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Friday, 4 February 2011 / 30 Shevat 5771

Volume 15 Number 4

Egypt: Will the unrest lead to Israel's worst nightmare? PAGES 3, 8, 9



SMELL OF FREEDOM IN THE AIR

The popular uprising in Egypt against the regime of long-time ruler Hosni Mubarak, has stunned the world as it gains momentum. The protesters are baying for blood – united not by dogma, but only by their demands for the removal of Mubarak. In the meantime Mubarak's grip on power remains tenuous, despite last-minute political concessions he has introduced. Here demonstrators on January 25 display a poster depicting an extreme form of insult in the Arab world – throwing a shoe at an opponent. (PHOTOGRAPH: MUHAMMAD GHAFARI).

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He says that although he lives overseas, "South Africa will always be home" - especially as his parents still live here.

Unrest in Egypt could lead to Israel’s worst nightmare

LESLIE SUSSER
JERUSALEM

FOR ISRAEL, the popular uprising against the Mubarak regime raises the spectre of its worst strategic nightmare: collapse of the peace treaty with Egypt, the cornerstone of its regional policy for the past three decades.

That is not the inevitable outcome; a modified version of the Mubarak government could survive and retain the “cold peace” with Israel. But if democratic or Islamic forces were to come to power denouncing Israel and repudiating the peace deal, that could herald the resurrection of a major military threat on Israel’s southern border.

The largely American-equipped and American-trained Egyptian army - by far the most powerful military in the Arab world - numbers around 650 000 men, with 60 combat brigades, 3 500 tanks and 600 fighter planes.



Anti-Mubarak protestors

For Israel, the main strategic significance of the peace with Egypt is that it took the threat of full-scale war against its strongest foe out of the military equation. But a hostile regime change in Cairo could compel Israel to rethink its military strategy, restructure combat forces, and, in general, build a bigger army, diverting billions of shekels with major social and economic consequences.

A hostile Cairo government could mean Egypt would be aiding and abetting the radical Hamas regime in Gaza, rather than, as at present, helping to contain it. Worse: If there is a domino effect that also leads to an anti-Israel regime change in Jordan, with its relatively large Islamic political presence, Israel could find itself facing an augmented military threat on its eastern border, too.

That could leave it even worse off than it was before 1977, facing a combined military challenge from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians - with the added menace of a fundamentalist Iran that seeks to acquire nuclear weapons.

The strategic importance of the peace with Egypt has come to the fore during crises over the past decade. Without it, the Second Palestinian Intifada (2000 - 2005), the Second Lebanon War (2006) and the Gaza War (2008 - 2009) could easily have triggered wider regional hostilities.

In each case, however, in the teeth of nationwide popular sentiment against Israel, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak adamantly rejected calls to commit Egyptian soldiers to the fray. On the contrary, Mubarak was critical of Hezbollah in Lebanon and of Hamas in Gaza for pro-

voking senseless killing, and he played a significant role in achieving postwar ceasefire arrangements.

“Not everything Mubarak did was right,” President Shimon Peres declared Monday. “But he did one thing for which we all owe him a debt of gratitude. He kept the peace in the Middle East.”

Because Mubarak served as a bulwark against regional chaos and was for decades a central pillar of American strategy against the radical forces led by Iran, Israelis found it baffling that US President Obama turned his back on the embattled Egyptian leader so quickly. Pundits argued Obama’s stance sent a disconcerting message to America’s moderate allies across the region, from Saudi Arabia to Morocco, that they might be as peremptorily abandoned in time of need.

That message might drive those equally autocratic leaders elsewhere for support, even possibly toward America’s foe, Iran. Secondly, pundits insisted that by distancing himself from Mubarak, Obama was encouraging the would-be revolutionary opposition in Egypt in a gamble that could prove counterproductive to US and Western interests.

Clearly, the American president was hoping for democracy in Egypt and a concomitant increase in popular support for America across the region. In his Cairo speech in June 2009, Obama offered the Muslim peoples of the ME a new beginning. Now, he seems to be using the Egyptian crisis to underscore that appeal.

But Israeli pundits warn this is unlikely to work. They maintain that instead of democracy in Egypt, there could well be a two-stage revolutionary process — an initial quasi-democracy, overtaken within months by the emergence of an autocratic Islamic republic under the heel of the Muslim Brotherhood.

It would be similar to what happened when the US supported pro-democracy forces against the Shah in Iran in the 1970s, only to see the emergence of fundamentalist ayatollahs. Moreover, in the event of an eventual Muslim Brotherhood victory, the big regional winner would be fundamentalist Iran.

However the events in Egypt play out, they will clearly have an impact on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The very notion of a threat to the peace with Egypt will almost certainly further reduce the Netanyahu government’s readiness to take risks for peace.

In a media conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday, Netanyahu re-emphasised the importance he attaches to the security element in any peace package - “in case the peace unravels”.

Events seem to be reinforcing both sides of the Israeli political divide in their core beliefs. The right is saying that Israel should not make peace unless it can be assured of ironclad security arrangements, and the left maintains if only Israel had already made peace with the Palestinians and the Arab world, popular unrest such as the protests in Egypt would not be potentially so earth-shattering.

Either way, events in Egypt are not good news for those advocating Israeli-Arab peacemaking. They could push efforts to resolve the conflict back several decades. (JTA)

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AROUND THE WORLD

NEWS IN BRIEF

HOUSE LEADERS TO OBAMA: VETO UN SETTLEMENTS' RESOLUTION

WASHINGTON - House of Representatives leaders have urged President Barack Obama to veto a proposed UN Security Council resolution that slams Israel on settlements and urges a return to direct Israeli-Palestinian talks.

"We are deeply concerned about the Palestinian leadership's decision to reject the difficult but vital responsibility of making peace with Israel through direct negotiations, and instead to advocate for anti-Israel measures by the United Nations Security Council and other international forums," says the letter sent on January 26.

The letter was initiated by Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Republican Florida), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and signed by Representatives Eric Cantor (Republican Virginia), the majority leader; Steny Hoyer (Democrat Maryland), the minority leader; and Howard Berman (Democrat California), the ranking Democrat on Ros-Lehtinen's committee, as well as the lead congressman on its Middle East subcommittee.

IRISH ACTIVISTS PREPARING GAZA-BOUND FLOTILLA

DUBLIN - Several Irish politicians and adventure travel writer Dervla Murphy will join a group of Irish anti-Israel activists on a boat bound for Gaza next month.

The group, which is expected to sail for the Palestinian territory from an undisclosed Mediterranean port on March 30, will be led by two protesters who took part in the Gaza-bound flotilla that was intercepted by Israeli commandos last May, leading to the death of nine Turkish activists aboard the Mavi Marmara.

One of the politicians scheduled to travel on the Irish ship is Aengus O'Snodaigh, who in 2009 compared Ireland's only Jewish parliamentarian to

GERMANY GIVES ADULT RATING TO TURKISH FILM SEEN AS ANTI-SEMITIC

BERLIN - German authorities have barred those under 18 from seeing a Turkish film widely considered anti-Semitic.

Jewish groups continue to raise concerns about the release in Europe of "Valley of the Wolves-Palestine", which critics say demonises Israelis and contains virulent anti-Semitic stereotypes of Jews as bloodthirsty killers of children.

Deidre Berger, head of the American Jewish Committee office in Berlin, said she welcomed the decision by the German ratings agency, FSK, to restrict access to the film. Berger called it "an important step in limiting the spread of this film, which glorifies violence and incites anti-Israeli sentiments".

Still, Berger expressed doubts as to whether the restriction would be enforced.

Shimon Samuels, the Paris-based director for international relations for the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, appealed on Monday to German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann to condemn the

SUNDANCE FESTIVAL RECOGNISES TWO ISRAELI FILMMAKERS

NEW YORK - Israeli filmmakers Erez Kav-El and Talya Lavie last weekend received awards at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah.

Kav-El won the world cinema dramatic screenwriting award for his film "Restoration", about a man coming to terms with his estranged son as his antique furniture-restoration shop suffers financial problems.

Lavie received an Inaugural Sundance

ACCUSED NAZI DIES BEFORE DENATURALISATION TRIAL

SEATTLE - A retiree living near Seattle, Washington, accused of committing genocide and other crimes as a Nazi officer during the Second World War, died a month before his denaturalisation trial.

Peter Egner, 88, died last week in an assisted-living community in Bellevue, Reuters reported on Monday, citing a facility representative.

Egner, a Yugoslavia native, is accused of joining in April 1941 the Nazi-controlled Security Police and Security Service in German-occupied Belgrade, a Nazi mobile killing unit that participated in the mass murder of more than 17 000 Serbian civilians during the Second World War.

Egner came to the United States in 1960 and became a citizen six years later.

The US Justice Department filed a lawsuit in 2008 attempting to strip Egner of his citizenship, saying he had lied about his Nazi past on his citizenship application.

Egner has admitted volunteering to serve in the Security Police and Security Service as well as guarding prisoners as they were being trans-

"We respectfully request that the Administration continue and increase pressure on the Palestinian leadership to return, immediately and unconditionally, to direct negotiations with Israel," the letter says, "continue and increase pressure on the Palestinian leadership to cease pursuing anti-Israel measures in international forums; declare that Palestinian failure to take these steps would have significant negative consequences for United States policy towards the Palestinians; and pledge in response to this letter to veto any UN Security Council resolution that criticises Israel regarding final status issues."

The resolution in question, reportedly drafted by the Palestinian delegation, does not address final status issues and urges a return to direct talks.

The Obama administration has said it opposes the resolution but has not said it will veto it. The Anti-Defamation League last week Friday urged the administration to make public its intention to veto the resolution. (JTA)

Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels. O'Snodaigh was prevented from boarding last May's flotilla.

Murphy, who is writing a book about the Middle East, including her impressions of Israelis and Palestinians, said she contacted the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign because she felt "so strongly about the whole situation in Gaza".

"I think the flotilla is a good way of drawing international attention to what is going on there," she told the Irish Times. "I hate publicity of any kind, and this is the last thing I would normally do. It shows how passionately I feel about Gaza." (JTA)

film and asked them to rally the support of local Turkish associations to discourage people from seeing it.

The movie is a sequel to the 2006 production "Valley of the Wolves: Iraq", which focused on a fictitious Jewish doctor harvesting organs of Iraqi soldiers for use in Israeli hospitals. The film was wildly popular among young men of Turkish background in Germany. In all, some 3.5 million people of Turkish origin live in Germany.

The new film involves a group of Turks who set out to avenge the deaths of nine militants who were killed by Israeli commandos on the Mavi Marmara, which attempted to break the Israeli naval blockade of Gaza last May. The opening scenes use actual footage from Israel's military raid.

Mainstream political parties have joined in condemning the movie as anti-Semitic and expressed concern about its potential to cause further harm to Israel-Turkey relations, which were damaged already by the Mavi Marmara incident and earlier the Gaza war. (JTA)

Institute Mahindra Global Filmmaking Award, which supports emerging independent filmmakers from around the world, for her film "Zero Motivation".

The film looks at three women working in an administrative office at a remote Israeli army base and their power struggles.

The festival for independent films ended last Sunday night. (JTA)

ferred to concentration camps. He also admitted serving as an interpreter during interrogations of political prisoners that sometimes involved severe torture. Prisoners often were executed following their interrogations.

Serbia's justice minister on November 26 formally requested Egner's extradition to stand trial in Serbia.

Meanwhile, on Monday, an immigration judge in Detroit ordered the deportation of John Kalymon of Troy, Michigan, who is accused of committing violent acts against Jews during the Second World War as a member of the Nazi-sponsored Ukrainian Auxiliary Police in Nazi-occupied Lvov.

Kalymon, who became a US citizen in 1955 after emigrating from Germany six years earlier, had his citizenship revoked in March 2007. A federal judge concluded that Kalymon took part in wartime violence against Jews and lied about it to immigration authorities.

Kalymon, whose former first name was Iwan, denies the accusations. (JTA)



Holocaust survivor Jack Puterman (left) and Jaap van Proosdij, a Righteous Among the Nations, discuss the exhibition in 2008 at the opening of the Durban Holocaust Centre. (PHOTOGRAPH: TERRY HAYWOOD)

Righteous Gentile Jaap van Proosdij dies at age 89

DON KRAUSZ
CHAIRMAN ASSOCIATION OF
HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS IN
JOHANNESBURG

IT IS with deep sorrow that I have to report the death of Jaap van Proosdij in Pretoria on January 22, at the age of 89. Van Proosdij was an accredited Righteous Among the Nations who saved hundreds of Jews in Holland from death in the concentration camps and gas chambers.

This account of Van Proosdij's remarkable exploits is based on Mordecai Paldiel's volume, The Righteous Among the Nations.

After their conquest of the Netherlands in May 1940, the Nazis began to "purify" the country of all non-Aryan elements, foremost among them the Jews. This also created the need to examine carefully cases of persons registered as Jewish but claiming to be either fully or semi-Aryan by birth, so as to weed out all non Aryans.

For this purpose a special administrative unit was created to examine doubtful cases in order to decide whether they were to be considered Aryans and spared, or Jewish and deported to their death.

In charge of this unit was a man named Hans-Georg Calmeyer. He soon realised the need for staff that had legal training and was Dutch speaking in order to peruse and decide on the validity of documentation that sometimes dated back to the days of the Inquisition.

He employed a 22-year-old, recently qualified lawyer called Jaap van Proosdij in a fulltime capacity to examine documentation brought in by Jews who requested reclassification from their previous Jewish status.

Van Proosdij was not a Nazi and soon realised the potential of suitable documentation in exempting Jews from transport to the death camps. So did Calmeyer. Soon petitions began to flow to his department requesting that the status of a parent or grandparent be changed from Jewish to half-Jewish or even fully Aryan. Baptismal certificates, most of them forged, were readily supplied to support such claims.

Dutch lawyers such as Van Proosdij, specialising in Aryanism, helped produce false records testifying to the non-Jewish origin of the applicants. Using such method, it can be said that at least 3 000 Jewish lives were saved, often with the co-operation of the German staff in Calmeyer's department.

Calmeyer too, would be awarded recognition as a Righteous Gentile. However, he was under the constant

surveillance of the SS, had to tread warily and handled with circumspection.

Working there, Van Proosdij had access to the lists of all the Portuguese Jews in Holland. These he handed to the still functioning Jewish Council in Amsterdam, requesting them to mark those who had died, were deported or protected by marriage to a non-Jewish spouse.

In due course these lists were handed to Calmeyer who was told which people qualified for exemption and which did not.

"Little did he know that the names we gave him of those who did not qualify were of people who no longer existed."

In order to prove conversion to Christianity, documentation had to be provided. So, fictitious churches were created and duly equipped with stationery and rubber stamps, all designed by Van Proosdij and his associates.

So impressive was this forged material that where genuine proof was produced to the Germans they often would not accept it as the forgeries looked more convincing.

A most remarkable case was that of Elsa d'Oliveyra. Her name was on the Portuguese list and she had been taken to the Westerbork Transit Camp for further investigation. Then Van Proosdij received a secret message from Westerbork that the following Tuesday all the Portuguese Jews would be deported to the death camps.

Van Proosdij phoned Westerbork from Calmeyer's office and informed them that Calmeyer was considering a special application for Elsa and that she should be kept in the camp. But by that time Elsa had already been put on the train which was due to leave at 11:00.

Van Proosdij immediately drove to the camp and walking alongside the train while calling Elsa's name, he managed to find her and drove her straight to Amsterdam where she was placed in hiding.

In 1997 van Proosdij received recognition from Yad Vashem as a Righteous Among the Nations. To achieve this he had to be able to substantiate his claim. He travelled to Holland, found Elsa and obtained written confirmation of how he had saved her life. One week later she died.

I am writing this as a Holocaust survivor. We were surrounded by hatred and humiliation, and under sentence of death. The only lights in the darkness and despair were people like Jaap van Proosdij. Without men such as he we would have lost all faith in our fellow Dutchmen and in humanity.

Press Council gears up to counteract government threatened interference

ALISON GOLDBERG
PHOTOGRAPH: ILAN OSSENDRYVER

THE PRESS Council of South Africa has embarked on a review of its entire setup, as a result of serious criticism in the wake of the threat by government to institute a statutory Media Appeals Tribunal with powers to fine and imprison journalists. The aim is to improve self-regulation of the print media.

Last October it called for public comment on its constitution, the SA Press Code and its complaints procedure.

In November, when it had received 24 written submissions, many substantial, it decided to extend the public comment period to mid-March and hold public hearings around the country to increase the number of comments.

The Council has taken no specific direction yet in order not to stifle further comment. But it will evaluate submissions based on three criteria: whether they are in the interests of ethical journalism; their practicality; and finally, not to make changes “simply because the ANC wants them”.

“Ultimately, whatever changes we recommend will have to be endorsed by the press. When we have completed our work, we will be ready to make submissions to Parliament if we are required to do so,” Press Ombudsman Joe Thloloe (pictured) told Jewish Report.

The PCSA is funded by the Newspaper Association of South Africa (NASA), The Magazine Publishers Association of South Africa (MPASA) and the Association of Independent Publishers (AIP), which contribute in relation to their size and ability.

For its part, the ANC is holding off its investigation of a Media Appeals Tribunal until this self-regulatory process is completed, according to ANC spokesman Jackson Mthembu, as quoted in the Mail & Guardian recently.

For Thloloe the increased use of anonymous sources in recent years is worrying. “This practice applies to both political and business spheres. While the Press Code states that the press has a responsibility to protect confidential sources of information, this is not carte blanche to publish falsehoods and say you can use anonymous sources.

“My advice to journalists is to use confidential information as a tip-off rather than the crux of the story. Journalists need to check the tip-off with other people who could corroborate it.

“According to the Press Code 1.4, where it has not been practical to verify the accuracy of a report, this shall be mentioned in such report. I have addressed the issue at all Avusa offices (publishers of inter alia the Sunday Times and Business Day) where workshops have been held on the matter.”

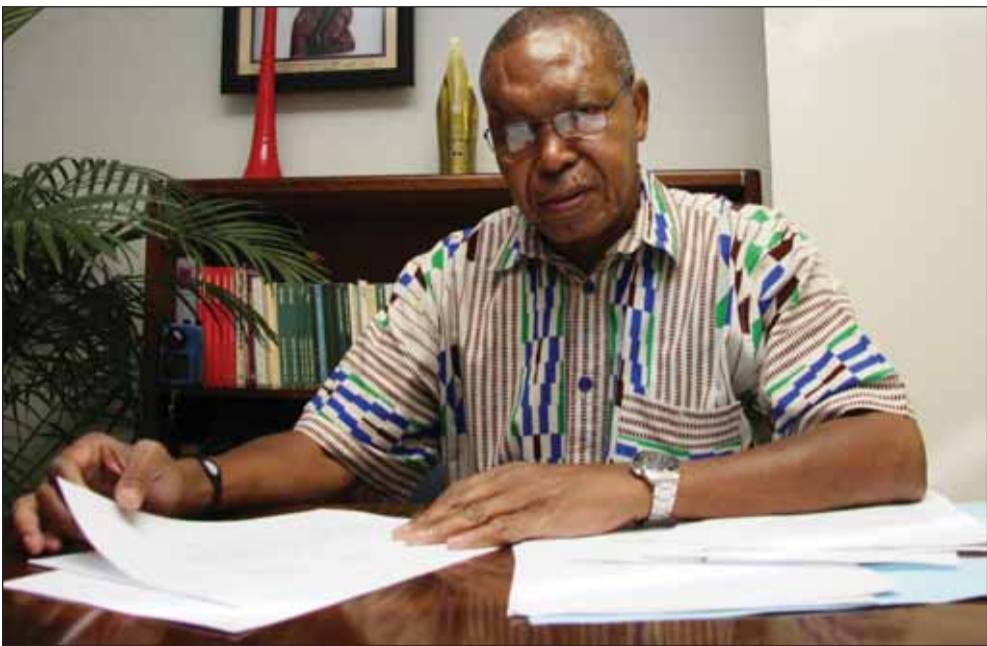
Editor of SAPA and a member of SANEF, Mark van der Velden, goes further. He believes the “existing section dealing with confidential sources should be expanded to include an obligation to explain, as far as possible, the reasoning, authentication and likely motivation/agenda of anonymous sources, where these are used as a primary source of a news story where there is no other way of attribution and the story is published in the public interest.”

Among the written public comments the Council will be evaluating, are the Law Society of SA’s and others’ calls for “parity of publicity for an apology in location, space and detail”.

They have also requested the Press Code to specify respect for the “dignity, privacy and the common law right to reputation”.

Calls for the imposition of fines and monetary compensation to be paid to the complainant, have come from the Centre for Constitutional Rights (FW de Klerk Foundation), Media Monitoring Africa, the Institute for Accountability in Southern Africa (Paul Hoffman SC), Reg Rumney, a former editor at the Mail & Guardian, currently director at the Centre for Economics Journalism in Africa at Rhodes University, and the Freedom of Expression Institute.

While the Broadcast Complaints Commission of SA does impose fines, Thloloe points out that very few press councils around the world do. Those of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the Scandin-



avian countries are much like the one in South Africa, so too the one in Canada, though it has provincial press councils.

Another issue is the constitutionality of the waiver complainants must sign of their right “to approach a court of law or any other tribunal to adjudicate upon my complaint or any dispute arising from my complaint submitted to the Ombudsman”.

Ziyad Motala, a professor of law and Jane Duncan, professor of Media and Information Society at Rhodes University, contend it is not constitutional. Thloloe is adamant it is, based on a landmark judgment by Ms Justice Kate O’Reagan of the Constitutional Court in March 2009 on private arbitration.

Asked whether he acts for the press or public, Thloloe says he is “on the side of excellence in journalism”; further, that the whole PCSA system is designed to protect the public.

As a measure of his impartiality, he says of all the complaints his office receives, 66 per cent are upheld in favour of the public and 34 per cent in favour of newspapers. The same holds true of its analysis of politicians’ complaints - from Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe to President Jacob Zuma, provincial premiers, mayors and city councillors.

Complaints lodged with the PCSA against the print media have increased from 94 in 2007 to 200 in 2010.

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SOCIAL SCENE

Rita Lewis jont@global.co.za



The YAD committee which organised the annual comedy evening, Naomi Hadar, the Gauteng executive director; Jessica Schneider; Bev Schneider; Robbie Cohen; Greg Katz; Michal Baruch; Kinneret Bitton; Gary Rothstein YAD chairman, Gauteng; Urit Eschel; and Yanky Woolf.



Above: The three comedians who kept everyone in fits of laughter: Tshepo Mogale; Mel Miller; and Robbie Collins, with some of the guests.

Left: YAD Gauteng Chairman Gary Rothstein.

Using laughter to raise funds

RITA LEWIS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY YANKY WOOLF

THE ANNUAL comedy evening of the Young Adults Division of the IUA-UCF, entitled Bliksem II was held recently at the HOD Hall in Oaklands, Johannesburg. As the comedy evening’s popularity has increased, so has its attendance and this year was no exception with people of all ages joining in the evening.

After dinner, three top notch comedians Tshepo Mogale, Robbie Collins and Mel Miller, each showed off their own particular brand of humour and each one had the audience literally rolling with laughter.

Towards the end of the evening a lucky draw was held with some wonderful prizes being given away, including return air tickets to Durban, spa packages and beauty products.

A weekend away at the Sabi Sabi Game Reserve was very “successfully” auctioned with much friendly rivalry between the bidders.

The evening also received very generous sponsorships from Wicount, Premier Dead Sea Products, Comair, Sabi Sabi and Comic Revolution.

“As a fundraising organisation, it is heart-warming to receive these sponsorships as well as to see the bigheartedness of the donors who attended the function and made

generous pledges,” said one of the committee members.

This all made for not only a fun-filled event, but a winning one in many ways as YAD, under the guidance of its chairman, Gary Rothstein, is dedicated to getting the young adults of the South African Jewish community more committed, informed and connected to both Israel and South Africa.

It has a very committed volunteer committee who work tirelessly. Besides fundraising, YAD arranges informal, fun events that enable young adults to socialise, network and foster stronger relationships with Israel and ensure that the local community’s needs are taken care of.

Funds raised for the IUA are channelled to Keren Hayesod which does vitally important work in Israel. This includes creating secure environments and assisting Israeli society with many projects such as renovating and building bomb shelters, the rehabilitation of victims of terror and facilitating an easy aliyah and absorption into Israeli society, among other things.

YAD will be running a young leadership course this year, with the intention of ensuring the preparation of future Jewish leadership in South Africa and a strong bond with Israel.

More information regarding the course is available from Jason Farber, the YAD co-ordinator on (011) 645-2525.

Three representative of sponsor Wicount, Dan Pallay; Jessica Schneider; and Nick Friedman with SAUJS’ Dani Emmanuel (third from left).



There is nothing better than having a good laugh.



Caterer Ido Sirton with Naomi Hadar, IUA-UCF Gauteng executive director and Yanky Woolf.



Some of the guests enjoying one of the jokes.

COMMUNITY BUZZ

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HEILBRON

From Emile Shreeve (now of Somerset West):

“I well remember Kaalkop Van der Merwe who had been terribly resentful that the young Harry Lotzof drove a Lincoln Continental (pink colour with tartan seat covers) after his return from working in Hollywood at Paul Hessey Studios doing black and white still photography of movie stars. Harry told me Kaalkop used to sneer insults at him because of this.

“Harry and his American-born wife, Genevieve, (former showgirl with the Marcus Follies) opened a photographic studio at Ingram’s Corner in Hillbrow in the good old days when Hillbrow was a fabulous place.

“He introduced colour photography to magazine publications – I think the original one was “Outspan” magazine with the first Miss South Africa on the cover, except the printers got the register all wrong and she had three eyes etc.

“Colour in those days was made with four separate primary colour transparencies placed one on top of the other.

“He had big name accounts like Pepsi and General Motors and did many covers for CAR magazine way back then.

“My grandfather, Jan L V Liebenberg (his wife Deborah Gregorowski Botha was Jewish) resigned as the MP for Heilbron and Linley due to ill-health. I’m not sure how long afterwards Kaalkop took on the responsibility.

“When we attended the funeral of Ben Simon, the local attorney and all-round nice guy in Heilbron, Harry pointed him out to me and said: “There goes the crook that replaced your gentleman farmer,” (meaning my grandfather who always wore a suit to ‘farm’ – he was a lawyer.)

“Kaalkop had acquired for himself a Cadillac and he was chauffeured through the little dorpie, sitting in the middle of the back seat, just the bald dome of his head showing through the back window.

“Ben Simon’s wife, Miriam, was a rabbi’s daughter and despite the age gap, Harry’s mother had been young Miriam Simon’s friend.

“Miriam worked tirelessly for the Union of Jewish Women for decades, driving all alone for miles in her little Morris Minor from Heilbron to outlying towns and farms.

“I met her shortly after I married Harry Lotzof (circa 1970-71) when she was attending a UJW meeting in Anstey’s Building in Johannesburg where we had the penthouse and despite the age gap we became friends too... I was married to him for 10 years.”

“How important the past becomes when one gets older!

“Thanks for the pleasant surprise reading about Heilbron in The Jewish Report.”

MUIZENBERG

Hyman Jocum continues with the Exhibition of Old Muizenberg:

“In a section captioned ‘Jewish Education’, mention is made of Lily Ginsberg who opened her own Montessori School. The daughter of a diamond magnate Ms Ginsberg gave up the principalship of her school in 1924.

“At the end of that decade Col Leversohn opened a Jewish day school for girls in the former home of Mr Clifford Knight along the Main Road. This was a triple story stone house The two schools established by Colonel Leversohn were probably the first Jewish day schools in South Africa.”

PORT ELIZABETH

From Rollo Berman:

“I started off at the Port Elizabeth Hebrew School in Clevdoon Road. The principal at the time was a Mr Goldman followed by a Mr Lazar. My arithmetic teacher was a Mrs Newman and Hebrew instruction was given by a Mrs Milowitz.

“In those days every schoolboy had a ‘Swanee whistle’. By mistake I blew mine in class with the result that Mrs Milowitz took mine away. I was very upset about this and ultimately I went to her house where she gave it back to me on condition that I would never blow it in class again. In my class were Hymie Hochman, John Jackson, Frank Falowitz and Alec Meyer who now lives in Israel.

“When Mr Lazar became principal he had a hard time with the boys... One day when the windows of the classroom were open, some of the pupils outside threw clods of sand and Mr. Lazar frantically told the boys to behave themselves. The look on his face was unforgettable.”

To be continued.

JOHANNESBURG/YEOVILLE

From Sheina Gordon:

“Tilly Romm z”l was a firm believer in the words of Pirkei Avot – (dabeir me-at ve-aseh harbei) – ‘say little and do much’. She showed constant, quiet commitment to her duties.

“Tilly and friends formed the ‘Ba-avur HaShabbat’ (For the promotion of the Shabbat) at almost the same time. They group arranged a regular ‘Oneg Shabbat’ in the hall of the Yeoville Synagogue.

“These occasions were thoroughly enjoyed by both adults and children. How sad that Yeoville is now but a shadow of its former self and its vibrancy – Jewish related – is gone.

“Note: ‘Ba-avur HaShabbat’ – for the promotion of the Shabbat. ‘Oneg Shabbat’ - delight/enjoyment of the Shabbat.”

ENTREPRENEURS

What did they put in the matzo flour, the chicken soup and the gefilte fish in the 1940s and 1950s that there was this blossoming of Jewish entrepreneurs who changed the way South Africans did business, entertained themselves, shopped, gambled and gambolled?

Sol Kerzner gave South Africans a new way of enjoying hotels and introduced casinos which had to operate in the so-called bantustans. Raymond Ackerman gave a new way of life to shoppers and another experience with his Pick n Pay chain of super-and later, hypermarkets. Pick n Pay has become a way of life for so many South Africans...

Natie Kirsh with Metro Cash and Carry was every bit as innovative in his own way. Isie Kirsh, his brother, played a major part in commercial radio in Lourenco Marques. Such was the impact that the SABC, to compete, started their own commercial radio station, Springbok Radio.

“Isie Kirsh was involved in the start-up of 702 Radio which, later, as Talk Radio 702 has had a major influence on the listening habits of many people in this country, especially in Gauteng.

Donald Gordon changed the way the insurance industry was conducted with his Liberty Life. Involved were Louis Shill, Sydney Lipworth, Michael Rapp and Michael Katz among others. Mark Weinberg did the same in Great Britain with Abbey Life. He is now Sir Mark Weinberg.

Eric Ellerine in the furniture industry, Brian Joffe in the financial field, also those at Sasfin, Adrian Gore who discovered gold in health cover and all those guys at Investec, Stephen Koseff, Ian and Bernard Kantor whose zebra icon is seen at so many international rugby fields and cricket grounds.

The list of these young lions involved in changing South Africa is endless and this list here is far from complete.

SAUDI ARABIA

A vulture has been arrested in Saudi Arabia on suspicion of being a Mossad agent working for Israel. The bird was carrying a GPS transmitter and a tag from Tel Aviv University and seemed to be embroiled in a “Zionist plot”, according to reports in the local press.

The Israeli authorities say that the vulture is innocent and was simply being used in a long standing study of migratory patterns.

From the British journal “This Week”, January 15, 2011.

Grand style tribute to Benoni Chevrah Kadisha

DAVID SAKS

BENONI JEWRY came together recently to pay tribute in grand style to the outgoing chairman of the Benoni Chevrah Kadisha, Danny Danzig, and to the many dedicated members of the organisation, who have given long service.

This took the form of a festive Shabbat dinner, attended by nearly 100 community members and well-wishers from outside the town.

The main speaker was Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, senior spiritual leader to the country communities,

who recounted his many unique experiences relating to Chevrah Kadisha matters in his work.

Incoming Chairman Ronnie Suttner, praised Danzig for ensuring that the community could always rely on the presence of an efficient and dedicated burial society.

“His leadership skills have influenced the members of the Chevrah Kadisha: Benoni has always had a fully self-sufficient devoted team of people who drop everything when needed and just do what needs to be done, no matter what,” he said.

Suttner recounted one of Danzig’s most noteworthy projects. The

Great Flu Epidemic that immediately followed the First World War, had resulted in the deaths of many Jewish children from the East Rand. Most of them had been buried in unmarked graves in the Benoni and Boksburg Jewish Cemeteries.

In 2001, assisted by fellow Chevrah Kadisha members, Danzig embarked on a project to identify and mark the various graves in the Benoni Cemetery. This involved intensive research in the records, where the relevant details were sometimes found on the back of cigarette boxes.

Once the identification process was completed, a tombstone was erected on each grave, bearing the deceased’s name and date of death.

In July 2002, a special consecration service was held, with the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, obm, officiating and intoning the haskara.

Congregants rally to save Edenvale Shul

CLIVE MASSEL

A FEW weeks before the start of the High Holy Days, last year, the Edenvale Shul was in dire financial straits. The shul was unable to meet its day-to-day expenses.

A few of the community members were called to an emergency meeting; a special financial committee was formed. It was established that unless a strategy was developed, the shul would not survive.

Problems it faced included: the shul’s overdraft was at its limit; there were past debtors who were unable to meet their commitment to the shul; there were no cash reserves; and there was a monthly shortfall of at least R30 000.

The reasons for this were that the

Edenvale Shul had become an ageing community; the relocation of members; there were no major benefactors; a reduction in membership; and a drop in simchas such as births, barmitzvahs, batmitzvahs and weddings.

A “Chai Save the Shul Campaign” was started. Members were invited to pledge a basic bronze chai of R100 per month, ranging to a Platinum Plus chai of R2 500 or more per month. The target for the monthly chai contribution was set at R30 000.

The response to the campaign was phenomenal. The community rallied around the shul and realising what they stood to lose, came forward in a variety of ways.

The Edenvale Shul was started in

the house of Stanley and Lorna Sneece in 1967. With the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, shul services were commenced and progressed to Shabbat services at the Sharon Country Club. In 1976, the EJC purchased from the local municipality an old church building and the adjoining house. These buildings were converted into the current shul and house of the rabbi. The current rabbi of the community Rabbi Ze Aiv Gruzd.

As a result of donations received from former members now living overseas, as well as very generous donations from the local community, the shul has been saved.

Plans are in place to address the medium term growth and sustainability of the shul.

Two Jewish events of note in Piketberg

THE PIKETBERG Museum Committee in the Western Cape, as well as Phina Hoberman, Doreen Goldberg, Josie Barnes and Harry Shaer, will officiate at two Jewish events in the town on February 17.

Descendants and interested parties are invited to participate in the consecration of a memorial stone at 10:00 in memory of the Gilman family who are buried in unmarked graves in the Jewish section of the old historical cemetery in “Die Trek” (Trek Street).

At 10:45 there will be a dedication of the Ten Commandments and Crown over the Holy Ark in the old Jewish Synagogue in Church Street (Kerkstraat) which is now an extension of the museum. The Ten Commandments and Crown are donated by Phina, Doreen, Josie and Harry in memory of their late brother, Max Shaer.

Some of the graves in the old cemetery in Trek Street date back to the 17th century.

The Piketberg Museum is housed

in an old Victorian-style house at 10 Kerk Street.

The synagogue was erected for Jewish refugee families who settled in the area from about 1880. It was built in 1923 by Andras Simon, a Hungarian Jew, and was bought by the municipality in 1970.

• For information, e-mail Phina Hoberman: phinah@iafrica.com and RSVP to the curator of the Piketberg Museum, Roché du Toit: (022) 913-2177, Monday to Friday 09:00-14:00.

ORT SA educator assistants to graduate in 2011



Adrienne Verster (ORT SA project co-ordinator), Victor Sefike (educator assistant) and Carol Rod (ORT SA business development executive).

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY LISA MORALEE

SINCE FEBRUARY 2010, ORT SA, together with Services SETA and the GDE, have implemented the Educator Assistant Project in six high schools in Alexandra and six high schools in Diepsloot. With only two months left of the course, ORT SA held an appreciation lunch for the

learners and the school principals who have welcomed and supported the educator assistants. The learners will graduate at the end of February.

During the event, Martin Behr, honorary life president of ORT SA, congratulated the learners for their dedication and hard work. “The experiences you have had during this learnership will stand you in good stead throughout your lives.”

HOD funds help keep Savyon Lodge going

DAVID SAKS

DESPITE THE embattled Zimbabwe economy having recovered slightly over the past year, the overall situation remains dire. Without the support of international Jewry, Savyon Lodge in Bulawayo, the country’s only Jewish aged home, would no longer be able to provide a safe (and kosher) haven for its residents, of which there are currently just over 20.

To date, fortunately, sufficient funding from abroad has been forthcoming to enable the home to meet its many pressing commitments, but ensuring that this continues, remains one of the ongoing challenges of the African Jewish Congress Zimbabwe Fund.

Recently, Savyon Lodge re-

ceived a much welcome donation from the Hebrew Order of David in Johannesburg. The funds, channelled through the AJC Zimbabwe Fund, will be used towards purchasing basic medical requirements and adult diapers. Since the abolition of the Zimbabwe dollar, all items are now available in all currencies.

Savyon Lodge President Brian Sher, who works very closely with AJC Zimbabwe Fund President Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, said he was “delighted at the generous response by the HOD in identifying the needs of Savyon Lodge as a beneficiary of their sterling work”.

• Anyone interested in contributing to Savyon Lodge, should please contact Rabbi Silberhaft on rabbiajc@gmail.com



Johnny Sonnabend on behalf of the HOD, presents a cheque to Brian Sher, president of Savyon Lodge, while Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, president of the AJC Zimbabwe Fund, looks on.

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HUGH RAICHLIN
ATTORNEYS NOTARIES & CONVEYANCERS

Egypt: another ‘Iran’ or ‘South Africa’?

SOUTH AFRICANS know the heady feelings evoked by overthrowing an authoritarian regime, particularly when it has been in power for decades and has protected its rule by systematically suppressing and eliminating opposition, through brute force or other means.

Our prisons were filled with political detainees, and the majority of the population lived in fear of security police and other of the regime’s agents. The oppressive system was so pervasive and long-standing that it became almost “normal” to live that way.

It is not easy to wrest the power back to the people. Courage and dedication from activists prepared to give their all are needed. And the general populace must reach the point where they will no longer tolerate the situation – a general “gatvol” sentiment, where the most unexpected incident sparks an entire revolution, with everyone’s rebellious emotions feeding off each other, creating an irresistible force. We saw it in 1976, when Soweto’s children in unison led the uprising.

Fortunately for us, one of the leaders who arose to take us through the turmoil and anger to a better society was Nelson Mandela, along with many comrades. The passionately-held ideal of him and his ANC movement was creating a free, democratic society. And today, despite our society’s many warts, we live in a pretty close reflection of that ideal, guarded by a constitution ranked among the world’s best.

We can be thankful there was no significant religious component to our apartheid struggle. Notwithstanding the morality and good order inherent in most major religions, religious conflicts are among the most brutal and intolerant, especially if it is brother against brother. No side can ultimately win in such a faith-based clash.

South African society, in contrast, contains a basic respect for people’s religions and beliefs - anti-apartheid activists were of all stripes.

Looking at what is happening in Egypt, one must support the fact that the populace is saying to the dictatorial Egyptian government and President Hosni Mubarak after his 30-year reign: “Enough! We demand a better society!”

But what sort of “better” are they talking about? What will emerge from Egypt’s revolution: an Egyptian “Mandela” promoting a free, democratic country? A “Khomeini” turning it into a fundamentalist Islamic regime? Or something in between?

The prospect of the most cohesive body in Egyptian politics today, the Muslim Brotherhood, hijacking this revolution for its own narrow political means, is frightening. There are strange bedfellows in this process, with virtually nothing in common except the desire to be rid of Mubarak and his son Gamal, who has been groomed as his successor.

The presence of the religious component in the Arab and Egyptian world, which was absent from the South African scenario, is potentially explosive. South Africa could never have turned into a fanatical Islamic regime. But Egypt could. What then?

The Americans and the West feel obliged to give public support to a democratisation process in Egypt, and this is appropriate. But their concern about stability and preservation of a reliable ally in that region is palpable.

The Iranian example is vivid, where Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi - a secular Muslim and a staunch ally who brought stability, though his regime was dictatorial - was replaced by a radical Islamic theocracy under Khomeini and his ayatollahs. The result was never-ending threats to the region and the world - including the Arab world.

Israel’s place in this maelstrom concerns Jews greatly. Losing Egypt as a three-decades-long, peaceful neighbour and being surrounded again by hostile countries would set it back to an era of existential threat most Jews thought had passed.

Traumatic memories flood into the mind of several Arab armies attacking it – or gearing up to attack it – from all sides simultaneously, as in 1948, 1967 and 1973.

Having gone through our own South African revolution and emerged with a very positive outcome, we hope and pray that Tahrir (Liberation) Square in Cairo does not become a Tiananmen Square - and that the new Egypt will be a constructive member of the international community of nations, and continue to be at peace with Israel.

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Either embrace change in Egypt or stay quiet

LARA FRIEDMAN
WASHINGTON

THERE IS the old joke that “denial is not just a river in Egypt.” And indeed it is true.

The Nile is the longest river in the world, along whose shores the Egyptian people continue their unprecedented protests, demanding an end to the Mubarak era. But denial also is the increasingly discordant notes sounded by some elements in the American Jewish community and in Israel seeking to attack and discredit the protests and lobby for a return to the pre-January 25 status quo in Egypt.

ments and draw the conclusion that the best thing for Israel and friends of Israel to do is bash the protesters or stump for Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who has been in power for three decades.

Make no mistake, change is coming in Egypt - indeed, it has come already. Few serious observers believe there is even the remote possibility that Mubarak can hold on to power much longer.

The longer he tries to hang on, the greater the likelihood that he will have to resort to more repressive (violent) measures to do so. Many fear a Tiananmen Square-style showdown in Cairo’s Tahrir Square.



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, second from right, meeting with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, at Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt, on September 14, 2010. (PHOTOGRAPH: MOSHE MILNER/GPO)

Last Sunday, for example, Malcolm Hoenlein, the executive vice-president of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organisations, blasted Mohammed ElBaradei - one of the few faces to emerge as a “leader” in Egypt’s ongoing protests - as a “stooge for Iran”.

The same day, Haaretz carried an article headlined “Israel urges world to curb criticism of Egypt’s Mubarak”.

Panic at change in Egypt and what its impact will be on Israel simply cannot justify this kind of response.

Yes, everyone who cares about Israel is concerned about what change will mean for security and stability in the region, especially for Israel. But only a fool could look at the ongoing develop-

ment, however, is not China, and such a horrific event would not save Mubarak. Rather it would only cement his regime’s total loss of legitimacy domestically and make it impossible for even old friends like the US government to continue speaking of the current situation - and what must come next - in diplomatic, measured tones.

Denying the reality of change in Egypt does not help Israel; it only guarantees that Israel’s future relationship with Egypt will be more difficult. It sends a message that Israel wants to hold on to the title of “the only real democracy in the Middle East” in perpetuity, even if this means directly engaging to frustrate the will of Arab peoples for democracy.

From a purely strategic, cynical, self-interested perspective, this is not a message that Israel or friends of Israel want to be sending to the people of a nation that when the dust settles will still be Israel’s most important neighbour and almost certainly will have a government that will be more populist in its approach.

Since Israel’s birth as a state regimes throughout the region have been non-democratic. This is not Israel’s fault. Nor can anyone fault Israel for developing security and foreign strategies that capitalised on the overwhelming authority of these regimes - whether with respect to Israel’s peace treaties with Egypt or Jordan, or its de facto detente with the Arab world at large.

But the Middle East is changing, and the attitudes and approaches of Israel and friends of Israel must change, too - even if in their hearts many still believe that for Israel’s sake, an autocratic but reliable Arab neighbour is preferable to a democratic but potentially unreliable one.

According to reports from the ground, the protests in Egypt have been mostly bereft of anti-Israel sentiment. The protests are genuinely about domestic politics - against poor governance, corruption, lack of democracy, etc.

They are not about Egypt’s foreign policy or Egypt’s peace treaty with Israel. This should be taken as a promising sign for the future, but it should not be taken for granted.

If Israel and friends of Israel unwisely insist on making what is happening in Egypt about Israel, this could change. They may get their wish and see Egyptians begin protesting against Israel, too.

Fears that a post-Mubarak regime will be less friendly to Israel are understandable, but some of the people speaking out now from Israel and the US Jewish community need to be aware of self-fulfilling prophecies. Their fears are only more likely to materialise if Israel and friends of Israel act foolishly during this transition period.

For Israel and friends of Israel, there are two smart choices: Either embrace the change that is happening with the same goodwill that is being shown by the rest of the world, or keep quiet. (JTA)

(Lara Friedman is the director of policy and government relations for Americans for Peace Now.)

When Israel & Egypt made peace 32 years ago



The Cairo talks, March 1979 when Israel and Egypt signed a peace agreement. From left: Menachem Begin, prime minister of Israel; Yehuda Avner, Israel’s ambassador to London at the time; President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt, who was assassinated three years later; Egypt’s Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Boutros Boutros Ghali (in dark glasses); and the then Egyptian vice president, Hosni Mubarak. (FILE PHOTO)

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Dilemma of pro-Israel groups: To talk Egypt or not

RON KAMPEAS
WASHINGTON

AS EGYPT convulses, pro-Israel groups and US Congress members are seized by the ancient maternal dilemma: If you have nothing nice to say, should you say anything at all?

The question of whether to stake a claim in the protests against 30 years of President Hosni Mubarak’s autocracy is a key one for the pro-Israel lobby and pro-Israel lawmakers because of the role they have played in making Egypt one of the greatest beneficiaries of US aid.

And in the same way that the outcome in Egypt continues to idle in the gear of “anyone’s guess”, there is little consensus in the byways of pro-Israel Washington over how to treat the nation and its nascent revolution.

The competing claims were evident in the divergent, and at times contrasting, calls issuing from figures known for their closeness to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, the trendsetter in the pro-Israel community.

Reactions to the unrest in Egypt crossed political lines, with some liberal and conservative commentators pressing the Obama administration to help topple the regime, and others stressing the need for stability.

Some AIPAC-related countries called for assistance to Egypt to be contingent on whether the emerging government remained committed to co-operation with Israel. Others were emphatic in omitting Israel as a consideration, saying it was not the place of Israel or its friends to intervene in what appears to be an organic shucking-off of a dictator.

Josh Block, AIPAC’s former spokesman who is still close to the lobby, said the commitment of whatever government emerged to peace with Israel should be a critical element in considering whether to continue the \$1.5 billion Egypt receives in aid, much of it in defence assistance.

“Given what’s taking place, it’s appropriate for the US government to be reviewing US aid to Egypt,” said Block, a senior fellow at the centrist Progressive Policy Institute.

“No matter what happens, clearly one of the top criteria Congress is likely to use is Egypt’s approach to its peace treaty obligations with Israel.”

That seemed to be the tack adopted by US Representative Nita Lowey (Democrat New York), the ranking Democrat on the foreign operations subcommittee of the US House of Representatives Appropriations Committee. She framed her statement in the context of the 1979 Camp David peace accords with Israel, which is the basis for Egypt’s status as one of the top recipients of US aid.

“Ever since the historic Camp David peace accords more than 30 years ago, Egypt and the United States have been partners in seeking a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” she said. “It is in the interest of the United States and regional

stability that this period of turmoil and uncertainty be resolved peacefully and that Egypt remain a strong ally.”

US Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Republican Florida), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, took that posture further, saying in a statement that US assistance should be contingent on an election that allows only parties that recognise Egypt’s “peace agreement with the Jewish State of Israel”.

Such cautions are fuelled by fears of the role the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood might play in a new Egypt. Other pro-Israel lawmakers notably omitted reference to the peace with Israel in their statements.

US Representative Gary Ackerman (Democrat New York), the ranking Democrat on the House Middle East subcommittee, called for a suspension of assistance to Egypt until Mubarak left — and then its renewal once a transitional government was in place, whatever its makeup.

“I believe the United States must suspend its assistance to Egypt until this transition is under way,” said the statement from Ackerman, who is a pro-Israel stalwart.

In an interview, Ackerman said the omission of an Israel reference was deliberate.

“I understand the angst and anxiety that exists in Israel, but we’re not going to pick the next leader of Egypt,” he said.

Instead, Ackerman said, the United States should use what he said was a closing window of opportunity, and side pronouncedly with the people and against Mubarak.

“If we sign the people of Egypt up as lobbyists, they will do the right thing,” he said.

US Representative Howard Berman (Democrat-California), and the ranking member on the Foreign Affairs committee and the author of last year’s sweeping Iran sanctions law, also kept Israel out of his statement. Unlike Ackerman, however, he said assistance should continue as a means of stabilising the Egyptian military.

“So long as the Egyptian military plays a constructive role in bringing about a democratic transition, the United States should also remain committed to our ongoing assistance programmes for Egypt, both military and civilian,” he said.

Betting on the military was perhaps the only certainty in the current chaos, said David Schenker, an Egypt expert at the pro-Israel Washington Institute for Near East Policy think tank. The Egyptian army is popular among Egyptians and, has taken steps during the uprising not to alienate the street.

“The arbitrator of this may be the military,” Schenker said. “It doesn’t want to cede power to a civilian power that’s Islamist. The army has entrenched interests with this regime and likes its relations with the US military.”

Egypt’s potential collapse triggered an intense “who’s to blame” debate in Washington over which party or group had done more to prop up Mubarak’s regime. One emerging theme was that more should have been done to use aid as leverage to

nudge Mubarak toward democratisation.

Pro-Israel congressional insiders said there had always been talk throughout the years of shifting funds from defence aid to democratisation assistance, at times from unlikely bedfellows: Ros-Lehtinen and the Zionist Organisation of America had backed such a shift, but so had the former Appropriations chairman, Representative David Obey (Democrat Wisconsin), a frequent Israel critic.

Such initiatives were abandoned, the insiders said, both in Congress and in the Bush White House after Hamas won elections in the Gaza Strip.

In a hearing on Egypt assistance in May 2006, just after the Hamas victory, Representative Shelley Berkley (Democrat Nevada), the lawmaker who is perhaps closest to Israel, made this aside: “I am wondering if I need a change in the way I think about the Middle East and about democratising nations that are no more ready for democracy than the man on the moon.”

The remark made headlines in Egypt. Now some pro-Israel voices are saying that not pushing for democracy has disastrous consequences - including critics of the regime. For example, the ZOA, which has frequently accused the Egyptian government of undermining peace and pressed for a reduction in US military aid, now is calling for the Obama administration to do everything it can to keep the regime in place, with Mubarak or one of his associates in charge.

Obama “should be showing some loyalty to a regime with which we have had good relations for 30 years,” ZOA President Mort Klein said. “If we have elections in the near future, you’re going to have a result like in Gaza. Of course I want democracy, but I don’t want democracy when the results support Islamic takeover.”

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice-president of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations, told the Yeshiva World News that the United States should have been working more proactively to ensure an orderly transition to democracy.

“This is something that we knew was coming — we should have been working at it all along,” Hoenlein said, adding that the Bush administration had paid lip service to the notion of building democratic institutions and the Obama administration not even that.

Hoenlein warned against the emergence in Egypt of possible transition leader Mohammed ElBaradei, saying he covered up Iran’s true nuclear weaponisation capacities while he directed the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN nuclear watchdog.

“He is a stooge of Iran, and I don’t use the term lightly,” Hoenlein said. “He fronted for them, he distorted the reports.”

Keith Weissman, a former AIPAC lobbyist and analyst who witnessed the Iranian Revolution unfold and who has lived in Egypt, said the warnings about ElBaradei were overheated.

“From what I see in Cairo there is no evidence he is on an Iranian agenda,” he said

Weissman said the inclusion of the Muslim Brotherhood in the opposition alliance ElBaradei is leading, should not be a cause for concern.

“In a post-Mubarak Egypt, you’d want the Brotherhood close,” he said.

In any case, meddling was counterproductive, said Lara Friedman, legislative director for Americans for Peace Now, writing in an op-ed for JTA (see page 8).

“Denying the reality of change in Egypt does not help Israel; it only guarantees that Israel’s future relationship with Egypt will be more difficult,” she said. (JTA)

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AVA Gallery, Cape Town: “The Space Between”, a solo exhibition by Dale Washkansky, until February 18, (021) 424-7436.

Gold of Africa Barbier Mueller Museum, Cape Town: “Earth is Watching Us”, an exhibition by Threads of Africa project, until March 31, (021) 405-1540.

Goodman Gallery, Rosebank, Johannesburg: “Broomberg and Chanarin” until February 12, (011) 788-1113.

iArt Gallery, Wembley, Cape Town: “To skip the last step”, a solo exhibition by Beth Armstrong, in honour of late Mark Hipper, until February 23, (021) 424-5150.

Little Theatre, Cape Town: “The Great Gatsby”, directed by Luke Ellenbogen, until February 19, (021) 480-7129.

Linder Auditorium, Parktown: Mozart Festival ends February 13, (011) 447-9264. On February 9 and 10, the JPO begins 2011 with Rossini’s overture from “Semiramide”, Beethoven’s 4th Piano Concerto and Mozart’s “Linz” Symphony. Soloist: Michael Roll (piano), Conductor: Emil Tabakov, (011) 789-2733.

Market, Newtown: In the Barney Simon, James Ngcobo’s “Sunjata”, ends on March 6. In the Laager, Fugard’s “Sizwe Banzi is Dead”, directed by Monageng Motshabi, ends February 20. In the Theatre, “Songs of Migration” ends February 13, (011) 832-1641.

Maynardeville, Cape Town: Shakespeare’s “Taming of the Shrew”, directed by Roy Sargent, until February 19, (021) 451-7695.

Montecasino, Fourways: In the Pieter Toerien, the British comedy trio “Fascinating Aida”, until February 13; in the Studio, Alan Swerdlow directs “Mass Appeal”, until March 27, (011) 511-1818. In Teatro, “Riverdance” until February 20, (011) 510-7472.

Old Mutual Theatre on the Square, Sandton: “Casual Sax” with Barbara-Anne Puren until February 19. The Friday concerts feature Kristel Birkholtz (violin) and Ashlea Martin (piano) on February 4; and Malané Hofmeyr-Burger (flute), Andrea Erasmus (viola) and Ventura Rosenthal (harp) on February 11, (011) 883-8606.

SA Jewish Museum, Cape Town: “Kith, Kin and Khaya”, photographs by David Goldblatt, until February 11, (021) 465-1546.

Wits University, Braamfontein: In the Downstairs Theatre, “Anatomy of Weather”, a dance-work choreographed by Bailey Snyman and Nicola Haskins until February 5, (011) 717-1380.

TAPESTRY

ART, BOOKS, DANCE, FILM, THEATRE

Two maestros conduct minor masterpieces

PAUL BOECKKOOI

THERE IS a prominent overarching theme found in the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra’s First Symphony Season of 2011, although it was not necessarily planned that way. We are hearing many of the minor masterpieces of major composers, a refreshing break from hackneyed warhorses.

Take Mozart: We’re presented with the wonderfully refined Symphony No 36, the “Linz”, his first major piano concerto, the No 9, known as the “Jeunehomme” (a tantalisingly original work), as well as his Impresario Overture, an instrumental rat-race with pin-pointed delicacy.

Take Beethoven: Both the Symphony No 4 and Piano Concerto No 4 is on the programme. For many the latter work is the most refined, searching and in the finale the most delectable of his five concertos, notwithstanding the heroics associated with his “Emperor Concerto”, the No 5.

These two composers didn’t write ‘cello concertos. That’s where Haydn comes in. It is always a special treat to hear any of them. Georgi

Anichenko, last year’s Belorussian Unisa String Competition winner in the ‘cello section, will perform the Concerto in D major. The only showstopper-concerto this season will be Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No 1, performed by the Taiwanese pianist Ching-Yun Hu.

On the romantic symphonic fields it is charm driving this season: Bizet’s Symphony in C, Dvorák’s Symphony No 6 and Mahler’s Symphony No 4, the last and most approachable in his “Wunderhorn” set, with the soprano in the finale reflecting a child’s vision of heaven. Our own Kelebogile Boikanyo will do the honours.

The first half of this programme is devoted to instrumental music from Wagner’s “Tristan und Isolde”.

The Bulgarian violinist Svetlin Roussev chose two shortish virtuoso pieces instead of a full-blown concerto. He’ll perform Ravel’s gypsy-inspired “Tzigane” and the brilliantly showy “Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso” by Saint-Saëns.

Two well-known maestros are sharing the podium: Emil Tabakov, Turkish born, will conduct the first three concerts, with the JPO’s prin-

cipal guest conductor Bernhard Gueller leading the final three.

Three concerts will be repeated in the ZK Matthews Great Hall, Unisa main campus, Pretoria, on Sunday afternoons at 15:00, while all six programmes can be heard on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 20:00 in the Linder Auditorium, Parktown, Johannesburg.

The full details for the season running from February 9 to March 17, are:

February 9, 10 (Jhb) and 13 (Pta) – Conductor: Tabakov. Soloist: Michael Roll, piano. Programme: Semiramide Overture (Rossini); Piano Concerto No 4 (Beethoven); Symphony No 36 – Linz (Mozart).

February 16 and 17 (Jhb) – Conductor: Tabakov. Soloist: Georgi Anichenko, ‘cello. Programme: The Impresario Overture (Mozart); ‘Cello Concerto in D major (Haydn); Symphony No 4 (Beethoven).

February 23, 24 (Jhb) and 27 (Pta) – Conductor: Tabakov. Soloist: Svetlin Roussev, violin. Programme: Romeo

& Juliet Overture (Tchaikovsky); Tzigane (Ravel); Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso (Saint-Saëns); Capriccio Espagnole (Rimsky-Korsakov).

March 2 and 3 (Jhb) – Conductor: Gueller. Soloist: Natalia Navrova, piano. Programme: Ancient Dances and Arias for the Lute, Suite I (Respighi); Piano Concerto No 9 – Jeunehomme (Mozart); Symphony in C major (Bizet).

March 9, 10 (Jhb) and 13 (Pta) – Conductor: Gueller. Soloist: Ching-Yun Hu, piano. Programme: Eight Russian Folk Songs (Liadov); Piano Concerto No 1 (Tchaikovsky); Symphony No 6 (Dvorák).

March 16 and 17 (Jhb) Conductor: Gueller. Soloist: Kelebogile Boikanyo, soprano. Programme: Prelude and Liebestod & Nachtgesang from Tristan und Isolde (Wagner); Symphony No 4 (Mahler).

• For subscriptions, phone Neville Pritchard at (011) 789-2733. Single tickets: Computicket.



The men who will lead the JPO’s first season this year: Bernhard Gueller (PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY WWW.COLBERTARTISTS.COM) and Emil Tabakov. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VASILKA BALEVSKA, COURTESY FLICKR.COM)



Death camps trigger Washkansky photo exhibition

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN
PHOTOGRAPHS: DALE WASHKANSKY

THE NAME Louis Washkansky will forever be associated with the world’s first heart transplant that was performed here in 1967 by Prof Christiaan Barnard. Now the recipient’s grandson, Dale, is blazing his own trail with a photographic exhibition at the AVA Gallery until February 18.

A Space Between is his first solo show and consists of the body of work he submitted for his MA in fine arts at UCT, all of which he says stems from his experience at the sites of the Ravensbrück and Buchenwald concentration camps in 2008.

“(The title) refers to my relationship to the Holocaust and the sense of distance that is happening through time and space,” the former Herzlian explains. “My aim is to try and move beyond that and create an experience that transcends memorialising, to keep it as a living history, to maintain its presence.

“We are in a time now where it’s crucial to maintain dialogue and

discourse around it. The fact that survivor’s testimony is becoming increasingly important due to the time lapse - I feel that now’s the time to really hold onto those stories and see that they don’t peter out.”

The project was also a vehicle to explore his Jewish identity, particularly regarding the way it was represented during the Nazi era. “I was interested in notions around the Jewish body and in my work I often reference connections to the Aryan body and the disparity between the two in the ideology.”

The 30-year-old always intended the Holocaust to be the focus of this body of work but it was “a little bit undefined” to start with. “I knew that I wanted to explore old photographic processes because I enjoy experimenting with photography.”

Five of the images, in fact, employ the old cyanotype process, drawing a connection to Zyklon B, the cyanide-based pesticide used in the gas chambers.

“At first I was using found imagery (sourced images from other photographers) doing crude collages,” he says. But after photo-

graphing his own landscapes at the camps, he decided to work from them, as opposed to the “more distant experience”.

“I think that personal encounter transformed the project. Before, I didn’t know how to enter the spaces - that experience of them allowed me to do that.

“I chose the two sites quite specifically,” Washkansky adds, “because they represented some sort of polarity of bodies between (the notorious commandant’s wife) Ilse Koch at Buchenwald and the imprisoned women at Ravensbrück, that I wanted to enquire into. It honed in on my intentions of seeing that ‘otherness’ of the Jewish body and determining

what it means to be ‘other’ – those figures became like archetypes for me to invest in and play around with.”

Washkansky has also created some pieces incorporating the printmaking and embroidery traditions which are part of the exhibition. “I translated documentary (Holocaust) images into cross-stitch and tapestry - it tapped into the femininity of the two characters (mentioned above), and (also) relates to how one has access to these images through the digital media and how, though they are still horrific, they enter into the domestic realm quite readily, becoming ‘everyday’.”

The AVA Gallery is at 35 Church Street, Cape Town, (021) 424-7436.



A black-and-white painted image of the photographer collaged onto a Holocaust photograph, tying in with the Nazi propaganda connecting Jews to Negroes and jazz players.

FELDMAN
ON FILM
Peter Feldman

PICK OF THE WEEK

Black Swan

Cast: Natalie Portman; Mila Kunis; Vincent Cassel; Winona Ryder

Director: Darren Aronofsky

Natalie Portman, a fine, sensitive actress, gets the role of a lifetime with Black Swan, where she carves this horror-drama hybrid into a challenging web of competitive intrigue. She’s been nominated for an Oscar for the role, one of several the film has garnered.

Under the artful direction of Darren Aronofsky (The Wrestler and Requiem for a Dream), this psychological thriller set in the world of the New York City ballet, focuses on a disturbed ballerina, Nina Sayers, and her descent into madness, brought about by the pressures of artistic perfection.

It is a dark side which Portman unveils here in a production that is handled with depth, wit and intelligence.

The role that Nina obsesses about more than any other is that of the Swan Queen in a sexy re-imagining of the ballet Swan Lake by artistic director Thomas Leroy (Vincent Cassel).

However, while Nina’s technical proficiency makes her the perfect choice for the White Swan, she lacks the spontaneity and seductiveness necessary for the Black Swan. Perfect for that role is Lily (Mila Kunis), a newcomer from San Francisco who oozes sexuality.

Ultimately, Leroy selects Nina over Lily with the hope that his new top performer will grow into the role. But Nina is a psychological wreck.

A fascinating aspect of Black Swan is the many facets within Andrés Heinz’s story and there is a little something in it for all, whether one’s tastes run to vulgarity or elegance, or whether one prefers horror to ballet.

Aronofsky returns to some of his favourite themes, such as monster mothers and female hysteria, and applies some deft touches in executing his vision.

Portman is superb as the fragile dancer who is overtaken by unsettling fantasies and eerie events as she prepares for the greatest role of her young life. She is complemented by a striking group of fellow players, the vibrant Mila Kunis as her rival, Lily, introducing elements of brashness and dark charm to her role as the overly ambitious newcomer.

French actor Vincent Cassel portrays the Machiavellian Thomas Leroy, the artistic director who is all about the art and is not too concerned about the victims he leaves behind.

Barbara Hershey, who hasn’t graced cinema screens for a while, rockets back as Nina’s control-freak mother, Erica, a woman who forsook her own ballet career to have a child, something she throws into Nina’s face during one heated argument.

Another rare appearance is that of Winona Ryder, as Beth, whose shining star as principal ballerina of the company has dimmed to such a degree that she goes off the rails. It a small part, but her scenes are telling ones.

Black Swan has been likened to a cross between All About Eve and The Red Shoes, with a pinch of Brian de Palma and David Cronenberg.

TAPESTRY

ART, BOOKS, DANCE, FILM, THEATRE

Bach will rock for as long as music is alive

The Cello Suites by Eric Siblín
(Harvill Secker, R145)

REVIEWED BY GWEN PODBREY

OF ALL the baroque composers, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) has had the worst PR. The fact that, until as recently as the early 19th century, his works remained largely obscure – and, even once they had been discovered, were relegated to the realms of academic chamber music and students’ counterpoint exercises – has aggravated Bach’s case further.

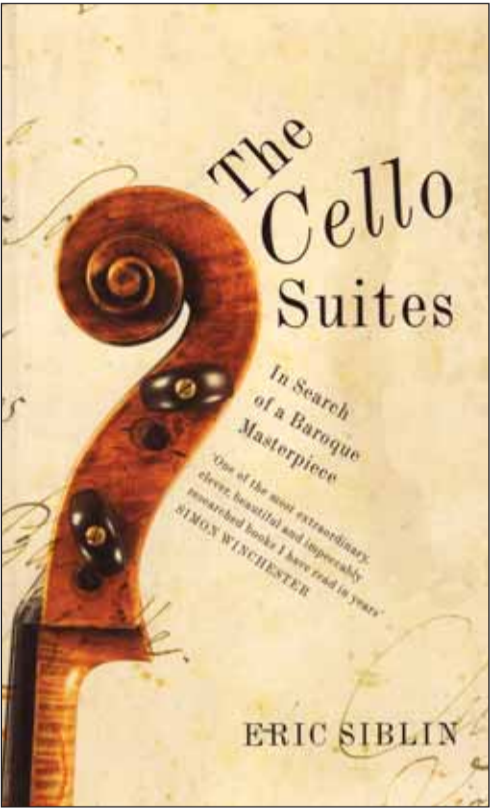
This is not surprising: during his lifetime, and despite his prodigious output, only 30 or so of his works were ever published. In many cases, his music is considered the domain of museums and stuffy, elitist concert halls, for these are where it is usually played.

Secondly, the intricate structure of baroque music, which focuses more on technical composition than on emotion, has given rise to the notion that it is devoid of feeling, cold, mechanical and uncomfortably mathematical for audiences more attuned to romanticism and simplex, easily discernible melodic lines.

Then, too, the prevailing image of Bach in the world’s imagination, thanks to the famous portrait by Elias Gottlob Hausmann, depicts a dour, bewigged, decidedly bilious burgher with no glimmer of humour or warmth.

Yet nothing could be further from the truth – as Siblín is at pains to tell us. The first time he heard Bach’s six Cello Suites, composed in 1720 and entirely unknown until legendary Spanish cellist Pablo Casals stumbled upon the only extant manuscript in an old music shop in 1890 (and then waited 12 years before he trusted his own proficiency to perform them publicly) – he was smitten.

The beginning of the real Bach Revival began in 1829, when a 20-year-old Felix Mendelssohn – son of Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn – performed and conducted the “St Matthew Passion” to a spellbound audience. (Although his family had converted to Christianity, Mendelssohn noted the irony that it had



taken a Jew to introduce Germany to its most impressive liturgical music.)

The suites are near-miraculous in their contrapuntal interplay, their intricate tonal relationships, their energy and their harmony, whether overt or implied. Since a cello is a comparatively limited instrument, allowing no more than two strings to be bowed simultaneously, chords (which comprise three notes played at once) must be arpeggiated into single notes.

Bach not only mastered this technique, but used it to its fullest dramatic effect. In doing so, he also gave the cello – for the first time – the spotlight as a solo instrument, rather than the minor orchestral spot it had hitherto occupied, exploring its astounding range and depth.

This book tells a three-tiered story: the writing of the suites, the part they played in Casals’ career and life, and Siblín’s own obsession with them. Part music history,

part biography and part literary mystery, it cleverly combines these elements using the suites’ prescribed components (prelude, allemande, courante, sarabande, minuet, gigue), so that the text alternates between Siblín’s quest to explore the works, Casals’ relationship with them – and, of course, the darknesses and light which Bach infused into them, drawing on his own secret heart.

A pop musicologist by profession, with very little classical training, Siblín – on first hearing the suites – was instantly riveted by their spectacular rhythmic and harmonic possibilities: no contemporary jazz musician, however much a virtuoso, could hope to rival Bach’s improvisational and extrapolative skill on a theme. The fact is: Bach rocks.

He has rocked for three centuries, and will continue to rock for as long as music is alive.

The circumstances in which the suites were composed, after Bach had just lost his young wife Maria Barbara, mother of his eldest four children, may have had a lot to do with them.

The opening bars of the first suite – sonorous, mournful, contemplative – evoke unmistakable grief. “One can almost hear the scene... The dread that begins the (second) prelude in a minor key follows an initial suite – a lifetime – of joy,” writes Siblín.

“The last measures of the prelude could well depict Bach entering his home, heart racing, anticipation modulating into panic. What has happened? Where is she? And then a young child, a shadow of his or her former rambunctious self – small, alone, a broken chord. He won’t see Mother again.”

Siblín’s ardour for his subject is palpable. His writing – distinctly journalistic, rather than academic – nevertheless draws on impeccable, lengthy research, while his easy, conversational tone makes the book at once readable and arresting.

If he occasionally lapses into arrogance, quoting himself in other publications (always an off-putting practice), one forgives him, for the jewels he brings to life ignite a desire to rush instantly to

one’s sound system and play the Cello Suites for oneself.

In one particularly poignant passage, Siblín – attending a Bach Festival concert in a small Presbyterian Church hall in Montreal, with conservatively dressed musicians and a quiet, deadly serious audience of no more than 250 – reflects on the fact that just up the road, rock group U2 is doing a gig, where fireworks, strobe lights, amplifiers, oversized video screens and 20 000 screaming, gyrating fans will help embellish the music and generate multi-million-dollar album sales.

“But will the rock band’s oeuvre still be performed three centuries from now? And will music scholars be sifting through old shoeboxes in search of lost U2 compositions?” he asks. You be the judge.

Whether you are unfamiliar with Bach, or well acquainted with him, you will find no better springboard into his beauty, truth and musical architecture than Siblín’s passionate, fulsome account.

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Dendy shortlisted for Thomas Pringle Award

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZY BERNSTEIN

JOHANNESBURG-BASED poet Gail Dendy has been shortlisted for the Thomas Pringle Award, for her short story, *Venus Crossing*. Aside from being a Greville Press published author (among others), she holds five university degrees, works as an information specialist for a corporate law firm, and having had a past career as a dancer, still dances regularly.

In *Venus Crossing*, an event mirrors a couple whose relationship has diverged, like the planets. Dendy has taken a historical event and found an interesting way of juxtaposing it with the existing status quo in this relationship.

She often writes about relationships: “I take from the exterior world and create a micro-world. It’s what interests me, because ultimately, everything breaks down into relationships. When I formulate my ideas, it comes down to relationships.”

Dendy is interested in astronomy. “When we were small,” she says, “in Durban, the sky was very dark at night and on a very hot summer night we would sit outside and watch the stars and see the sputniks.

“You could look for the sputnik and then follow it across the sky; it was always something magical. There was also the Playhouse in Durban, with the ceiling full of stars, so somehow I connected with that.

“I find writing prose easier; I prefer working with a small canvas, which the poem gives. With prose the writing is looser. I like the tight structure you get with poetry.

“When I sketch out a new poem, it is always hand-written. I can’t sit at a computer and think like that.

“It is always very late at night, before I go to sleep... I scribble away. I do not set a time. I just write. Very often, I can start off when I feel really uninspired. That is when the discipline comes in. You start forcing yourself to write and then in the process, that’s when the ideas start coming.

“Sometimes I’ll throw out the first two stanzas. Actually that was almost like warming up the muscles and then the poem starts taking off from where I got inspired. And then often in the morning, that’s the original draft and it stays on the page and then I’ll type it up and then once it’s on the computer, that’s when I start fixing and editing.

“And if I am very lucky, there is little to do. But you don’t get that



Gail Dendy and her cat.

lucky very often. It’s got to be able to hold up. It has to have a skeleton.”

Being shortlisted for this award administered by the 50-year-old English Academy of South Africa, was simply about validation, according to Dendy. The academy was established “to promote the effective use of English in southern Africa”.

“Writing is an isolating and solitary experience and you don’t know if anyone is reading your work,” says Dendy. “This acknowledgement is feedback.”

The winners of the Thomas Pringle Award for 2010 were announced last week. Stephen Watson’s *Buiten Street* and Sandisile Tshuma’s *Arrested Development* walked away with top honours in the short story category. The judges were Jo-Anne Richards, Hugh Hodge and Phakama Mbonambi.

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LETTERS

The Editor, Suite 175, Postnet X10039, Randburg, 2125 email: carro@global.co.za

Guidelines for letters: Letters up to 400 words will get preference. Please provide your full first name and surname, place of residence, and a daytime contact telephone or cell number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.	Disclaimer: The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report
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YOU DON’T SPEAK ON MY BEHALF, MR KRENGEL

WHILE READING the Jerusalem Post online, I was disheartened to see them quote Zev Krengel (chairman of the SAJBD): “...and the relationship between the Israeli ambassador and the local Jewish community is at an all time low”, he said, adding that the Jewish community fights especially hard for Israel in South Africa and now feels betrayed.

Based on this quote, who gives Mr Krengel the right to speak on my behalf? Where does he find this information that the local Jewish community is at

COMMUNAL LEADERSHIP HAS DISPLAYED VERY POOR JUDGEMENT

IF ZEV Krengel and his Board of Deputies sought some personal satisfaction from publicly castigating Mr Dov Segev-Steinberg, Israel’s ambassador to South Africa, for carrying out his diplomatic duties, they should hang their arrogant heads in shame.

Mr Krengel should immediately tender his resignation, together with certain of the infantile members that constitute his Board.

Tzipi Livni’s visit would certainly have been beneficial and informative, but given the sensitive diplomatic and strike-related circumstances, a postponement was fully justified.

In the annals of our proud community history, there has never been such poor judgement dis-

GUTKIN HAS AN ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO EXPRESS HIS VIEWS

IN REACTION to the letters about Irwin Gutkin’s views on Caroline Glick and anti-South African comments and jokes, it is Gutkin’s absolute right to have and express these views.

South Africans seem to have this arrogance and superiority, almost master race type of complex, that allows them to be anti others and to make anti jokes about others, in the Jewish community anti Israeli and anti-Australia jokes, yet for some reason nobody is allowed to contradict them.

BOARD IS IN STATE OF DENIAL REGARDING BAAL SHEM TOV SHUL

AS A congregant, I wish to ask some searching questions about the role of the SABJD in Baal Shem Tov Shul’s battle for survival.

Councillor Christine Walters has engaged the full weight of the City Council in her drive to get that shul terminated... and BST found itself embroiled with a Board that seemed determined to deny the gravity of the situation.

The battle is now being fought on the legal battlefield. This is where it should have been fought in the first place. Those Jewish collaborators who, to their shame, offered their support to Walters, presented BST with enough trouble from within to begin with. That the Board should add an additional layer of resistance to BST is unfortunate, if not downright reprehensible.

The Board’s conduct prompts the question: To whom is the Board answerable should it underperform or contravene its constitution?

Nobody I know has any recollection of being given any say in the Board’s leadership nominations or its actions. We are simply told Mr Chairman says (Chairman’s statement), and that is it.

And the Board made some statements that were simply not true.

BST stated that the Board was “elevating a parking issue to anti-Semitism”. The Board turned a deaf ear to reports and evidence of Walters’ rabidly anti-Semitic actions.

Worse, I believe the Board lied. National Director

BLACK TYPE ON YELLOW BACKGROUND WOULD AID SAJR READERS

AS AN avid reader of the Jewish Report, kindly sent to me regularly via e-mail, I not only devour it with enthusiasm but can’t wait for the next edition.

As a doctor dedicating my medical practice to mainly children with behavioural and learning problems for the last 35 years, problem readers (dyslexia) form a major part of my practice.

Medical research has clearly established that the human retina of the eye has a distinct preference for black print on a pale yellow background. Black print on white paper is rejected by the retina, making reading even for good readers stressful. This is more so for the elderly and some diabetic people and especially poor or slow readers.

LOOKING FOR...

LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ON HAZEL COHEN

MIKE LEVY of Cambridge in England is trying to find a long lost relative. She is Hazel Cohen, nee Sachs, last heard of when she was married in 1957.

Hazel was the daughter of Netty and Abe Sachs and she married Leslie Cohen, younger son of Ann and Natie Cohen, at the Great Synagogue in Wolmarans Street.

Back in 1957, Hazel’s family lived in 15 Olivia

an all time low? I don’t feel betrayed!

I actually feel ashamed that Israel’s Ambassador to South Africa Dov Segev-Steinberg gets abused by (former deputy minister of foreign affairs) Fatima Hajaig , and now by “our own representatives”.

I believe the Jews of South Africa deserve more mature, respectful leadership.

E Seligmann
Pretoria

played by South Africa’s Jewish leadership as Krengel’s disgraceful public insult of Israel’s ambassador.

The arrogance of Chairman Krengel will probably evolve into a “Gbagbo” manoeuvre (where the Ivorian president who lost the vote to Alassane Outtara, refuses to relinquish power) instead of the proper thing to step aside. Can you imagine the wise and circumspect powers of reasoning which guides the Board of Deputies in their decision-making processes? G-d help us!

Jack Shaplo
Savoy, Johannesburg

Why not? It seems they can’t take the punch. Also, I am so unlucky, miserable and sad to never have received any of the anti-South African jokes e-mailed from people in Israel, so where are these to be found?

I also want to be placed on such an e-mail distribution list please. Oh and a belated happy Australia Day for Wednesday January 26.

Ricky Lomey
Johannesburg

Wendy Kahn was asked: “Did you meet with Christine Walters?”

Before we go any further, let us define the “you”. If I ask Precious at my bank to finance my car purchase, it is clear I am asking the bank, not Precious herself, to finance it.

When Mrs Kahn was asked: “Did YOU meet with Walters?” the question was clearly, did the BOARD meet with Walters?

Mrs Kahn answered in the negative. That was a lie.

The truth emerged when SAJBD Chairman Zev Krengel sent an e-mail to Rabbi Gavin Michal (of Baal Shem Tov Shul), confirming the Board had indeed met with Walters.

Why did Krengel send this SMS? Given that is was sent conspicuously shortly before Krengel’s interview on ChaiFM (Michal’s invitation to participate was withdrawn), it is not difficult to draw the inference that it was sent to disable an anticipated attempt by Michal to get Krengel to answer the question on air.

While BST was desperately fighting its legal battle with the Council, what did the Board offer? Mealy-mouthed denials... and a suggestion of a nice bunch of flowers for Walters.

The Board has failed a synagogue in distress. It owes the community an explanation.

Stanley Luntz
Johannesburg

Given this information, would it not be a courteous consideration the make the Jewish Report even more readable by providing a pale yellow background to the written articles?

A simple test would convince you of the reality of my comments. A computer generated “yellow” Jewish Report would be very easy to implement. I am not sure the printed version would be easy, but certainly a consideration.

Many examples of printed matter which changed to the yellow format, are available.

Dr Billy Levin
Benoni

Road, Berea. The Cohens lived in Fortesque Road, Yeoville. Hazel and Leslie were married on August 11 1957.

“Hazel would be related via my maternal grandfather’s sister who emigrated to South Africa around 1900. My family lost contact after that wedding invitation in 1957.”

Levy may be contacted at mike.levy82@gmail.com

SAHGF SHOWS ARROGANT ABROGATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY

THE GLIB statement from the trustees of the SA Holocaust and Genocide Foundation (SAJR January 28), represents an arrogant abrogation of accountability by the trustees who unanimously confirmed the continuation of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu’s position as patron.

In light of the tone and extent of the recent debate on the matter, the trustees are obliged, in terms of their

THUMBS UP FOR THE SAHGF

I HAVE read many articles in this newspaper regarding the new Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre which is currently being built on Jan Smuts Avenue opposite the Westcliff Hotel.

As a Tutsi genocide survivor, I feel the need to express my expectations particularly regarding the Rwandan genocide. I have no hesitation in saying that the centre is long overdue in South Africa and this is also the right time to have this centre in our province.

We live in a time of unparalleled instances of wars, genocides and ethnic violence which include the Holocaust, Tutsi genocide, Herero genocide, Darfur genocide, apartheid, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and racism... and the list goes on.

It is imperative that there is a greater understanding of the psychological, cultural, political, and societal roots of human cruelty, mass killing, and genocide.

We need to raise our voices and examine the factors which enable individuals collectively to perpetrate gross

MIDDLE EAST AND FREE WORLD NEED ISRAEL

IT IS illuminating to observe the current political scenario taking place in the Middle East.

Unjustified and puerile attempts are being made to “legitimise” a Palestinian West Bank state in an effort to embarrass Israel into conceding a land grab by the Palestinians.

Malignant and irrelevant efforts are being propagated to “deligitimise” Israel by those whose intellectual prowess and suspect political ideologies are frightening in their bigoted manifestations.

And now the world is witnessing the Arabs’ revolution demanding greater democracy, and a better quality of life in their countries which have spawned a rigid feudal system of unacceptable human domination over many cen-

LIES AND HALF TRUTHS CONJURE UP NAZI PROPAGANDA ERA

I AM Jack Shnaier, age 81. I have lived in Doornfontein, Berea, Saxonwold and lastly in Norwood and presently in Australia.

I was living in an era when there was no Israel. The Nazi propaganda machine under Dr Goebbels realised that in order to fulfil the Nazi dream of a Yudenrein world, he had to portray the Jews in a bad light.

He used films in movie houses, radio broadcasts, posters and intimidation to achieve the Nazi aims. Europeans did nothing at all to help the Jews.

They believed the Nazi propaganda that once Europe was free of Jews all their problems would be solved.

Today I am proud as a Jew of Israel and its achievements. I cringe, my heart cries out when left-wingers

responsibility to their principal stakeholder, namely the SA Jewish community, to publish the names of the trustees, how they were nominated, appointed or elected, together with a reasoned justification for their decision regarding the selection/nomination of Tutu as patron of the SAHGF.

Joel Wolpert
Benmore, Johannesburg

human violence. We have an obligation to educate communities on human rights issues and to pave the way for reconciliation and to avoid the atrocities happening ever again.

Unfortunately saying “Never again”, has turned out to be untrue. There is clearly danger among us. We all knew about the Holocaust but did not help to save human lives on several occasions.

With the Tutsi genocide, perpetrators have enjoyed immunity especially in Europe and some African countries. I am sure once people become aware of this evil of mass killing, there will be nowhere to hide.

I am hoping that the centre will bring hope to many people, anti-Semitic actions will decrease, no foreigners will be set alight again on this land, and the law should take its course.

Lastly a beautiful thing is that the centre is a memorial to all those who have suffered injustice at the hands of another!

Bonaventure Kageruka
Johannesburg

turies.

Perhaps now more than ever the Western democratic world will appreciate and support the only true democracy in the Middle East where human rights are enshrined, and where the welfare of the citizens is given top priority, and that is in Israel.

Thus American support for this freedom has been justified despite reluctance by the current, hopefully not for long, American president, who will finally realise, and help maintain the status of the Holy Land of Eretz Yisrael.

The Middle East needs Israel. The free world needs Israel.

Dr A M Levin
Johannesburg

believe lies, half truths, out of context stories. All this reminds me of the Nazi propaganda machine.

Destroy Israel’s credibility by TV, radio through posters, demonstrations, boycotts...

Make Israel the bad guy, just as the Nazis made the Jews the bad guys - and no one lifts a finger to help them, then when Iran and Syria are ready, Israel can expect no sympathy from a world filled with left-wing Nazi propaganda.

The Nazis were national socialists. Today the left-wing socialists are akin to the Nazis. South African Jews who do not support Israel are nothing but Nazis.

Jack Shnaier
Australia

FOR THE RECORD

CORRECT CONTACT DETAILS FOR HEBREW ULPAN

THE CONTACT information for the Morris Rutstein/SAZF Hebrew ulpan (mentioned in the SAJR last

week’s issue) should read: telephone (011) 645-2531; fax (011) 640-1992 and e-mail: miriam@beyachad.co.za

ELLIOT WOLF STILL HEADS THE KDSF

THE BLURB on the front page of last week’s Jewish Report was about the Wolf twins. It states that they have retired; in fact Elliot some years ago retired as headmaster of King David

Linksfield, but is still the executive director of the KDSF, as it stated in the article. Also, Barney Myers was the first principal at King David Primary School Victory Park not Linksfield.

LETTERS

The Editor, Suite 175, Postnet X10039, Randburg, 2125 email: carro@global.co.za

HIGHLIGHTING THE ALL-IMPORTANCE OF ALLIES

IN THE editorial (SAJR Jan 21) you write on “truth tellers”, ie people on the far left and far right who voice provocative opinions. They are entitled to their opinions but there is a danger they become physical, or their language incites violence.

In the matter of the Baal Shem Tov Shul, there are the pacifists who say “close the shul” and those on the right who say that we should make a stand and fight. (I’m not sure who to fight - Ms Christine Walters? The municipality? Or even the ANC?)

Then there are those (such as the SAJBD) who believe they can solve the problem by negotiation (who, except Menachem Begin, would have believed Israel would sign a peace treaty with Egypt?).

Regarding the matter of the sovereignty of the West Bank, we have on the one

extreme Hamas and on the other side the followers of Avigdor Lieberman (Israel’s right-wing foreign minister). Both these parties will not make concessions. Then there are those who are prepared to negotiate, such as Fatah on the one side and parties such as Kadima on the other side.

What is the position in Israel? It is threatened by a non-negotiating axis of Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah, with Iran soon to acquire nuclear weapons. What is Israel’s reply? To antagonise our allies by exercising the “non-negotiable” right to settle in the West Bank.

To highlight the critical role of allies, I can recount the progress of the Second World War. In the mid-30s the fascist states formed an alliance (Germany, Austria, Romania, Hungary, Italy) to combat the

Russian communist threat. In 1939 Britain spoilt the party by declaring war on Germany which had invaded Poland on its way to Russia. This gave Germany no option but to invade France via Holland and Belgium, to launch a seaborne attack on Britain from the shores of France.

Britain called on its allies, such as the Commonwealth countries and the USA. Russia became an ally when Germany invaded that country. The combined fire power from the Allies, ably assisted by the Russian winter, eventually wore down the Axis powers but it took almost six years from start to finish. This illustrates the critical role of allies and Israel’s right wing should bear that in mind.

John Brenner
Cyrildene, Johannesburg

SA JEWS CAN STRENGTHEN POSITION THROUGH ALLIANCES, CONVERSIONS

THERE ARE many benefits to living in South Africa: the pleasant weather, the friendly people, the easy lifestyle, and the strength of the Jewish community. South Africa also has remarkably low rates of anti-Semitism. Yet it seems to me that despite all of this, Jews are actually very vulnerable here.

History has shown that our fortunes even in hospitable countries, can quickly take a turn for the worse. The potential for it happening here lies in South Africa’s one-sided support of the Palestinians, the strength of anti-Israel groups, and the unenviable situation where an honoured national icon like Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu can have such a dicey history vis-à-vis the Jews.

To many, it seems as if the Jewish leadership is too frightened to tackle the Tutu issue head on, but guess what? They have every reason to be scared. Someone like Tutu has the ability to make life for Jews in this country very difficult indeed.

The Jewish leadership is afraid of Tutu because they understand that we are a tiny, weak group largely confined to a few little enclaves of Johannesburg and Cape Town. Also, we are also almost entirely white, which in South Africa, does not translate into prestige.

South Africa may be good to the Jews, but make no mistake about it, Jews here

present an easy target.

Jews have contributed mightily to the new South Africa, so we shouldn’t have to emigrate. Neither is mass aliyah a feasible or viable option, for Israel is an overcrowded country where life is very difficult; besides, why shouldn’t Jews have every bit as much right to pursue happiness, as anyone else, living in places that we love?

Isn’t it also true that the Israeli side of the conflict deserves to be given equal time to the Palestinian side?

The good news is there are things we can do to change the situation. First, the Jewish leadership can reach out to African and evangelical Christian groups, whose collective membership in SA runs well into the tens of millions, and who are predisposed to being pro-Israel.

They may have good intentions, but are not us, so we can’t expect them to understand our concerns unless we communicate those concerns and work toward mobilising their might, to act as a counterweight to the pro-Palestinian groups.

Secondly and more important, we live in a world of lost, rootless souls. Judaism is a rich, deep tradition that focuses less on dogma and creeds than other faiths, but instead contains developments in ethics, psychology, and spirituality well ahead of other civilisations, and offers

supportive community and family life.

Interest in Judaism is very high the world over, and we should use this to our advantage.

There is no reason we should not encourage conversions, even mass conversions. We can start by reaching out to the Lemba community, which numbers many tens of thousands, and which already practises a rudimentary Judaism. Our goal should be to create a large, powerful, and multi-racial Jewish community here and elsewhere.

You might object that the rabbis and leaders of the community will not implement such a pro-conversion policy. Don’t forget, however, that the rabbis and leaders serve the community’s needs; they don’t control the community. They will implement a pro-conversion agenda if we pressure them to do so.

I therefore urge all who read my letter to apply pressure on the secular communal leadership and the rabbinates, both Orthodox and Progressive, to implement a pro-conversion agenda. Our fortunes in this world will change when we choose to make it change.

Jared Joel
Sydenham, Johannesburg

This letter has been shortened. - Editor

CHASTISING AMBASSADOR SEGEV-STEINBERG ‘SHAMEFUL AND UNDIGNIFIED’

I REFER to the article two weeks ago in the Jewish Report, “Israel’s Foreign Ministry union dispute scuppers Livni visit”.

The right to strike is an important benchmark in any capitalist democracy. Members of the Israeli Foreign Ministry exercised their rights when they embarked on a month-long strike.

While this unfortunately was a factor in opposition leader, Tzipi Livni, cancelling her trip to South Africa, it is also an inter-

nal Israeli governmental issue and should be respected as such.

I read the above-mentioned article with great concern as blame was heaped on Ambassador Segev-Steinberg and his embassy. This is an embassy which has shown great support for and a willingness to grow and maintain not just the vital links of South African Jewry to the State of Israel, but diplomatic ties between our two countries.

Israeli diplomats already navigate hostile territory in South Africa. We can ill afford to have ties between official emissaries and our community strained.

Publicly chastising a dignitary, especially someone like Ambassador Segev-Steinberg, is at once shameful and undignified.

Rolene Marks
Modiin, Israel

COMMUNITY COLUMNS



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Zev Krengel,
National Chairman

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

The legacy of Nelson Mandela

IT IS testimony to how much Nelson Mandela means to the people of South Africa, and indeed the world, that despite his having been in retirement for over a decade, news of his admission to hospital generated international concern.

The anxiety was heightened by the initial media blackout, which generated all kinds of disquieting speculation and rumours. According to the latest reports, fortunately Madiba is stable and making good progress.

The time will come when Nelson Mandela will no longer be with us. When that day comes, we will all reflect anew on the legacy he left us, and how we, as South Africans, can take that legacy forward.

We know that during the most crucial time in this country’s history, we were blessed to be led by a man of incomparable vision, dignity and moral stature. How much this contributed to the success of the peaceful transition from repressive white minority rule to multiracial democracy can never be underestimated.

At the same time, we must avoid the trap of attributing the South African miracle to any single individual, no matter how great. Our dramatic transition to democracy, accomplished in the face of formidable obstacles and widespread predictions elsewhere in the world that it would all end in chaos and bloodshed, was ultimately made possible through the collective efforts of the South African people as a whole.

Mandela himself would be the first to acknowledge this. Democracy came to South Africa because ordinary South Africans bought into the vision of a free, equal and unified society that Mandela and others like him devoted their lives to striving for. In doing so, they transcended the bitter divisions of the past and reached out to one another in the common cause of creating a better society for all.

Time and again, the South African people have confounded the sceptics by pulling through - and much more - against the odds. This should be uppermost in our minds when facing up to the inevitable challenges that face us in the here and now, yet all too often we fail to muster the necessary self belief.

We can use the example of Nelson Mandela to overcome this, not by putting him on a pedestal and treating him like a man apart, but rather by recognising him as the epitome of the national spirit that made the new South Africa a reality. For Madiba himself, one can think of no more inspiring a legacy.

This column is paid for by the SAJBD

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Royal romance and Intrigue through the ages

BARRY BILEWITZ

DAVID, KING of Israel and Judah, while walking on the roof of his house, saw Bathsheba, who was then the wife of Uriah the Hittite, bathing. He immediately desired her, had an affair and made her pregnant.

David arranged for Uriah to be abandoned during a heated battle and left to the hands of the enemy. After Uriah was dead, David made the now widowed Bathsheba his wife. She bore him a son, Solomon and secured him succession to the throne, despite Adonijah being David's eldest surviving offspring.

Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines and although there is no reference to any form of physical contact between him and the Queen of Sheba in the Tanach, the imperial family of Ethiopia claims its origin directly from the offspring of the Queen of Sheba (Makeda) by King Solomon.

"Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all," Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote. Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard would, however, probably not have shared those sentiments as they were beheaded when King Henry VIII tired of them.

Catherine of Aragon and Anne of Cleves merely had their marriages to him annulled. Jane Seymour died shortly after childbirth and Catherine Parr survived him.

Queen Elizabeth I was still unmarried in 1574, at age 40. Parliament was urgently requesting her to marry. Several people were considered, but nothing came of it. The Queen had a habit of giving nicknames to her favourite people and her beloved, warty Frenchman she called "Grenouille" or "Froggie". This was François Duc D'Alençon, the youngest son of Katherine de Medici of France.

They courted and things were getting serious despite their age difference. However, her subjects were in an uproar at the thought of a French Catholic ruler in their court.

Prince Oscar, son of King Oscar II of Sweden, fell madly in love with Ebba Monk, a maid-of-honour to his mother. Forgetting

his own humble ancestry, King Oscar disapproved of his son's betrothed, and for a long time the lovers found it impossible to marry.

At last Queen Sophia on the eve of an operation, begged her husband to give his consent, which he did and the marriage of Prince Oscar and Ebba Munk took place at Bournemouth. They lived very quietly, devoting much time to good works and were greatly loved by the people of Sweden.

One of the great romances of English royalty was the love between Queen Victoria and her first cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. They had nine children, all of whom married into royal and noble families of Europe as did 26 of their 42 grandchildren.

Her son, King Edward VII and her eldest grandson, Kaiser Wilhelm II, were at her deathbed in 1901. Thirteen years later their respective countries were facing each other in the First World War.

Franz Ferdinand became heir presumptive to the throne of Austro-Hungary when his cousin Crown Prince Rudolph committed suicide and his father renounced his own succession rights. Franz Ferdinand fell deeply in love with Sophie Chotek despite her not being eligible.

After four years, his uncle, Emperor Franz Josef, finally consented to their union, but their offspring would have

no rights to the throne. He and Sophie were shot in Sarajevo, an event which triggered the First World War.

King Edward VII of England's love was so great that he abdicated the throne to marry Wallace Simpson, a twice divorced socialite from the USA.

Lilibet twice refused to marry Bertie, president of the Industrial Welfare Society, before succumbing to his ardent wooing. She was both pretty and bright.

Shortly before the Second World War started, Bertie took on the name of King George VI when his brother abdicated, as he felt that "King Albert" would diminish the status of his grandfather whose name should stand alone among royalty.



Compiled by Marlene Bilewitz Contact (011) 023-8160, Cell 083-475-0288 or e-mail: marlene@sajewishreport.co.za

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MARLENE BILEWITZ

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a wide variety of tastes, as they offer everything from fresh sushi, poultry, pasta, Portuguese specialities, steaks and various delectable seafood dishes. The Adega in Greenside is famous for their in-house specialities, so let the well-informed and efficient waiters tell you about them and make sure to keep room for the delicious deserts. Adega Greenside was established four years ago and stands proudly as one of the best restaurants on the strip. It has an elegant yet comfortable ambience with relaxing music quietly playing in the background and it guarantees to make your dining experience a memorable one, whether it's for lunch, after work or over the week-end. Adega Greenside is also well known for its outstanding set menus and buffets, where you are sure to get good value for money. If you're looking for a venue to host any type of celebration - large or small - birthday parties, farewells, meetings or a year-end function, Adega Greenside will cater to your personal tastes in food, music, table settings and live entertainment. You request and they organise and deliver exactly to your specifications. Stay watching out for this restaurant which will be announcing all sorts of exciting and inexpensive specials during the year.

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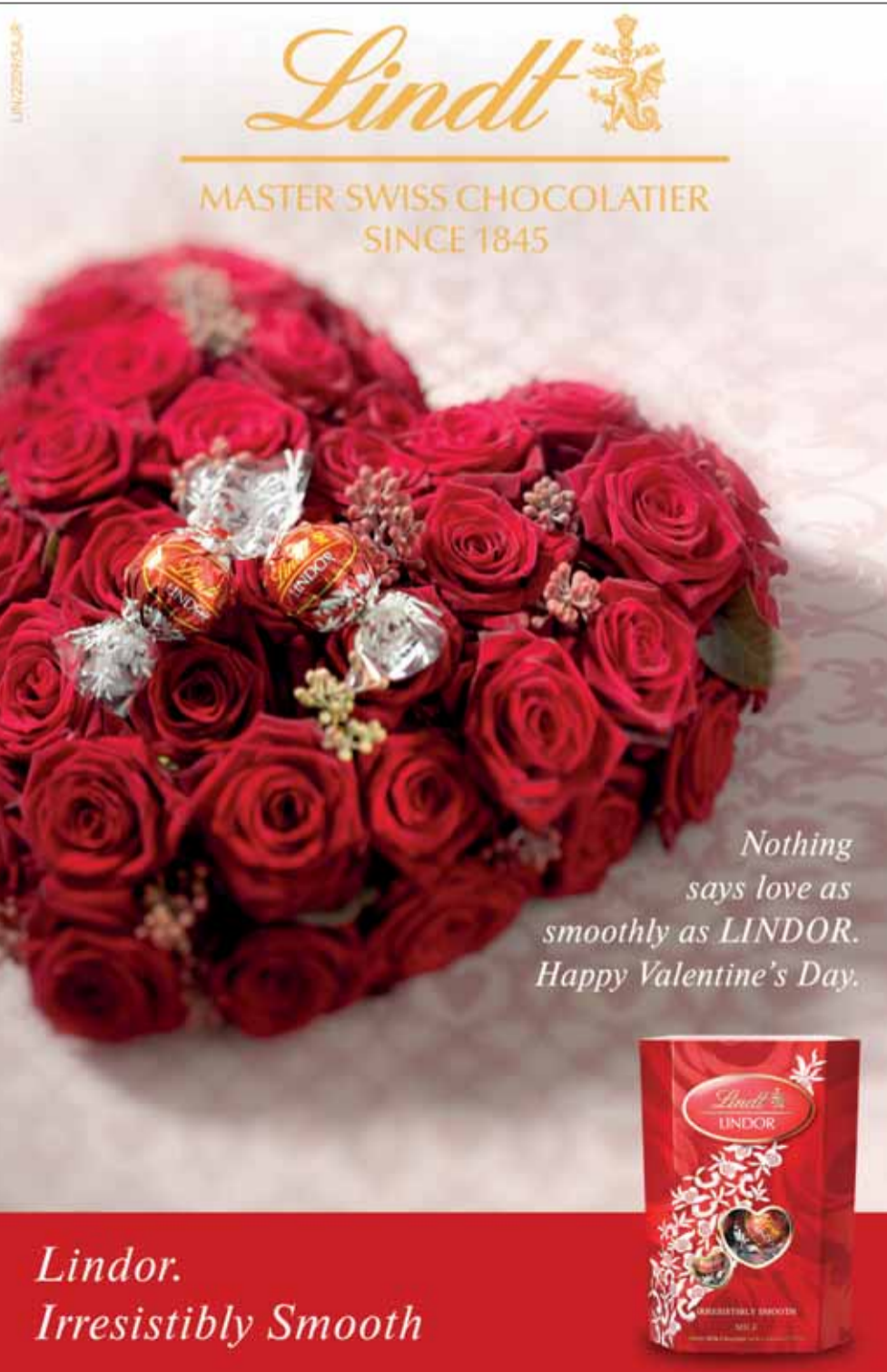
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Second Innings, Jhb - Jewish Community Services - Donald Gordon Centre, 85 George Ave Sandringham. At the Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres, every Sunday morning for tea at 10:00, followed by the meeting at 10:30. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718. Cost: R20 members, R40 non-members.

SA Friends of Beit Halaohem: Beyachad, 2 Elray St, Raedene. Contact Leanne tel (011) 645 2553, e-mail: beithalaohem@beyachad.co.za

South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Johannesburg) - Beyachad, 2 Elray St, Raedene. Contact (011) 645-2500 or (011) 645-2523.

SA Zionist Federation (SAZF), Johannesburg - Beyachad, 2 Elray St, Raedene. Contact Froma, (011) 645-2505.

Israel Centre, Contact Debbie (011) 645-2560.

Jewish National Fund (JNF), Beyachad, 2 Elray St, Raedene. Contact Crystal Kaplan, 083-376-5999.

Jewish Outlook. Contact Ryan Cane, e-mail info@jewishoutlook.org.za. Support line: 27 76 215 8600, website www.jewishoutlook.org.za.

Jewish Women's Benevolent Society (JWBs) - Sandringham Gardens, 85 George Ave Sandringham. Contact Carolyn Sabbagh, (011) 485-5232.

Simcha Friendship and Cultural Circle (SFCC), Johannesburg - Sandton Shul. Contact Sylvia Shull, (011) 783-5600. Meetings on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd Wednesday each month at Sandton Shul at 10:00 unless stated otherwise. United Sisterhood, 38 Oxford Rd Parktown. Contact Marian (011) 646-2409. Website: www.unitedsisterhood.co.za.

Tiyulim (Jewish Outdoor Club). Contact Martin 082-965-7419 or Greg 082-959-9026.

Union of Jewish Women (UJW), Jhb, 1 Oak Street Houghton. Contact (011) 648-1053, fax 086 273-3044. Cost R15 for the Friendship Luncheon Club and a R20 donation for lectures unless otherwise stated.

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UJW CT AED Programme at Stonehaven, Albany Road, Sea Point. 10:00 for 10:30. Entrance: R20 (incl refreshments).

United Zionist Luncheon Club (UZLC), Jhb - Our Parents Home. Contact Gloria, (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.

UOS - Union of Orthodox Synagogues, (011) 485-4865, e-mail: info@uos.co.za, fax 086-610-3442.

WIZO Jhb - Beyachad, 2 Elray St Raedene, e-mail: wizopublicrelations@beyachad.co.za. Contact Joyce Chodas (011) 645-2548 or Sandy Kramer (011) 645-2515.

CROSSWORD NO 196

1. Pushed in, somehow, and castigat-
ed (8)
2. A case of youthful excess? (4, 3)
4. Penny in unity isn't very neat (6)
5. As snob is to reconstruction, find
one on the blower
(10)
6. Rule in a downpour, we hear (5)
7. Archaeologist's lodgings? (4)
10. Steady wrap around, having separ-
ated (6, 4)
12. Zap trees back onto high wires (8)
15. Vegetable equal to the cut (7)
16. International organisation tied up
– but together (6)

[illegible]

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Bronstein is director of TA Nursery School

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZANNE BELLING

SARA BRONSTEIN (pictured), a Kodesh teacher and former substitute teacher at Torah Academy Primary School for the past two and a half years, has been appointed director of the nursery school - which is a new position.

Sara, daughter of Professors Michael and Jeanne Rudolph, is an alumnus of Torah Academy, having spent her entire school career there, from nursery school till matric.

After matric she spent six months at a teaching seminary in Montreal, Canada, and then went on to Safed, Israel, where she was at a teaching seminary for another year.

As a shlucha for Chabad, she taught at Hebrew schools, adult education and ran community programmes in Malibu, California; Bal Harbour, Florida and Manalapan, New Jersey, while studying for the BBA (Bachelor of Business Administration) degree through Unisa.

She spent a few years in New York as a manager and agent of a real estate office before returning to South Africa in 2006, marrying Chaim Bronstein the following year. They have two children.

"I feel very humbled and honoured to be put into such a position of leadership," says Sara.



Rosabelle Klein adds additional baby class

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY SANDRA HIRSCH

IT'S A new school year and a new start at Rosabelle Klein (Waverley) Playschool. An additional baby class - which opened its doors last week Thursday - has been added for children from the age of 18 months. The children spent the morning testing out the new facilities and playground and settled in very quickly, having a great time with their teacher Dani and assistant Goggo Jann.



Fresh batch of house captains for YC grade 6



Top: Aharon Cohen; Yonatan Perez; Adam Melnick; Joseph Beer (principal); Aaron Shrock; Yaakov Carno; and Darren Kozinsky.
Front: Nina Gershon; Erin Jaches; Ami Lee Selikson; Talia Urdang; Rachel Lager; and Carmella Illos.

OWN CORRESPONDENT
PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED

YESHIVA COLLEGE Primary School recently announced the house captains and vice house captains for 2011.

The learners themselves in the grade 6 year, voted for their fellow class mates to elect the house and vice captains. It is a job

that requires responsibility, togetherness and unity, hence creating a great spirit among the entire primary school contingent.

The names of those elected were announced at a special primary school assembly by Principal Joseph Beer.

We wish everyone in our team of captains and vice captains a most successful year.

KDLP ‘human tree’ celebrates Tu B’Shvat

SHELLY FREINKEL
PHOTOGRAPH: YONIT WEIL

KING DAVID Primary Linksfield created a human tree to celebrate Tu B'Shvat. Each child participated in writing activities on leaf shapes. This was the culmination of a moving assembly emphasising the devastating fires of the Carmel forest in Israel.

The school used the day to sow the seeds of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People and the "Leader in Me" programme, which has been adopted by the King David Schools.

The morning was an example of integration and synergy between the Jewish studies, Hebrew Secular and Art departments. A win-win day for all.



Pictured are all the children at King David Primary Linksfield.

Contribution sent to Gilad Shalit’s family



Pictured are some of the children from the show: Hannah Miller; Gabi Katz; Dylan Kilov; Ohad Lavie; Adam Kraut; Georgia Stoller; and producer Marlene Miller.

MARLENE MILLER
PHOTOGRAPH: DORI MEIRY

PROCEEDS FROM the solidarity concert for Gilad Shalit, captured by Hamas in 2006, recently held at King David Sandton Primary School, have been sent together with a DVD of the concert, as well as some of the poetry that was written by grade 7 pupils to Gilad's family, to show that here in South Africa we have not forgotten Gilad.

UJW brings joy to some young hearts

RITA LEWIS

A BRAND new branch of the Union of Jewish Women recently hosted a Christmas party for some 80 children who come from the Granny-and-Child-headed families that the organisation supports in the Pimville area of Soweto, as well as from a squatter camp in Tembisa on the East Rand.

The party was held at the UJW's Houghton House, where the children were treated to a variety of fun activities including face-painting, jumping castles, play-ball and an exciting magic show.

After all the fun, the children were served with a healthy lunch and each child received an age-appropriate gift.

The event was memorable for both the children as well as the organisers, who are a group of young women for whom this was their first venture and hopefully not their last.



Some of the children having fun at the recent party held for them by the UJW.



MACCABI GAUTENG - JUNIOR SOCCER TOUR 2011

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Sela is made to wait for complete SA Open opener

JACK MILNER

ISRAEL'S DUDI Sela will be hoping for some better fortune at this year's SA Tennis Open that began at Montecasino in Johannesburg on Monday.

Two years ago the Israeli was blown away in his opening round match against Spain's David Ferrer but he had a good pipe-opener this time when he teamed up with Slovakian Karel Beck in their opening round of the doubles tournament to upset second seeds Dustin Brown of Germany and Rogier Wassen of the Netherlands. They won the encounter 6-3, 7-5.

Sela was scheduled to play Edouard Roger-Vasselin of France in his first round match but play was suspended due to rain with the Frenchman leading 6-1, 2-3. Play was eventually called off and Sela was to resume on Wednesday.

Sela, who has yet to win a match this year, climbed two places to No 90 in the world.



Dudi Sela in action at the SA Tennis Open at Montecasino on Tuesday. His match was suspended due to rain. (PHOTOGRAPH: REG CALIDICOTT)

Harel Levy attempted to qualify for the tournament but lost to Canadian Milos Raonic. Raonic made his name recently by reaching the fourth round of the Australian Open last week.

On the subject of the Australian Open: Shahar Peer climbed to a career-high No 11 in the world rankings, despite failing to progress for a fourth straight year past the third round of the Australian Open. There is now just 115 ranking points separating Peer from breaking into the top-10. She benefitted from Serena Williams' dramatic drop and the fact that the retired Elena Dementieva was finally removed from the WTA rankings.

The next player Peer will be looking to overtake is 11th-ranked Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland. The two will face off in the Fed Cup in Eilat starting this week in Pool B of Europe/Africa Zone Group I.

Israel opened their group games against Luxembourg on Wednesday and after playing Poland, will face Bulgaria.

The national team will need to finish the pool in first place in order to advance to a tie against one of the other three pool winners for a place in April's World Group II playoffs.

"We have got used to the courts and I hope there will be plenty of fans that will help us win," Peer said after practising in Eilat.

Israel's No 2, Julia Glushko, will also enter the matches in Eilat ranked at a career-high, jumping 28 places to No 205 in the world.

Meanwhile, for the first time, the top 10 players in the women's tennis rankings represent 10 different countries. The WTA said in a statement that 11 different nations were represented among the top 11 spots, including Israel, and 30 different countries among the top 60.

Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki remained No 1, followed by Australian Open champion Kim Clijsters of Belgium, Russia's Vera Zvonareva, Italy's Francesca Schiavone and Australia's Sam Stosur.

The next five are: Venus Williams of the United States, China's Li Na, Jelena Jankovic of Serbia, Victoria Azarenka of Belarus and Poland's Radwanska.

Former No 1 Serena Williams, who has been sidelined with a foot injury since winning Wimbledon for the fourth time last year, dropped from No 4 to No 12.

Maccabi Gauteng junior squash off to a flying start with a great turn-out for the training sessions on Sunday evenings.



Maccabi Squash trains at Killarney on Sunday

GAUTENG MACCABI Junior squash training takes place on Sunday at Killarney Country Club.

Graham Prior, one of the top coaches in the country, will be running the junior programme this year. The training is for boys and girls from ages 12 to 18 and will run from 18:30 to 20:00.

"We have an exciting programme this year with an inter-provincial tour to Cape Town on March 20 and 21. Trials will take place later this month," said convener Glenn Lazarus. "Tell your team-mates and friends to come down to the courts on Sunday."

• For more information, contact Lazarus on 083-273-6926 or email glenn@ats.co.za

Venue set for Maccabi Open soccer trials

JACK MILNER

TRIALS FOR the Maccabi Open (18+) soccer squad for the upcoming Pan American Maccabi Games, will take place on Saturday February 26 from 08:00 to 21:30 and Sunday February 27 from 09:00 to 14:00 at Balfour Park Football Club, Gresswold, Johannesburg.

The PanAm Games take place in Sao Paulo, Brazil from December 25 to January 3 and South Africa plans to take a strong team


and hopefully bring home a medal from the tournament. The Games include teams from Brazil, USA, Peru, Canada, Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico, Chile and Paraguay and is regarded as a precursor to the Maccabiah at Israel in July 2013.

Players interested in participating in the trials must send their details (name, surname, cell number, e-mail, date of birth and playing position) to football@maccabi.co.za or call Ryan on 083-703-4463.



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Sports days for Jewish primary schools

KING DAVID Sandton has put together an Inter-Jewish Schools sports festival to be played on Sundays for five weeks.

The tournament begins on February 27 and runs until April 3. However, there will be a bye on Sunday March 20 because of Purim. It will be played at the Zoo Lake Sports Club starting at 14:00 on every Sunday and will run until around 20:00.

The sports involved are cricket, soccer and netball. Netball will be played in five age groups, from Under-9 to Open, while soccer is for Under-9 and Under-10, with cricket for Under-11s and Open.

Soccer and netball teams will play each other twice on a round-robin basis with the semifinals and finals taking place on April 3.

The concept is the brainchild of Hayley Nathan, chairman of the King David Sandton PTA. She said: "It follows on the success of a tournament organised by Montrose Primary School. They had a successful primary school cricket day/night challenge and we adjusted it into a Jewish event."

The schools taking part are the three King Davids - Linksfield, Victory Park and Sandton - as well as Yeshiva College.

"The tournament has also been endorsed by Maccabi South Africa," said Nathan. "They will be sending talent scouts to see which players they can draw into Maccabi teams."

The opening ceremony will take place on February 27 from 16:15 until 16:45pm.

Barney Gordon tee-off on February 20

MACCABI GOLF will be hosting the Gauteng Championship for the Barney Gordon Trophy at Houghton Golf Club on February 20. The tournament is one of the most prestigious events on the Maccabi calendar.

The A and B Divisions will play 36 holes while C division and ladies will play 18 holes

in the afternoon.

This year a Super Seniors category for men of 65 years and older who are handicapped off senior tees, has been introduced. They will also play 18 holes in the afternoon.

Participants can makeup their own four-ball within divisions if they wish or the organisers will create a four-ball for them.