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Sanders becomes first Jewish primary winner



Photo: Meredith Dake-O'Connor/CQ Roll Call

Bernie Sanders (74) maverick Democratic Party presidential hopeful on Tuesday became the first Jewish candidate in US history to win a presidential primary. He won the New Hampshire primary over arch-rival Hillary Clinton by 60 per cent of the Democratic vote to Clinton’s 38 per cent. Sanders, a secular Jew and self-described democratic socialist, is the darling of young voters, with his anti-Wall Street rhetoric and attacks on inequality. Though New Hampshire is home to only 1,3 million Americans and 10 000 Jews, the state has long been a decisive early proving ground for presidential candidates. Last week in Iowa, Sanders virtually tied with Clinton. But pundits warn that he may face an uphill battle against Clinton later this month in Nevada and South Carolina. In the photograph, Senator Sanders is speaking in Manchester, New Hampshire, on February 8, prior to the primary. See pages 5 and 7

‘Spanking is humiliating’ – but not all parents agree

It may be unconstitutional for parents to smack their children, according to a recent Human Rights Commission report. Corporal punishment is outlawed in SA schools, but at home the jury is out on the subject.

4

Why the Kotel deal is a victory for now, but not forever

While the Women of the Wall who fought for the right of women to pray together at Judaism’s holiest site saw their hopes come to fruition recently, the Kotel has been officially designated as an Orthodox Jewish prayer section.

6

With Issie Granoth’s death another Jewish era passes

Issie Granoth passed away in Cape Town recently at the age of 91. An architect, he spent most of his life in Israel and South Africa. He travelled on board the Drom Afrika in 1947, reaching the then Palestine in spite of a ban on immigration by the British Mandate. (Also see page 12).

8

Israel and apartheid narrative: SA students join debate in California

At a meeting at UCLA, 2 black student leaders debunked the old ‘Israel is an apartheid state’ canard. Miyelani Pinini was student president of UCT, while Jamie Mithi, a Wits law student, saw first-hand the heavy boot of anti-Semitism on campus.

10

Nelson Mandela - the Legacy of Friendship Dialogue

The legacy of Mandela has been brought into question by those who feel transformation is lacking after 22 years of democracy. Afrika Tikkun – of which Mandela was patron-in-chief – is defending Mandela’s legacy with a dialogue in this regard.



15

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Kosher food, kosher money



Parshat Terumah
Rabbi Shmuel Bloch
Hazelwood Shabbos
Minyan

It is well known that when it comes to food, people are careful to check that what they are about to purchase or eat is kosher.

However, what about giving charity? Does one need to ensure that the money that one donates is “kosher” as well?

Remarkably enough, the idea that one’s charity should be pure and unsullied is derived from this week’s parsha.

The parsha begins by discussing the contributions that the Jewish people needed to give in order to build the Mishkan (Tabernacle) in the desert. Careful analysis and deep contemplation are required in order to fully appreciate the function and purpose of the Mishkan.

Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveichik, one of the greatest rabbis of the 19th century, in his book “Beis Halevi”, wonders why the Parsha of Terumah, which deals with donations and charity, comes immediately after the parsha of

Mishpatim, which deals with civil and tort law and different aspects of justice.

He answers that the close proximity of these two sections of the Torah comes to teach us a fundamental lesson. Before a person can contribute money to a worthy cause or dispense charity, he needs to investigate and clarify that the money in his possession was earned honestly and was not amassed by cheating and stealing from others.

The Beis Halevi explains that a person first needs familiarity and fluency in the intricate laws of Mishpatim, so that he will never defraud or deceive anybody while accumulating his wealth. Only after this has been achieved and this person is sure his money is “kosher money”, can he distribute money to those who really need it. Then he will be rewarded in full measure for the mitzvah of giving money to charity.

Helping others with one’s money when done correctly, generates feelings of indescribable goodness and righteousness.

Hashem spoke to Moses saying: “Speak to the Children of Israel and let them take for me a ‘terumah’, from every man whose heart motivates him, you shall take My portion.” (Shemos

Chapter 25 verse 1-2)

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch explains that the word “terumah” is related to the Hebrew word “ROM” which means to uplift and elevate. The effect of donating to the Mishkan raised a person spiritually and imbued his wealth with holiness and purpose.

Such a person would naturally be elated and full of joy. We have all felt similarly when helping someone financially who is really in need.

Nothing can compare to knowing that you assisted someone who was down and out in a correct way and that they are now flourishing due to your timely intervention. You feel you truly have accomplished something wonderful in the world. The truth is that you have.

Jewish wisdom has much to say on the power and potency of helping others with your money. Kosher food affects one’s existence in the most profound way and giving charity in the correct way as per the instructions of the Torah, is no different. Do not delay. Do it and do it right.

If you do, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you will have made an investment that will yield priceless returns for all eternity and for all time.

World News in Brief

5 pro-Iranian operatives arrested in Bethlehem

BETHLEHEM – PA security forces reportedly arrested five pro-Iranian operatives who had been receiving funds from Iran while working in Hamas-ruled Gaza to carry out terror attacks against Israel. The leader of the pro-Iranian operatives, Hisham Salem, confirmed that they did operate in the West Bank and were expecting financial and military aide. “A-Sabrin”, as the five-member terror cell is called, had been operating in Gaza in the past years before their recent arrest. (JNS.org)

Shabbat Times

Parshat Terumah
February 12 / 3 Adar 1
February 13 / 4 Adar 1

Starts	Ends	
18:15	19:25	Johannesburg
18:19	20:17	Cape Town
18:15	19:19	Durban
18:15	19:37	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:48	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:37	East London

Community

Blumenthal’s LRG aims to level the Jewish playing field

SUZANNE BELLING

Jewish organisations, particularly large ones, tend to play the person, not the ball, says Dr Ivor Blumenthal (pictured), who has started the Labour Relations Gemach (gemilut chesed).

“It is free to Jewish members to join and they are not expected to pay advisory services.”

Blumenthal adds that employers, especially small ones seldom have the resources, time or inclination to implement a formal HR set of policies and procedures – a system that can withstand the scrutiny exacted from with a bargaining council or the CCMA.

“The LRG is a Jewish organisation established informally with the singular purpose of assisting Jewish employees in all matters to do with labour relations. It is an advisory body to level the playing fields between employers and employees when there is inevitably an imbalance, keep Jewish employees in their jobs for as long as possible.”

Blumenthal told the SA Jewish Report that there was a large number of practitioners within the community who were willing to give of their time to assist wherever possible and to help keep costs incurred in direct representation as low as possible.

“In matters involving Jewish employees, the LRG facilitates conciliation, mediation and, where possible, even arbitration services in the hope that from engagement can come compromise and agreement.

“I am acutely aware that sometimes Jewish employees are dealt with unfairly because there is an unspoken sense of obligation between Jewish employers and employees that, irrespective of the level of mistreatment, opportunism or abuse, nothing should be done or said.

“Equally as Jewish employees often are white and not blue collar employees, companies in general, exert an unspoken

cultural expectation that they should not join trade unions, be aware of their rights or have an opportunity to be represented in the face of company action against them. It is even worse for Jewish blue collar employees employed in trade, craft and labour functions. They are subject to a similar cultural expectation and are seldom part of the closed circle created often where trade unions are indeed present.

“I have started the gemach on the principle that all advisory services should not incur costs. They are after all simply discussions on facts and options. As a business consultant all I have to offer my community is time and experience and that’s what the gemach is founded upon - time and experience.

“There are other professionals within the Jewish community who will also give of their time in a similar fashion. As matters evolve and appearances and direct representation is required, the agreement with those who give of their time to assist in the gemach is that they will work to a schedule of rates designed to compensate them for their time at the equivalent of cost rather than traditional going rates.”

It is giving back to the community, Blumenthal feels.

There are many people who do not realise they are being constructively dismissed, disadvantaged, edged out of their positions and overworked.

“They keep quiet about it because Jewish people don’t use trade unions. Conversely they have a sense of entitlement, which becomes a community issue rather an individual one.”

Jewish employers have been increasingly complying with BBBEE, social investment and corporate social investment in order to score points and the Jewish workforce has been losing out, Blumenthal says.

“Essentially we expect a great deal of pro bono work from those volunteering to assist the gemach,” he adds.

MP and labour lawyer Michael Bagraim welcomed the



gemach. “This happens in the welfare sectors across the board - not just in Jewish organisations,” he said.

“There is a need for someone to advise employees of their rights in terms of labour legislation.”

Anyone wishing to join the LRG, should submit their name, surname, ID, cell number and name of employer to arkkon-sult1@gmail.com

“We will ensure that your employer is informed in a diplomatic and procedurally unthreatening way, that you are a member of the LRG and that the LRG will represent you in all Labour Relations Act and Basic Conditions of Employment Act matters to do with your employment relationship,” Blumenthal said.



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Fruitree Grape Juice is not kosher

ANT KATZ

Unfortunately we have bad tidings for kosher consumers who may have thought a new variety of fruit juice could enter their households: Fruitree Grape Juice is not kosher. The misunderstanding is the result of a hechsher printing error. The kashrut division of the Union of Orthodox Synagogues, is however, on top of it and it is expected to have a quick and happy ending.

The kashrut division on Monday issued a rather confusing kashrut alert, which read: “Please be aware, that ‘Fruit Tree’, a fruit juice manufacturer, has made a batch of grape juice that erroneously bears the Beth Din logo. The product is not kosher. The company apologises for the error and has undertaken to rectify the mistake as quickly as possible.”

Jewish Report and the head of kashrut at the UOS, Greg Bloch, spent time trying to find out what this is all about.

As Fruitree is a brand of Ceres which is supervised by the Cape Town Beth Din, it took some time to get to the bottom of all this. But, we are now able to confirm the following:

- The brand referred to is, in fact, “Fruitree”;
- While some Fruitree brand products are kosher, their grape juice has never been;
- The “batch” referred to in the alert was a batch of packaging and not a batch of juice;

• Only the 1 litre Tetrapak container, as illustrated, is affected;

Ceres and Fruitree staff members are at present out in the marketplace placing tens of thousands of stickers over the incorrect hechsher (diamond-shaped logo of the Beth Din which signifies the product is kosher) to cover the mistake and to ensure that the kosher consumers are not confused about which of their products are indeed kosher.



Poll: Majority of Palestinians oppose third intifada

JERUSALEM - The majority of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza oppose a third intifada, according to a new poll, reversing the popular sentiment from three months ago.

The poll of 1 200 Palestinians conducted by the West Bank-based Arab World for Research and Development firm in late January was released on Sunday.

Regarding a third intifada, 53,7 per cent overall said they would oppose an uprising, while 42 per cent would support one. Backing was higher among Gaza Palestinians, at 47,3 per cent, than those living in the West Bank, at 38,8 per cent.

An October poll by Arab World for Research and Development, of Ramallah, had found the majority of Palestinians supporting such an uprising.

The new poll also found that 78,6 per cent of Palestinians oppose the idea of dismantling the Palestinian Authority, and that if an election were held now, its president, Mahmoud Abbas, would defeat Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

Respondents were almost evenly divided between optimism and pessimism on the future: the optimistic were at 49,5 per cent, the pessimistic at 48,7 per cent.

Asked how the current wave of violence has affected them and their family, 35,8 per cent of Palestinians reported a loss of income, 20,5 per cent said it has created obstacles to their travel and movement, and 18,3 per cent said it has led to the loss of a job.

Among West Bank Palestinians, only 11,7 per cent reported that the violence has had “no impact” on them or their family.

The poll summary did not report its margin of error. (JTA)

More news on our website www.sajr.co.za

All South Africans must work to defeat racism

DAVID SAKS

If racism is to be defeated, then all South Africans, and not just the leadership, must become involved in the fight. This is the basis of a new “Code of Courtesy”, an initiative of Active Citizens, which was launched in Johannesburg on February 3.



SAJBD National Vice-President Zev Krengel speaking at the launch.

The Code was co-written by SAJBD National Vice-President Zev Krengel and Active Citizens founders and business leaders Bobby Godsell and James Motlatsi.

Active Citizens was founded in April 2013 with the aim of encouraging ordinary South Africans to make a positive difference to their society by, inter alia, contributing their time and skills to social upliftment. The Code of Courtesy came about in response to the furore over racist hate speech in South Africa, particularly in the social media.

While the right of people to express their views and to disagree - even strenuously - with one another, is a fundamental democratic right, this must always be conducted in the spirit of the Constitution.

Based on this, the Code of Courtesy urges people to respect the dignity of their fellow-South Africans when expressing their views about the country and its future. Those signing on to the pledge further commit themselves to respecting “the diversity of gender, race, ethnic origin and religious belief”, and to ensure that when disagreeing with their fellow-citizens, they would “contest their ideas, but not attack the dignity of their person, nor of the group to which they belong”.

Speaking at the launch, Krengel described the social media as a double-edged sword,

since unfortunately it was open to being abused.

Indeed, he doubted whether South Africa would have been able to make the turbulent transition from apartheid if Facebook and Twitter had existed at that time.

“Social media allows racists to spew hatred that causes terrible hurt to general South African citizens. We want to live in a democratic country where there is freedom of expression, but we need to act responsibly,” he said.

In his introductory remarks, Godsell stressed the crucial part that the various faith communities, through all of which ran the “golden thread that looks to the principle of treating others as you would have them treat you”, had to play in taking the initiative further.


Motlatsi urged that South Africans, rather than continually focusing on negative issues, focus on the positive aspects of South African society and how to build on them.

In a vote of thanks, Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi remarked that the morning’s discussions had revealed the depth of people’s concern for South Africa, particularly for the economy and social cohesion.

“While each of us comes from a different background and serves in a different

sphere, we are friends simply because we share this love of our country. Ours is a noble duty. Let us fulfil it hand in hand,” he said.

• The full text of the Code of Courtesy can be found at <http://www.citizens.za.com/>



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Directions: Rivonia Rd into School Rd, left into Middle Rd, follow pointers.

Norma Robinson 082 554 7260 | 011 656 0888



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Directions: Northfield into Long into Jennifer.

Joel Harris 082 929 0287 | 011 880 3550



Glenhazel – Asking R2.499 Million

Immaculate family home in exclusive crescent. Hurry to stake your claim on this very spacious 4 bedroomed home with 4 grand reception rooms (billard) 2 bathrooms (mes), huge eat in kitchen, lovely pool area, staff accommodation. Lots of off street parking. Web Ref: 99657.

Directions: Northfield into Daleview into Fir.

Joel Harris 082 929 0287 | 011 880 3550

All’s well that ends well for Cape Town’s Schapiro family

MICHAEL BELLING

The Department of Home Affairs has reversed an earlier decision to ban the six-year-old Noa Schapiro from re-entering South Africa for five years, splitting her Cape Town family between South Africa and Israel.

As a result of the rescinded decision, Noa and her mother, Jessica, were scheduled to return to South Africa from Israel this week to join businessman Yaron Schapiro, a South African citizen and Jessica’s husband and Noa’s father, and their other two daughters, Sophie (13) and Maya (10). Schapiro has dual Israeli and South African citizenship.

The family went to live in Israel in 2006 to help care for Yaron’s mother, who was in failing health at the time.

Noa was born in Israel on January 28, 2010, but her birth was not registered with the South African embassy in Tel Aviv, as Schapiro thought she was automatically a citizen of South Africa by virtue of his citizenship.

The family returned to South Africa in 2015. Sophie and Maya hold dual South African and Israeli citizenship. Like them, Noa travelled using an Israeli passport and her parents believed the same applied to her.

On their return, Schapiro devoted himself to his business in Cape Town and he and Jessica found a new home for the family, renewed their driving licences and registered the two older children at school and Noa in a nursery school.

Schapiro said he had enquired about Noa’s status at the South African embassy in Israel and was told it could be sorted out in South Africa.

In December the family went to Mauritius on holiday but was told that Noa had overstayed her visa and would have to



Jessica, Maya, Noa and Yaron Schapiro enjoying a light-hearted moment before Jessica and Noa had to return on their own to Israel following a five-year ban by the Ministry of Home Affairs which declared Noa “undesirable” and unable to re-enter South Africa.

leave the country. At that time Noa was declared “undesirable” and told she could not return to this country for five years. As a result, Jessica and Noa returned to Israel, while Yaron and the other two girls remained in South Africa.

At the time, the South African Department of Home Affairs applied a strict interpretation of a law on birth registration that took effect in 2014, providing that the birth of a South African child had to be registered within 30 days, even though in this case it meant splitting the family.

Late last week Yaron told the SA Jewish Report about the change in the position of the Department of Home Affairs and on Monday confirmed the scheduled arrival of his wife and daughter. This means that the family will remain together while applying to regularise Noa’s South African status.

“We are excited and very happy,” Yaron said, “and just waiting”.

Palestinians turn out in honour of terrorists who killed policewoman

JERUSALEM - Thousands of Palestinians last week Friday turned out to honour three Palestinian terrorists who murdered an Israeli policewoman earlier in the week.

The large turnout for the funeral of the three terrorists, Ahmed Abou Al-Roub, Mohammed Kameel, and Ahmad Rajeh Ismail Zakarneh, in the West Bank village of Kabatiya, occurred despite a closure of the village by Israeli security forces, the Jerusalem Post reported.

Earlier last Friday, Israel handed over the bodies of the terrorists to the families on the assurance that they would not use their funerals for a political rally or procession.

The three terrorists killed 19-year-old border policewoman Hadar Cohen and critically injured another female officer in an attack near Jerusalem’s Damascus Gate. The terrorists, who were wielding machine guns, pipe bombs, and knives, were shot dead by police at the scene. (JNS.org)

Hamas terror tunnels ‘reach deep into Israel’

JERUSALEM - A senior Hamas official warned last week Wednesday that the Palestinian terrorist group’s efforts to rebuild the Gaza Strip’s terror tunnel grid, are advancing rapidly, and that some tunnels dug under the border already run deep into Israeli territory.

“Israeli technology will not be able to stop the resistance as long as Hamas exists,” Hamas official Mahmoud al-Zahar told Oman-based Alwatan News. “Even if Israel is able to uncover a tunnel, or two, or 10, they [the tunnels] run deep under Israel, beyond Gaza, into 1948 territory.”

He added that regardless of the tunnel grid, Hamas had “other advanced measures” with which it could fight Israel. The Israeli military had destroyed Hamas’s terror tunnel network during Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014. (JNS.org)

‘Spanking is humiliating’ - but not all parents agree

MARGOT COHEN

It may be unconstitutional for parents to smack their children, according to a recent Human Rights Commission report. The age old debate about how best to discipline your offspring has again come to the fore.

Corporal punishment is outlawed in South African schools, but at home the jury is out on the subject with those in favour talking of a “loving spank” doing far more good than wrong and crying foul over “Big Brother” even trying to control the way parents bring up their children.

Bruce Noziac, deputy headmaster of King David High School Victory Park, says most parents are opposed to hitting their children. They often use the “time out” approach. A good hiding is discouraged as it is thought to be scarring and damaging.

“Corporal punishment in schools was abolished ages ago,” says Noziac. “Many parents believe discussing contentious issues is a better way to enforce rules.”

Well-known educational psychologist, Lesley Rosenthal also believes there are better ways to discipline your child, other than spanking. “Humiliating them is, in my view, is certainly not the right approach. It is preferable to teach children the consequences of their actions and to offer them rewards if they comply.

“Give them choices and let them decide. For instance, they can watch TV if homework is completed, but not before. And it’s important to follow through the conditions.”

Grant Ravenscroft, a parent of two teenagers, says he does not smack his children although he believes that, in a way, modern parents are “probably way too soft”.

Some parents, especially older ones or grandparents who brought up children when corporal punishment was the norm and quite acceptable, maintain that the odd “klap” does no harm.

If a toddler puts his finger in a plug socket, says Rosenthal, one’s natural reaction is to smack his hand lightly to stop this happening again.

One parent who would only speak on condition of anonymity, said: “As I child, I was spanked often and locked up in my room as punishment. My mother, however, denies this completely. Yet I bear mom no ill will in spite of this legacy.”

Another parent says she and her spouse hit their sons quite often as they were unruly and naughty when they were small. “I don’t feel guilty about it either and I don’t believe it did them harm”, she claims.

Positive parenting, say the experts, includes praising children for completing tasks like tidying up and being considerate to family members.

Perhaps the yardstick should be: “Let the punishment fit the crime”, as the Gilbert and Sullivan song from the opera Trial by Jury suggests.

But it remains an emotional issue. “Spanking” conjures up an image of a loving light smack on the bum or hand, but unfortunately there are parents - and teachers - who would “beat the living daylight” out of a “naughty” or “disobedient” child. Legal protection seems to be the only option.

Horrorifying stories from yesteryear’s abuse in schools, still abound and alas, have become somewhat of a macho boast among those whose memories have become very faint and selective.

It is true that a headstrong child can manage to drive the most patient of parents up the wall, itching to grab the first thing in hand to “spank” some sense into rebellious little behinds. But more and more child psychologists warn against long-term damage done by corporal punishment.

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Did Bernie Sanders steal Joe Lieberman’s Jewish crown?



AMI EDEN
NEW YORK

Maybe now that Bernie Sanders has become the first Jewish candidate to win a presidential primary he’ll start getting the Joe Lieberman treatment.

Sanders (74) made history on Tuesday night when he became the first Jewish candidate in US history to win a presidential primary election.

Sanders, a secular Jew and self-described democratic socialist who has made economic inequality in America the centrepiece of his campaign, had been the favourite to win in New Hampshire - and did so handsomely by 60 to 38 per cent over Democratic favourite Hillary Clinton - and in last week’s Iowa caucuses he nearly tied Clinton. But Sanders is expected to face uphill contests against Clinton in contests later this month in Nevada and South Carolina.

Sanders is the darling of the young voters, blasting Wall Street fat cats and inequality.

Though New Hampshire is home to just 1,3 million Americans, the state holds the nation’s first primary and long has been a decisive early proving ground for presidential candidates.

Back to “the Lieberman treatment”: In 2000, Al Gore’s decision to tap Lieberman as his running mate set off what felt like a months-long national barmitzvah bash. But the party - and all the speculation about a Shabbat-observant, kosher-keeping vice-president - proved premature, thanks in part to confused elderly Jewish voters in Palm Beach County. And then Lieberman’s presidential bid in 2004 totally flopped in the primaries.

So, you’d think there would still be room for some hoopla over a Jewish challenger winning the New Hampshire polls headed into the primary. Nope. Bubkes.

The lack of Jewmania this time around is partially attributable to Donald Trump hogging the media’s attention. But more importantly, since Lieberman’s dance on the national stage an African American was elected president, a Mormon won the Republican nomination and a woman is widely viewed as the favourite to win in 2016. Suddenly the whole first-Jewish-president thing seems like a yawner.

There is also the fact that Lieberman wore his Judaism like a yarmulke. He proudly put his faith front and centre while embracing the role of religious trailblazer and Jewish role model. Sanders, not so much.

That’s not to say Sanders is trying to pass (why bother?). When asked, he says he’s proud of his background, and he occasionally will invoke his Jewishness on his own. But generally he seems uncomfortable with efforts to place a Jewish frame on his candidacy.

The result is that Lieberman comes off as the more-Jewish candidate - even though the overwhelming majority of American Jews are more like Sanders in terms of their secular Jewish identity and, in many cases, their politics.

While plenty of Jews and Jewish organisations took pride in Lieberman’s nomination in 2000, his spirited defence of a greater role for

religion in the public square flew in the face of decades of Jewish activism and anxiety over a lowering of the church-state wall.

Similarly, while Lieberman’s vocal support of the Iraq War made him a hero in some Jewish circles, polls showed his hawkish views were out of step with the majority of American Jews.

Perhaps Sanders’ most dramatic Jewish moment in the campaign came during a rally in October at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, in an exchange with a hijab-wearing senior, Remaz Abdelgader. She identified herself as “an American Muslim student who aspires to change this world” and complained about the “rhetoric that’s going on in the media”.

In response, Sanders hugged her and said: “Let me be very personal here if I might. I’m Jewish. My father’s family died in concentration camps. I will do everything that I can to rid this country of the ugly stain of racism, which has existed for far too many years.”

Sanders’ comments echoed one of the most publicly Jewish moments of the other possible contender for first Jewish president, former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Back during the fight over whether to allow a Muslim community centre to open near Ground Zero, Bloomberg passionately defended the project, a stance his confidantes linked to his parents’ encounter with anti-Semitism and that Bloomberg himself later connected to the protection of Jewish religious rights.

If Sanders and Bloomberg share what remains of the leading brand of American Jewish identity - a mix of religious ambivalence and ethnic pride - they reflect distinct trends in American Jewish political attitudes.

As a self-described democratic socialist, Sanders is a throwback to the first half of the 20th century, when the Jewish street embraced a leftism fixated on economic issues. Bloomberg reflects the Jewish rise up the socioeconomic ladder and an evolving brand of liberalism focused more on social issues, like abortion and minority rights.

Sanders promises to fight the banks and make peace with the National Rifle Association; Bloomberg defends Wall Street while waging war against the gun industry.

Whose politics will define the next stage of Jewish liberalism?

We could get a direct face-off, if Sanders somehow rides his historic New Hampshire win to the Democratic nomination and Bloomberg jumps in as an independent.

And if you’re having trouble getting your head around a Jewish democratic socialist and a Jewish billionaire duking it out for the White House, just imagine if Donald Trump wins the Republican nod. That would make him the only one in the three-man race with Jewish grandchildren who go to an Orthodox shul.

On the Republican side, businessman Trump scored a decisive victory over his rivals, capturing 34 per cent of the vote. The next-best finisher was Ohio Governor John Kasich, with 16 per cent. Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush and Senator Ted Cruz of Texas came out neck and neck, at about 11 per cent. (JTA)

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Please Mr President – don’t pretend

This week we will be listening closely to the voice of our president when he delivers the State of the Nation Address. You may have heard his Thursday speech by the time you read this, but even so, I am willing to take bets that we WILL witness some of the usual disruptive antics from the enfant terrible Julius Malema and his cohorts. This time not about when Zuma will pay back the money for “security upgrades” at his Nkandla homestead that was Malema’s 2015 cause célèbre; but now about why he fired Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene and cost the country billions of rands in the aftermath.

What is less predictable - is if

he does stand up and admit to the many crises facing us: a flailing economy with even gloomier forecasts; a water shortage; tertiary education disasters; income inequality, gross unemployment and an overburdened healthcare system - is whether he will actually show some initiative and set in motion some viable strategies for real change.

His decision to replace Finance Minister Nene for apparently refusing to do his bidding, with the grossly underqualified and little-known ANC apparatchik David van Rooyen and then to hurriedly (re)appoint Pravin Gordhan over the course of a weekend following public outrage - showed that for

all his perceived arrogance - on issues that he has been sufficiently called to task on, he is sometimes willing to listen.

More evidence of this was his complete turnaround on Nkandla after seeking the advice of an expensive new senior counsel, Jeremy Gauntlett. From his initial indifference and refusal to pay back some of the money he owes for non-security-related alterations at his Nkandla homestead, he last week made a request for the auditor general and finance minister to determine an amount he should repay!

To many pundits, Zuma now seems to be feeling vulnerable: faltering parastatals (Eskom, SAA);

his party’s loss of support in the 2014 national elections; pressure from his critics, from opposition parties and his own party about his scandalous relationship with the wealthy Gupta family, are all reasons for his increasing humility.

It might be optimistic but perhaps Zuma will not just cheerfully wade through a speech of smiling platitudes on Thursday night, noting all the small victories of his government while ignoring the burning issues. Our economy is a priority: he needs to address a plummeting rand, rising food prices, soaring government debt and the strong possibility that South Africa’s sovereign rat-



South African Jewish Report

ing will be downgraded to junk status. Please Mr President - give an honest analysis of the state of the nation with a cogent plan for improvement. We need leadership.

– Vanessa Valkin, editor

Why the Kotel deal is a victory for now, but not forever

DEBRA BENNET
JERUSALEM

On the morning of December 1, 1988, a group of about 70 Jewish women entered the sacred space of the Western Wall. They represented all the major streams of Judaism. Some wore prayer shawls or kippot. Some did not. One woman cradled a Torah in her arms.

Together, their voices rose in prayer, marking the beginning of a movement. From that day until now, the Women of the Wall have fought for the right of women to pray together at Judaism’s holiest site - out loud, with tallit, tefillin and the Torah.

It has been no easy task.

For the past three decades, the Women of the Wall have faced down the many who object to their mission. During their monthly prayer services at the wall, people have screamed and yelled, blown whistles, and hurled rocks and even faeces at them.

Critic after critic told the women they were the ones disturbing the peace, causing problems and airing dirty laundry in public. They were commanded to stop and give up their fight without acknowledgement of the injustice they were battling.

But on January 31, some of the Women of the Wall’s greatest hopes came to fruition. The Israeli government approved a deal recognising mixed-gender, egalitarian services at a part

of the Western Wall called Robinson’s Arch, an archaeological site adjacent to the traditional prayer area.

The government will expand Robinson’s Arch and make it accessible from the main plaza, where everyone enters to get to the Western Wall. Those coming to pray will be able to choose between an all-male section, an all-female section and an egalitarian section where anyone can pray however they choose.

An incredible victory, right? Yes. But much has been lost, too.

While Robinson’s Arch has been recognised for the first time as a place for Jews of any denomination to pray, the area known as the Western Wall has been officially designated an Orthodox Jewish prayer section ruled by Israel’s Chief Rabbinate.

For some - even members of Women of the Wall - this concession makes the deal a defeat rather than a victory. They refer back to the original goals of the movement: demanding room for women to pray with other women out loud, not separate but equal spaces.

Orthodox members of Women of the Wall and others face the same dilemma they always have: Where do you pray at the Wall when you feel most comfortable with a separation of women and men but believe in the rights of women to pray out loud and read from the Torah?

Some of these women feel forgotten. Who

will fight with them now? Have the Women of the Wall given up who they really are in this compromise?

Last week’s Torah portion provides some insight.

A newly freed people, escaping the bonds of Egyptian slavery, the Hebrews gather at the foot of Mount Sinai to hear the new laws of the community, to receive the commandments. They listen as Moses relays the following words: “When you acquire a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years; in the seventh year he shall go free...”

Hold on one moment. The Hebrews were just freed from awful, brutal, demoralising slavery. Why, then, is the Torah so quick to institute a new set of laws for the practice? If slavery was so terrible for us, shouldn’t our next step be ensuring that we are not inflicting the same horrific experience on others?

True, the new laws ensure rights for slaves, address them as human beings and even provide for them to be freed after a time. But still: slavery.

We must remind ourselves that in the ancient Near East, a world without slavery was unimaginable. Change could happen, but gradually - one step at a time. You can imagine our ancestors wondering: “Is this enough?”

Then as now, the answer is: “Maybe for now, but certainly not forever.”

As we consider the historic compromise on

the Western Wall, we should remind ourselves that this is the way of change - as great leaders of social movements have understood.

The Rev Martin Luther King Jr said: “If you can’t fly, then run, if you can’t run, then walk, if you can’t walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.”

We are moving forward. Last month’s decision proves that.

The challenge is not to become complacent with this victory. We must continue to challenge the assumption that traditional Orthodoxy is and should be the norm at the Western Wall. We must continue to demand and raise our voices.

Gloria Steinem, another fighter for equality and justice, said: “I’m a realist, but I’m also a dreamer. And I’m not just a dreamer, I’m a hopeaholic.”

We Jews are hopeaholics, too. So we hope and pray for a time when every woman and man can pray, raising their voices, wearing the garments that provide meaning to their prayer and speaking the ancient words of our people at our holiest site, the Western Wall.

We grasp this hope while understanding the reality of the world. And we carry this hope with us as we move forward, striving for the next great victory. (JTA)

• *Debra Bennet is the associate rabbi at Temple Chaverim in Plainview, New York.*

Beware the seduction of populist thugs



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

The country’s decline under President Jacob Zuma leaves South Africans between a rock and a hard place. On one hand, their intense desire to be rid of him for corruption, inept government, allowing state institutions to be manipulated by the Gupta family, etc. On the other, fear of the thuggery overtaking SA politics in response to his tenacity in holding on to power, epitomised by populist politicians like EFF leader Julius Malema.

There is something satisfying in Malema’s insistent, theatrical highlighting of Zuma’s duplicity regarding Nkandla, the firing of former Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene, the Gupta’s influence, the disasters at state-owned enterprises like SAA and Eskom, and so on.

The waning of South Africa’s international standing under his leadership is painful - two decades ago we were proud

South Africans, today we’re somewhat embarrassed.

Questions about who runs South Africa are crucial. Is it Zuma, the ANC, or the Guptas? EFF deputy leader Floyd Shivambu says the Guptas “have de facto colonised South Africa, with Zuma being the chief colonial administrator”.

One wants to cheer as Zuma squirms under the EFF assault. But we must be wary of Malema’s threatening tactics and the trend they set. His statements on the Guptas are dangerous. For example, that they “must leave the country with immediate effect”, journalists from Gupta-owned media The New Age and ANN7 should stop attending EFF briefings because it is “not safe for them”. And his ethnic references like government decisions being made with the Guptas “over a curry”.

Jews should reject this. Not just ethically, but based on historical experiences with anti-Jewish thuggery. If the Guptas are corrupting government officials for their own benefit, it should be handled through the courts, the Public Protector or other legal entities. That they are of Indian origin

is not the point.

Referring to this invites the kind of nightmare scenario we experienced in the xenophobic attacks on foreigners in 2008. Or in April last year when Mozambican Emmanuel Sithole was killed in Alexandra township in Johannesburg during a rampage in which foreign-owned shops were looted.

Jews know the slippery slope of ethnic attacks not just from Germany, but also pogroms over the years elsewhere, where hooligans rampaged through Jewish areas while authorities either encouraged them or turned a blind eye.

In Germany, Hitler took power partly through thuggery: he convinced Germans the Nazis would solve their problems, so they overlooked their violent means and handed over the state - democratically - to him, leading to the Second World War and the Holocaust.

In seeking scapegoats, populist politicians with devious agendas could say not just “white capitalists” - in Malema’s words - are responsible for poverty, but could mischievously point at ethnic groups

including “white Jewish capitalists” or others. This happened in Germany. Woe betide us if it should spiral out of control here!

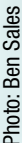
There is tremendous anger in this country. It doesn’t take much to ignite violence ranging from killing foreigners, to students destroying property on university campuses, and physical confrontations in Parliament. Many South Africans - feeling betrayed that 21 years after apartheid they are worse off than before - look for a target.

Rational analysts and sane citizens know the ANC government and Zuma have failed dismally, but populist politicians know how to direct the fury to what suits their agendas.

It is clear Zuma must go. And the ANC has lost its way and should be punished by the citizenry. But thuggery is not how to do it. It could destroy this country and rob it of the fruits of the struggle of Nelson Mandela’s generation who fought for a better South Africa.

• *Read Geoff Sifrin’s regular columns on his blog sifrintakingissue.wordpress.com*

Photo: Ben Sales



BEN SALES
SHAAR HAAMAKIM, Israel

Although Shaar Haamakim, like many other kibbutzim, underwent privatisation in the early 2000s, its members still jointly own its factories and maintain a fund to support kibbutzniks in need. (JTA)

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With Issie Granoth’s death another Jewish era passes



The late Issie Granoth with his wife Pamela.

SUZANNE BELLING

Malchalnik Issie Granoth passed away in Cape Town recently at the age of 91.

He spent most of his life both in Israel and Africa as a successful architect and a key member of the Jewish Maritime League, who travelled on board the Drom Afrika, reaching the then Palestine in 1947 in spite of the ban of immigration by the British Mandate. (See story of Drom Afrika on page 12.)

While the fishing trawler was docked in Haifa, the Exodus, a ship filled with 5 000 illegal Jewish refugees from war-ravaged Europe, was towed in by British vessels. Everyone aboard was sent back to Europe, although most of them came to Israel again after independence.

Born in 1924 in Bernowitz, a city that was at different times governed by Russia and Poland, at the age of seven, Granoth moved with his family to Cape Town. At the age of 17, he falsified his age to fight with the South African army in Italy during the Second World War.

After the war he returned to South Africa, but not before he visited Palestine. In South Africa he was at a hachshara (training farm) and in the South African Communist Movement. He later sailed to Israel on the Drom Afrika.

In Israel he joined the Air Force and travelled to Czechoslovakia to smuggle the first planes in the Air Force to Israel.

After a while he returned to South Africa to study architecture and attain his matric, returning to work in Israel. He planned buildings in Israel such as the Sheraton Hotel and a restoration of the synagogue museum in Ramat Aviv.

Granoth met and married his first wife, Lydia. They lived in Tel Aviv, where their son Agnon was born. Lydia was one of the Tehran children, a group of Polish-Jewish children, mainly orphans, who escaped the Nazi German occupation of Poland. They found temporary refuge in orphanages and shelters in the Soviet Union and were later evacuated with several hundred adults to Tehran, Iran, before finally reaching Palestine in 1943.

After the birth of their daughter Daphna, the family moved to Tanzania for two years. They returned to Israel for a few months and went to Kenya for a further two years, where Granoth built sailing boats “with his own hands”.

The family returned to Israel and then to South Africa.

Working in South Africa, after his divorce from Lydia, he met his second wife, Pamela, a well-known chef, who runs the tea room at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

Back in Israel again, they set up a catering company but came back to Cape Town three years later.

Granoth survived complicated heart surgery, but eventually succumbed to cancer. Even towards the end, he carried on going up the mountain at Kirstenbosch.

In a hesped, Agnon said: “My father lived life fully examined, and strived for perfection in everything he touched. He was a respected architect, a painter, a talented sculptor, a builder, carpenter, amazing husband and father, which he passed on to me and his grandchildren...”

He is survived by his wife, Pamela, of Cape Town, children Agnon and Daphna and eight grandchildren, who live in Israel, and his sister Miki Tobias, who lives in Johannesburg. He is buried in Pinelands Jewish Cemetery.

Chock-a-block with very interesting reads

What’s on the web this week: All the latest news and views for you

Read the latest news and views about - and of interest to - South African and world Jewry, The South African Jewish Report sends out a digital newspaper 52 weeks of the year - and when there is a weekly print edition (an average of 45 weeks a year) a digital PDF version is attached as well.

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- Nevada’s Democratic caucus conflicts with Shabbat
- Who were the chosen team on Sunday?
- When the Broncos beat the Panthers 24-10 in Sunday’s Super Bowl 50, almost R90 000 found its way into two shuls’ coffers thanks to a fundraiser devised by their enterprising rabbis
- Jewish teen chooses Shabbat over Olympics
- Good news follows latest BD printing error

- Cruz vs Trump - Jews can be offended or honoured
 - Ted Cruz, the Texas Republican senator running in the US Republican nomination process ahead of the 2016 elections as an anti-establishment maverick, slammed Donald Trump for his “chutzpah” on the weekend. This has once again seen Cruz being accused of making Jews collateral damage in attacks on his insider rivals. But is he?
 - All the latest on the Rabbi Berland saga
 - Chirp-fest - JR Online readers have been very vocal posting dozens of (sometimes inflammatory) comments back and forth
- Follow the full story “Christian leaders’ trip to Israel overwhelming” - the full and extended story from the print version - with amazing pictures, will be an eye-opener for our Jewish readers who will gain a very different and interesting perspective. And it will be a delight for our many Christian Zionist readers, too.



World News in Brief

Roman-era canal system unearthed near Dead Sea

TEL AVIV - An ancient canal system used 2 000 years ago to irrigate terraced agricultural plots, was unearthed near the Roman-era fortress of Metzad Bokek in southern Israel. The Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) and the Israel Nature and Parks Authority jointly conducted the excavation. The system used gravity to carry water from the Ein Bokek spring to the terraces. The longest of the canals measures 1,2 miles. Noah Michael, the archaeologist directing the dig for the IAA, said “the canal system, which connected irrigation pools and linked to an aqueduct that conducted water from the spring, was plastered and apparently covered. Signs of repairs evident in the plaster demonstrate that the system was in use for a long time during the Roman era.”

The IAA said: “The terraces were used to raise various crops that were apparently used in the process of creating the legendary persimmon perfume. That perfume was known far and wide, and researchers think that on these terraces, the persimmon plants themselves, which were different from the persimmon trees we know today, were grown.” (JNS.org)

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Israel’s offer to Oscar nominees

LONDON - The Israeli government is offering Oscar nominees a trip to the Holy Land worth \$55 000.

In every goodie bag this year, alongside an expensive e-cigarette, a fitness retreat and a year’s worth of unlimited Audi car rentals, Oscar nominees will find a voucher for a 10-day trip to Israel, including first-class flights for two and accommodation in a 5-star hotel.

This is the brainchild of Israeli Tourism Minister Yariv Levin, who said that the initiative was intended to allow Hollywood’s opinion makers to “experience the country first hand and not through the media”.

He said: “These are the most senior people in the film industry in Hollywood and leading opinion-formers who we are interested in hosting. Their visit will have enormous resonance among millions of fans and followers, including social media.”

The initiative would cost the Israeli government around £1 million if all those offered the trip decide to take it up. – Jewish Chronicle

Parents can now skip germ-ridden waiting rooms

NETANYA - Your preschooler wakes up with an earache and fever. You tell your boss you’ll be late to work, wangle a paediatrician appointment, bundle up the sick kid, sit in a waiting room full of other sick kids, spend five minutes with the doctor, and leave with a prescription and/or orders to return for a follow-up exam.

All parents loathe this scenario, but Israeli dad and healthcare industry entrepreneur, Dedi Gilad, took the initiative to change it. His vision was a home telemedicine kit to help parents perform standard throat, ear, eye, skin, heart and lung examinations of high enough quality to enable a remote diagnosis by the child’s physician. And it would not be limited only to paediatric patients.

In 2012, Gilad and Ofer Tzadik founded TytoCare and spent nearly three years perfecting the technology and design. The Netanya-based company raised \$18,5 million from investors including US drugstore chain Walgreens, and now is beta-testing its user-friendly kits for home and clinical use.

The telehealth platform and home kit includes a modular device with a stethoscope, otoscope and computer-vision camera, along with smart audiovisual guidance to the user. Exam results are transmitted to the patient’s chosen clinician via a HIPAA-compliant secure connection.

Alternatively, the user can make a

remote appointment with the doctor and perform the exams while seeing and talking to the doctor through Tyto’s video conference feature. - Israel 21c

Cotler at helm of new Raoul Wallenberg Centre

OTTAWA - Irwin Cotler and Stéphane Dion are friends and former parliamentary colleagues, so it was no surprise that former minister of justice met with Dion, the current foreign affairs minister, last week to discuss issues on Cotler’s mind, including, human rights, Iran, and terrorism in Israel.

Cotler, who left parliament last autumn after a distinguished career that included time as attorney general as well, raised issues that are high on the agenda of the new organisation he’s created, the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

The centre is named for the wartime Swedish diplomat who saved hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Nazis. Wallenberg was arrested by Soviet forces in 1945 and disappeared in the Soviet camp system. His fate remains unknown.

Cotler said the centre would continue Wallenberg’s humanitarian legacy and pursue justice. Its mission statement includes opposing anti-Semitism and genocide, promoting human rights and defending political prisoners.

The organisation is an international consortium of parliamentarians, scholars, jurists, human rights advocates, NGOs and students. Its honorary co-chairmen are Nobel Prize winner Elie Wiesel; Supreme Court of Canada Justice Rosalie Abella; former Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson; and Meir Shamgar, former president of Israel’s Supreme Court.

During their meeting, Cotler briefed Dion on several upcoming centre initiatives and raised the issue of Iranian human rights violations. - Canadian Jewish News

New unmanned sea vehicle hits submarines with torpedoes

HAIFA - Elbit Systems unveiled a new, autonomous unmanned surface vehicle (USV) that can wage anti-submarine warfare missions by firing small torpedoes, and detect and blow up underwater mines by sending robots and interceptors deep underwater.

The Seagull autonomous multi-mission USV is a two-vessel system that has been developed over the past three years, Elbit officials said at Haifa

port, where the platform carried out some manoeuvres on the water.

Ofer Ben David, vice-president of Naval Systems Business Line - UAS at the ISTAR Division, described the platform as a “revolution”, adding that no platform like it exists today.

“We are witnessing the proliferation of submarines, both conventional and nuclear, and sea mines. The cost and risk of dealing with these threats is high,” he said.

“We consider the Israel Navy and Defence Ministry to be advanced potential milestone clients,” he said. Other potential clients are in touch with Elbit as well.

“We would not have entered into this if we did not have a business plan, and if this did not cause much interest, and amazement,” Ben David added. - Jerusalem Post

Three Israeli conmen convicted for £80 million scam

LONDON -Three Jewish fraudsters who fleeced investors out of £79,5 million and blew the cash on “Bentleys, yachts and million pound houses” are facing years behind bars.

Spencer Steinberg, 45, Michael Strubel, 53, and Jolan Saunders, 39, claimed they had won a contract to supply electricals to the Olympic Village ahead of the 2012 London Games.

They said Saunders Electrical Wholesalers Limited (SEWL) also supplied goods including trouser presses and kettles to major hotel chains.

But SEWL was just a shabby high street electrical retailer in east London - a “one man and a van operation”.

Victims were persuaded to invest hundreds of thousands over a period of two months so SEWL could meet urgent orders, then paid seemingly sky-high returns.

They were then asked if they would “roll over” their investment for another two months.

The trio used bogus accounts to impress clients into parting with their cash.

Two investors parted with £2 million after being shown fake company invoices that showed they were supplying the Olympic Village.

Others were fooled after Saunders started using doctored invoices from the Park Plaza chain of hotels that suggested they were a major supplier.

The trio was not investigated until the scandal of United States investor and notorious fraudster Bernie Madoff hit the headlines in 2008, jurors heard.

Steinberg and Strubel were unanimously convicted of conspiracy to defraud after a five-month trial at Southwark Crown Court.

They had denied the charges. - Jewish Chronicle.

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Israel and apartheid narrative: SA students join debate in California

**EITAN AROM/JNS.ORG
LOS ANGELES**

About two-dozen people filed into Dodd 175 at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus on a Thursday night – February 4 – scouting out seats and picking at the kosher pizza in the back of the lecture hall. Miyelani Pinini knows the drill. A former student president of the University of Cape Town, she’s attended and even organised her share of free-pizza events.

But now she and a fellow South African student leader were the stars of this one, brought to campus by StandWithUs, a pro-Israel education and advocacy organisation, and Students Supporting Israel, a national network of pro-Israel campus groups.

Having travelled to Israel and the West Bank on the inaugural trip for the South Africa-Israel Forum (SAIF) in January 2015, she and law student Jamie Mithi undertook a whirlwind southern California speaking tour, weighing comparisons between Israel’s treatment of Palestinians and the South African apartheid regime.

“Our apartheid narrative is literally being stolen right under our feet just as our resources have,” Pinini told the lecture hall at UCLA.

Having ridden the tides of campus politics – she was removed as the university’s student president, in part because of her Israel trip – she’s well versed in a political landscape where pro-Palestinian students build solidarity with South Africa’s black majority, winning by default on a playing field where opposing Israel is the norm. She views the connection as illicit.



South African student leader Jamie Mithi speaks on February 4 at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) about the anti-Israel comparison of the Jewish state to apartheid-era South Africa.

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement is well-traversed territory at American colleges, with pro-Palestinian students seeking to cut ties with companies doing business in Israel and pro-Israel students loudly objecting.

On American campuses, despite increased anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incidents in recent years, the chips often stack in favour of pro-Israel students, in part because many universities defer questions about whether and when to divest to the State Department, which stands by Israel despite periodic policy disagreements.

In South Africa, the tables are turned. The ruling party, the African National Congress, accepts BDS as a plank in its platform. There, BDS is government policy.

Natan Pollack, formerly the leader of the South African Union of Jewish Students and director of programme development for SAIF, has been at the brunt of that policy.

Accompanying Mithi and Pinini at UCLA, he recalled an official from the ANC youth organisation spitting

on the ground in front of him and telling him, “effing Jew, bloody kyke, your people are taking over the Middle East, your people are taking over South Africa”.

Many members of the South African student leadership were both anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic, Pollack said. The speakers stood in front of a black board scrawled with the words, “Let’s talk about APARTHEID!!!” Both Pinini and Mithi spoke personally on that topic, having come into contact with the ghosts of South Africa’s racist regime.

For Pinini, one tangible connection is her mother, who after earning a medical degree outside of the country, returned to find that her doctorate was treated as sub-equal.

“She wasn’t allowed to operate on white people’s bodies even though she could save their lives,” she said.

Pinini didn’t know much about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but discussions of divestment and boycott resolutions on her campus led her to take the free trip to Israel.

Watching people of different races mixing in the streets there, she saw

a picture she couldn’t reconcile with what she knew about her country’s history.

“Something clicked in the back of my mind and I said: ‘You know prior to 1994 this was not allowed in South Africa,’” she said. “Black people were not allowed to walk side-by-side with white people.”

Mithi likewise came at the conflict sideways, deciding it would be beneficial to him as a debater (he ranked number one for Africa in the World Universities Public Speaking Championships) to read up.

Originally, the topic was not his strong suit.

“I always used to lose those debates,” he said. “Like consistently I would rank fourth in any debate that had to do with Israel and Palestine.”

He approached students from both sides of the divide to learn more and propose a debate on the issue. He found pro-Israel students ready to participate while pro-Palestinian students told him: “We won’t have that debate.”

A few years later, he was taken aback when students aligned with

the BDS movement disrupted a piano recital on his campus, the University of Witwatersrand because it was hosted by a Jewish organisation.

He decided to take a stand against the impingement of free speech and breakdown of decorum.

“What people immediately assumed is that I’m pro-Israel and anti-Palestine, but I wasn’t even talking about that issue,” he said.

Pithi is a steadfast student of, “I want to hear the other side” type thinking, insisting that his most common response when asked for an opinion is: “I don’t know enough.”

He believes it difficult to question Israel’s right to exist. More generally, he views the Israeli position as defensible, even when he doesn’t go out of his way to defend it.

Pithi’s main critique of the BDS movement is not the substance of the argument, but its form, believing that pro-Palestinian students are poisoning the well for productive and educational dialogue by attacking their opponents personally.

But beyond the rhetoric, he sees a practical difficulty in breaking ties with Israel. Travelling in the Negev, he saw firsthand how Israeli farmers have made the desert bloom.

“Africa has a lot of issues around food security, around water provision, and I was like: ‘We need to hook up with Israel, what’s the hold up?’” he said.

“I was like: ‘These are some skills that my people need,’ and I personally, just from an economic perspective, I wouldn’t boycott Israel, because I need some stuff that’s there. From a selfish motivation angle, I would refuse to boycott.” (JNS.org)

Opinion

South Africa: dark clouds over a Diaspora dream

STEVEN APFEL

If the Jews do one thing well, it’s to imprint their mark on new lands. And if that imprint describes one pattern, it would be some black punishment for their trouble. As dark night follows bright day, this has been the law of exile.

Only to deceive, many domiciles appeared to be the land of G-d’s promise. It would be hard for South African Jews not to have that kind of feeling about the country their forefathers adopted, warts and all.

If Jews were too late on the scene to shape the development of the American West, opportunistic types arrived in time to remake a primitive South Africa. “We built this country with heart and soul.” The slogan from Jewish Report’s 2015 “Annual Jewish Achiever Awards” was no idle blast. From the early magnates until today, business and the sciences have almost been Jewish preserves.

Perhaps home-grown Jews were too busy making their mark to get their hands dirty with politics because, unlike their American counterparts, they never cared to mix it with business. The apartheid era did bring political activists out in droves, but more as communist ideologues than as Jews.

When democracy came in 1994, the transition was better than many had feared; Jews who skipped prematurely to pastures new, missed out on a golden age. Under President Nelson Mandela a Jew could live the old privileged life, now with a clear conscience.

When the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris stood on the inauguration podium next to his friend the president, it marked the peak of Jewish belonging. There’d be a price to pay; the exile was not meant for putting down roots which make a Jew feel that home is where the hearth is.

Two decades later a threatening cloud gathers over the community. Jews fret that heavyweight business clout can’t seem to buy any lobbying power. Muslim interests on the other hand are all over the government like a rash.

Communal leaders perform had to fall back on the path of least resistance by employing two rules of thumb: 1) Do and say nothing that might close government doors on dialogue. 2) Avoid offending the nation by offending its favourite son, Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It was soon made obvious that both sacred cows felt free to treat the community with disdain.

In quick succession the ruling party

hosted and feted a terrible trio: Leila Khalid the old matriarch of terror; Mahmoud Abbas, grand kleptomaniac, inciter and diplomatic thorn in Israel’s body; but more horrendous than both, Khaled Meshaal, the acceptable face of Hamas.

If the government must be appeased, the national icon, Desmond Tutu must be worshipped. Without lifting a finger, the wily cleric can tie the community in knots. Tutu wins contests by grinning while the Jews tear into one another over him.

Jewish palavers, thank you, don’t need provocateurs from the outside. There was the King David School prefect who donned a Palestinian scarf at a debating contest. It came as a rude jolt to a community cock-a-hoop after a mass rally for Israel.

The boy apologised. His statement was like the keffiyeh he’d worn, wild and posturing and oozing contradiction. Rather than tear the statement to pieces, parts of the community tore the boy, his family, and the school to pieces.

Israel-haters were quick to capitalise. Five hundred Jews found it in their capricious conscience to sign a letter in support of the boy. The ANC, on warm terms with Iran and other beacons of enlightenment, lionised their big-hearted, principled Jew

while King David Schools worked manfully to dampen the big Jew bash.

Today it is difficult for Jews not to feel the weight of living in South Africa. One problem is that President Jacob Zuma and cronies act like Ali Baba and his forty thieves.

Another problem is that social and economic indicators are heading to hell in a basket. But one development weighs above all: that old bogeyman has come back to haunt a Diaspora community. Baiting and banging away at Israel is a device for diverting danger or gaining votes. Ask Europe. Without a bogeyman how would inept ANC power-huggers turn minds away from the ills they cook up daily in their potjie?

Meanwhile they’ve put members under a travel ban. The penalty for going to Israel, expulsion from the party, is not one to be taken lightly when ANC members can live off the fat of the land without doing an honest day’s work. So, comrades keep blinkers on while they knock away at the “illegal apartheid” state, otherwise known by the swearword “Israel”.

Brazen BDS tactics are another poke in the community abdomen. If life for Jews on campus is not dangerous, it’s not comfortable either. Physical attacks are bad enough. Token

assaults on rules and values that Jews hold dear also have the power to shock.

When activists contrived to sneak a pig’s head onto a counter at Woolworths, the image cut deep to Jewish nerve roots. To make life hotter still, BDS has formed a triumvirate with the press. The development was inevitable after the premier press group in the land was bought by a Muslim affiliated with the ruling party.

Throughout, the community has been kept on the right side of pessimism by an unlikely bright spot. Except for a long ago fire bomb lobbed at a Jewish book shop in Cape Town, the terror in Europe has kept away... all the more remarkable given that terrorist groups run camps in the empty spaces of the Karoo.

Maybe our government turning a blind eye is a blessing: why would jihadists mess on the doorstep of an accommodating host?

If you look for a silver lining in the dark cloud, it peeks out tenderly and intermittently, as if not to give the Jews in exile, not even at the bottom of Africa, false hope.

• *Steve Apfel directs The Writing Artists’ Room, offering creative ideas and content to corporate clients. His book, Enemies of Zion, is due out in 2016.*

Seven reasons South Africans invest in Cyprus

More and more people want to acquire permanent residency in Europe to secure a “Plan B” for themselves and their families. And Cyprus, a former British colony, full EU member and not part of Greece (!), currently has the most attractive residency programme on offer.

Purchasing a residential property for at least €300 000 (+ VAT), qualifies the main applicant, the spouse and all dependent children up to age 25 to secure permanent residency status, as well as obtain Schengen travel visas.

Cyprus is a very popular choice not only because of the affordable investment entry-level to secure residency, but also because of the following seven benefits:

- Cyprus and Israel have strong ties in the natural gas industry. Cyprus, Greece and Israel recently discussed forming a trilateral committee to assess building a pipeline between Israel and Cyprus and on to Greece for gas exports to Europe. This is going to generate huge amounts of revenue.
- Cyprus is enjoying enormous foreign investment: In the last two years over €2 billion worth of property sales were made to foreigners via the residency and citizenship programmes; Attaq Ltd (JSE-listed) invested €195 million into two shopping malls; Wilbur Ross (USA billionaire)

- invested €400 million into the Bank of Cyprus; and an Egyptian businessman invested €200 million into the development of a new marina.
- The whole family can get EU passports in three months’ time via Cyprus’ “Citizenship through Investment” programme - and dependent children up to 28 years of age, also qualify. This is the quickest way to get unlimited access to Europe for life!
- Properties in Cyprus offer excellent value for money when compared to other European countries - especially homes right on or near to The Med. The lush and beautiful western side of the country is similar to the Western Cape and enjoys the biggest demand and highest growth.
- The lifestyle is similar to South Africa: The

golf courses are world-class, the countryside is breathtakingly beautiful and Cyprus has 57 blue-flag status beaches, the cleanest seas in the Med and a mountain range where it snows for three months. This is a country for enjoying and exploring.

- No inheritance tax: On your death you can dispose of your assets to your loved ones without having to pay the Cypriot government any tax. This is advantageous for legacy planning.
- There are no social problems in Cyprus: No car guards, shanty towns or people living below the poverty line; and because of this, Cyprus has huge appeal as a destination for relocation, retirement, holiday-making and investment.

Some other attractions that Cyprus offers are:

- Being a former British colony, there is no language barrier - everyone speaks English and all the documentation is in English;
- You can rent out your property to earn a Euro-based income; and some properties come with a rental guarantee for long-term rentals;

- Low cost of living: It is a lot cheaper to live in Cyprus than in South Africa even with a volatile exchange rate. Monthly living costs are a fraction of those in SA and there is a lot more income left at month end.
- Euro-accredited education: Your children will have access to top universities and world-class education facilities with a multitude of post- and undergraduate degrees available, giving them a distinct advantage when they enter the global job market;
- Europe on your doorstep: Cyprus has two international airports and several marinas, which means getting across to and from Europe is easy and inexpensive;
- First World medical facilities: You have access to very affordable healthcare with highly qualified doctors and specialists and a multitude of first-class hospitals and medical centres.

Cypriot Realty is a pioneer in actively and consistently promoting the opportunities in Cyprus and has successfully been doing this from their Cape Town and Sandton offices since 2008. As a result, we are recognised and respected as southern Africa’s authoritative investment specialist for promoting Cyprus as an ideal destination for acquiring permanent residency/citizenship, property investment, immigration/retirement and starting a European-based business. Contact us for a confidential meeting to discuss how Cyprus can fit in with your offshore plans - we will assist and guide you every step of the way to realise your Plan B.

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The story of the Drom Afrika

This article, by Issie Granoth, appeared as a “Guest Column” in The Jerusalem Post in 1997 and is reprinted with kind permission of the newspaper.

*The Drom Afrika set sail from Cape Town for Palestine in 1947. The ship had been procured by the Jewish Maritime League and converted from a minesweeper into a fishing trawler. Among the 17-man crew were seven young Jewish lads, determined to reach Palestine despite the ban on immigration by the Mandate administration. This is the story by one of them, a former Capetonian, **Issie Granoth** (who died recently), then known as Issie Greenberg.*

●

In May 1947, the Drom Afrika set out from Cape Town for Haifa. The little ship sailed with the aspirations, hopes and prayers of the founders or the Jewish Maritime League and the Jewish Community of South Africa, in that she would help to promote the building of the Yishuv in a way that had been closed to Jews for centuries.

During the Second World War the ship, a 500-tonner, served as a mine sweeper and cruised at 11 knots under good conditions. The crew was a motley lot: our skipper was Danish, our chief engineer Norwegian and our second engineer English. The rest of the 17-man crew were South African and included seven young Jews whose fervent wish was to make Eretz Yisrael their home. The State of Israel was then but a dream.

Of these, only Chaim “Solly” Chait had been to sea before. At 16 he had taken his brother Solly’s identity document and run away to join the wartime merchant navy in the hope of making his way to Palestine. After many hardships he returned to Pretoria in time to hear of the Drom Afrika.

He immediately came to Cape Town and signed on. We all belonged to or sympathised with one of the Zionist youth movements. Sam Gross joined us for the first stage of the trip to Mossel Bay. A crowd of well-wishers came to the docks to see us off. Hatikvah was sung and hope was in all our hearts.

By nightfall the wind had risen to gale force. The little ship rolled and pitched as she struggled through mountainous waves and howling winds. At midnight I went up on watch. Water poured into the tiny fo’c’sle [the section of the upper deck at the bow forward of the foremast] where 10 of us bunked in tiers around the mess table. Lines had been made fast on deck to haul oneself, battered by waves coming over the bows and side of the ship, across the short distance of deck from fo’c’sle to galley and then to the bridge.

The bosun [petty officer in charge of the ship’s riggings, anchors, cables and deck crew] gave me the course to steer. I grabbed the wheel, and watched the compass pin. With luck I got the hang of it and managed to keep on course.

Meanwhile, a drama was unfolding in the engine room. The pumps were not working and the engine room floor was awash with water. If the fire was extinguished by the rising water, we would have no steam and the ship would drift helplessly onto the rocks off Mossel Bay. Since we had sailed on the National Day of Norway, the chief engineer had celebrated with gusto and was lying on his bunk in a stupor! The other engineers were hardly in better condition. All available hands were called to bail from the hold with buckets and long ropes.

The bosun and I came off watch at four in the morning to join the others. The stoke-hole was hot and we stood knee-deep in the oily bilge water, lurching with the heaving of the vessel. One could stay below for only a short while without being sick. Before dawn a hand pump was rigged and eventually we made it to Mossel Bay.

Arrival of the Exodus when the Drom Afrika was in port.



After repairs we sailed for Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban. The Jewish communities in these ports of call received the Drom Afrika with enthusiasm and warm hospitality. But our troubles were far from over. At each port we had repairs. Sometimes we would leave harbour only to return within a few hours for more repairs. Most of us, even the old salts, would be seasick for the first four days out of every port. We experienced even worse storms going through the Mozambique Channel, but our spirits were high and we sailed with enthusiasm and anticipation.

There are few pleasures in life that compare to seeing a sunrise at sea after standing in the small cosy world of the bridge, ploughing through the dark sea, stars fanning out over the sky as the ship rolls matron-like through the swell, and a reassuring rhythmical throb of engines below. We were on our way to the Promised Land. After Lourenco Marques, the heat and humidity drove us out of the unventilated fo’c’sle. Clothing turned green. We staked out shelter on deck and I made myself comfortable under the life boat. At Beira we took on water and sailed for Mombasa. Again several days were spent on repairs. We launched the life boat - a very difficult operation - and sailed in the lagoon enjoying a rare spell of leisure.

The next port of call was Aden. Schools of porpoises frequently accompanied us on our way, showing off a wonderful repertoire of tricks. Often shoals of flying fish would take off, scintillating in the sun and sometimes a few would land on deck.

Aden was dry and ashen, grey goats wandered aimlessly through the streets. In the evening the townspeople brought their beds to the docks to sleep. Once more we took on water and sailed up the Red Sea. On a calm moonless night we ran aground on a sandbar. The engines were flung into full astern with such alacrity that we came off the bank almost immediately.

At Port Suez, a pilot came aboard and we took our place in the convoy going up the Canal. I had first met “Palestinians” 18 months before, at the Air Force base at Shamdur across the lake, while waiting to return to South Africa after the war. Their

spirit and zest made me a Zionist without having read a line of Herzl. I then decided to return on aliyah. A short call at Port Said and off on the last leg.

When the sun rose the following day, we were sailing up the coast of Eretz Yisrael towards Haifa. While it had been an extraordinary voyage for all of us, for the seven Jewish crew members the emotions were profound. It seemed that we had yearned for this moment for generations. This was a homecoming made more poignant by the hardships of our voyage and the fact that Eretz Yisrael was still forbidden to us by the British. As we approached Haifa, our captain was in doubt what the local flag was, so we hoisted the Zionist flag. Immediately a police launch shot out to investigate and made us take it down. Thus we entered Haifa; the Carmel benign in sunshine.

The Drom Afrika anchored near a line of a dozen derelict ships. This was an honour as those ships had brought the illegals home. They looked pathetic and it was incredible that they could have crossed the Mediterranean with such a heavy freight of suffering. The British would not grant us shore leave so we stayed aboard the Drom Afrika, looked longingly at Haifa and the Carmel, and listened to the noises from the town. After more repairs and some delays we set out on our first fishing trip. Thus we learned what hard life deep-sea fishermen lead.

As soon as the huge net had been cast and the trawl doors had spread the net-like wings under the water, anyone off-watch would bunk down. When the order for the trawl-up came, everyone was at the net manhandling it into the boat. If nets were torn they had to be repaired and we all worked at it. The first trawling expedition lasted five days and we totalled six hours sleep. We caught very little fish but miles of net were repaired. On the second trip we almost lost our propeller.

The Drom Afrika sailed slowly back to Haifa, then on to Alexandria in Egypt to repair the propeller and scrape her bottom. We arrived in the middle of a cholera epidemic and spent a month in Alexandria anchored in the bay, on constant guard against pirates who often boarded the ships there.

We returned to Haifa and were at our

mooring when the Exodus was towed into port and the 5 000 survivors of the Holocaust transferred to three British ships to be taken back to the camps in Germany which they had so recently left. I learned afterwards that all eventually made their way back to Israel.

At night Haifa harbour was alive with activity. Police launches patrolled the harbour dropping depth charges against Jewish frogmen. Charges went off with a tremendous clang against the hull of the ship at intervals all through the night. Searchlights constantly swept the harbour. Despite all that, at least one British ship used for transporting Jews to Cyprus was sunk at the wharf.

We had been aboard the Drom Afrika for six months when we set out for our last fishing trip. We left Haifa in the afternoon. Shortly after we returned from the trip, five of the Jewish crew were taken off by the Hagana and replaced with crew from Kibbutz Sde Yam. A month or two later “Solly” Chait and Sam Wulfson were also taken off, and not long after joined a newly-formed paratrooper unit. The War of Independence was upon us. Sam, an ex air-gunner in the SAAF, had begun a great morale booster aboard ship. He lost a leg in the War of Independence, after which he settled on Moshav Habonim. He later died in South Africa.

Chaim Chait settled in Timorim and was killed on Reserve duty when his parachute failed to open. “Piet” Groenewald joined Kibbutz Ma’ayan Baruch.

Tuvia Ozen, Yaakov Shirk, Ben Hayam Hirshon and I joined Kibbutz Shuval in the Negev. Tuvia died in South Africa; Yaakov lives on Moshav Timorim, and Hirshon returned to South Africa.

My last contact with Drom Afrika was in 1948 during the War of Independence. Returning from Czechoslovakia on the aircraft accompanying Spitfires flying to Israel, I learned that the Drom Afrika, now serving legally in the Israeli Navy, was somewhere below us ready to give aid and succour. There are other ways of getting to Israel today - eight hours by El Al can only be a moving experience. I am grateful I came with the Drom Afrika.

KDVP selects its Diller Teen Fellows for 2016



Yakira Shepherd (madricha); Julia Stenz; Alexa Friedman; Danielle Bortz; Leanne Urdang; headmaster Andrew Baker; Samuel Strous; Doron Goldsmith; Rabbi Mendel Rabinowitz; Bruce Nozaic; and Hanna Ben-Moshe (front).

HANNA BEN-MOSHE

Last Sunday the Diller Teen Fellows Programme for 2016 was launched at King David Victory Park. The project focuses on developing young Jewish leaders in the areas of identity, leadership, Zionism and tikkun olam.

Through diversity in different groups, the delegates learn the values of peoplehood and the importance of Jewish unity.

Diller’s main goal is to connect Jewish

teenagers from around the world and create a global dialogue that will strengthen the bonds between the Diaspora and Israel.

Six of King David Victory Park’s grade 11s were selected to join this leadership programme, which is organised by the Israel Centre.

The KDVP delegates for this year are: Danielle Bortz; Alexa Friedman; Doron Goldsmith; Julia Stenz; Samuel Strous; and Leanne Urdang.

Experiencing the wonder of books



SHEVA MESSIAS

Four-year-old Olivia Levy is so excited with the new library at King David Pre-Primary School Linksfield! She just couldn’t resist feeling on top of the world and reaching for the stars.

At a time when people are so drawn to technology, there is still tremendous value in reading books. Not only do children gain knowledge, increase vocabulary or enjoy the magic of stories, but bonding and warm relationships develop between the child and the storyteller, be it the teacher, parent, grandparent or caregiver. The children are very excited to be using the library and taking books home once a week.

YC Primary announces 2016 house and vice-captains



OWN CORRESPONDENT

Yeshiva College Primary School has elected its new house and vice-captains for 2016, for Tzion, Israel and Judah.

Pictured are: Gavi Lacob; Yehuda Raff; Yoni Porter; Jonathan Hazi; Daniel Ezakowitz; Jonathan Lewis; and Joseph Beer, principal. The girls are Rachel Bolel; Sasha Machanik; Liora Rosenberg; Ariella Feinblum; Noa Goldstein; and Yakira Zulberg.

Are your children being equipped for a digital future?

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Your child is receiving an academic education at a great school - but have you ever wondered if the curriculum taught at school is enough to prepare them for the jobs that will be relevant in the future?

According to statistics, “coding” is the must-have job skill for the future. Children today are facing a digital future, so learning the language of computers (digital literacy) is becoming a critical skill for them.

King David Victory Park Primary has entered into a partnership with Think Ahead and has initiated an extracurricular mural called CodeSpace for primary school learners from grade 5 - 7. CodeSpace is designed to teach the basics of computer programming and computational thinking.

Facilitators from Think Ahead work with groups of children to teach and guide them to become creators of technology. Using block-based programming iPad apps, children apply coding basics to create their own games, art, animations and programme robotic toys.

Learning to code develops skills such as critical thinking, collaboration and computational thinking. The programme is fun, interactive, inspiring and builds confidence.

There is a global drive to teach children to code, even if they don’t go into it as a career, because it impacts every profession in the 21st century.



Ethan Goldberg; Ethan Lewis; Joshua Beira; Liron Krawitz; and facilitator Mineze Grobler.

Little ones added spice to their art



JENNY MILLER

In keeping with Sydenham Pre-Primary School’s theme of The Five Senses, the children created their own awesome, spicy-scented sensory paint by mixing spices instead of paint!

Before adding any water to the spices, they smelled them first. Cinnamon, paprika, turmeric and curry powder were mixed with water and as the kids did their painting, the aroma of the different spices permeated the air.

“Messy Play” was made up of shaving cream mixed with vanilla essence. The children had loads of fun spreading, feeling and smelling. This activity stimulated both the senses of smell and touch.

And not to be outdone during baking, cinnamon and sugar were added to enhance the flavour of the challah dough and delicious babkes were the result.

Not only was their sense of smell stimulated, but they could touch, see and taste the dough.

‘The Right to be Human’ project launched at KDHSL

CARYN HOROWITZ AND JESSA MARX

King David High School Linksfield launched a groundbreaking project “The Right to be Human” at an assembly last week Friday with Wendy Kahn, national director of the SAJBD, as the keynote speaker.

Andre Croucamp, of MindBurst which develops courses to foster critical and creative thinking, outlined this new project the school is embarking on. It will encompass classroom lessons, workshops and activities that focus on what it means to be human.

The student leaders presented a video detailing what each committee will be doing in the school over the coming months in line with this theme. These include exploring: the right to be Jewish and the responsibilities that come with it; dealing with anti-Semitism on the sports field; the preservation of water and the environment in general; and the need to look after ourselves holistically by way of a balanced lifestyle.

Posters were put up around the school exhibiting some of the Holocaust art of David Labkovski who



Principal of KDHL Lorraine Srage; Academic Head, Dino Angelou; and educational psychologist and initiator of the programme, Caryn Horowitz.

was imprisoned in Siberia for eight years and was released to find the Nazis had destroyed his hometown of Vilna. His emotive artwork will be on show on May 26 along with works that will be produced by learners at the school. The final exhibition will be curated by the grade 9s and will reflect the school’s interpretation of the theme.

This process will allow the King David Linksfield learners the opportunity to look deeply into themselves, as well as others “and see the unifying factor that binds us all: our humanity”.

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Nelson Mandela - the Legacy of Friendship Dialogue

MARC LUBNER
CEO AFRIKA TIKKUN

The legacy of Nelson Mandela, once universally esteemed, has been brought into question by those who feel transformation is lacking, some 22 years after our transition to democracy - that he made economic compromises that allowed white wealth and privilege to be protected to the detriment of development and real transformation.

Outreach organisation Afrika Tikkun owes so much to Nelson Mandela. While the questioning and debate of his legacy is excellent for our nation and a sign that we are maturing out of the blind adoration of yesteryear, we feel it necessary to also defend aspects of his legacy that should always be upheld.

We are talking about the very simple, necessary heritage of friendship that he modelled and inspired South African citizens in.

With all the hate speech that has recently been unleashed on social media platforms, we could really do with some of that now.

South Africa needs a particular kind of peace - not the kind that is the absence of unrest but the kind that is grounded in friendship.

To quote Aristotle: "Friendship would seem to hold cities together." How else can people or groups of people between whom there has been hatred and significant harm, now share the plough and build a nation?

It would be a shallow and insincere transformation if our economy was not transformed. In South Africa, apartheid and the enmity of races was a structurally entrenched and legally ratified opportunity for one group to enrich itself at the expense of the other.

To quote Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu: 'When the missionaries came to Africa, they had the Bible and we had the land. They said, 'let us pray'. We closed our eyes. When we opened them, we had the Bible and they had the land.'

But how sustainable is this transformation if across the races there was not concern for one another's well-being?

On February 11, we entered the 27th year since Mandela was freed from prison. His long walk to freedom included 27 years in prison.

"The recent eruption of racist hate speech, a number of them with strong anti-Semitic sentiments, comes 21 years after transformation.

It is cause for concern for us as an organisation working with a hugely diverse staff to bring social and economic transformation among the poorest of the poor.

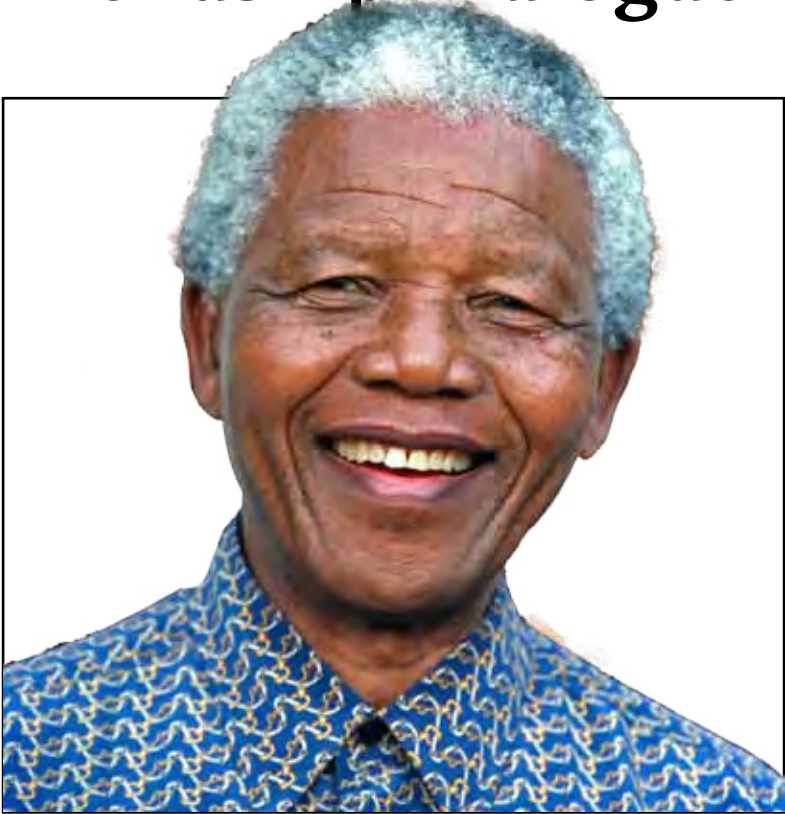
Aristotle again: "In tyranny, there is the least amount of friendship."

Perhaps the most wonderful part of this re-evaluation of Mandela's legacy is the opportunity for the nation to build a new, equitable, and honest culture of (civic) friendship.

But those are things that Mandela gave us - there's no good then, in throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Bertie Lubner, my father and one of the founders of Afrika Tikkun, enjoyed a famous friendship with Nelson Mandela. He has a legacy of his own in this respect, being the person who in 1992 was instrumental in orchestrating and bringing Nelson Mandela, FW de Klerk and Mangosuthu Buthelezi together on the same platform for the first time.

But it was a friendship that extended beyond political significance, or even the significance it had to us at Afrika Tikkun, Nelson Mandela being our patron-in-chief.

Through his influence the Lubners started Afrika Tikkun together with Herby Rosenberg and the late Chief



Rabbi Cyril Harris, which today reaches over 16 500 beneficiaries every year with a sustainable solution for youth unemployment.

We remember Mandela today not only because it is worth remembering, but because we want to build on the idea that friendship can shape a nation. In a just society, citizens feel

a friendship with one another. They share values, goals and a sense of justice. They are concerned for one another's well-being.

To every utterance of hate speech, it is important to respond with the pursuit of justice. It is equally important to uphold the ideal of friendship, where possible.

World News in Brief

Torah scrolls set ablaze in the Gush Etzion region

JERUSALEM - Suspected Palestinian arsonists set fire to Torah scrolls last week Friday in a synagogue located in Givat Sorek, within the Gush Etzion region of Judea and Samaria.

The Givat Sorek outpost was established atop a hill overlooking the site where three Jewish teens (Gilad Shaar, Eyal Yifrach, and Naftali Frenkel) were kidnapped by Hamas terrorists in the summer of 2014.

The vandalised synagogue, comprising a prayer tent that housed the Sifrei Torah, was named after

the three boys, who were murdered soon after their abduction.

Investigators found a trail of evidence leading to the nearby Palestinian village of Halhul, prompting the authorities to conclude that Palestinian perpetrators were behind the arson attack.

Israeli President Reuven Rivlin described the sights from the scene of the arson attack as "heart-wrenching".

"The affront to the sanctity of our people hurts even more when it happens in a place that commemorates those who were viciously murdered," Rivlin said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wrote on his Facebook page: "I expect the international community to condemn the desecration of a synagogue,

an act that is the result of incessant Palestinian incitement." (JNS.org)

Iran's ballistic missile programme will become stronger: army chief

TEHRAN - Iran plans to continue developing its missile programme, the commander-in-chief of the Iranian Army has said.

"Our missile programme is not a threat against our friends, but it is a threat against our enemies. Israel should understand what it means," Maj

Gen Ataollah Salehi said, Iran's Fars News Agency reported last week Thursday.

Although last summer's nuclear deal did not lift sanctions against Iran's missile programme, Salehi said the programme "will become stronger. We do not pay attention and do not implement resolutions against Iran, and this is not a violation of the nuclear deal."

Most international sanctions on Iran were lifted by the nuclear deal, but a United Nations Security Council resolution barred the country from working on ballistic missiles for eight years. Ballistic missiles are a delivery mechanism for nuclear weapons. Iran, however, already violated the UN resolution by conducting a missile test last October. (JNS.org)

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Ari will be in South Africa from **7-15 February**, please email him to make an appointment.



JAWITZ
PROPERTIES

Technology’s not the culprit, but how people use it



MARGOT COHEN

The days of a man on a bicycle throwing your newspaper over the fence into your driveway, may be numbered, says Professor Anton Harber (pictured), Caxton Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Wits University.

Speaking at a meeting of the Union of Jewish Women, Harber extolled the virtues of new media like Facebook, Twitter and Google. The downside, he said, is that digital media has no gatekeepers or filtering, as does conventional journalism.

Harber pointed out that every wave of new media has brought a moral panic and highlighted social anxiety about how it could change our lives.

In the seventies when television arrived in South Africa, there was a fear that too much watching would turn us into idiots. He said that the instinct is to blame technology but that actually, it’s the way people use it that matters.

Use of the Internet has helped us widen our horizons. How we manage it or use it is what is important. New media is here to stay, so use it intelligently, posits Harber.

Do our children read less now? Evidence points to the contrary, says Harber. Young people absorb more news than the older generation, he believes. They define for themselves what they want to read and digest the news. They read shorter pieces or watch videos; they are quite well-informed.

Social media usage widens our choice. Boundaries are crossed easily reading international newspapers on line. We can choose which papers to read. All citizens now have the power to enter national conversations.

So, what are the negatives?

The possible promotion of racism or anti-

Harber pointed out that every wave of new media has brought a moral panic and highlighted social anxiety about how it could change our lives.

Semitism is a negative, he says. It can also be parochial because Facebook only talks to friends. But one has the power to cut them off or unfollow undesirable views.

He says common law deals adequately with violence or anti-Semitism, “so we don’t need censorship”. Net neutrality - an argument that the Internet be treated like the phone, rather than radio or newspapers, has arisen.

Harber pointed out that some companies are trying to get preferential treatment on the Internet, where diversity is the key.

He was “forcibly struck” by the capacity of the state to control when he was in China and could not access Google, Twitter or Facebook.

His concerns are that there is no business model for journalism on the Internet.



Traditional advertising no longer works. Free speech is important, but the Internet is hard to sensor or control.

The gathering of information costs money, and it is hard to get people to understand that they must pay for it. Yet, says Harber, there has been a boom in investigative reporting in South Africa. Why? Philanthropy pays for investigative journalism in some cases. This is, however, unsustainable and will have to change.

Ways to manage and select information is important. Being discerning and checking sources must continue. Media awareness should be taught at schools, he maintains.

Harber is leaving the relative comfort and safety of Wits for eNews Channel Africa where he will spend two years.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies



Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

Throughout its history, and particularly since South Africa’s transition to democracy in 1994, the SAJBD has been involved in various public policy initiatives aimed at combating all forms of racism, discrimination and the like. This included providing significant input into the South African Constitution of 1996 and the subsequent Promotion of Equality & Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (2000).

A few weeks ago, the Department of Justice released a draft “National Action Plan to combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2016 - 2021)”. A general invitation has been issued to civil society and the public at large to submit comments and suggestions, which will be considered when taking the drafting process through to the next stage. The central purpose of the National Action Plan (NAP) is to provide our country with “a comprehensive policy framework to address racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at both a private and public level”.

The intention is not to replace existing laws and policies, but rather to be “complementary to existing legislation, policies and programmes which address equality, equity and discrimination”.

In practical terms, it seeks to set up new structures and improve existing ones, through which incidents of racism, racial discrimination and intolerance can be monitored, reported and responded to.

In fulfilling our core function of protecting

the Jewish community, we rely on existing legislation as well as State structures such as the SA Human Rights Commission, the Equality Courts as well as the Criminal Courts.

It is therefore vitally important, not only to our community but to all South Africans, that these institutions continue to be effective, and strengthened. As the traumatic events of the past few months have shown, no one grouping in this country can regard themselves as being immune from racially charged abuse. The Board is currently analysing the draft NAP and will be furnishing detailed submissions within the prescribed timeframes for doing so.

Think before you Tweet

Overcoming racism in our society requires legislation, including having in place effective vehicles through which to enforce it. However, while laws and penalties help to discourage the public expression of racist sentiment, they do little to eradicate the underlying prejudice that gives rise to such incidents.

For this to begin to happen, there has to be a profound shift in the way people - as individuals - think about and treat each other.

Last week, SAJBD National Vice-President Zev Krengel was centrally involved in the launch of an inspiring initiative by the organisation Active Citizens, the aim of which is to encourage people at all times to respect the dignity of their fellow citizens, even (and indeed, especially) when disagreeing with them. It is very much this culture of respect for those who differ that has been severely undermined of late in this country, and which it is incumbent on all of us to fully restore.

• Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday 12:00 - 13:00

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

A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

Simple morning routines: Counting our blessings

Think for a moment about your early-morning routine. What happens when you wake up and prepare to start your day? You may dash to the shower, hurriedly brush your teeth, comb your hair and get dressed.

Some people put on makeup and some even eat breakfast before they leave home. It’s safe to say most of us have at least one cup of coffee to fortify ourselves for the day ahead. But for all of us preparing to leave the house is generally a rushed, very routine affair.

For the 120 residents at the Selwyn Segal Centre it is not.



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Michael Sieff
Group CEO

In fact, each deliberate step of the way, each day of the week, is a learning experience.

Residents are housed together in small units and grouped according to gender, age, level of functionality and behavioural needs. There are nine such units at Selwyn Segal - four male and five female - each named after a city or area in Israel: Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, etc.

The family-focused atmosphere in the units is designed to mimic life in a normal home and is where residents live, eat, sleep and learn personal grooming and life and social skills under the supervision of care workers. The day programme begins with teaching toilet routines, how to brush their teeth, bathe, dress, make their beds and set the table for breakfast.

The results of this programme have been very encouraging in promoting independence and good habits. The repetition is beneficial against regression as residents age. A vase of fresh flowers on the dining room table communicates their sense of pride in “home and family”.

After grooming and breakfast, residents leave their units. Those able to attend protected employment activities at Kadimah, The Junction, or the Selwyn Segal workshop, either walk up there or take the bus to Kadimah. They are given packed lunches and snacks and return to Selwyn

Segal in time for afternoon tea.

With or without protected employment opportunities, the programme is a full one with daily religious, exercise, stimulation and recreational programmes. There is much to learn and enjoy: current affairs, Jewish festivals, general knowledge, movies, sports, outings, music, swimming and preparation for Shabbos on Fridays.

So, when I’m running late and rushing to get ready to leave home, I take a second to appreciate that the routine comes naturally and easily to me. Let’s count our blessings and take nothing for granted.

May our partnership continue to thrive. Feedback@jhbchev.co.za

This column is paid for by the Chevrah Kadisha

Dafina - it’s a slow-cooked Moroccan stew



SABRINA OVADIA

Dafina is an iconic, slow-cooked Moroccan stew served especially on Shabbat. It has a long history and no two are the same.

For centuries, Jewish women around the world have prepared some kind of similar dish each week, usually prepping the ingredients Friday to be served for lunch the next day. Although recent generations have immigrated around the globe to different countries, the tradition of this classic dish has prevailed and is close to each family’s heart.

There is no right or wrong way to make this dish, and recipes vary from city to city and family to family. Jewish houses are distinguished by their dafina and what is included in it. There is even a legend that noble rabbis can sense the peace and holiness of the house from the smell of the dafina!

The most commonly found ingredients are potatoes, sweet potato, chicken, meat, rice, barley, chickpeas and, of course, a famous golden brown egg.

Many recipes call for each item to be placed in individual cooking bags. Everyone adds their personal touch and favourite spices; some of the most commonly used spices include paprika, cinnamon, cumin, honey, dates and garlic. I even have a family member who throws in a whole peach, pit and all.

Like the mothers and grandmothers who came before me, I have adapted the recipe handed down to my own family’s taste and cook the rice separately. It may not look like much, but there are few things that warm the soul quite like a hot dafina on a cold winter day, and I invite you to add your own family’s take on this beloved dish.

Moroccan dafina

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds (1kg) flank meat, on the bone
- 4 pieces of chicken, on the bone
- 12 large red potatoes, peeled
- 2 cans of chickpeas, rinsed
- 4 eggs (in the shell)
- 4 pitted dates
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon of honey
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3-4 garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil

Directions:

Arrange the chickpeas on the bottom of the crockpot. Add the potatoes around the interior walls of the pot. Place the meat, chicken, eggs and pitted dates in the centre.

Add all the spices and mix very well but gently to keep each ingredient in its place. Pour in enough water to cover everything. The top of the water should hit around 1/4 inch (6.35mm) above the ingredients. Set the crockpot at a medium temperature and set to cook for 24 hours. Sephardic tradition is to not add any water, even boiling, to the crockpot on Shabbat. (The Noshier via JTA)

• Sabrina Ovadia was born and raised in Casablanca, Morocco, and grew up watching her mother and grandmother create delicious dishes from scratch. Check out her blog [thebeeskitchen.com](#).

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south african
Jewish Report

Israel trip an eye-opener for South African clergymen

ANT KATZ

A partnership between the Jerusalem-based Bridges for Peace organisation, the SA-based South African Friends of Israel (SAFI) and the Cape Council of the SA Zionist Federation, recently facilitated a trip for a diverse group of South African Christian clergymen of various denominations to Israel.

At the end of the 11-day trip - which ended last week - it was clear it would indelibly alter the perceptions of the 20 delegates, both spiritually and politically, of the Holy Land.

From the moment the group arrived at Ben-Gurion Airport, says SAFI executive director Gavi Sacks, they were unanimously impressed with the interpersonal respect the airport workers showed to all religions.

“They seemed to be surprised that they were in such in a safe space,” explains Sacks. One delegate even told him that he had been surprised to see a Muslim family waiting for a flight.

While the delegates did not expect the same environment to exist in the country as a whole, they were quickly to find that there was no discrimination in Israel at all. “From shopping centres to buses, even walking in the streets,” says Sacks, seeing people sharing was a surprise to the South Africans.

Simple, everyday experiences like people of different faiths sitting in the same restaurant and particularly in mixed groups at the same table, was astonishing to them. It was not what they had expected.

Their first stop was at Neot Kedumim, a biblical nature reserve between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. They were overwhelmed by walking on stones and soil that was there in biblical times. There were artefacts such as old

The group of South Africans in Israel.



cisterns that had been used to water gardens that still bear biblical fruits like pomegranates, figs, grapes and olives that were taken to the Temple. The visitors were “overwhelmed” to be where people of the Old and New Testament had been, says Sacks.

They also saw all of the trees mentioned in the Bible, such as Cedars, Cyprus, and Gophers (whose wood, says the Bible, was used to build Noah’s Ark). “There was a deep sense of religion,” says Sacks, that the religious sites they were to see were a reality, and not just pages in a book.

The South Africans thoroughly enjoyed visiting the New Testament holy sites such as the Garden of the Tomb, where Jesus’ first resurrection was said to have taken place. It reduced one of the clergymen to tears and he gathered his associates for an emotional prayer session.

They saw WIZO’s Ironi Careira youth centre in Tel Aviv, a place of safety for children from all backgrounds at risk, who are offered a new

lease on life by gaining skills that enrich them forever.

While they were amazed that anyone was able to go to the Western Wall, which has no religious restrictions, for example, the Temple Mount is blockaded by Israeli police who allow only Muslims to go there “out of respect to the Muslims and safety for anyone else”.

The clergymen visited Christ’s birthplace, Bethlehem, in the West Bank. Pastor Naeem Kouri, a Christian Palestinian living in Bethlehem, told them how he and his community faced discrimination and had often been threatened.

He himself had once even been shot. He said the tiny remaining Christian community in Bethlehem lived in peril as their mainly-Muslim neighbours saw them as an enemy. The Christian community was dwindling fast. Not long ago it represented 85 per cent of the town’s inhabitants. Today, he said, they were a meagre 15 per cent.

The SA visitors were fascinated by what they saw at the two medical facilities they visited – many of the patients were not Israeli.

This picture was taken outside the Emek Medical Centre in Afula, a sprawling complex close to the borders of the West Bank, Syria and Jordan. The group was hosted by Dr Larry Rich (front row with umbrella) and their guides for the tour were SAFI’s Gavi Sacks (front row extreme left), the Cape Fed’s Julie Berman (front row extreme right) and facilitator Bridges for Peace’s Chris Eden (back row, centre, without cap).

Inside Emek Hospital, says Eden, the South Africans couldn’t stop talking about how the patient-mix removed all semblance of interracial enmity between patients, staff and families. “Everyone interacts with everyone,” says Sacks and the hospital takes in patients from neighbouring territories such as Syria as well.

The other hospital they visited was the Tel Aviv-based Save a Child’s Heart at the Wolfson Medical Centre which has provided life-changing surgery for over 4 000 children. Fifty per cent of their patients come from the Palestinian Territories, 40 per cent from Africa and 10 per cent from the rest of the world.

Both hospitals train people from neighbouring regions in the Jewish belief that tikkun olam includes everybody.



Other important religious sights they visited included Caiaphas’ house, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives, Masada and the Dead Sea.

The South Africans found Haifa amazing. They couldn’t quite believe what a tech hub it was, and were amazed that multinationals like Google, Intel, Microsoft and many more, operated such massive business units there.

Haifa University was a wonderful stop, as was the Bridges for Peace regional distribution centre which keeps food and essentials on hand for emergencies which it distributes to all who are in need. “No wonder Jews win so many Nobel Prizes,” said one of the clergymen.

The overall take-away by the South Africans was overwhelmingly spiritually positive.

They had expected from the media hype they had been exposed to that they were going to travel to a war-torn country. To the contrary, they constantly spoke of the development and infrastructure and couldn’t believe it had been achieved in a mere 68 years of Israel’s existence.

One of the most collective emotional experiences for the SA group had been an early morning boat cruise on the Sea of Galilee. The clergymen went to the place where Jesus is said to have walked on the water. They raised an SA flag, spontaneously broke out in singing of the national anthem and then took communion on the boat.

That morning they had woken to falling snow - and looked over Syria from the Golan. An Israeli Druze family hosted them for tea and the day ended back in Galilee where the project co-ordinator, Chris Eden, SA national director of Bridges for Peace, gave the visitors his analysis on the geopolitical situation - from biblical times up to 2016.

Palestinian Israeli Bassem Eid addressed the group on the life of his people living under Israeli rule and expressed gratitude towards Israel for the quality of life he and his community had been afforded. He expressed the view that no peace could be achieved if the Palestinians themselves (Hamas and the PA),

did not first achieve peace between themselves.

The group visited the Mount of Beatitudes (Har Ha-Osher), the hill where Jesus is said to have delivered the Sermon on the Mount and where he was said to have turned five small barley loaves and two small fish into enough food to feed 5 000 hungry people.



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Lots of fun in this Israel fundraiser

ILAN HERRMANN

The “Jerusalem Forever” concert, a fundraiser for victims of terror in Israel, takes place in Johannesburg on Sunday, February 21, at 19:00. All proceeds go to the OneFamily Fund, a group that deals with victims of terror in Israel, facilitating across the full gambit of needs following a terror incident.
For venue details, please contact Rav Ilan Herrmann on (011) 440-5995 or 082-635-0849 or soulworkout@gmail.com
Booking can be done at Computicket and at the Kollel Bookshop. Tickets range from R180 to R220.
A dazzling cast will be performing, including Adam Davis,

Today, Friday (February 12)

• UZLC hosts David Saks on “The Old and the New Anti-Semitism in South Africa”.
Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 – 14:00. Contact: Gloria (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.

Sunday (February 14)

• Big Band Music Appreciation Society meets at St John’s College Auditorium, Houghton. The programme is compiled by Dave Goldstein. There’ll be a video and short programme on Big Band music followed by the AGM and after that audiovisual programme on “Bing Crosby and Friends”. Time: 14:15 sharp. Enquiries: Marilyn 072-243-7436 or Jack 082-450-7622.

• Second Innings hosts Prof Bill Evans, School of Oral Health, Wits Faculty of Health Sciences, on “The Tooth, The Whole Tooth And Nothing But The Tooth”. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: (011) 532-9616.

Monday (February 15)

• UJW adult education division hosts Prof Francis Thackeray, president of the Royal Society of SA and the Phillip Tobias Chair of Paleoanthropology, University of Witwatersrand, on “William Shakespeare and ‘The Weed’” (audiovisual). Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (February 16)

• JJAC hosts a movie night for Jewish singles aged 27 - 49. Meet at 19:00 at the bottom of the escalator at Sandton City. Information: E-mail whatson@jjac.co.za to book.

• UJW has arranged an outing to the Ububele Children’s Clinic in Kew. Time: 09:30. Meet at the UJW at 1 Oak Street, Upper Houghton at 09:15. For details: (011) 648-1053.

Wednesday (February 17)

• Cape Town Holocaust Centre in partnership with the SA Jewish Museum, presents a

public lecture by Dr Rose Lerer Cohen from Israel, on “Personal and Cultural Plunder: Perspectives of the Holocaust in Lithuania”
Venue: Cape Town Holocaust Centre, Gardens. Time: 18:00. Light refreshments. Entrance is free but donations welcome. RSVP: (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, formerly of Department of English at Wits, on “The Written Word Leaps off the Page”
Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Thursday (February 18)

• RCHCC in association with the Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research at UCT launch the book by Prof Milton Shain, “A Perfect Storm: Anti-Semitism in South Africa 1930 - 1948”.
Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R80 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378, or e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za

Book Review

Finally a sad mystery could be unravelled

SUZANNE BELLING

Letters of Stone - from Nazi Germany to South Africa
Steven Robins (Penguin, Random House, South Africa R250)

During his childhood in Port Elizabeth, Steven Robins - now a professor in the department of sociology and social anthropology at the University of Stellenbosch - continuously looked at a photograph of three women in a strategic place on the dining room table.

The photograph was shrouded in mystery and the silence of Steven’s father, who had successfully fled Nazi Germany.

The three women were his father’s mother, Cecilie and his sisters, Edith and Hildegard, about whom his father, Herbert Robinski, never spoke.

When Robinski settled in South Africa in 1936 and his younger brother, Arthur, in the former

Northern Rhodesia, the family, including another brother, Siegfried, was left behind to perish at the hands of the Nazis in Auschwitz and Riga.

Robins tried to research their fate and had a revelation in 2012 when Arthur’s children, cleaning out their father’s flat in Sea Point, stumbled upon a cache of old letters, written mostly by Cecilie to her sons in Africa. She outlined the details of their heartbreaking lives and the futile efforts to complete papers for the family to escape.

For Robins, this brought his ill-fated story to life. When the letters lost their optimism and suddenly stopped, the audible silence told what had become of Robins’ family.

The book is a story of discovery on Robins’ part, exploring the global rise of eugenics and racial science before the Second World War.

Most of all, this book is a poignant reconstruction of a family trapped in an increasingly terrifying and deadly Nazi state and of the immense pressure on Steven’s father in faraway South Africa, which forced him to retreat into silence.



Ilan Herrmann, Mark Samowitz, Ezra Altschuler and Ezra Sher.
Music ranges from soul to rock to classical Jewish music. The outstanding Yeshiva College A Cappella Group will also be performing.
Artist Julian Grabman's magnificent water colour landscapes of Jerusalem, with copies of various sizes, will be on sale on the evening.

World News in Brief

Jewish teens convicted of murdering Arab teen, sentenced

JERUSALEM - Two out of the three Jewish teenagers convicted of burning 16-year-old Muhammad Abu Khdeir to death in July 2014, received stiff prison sentences last Thursday in a Jerusalem court. One of the murderers, 17, was given a life sentence. A second murderer, 16, was sentenced to 21 years in prison. The third convicted teenager is attempting to plead insanity and has not yet been sentenced. The names of all three Jewish teenagers remain under gag order. Abu Khdeir, an Arab boy from Shuafat in eastern Jerusalem, was kidnapped and burned to death while waiting to enter a mosque, an attack carried out in retaliation for Hamas terrorists’ kidnapping and murder of three Jewish teenagers in Gush Etzion in June 2014. (JNS.org)

Fred Sternburg, doyen of American sporting publicists

JACK MILNER

One person in the world of sport who gets very little attention but is often the man in the machine room is the all-important publicist. He is the man a sportsman and his team turn to, to make their player or event even bigger than it actually is.

In advertising parlance: You sell the size, not the steak.

The publicist often functions largely in the background and in many cases is almost anonymous. One of the greatest of this breed is Fred Sternburg. In the world of American sport - and boxing in particular - he is a legend.

He is totally honest when asked what his job is. “To sell. I am a salesman,” he replied. “I am selling a client, I’m selling an event or a personality. I have to sell a story and make it newsworthy.

“If it isn’t newsworthy, what do you care? It’s my job to find that hook. I’ve got to research it. I’ve got to not just talk to the client, I’ve got to talk to you and see where the fit is. That’s basically it. It’s selling the story and researching the story and presenting it and letting the media guys run with it. That’s why people come to me.”

It’s an obvious concept, but something many sports administrators fail to see or don’t pay enough attention to.

In South Africa, for example, development is a big issue within sporting bodies but for most sports fans it’s irrelevant and they would bypass the story of a tennis clinic in Soweto. In fact, many newspapers would not use the story unless it was a quiet day and they were desperate for copy. But have Roger Federer conduct the clinic and it becomes a different issue and any publicist worth his salt will create a wonderful news

story that could easily end up on the front pages of newspapers.

In the US Sternburg is a legend, because he can find an angle in almost any story and get it into the newspapers. Among others, he has worked with Shane Mosley, Oscar De La Hoya and Riddick Bowe. More recently he has also been working with Filipino boxing legend Manny Pacquiao.

“Most of my business is boxing right now, but I’ve done almost every sport there is. I’ve done major league baseball, basketball, women’s tennis, the PGA and LPGA tours. I’ve even represented doctors,” said Sternburg.

Sternburg refreshingly has his feet firmly on the ground. Ego-tripping is not part of his vocabulary. He has rightly been described as “loquacious” but his success has never gone to his head. He knows that in this game you have to work at new angles all the time; yesterday’s success means nothing today. He spends about two weeks every month on the road, working, working, working...

The high regard this Jewish boy is held in sporting circles - especially boxing - manifested itself when in 2004 the American Boxing Writers Association honoured him with the Marvin Kohn Good Guy Award.

For Sternburg it all started in 1985 when he became an intern with a man named Charlie Brotman who was famous in boxing for being Sugar Ray Leonard’s publicist. He ran a sports and entertainment public relations agency in Washington.

“For me it was a grass roots education where I just moved my way up and learned the business, watching him with Sugar Ray. Then we got Riddick Bowe and did several fights with him and then a few accounts were handed over to me.



Publicist Fred Sternburg with world champion boxer Manny Pacquiao, one of his major clients.

“When you work with people like Leonard and Bowe at that level, you get hooked pretty quickly because they are such fun guys to be with.”

But Sternburg admits that the hardest part of his job is to keep what he wants to sell fresh and interesting for the media and keeping the client on track. “You just have to stay creative. You’re doing a good job for a client and I’m the first line of defence. If I fail, the promotion already has one foot in the grave.”

A perfect example of Sternburg’s brilliance is the recent story of Manny Pacquiao’s wife having another baby. It’s their fifth child, nothing new in that, but Sternburg found the right spin for the right moment.

The child was named Israel and in his release Sternburg quotes Pacquiao: “Thank G-d for the safe delivery of baby Israel, who

we hope to raise as a good Christian, having been named after the Holy Land, which is the birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Although Pacquiao said the choice to name his son Israel was inspired by Christianity, Sternburg explains that Pacquiao “loves” the Jewish state. Sternburg added that the boxer and his family have visited the country several times.

Sternburg also revealed that the superstar has mezuzahs affixed to every doorpost of his Philippines home.

“Big ones, he got them in Israel,” Sternburg said. “He didn’t have one on the bathroom door. He seemed to know where to put them.”

He cleverly picked up on the Jewish symbolism, which is a lesson on how to get a story about the birth of another son for Pacquiao into the Jewish Report in South Africa.

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World News in Brief

Jewish day schools threatened in US and UK



North London police near a Jewish Day School.

ANT KATZ

Two Jewish day schools in different US cities received threatening phone calls on Tuesday after some schools in Britain received a bomb threat on Monday. The threats prompted police investigations in both countries.

A caller to the Perelman Jewish Day School in suburban Philadelphia threatened to “kill Jews” before hanging up. The Perelman Jewish Day School is situated in Lower Merion, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia. It received a threatening phone call at 10:30 on Tuesday.

The Joseph and Florence Mandel Jewish Day School in Beachwood, Ohio, a Cleveland suburb, received an anonymous threatening phone call shortly after 10:00 on Tuesday, according to the Cleveland Jewish News. Police checked the school but found nothing suspicious. Local police, aided by the FBI and the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, investigated and determined there was no credible threat.

Perelman is a Conservative day school, while the other US school threatened, Mandel, is nondenominational.

In the UK, bomb threats were made to seven schools - among them Jewish schools. The calls were all made shortly after 08:00 on Monday. No explosive devices were found in the schools and they were not evacuated, according to reports.

The Community Security Trust, Britain’s Jewish community security umbrella, in a tweet advised the Jewish schools to “fully enforce all security procedures”.

A London Metropolitan Police spokesman told the Jewish Chronicle that police are not treating calls to Jewish schools differently from the rest. He said, however: “If it looks like it is focusing on faith schools or is inciting hate crime, then we will take a harder approach.”