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# A city struggling to get to grips with terror horror



Photo: Israel-Bardugo, courtesy of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews

After the series of co-ordinated terror attacks on Paris – a wave of violence that would kill at least 129 people last week Friday – France has already shown signs of a clampdown on terror. This week, President Francois Hollande requested a three-month state of emergency. People are wondering if the kind of precautions considered natural in Israel – like guards at malls and metal detectors at bus stations – will be likely in France, a country that puts a premium on civil liberties. There are about 500 000 Jews in France, the majority of them in Paris. The Jewish population is increasingly reconsidering its future there querying whether it is worth staying put or moving away. Jews feel extremely vulnerable, having experienced the hatred of Muslim fanatics before. Pictured are French soldiers guarding staff and children at a Chabad school in Paris on Monday. See pages 8 & 9.

**SAJBD confronts ‘Snowy Smith’ in hate speech case**

The hate speech case against right-wing conspiracy theorist Snowy Smith, brought by the SAJBD, got underway in Durban’s Equality Court last week. An interim interdict was granted, preventing him from packaging and distributing racist, anti-Jewish propaganda.

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**Israel can help SA with advanced water technology**

Israel’s Ambassador to SA, Arthur Lenk, in an op-ed piece, said Israel, a world leader in water conservation and drip irrigation, had much to offer SA. He said the country should be fully investigating ideas for increasing SA’s water supply, also through desalination.

4

**Mindset changes needed to prevent Paris-like attack in US**

The attacks pose major challenges for the US, officials and security experts say. The US must become more alert to security signs. “Our intelligence community is not picking up on threats,” says John Cohen, a former top intelligence officer at Homeland Security.

6

**A ‘Jewish home away from home’ for CT students**

UCT will soon see SA’s first campus centre for Jewish student life open its doors. Rabbi Nissen Goldman, with his wife Ariella, returning from the US, saw there was no centre for students “and we decided to stay and fill that gap,” Rabbi Goldman said.

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**Israel – tarnished with the brush of the ‘Big Lie’**

Michael Belling dissects the ‘Big Lie’ bandied about by Israel’s enemies, on what the country is and what it stands for. November 10 marked the 40th anniversary of the lowest point reached by the UN, when instead of combating racism, it became overtly racist, promoting anti-Semitism.

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# The rewards of responsibility



*Parshat Vayeitzei*  
**Rabbi Ramon Widmonte Mizrachi**

The echoes of the mayhem and terror in Paris are still loud and raw; indeed, none of us knows if they will be given time to fade away before others take their place. After the events of Shabbat, I counted the number of days until the bizarre finger pointings began and indeed it took only two days before Israel was officially accused as being responsible for the attacks in Paris (in an op-ed of Al-Hayat Al-Jadida) as revenge for the EU’s decision to discriminatorily label produce from the West Bank and the Golan Heights.

When we read this week’s sidrah, we find a marked difference in the attitude displayed by

our forefather Ya’akov and that of his father-in-law, Lavan. It mirrors the disconnect we see today.

After Ya’akov eventually flees from Lavan, his father-in-law chases him down, finally forcing a confrontation at the outskirts of Israel. After accusing Ya’akov of theft, Lavan finds nothing and then 20 years of anger and frustration burst out of Ya’akov:

“And Jacob was annoyed, and he quarrelled with Lavan, and he said to Lavan: “What is my transgression? What is my sin, that you have pursued me? For you have felt about all my things. What have you found of all the utensils of your house? Put it here, in the presence of my kinsmen and your kinsmen, and let them decide between the two of us.

“Already 20 years have I been with you, and your ewes and she-goats have not aborted, neither have I eaten the rams of your flocks. I have

not brought home to you anything torn [by other animals]; I would suffer its loss; from my hand you would demand it, what was stolen by day and what was stolen at night. I was [in the field] by day when the heat consumed me, and the frost at night, and my sleep wandered from my eyes....” B’reishit 31

We hope and pray that Lavan will take this opportunity to perform some honest self-reflection, to take stock of his own responsibility for the breakdown in their relationship, but what we hear is a shocking testament to his complete allergy to any form of accountability.

“The daughters are my daughters, and the sons are my sons, and the animals are my animals, and all that you see is mine...” Ibid.

What a lost opportunity. Lavan will spend the rest of his life sure that everything which goes awry in his world is due to the “other guy”. And the tragic result of this is that things

will continue to spiral downward for him without him ever realising that he could stop it, if he would only take stock of himself.

Ya’akov, on the other hand, has begun a process of reconciling with himself and with his own contribution to his life’s turmoil - something we will see over the next few weeks in the sidrah. And his reward? He will slowly metamorphose into Yisra’el, and he will become the singular father of the Jewish people, with all his children gathered round him.

This is the mark of Yisra’el - the ability to reflect critically on ourselves (sometimes too much so) and to move forward again with the wisdom of self. We can only pray that other nations of the world will learn this and see the greatness in taking responsibility instead of perpetually blaming someone else; and in our personal lives, it is a lesson we can apply as well.

## What’s on the web

### Last chance to win our R22 000 package

It’s easy to enter for our Family Fitness Package worth R22 000. Go to the Jewish Report website and enter! And, at this stage, readers have a 50:1 chance of winning this magnificent prize. Every member of the family can enter. Many already have.



Jewish Report is giving one lucky family of readers, before Shabbat, an array of specialised and personalised family fitness products and services which will mainly be provided by 10 specialist sports scientists.

A prize-giving will be held on Wednesday November 25 at CycleZone in Rosebank and will include talks by training specialists as well as product demonstrations. Light kosher refreshments will be served and all are welcome to attend. Meet the various product and service suppliers and win product hampers and discount vouchers.

In attendance will be Exercise Solutions’ founder and well-known sports scientist Zac van Heerden; stability trainer Craig Lewis; running coach David Katz; functional sports nutritionist Ian Craig; view TomTom’s health range; sports physiotherapist Aurelle Medalie; representatives from CycleZone; The Sweat Shop; Dean Abro and Mark Wolff of 32Gi; and home-based trainer Gabi Riesnik.

- Also on our website, [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za), follow all the drama from Paris and Tel Aviv over the weekend and read the tragic tale of the rabbi whose family was attacked, and some killed, near Hebron just before his daughter’s wedding.

## News

### SAJBD confronts ‘Snowy Smith’ in hate speech case in Durban

DAVID SAKS

Last week Wednesday, a long-anticipated hate speech case brought by the SAJBD against right-wing conspiracy theorist Snowy Smith finally got underway in Durban’s Equality Court. The Board sought an interdict preventing Smith from packaging and distributing what it terms “extraordinarily offensive” racist, anti-Jewish propaganda.

The following day, Magistrate Aletta Moolman granted an interim interdict, prohibiting Smith from sending out any e-mails referring to people of the Jewish faith. The order will remain in place until judgment is handed down, probably in the middle of December.

The case was lodged by the Board in April 2013 following the alleged mass posting by Smith of dozens of anti-Semitic e-mails over the previous three years, including some to Jewish individuals and institutions, journalists and news editors.

In one case, printed matter and DVDs containing similar material were sent to the office of a Jewish former High Court justice. One of the reasons for the delay in bringing the matter to a hearing was that for a long time it had not been possible to physically locate Smith in order to serve the court papers on him.

In her evidence before the court, SAJBD National Chairman Mary Kluk stressed that while the Board fully supported the right to freedom of expression, the kind of material disseminated by Smith crossed the line and could not be ignored.

She disagreed with those who argued that most people would simply dismiss Snowy Smith as an obvious crank, since not everyone “thought critically” and at least some of those bombarded with such “vulgar propaganda” might start to believe it was true.

“History has taught us we cannot ignore hatred in this form. It is deeply hurtful and provocative,” Kluk said, “Not only are we labelled as undesirable; we are labelled as money-grubbers, terrorists and murderers,” she added.

The complaint refers to e-mails sent from October 2010 to May 2012, although since then, there have been many others. The SAJBD contends that these amount to the “advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion, which constitutes incitement to cause harm” and therefore fall within the exceptions of one’s right to freedom of expression.

The material in the e-mails circulated by Smith, which were gleaned from a range of right-wing extremist websites based in the US, included such asser-

tions as “the Zionist Jew NWO (new world order) orchestrated and systematically planned the downfall of every White Owned, White Run Country in Africa, including South Africa using communism” and “There is only one group of terrorists in the world today and they are Zionist Chabad Freemasons, Illuminati Jews and the Billionaire Wall Street Bankers. We know exactly where they are.”

Smith, who is representing himself, told the court that all he was doing was distributing what was already on the Internet and YouTube, most of it posted by “the Jews”. He cited a list of what he described as “experts”, mostly Holocaust denials, whose work he said he had researched and established to be the truth.

Smith, who has denied that Jews are of Middle Eastern origin and challenged the Board to prove otherwise, also asserted that he could not be accused of being anti-Semitic because he supported the Palestinians, who were “Semites”.

## More news on our website [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)

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# Shai Musli’s bail and extradition hearing postponed

ANT KATZ

Accused Israeli mob boss, Shai Musli, appeared under heavy police guard ahead of his extradition hearing in the Randburg magistrate’s court on Monday after police were tipped off that there were plans to help him escape. The case was remanded to next Friday and the alleged crime kingpin continues to be detained at an undisclosed facility.

Security pundits suggest that he is being regularly shifted around by his captors, jittery about the tip-offs of a planned escape.

Musli, who is observant Orthodox, is alleged to head one of Israel’s most feared crime families and was arrested in South Africa on an Interpol warrant for a string of alleged crimes including murder and conspiring to murder several of his Tel Aviv rivals. He was captured at Montecasino in Johannesburg last month while gambling and police say they believe he has been in South Africa since 2011.

Shai’s brother Yossi was convicted in



Shai Musli.



Yossi Musli.

Israel in 2007 of attempted murder of rival mobsters. Eight other members of his criminal outfit also were convicted.

Yossi was sentenced to 11 years in prison and Israeli police believe that Shai (or Shay as spelled in the Israeli media) took charge of the family’s criminal activities at that time.

Not only is Shai Musli one of Israel’s most wanted men, but the Muslis are said to be one of Israel’s wealthiest and most powerful crime families. Senior SAPS spokesman, Brigadier Vishnu Naidoo told Jewish Report that Musli had been arrested purely on Interpol’s Israeli extradition request. “There are no South African charges,” he said.

In court on Monday, magistrate Pravina Ragoonandan postponed the hearing at the request of both parties so that the state and Musli’s defence team could be shown the extradition papers. The Times newspaper reported on Tuesday that some official documentation relating to his extradition was still outstanding.

Israeli police want him extradited to stand trial on a number of allegations of

involvement in murders in Holon, Bat Yam and Rishon Letzion. According to Israeli daily newspaper Haaretz, Musli is also suspected of other serious offences including conspiracy to commit murder.

The conspiracy charges, according to the Jerusalem Post, relate to alleged plans to murder mobster rivals.

A police source with information about the alleged plans to help Musli escape, said the police were “expecting something” (to happen at the court). “That is why the additional officers, who were undercover, were both inside and outside the court.

“The information is that any attempt (to

free Musli) will not be made by one of his usual court supporters, who include friends and family, but instead by someone from outside the country.

“All that the police officers involved in the case have been told is that an attempt could be made some time soon,” the officer said.

However, despite all the additional security, Musli appeared unfazed. He grinned in the dock, laughed with his supporters and was seen giving thumbs-ups and high-fives to friends as he was led out of court after his case was postponed.

He told his family that he was fine as he was being led into the court’s holding cells.

## BDS’ ‘arrest warrant’ statement pure hogwash

A press statement from Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions sent out yesterday that warrants for the arrest of four commanders from the Israel Navy and Defence Forces had been issued by South Africa’s Directorate of the Priority Crimes Investigation Unit (DPCIU) was dismissed as “malicious” gossip by Hawks spokesman Brigadier Hangwani Mulaudzi.

He told Jewish Report on Tuesday that he had been inundated with media calls, that he has consulted extensively with all of the Hawks’ units, and that he would like to go on record to say: “The DCPI (Hawks) would like to distance themselves from such malicious gossip.”

This follows the four Israeli commanders’ involvement in the 2010 Israeli attacks on the Mavi Marmara aid ship.

A four-year-long case involving a South African journalist, Gadija Davids, who was on board the Mavi Marmara when it was attacked, created the furore.

Davids laid her first complaint with the South African Police Services and South Africa’s National



Prosecutions Authority (NPA) in January 2011.

BDS then issued a “clarification” and an apology “for the misunderstanding” later on Tuesday, admitting that “the warrants of arrest against the four Israeli commanders were issued by Turkish authorities not by the South Africa’s Directorate of the Priority Crimes Investigation Unit”.

The BDS “clarification” added: “South African authorities have confirmed in writing to Ms Davids that they have received the Turkish warrants of arrest against the Israeli commanders and have accordingly circulated the suspects on the South African Border Control system on September 3, 2015”.

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# Community Voices

## Scorcher of a heat wave affects every Gautenger

SUZANNE BELLING

Over the past month Gautengers have been sweltering in daily temperatures ranging from 30 to 39 degrees. To boot, the air remains dry with no sign of rain in sufficient quantities to end the current drought and bring relief. We are now also facing water restrictions and although government representatives insist it's not yet a water crisis, for many it certainly feels like one.

We asked members of the local Jewish community how they have been affected.



**Jude Petrank**, who owns an air-conditioning installation and servicing company, says: "There has been a real spike in the volume of calls, requests for all kinds of air-conditioners and for maintenance."

While the heatwave was good for business, Petrank bemoaned the lack of rain, which lessened the humidity in the air.

"We've been trying to watch the situation and do our bit, but it is a drop in the ocean."

He said that "air-conditioning distributors and suppliers are moving volumes of stock which may be depleted. You can't disappoint people, but there are not enough hours in the day. I start at 07:00 and work till 21:00 at night. It is a Catch-22 situation."



**Joy Rubin**, of Glenhazel, who waters her garden with a hosepipe before 06:00 and after 18:00, shares a hosepipe with her neighbours to save water.

"I have half a bath, brush my teeth with the tap off, let the dishes pile up and only wash my clothes when I have a full load."

Rubin was very taken with Israel's Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk's article in The Star newspaper, offering Israel's help with South Africa's drought problems.

"Israel is an arid country and has solved the problem through desalination and various other means. I wish South Africa would take up the ambassador's offer," she said.



**Arnold Suttner** quipped that it was supposed to rain during and after Succot but it had not happened this year. "I don't know why we don't follow Israel's example."

He said he used a hygrometer and a barometer to check humidity and air pressure, which could indicate rain when humidity was up and the pressure fell.

He was hoping there would be an increase in the moisture in the air.



**Monty Sassen**, of Rouxville, who is responsible on behalf of the body corporate for the gardens of the block of flats in which he lives, said the gardener had been told not to do any daytime watering and had been instructed to return after 18:00 to use the hosepipe (he stays on the premises).

Sassen said he was making inquiries about the water restrictions with regard to possibly topping up the swimming pool after hours as well. He added that other staff members in the block had been

informed of the restrictions, as some areas on the property were allocated to specific flats, which were the responsibility of the relevant owners, some of whom had sprinkler systems.

The heatwave "hasn't really affected us", he said, "because if we open the front and back doors, we get a wonderful breeze, which breaks the heat".



**Mark Loeb**, owner of a sprinkler installation and maintenance company, says he has been inundated with calls to have sprinklers installed or serviced, because using hosepipes in the specified hours - between 18:00 and 06:00 - requires more water as the water is not distributed evenly.

"One of my customers contacted the American Meteorological Society, which said: 'We are in year one of a five-year drought cycle.'"

The last major drought, according to Loeb, was in 2008 and the same is happening now. "We need a lot of replenishment."

Loeb says that in the wetlands of South Africa, "there is a lot of acid drainage, which has adversely affected the quality of the water."

Over the past six years the weather patterns in Johannesburg have reflected days of afternoon thunder showers - "non-stop, for weeks and even months. This affected my business, which I shrunk from two vehicles to one and from 14 to five workers. The industry shrunk 80 per cent over the last five years, but now it is picking up."

"This is the second heatwave in spring and people have to water at night and stand in the dark."

He said several water towers in the high-lying areas were running on empty.

Israel could help South Africa with desalination, but there had been no official response from our government.

More news on our website [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)

## Israel can help SA with advanced water technology

ANT KATZ

Israel's Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk, opened a dialogue last week by suggesting South Africa should be fully investigating ideas for increasing the country's water supply. "South Africa can learn from Israel," he wrote in an op-ed published in local papers last week titled "Water lessons from an arid country".

Israel, says Lenk, "has not merely preserved water - but increased supply by desalination and recycling".

Jewish Report interviewed the ambassador this week to find out more - and was pleasantly surprised to hear of the projects already being shared between the two countries - and how large the scope is for further co-operation.

- Last month many South African officials and private-sector industry leaders visited Tel Aviv to take part in the annual WATEC conference and exhibition;
- Farms throughout the country, from small emerging enterprises to large-scale producers, are using the Netafim drip irrigation system, so much so that the company has opened a factory near Cape Town and even exports the products;
- Discussions on desalination of seawater have been ongoing with both the private and the public sector;

"Finally, the headlines here in South Africa are beginning to cover the enormous water challenges this country faces," Lenk says. "I believe that ideas for increasing supply should be fully investigated..."

"It is clear that there is a need for developing short- and long-term planning to tackle this issue, and lessons from other arid countries could offer valuable input."

"What Israel has done, is not merely preserve our natural water sources, which are far too small for our crowded neighbourhood, but significantly increase the water supply by a massive investment in desalination and recycling and strict rules on water use."

An Israeli company is currently building the US's largest desalination plant in California. While it may be the biggest in the US, says Lenk, it is smaller than three of Israel's four major desalination plants which make the salt water from Israel's Mediterranean coast drinkable.

"Israel uses advanced techniques of reverse osmosis which is significantly cheaper, cleaner and more energy-efficient than in the past. The Israeli projects are run by the private sector."

Yet another Israeli success is an integrated national plan for development and management of an adequate water supply. Given Israel's hugely complex geopolitical situation, says Lenk, the Holy Land sees a secure supply of water as a national security issue.

Then, earlier this year, Israel and Jordan reached an agreement to share water to be produced by a planned new desalination plant in Aqaba.

- Desalinated water will be used primarily for Israel's thirsty southern region;
- Another pipeline of desalinated water will be piped to Israel and Jordan's shared Dead Sea, decreasing the salinity levels and saving what is currently fast receding into a desert;
- By creating additional potable water, Israel will double the amount of fresh water it currently supplies to Jordan from the Sea of Galilee.

"Israel treats 86 per cent of its domestic wastewater for safe re-use in agriculture," says Lenk. While treatment techniques cause water in Israel to be "more expensive than current prices in South Africa", realistic pricing brings an interesting benefit beyond confidence of long-term sustainability. Farmers have an economic incentive for more efficient usage.

While the world average use of drip irrigation is just five per cent, 90 per cent of Israeli farmers use it. The use of a plastic emitter in drip irrigation was developed in Israel by Simcha Blass in the late 1950s and, in 1966, Israel's Netafim Corporation developed the world's first dripper.

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# Now Paris horror is linked to Mideast conflict...

MICHAEL BELLING

Annika Hernroth-Rothstein of Sweden, who came to South Africa this year to address the annual Limmud gathering, told the SA Jewish Report in an interview from Sweden that the comment by Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström linking the Paris terrorist attacks to the Israel-Palestinian conflict was “just part of the all over cognitive dissonance that Sweden and Europe are suffering from”.

Wallström said last weekend that the Islamic State (ISIS) attacks in Paris were partially fuelled by Palestinian frustration.

“To counteract the radicalisation, we must go back to the situation such as the one in the Middle East of which not the least the Palestinians see that there is no future: we must either accept a desperate situation or resort to violence,” she stated.

Hernroth-Rothstein said she was not in the least surprised by the comment.

“Ever since the London bombings 10 years ago, we have had this enormous problem with Muslim extremists. Our government has failed to recognise this threat and even after Paris they refuse to recognise the culprits.”

A Jewish woman in Sweden, Susanne Sznajderman-Rytz, the child of Holocaust survivors and a Yiddish teacher, saw the foreign minister in a Stockholm street on Saturday and asked her to comment on her statement.

Wallström replied: “The Jews are campaigning against me.”

Sznajderman-Rytz was shocked and has written to the foreign ministry requesting additional comment, but has yet to receive a reply.

Hernroth-Rothstein said Wallström’s comment was problematic in several ways.

“By blaming this attack and extremism in Europe on the Arab-Israeli conflict, she is being incredibly condescending to Arabs and Muslims. She is saying that they are basically primitive people who resort to murder when they are dissatisfied.”

She said that Wallström failed to understand Europe and what was happening there today.

“The fact that they don’t acknowledge it is what sustains ISIS and is cowardice in the face of evil,” she said.

“I’m waiting and hoping the Jewish community in Sweden will react.”

She said the Israeli ambassador to Sweden had called the foreign ministry about it.

Both the Israeli Foreign Ministry and Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely responded sharply to Wallström’s comment.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nachshon said on Monday that the Swedish ambassador had been summoned to clarify the remarks, and that Wallström’s words were “ridiculous in their rudeness”.

“The Swedish foreign minister is systematically biased, hostile, and one-sided against Israel when she points to the connection between the attacks in Paris and difficulties between Israel and the Palestinians,” Nachshon added.

“Anyone involved in a hopeless attempt to create a link between the attacks from radical Islam and the difficulties between Israel and the Palestinians is deceiving himself, his people and international public opinion.”

Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely added that the comments were “blatant and vile anti-Semitism” and equivalent to “blood libel,” and that the ministry would make abundantly clear the severity of her statements.



# The fervent prayer for rain remains

ANT KATZ

Five out of the country’s nine provinces have now been declared water disaster areas, as government’s inter-ministerial task team grapples with the twin disasters of record heat and low rainfall, causing one of South Africa’s worst droughts ever.

Long-term food security in the country is possibly more threatened than ever before.

The shortage of water most affects farmers who cannot harvest crops or feed livestock. The water shortage, attributed to the El Niño syndrome on the climate, means that the heatwave and low rainfall are expected to last until the end of summer, with some weather forecasters only seeing a rain respite by March next year.

SAJR spoke to two successful Highveld Jewish farmers to get a better understanding of the challenges they are facing.

Darrel Kadish (who lives in Johannesburg but farms in the Bethal area), and Desmond Hyman (who lives and farms 30 km south of Middelburg) farm a typical Highveld mix - beef cattle, potatoes and white and yellow maize.

“We were very fortunate that we got our maize in (the ground)” before this week’s rain”, Kadish told SAJR. Some of his neighbours, he says, had only partly planted or had planted no maize yet. He is monitoring global forecasts which, he

says, “are showing possibly the worst El Niño ever”, and are predicting the hottest and driest summer in South Africa’s history. Maize represents 65 per cent of Kadish’s income.

Desmond Hyman is more up-beat. He told SAJR that maize represented around 25 per cent of his income. “With this rain we have had now, we will plant,” he says. If it rains, says Hyman, “we’re good, if it doesn’t, we’re all in trouble.”

Maize affects all dairy and meat prices. Feeding animals can represent as much as half of the input costs, and a farmer’s profit lies in the cost of feed. Kadish says potatoes are planted between August and October, and harvested between December and February. Most potato crops are irrigated, but that leaves farmers “reliant on rain to fill our irrigation dams”.

His five dams still hold about 40 per cent of their capacity. But, he says, if there is not normal rainfall, he will be lucky to recover between 10 and 20 per cent of normal yields.

Hyman who is more reliant on income from potatoes, says his dams are still around 70 per cent full and it will be enough to see him through this season.

Kadish’s cattle run on the veld and eat the grass. Hyman has a feedlot. “Without rain the grass won’t grow,” says Kadish, “so we have had to make feed to get them through the winter.”

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# Does Paris change the way we see ourselves?

south african Jewish Report

By the end of last week, a fresh sense of doom about South Africa’s future had set in like a dark, suffocating cloud.

In Johannesburg, the overpowering heat, the dysfunctional traffic lights, the garbage and graffiti-littered streets – all gave one the sense that we had finally cut our ties with the First World.

Then came news of SAA Chairman Dudu Myeni’s ridiculous flouting of her fiduciary responsibilities regarding the airline’s turnaround plan; stories of drought and dying animals, water restrictions and treatment plant mismanagement...

It all smacked of government incompetence, maladministration, and squandering of our municipalities and our state-owned entities and a disregard for our citizens who also received news that despite all, their president was getting a new multi-billion rand jet.

It was one of those weeks where that same

old “emmigration conversation” resurfaced in the minds of Jewish South Africans like an uncomfortable migraine. And reflecting, not just on the week, but on the last few months – of student protests, government corruption, a flailing rand, unemployment, police brutality, uncontrolled crime and more – some of us might even have got ourselves into a state of self-reproach that we had not emigrated already – when we were younger, richer (or poorer), or more courageous.

We may even have looked on with envy at safe, sophisticated Europe or in awe of efficient and trail-blazing North America and wished we had made the move or, for some of us, never come back.

Then a world tragedy occurred last Friday night in Paris that again shifted the parameters of our assessments. And as the days pass from Friday, November 13, and the names of the victims of the attacks in Paris flash across our TV screens and facts about the terrorists are uncovered, and the world reels from the horror of it all – we

cannot help but think what this means for South Africa.

And luckily – for now at least – it appears to mean very little. We are a comparatively irrelevant country with no part in the growing global fight against ISIS terror. South Africa has not joined a US coalition targeting the Islamic State with airstrikes in eastern Syria and northern Iraq. Nor have we sided with the Western powers in labelling and banning Middle East terror groups.

In fact, we welcomed one group – Hamas – into our midst with open arms last month. And as horrific as it was for South African Jewry to fathom our government cosyng up to a known terrorist organisation, this quiet departure from Western opinion, may inadvertently protect us from groups like ISIS bringing their terror here.

While France’s leaders mourned its dead on the weekend and the US revved up intelligence and security as fear mounted about potential terror attacks, our South African leaders – in the spirit of positivity

and hope – were meeting with the BRIC nations at the G20 summit in Antalya, Turkey talking about opportunities for growth and mutually beneficial co-operation.

And although we have refugees from neighbouring countries at our borders, we are far away from the turmoil of fleeing Syrians flocking to our shores.

Yes, we have huge, internal problems but poverty, corruption, poor leadership and no jobs are not the result of outside forces which Europe now faces and may have to go to war to confront; they are really of our own doing or undoing.

We showed in 1994 that we could overturn unworkable political systems and reinvent ourselves. Perhaps we can again transform and lift the bar.

The lessons of Paris are that all nations face obstacles, but at least, with the right leadership, we have the precedent, the constitutional freedoms and, hopefully, the resources to tackle them.

– Vanessa Valkin, Editor

## Mindset changes needed to prevent Paris-like attack in US

RON KAMPEAS  
WASHINGTON

The series of terrorist attacks that killed at least 129 in Paris pose a couple of major challenges for the United States, Jewish officials and security experts say.

The challenges: security threats from the 200 or so Islamic State fighters who have returned to the US, and moral questions surrounding America’s absorption of Syrian refugees.

The key takeaway from last week Friday’s attacks, for which ISIS has claimed responsibility, is that the plotters managed to organise the terror wave in the French capital undetected by Western intelligence, said John Cohen, who until 2014 was a top intelligence official at the US Department of Homeland Security.

“We need to come to realisation that as robust as they are, our intelligence community is not picking up on threats,” said Cohen, now the senior adviser at the Rutgers University Institute for Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security.

John Brennan, CIA director, said backlash over the scope of intelligence gathering after the 9/11 attacks had eroded the intelligence community’s surveillance capabilities, with rollbacks in eavesdropping coming as a result of revelations by former National Security Agency contractor and whistleblower Edward Snowden.

“In the past several years, because of a number of unauthorised disclosures and a lot of hand wringing over the government’s role in the effort to try to uncover these terrorists, there have been some policy and legal and other actions that are taken that make our ability - collectively, internationally - to find these terrorists much more challenging,” Brennan told the Centre for Strategic and International Studies think tank on Monday.

There is evidence suggesting that one of the attackers involved in the Paris attacks may have arrived under the guise of being a refugee, and that the planner, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a Belgian citizen, was a returned fighter from the war zone in Syria and Iraq.

Yet as in the wake of previous attacks in Europe, security experts said the United States does not face the same challenges.

In a New York Times op-ed on Sunday, Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, both top former Obama administration national security officials, outlined the differences: Far fewer fighters



A police officer patrolling the Times Square subway stop in New York City last week Saturday, the day after the Paris attacks.

have returned from ISIS territory to the United States and are easier to monitor, and refugees, flooding the shores of Europe in cramped boats, arrive in far smaller numbers to the United States and after a rigorous screening process.

“Counterterrorism often boils down to a search for a few individuals, and the chaos surrounding the flood of refugees - a record 218 000 entered the European Union just last month - has exacerbated the difficulty of keeping track of such incoming security threats,” Simon and Benjamin wrote in their op-ed.

“But the United States doesn’t have this problem,” they wrote. “Pretty much anyone coming to the US from Middle Eastern war zones or the radical underground of Europe would need to come by plane, and, since 9/11, we have made it tough for such people to fly to the US.”

Additionally, tracking the approximately 200 fighters who have returned to the United States is easier than monitoring the 2 000 - 3000 who are estimated to have returned to Europe, where borders are porous and intelligence agencies do not always co-operate.

Cohen identified an element common to both the US and European arenas: the radicalisation of indigenous Muslims. Several of the eight attackers in Paris were natives of France and Belgium, and perpetrators of recent mass attacks in the United States - including those behind the Boston Marathon bombing in 2013 and the

2009 shootings at Fort Hood in Texas - were immigrants of long standing.

Cohen said that US and European law enforcement needed to create more intimate relationships with Muslim communities from which potential terrorists might emerge. “The first thing that national authorities need to recognise is that an important part of our approach dealing with the threat does not involve them alone, it involves working with local police more robustly.”

Cohen referred to reports that Omar Mostefai, one of the suspected attackers in the Paris attack, was a petty criminal from a dysfunctional family. He dropped off the French intelligence radar after authorities deemed his involvement with extremists not to be a threat.

Cohen said local authorities should have engaged the Muslim community and mental health officials to reel the young man back in.

“We have to have the ability when we find people to match that behavioural profile to engage educators and mental health professionals.”

The Paris attack showed terrorists willing to attack a broad cross-section of society, beyond the targeted attacks on Jews and secularists of previous attacks.

Experts suggested emulating in the broader community the heightened awareness of potential threats in the Jewish and other vulnerable communities. Attacks by loners and groups

almost always involve advance reconnoitring, which would be noticeable to the trained eye.

Paul Goldenberg, director of Secure Community Network, the security arm of national Jewish umbrella groups, identified possible “force multipliers” in Paris who may have spotted trouble had they been trained to do so - among them ticket sellers and ushers at the soccer stadium and the concert hall that came under attack.

Cohen praised Amtrak for its comprehensive security training of staff and for posting pervasive notices to passengers to be aware of suspicious objects. Other private sector industries, including hotels, shopping centres and entertainment venues, could emulate Amtrak’s model, he said.

A number of Jewish organisations have expressed concern by the spate of governors, most of them Republicans, who have vowed not to provide services to war refugees from Syria. The Obama administration has said it would take in 10 000 over the next year.

“The Jewish community is particularly affected by the images of men, women and children forced to flee their homes only to find they are unwanted anywhere else,” the Anti-Defamation League said in a statement. “Many of these refugees are fleeing the same terrorists who perpetrated the horrendous attacks on Paris.”

Texas Governor Greg Abbott was among the first on Monday to say he would not accept refugees.

He said on Twitter. “Security comes first.”

A number of Jewish groups joined 81 organisations on Tuesday in sending a letter to every member of Congress urging them not to reduce intake of Syrian refugees.

“To turn our back on refugees would be to betray our nation’s core values,” said the letter, which was signed by the ADL, the American Jewish Committee, the National Council of Jewish Women and the Union for Reform Judaism, among other groups.

“It would send a demoralising and dangerous message to the world that the United States makes judgements about people based on the country they come from and their religion.”

Mark Hetfield, director of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, which initiated the letter and is working to settle some of the refugees, noted that unlike the flood in Europe, the United States is accepting refugees only after extensive screening. (JTA)



# What has Paris terror to do with SA?



## TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

When President Jacob Zuma addresses the SA Jewish Board of Deputies conference on Sunday, it will be in the shadow of the horrific terror attacks by ISIS in Paris last Friday, which left over 129 dead and hundreds of others wounded, some critically.

All signs are that the Third World War between radical Islam and Western civilisation, has begun in earnest. French President Francoise Hollande said as much when he declared: “France is at war,” imposed a state of emergency and told the French parliament on Monday that France should unite with the US and Russia in a grand coalition to destroy ISIS.

The audience at the SAJBD conference will have mixed feelings towards Zuma because of the ANC’s welcome to the Palestinian terrorist organisation Hamas a few weeks ago.

It will be disappointing if he sticks to mouthing the old, worn-out platitudes about the rainbow nation, the Jews’ importance in the liberation struggle, and how the ANC is fighting for the good of the country.

There is a perception that under his leadership, South Africa has lost its moral bearings and has shrunk to an irrelevant midget on the world stage, two decades after the great international prestige it held during Mandela’s time as a moral touchstone for all.

South Africa has never faced terrorism of the sort going on in Europe and the Middle East, and which destroyed the World Trade Centre in New York on September 11, 2001. But we are not immune, even here at the bottom of Africa. We are part of today’s connected world.

The Paris attacks illustrate the reduced role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in international affairs, despite the massive media attention it still gets.

The brand of terror France has suffered has little to do with the “occupation of Palestine”; it is more about the clashing Islamic and other forces in Syria, Iraq, Libya and other places in the Mideast, as ISIS attempts to establish its Islamic caliphate under Sharia law.

Diplomatic myopia still exists about the relative role of the Palestinian issue. Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon said after the Paris killings that European defence ministers visiting Israel to consult with him mostly focus - correctly - on radical Islam’s anti-Western terror campaign.

But, he said, “when foreign ministers come, they speak with us about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as if that is the source of all the world’s problems”.

ANC support for a Palestinian state is legitimate. But South African politics, whether in the ANC, Cosatu, the SACP and elsewhere, still seems largely stuck in the latter mindset.

Radical Islam has become the “Nazism” of the 21st century. It will have to be defeated by a determined international alliance of countries acting together, in the same way Nazism was defeated in the Second World War. This is what Hollande is calling for.

Going back to Zuma’s speech at the SAJBD conference: Terrorism is at the top of people’s minds and he needs to address Jewish outrage about his Hamas meetings. Was it part of a long-term strategy, or motivated by expedient local politics?

The issue is complicated and not everyone opposes engaging with Hamas, including some top Israelis. For example, former Israeli intelligence chief, Efraim Halevy, who spent decades in the Mossad and was a key player in achieving the Israel-Jordan peace treaty, says Israel itself should talk with Hamas.

Interviewed at a Haaretz-sponsored

conference on peace in Tel Aviv recently, he said military action hadn’t been successful in combating the terrorist group, and Israel should recognise democratically-elected Palestinian governments even if they included Hamas. Other Israelis vehemently reject this view.

France is the birthplace of human rights, epitomised by its secularity, vibrant culture, and the phrase liberté, égalité, fraternité. Together with all of Europe, it faces the dilemma of how to protect these human and individual rights while providing security against terrorism. The most important individual right is the right to life itself.

Zuma has an opportunity to show his colours: Is he a leader of global stature who understands the grim new reality of the Third World War? Will his South Africa side unequivocally with Western values and support the grand coalition against Islamist terror in a more meaningful way than simply sending “condolences” to Paris? Or will he continue playing small-minded local politics aimed mainly at staying in power?



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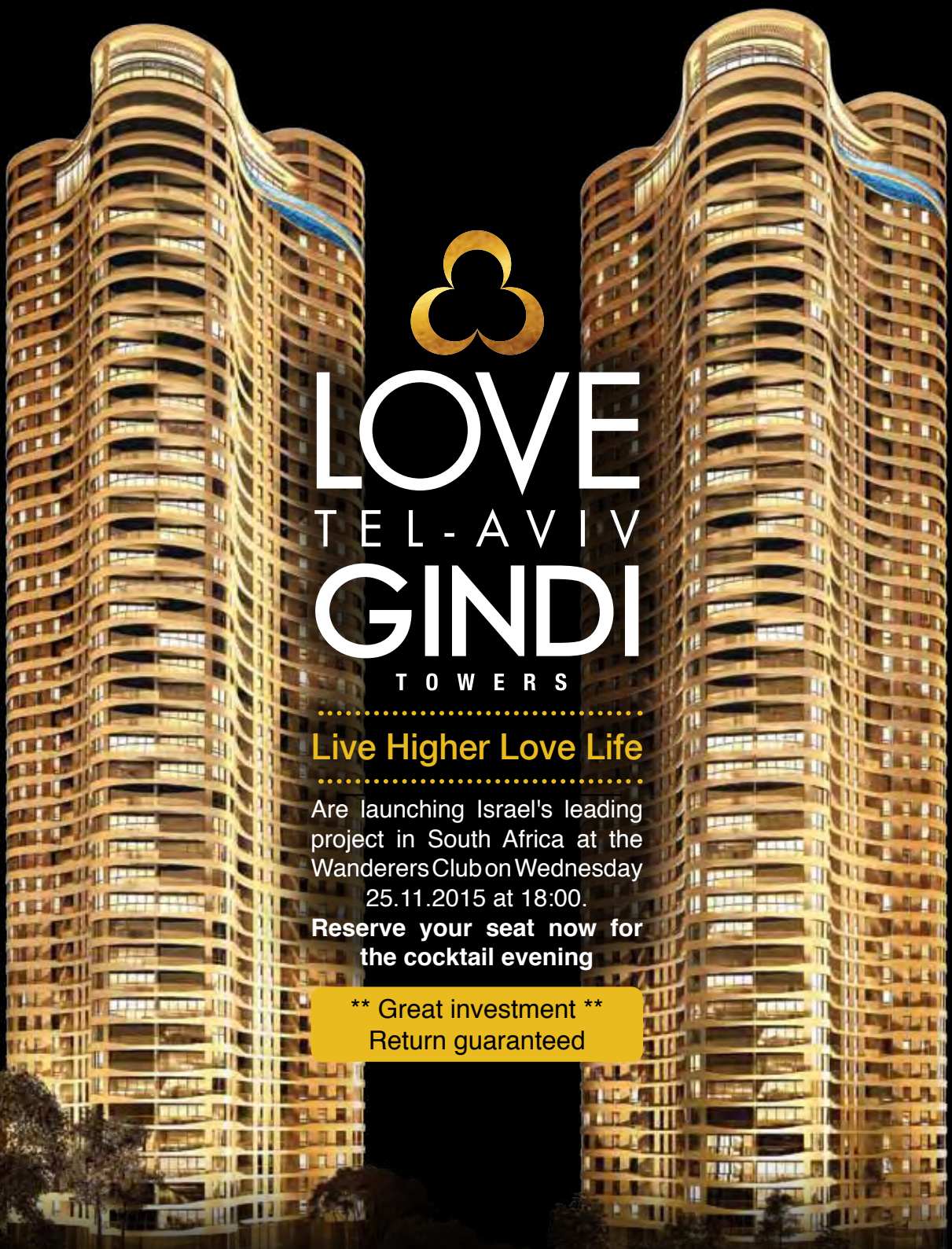
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### HOME IN ISRAEL

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# In wealthy Paris hamlet, some Jews reconsider their future

**CNAAN LIPSHIZ**  
**PARIS**

Babette and Sasha Bergman lead what many would consider a charmed life.

Both Jewish hi-tech professionals in their 30s - they met while working at Google's European headquarters in Ireland - the Bergmans settled in this capital city shortly ahead of the birth of their now four-year-old daughter, Daniella.

On weekends, they enjoy entertaining friends in their spacious apartment in the 17th arrondissement - an upscale and heavily Jewish district where the anti-Semitic incidents common throughout the rest of Paris are more rare. Many Jews in the poorer quarters say this area is the ivory tower of upper-middle class French Jewry.

Living on a street with three synagogues and near many kosher shops, observing the Sabbath and keeping kosher is far easier in Paris, where some 350 000 Jews live, than it was when they were living in Dublin, says Sasha, who was born in Russia and grew up in the Netherlands.

But in the wake of the jihadist attacks that killed at least 129 in Paris last week, even the Bergmans are finding it increasingly difficult to imagine a future for themselves in a country where Islamist terrorism and violence - including attacks that target the Jewish community - are putting wind into the sails of a rising far-right.

"I love this city, I love my country, but after the initial shock from the attacks and the pain, my first thought was regret that we decided to settle here," said Babette, who is Sephardic and grew up in the French city of Lyon. Two of her three sisters recently moved

to Israel.

In January, soldiers with automatic rifles were posted regularly outside the Bergmans' building to guard an adjacent synagogue. It was a precaution taken following the slaying by Islamists of 12 people at the offices of the satirical Charlie Hebdo newspaper, followed by two other terrorist attacks, including one at a kosher supermarket, Hyper Cacher, in eastern Paris that killed four people. The supermarket attack came about three years after an Islamist killed three children and a rabbi at a Jewish school in Toulouse, France.

"We pass them by sometimes with Daniella," Babette said of the soldiers guarding Jewish institutions. "We're grateful, but it's not a normal way to live."

Two days after last week Friday's deadly attack, Babette's family from Lyon and Israel gathered in Paris for a cousin's wedding at the historic Synagogue des Tournelles in the Marais, the city's historic Jewish district.

After the ceremony, the congregants left the synagogue quickly, mostly to make room for the next wedding - there were four Jewish wedding ceremonies planned there that day - but also because some guests said they felt uncomfortable gathering among groups of Jews at a time when terrorists believed to have been involved in the attacks are still at large.

"We're not too scared to come here and continue our lives as usual," said Ness Berros, a French Jew in his 20s who attended the wedding. "But we're too scared to feel exactly at ease right now."

The synagogue is under heavy guard by soldiers and police officers. Security was even tighter at another event the same day at the Synagogue de la Victoire, also known as the Grand Synagogue of Paris, at a ceremony hon-



A wedding at the Synagogue des Tournelles in Paris, last Sunday.

ouring the victims of the Friday's attacks.

Outside Jewish institutions, many of which had suspended their activities following the attacks, streets usually bustling with tourists and locals were much emptier than they otherwise would have been on a sunny Sunday afternoon in November.

Fears were just as pronounced outside the city, in its poorer suburbs, where tens of thousands of Jews live in close proximity to many Muslims - and where tensions often run high. Such neighbourhoods provided the majority of Paris-area Jews who immigrated to Israel last year, according to Jewish Agency figures.

In total, 6 658 French Jews left for Israel last year, more than triple the total number in 2012.

In Pavillons-sous-Bois, a northeastern suburb, Sandra Sebbah, a Jewish mother of four, says the soldiers outside her children's Jewish school "might as well be cardboard cutouts" be-

cause "they won't stop an attack by the people with the kind of determination we saw."

Sebbah said she could not leave France because of her husband's work, but encouraged her children to "live somewhere else, like normal people and not like this, where I am afraid every minute they're not home - especially when they're at school."

Meanwhile, many French Jews worry that the attacks will strengthen the popularity of the National Front, a far-right, anti-immigrant party that French Jewish groups have largely shunned for the anti-Semitic track record of its founder, Jean-Marie Le Pen.

Marine Le Pen is the party's current leader.

In a poll conducted two weeks before the Paris attacks, Marine Le Pen emerged as an early favourite candidate in the 2017 presidential elections. Some 30 per cent of those polled said they would vote for her over the

*Continued on page 9*

## Art

# JAG celebrates its 100th with a Pre-Raphaelite exhibition

**MARGOT COHEN**

This month the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) building turns 100 years. Its founders, Lady Florence and Sir Lionel Phillips, decided to give the gritty mining town of Johannesburg a glimmer of culture and art.

JAG was officially opened in November 1910 in what is now the old showgrounds at Milner Park, now part of Wits campus.

Last week, more than 1 700 art lovers gathered at Joubert Park where the Gallery is situated, to mark the historic landmark which was designed by architect Edwin Luytens.

The building is a national monument and includes works by many celebrated South African artists. The centenary exhibition showcases the masters as well as digital works. Among the exhibits is the traditional African, Moments in a Metro exhibition and a display of South African works between 1954-1970.

The artworks date from the 17th century to contemporary Sekoto, Kentridge, Dali, Francis Bacon and recently a Damien Hirst.

Historic curator of JAG since 1991, Sheree Lisssoos, has put together an interesting collection of Pre-Raphaelite paintings for the centenary. These came to the gallery between 1948-'50 with the Neumann bequest from Sigismund Neumann and consist of 58 works in different media by Victorian artists.

Neumann's works were stored at the Tate Gallery for some time. He came to South Africa in his late teens to seek his fortune on the Kimberley diamond mines and became a successful mining magnate. He later owned a thriving merchant banking business in London.

In 1913 he donated a small but representative pre-Raphaelite collection of paintings and drawings to JAG.



Neumann's gift was part of the £50 000 needed by Lady Florence Phillips for a nucleus art collection at JAG from funds raised by public subscription in London in response to her request for support.

Lisssoos herself has always been fascinated by the pre-Raphaelites. Among the important works displayed are portraits of Ruskin, Rossetti and William Hunt.

She says that of all the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood artists, William Hunt was the most consistent in the pursuit of serious subject matter and fidelity to nature. "The paintings were often accompanied with lines of poetry or verse," she adds.

Lisssoos has several art history degrees and also a fine arts degree. She lectured at Wits for 18 years before joining the Gallery.

She is determined to get the art-loving public back to the Gallery; it's a misconception that the area is unsafe, she claims.

• *The exhibitions are well worth seeing and will be on until March 2016.*



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# A time to come and a time to go

At the beginning of this year, the world was shocked by two horrific terror attacks carried out in Paris against Charlie Hebdo magazine and a kosher supermarket. As we have now seen, this was a prelude to something even worse, a co-ordinated series of barbaric attacks that claimed the lives of over 150 innocent Parisians last Friday evening.

The Paris atrocities were just the latest incidents of terrorism by Islamist extremists that have taken place this year, all of which underline the precarious nature of security around the globe.

They include the massacre of 147 students at Garissa University in Kenya and the deaths of at least 38 people, mainly tourists, in Sousse, Tunisia. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the people of France during this tragic time.

The Paris attacks have lent an additional significance to what Dr Bernard-Henri Levy will have to say at the SAJBD’s national conference this Sunday. Dr Levy is recognised internationally as being a strong, forthright voice against extremism, racism and anti-Semitism, and hailing from a country that has been particularly affected by these scourges, provides an additional dimension of urgency and immediacy to the insights he has to impart.

Sharing the platform with him is World Jewish Congress

President Ronald Lauder, who is likewise engaged at the highest levels in global efforts to counter extremism and bigotry.

**A valedictory message**

This is my last SA Jewish Report column before I step down as National Chairman of the SAJBD. In thanking all of those who accompanied me along what has been a sometimes bumpy, but always enthralling and deeply rewarding journey, I begin by thanking our extraordinary Jewish community for their support and good will. It has been a pleasure to have engaged with so many of you and a privilege to have represented the community in so many important forums.

Next, I thank all my colleagues on the SAJBD’s executive committee, not just for their unstinting support, advice and assistance, but as importantly, their warm friendship. They are National President Zev Krengel, Vice-Chairmen Doron Joffe, David Simson and Eric Marx, National Treasurer Raymond Goss, Advocate Michael Donen and regional chairmen Ronnie Herr, Jeff Katz and Sean Zagoev.

Zev in particular has been an unbelievable mentor, and without his unstinting and generous support, advice and guidance, I could never have taken on the position.

Finally, I wish to thank our national staff: National Director Wendy Kahn, Associate Director David Saks, Charisse Zeifert, Shirley Beagle, Jenni Fearnley, Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft and Chaya Singer.

Without reservation, I can say that the commitment and passion shown by this phenomenal team, with Wendy unfailingly leading by example, is in my experience unparalleled. All are driven by the same love and concern for the Jewish community, and in serving, it go way beyond the call of duty.

As I step down after four years at the helm of this very special organisation, I do so secure in the knowledge that SA Jewry is in the best of hands.

• 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*



**Above Board**  
**Mary Kluk**  
National Chairman

## Paris Hamlet

From page 8

incumbent Socialist Party president, Francois Hollande, who would garner 19 per cent of the vote.

Back at the Bergmans’ apartment in central Paris, Babette’s father, Gerard, said the attacks reminded him of his childhood. A dentist in his 60s, he left Constantine, Algeria, in the 1960s amid a bloody civil war, in which local nationalists fought France for independence and each other for dominance.

Gerald, who did not want his last name used in print, said his family narrowly survived a bombing outside their home because they were at a restaurant when the explosive detonated.

“Now it seems to me the same barbarians are coming to drive me and my family once again, this time out of France itself,” said Babette’s father, adding he will probably leave for Israel within the next few years.

His wife, Jacqueline, who was born in Morocco, said she believed the war in Algeria might have traumatised her husband.

“I had a very different childhood in Casa-blanca,” she recalled. “When we talk about coexistence, I know it’s possible because I lived it, with neighbours, Arabs and Muslims, living together, acknowledging each other’s holidays.”

Still, Jacqueline said, she also saw no future for Jews in France.

After the wedding celebration, a visibly tired Sasha puts Daniella to sleep and prepares to drive for an hour and a half to a university campus in Fontainebleau, where he is completing an executive MBA programme. (JTA)



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# Young Wayline reached her dream at Yiddish Folk



The senior group children of Yiddish Folk Pre-Primary School, playing with Wayline Thompson in the playground.

ANDY HAEFNER

Last week Friday, the senior group children at Yiddish Folk Pre-Primary School welcomed Wayline Thompson to the school. Wayline is a 10-year-old girl who was diagnosed with aplastic anaemia. This is a condition when the body stops producing enough new blood cells

She attends Drommedaris Primary School in Boksburg, but unfortunately hasn't been well enough to be at school. She has been under the auspices of the Reach for A Dream Foundation and the only dream she has is to be a teacher for a day.

Imagine the excitement at Yiddish Folk at being able to make a beautiful young child's dream come true!

Wayline spent a morning reading stories, handing out snacks and playing with the children, as well as assisting with concert practice. She had the most amazing time and Yiddish Folk couldn't be more proud that she chose this school to fulfil her dream. Yiddish Folk presented Wayline with holiday vouchers.

# Super Shabbat at King David Victory Park Primary School

RABBI RICKY SEEFF

This past Shabbat, King David Primary School Victory Park, together with the PTA, arranged a "King David Super Shabbat".

The event began in the morning with a unity davening ceremony on the field, with parents joining their children for prayers and a musical hallel on the stands. Musicians Johnny Sklar and Yochi Ress added their special musical talents to the event.

On Shabbat evening the whole school was invited for an inspirational shul service at Victory Park Shul, with the children leading Kabbalat Shabbos. It was followed by a delicious Kiddush.



KDVP Primary School parents join their children for davening and musical hallel on the stands.



# Sydenham tots learn about saving water - in a fun way

LESLEY BLOCH

At Sydenham Pre-Primary School, the kids really stayed cool during the Gauteng heat wave!

After educating the children about water restrictions and the reason for terminating "sprinkler fun", they continued to have fun splashing and blowing bubbles in the water trough.

# TA pre-grades celebrate with year-end concert

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Pre-grade boys from Torah Academy Nursery School took part in a graduation and end-of-year concert last week. They are in Leah Lipskar and Gitty Rabin's class.

Every class in the nursery school has concerts to celebrate the end of year and Chanukah.



# Young Nadav was last 'sighted' in Hanoi...

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Nadav Ossendryver, founder of the immensely popular Latest Sightings website, went to Vietnam last week with a group of eight South Africans to attend a Wildfest Youth Rhino Summit in Hanoi.

Through Project Rhino KwaZulu-Natal and Operation Game Change (OGC), they went to educate schoolchildren and university students about the plight of the rhino in South Africa and the trafficking of wildlife in Africa in general.

Pictured in front of an audience of 3 000, Nadav hands over a memorandum to Vu Minh Ly, director of National Volunteer Centre, Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union.



## Gathering Voices

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Biennial National Conference  
Sunday 22 November 2015

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# Riding 94.7 kilometres and flying the flag, for a good cause

**RABBI RAMON WIDMONTE MIZRACHI**

Last Sunday, November 15, team Ride4AfricaIsrael, rode the 94.7 cycle challenge. Over 40 riders from both Jewish and Christian communities joined our team and embarked on the daunting challenge of 94.7 kilometres across Johannesburg, wearing the proud colours of Israel and South Africa.

Ride4AfricaIsrael is a campaign set up last year by committed South Africans to bring drip irrigation technology from Israel to schools in underprivileged communities. With little rainfall, many schools' feeding schemes are under stress. Through this project, schools with their own vegetable gardens may have access to the water solutions needed be able to grow the produce for students and neighbouring communities.

Led by Mizrachi SA, Deisi, Maccabi, the SA Zionist Federation and South African Friends of Israel have

joined as partners in this exciting project. With the mentorship of world, and Maccabi champion, Kevin Evans, the team was ready both physically and mentally to ride the race for the second year. We received only positive feedback from other cyclists across the race.

With funds coming in from Sunday's race, the pilot project can now be set up in a Gauteng school in the coming weeks.

The project will also educate kids and parents in the community about Israel; provide a model of healthy living to disadvantaged South Africans; tell the good story of Israel and all the great things it brings the world and unite diverse South Africans at a time when water is a critical issue.

There are opportunities to sponsor a rider or to join us next year for the ride. Contact us on [info@ride4africaisrael.org.za](mailto:info@ride4africaisrael.org.za), [www.ride4africaisrael.org.za](http://www.ride4africaisrael.org.za) or call us on (011)-4853624.



# ORT SA wins big at golf and goodwill

**MARCELLE RAVID**

The 42nd ORT SA Golf Classic took place at the Killarney Country Club recently as a fundraiser for ORT.

This year the ORT SA Golf Raffle honoured the late George Kuper. "George, a larger-than-life good man and ORT SA stalwart, was golf committee chairman for many years," said the committee in a unanimous statement.

Presenting the prizes to the raffle winners was George's wife, Vicki and his granddaughter, Indya. His daughter, Ariellah said: "[It's] really special that this was

done for my father as he truly loved his years with ORT and the work the organisation does."

Ariellah serves on the ORT Cape Trust while daughters Nicole and Natanya were present at the prize-giving.

"It is an incredible tribute to ORT SA that four generations of this family continue to support our amazing organisation," said Ariellah Rosenberg, ORT SA CEO. We are absolutely thrilled with the funds raised. This allows ORT SA to continue educating and training South Africans in all communities," said Solly Burgin, convener of the ORT SA Golf Committee.

# Arthur Marsden literally climbs every mountain

**ANDREA WAINER**

On a chilly evening, at a WIZO function in Johannesburg, Leanne Braudo welcomed people into her home to hear the story of the amazing adventures of Arthur Marsden.

This advocate by profession's passion is adventure, and in particular, climbing mountains. Using pictures and video clips, Arthur kept his audience spellbound with stories of his climbing the highest mountains in the world and journeying to the North and South Poles.

In South Africa, Arthur has hiked the Drakensberg Grand Traverse unsupported in winter. He pioneered a trip to the Ruwenzori Mountains, also known as the Mountains of the Moon, in Uganda. He has reached the summits of Mount Kilimanjaro three times, Mount Aconcagua in Argentina on the Chilean border, Mount Elbrus in Russia, Carstensz Pyramid in West Papua (formerly Irian Java) in New Guinea, and Mount Denali in Alaska.

On May 24, 2010, Arthur achieved the highlight of his climbing career

when he reached the summit of Mount Everest from the north side in Tibet. In April 2011, he reached the North Pole, man-hauling a sled from the 89th parallel, close to the transient Russian Ice Camp Borneo in the Arctic Circle.

In January 2013 Arthur finished what is known as "The Adventure Grand Slam" by summiting Mount Vinson in Antarctica and hauling a sledge to the South Pole. He is but one of 36 people in the world to have completed "The Adventure Grand Slam".

Facing many challenges, Arthur learned tenacity, humility and focus, developing close bonds with the people he was with, as they experienced extreme challenges together.

He shared life lessons with his audience about sticking to one's goals, facing the mountains in their lives and conquering them and savouring the high moments as everything can change in a moment. There were many questions from the audience and much discussion as they enjoyed tea.



Leanne Braudo, Andrea Wainer and Arthur Marsden, at the WIZO function.

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- Sleeps ± 201 female students.
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LEADING WATER CONSERVATION COUNTRY ISRAEL CAN HELP SA

I’m wondering, in these days of Johan-nesburg’s sweltering heat and lack of rain, whether anyone knows if the co-operative water research project between the University of Johannes-burg (UJ) and Ben-Gurion University (BGU), cancelled in March 2011, has been reinstated or not. From the online reports it is not clear.

In March 2011, UJ’s senate voted to cut ties with BGU. I happened to be at UJ, attending an academic talk, when the senate representative walked in from the voting meeting and informed us that the senate had voted to sever ties with BGU.

I said: “That’s a pity.” He asked: “Why?” I said: “BGU is internationally, a highly accredited university and UJ will lose out.”

On March 23, 2011, Stuart Graham, writing on the IOL website said: “... Ben-Gurion University... had been working with UJ on finding a method to clean algae that has infested South Africa’s drinking water. The severing of ties meant the project was likely to come to an end, leaving UJ without access to BGU’s extensive water expertise.”

In the same article, Adam Habib who was UJ’s deputy vice-chancellor at the time, was quoted as saying that individual professors from UJ would be allowed to keep up existing partner-ships with BGU.

A few months later in July, 2011 the BGU website stated that the collabo-rative research agreement had been re-instated.

However, on July 11, 2011, Alfred Moselagomo writing for The

Sowetan, said: “UJ denies ties with Israel” and cited Farid Esack, head of the religious studies department, saying the “claim is false and reflects a desperate attempt to counter Israel’s increasing isolation”.

In July this year, regarding the impending water shortage in South Africa, Charlotte Mathews, wrote for BD Live: “The water crisis is already here, warn engineers.”

On September 29, Marie de Verges wrote an article for BD Live entitled: “Israel holds the key to regional water crisis.”

An image was attached of the Sorek Desalination Plant, 15 km south of Tel Aviv, “which turns sea water into drinkable water for 1,5-million people through reverse osmosis”.

On November 6, Bekezela Phakathi, also writing for BD Live, quoted the Cape Chamber of Commerce President Janine Myburgh, as saying that “de-salination would be necessary in the future” and that it is normal practice in the Middle East, “where most desalina-tion takes place and it is amazing that we are not doing it here. The same image of the Sorek Plant outside Tel Aviv was used for her article, and “the Middle East” would appear to mean Israel.

Wouldn’t it be great if we South Africans were able to overcome our ambiguous relationship with Israel and continue to benefit from Israel’s ingenuity and expertise with regards to water conservation?

**Beverley Price**

**Johannesburg**

SIFRIN PART OF A DYING BREED OF JEWS RUNNING FOR COVER

I was somewhat alarmed at Geoff Sifrin’s Taking Issue column in respect of the “ Hamas advert ” by Friends of Israel in the Sunday Times.

Sifrin states that “no matter how well composed it is, you cannot control how it will be exploited and understood by sectors of the newspaper’s colossal readership”.

Is this not the case for any article written by anyone, every day, all over the world? What is Sifrin scared of? I think he belongs to a dying breed of Jews (thank G-d) who run for cover the moment something may rock the boat.

Congratulations to Friends of Israel for having the guts to stand up for us Jews (those who are not afraid). You deserve all the support you can get.

**Sonny Myerson**

**Oranjezicht, Cape Town**

CHOICE OF ZUMA FOR SAJBD CONFERENCE IS INAPPROPRIATE

What is it with us Jews, who, in a democracy, feel obligated to pander to and toady up to the ANC and invite President Jacob Zuma to deliver a keynote ad-dress at the SAJBD Conference. This is the man who very recently gave a royal and rousing reception to Hamas’ Khaled Meshaal, acknowledged by most of the Western world to be a terrorist. This is the man who accommodated Sudan’s Omar al-Bashir, a genocidal maniac, and flew him out of the country despite a ruling by his own judicial court in South Africa.

This the man whose party, in the not too distant past, feted Yasser Arafat, also acknowledged by the Western nations as a terrorist and accorded him a royal reception and red carpet treatment and allowed him to march into the Houses of Parliament carrying a gun, when even our president is not allowed to carry any kind of weapon on the premises. Hamas and Hezbollah are deadly enemies of Israel and of Jews - the ANC is seemingly friendly with these “organisations” whose avowed intention is to kill all the Jews and eliminate the State of Israel from the face of the earth. These organisations apparently are friends of the ANC. The maxim goes: The enemy of my friend is my friend. How applicable is this to the cosiness of the ANC and Hamas and Jews and Israel?

Think I might be present at the SAJBD Conference? Perish the thought!

With apologies to Ronald Lauder and Dr Bernard-Henri Levy, who will be the keynote speakers.

**Jack Miller, Gresswold, Johannesburg**

AD AGAINST HAMAS IS ‘A COMPLETE WASTE OF MONEY’

I don’t always agree with Geoff Sifrin. However, he is correct in his Taking Issue column in Jewish Report of November 6: The ad against Hamas is a bad idea.

It’s a complete waste of money which could have been put to better use. All the advertisement does is preach to the converted and I doubt whether many people could be bothered to read that long screed of type. And as Sifrin rightly points out, the SA Zionist Federation has given the enemies of Israel and the Jews lots of ammunition to put across their vitriolic comment.

This is despite the Sunday Times’ statement that they do not publish letters or material that will stoke racial hatred. But watch the letters the “paper for the people” will publish this Sunday!

The SAZF lives in a world of its own, and yes, it takes up the cudgels against anti-Semitism and does its best to change people’s views of Israel by taking journalists (and others) on junkets to the Holy Land.

Trips like those do not change people’s opinions and if they do write anything positive, there is always a rider - and their views will be heavily sub-edited in the newsroom.

According to Sifrin the SA Friends of Israel, a Fed ini-tiative, is planning to broaden the scope of the campaign; this will just be throwing good money after bad.

LABELLING ISSUE: WHAT’S SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE IS SAUCE FOR THE GANDER

The European Union has passed a directive that all prod-ucts, including produce manufactured or grown) in the Israeli “occupied” settlements, must be labelled as such, presumably to alert prospective buyers.

This has angered many Israelis and Jews as it is seen to be discriminatory.

However, on the positive side, most buyers of these products (emanating from Israel), know where they come from, so it is unlikely to have a significant impact.

What is of serious concern, however, are the malicious statements made by European diplomats and people in top positions.

The French ambassador to Washington has said that this “is a positive step”. I agree with him, but not in the sense that he suggests.

In Spain, there is apparently a warrant of arrest out by the Spanish government for Minister Avi Lieberman and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and several other Israelis (the former minister of defence, and the former head of the navy), for crimes allegedly committed in the sinking the Turkish vessel, Mavi Mara, a few years ago,

JVJP ZUMA LETTER GIVES A BACKHAND TO SAJBD CONFERENCE

Jewish Voices for a Just Peace (JVJP), who call themselves “a group of SA Jews who wish to add our voices to the grow-ing number of Jews who dare to disagree with the blind support for Israeli violence against civilians”, addressed a letter to President Jacob Zuma.

As proud, South African Jews, concerned about both Palestinians and Israelis, we write this open letter welcom-ing your attendance at the SAJBD Biennial Conference titled “Gathering Voices, Combating Global Racism, and Anti-Semitism”.

We believe this to be an ideal opportunity for you as president] as an activist, freedom fighter and president of democratic South Africa, to engage the audience on some key issues:

- The definition of racism includes Islamophobia which ho-mogenises the Muslim world into a singular thinking-and-acting body with a nucleus of irrational militant Islam.
- The safety of Jews from another Holocaust can in fact be realised, by fighting all forms of racism and hatred. Build-ing walls will never achieve safety; only make one more of a target.
- Jews - like many other cultural and religious groups - have strong traditions of charity, education and social justice. As a community who benefited under apartheid and still continues to benefit, we have an active role to play in rebuilding the society we all want to be part of.
- The SAJBD claims to be representative of the Jewish community, but in fact only amplifies the voice of Jews who support Israel uncritically. The SAJBD as the umbrella organisation of Jews in South Afric, should embrace all views equally and ensure no voices are marginalised.

What the Fed needs is to utilise a professional public rela-tion company to guide and give advice on how to polish Israel’s and by extension, the Fed’s image through the press, through well-considered opinion pieces and let-ters to the editor, apart from the media team’s excellent contribution.

There are some excellent Jewish PR agencies in Johan-nesburg who could do the job.

In the same issue of Jewish Report I note that the SAJB has invited President Jacob Zuma to be its guest of honour at its biennial conference in Johannesburg. To what end? This is the man who along with his colleagues, warmly embraced Hamas.

As long as people like Obed Bapela and International Relations and Co-operation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, who had a lot to say about dual citizenship and the Gaza conflict, are his advisers, he is certainly not going to say anything of substance. In fact he will most likely giggle and stumble his way through his speech, not even having the decency to read it beforehand.

Just another sign of disrespect he has for the nation at large.

**Brian Josselowitz**

**Milnerton**

notwithstanding, the fact that the vessel had not been cleared to be in Israeli waters.

It has become patently clear that virtually all of Europe does not support Israel or its policies and some of these countries are blatantly anti-Semitic in their actions to support the Palestinians.

That said, it seems that an equitable quid pro quo can be sought from European countries - the EU countries exporting their products to Israel (and indeed South Africa and the US), by labelling the products “from EU”.

This will ensure that people who do not agree with Europe’s stance on the labelling issue and opposition to Israel, will have the option of purchasing alternative products from other destinations.

Many people already do not buy French, Swedish, Spanish or Belgian products for various reasons.

It is time that Israel takes firm action rather than vent its displeasure through the media or diplomatic channels.

**Nathan Cheiman**

**Northcliff, Johannesburg**

- The SAJBD has organised this conference to discuss ways of combating anti-Semitism. The best way to counter anti-Semitic sentiment is to pressure Israel - which claims to be speaking on behalf of all Jews - into negotiating a just peace with Palestinians.
- The SAJBD supported Israel’s Operation Cast Lead in 2008/2009 and Protective Edge in 2014 in Gaza which killed thousands of people, mainly civilians, including hundreds of children. They destroyed infrastructure and housing, much of which has never been rebuilt. Gaza’s citizens continue to languish under the blockade.

Death and destruction should never be celebrated, let alone through the hosting of a nationalistic rally in support of the Israeli military and might.

We might not represent the majority of Jews in South Africa, but neither did Dietrich Bonnhoefer in Nazi Ger-many nor Beyers Naude, Antjie Krog, Bram Fischer, Joe Slovo and Ruth First in apartheid South Africa.

Our individual consciences and our Jewish tradition compel us to declare to the SAJBD and to the Israeli government that we will continue to speak out.

We ask you [as the president] to provide the nec-essary guidance by urging all parties to overcome all forms of racism, discrimination as well as social, economic and political injustice by sitting down at the negotiation table for a long-term, sustainable solution towards peace, reconciliation and self-determination for all.

**Jewish Voices for a Just Peace**

**Johannesburg**



BLAME FOR DIAMOND INDUSTRY WOES IS POOR GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

Lionel Slier’s article in the Jewish Report of November 13, “Writing the obituary of the South African diamond industry” is factually incorrect in many instances.

The relocation two years ago by DeBeers of all their rough diamond sorting and trading functions from London to Gaborone was brought about by an agreement signed between De Beers and the Government of Botswana and has absolutely nothing to do with South Africa.

Furthermore, it had very little impact on the diamond cutting and polishing landscape in South Africa. If anything, it added more foot traffic to South African shores. Some diamond businesses operating in South Africa opened additional offices and factories in Botswana, which allowed these companies to leverage off existing economies of scale which were already present in their local operations.

Not one factory shut down completely in South Africa only to open in Botswana instead.

Slier refers to “The State Diamond Company” and “The State Government Company”. I guess the entity name he is referring to is that of The State Diamond Trader, the SDT.

Slier claims that as a result of the relocation of De Beers to Botswana “there was no longer a single South African sightholder”. This is not true. There are currently eight South African sightholders who have active agreements with De Beers to purchase rough diamonds 10 times a year in Kimberley.

Yes, local players do have to compete with international buyers at private tenders as well, but this is not what has caused the dramatic loss of jobs in the local diamond and cutting industry. Ultimately there is a natural place for South Africa among the leading cutting and polishing sectors of the world and what is hindering the sustainability of this industry going forward is simply poorly planned and executed government legislation together with an overly regulated local business environment.

Should the South African government decide to open up the industry and let free economic factors take over, the future sustainability of the industry in South Africa would not be in question.

Ilan Kaplan  
Vice-Chairman - South African Diamond Manufacturers Association

Read the South African Jewish Report online  
www.sajewishreport.co.za

TURKEY’S DUPLICITOUS POLICIES DON’T CREATE A MURMUR

Within days following the horrific attacks perpetrated by ISIS in Paris, the G-20 leaders met in Turkey, to discuss a co-ordinated response to terrorism. As Turkey itself suffered its worst terrorist act in Ankara only a month ago, the security at this meeting was unprecedented.

Turkey however, also has blood on its hands having been involved in subjugating the fourth largest ethnic group in the Middle East, the Kurds. The 20 million Kurds are spread over an area comprising Eastern Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Russia.

In each of these areas they are a threatened minority and the rise of ISIS is a direct peril to their survival. The Kurds in Turkey have since the First World War been the victims of cultural and religious attacks on their ethnicity and political rights.

The right to speak, write and publish in Kurdish was forbidden and even the use of the word “Kurd” was denied and their leaders have been hunted and jailed. Although the Treaty of Sevres, in August 1920 provided for an independent Kurdistan, after the dissolution of Ottoman Turkey, it was never ratified.

Again, following the Turkish war of independence, its promises to the Kurds to grant them some independence in return for their assistance during the war, came to nothing. Instead after attaining independence, Turkey embarked on a policy of ethnic cleansing and perpetrated several massacres, such as those at Dersim and Zilan, where hundreds of thousands of Kurdish lives were lost.

Against the Armenians a genocide of over one million civilians was perpetrated.

The barbarism against the Kurds continues, under the guise of Turkish support for Nato’s efforts to bring about the demise of the Assad regime in Syria.

While ironically, the Pashmurga Kurds represent the only effective ground forces able to withstand ISIS and the Assad government forces, Turkey continues to ruthlessly attack them and the PKK Kurdish fighters on the ground and from the air.

Thousands of Kurdish civilians have been killed in these attacks and large swathes of “Kurdistan” are uninhabitable. While the Kurds have only ever wanted autonomy in the

areas they are the majority and do not seek the demise of any states in the region, they are considered by the US and Nato to be terrorists.

Turkey, is the only member of Nato to have attacked - with over 40 000 troops in 1974 - and still occupies another European country, namely Northern Cyprus. Unlike Russia, which is the victim of European and American sanctions for attacking the Ukraine and Georgia, Turkey seems to have escaped scot-free and is instead being honoured by hosting of the G-20 powers.

If the leaders of these powers are sincere in their endeavours to confront terrorism, they need to first look closely at their own members and in particular at Turkey, which is playing on both sides of the field.

Its commitment to fight ISIS is questionable and certainly ranked behind its commitment to destroy Assad and the Kurds. For Nato to be an effective force against ISIS, it needs to reign in Turkey’s duplicitous policies.

Ben Levitas  
Chairman, SAZF Cape Council

CAN ANYONE HELP UNRAVEL THIS MYSTERY?

Mike Roberts needs information for a book he is writing. He needs to identify someone who may know a man whose first name was either Max or Alex or possibly was Ken Alexander. During the war this man managed to enter Germany to rescue his two sisters (one was called Friedl or Frieda). The sisters stayed in Ray Mansions, Vredehoek and he lived in St James Street, later retiring to the Garden Route.

In this photo taken in Mouille Point circa 1949, Max/Alex is sitting next to the two-year-old Mike Roberts. The last time they met was in 1990 when he would have been in his early 80s.

Mike intends including this man’s heroic rescue of his sisters in the book.

If you can help, please contact MikeR (Mike Roberts) 2782 561 3854 //2711 787 6709 //mykerob@gmail.com



Two young lives commemorated in a fun way

SHEREEN MILLER

Four years ago, at age 13, Dean Walt died tragically in a car accident. Ten months ago, his only sibling, Dylan, took his life at age 19, leaving his parents, Ivan and Belinda, family, friends and the community that they were so much a part of, once again devastated.

Ivan and Belinda have held fundraisers since 2012 for various organisations and recently held a fundraiser in honour of Dylan. Funds went to Yad Aharon and Michael and the Medical Rescue Unit in Pretoria. It was a very powerful and emotional day which brought hundreds of teenagers and adults together for fun-filled action soccer, followed by a prize-giving.

Over R70 000 was raised between the two charities that day. “The Walty Brothers Fun Day” will again be held next year.

Ivan Walt thanked everyone for “the continued support, love and kindness”.



Dean Walt and his brother Dylan, pictured together.



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# A ‘Jewish home away from home’ for students in Cape Town

## OWN CORRESPONDENT

The University of Cape Town will soon see South Africa’s first campus centre for Jewish student life open its doors in the city.

“We are hoping it will be launched in February in time for the academic year,” said Rabbi Nissen Goldman, son of Rabbi Yossy and Rochel Goldman of Johannesburg.

He and his wife, Ariella, daughter of Michael and Linda Gavronsky of Cape Town, were living in New Jersey in the US and returned to Cape Town for the birth of their baby “AJ” 18 months ago.

“We didn’t think we would stay, but we saw there was a gap in that there was no centre for students and we decided to remain and fill that gap,” said Rabbi Goldman.

He and Ariella are on a mission to create a “Jewish home away from home” for university students in Cape Town and are committed to making this exciting project a reality.

The young Rabbi Goldman served as chaplain last year for the Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre, a Jewish academic institution, at UCT. In that capacity he organised High Holy Day services, Friday night and Yomtov student dinners, weekly “Lunch ‘n Learn” Torah classes and several socials.

The experience convinced him that students wanted to have a space they could call their own. “We needed an actual home that the students can feel is theirs and a space to host all of these programmes and more. At the end of the day, every community needs a home,” he said.

The new centre which will be located near UCT, will be an affiliate of the Chabad on Campus international network which currently has 230 centres, all locally funded on university campuses worldwide, with 19 new centres to be

Rabbi Nissen and Ariella Goldman, with baby “AJ”.



opened this coming semester. Rabbi Goldman is emphatic however that the centre will be open and welcoming to all Jews regardless of affiliation or level of observance. Quoting the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, OBM, he says: “Labels are for clothing, not for Jews. The Jewish people are one nation with one Torah and one G-d. Nothing can divide us.”

Rabbi Mendel Popack, director of Chabad in Cape Town, is bringing the young couple as the Chabad shluchim to Rondebosch where the centre will be located. It will be easy walking distance to UCT campuses and student residences.

Although the Goldmans promise that Chabad on Campus will serve all Jewish students at local universities, Nissen says operating out of UCT makes the most sense. “It has the highest Jewish population by far. The area is up-and-coming and totally student central. There are also other colleges in the area which works out great for everybody.”

The centre which will also serve as the Goldman’s home, will host Shabbat and Yomtov meals free of charge, as well as shul services. There will be weekly study and a variety of cul-

tural events to promote community-building. “We can’t just cater to the mind and soul, we need to address the whole person holistically,” he adds. As a passionate musician the rabbi hopes to host musical events, showcasing Jewish student

## Shooby Doob Shloimy ready for its barmitzvah performance



Mark Samowitz and Helen Heldenmuth, creators of Shooby Doob Shloimy, with some of the children in the cast of the upcoming Chanukah concert, Gavi Mindel (front) and (back) Netanya Mindel, Liron Mindel and Jordan Milner.

### SUZANNE BELLING

Shooby Doob Shloimy, a very big Jewish South African music export, with three albums to the show’s credit and another one shortly to be released in honour of its barmitzvah year - will be sharing its Chanukah message with children of the community on December 6, with morning and afternoon shows at Eden College in Lyndhurst.

The brainchild of television producer and drama coach Helen Heldenmuth and Cantor Mark Samowitz, formerly of the Victory Park Shul, the idea was born at the Johannesburg Zoo at a charity function when Mark gave a lift to Helen to the venue in a golf cart in the pouring rain.

“I was sick and tired of all the violent heroes such as Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and looked around for a Jewish hero,” said Helen.

After she heard Mark sing she knew she had found her hero. “My Hebrew name is Shlomo and so we named our star Shooby Doob Shloimy,” Mark said.

The two began their practice of sitting up through the night at Helen’s piano, with Mark composing the music and Helen penning the lyrics.

Shloimy developed into a well-loved and recognisable character, who regularly goes to every Jewish day school in South Africa as well as travelling to Australia, London, at least seven cities in the United States where his three albums - on the Pesach seder, Shabbos from candle-lighting to Havdalah and on mitzvot became best-sellers.

The fourth album will be “A day in the Torah way” covering the Jewish way of life from opening one’s eyes to going to bed at night. “This is to

talent. Responding to the frequently asked question as to how many Jewish students there actually are at UCT, Nissen says that without official statistics it is only a “guesstimate”. But he calculates that there are 700 – 1 000. He estimates that the majority are former Herzlians but the number includes students from other provinces as well as overseas.

He feels strongly that the new centre could actually attract Jewish students to UCT. Having a “Jewish home away from home” could appeal to more committed young Jews both nationally and internationally. They would feel confident that they could still have a vibrant connection to Jewish life, even though they were far away from their home base.

Still in their 20s, the Goldmans are old enough to share life experiences with the students, but young enough to relate to them.

mark the barmitzvah year,” the two said. Their album on Shabbos was performed in conjunction with the Shabbos Project.

Mark can identify with the children, having been head boy of King David Victory Park. Mark trained with the late famed Eve Boswell and studied under Jonathan Birin, one of her senior students. Apart from being a chazzan in Johannesburg, he has also conducted services in New York, Florida (US) and Perth.

Helen, who was deputy head girl of Waverley Girls’ High, went from being a teacher at several schools, directing school plays (which she still does) to founding the Jewish programmes on the ghost channel on M-Net. She was then approached to become director of religious programmes on SABC.

Known for her outrageous humour - live and on radio - when she was telephoned for an interview to join the SABC (she was overseas when she took the call), the SABC interviewer seemed satisfied - until he asked her age (she was 54 at the time).

“Oh no, you are too old for the position,” he said.

Quick off the mark Helen asked if he thought Nelson Mandela was too old to be running the country!

“You are too smart, you’ve got the job!” was the reply.

Part of the proceeds of their Shooby Doob Shloimy performances goes to charity.

“Shooby Doob teaches the kids how to be a mensch, having good middos, how to love oneself and to (work towards) bringing Moshiach,” Mark said. “Many of the cast of our early shows are today parents of the kids in today’s productions.”

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A photograph of a woman driving a car, seen from the side/rear. The car is on a road with trees in the background.



# Russell Gaddin remembered in a moving ceremony

SUZANNE BELLING

“Klal mensch” were the two words that captured what the late Russell Gaddin, z”l, represented, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein told over 800 people gathered at a memorial service at the Yeshiva College Hebrew Congregation to pay tribute to him. He was “a leader who reached out and made a difference - one who devoted decades of his life to advance the interests of the Jewish community. The best dedication would be to emulate him,” Rabbi Goldstein said.

Representatives of all the organisations Gaddin served in his lifetime and members of his family addressed different aspects of his life - as chairman and president of the South African Board of Jewish Education, as chairman and president of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, co-founder of the Community Security Organisation and chairman of the United Communal Appeal, Gauteng.

Rabbi Avraham Tanzer, rav of the Yeshiva College Hebrew Congregation and rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva College, said Gaddin represented “the basic values of Judaism”. Gaddin served the community with passion, he said, recalling his role in the debenture issue which helped save the Jewish day schools when they were in trouble and his foundation membership of the board of the SA Jewish Report.

“Russell, you made a difference,” he said.

## Around the Jewish World

### Controversial discretionary fund allocation

**NEW YORK** - In a letter which was distributed to all members of Temple Israel of White Plains, New York, Rabbi Gordon Tucker notes that a Temple Israel donation to the New Israel Fund (NIF) was earmarked for Ethiopian refugees and made via his rabbinic discretionary fund. In the wordy, two-page letter, Tucker clarifies that while a 2013 donation to the NIF was written from the shul, he personally provides financial and ideological support to the radical New Israel Fund. He neglects to inform his congregants that he is a leader of the organisation, serving on its International Council.

The question was asked if synagogue funds - and a rabbi's salary - should go to an organisation that supports a boycott of Israel and that is the question facing the 800-member synagogue in Westchester County, in an affluent New York City suburb.

Rabbi Tucker and the board, which has thus far unanimously defended him, should be ashamed of themselves for supporting the New Israel Fund, which advocates a boycott of Israel, actively opposes the IDF and just this week defended the families of Hamas terrorists in the Israeli Supreme Court, says the Jerusalem Post. - Jerusalem Post

### Security substantially ramped up in England

**LONDON** - Security was ramped up at synagogues over Shabbat following the terror attacks in Paris which killed at least 129 people last week Friday.

A Community Security Trust spokesman said that while there was “growing social media chatter in Arabic and English calling for, and threatening, further violence”, there was no specific intelligence concerning potential attacks in Britain.

The organisation said it had “increased its guarding levels at synagogues this Shabbat and we will continue to review our security in the coming days”.

It also assured the public that it was in “close contact with the police and government to discuss the implications of the attack for UK Jewish security.” It called on communal venues to “ensure existing security procedures are rigorously enforced”. - Jewish Chronicle

Rabbi Dorron Kline, CEO of Telfed (the SA Zionist Federation in Tel Aviv), who conducted Gaddin’s funeral in Modi’in where Russell and Battie Gaddin lived (they also had a home in Glenhazel), said: “G-d’s great name is lessened when a good person leaves us.”

“A great Jewish leader and a great Jewish hero,” is how Avrom Krengel, speaking on behalf of the SA Zionist Federation and SA Jewish Board of Deputies, described Gaddin.

His achievements in the field of Jewish education were highlighted by Elliot Wolf, former headmaster of King David Linksfield and director of the King David Schools’ Foundation, where Gaddin had been a trustee for 21 years.

“Shalom chaver,” was the fitting farewell by Stanley Seeff, national chairman of the CSO.

Moving words recalling her grandfather “Yus” life (she could not pronounce Russell when she was little and the name stuck) brought tears to the eyes of family and friends when Yael Katz highlighted his commitment to family and the love he shared with his children and grandchildren.

Gaddin’s son-in-law, Robert Katz, conducted Mincha, while his son Wayne Gaddin led the Ma’ariv service.

MC was Bradley Gelbart. Ari Slasky intoned El Maleh Rachamim, while the singing of Hatikvah was led by Rabbi Leron Bernstein.



## Another successful year with ORT JET and Deloitte

The establishment of the ORT JET and Deloitte partnership in January 2012, created a unique opportunity to equip mentors to provide the highest quality of expertise to businesses on the ORT JET Mentoring Programme. The ORT JET mentors are successful business people, volunteering their time and skills to help small businesses in need of growth and support. Deloitte is a proud corporate partner providing a Mentor Enrichment Programme, which offers cutting edge, up to date information delivered by experts in various industries.

Through this programme, the ORT JET mentors acquire additional skills to use in their own careers and businesses. Over the past 12 months, ORT JET mentors had the opportunity to learn from industry experts from Deloitte, covering a range of topics that impact businesses today. These topics included how to manage transformation; becoming a mindful and present leader; the tools for mentoring; and a women’s power breakfast where the speakers were some of SA’s leading business women.

ORT JET and Deloitte’s partnership has made an enormous impact on the community. More than 400 mentors have been impacted and guided through their involvement on this programme. In return these mentors have given back to the businesses they are mentoring, creating an even greater impact.

*ORT JET thanks Deloitte for being a proud sponsor of the ORT JET Mentor Enrichment Forums! If you would like more information on how to donate your time as a mentor on the ORT JET Mentoring Programme, visit [www.ortjet.org.za](http://www.ortjet.org.za) or email [Cindy@ortjet.org.za](mailto:Cindy@ortjet.org.za)*

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Women’s Power Breakfast with SA’s leading business women



# Israel - tarnished with the brush of the ‘Big Lie’

**MICHAEL BELLING**

November 10 marked the 40th anniversary of the lowest point reached by the United Nations when, instead of combating racism, it became overtly racist, adopting and promoting the world’s oldest hatred, anti-Semitism. On that day, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution equating Zionism with racism.

It was not just a lie, it was a Big Lie, a term invented by Adolf Hitler, who said: “If you tell a big enough lie, and tell it frequently enough, it will be believed.”

The Big Lie was mastered by the Germans - it is a propaganda technique used primarily by totalitarian regimes - but perfected by the Soviet Union, which even set up a special department for this purpose in the KGB, at that time the world’s largest spy and state security machine.

This lie started several years earlier, in the late 1960s, after the Arab clients of the Soviet Union suffered an ignominious defeat following their 1967 aggression on Israel. Russian rulers were worried about a revival in the godless communist country of Jewish consciousness and identification, which they felt could threaten their doctrinaire Marxist-Leninist totalitarian philosophy, the reason for the existence of the Soviet state.

The Soviet leaders referred it to the KGB propaganda and disinformation department, hoping to discredit the unwelcome Jewish renaissance and put a stop to it. They clearly felt they had to undermine Israel and Zionism, the Jewish national liberation movement. By doing so, they hoped to discourage Soviet Jews from identifying with their Jewishness and with Israel - they failed, but not for want of trying.

The KGB probably felt it could not use religious anti-Jewish accusations, as the Soviet

Union had no religion other than communism. Racist anti-Semitism had been discredited after Hitler, so they hit on a modern, post-Second World War human rights theme, inverting Hitler’s real race hatred, and coming up with the totally baseless claim that Zionism is racism.

This Big Lie was accepted with alacrity and promoted by Israel’s Middle Eastern enemies who, along with the Soviet Union, were the leading proponents of Jew hatred after 1945.

With the Soviet bloc, these countries had an automatic majority in the major international organisations, which they used to advance this claim. By 1973 it was already being adopted by some United Nations bodies.

But the campaign peaked on November 10, 1975 when the Big Lie was adopted by the UN General Assembly in Resolution 3379, stating that Zionism was a form of racism.

The resolution was severely criticised at the time. For example, Daniel Moynihan, US Ambassador to the United Nations, termed it “an infamous act”.

He continued: “What we have here is a lie - a political lie of a variety well known to the 20th century, and scarcely exceeded in all that annal of untruth and outrage. The lie is that Zionism is a form of racism. The overwhelmingly clear truth is that is it not... whatever else Zionism may be, it is not and cannot be ‘a form of racism’.”

In 1991, 16 years later, the General Assembly came to its senses on the issue and repealed the resolution, something never done before or since. This and the subsequent confirmation of rediscovered Jewish identity in the former Soviet Union, were possibly the biggest slap in the face for the KGB originators of the libel, as close to a million Jews used the opportunity

they then had to emigrate to Israel.

Unfortunately, the saga of this Big Lie did not end there. It was resuscitated with additions and refinements a mere 10 years later in all its poisonous hatred, at the notorious so-called 2001 Durban anti-racism conference - officially the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, under United Nations auspices.

The conference was hijacked by vile Jew hatred and anti-Israel rhetoric, including anti-Jewish pamphlets and the distribution of the worst anti-Semitic false accusation of the previous century, the notorious forgery, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

Participants even called for the reintroduction of the discredited “Zionism is racism” resolution by the United Nations General Assembly. The conference became a launching pad for a new and vicious anti-Semitism.

This time the Big Lie focused on accusing Israel of what Jonathan, Lord Sacks, former Commonwealth Chief Rabbi, called “the five cardinal sins against human rights: racism, apartheid, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and attempted genocide”. It also often compared the conduct of Israel and its leaders to the Nazis.

The language of human rights has been the ideal since the Second World War. The new Big Lie latched onto them to attack Israel falsely. Israel has been singled out so disproportionately for these attacks that most Jews feel that humanitarian concerns are not the motive behind them, but far more sinister anti-Semitism.

To take just one example of this egregious discrimination, the UN Human Rights Council, established in 2006, has condemned Israel more often than all the other countries in the world combined, including many of the worst real human rights violators, passing 62 resolutions against Israel to a total of 55 against all other countries.

In 2013 the UN General Assembly itself adopted no fewer than 21 resolutions singling out Israel for censure, with only four protesting

the actions of other countries.

Since 2005, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement - founded by Israel’s enemies - has latched onto this Big Lie and motivated many boycotts against Israel, from using often intimidatory tactics against prominent people visiting, or artists performing in Israel, to academic boycotts and more.

BDS denies being anti-Semitic and claims to be pro-Palestinian, but this rings hollow in view of its total silence on Palestinians persecuted and killed elsewhere in the Middle East (thousands killed in the Syrian civil war alone) and its leaders openly advocating the destruction of the State of Israel.

This call for the end of the Jewish state is part of the new anti-Semitism. The old anti-Semitism denied Jews rights as individuals. In its newest incarnation, Jew hatred denies the right of the Jewish State to exist among the family of nations and of Jews to have a state like any other people.

All this has also led to open old-fashioned Jew hatred again emerging in recent years on the streets of Europe and even in South Africa, with one local BDS leader singing “Shoot the Jew” at a demonstration and a pig’s head being placed in what the perpetrators believed was the kosher section of a shop.

Jews are feeling unsafe in several European countries. There have been fatal attacks on Jews in countries such as France and Denmark, apart from open expressions of anti-Jewish views in demonstrations and even in public discourse.

The letter and spirit - and hatred - of the 1975 Big Lie live on in full force. While repetition of the falsehood may get it believed, the truth is that Zionism is not a dirty word. It is no more than the Jewish national liberation movement for the right of self-determination, like other peoples, in their ancestral homeland.

• *Michael Belling was a foreign correspondent in Israel and is a freelance journalist, lecturer and a former Israeli advocate.*

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## Gertie Awerbuch - lovable and larger than life

**SUZANNE BELLING**

“Gertie was a larger than life person, who lived life to the fullest,” said Rabbi David Masinter, who conducted the funeral of the late Gertie Awerbuch (pictured) at West Park Jewish Cemetery last week.

She had come into her age (87), as with Avraham and Sarah, and would never be forgotten for her outstanding contribution, her sense of humour (“Vot vos, vos,” - the title of one of her productions, What Was, Was, she used to say), her charity work and her culinary skills; she was cookery editor of The Citizen for 17 years.

“She did everything with a passion,” said her daughter, Suzanne Weil. “She was an actress and appeared opposite the famed David Kossoff, who died in 2005. Her anecdotes and stories she relayed after some encounters, made us laugh for years.”

A playwright and songstress, she put the Mock Wedding on the map, with several versions of the original following suit. They featured top personalities such as Solly and the late Abe Krok and Eric Ellerine. All the male and female parts were played by men. This was done through the late Joan Brickhill and ran on and off for eight years.

Another success was Take My Word, a musical which opened the Brian Brooke Theatre in 1965.

She was famed for her bulkes and cheesecakes - “her secret ingredient was love”, says Suzanne. “Her greatest love was poetry; she loved playing bridge, music and entertaining friends.



“The matriarch of the family, she remained relevant from bridge on-line, Facebooking and WhatsApping.”

Gertie grew up in Doornfontein in Johannesburg and lived in her mother’s boarding house, depicted in What Was, Was through the Eastern European characters who had settled in the Goldene Medina

Gertie had seven distinctions in matric, with her first job at a shipping company. She later became a top class estate agent.

She married Morris Awerbach in 1951 and they divorced 13 years later. Morris died in 2001 at the age of 78.

They wrote shows together for charity. Gertie was also committed as a charity worker and devoted her time to WIZO. Her tzedakah was through the sales of her cookery book.

“She was charismatic, energetic, loving, warm and honest and her mind retained everything. She even took her grandchildren to hotels to recite poetry to them and anyone else who would listen! Although she was a most non-judgemental person, she did not suffer fools gladly.”

She leaves her three children, Barbara Hind, Michael Awerbuch and Suzanne Weil. She was close to her brothers Henry and Max Ulfane. She is also survived by four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

“She was their guide and sounding board. She could squeeze a lemon and out would come nectar,” said Suzanne.



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A column of the Union of ~Jewish Women

UJW - its reputation extends beyond our borders

Described by some as “the best-kept secret in the Jewish community” but recognised and lauded by late President Nelson Mandela, the Union of Jewish Women, with active and dedicated branches in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London and Pretoria, has been at the forefront of empowerment, education and philanthropy, since its inception in 1931.

It has enriched and enhanced the lives of hundreds of thousands of South Africans, both in the Jewish and wider communities; and as an affiliate of the International Council of Jewish Women, its reputation has extended beyond our borders.

The enthusiasm and dedication of our members know no bounds. Our Jewish projects include Kosher Mobile Meals, which provides cooked nutritious meals to 160 elderly persons and panic buttons to some recipients; weekly Friendship Club lunches; and upgrading of facilities at Sandringham Gardens. Cape Town’s Malach Fund is a bridging support service for those in immediate need until Jewish Community services can assist - support ranges from help with Shabbat dinners to financial support to cover rental, food and toiletries.

Durban’s monthly Friendship Club at Beth Shalom provides birthday gifts, bingo prizes and outstanding teas, and pre-Rosh Hashanah and Pesach braai luncheons and annual Chanukah parties are also held here.

PE hosts the monthly Club 42 for seniors, providing entertainment and delicious treats, and arranges an annual children’s Chanukah party. The East London branch supports both shuls as well as Highlands House, Glendale, Oranjia and Arcadia.

Pretoria’s donation of two hi tech hospital beds with hydraulic lifting facilities for Jaffa Retirement Home’s frail care centre, was well-received.



  
**Women of Action**  
**Lynne Raphaely**  
National President

UJW is involved in many out-reach projects - too many to mention in detail. We assist crèches in townships with construction needs and play equipment, with early childhood development programmes and meals.

We supply granny- and child-headed households with food and clothing; we host empowerment schemes for women; we run numerous feeding schemes and soup kitchens and after-care centres for vulnerable children; we assist those in need after disasters such as fires and flooding; we pack parcels for Rape Crisis victims; we give soup to hospice patients; we

donate winter woolies, beanies, blankets... the list goes on and on.

Our annual Toni Saphra Bursary is open to women regardless of race, colour or creed who already hold an undergraduate degree and whose proposed post-graduate degree will equip them to render social service in SA.\*

Although every day sees our members performing mitzvot, Sunday’s International Mitzvah Day will once again see all UJW branches in action - solar powered lamps will be distributed in squatter camps; parties will be given at various homes, including Selwyn Segal, PE’s Gelvan Park Aged Home and Beth Shalom.

Kiddies from a children’s home will be treated to a “train ride”; backpacks containing school essentials will be given to underprivileged crèche children going to “big school”; a crèche will be painted; food and gift parcels will be distributed and, as always, there will be outpourings of love to many lonely folk.

Join our vibrant organisation and make a difference.

• *Anyone wishing to apply for a bursary can contact Barbara on (011) 645-2591.*

What’s On

**Today, Friday (November 20)**  
  
• UZLC hosts Gideon Shimoni on “650 000 Hours, If You’re Lucky”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.  
  
• FNL Friday Night and Beginners Service at Shul in Sandton Central. Information: rak@chabad.org.za

**Saturday evening (November 21)**  
  
• Lewandowski Chorale concert, “Lewandowski Songs”, in The Atrium at Wits. Time: 20:00. Cost: Advance booking R120 at webtickets.co.za or R150 at the door. Contact: Di Golding 082-338-4462.

**Sunday (November 22)**  
  
• Second Innings hosts Dr Tim Wilson on “Understanding Public Servants - Helping Them To Do Their Jobs Better”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R30 visitors (incl tea and refreshments) Contact: Linda Fleishman tel (011) 532-9701.

**Monday (November 23)**  
  
• Chabad’s Jewish Seniors club – Monday to Friday, from 09:45 to 12:00. Venue: Chabad House, Savoy. It includes

**Tuesday (November 24)**  
  
• JH&GC in association with UNHCR, Lawyers for Human Rights and Constitution Hill, host the opening of a photographic exhibition “#ibelong - Ending Statelessness by 2024” Venue: Constitution Hill Old Fort Mess Hall. Time: 18:30 for 19:00. Bookings or information: shirley@jhbholocaust.co.za or (011) 640-3100/2148. Admission free.  
  
• JJAC hosts a movie night at Sandton City. Time: 19:00. Meet at bottom of escalator by the movies and decide what to see and book from there. E-mail whatson@jjac.co.za with “Movie 24 November” in the subject line and your name and cell number in the body of the e-mail.  
• UJW presents a video (audience choice). Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R20. Contact: UJW

**Wednesday (November 25)**  
  
• Chabad’s Jewish Learning Institute presents: “The End-game:” Is death permanent? Does Judaism believe in resurrection? Is it possible that we may one day be reunited with our loved ones? Venue: Shul in Sandton Central. Time: 19 15 - 20:45. Information: www.jli.org.za  
  
• SA Friends of Israel and SAZF host a panel discussion with SA parliamentarians Rev Kenneth Meshoe; Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Mosiua Lekota on their recent fact-finding tour to Israel. Venue: RCHCC. Time: 19:00 for 19:30. RSVP: Lisa@sazf.org or (011) 645-2501. Limited seating available. Booking essential.  
  
• Second Innings hosts an outing to “Ludwig’s Rose Farm”. The bus will depart at 09:00 sharp from the parking below Golden Acres. Cost: R140 includes the bus, a guided tractor trailer tour and one drink. Book with Betty Jankelowitz or Pearl Kahn (011) 532-9701.

office (011) 648-1053.



# Change in landscape forces change to Maccabi

JACK MILNER

Through financial considerations, especially the weak rand, Maccabi SA has to reinvent itself and change emphasis, thinking beyond the Maccabi Games.

The Maccabi World Union has played a massive role in Jewish life all over the world. South Africa has been closely tied to the organisation since the early days and in fact, was among the 18 countries to send participants to the first Games in Tel Aviv in 1932, when a total of 400 athletes competed.

In 1935 South Africa sent its first official delegation to the second Maccabiah which was

attended by athletes from 26 countries.

The SA team comprised only 19 members, but they still won 10 medals.

In 1950 - now in the State of Israel - South Africa sent a far bigger contingent. Among the soccer players were local greats such as Morrie Jacobson, Hymie Klonner and Phil Snoyman, a member of a legendary Jewish soccer family. A young Abe Segal was in the tennis team.

The Maccabiah, and along with it local interest, grew with every new event. With it the list of leading South African Jewish sportsmen increased. Abe Segal went back to win the singles and double gold medal. Ian Froman, who was later acknowledged as the father of Israeli

tennis, played in the 1961 team. Cecil Bransky (bowls), Lawrence Seeff (cricket and soccer), Adam Bacher (cricket), Ilana Kloss, Sid Gordon, Julian Krinsky, David Schneider, Earl Grainger, Brian Levine, Howard Herr, David Nainkin (tennis), Carmel Goodman (swimming), Malcolm Dorfman (karate), Mandy Yachad (hockey) and Richard Kaplan (golf), were just a few of the country's leading sportsmen and women who formed part of the Maccabi SA team.

There were certain sports that were not represented, but some athletes, better known in other sporting fields, still attended the Maccabiah. Cricketer Dennis Gamsy was a member of the 1961 soccer team, although cricket was later introduced and he played for SA at the 1973 Games, while rugby Springbok Okey Geffin played in the bowls team.

Much changed in 1985 when junior teams were introduced and the delegations started to increase dramatically. Over the same period South Africa was barred from all competition by the International Olympic Committee and as the Maccabi Games fell under IOC auspices, Maccabi World Union had to follow suit.

However, South Africans were allowed to participate, but actually as a “no-brand” delegation.

In 1993 SA returned to the fold and the teams began to grow. Then, in 2001, the Maccabiah was called off because of the Intifada, but between the Israelis and the Americans it was rescued at the last minute, although it was shortened to just over one week.

In 2005 Maccabi SA took a record size team, but a few cracks began to appear. The rand was unstable and with costs going up all the time, team members were asked to pay in an extra amount over and above the original stipulated amount, to cover additional costs.

It put a lot of pressure on the coffers of Maccabi SA and in 2009, with costs skyrocketing, the team size had to be reduced.

During SA's isolation period, events like the Maccabi Games took massive pride of place along with many of the international sporting events, such as the rugby and cricket Currie Cups. But with South Africa getting back into the international arena, Maccabi now has huge competition. The better sportsmen would rather use their money to attend a world championship in their respective sports.

“The cost to attend the Maccabiah is determined in dollars and with the rand at its current rate, only a small number of athletes can afford to go to the Games,” says Maccabi SA Chairman Cliff Garrun. “We are still hopeful we will have a



The South African team enters the sports arena in Tel Aviv for the first Maccabiah in 1932.

delegation of sorts.”

The second question is: Where are all the great South African Jewish sportsmen? Their numbers have dwindled with many Jews emigrating and with local teams affected by racial quotas.

While Garrun acknowledges the Maccabiah is still “the jewel in the crown”, he and his committee have realised that for Maccabi to survive in South Africa, it cannot purely rely on the Maccabi Games.

“There is still some symbolism surrounding the Maccabi Games. It's the Zionist affirmation for people living in the Diaspora,” said Garrun.

“I would like to think our relevance has changed in recent years. For the first time in more than 25 years we have a fulltime sports director in Alain Nathan. We have around 2 200 people participating in sports locally. Every weekend we have kids competing in netball and soccer.

“We have introduced mountain biking into our curriculum. Maccabi Bowls has another tournament coming up later, the second this year. Regular tennis clinics are going on under Byron Werberloff. Golfers are still very active and we have 300 to 400 kids playing in cricket tournaments.”

“We now have a completely different model and our priority is to engage with the community. Our primary market is Jewish day schools; we offer different options to them.”


With this in mind Maccabi SA is in the process of planning a whole relaunch which will include rebranding and a whole new website.








“We have a cohesive and ambitious leadership and we need to play a positive role in the community. The political landscape has changed and we needed to rethink our function.”

However, Garrun does not see South Africa going the way of the Maccabi clubs in Europe and participating in regular provincial and national tournaments. “They play in secular leagues and that means participating on Saturdays. That won't wash in our community.”

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