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# south african Jewish Report

■ Volume 21 – Number 37 ■ November 3 2017 ■ 14 Cheshvan 5778

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# Christian Zionists to counter EFF march on Israeli Embassy

**TALI FEINBERG**

About 2 500 Christian Zionists will hold a peaceful protest on November 2 to counter the Economic Freedom Fighters' (EFF) march on the Israeli Embassy in Pretoria.

"As Christians, we believe in the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... we can't keep quiet when Zion is under attack. If you attack the G-d of Israel, you are attacking Christians. If you open the Bible you see that land belongs to Israel," said Christian Zionist and activist Masindi Mmgwena.

He told the SA Jewish Report that the EFF's behaviour in this march is unacceptable to him and his fellow churchgoers.

"We want to tell South Africa that we will never divorce ourselves from Israel and we will not support any government that is against Israel. The EFF is committing political suicide with this march, as 85 per cent of South Africans are Christian. To the Jewish community we say: We are doing what Mordechai did - he persuaded Esther to speak on behalf of the Jewish people. Pray for us."

The EFF march has apparently been in the offing since May 6, this year when their Central Command team met and resolved to "organise their own picket to the Israeli Embassy in support of the Palestinian prisoners, who were at the time on hunger strike", according to an EFF invitation that was sent out to leaders of civil society formations, organised business and faith-based movements and organisations.

They invited people to join them in the picket at the embassy at 12 noon today (Thursday).

In the invitation, they maintained that although the hunger strike had long since ended, the EFF Central Command team wanted to use the "picket" to highlight and profile the Palestinian struggle.

They chose November 2 because they believed it to be a "significant date in the Palestine calendar" as it marks the 100 years of the Balfour Declaration, which they claim ultimately led to the "dispossession of the Palestinians of their country of sovereignty and land (sic)".

The EFF also circulated a poster on Facebook calling on their "comrades" to march on the Israeli Embassy.

An article in the Pretoria East Rekord newspaper said, however, that the march will also demand that the South African government provides free higher education from 2018 onwards; that Jacob Zuma must step down as president of South Africa; that the Gupta family must immediately leave South Africa; that the national director of public prosecutions Shaun Abrahams must step down.

The Pretoria East Rekord quoted Julius Malema as saying: "Maybe the only thing they will listen to is militant action. Every street in Pretoria must be occupied."

Malema also tweeted about the march on October 25: "We love self-determination, peace and justice, democracy is our nickname. We are not free until Palestine is free, let's occupy (the) Israel embassy".

The Christian Zionist organiser called the EFF "hypocrites" as they demand the return of land while criticising Israel for reclaiming its rightful homeland.

Another Christian Zionist lead organiser told the SA Jewish Report that their protest is "a peaceful, Biblical and silent protest. We believe that the EFF is wrong to enter into the domestic politics of another country. We are hoping to share ideas and tell them things they may not know about Israel."

"We must stand up and share the correct information," he says. "We think that people who are marching for the EFF, don't even believe in this cause, or know why they are marching, as many of them are Christian."

"We are simply meeting our brothers and sisters from EFF as they arrive. We are not going there to fight them, but to educate them, as we believe many of them are lost."

SA Zionist Federation chairperson, Ben

Swartz, commented: "The marching of the EFF on the Israeli Embassy is beyond absurd. South Africa is in the midst of seemingly insurmountable challenges and yet the EFF elects to spend time, capital and resources pursuing a highly emotive agenda and polarising issue."

"The EFF and those opposed to Israel in South Africa, should be under no illusion as to the many millions of South Africans who are supportive and appreciative of Israel and what it stands for."

"Israel remains one country that has so much



EFF's preparation meeting for the November 2nd march

to contribute to South Africa's well-being, and is ready and able to impart this expertise," says Swartz.

Tshwane Metro Police confirmed that plans were in place for the march on Thursday, and that they will be deployed to monitor the march.

EFF members are scheduled to leave from Church Square at 11:00 on Thursday to march to the Embassy in Hatfield. They are expected to disperse from the Embassy at 17:00.

Numerous requests for comment and calls to the EFF, went unanswered.

### Shabbat times this week

Starts	Ends	
18:08	18:59	Johannesburg
18:15	19:53	Cape Town
18:01	18:54	Durban
18:15	19:12	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:24	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:13	East London

### Parshat Vayeira

## Stay focused while navigating the distractions

**T**hey call it "dumbwalking" nowadays. When we space out of our bricks and mortar world and into that new digital world order. Watching the display on those small screens on our phones, our minds and attention are captured by these new phenomena.

How powerful is our capacity to multi-task the human and digital worlds? Will this capability allow us to traverse these two worlds simultaneously?

Some of us will manage better than others, but most will falter in some way. It is a colossal challenge to meaningful human interaction, because people crave communication that is focused without distraction.

When the Torah says that "Adam knew Eve", the predominant message is the experience of human intimacy.

There is also a general lesson about human interaction. The most powerful communication is about focus without any distraction.

Any communication between human beings, no matter how trivial, will ultimately be measured for focus, and level of distraction.

G-d too, expects us to dedicate ourselves entirely to Him when He interacts with us. A mitzvah performed, or prayers offered, must be infused with the correct "kavanah". That being an inspiration and thought process dedicated exclusively to Hashem and the fulfilment of His will.

When G-d revealed himself to Avraham, at the plains of Mamreh, to visit Him after the fulfilment of the mitzvah of bris milah, this was a most powerful interaction. The Creator of the world communicating directly with Avraham, founder of our nation and great leader of the nations of the world.

Who would dare to interrupt such an encounter at all? Yet, apparently the arrival of three unknown guests, angels in the form of men, causes Avraham to do exactly this.

Surprisingly Avraham (as if it were so) puts G-d on hold. Hashem Himself is left "listening to the switchboard music" as Avraham goes

off to honour his unknown guests. This in today's language is like Avraham taking out his cell phone to check his messages while G-d waits on standby.

"Hachnosas Orchim" the mitzvah cherished by Avraham of honouring guests, is apparently deemed more important than receiving the Shechinah, the Divine presence of Hashem as it manifests in the world.

By doing this Avraham is fulfilling Hashem's will and performing his mitzvah. That is not a distraction at all or a loss of focus. Rather a deed that re-enforces and strengthens their bond, not an interruption at all.

Can we (as if it were so) place G-d on hold? Can we say, hey G-d please wait a few moments while we take care of the guests? The answer is yes, because it is done so in order to take care of G-d's own children.

As we navigate the virtual distractions in the real world we need to stay focused. To give others, especially our dear ones, the time and attention they deserve and to serve Hashem without distraction. A life interwoven with Torah and mitzvahs, is a life completely focused on communication with Hashem.

**Rabbi Sholem Bacher**  
Blairgowrie  
Hebrew Centre



# Mngxitama defends hate speech allegations

NICOLA MILTZ

Black First Land First (BLF) leader Andile Mngxitama has come out guns blazing in defence of hate speech allegations levelled against him in the Equality Court, going as far as accusing the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) of hypocrisy and racism.

SAJBD earlier this year lodged a complaint in the Equality Court accusing Mngxitama of hate speech after he posted two tweets which the Board claimed were “grossly insulting, racist and hurtful, especially to members of the Jewish community”.

On August 24 at 05:20, Mngxitama posted: “For those claiming the legacy of the holocaust is ONLY negative think about the lampshades and Jewish soap.”

Later that day at 17:28 he posted a further tweet which read: “I concur with @helenzille that the aroma of the burning flesh from the furnace of the holocaust may wet the appetite of the S.A. cannibals”.

In papers before the Equality Court held at the South Gauteng High Court, Wendy Kahn, national director of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) said: “The comments were clearly aimed at mocking the community over the mass murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime during World War 2.”

On behalf of the Board, Kahn said: “This has caused enormous offence to Jewish South Africans, most of whom had family members who died in the Nazi genocide, and for whom the Holocaust is a constant, painful memory.”

“By his malicious comments, Mr Mngxitama belittled the trauma that Jews feel about the Nazi genocide, and in fact taunted them with it. He further infringed on the fundamental right to dignity of South African Jews by depicting Jewish lives as being so worthless as to make the mass murder of Jews, as well as the desecration of their corpses, as to be something to make a joke about.”

Kahn said these comments were “extremely hurtful and disquieting”.

“The blatant anti-Jewish hate speech... was deeply insulting to me on a personal level and to my fellow Jewish community members in general.”

“What is of added concern to me, is that he is someone who represents a political constituency and therefore is in a position to influence others to adopt and propagate similarly hateful views.”

In an answering affidavit Mngxitama denies all these allegations calling them “baseless”.

“I deny that my tweets constitute hate speech,” he says.

With reference to Western Cape Premier Helen Zille’s pro colonialism tweets earlier this year, he said, his first tweet was a “clear political response by me to Helen Zille’s first pro-colonialism tweet...’For those claiming legacy of colonialism was ONLY negative, think of our independent judiciary, transport infrastructure, piped water etc.’ I was merely paraphrasing Zille in my tweet”.

His second tweet too, he says, “was in response to Zille’s tweet to cannibalism which was on the same day and which was intended on her part to hurt, was rendered irrelevant by the white silence in this respect”.

He said his tweets have been “decontextualised” by the Board and his other “detractors”.

“The truth is that the tweets by me were posted on the very same day that BLF took Helen Zille to court.

“My tweets have been deliberately misrepresented and its meaning distorted.

“It is... abundantly clear that my tweets were aimed at exposing the badness of Helen Zille’s naked racism manifested in her utterances. What is also clear is my outrage against the glossing over or miniaturisation by whites of the horrors of the black holocaust of colonialism in comparison with the white response to the Jewish holocaust.

“This has caused enormous offence to Jewish South Africans, most of whom had family members who died in the Nazi genocide, and for whom the Holocaust is a constant, painful memory.”

“My tweets have certainly exposed selective outrage on the part of whites which in turn dismisses the collective pain of blacks and gives recognition only to white suffering.”

He goes further to say the charges against him, including that of him attacking the constitutional rights to equality and dignity of Jewish South Africans, is “suggestive of hypocrisy”.

He said the response by the SAJBD to his tweets “proves” his point, “Where is their (SAJBD’s) outrage against Zille? Where is their case against Zille in the court?” He accuses the Board of not expressing any “public moral outrage against Zille for her pro-colonialism utterances.”

Kahn said in court papers: “It should be stressed... that the Jewish community’s right to dignity and equality is not conditional

Andile Mngxitama



on its representative organisations first condemning human rights violations against other groups. It is an absolute right guaranteed to all citizens under the Constitution... the SAJBD is in reality on record as having frequently condemned all forms of racism, xenophobia and related bigotry. It is not in a position to launch cases in respect of each complaint.”

He accused the Jewish community in South Africa and the Board, of being “very bad at self-reflection” citing two newspaper articles to back himself, one by Kim Heller and the other by Rebecca Hodes, which were largely critical of the community’s responses following his tweets.

He said he was “exercising his rights” if one were to take into account “the aim, purpose, intention and meaning of my comments, and the employment of irony to achieve the desired ends”.

They are “written to show the hypocrisy of whites in their contradictory responses to the Jewish and the black holocausts. The intention was to counter the reasoning of Zille and to expose the naked racism, including the double standards or hypocrisy of whites in their different responses to the two holocausts.”

He denies his comments were racist “at the very least my comments were meant to correct and address racism by pointing out the... selective rage of whites when it comes to responding to the two holocausts, namely the Jewish and black holocaust and to atrocities characterised by black pain as opposed to white pain generally.

He denies his comments amount to hate speech and therefore says there is no need to

apologise.

SAJBD contends that the “hateful material” that was published and placed in the public domain by Mngxitama on his Twitter profile, amounts to harassment and hate speech.

“In addition to in and of themselves being deeply hurtful and offensive, Mngxitama’s tweets elicited numerous further overtly anti-Semitic comments in the social media.”

Kahn said Mngxitama’s comments are anti-Semitic, hurtful, harmful, inciteful and undermine the fundamental right to dignity to which all citizens of South Africa are entitled and that for various reasons “his comments amount to hate speech”.

Mngxitama denies the allegations.

The Board said it was “important” that Mngxitama undergo an educational sensitivity training course, suggesting the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre.

“At such a course he would (hopefully) become aware of the horrors of where his racist hate-filled conduct could lead... Hopefully his hatred and bitterness will be directed at making positive changes to society; rather than his regular taunting, mocking and heaping scorn on those he targets.”

To this suggestion Mngxitama said: “The call for me to be educated by Zionists is aimed at humiliating me and reproduces the violence of colonialism.”

He said the Board did not “seek an audience” with him, it “did not seek a debate with me. Their response shows their deep-seated belief... that blacks are cognitive cripples.”

The case is before Judge Lotter Wepener. Both parties await further instructions.

JAWITZ

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# Board treasurer steps down amid allegations

TALI FEINBERG

The National SA Jewish Board of Deputies' newly-elected treasurer, Eric Marx, has stepped down suddenly amid allegations regarding his conduct during his term as Cape Board chairman.

Marx has also stepped down from his role as ex-officio, executive committee member and immediate past chairman of the Cape Board.

In answering questions from the SA Jewish Report asking why he had resigned so suddenly, Marx wrote: "Following the Cape Board's biennial conference at which a new committee was elected, allegations of irregularity around various aspects of the election were directed at the Cape Board.

"Included in these allegations is the fact that, on the morning of the conference, I arranged for my son to be a substitute in place of a delegate of an affiliate (shul or organisation voting on behalf of its constituents) who was ill.

"I am a past president and member of that affiliate. I have apologised for this lack of judgement and I am certain that it had no effect on the outcome of the elections. I am confident that the other allegations are without substance, but these have been referred to an independent review panel under the chairmanship of Advocate Seligson."

Marx's decision comes in the wake of a heated fracas over the Cape Board's elections (as reported in the SA Jewish Report on September 7). The Cape Board has acknowledged there are members of the community who were unhappy with the election results. This specifically relates to two

prominent women, the one a vice-chairperson and the other a former chairperson, were voted off the Cape Board.

There is a strongly-held belief that this was a result of a concerted smear campaign by members of the community. There were allegations that lies were spread about the two women being pro-BDS, and affiliates were believed to have been encouraged to vote the women off the Cape Board.

Greg Flash, a former member of the Cape Board, said: "The results of the Board election with Bev May and Li Boislin being voted off, shocked, saddened and angered me. In particular, that Li – as a past chairman and an extremely hard worker – could be booted out, is disgusting. I am ashamed of those that pushed this agenda, whoever they were. It may have been democracy, but it does not make it moral or right."

A key question around Marx's chairmanship concerned his actions in relation to the annual Yom Hashoah ceremony held under the auspices of the Cape Board, in April, which was during his tenure. An Equality Court agreement had stipulated that the service be held in two parts, with a woman singing solo in the first part.

However, the Cape Board under Marx's chairmanship distributed two sets of posters, with one only advertising the second half of the ceremony, violating this Equality Court agreement. This was done without the knowledge or buy-in of the Cape Board or its executive.

In response to questions about the posters from Gilad Stern (one of the applicants in the Equality Court matter who therefore had a vested interest in ensuring the first half of the ceremony was advertised to the community),



Eric Marx

Stern said that Marx denied any knowledge of the posters or that the Board had produced them, and at that point he agreed to withdraw the posters.

Marx wrote in his statement: "This was the first ceremony post the settlement agreement in regard to the Kol Isha issue last year and was, by agreement, held in two parts.

"The Cape Board mounted an extensive community campaign advertising the ceremony and reflecting the times for both parts. In addition, following a request by Orthodox shuls, a poster designed by an outside organisation reflecting only the time of the second part, was distributed by the Board to those shuls. The distribution of this second poster was done with my knowledge. With hindsight, this should not have taken place."

Marx also stated that he thinks his presence on both the Cape Board and National Board, would distract the SAJBD from its important and essential work, and would result in a protracted and vicious

public spat in the context of his actions. He therefore chose to step down from his Board positions.

"I conclude by recording that every action that I have taken over my term of office, has been taken in the best interests of the community and Board; it has been an immense privilege to lead the Cape Board during a difficult period; and I hope to again serve the Board soon."

Despite stepping down, it has been confirmed that there is agreement that Marx will be able to return to his role as national treasurer at the SAJBD after six months.

"The decision for Eric to return to his position after six months, was part of a settlement agreement entered into by the Cape Council. It will be discussed at our NEC meeting," wrote Charisse Zeifert, head of communication at the SAJBD.

In response to questions from the SA Jewish Report, SAJBD President Mary Kluk said: "Mr Eric Marx was elected to the SAJBD as national treasurer at our NEC meeting held immediately after our National Conference on August 20, 2017.

"At that time, no allegations had been made against the Cape Board in regard to the elections. The discussion around who will replace Eric will be determined at our NEC meeting, as per our constitution.

"We are grateful to Eric for the contribution he has made to our community, both in Cape Town and nationally. Throughout Eric's term of office, very often dealing with complex and difficult issues, we believe he has always endeavoured to act in the best interests of the community. Bringing about a resolution on the Kol Isha issue is just one such example."

## Israel and Africa need each other

YOSEF I ABRAMOWITZ  
JERUSALEM

The Jewish month that began this week, Cheshvan, has traditionally been dubbed "mar", or bitter, because it alone among the months is devoid of any holidays.

It is time for the Jewish people, and the Jewish calendar, to drop mar from Cheshvan, since it is blessed with one of the most remarkable and sweetest Jewish holidays: Sigd.

At the end of Cheshvan for well over a thousand years, the Jewish community of Ethiopia would dress in white, climb Mount Ambover in Gondar and pray for their redemption and aliya to Jerusalem.

The miraculous airlifts and rescue of Ethiopian Jewry, and the subsequent aliya of tens of thousands more, stands as one of the proudest moments in Jewish history and a shining example of what Jewish peoplehood can accomplish against great odds. Now the Ethiopian community celebrates Sigd en masse on the Haas Promenade, overlooking the Old City, with prayer, music and speeches. Israeli schools are starting to celebrate Sigd, as should Jewish schools worldwide.

Africa has gifted to the Jewish people sweetness and hope on Cheshvan, which is also Jewish Social Action Month, when we turn outward as a community.

I have accompanied Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders to Africa over the past several years, promoting not only a solar-powered vision for the continent, but an enlightened Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on a visit to Africa



policy of becoming a superpower of goodness. Israeli water, agricultural, medical and green energy technology and investments can play a transformative role by uplifting the dignity of hundreds of millions of people.

And with a quarter of the votes in the UN General Assembly belonging to Africa, as well as two swing votes on the Security Council, there are diplomatic benefits to Israel as well.

It is no wonder that AIPAC, the pro-Israel lobby, had for the first time an African head of state – President Paul Kagame of Rwanda – address 15 000 activists at its annual policy conference earlier this year. And the African Institute of the American Jewish Committee has not only lobbied African ambassadors to the United Nations, but also has been sponsoring them on transformative fact-finding missions to Israel.

The push into Africa has deep roots in the Zionist narrative. In Theodor Herzl's day, Africa was ruled and

exploited by European empires.

"There is still one other question arising out of the disaster of nations which remains unsolved to this day, and whose profound tragedy only a Jew can comprehend. This is the African question," Herzl wrote in his diary in 1901. "Once I have witnessed the redemption of the Jews, my people, I wish also to assist in the redemption of the Africans."

While Herzl himself didn't witness the creation of the State of Israel, Golda Meir did. And when she became foreign minister, she set out in 1958 on an African tour that led to the creation of Israel's famed international agency for international development, Mashav.

When Netanyahu declares that "Israel is coming back to Africa", he is channelling Golda. And when he says that "Africa is coming back to Israel", he's channelling Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, the "Lion of Judah", who claimed King Solomon as an ancestor.

The challenges facing Africa, and the potential for African-Israeli partnerships to address them, are staggering. There are 600 million Africans without access to electricity and 300 million without access to clean water.

A famine sweeping East Africa affects 16 million people, including the hungry 2 000-member Abayudaya Jewish community in eastern Uganda.

At the same time, Africa boasts 11 out of the 20 fastest-growing economies on the planet, according to the World Bank, and its billion-plus population will double by 2050.

For this economic and humanitarian potential to be unleashed, at least two obstacles have to be overcome – one-self-inflicted, the other political.

The self-inflicted thorn in the side of Israeli-African relations has been the treatment of African asylum seekers in Israel. The Israeli High Court has consistently ruled against the government's treatment of the 46 000 people considered "infiltrators", as if those fleeing Eritrea and Sudan – both cruel dictatorships – are simply economic refugees.

A new strategy is needed: turning over to Mashav the Holot Detention Centre to train Africans in the latest Israeli water, agricultural and green energy technologies. Those who would graduate and leave voluntarily, could be emissaries from Israel on how to transform Africa, and they would have the skills to begin their lives anew and prosper.

Plenty African countries would

line up to woo these newly skilled Africans if they brought the blessing of Israeli know-how, technology and investments, with them.

Mostly political threats led to the postponement of an Africa Israel Summit with African heads of state and Israeli leaders that was supposed to take place in Lome, Togo, at the end of October.

The postponement was due to a toxic combination of political unrest in the West African state, a concerted effort by South Africa and Morocco to undermine it, and the mounting political and legal challenges that the Israeli prime minister faces at home. Even so, the pace of African-Israeli engagement on many levels continues to increase, especially with Christian heads of state.

The best answer to the diplomatic pressure that caused the postponement of the Africa Israel Summit would be for Netanyahu to appoint Knesset member Avraham Neguise as Israel's foreign minister. Dr Neguise, a Likud member, is the only Ethiopian member of the 20th Knesset and was seated strategically next to Sara Netanyahu, when her husband wowed the Ethiopian parliament last year. Netanyahu currently holds the foreign minister portfolio.

Sixty years after Golda Meir's historic mission to Africa, it is time for Israel to have an African foreign minister. This will be met joyfully by world Jewry and the world at large, sealing Cheshvan's transformed sweet status and elevating the Israeli-African story into our mainstream consciousness. (JTA)

# 'Black Death' is not that deadly

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

South Africa has been declared at risk for plague importation, by the World Health Organisation, one of nine countries in this category, on account of trade and travel between the country and the Indian Ocean island. The first thing Professor Lucille Blumberg points out is that "Black Death", a term used to describe the plague that has broken out in Madagascar, is a misnomer.

Jews have a history with the plague. In the mid-fourteenth century, they

were accused of having deliberately poisoned the wells – possibly because they were less affected than others through being isolated in ghettos and due to a general sense of anti-Semitism at that time – and were blamed for the outbreak of the Black Death in Europe which resulted in a third of its population perishing.

The violent attacks against Jewish communities that followed, came to be known as the Black Death persecutions and massacres.

The first massacre saw the Jewish quarter in Toulon, France, sacked

and 40 Jews murdered in their homes, followed by similar actions in Barcelona in Spain. Hundreds of Jewish communities were destroyed during the period 1348 – 1350, with some individuals killing themselves to avoid persecution.

Blumberg, who is medical consultant at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), explains that the plague used to be called the Black Death because a large number of people were affected, many died and because of the blood-borne phase of the disease.



Professor Lucille Blumberg

"Their tissues appeared black, because they had damage to tissues and they also had haemorrhage into tissues. And I guess black also referred to the high number of cases and huge number of deaths.

"But that was then," she says. "It's a different disease now, it's treatable.

"We have antibiotics that are highly effective – it's not a bacterium that has developed resistance, so it is treatable with some antibiotics that are quite readily available."

The key focus should be on early diagnosis and treatment with the correct antibiotics, she stresses, adding that the severe form of the illness, pneumonic plague, is quite rapidly progressive and has a high mortality rate.

Continued on page 7 >>

# Rothschild takes up position on SAA Board

STAFF REPORTER

When the Minister of Finance Malusi Gigaba approached Geoff Rothschild to take up a seat on the new South African Airways Board of Directors, he could not refuse the challenge.

"As part of the CEO Forum, we offered to help sort out state-owned enterprises. So, with that offer in place, it was incumbent on me to take up the appointment," says Rothschild, former Johannesburg Stock Exchange chairman, long-time Jewish Achiever Award judge and a real mensch.

With the exit of controversial SAA chairperson Dudu Myeni, Gigaba has announced huge changes to the board. Myeni was replaced by businessman Johannes Bhekumuzi (JB) Magwaza.

Nolitha Fakude, who is on the Anglo American board, is the new deputy chairperson and a non-executive director. Five current board members have been retained.

The new non-executive directors are: Rothschild; Ahmed Bassa, an aviation industry professional; Tinyiko Mhlari, a chartered accountant and Armscor board member; and Martin Kingston, Rothschild & Co financial services firm's CEO in South Africa and vice-president of Business Unity South Africa.

Those being retained on the board are: Swazi Tshabalala, Peter Tshisevhe, Thandeka Mgoduso, Pieter Maluleka and Akhter Moosa.

Rothschild is looking forward to taking up his position in a few days and sees it as a great challenge. "It is a challenge for the board to get to understand SAA, ensure it has a strong executive team and to guide it the right way," he says.

Rothschild says he believes that the new SAA chief executive officer has had a stellar career at Vodacom and should be great in this position. He says the chairman of the board, Magwaza has "an excellent reputation" and he knows and respects



Geoff Rothschild

many of those selected to the board.

"Our challenge as a board is to ensure the executive can successfully run the organisation without shareholder intervention," he says. "To do this, we have to understand the industry and all its nuances. Also, we will find out what talent we have and where the challenges are. All this will come with a proper induction, which will happen on November 3.

"If I judge by the many, many messages I have received, people see this new board as a ray of hope," says Rothschild. "SAA deserves a strong board who are willing to give of their time and effort to guide the operational team. It is possible to turn things around for SAA."

Using the example of Aeroflot, which he says people would dismiss when they heard its name, is now a top brand in the world. "So, it can definitely happen.

"Despite all the negativity around SAA, it still has excellent staff and people are happy to fly on its planes. Our challenge is to make sure people want to fly SAA before any other airline and to make it profitable."

Rothschild says he is excited to be a part of a process of contributing to the greater good of this country.



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## South African Jewish Report

### Knowing who is on your side... and who clearly isn't

In our edition last week, we ran a story about Tokyo Sexwale, who was scheduled to deliver the keynote speech at the gala dinner at the World Jewish Congress's gala dinner in Cape Town last week. He was invited to speak to some of the most important leaders in the Jewish world. Yes, I said Jewish world, not Zionist world, because that is the case.

My guess is he was invited to speak because he is a leading figure in South Africa, having been Premier of Gauteng, Minister of Home Affairs, an ANC anti-apartheid activist and a top businessman. I am sure that his present fascinating position of Fifa's head of Israel/Palestine monitoring committee, cinched his attraction for the World Jewish Congress.

In the latter role, he does hold a precarious position, because both Israeli and Palestinians want him to favour them. So, when I heard he wasn't actually at the event, I can't say I was terribly surprised – albeit that he gave a decent notice that he couldn't make it and agreed to a fair alternative. This was a pre-recorded interview with the intrepid investigative journalist Mandy Wiener.

But even Wiener – whose skills at getting the hardest nut to crack are legendary – got a fairly tepid interview. Again, Sexwale is a politician and is well aware of the Catch 22 situation he is in.

He was so careful with his words. He was extremely cautious about not taking sides. He even called on Jews to put pressure on Israel to work with the Palestinians. He asked the World Jewish Congress to use soccer to bring Israelis and Arabs together. His message was about peace.

Here's the rub: No sooner had our newspaper hit the streets than BDS was calling for his resignation from his Fifa position.

They claim – using our newspaper as ammunition – that Sexwale “reduced Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine to a disagreement between Jews and Muslims” et cetera et cetera. They insist that he had “complete disregard, for example, of the indigenous Palestinian Christians and the larger question of Palestinian self-determination in the face of Israel's illegal occupation”.

I read and reread what we published and was astounded that they could read that into what he said.

My question is: Was there anything that Sexwale could have said at that event or in the interview that wouldn't have got the same reaction? Is this about Israel or is this about Jews? I would like to believe that BDS's issues are strictly about Israel, but we keep seeing evidence to the contrary. This is a perfect example.

Sexwale was so careful not to upset either side, to the point that the interview was beyond vanilla. He said nothing of real consequence because he sat on the fence, so as not to upset anyone.

In fact, if he chose a side, it was the Palestinian one because he was calling on Jews to pressure Israel. I can't say I blame him. He was not in an easy situation.

However, clearly BDS wasn't terribly interested in the effort he made not to upset anyone. They appeared to have a mission. They were going to find something to turn against him, no matter what he said. Why? Could it be simply because he accepted an invitation to speak to a room full of Jews?

#### Marching to Pretoria

On the flipside, while the Economic Freedom Fighters chose to take to the streets to protest the 100-year-old Balfour Declaration, by marching to the Israeli embassy, there is another group who – in their thousands – made a similar decision to show their allegiance and support of Israel.

They aren't Israelis, nor are they even Jewish – they are devout South African Christians. Holding their bibles in their hands, for the sheer love of Israel, they chose to show their allegiance for and protect the Israeli embassy from the EFF.

They are taking time out of their busy lives and time off work to do this, which could potentially be dangerous.

They are unashamedly supportive of Israel and chose to do this off their own bat. In the light of the anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment that is so evident in this country and the world, it is a welcome relief to know that we have brave and supportive friends in this country. They are friends indeed! Shabbat shalom!

**Peta Krost Maunder**  
Editor



## Dateline: Middle East

### Is it just a swing to the right or something very sinister for us?

PAULA SLIER

This week coalition talks between the Austrian conservative People's Party and the far-right Freedom Party, began in earnest. The Freedom Party's first leader was a former SS officer and its current leader was arrested almost three decades ago at a torch-lit march with a group modelling itself on the Hitler Youth.

If successful, it will be the first time since the Second World War, that a leader with Nazi links will be sitting in a European government.

I was in Austria to cover the elections and no-one I interviewed was particularly surprised by the results. Unemployment, immigration and terrorism, were their top concerns.

The Freedom Party came third with more than 27 per cent – its best showing ever – in an echo of recent successes by far-right parties across Europe. In Germany, France and Bulgaria – where an openly far-right party has been part of the government since May – more and more voters are buying into politicians' promises to adopt a hard line on Muslim immigration and political Islam.

But when it comes to Jews and Israel, despite many of the far-right party leaders claiming to be friends, many Jewish and Israeli analysts are worried. They deem these leaders to be xenophobic and even anti-Semitic.

Before the French presidential elections in April and May, far-right National Front leader Marine Le Pen, had to fend off accusations that two of her long-time associates were Nazi sympathisers who used to host “striped-pajama” parties.

The clothes worn were reminiscent of the clothing Jews were forced to wear in concentration camps. She has since promised French Jews that her party is “the best shield” to protect them.

In Austria too, Heinz-Christian Strache, the leader of the Freedom Party, is insisting that Nazi links from his youth have been exaggerated. So far Israeli government officials have shunned him (although he's visited Israel at the invitation of the Likud) but Jerusalem finds itself in a quandary.

Should it engage with European far-right parties if they become a part of government? And choosing not to, which has been Israel's longstanding policy until now, will essentially mean that Jerusalem is boycotting a friendly country.

The irony is that many of these parties express support for Israel and the rise of the Freedom Party is actually good for Austrian-Israeli diplomatic relations.

Strache has written to Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, pledging to move the Austrian embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. He has visited Israel several times and declares support for Israeli settlement construction. His views dovetail nicely with Netanyahu's.

It's a far cry from 1999 when the very same Freedom Party became part of the Austrian ruling coalition and Israel recalled its ambassador and downgraded relations with Vienna for more than three years until the coalition fell apart. But now, two decades on, Austria is not an isolated case on the European map and no doubt Jerusalem will increasingly find herself having to deal with this dilemma in future.

Many of the experts I've interviewed, caution against Israel embracing these leaders and their parties. A leopard cannot change its spots, they insist.

They point out that Strache, despite all his good-sounding rhetoric, still believes Austria was occupied and a victim of national-socialism. He thus believes they cannot be blamed for what happened to the Jews. Factually, this is incorrect. These are people who are not friends of Israel and among them are clear anti-Semites, they warn.

Is it not possible, also, that they're portraying themselves as pro-Israel to gain both legitimacy and attract support and votes from their local Jewish communities?

What's more, a pro-Israel platform advances their anti-Muslim agenda – and this is a trap Israel must be careful not to fall into. It will not be helpful if Jerusalem is seen to have jumped on the anti-migrant bandwagon. It would also not be wise to be siding with parties that do not advance the values of a liberal democratic Jewish State.

We would do well to remember that history has shown that whomever targets one group, will sooner or later seek to harm Jews. Perhaps, for this reason, Israel has so far been mum on the topic.

But the flipside is that Israel needs all the friends she can get. The results of democratic elections have to be respected and the mood sweeping across Europe cannot be ignored.

For now, Jerusalem is most likely to wait and see how other countries like Germany, France and Britain respond and navigate a way to deal with European right-wing governments.

• Paula Slier is the Middle East Bureau Chief of RT, the founder and CEO of NewshoundMedia and the inaugural winner of the Europcar Woman in Leadership Award of the South African Absa Jewish Achievers.



Freedom Party (FPÖ) leader Heinz-Christian Strache after exit polls

# Expanding our 'we'

MARC LUBNER

If we at Afrika Tikkun can have one legacy, it is this: the act of compassionate connection. This is kindness that embraces individual value and difference and that develops potential.

We draw this from our founders – Bertie Lubner and Rabbi Cyril Harris, both of blessed memory. They demonstrated how tzedakah and ubuntu can complement one another in the work of nation building.

In South Africa today, that value of connectedness is under assault. The challenges and occasionally the pain of connecting across cultures, has given way to some of the worst behaviour of which humans are capable.



As Jewish people, this is a moment not to withdraw, but to engage and connect. Our faith teaches us to care first and foremost for our own community, but this should not preclude us from caring for the greater community of South Africa.

We, as Jews in South Africa, whether we were born here or are naturalised, should also have a sense of obligation and responsibility to the communal "we" of South Africa.

The "we" of South Africa's first democratic elections was completely inclusive. It was a remarkable and important moment in South Africa's history that we need to continually go back to, to remind ourselves of the power of that inclusivity.

The politics of who "we" includes and who it excludes is determined by social conventions and outlook, by history and economic conditions. They in turn determine economic strategies.

>> Continued from page 5

## 'Black Death' is not that deadly

There are three forms of the disease: bubonic plague is the common one that usually results from the bites of fleas that have been infected by rodents and carry the bacteria. Painful, swollen lymph nodes in the groin, armpit or neck are symptoms. If not treated at this stage, it can progress to either a blood infection (septicaemic plague) or severe pneumonia (pneumonic plague).

"What happened now (in Madagascar) is that there were a lot more cases of pneumonic plague – that is spread person-to-person (through coughing and sneezing) and it's highly infectious."

The deaths that have occurred, she surmises, could be due to the fact that people have presented late for treatment.

"You have to bring treatment to the people – you have to make it accessible and teach them about symptoms and what to do."

There are, however, no travel restrictions to Madagascar in place and Blumberg thinks that the risk there is "quite low" unless one is living in a rural environment where fleas are more common. "They have an annual seasonal increase from plague – it's not unusual," she adds.

The current outbreak is, however, unusual in that it has affected urban areas, increasing the risk of transmission.

So, how can people protect themselves? "I think it's

It is possible in our day to understand the rise of the alt-right in the United States, Europe and the United Kingdom, as a direct result of who "we" and "they" are in the understanding of the American, British and European people. Countries that are succeeding in our times are those that are expanding their horizons around "we".

Diversity adds value. This is something we can learn from millennials. The best of them are able to navigate the world more effectively than any previous generation. They have embraced a sense of community that is far greater than what has gone before.

Look at Facebook and how it has grown foreign countries' economies

because it is making connections accessible in ways that government can't. Look at online learning initiatives like the opportunity created by LinkedIn and Lynda.com.

Through these social media initiatives, the concept of "we" grows bigger than one country, collective or culture can contain. It breaks barriers that in turn democratises nations and ignites their economies.

The problem in any environment where the definition of who we are, becomes too limiting, is that it leads to division and a spiral of reciprocal hostility. Others reject us and we reject others.

Our definition of "we" should begin by acknowledging that we are members of the same human race – we all come from the same source, the same G-d ultimately. We are also South Africans, with a national interest at heart. This should influence and affect our sense of life purpose.

The remarkable thing is that our identities as self, faith, family, city, country do not need to be exclusionary.

We can still care about ourselves individually and we can still care about our families, without having to compromise on our sense of nationalism.

It only becomes a problem when we see these as either/or identities or sets of loyalties. I strongly believe that one of the responsibilities that we as Jews have is to share whatever resources, capital, talents, connections and ideas come our way with as a broad a community possible.

Equally, the concept of "we" needs to be taught to the communities that Afrika Tikkun reaches out to. An isolated community will not as readily have a vision of what they can become and how they could contribute and add value.

If the residents of Alexandra township see themselves in isolation to the rest of the city of Johannesburg, they are robbed of the many opportunities that naturally generate from forming connections.

I recently went to a conference at the Harvard Kennedy School of Management, where we analysed economic policies and how they are influenced by the way in which society defines this concept of "we".

In the "Rainbow Nation" perspective that marked our transition to democracy, the economic policies that flowed – black economic empowerment for example – were sensitive to the haves and the have nots, to the whites as well as to the blacks.

We saw a transfer of wealth taking place through a measured programme rather than simply through nationalisation. All parties' interests were taken into consideration through a definition of the "we" that saw that "we South Africans" needed to give effect to a redistribution of wealth.

Unfortunately in recent times, we've seen rhetoric that defines "we" in far more limiting ways. As a result, we see public discourse and policies that are exclusionary and increase a sense of difference, division and

avoiding crowded places – I don't think tourists are at great risk," she says.

"I think it's about protecting yourself against flea bites if you're in the more rural areas." The NICD website advises the liberal application of DEET-containing insect repellent to prevent flea bites. Prophylactic antibiotics are not advised.

"All travellers returning from Madagascar must monitor their health for 15 days and seek medical care immediately at their nearest health facility, if they develop fever, chills, head and body aches, painful and inflamed lymph nodes, or shortness of breath with coughing and/or blood-tainted sputum.

"They should tell the doctor about their recent travel and their symptoms. Persons with fever should also be tested for malaria," it states.

While we are a country at risk of plague, the last cases were in 1982. "We do have a monitoring programme for plague," says Blumberg.

Blumberg is confident the country is prepared for any eventuality in this regard. "There are a lot of things in place.

"Your risk of getting malaria in Madagascar is probably higher than plague and I think it's important to remind people to protect themselves against malaria and not come back with a fever and cause confusion."

## opinion

resentment. At the same conference, evidence was given to demonstrate that countries where immigration was made easy (in particular for people with skills) experienced significant GDP growth. Rwanda with its GDP growth between 7-8 per cent and Australia, are good examples of this. Australia's focus on accepting immigrants with skills is expected to add US\$1,2 trillion to its gross domestic product through 2050.

Closer to home, we're going to lose young Jewish people matriculating from our schools if their definition of "we" excludes the rest of South Africa. It is beholding to us to teach a concept of "we" at Jewish schools that shows how tzedakah and ubuntu have mutual value and greater value when they are co-present.

In this way, those youngsters

graduating from schools feel that they have a sense of purpose in contributing towards a society they feel they belong to.

Those who hold a service mentality to mankind understand how much more you get back than what you are able to give. Whether it is knowledge or resources of any kind, you yourself receive in ways that out-measure the gift itself. That sense of empowerment, and the sense of purpose gives you the opportunity to live life joyously.

Through a sincere reflection and re-orientation towards a more inclusive we, we will discover this gift. For what is it to have an all-encompassing sense of belonging within a world darkened by isolation, ignorance and fear, if it is not the calling to be a light to the world. And with the responsibility of the calling to be a light to the nations, comes empowerment.



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# Dr Neguise – embodiment of Balfour Declaration vision

NICOLA MILTZ

When Dr Avraham Neguise was a little shepherd boy in a rural Ethiopian village, he had no inkling that he would one day become one of Israel's most prominent politicians and activists for change.

As the only Ethiopian-born member of the Israeli Knesset today, the Land of Milk and Honey was then only a far-off place that existed only in his wildest dreams and imagination.

Today MK (Member of the Knesset) Dr Neguise, is the very embodiment of the vision of the Balfour Declaration – a Jew, and an immigrant living his dream in the Promised Land.

Neguise also embodies why calling Israel an apartheid state is the worst kind of insult and untruth.

"Using this word [apartheid] in the context of describing Israel, is an affront to all humanity. My personal life... proves that Israel is the exact opposite of this word... it is also insulting to South African history and the justified struggle of South Africa against a true apartheid regime."

This week Neguise will be in South Africa, speaking at The Academy of Jewish Thought & Learning in Johannesburg. He is a guest speaker in the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration celebration.

"The Balfour Declaration is meaningful to me," he explains to the SA Jewish Report. "It is one of the historical factors that opened the way for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in the land of Israel and the creation of the State of Israel.

"To have Jews gathering from the four corners of the earth as it is written in the Torah. This State is now my home... I am now a proud citizen of Israel... Today 6,5 million Jewish people are citizens of the State of Israel because of the Balfour Declaration."

Joshua Gavronsky of The

Academy said: "Dr Neguise is a true representative of the effect of the Balfour Declaration. An oleh from Ethiopia, only through the culmination of what the Balfour Declaration represents, has MK Dr Neguise been given the opportunity to go from shepherd to Shepherd.

"He is a true hero of Israel and the story of the Jewish people," says Gavronsky. "This is true for all inhabitants of the State of Israel and our global return to Zion since the founding of the state."

While Neguise continues to have an intense love for his country of birth, it is his unwavering commitment to the State of Israel and to the welfare of Ethiopian Jews in Israel and other immigrants, that defines him. As chairman of the committee for immigration, absorption and diaspora affairs, he focuses on social issues such as helping new immigrants integrate into Israeli society and continues to champion the aliya of all Ethiopian Jews.

While Neguise continues to have an intense love for his country of birth, it is his unwavering commitment to the State of Israel and to the welfare of Ethiopian Jews in Israel and other immigrants, that defines him.

To date there are 142 000 Ethiopian Jews in Israel of whom 52 000 were born in Israel, he said. Immigration is continuing with 1 300 new arrivals from Ethiopia this year.

Recalling those first few days after his arrival in 1985, he says: "It was the fulfilment of a dream," and his steadfast advice to new immigrants is to "make an effort".

"I have a formula," he said. "Opportunity and personal effort



Dr Avraham Neguise

will equal achievement and success. The Israeli government offers the opportunity in all areas, it is then up to the immigrant to put in the effort."

Patience he says is crucial. "When you transfer from a country of birth there are new challenges in all aspects of life, be patient and put in the effort," he said.

The passion-driven politician and activist is grateful for the opportunities afforded him in Israel and is particularly proud of his academic achievements, holding five degrees including a PhD in Education.

But in his role as chairman of the caucus for Israel-Africa Relations, which he established, he is instrumental in trying to help foster ties between the African continent and Israel.

He has accompanied Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders to several African countries in a bid to build relationships and strengthen ties, as well as to promote not only a solar-powered vision for the continent, but also Israeli water, agricultural, medical and green energy technology

and investments, which he and other leaders believe can play a helpful, transformative role by uplifting the lives of millions of people on the continent, the relationships being mutually beneficial, he said for both parties.

"The reality is, Israel is a light unto the nations... repairing the world... Israel is helping the African people... and is going to Africa in a big way."

Echoing Netanyahu's speech at the Economic Community of West African States summit in Monrovia earlier this year, he said: "Israel is coming back to Africa," adding: "Africa is coming back to Israel."

During a recent talk for The Institute for the Study of Global Anti-Semitism and Policy, he said the use of the word apartheid to describe Israel was an insult.

"The BDS movement is based on the premise that Israel is similar to South Africa in the apartheid era. If indeed one wants to believe that the current reality in Israel is comparable to apartheid South Africa, then, I'm sorry to say their long-time struggle was for nothing and their leader,

Nelson Mandela, was in prison for nothing... the word apartheid has nothing to do with the reality in Israel."

He said despite on the ground efforts by pro-BDS organisations, there were heads of states from around the world who were "flocking" to Israel and "actively pursuing" the strengthening of ties with Israel.

"We have to be united in order to fight BDS and work together to overcome these challenges. Anti-Semitism is a problem for all humanity – because it is against humanity.

"My proudest accomplishment is my personal story of coming to the State of Israel," he said.

"I am happy to be a role model to my community and other immigrants... I grew up as a shepherd in Ethiopia. I immigrated to Israel 32 years ago. I received an equal opportunity for education. I have five degrees and I am now a lawmaker. I am one of the millions who settled here successfully." This is why the Balfour Declaration is meaningful to him.

## What does the EFF's SRC victory mean for Jewish students at Wits?

JORDAN MOSHE

As the Economic Freedom Fighters readied themselves to march to the Israeli embassy in support of Palestinians on Thursday (November 2), the Jewish students at Wits wondered what kind of impact their new EFF-strong Student Representative Council will have on them.

With their calls for the decolonisation of tertiary institutions and drawing of attention to national socio-economic concerns of disadvantaged students, the EFF Student Command (EFFSC) secured 12 out of 15 seats at the SRC elections held on October 19. They officially came into office on Wednesday (November 1).

This victory comes at considerable cost to the previously dominant ANC-aligned PYA (Progressive Youth Alliance), who took the remaining three seats in this year's election.

Outgoing SAUJS chairperson at Wits, Gabriel Zollman, says it is difficult to gauge what lies ahead, including the implications for Jewish students, as this is a first for Wits, and for the EFFSC.

This election, he says, highlights how the major political challenges which directly affect students, are a determining factor in university

politics. It in turn strongly influences national politics.

However, he did lament the fact that "so few students voted in this SRC election. There are still real issues facing students, and it will be interesting to see what approach this new EFF-led SRC adopts in solving some of those problems".

Incoming SAUJS chairperson for 2018, Rachel Raff, expressed some concerns about the new SRC, not least of all the stance adopted on Israel by the EFF in government.

"As we know, the EFF has aligned itself with the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which seeks to delegitimise Israel as the nation state for the Jewish people.

"During the BDS's Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) on campus, the movement seeks to provide a distorted view of the situation in Israel. They evoke feelings of fascism, racism, apartheid and colonialism in students, enticing hate towards their Jewish peers."

On the consequences for Jewish students attending Wits, she said: "The BDS – and by extension the EFF – claims that anti-Zionism does not equate to anti-Semitism. This is totally untrue. I think this distorted view held by the incoming SRC members... could negatively affect Jewish students by a rise of



anti-Semitism on campus.

"The local branches of SAUJS will have to increase the level of Israel exposure and engagement on campus, providing platforms for students to get a comprehensive view of the issues surrounding Israel and educating them on what Zionism is and its essential link to Judaism, says Raff.

"The SAUJS national committee will provide as much support to local branches as possible, and it is our hope that the political views on the SRC do not cloud their judgement as representatives of the whole of the university's

student body."

Despite these concerns, some Jewish students are not overly perturbed over the political changes on campus. Honours student Kevin Levy says: "While any major shift in political leadership has the potential to foster dangerous rhetoric and agendas, I'm not entirely certain that this change will have much effect on the day-to-day university experience – certainly not for Jewish students who, especially nowadays, are fairly inconsequential in the greater scheme of things."



# The long journey to MS Positive

NIA MAGOULIANITI-MCGREGOR

“I just put one foot in front of the other.”

So says Toni Krok, a South African, now living in North London, mother of two daughters aged 13 and 10, who was describing no ordinary ramble or Sunday afternoon walk in the park.

Diagnosed 10 years ago with multiple sclerosis, Krok, along with husband Dov and 25 friends and supporters, recently climbed Mount Etna, Europe’s highest active volcano, to raise funds for her new charity MS Positive.

And raise funds they did. £80 000 in fact. That in itself is no mean feat. But Krok also returned home embracing an unintended gift. It was something resembling inner peace.

“The climb was an exercise in mind over matter. Though I nearly fell once or twice, I was in a meditative state. It was a G-d-like experience. I kept thinking: ‘G-d is allowing me to climb this mountain. Look what He’s doing for me.’ It was a time when time didn’t matter.”

“When the epiphany struck me that life itself is about the journey, about what’s going on in between the spaces, I felt complete peace. I know now life is about being mindful, about being conscious.”

But the story starts 10 years ago with a doctor’s diagnosis.

“You have MS.  
““The words just rolled off his tongue,” she says. “But for me? Mind-blowing doesn’t begin to describe it. I was 30 years old, with two small children.

“I was angry and sad at the same time. I had low moments. You know that iconic figure of a girl in a calliper holding a charity collection box you see in malls? I thought that was now me.”

But Krok comes from, as she puts it, a “driven family” and she decided not to take this new illness lying down. She also had the benefit of the late PR guru Suzanne Weil’s input.

“You’ve going to live with MS for the rest of your life. Make it your friend.” Therein was the start of Krok’s internal journey towards a positive outlook. Somehow, she realised, she had to make peace of this “new norm, the new me, my new life”. She had to, as she says, “take the good out of the bad”.

“I’ve been blessed in my life. I always had everything at my fingertips. I’ve received the best medical treatments and support, and I thought: ‘What about those who don’t?’”

Initially, she responded to this idea by fundraising for the MS Society. “It’s an amazing charity, but I felt something was missing. I wanted to provide the personal,



Toni Krok



After climbing Mount Etna

moment. I do Pilates which helps. I’ve learnt than even breathing needs to be purposeful. I’ve learnt every new beginning bring other beginnings.”

There was another happy consequence of walking those 60 kilometres in three days, crossing two fresh lava fields and running down over 400 metres of loose stone. “My walking is better than ever. I believe that the climb up Mount Etna has re-patterned my brain.

“Mount Etna certainly wasn’t a luxury-type experience. We stayed in hostels, tents and mountain refuges that I may not have chosen in the past. But I’m so glad we did. There were people there from all social backgrounds. It was amazing. When our guide said to me one day: ‘My mother has MS’, it felt truly inspirational. I knew we were doing something right. That everything happens for a reason.

“Sir Edmund Hillary once said: ‘It is not the mountain that we conquer, but ourselves,’ and I finally understood what that meant.

“The mental challenge was harder than the physical one. My trainer, Colin Church, was fantastic. He watched every step I took. He helped me prepare in every way but one: I really thought there would be a kiosk with a cappuccino at the top!”

bespoke emotional and practical support that, with the best will in the world, is always a challenge for an organisation on the scale of the MS Society.”

So, Krok, along with friend Janine Oppenheim who has experience in running a charity, launched MS Positive – “a charity with a can-do attitude”.

Aimed at supporting individuals and their families in North London who are affected by MS, the charity is set to provide a helpline, a programme of exercise and fitness classes, and emotional as well as practical support and advice through a range of forums. All free of charge, Krok says it will be fully functioning by January next year.

“I want to teach people there are no barriers for those of us affected by MS. It affects everyone differently, yes, but mental attitude plays a role. How we respond to our circumstances makes a difference.

“Personally, I had to learn to slow down. To be conscious and mindful in every

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# Community has internalised the Shabbos Project

**CHIEF RABBI DR WARREN GOLDSTEIN**

It is deeply moving to watch how the Shabbos Project has matured here in South Africa over the last five years. It has become part of the fabric of our community, and touches almost every one of us in a real and meaningful way. I saw this so clearly during Sukkot, when my wife and I hosted the student leaders of the various Jewish day schools in our Sukkah. Three even came from Cape Town to be part of the gathering, which was devoted to brain-storming and galvanising to work together for the Shabbos Project. I was struck by

the warmth, energy and enthusiasm of these young grade 11 leaders who love the Shabbos Project and what it does for our community. It made me realise how much the Shabbos Project has entered our hearts and minds.

During the last five years the Shabbos Project experience has become deeper and more meaningful for our community. This last Shabbos it was so heart-warming to see the streets thronging with Shabbos walkers, to feel the spiritual singing at a Dark Tisch, and to feel the buzz in the community. I went with my family to a street dinner nearby and saw neighbours and friends, new and

old, come together in a spirit of unity, and was moved to think about how these street dinners are now spread throughout the country. People have brought their creativity and sense of fun to make this project their own. Our Shuls also embrace the Shabbos Project with more proactive energy with each passing year.

It is so beautiful to see how keeping Shabbos has become within the reach of all of us, and how we are connecting more and more with the magic of Shabbos. When visiting the primary schools in the lead up to the Shabbos Project I asked the kids what their favourite thing about Shabbos is. The most popular

answer is that they enjoy spending uninterrupted time with their parents. I feel that our community is connecting more often and more deeply with the joy of Shabbos, which seems to be more needed with every passing day in our crazy world. The experience of Shabbos brings the refreshing power of connectedness to a world of increasing pressure and fragmentation.

Over the years I have watched the Shabbos Project unite and strengthen us all. It bonds us and makes us feel like one community, with shared purpose and vision. It bonds us with Jews throughout the world, who have followed our lead

and join us in the Shabbos Project. We have opened our hearts and our souls to the Shabbos Project and in so doing we have been blessed.



**Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein**

## Shabbos is hard work

**CHRISTOPHER MC ARTHUR**

The product of a Roman Catholic father and a Jewish mother who, herself, had a Roman Catholic father, I have the privilege and burden of existing in two of the three major Abrahamic traditions.

When trying to communicate the experience of observing Shabbat to non-Jews, I always use analogies they're most likely to connect with.

"Imagine the meal you eat on Christmas Day; all the accoutrements like potatoes, gravy, three kinds of meat. The table set beautifully and the best silver you own laid out. That's what Shabbos is like, except every week."

But this Shabbos was not like that for me. You see, lately I have had a work schedule that our ancestors would describe as "Egyptian". Moses may have led us out of Pharaoh's land, but we walked straight into the Capitalist West after our emancipation.

As a young, ambitious professional in my mid-twenties who was the first in my family to get a degree, success in the working world has become not only something for myself, but a mark of pride for my whole family. I arrive early and leave late. I never say no to a task, and always say yes when an extracurricular project comes up at the office. So, naturally the word "project" gets me excited.

The Shabbos Project gives an air of occasion to Shabbos that some Jews don't feel any other Friday night. I stayed in Sea Point where it seemed every kitchen was filled with the warm, homely smell of byproducts from the Great Challah Bake.

There were fairy lights sprinkled all over the Atlantic Seaboard. A unity dinner held at the Weizmann School hall drew an astonishing 700 people. I ate my supper in a Bedouin-style stretch tent; we played games and performed skits for the children while their parents heard a spirited and inspiring talk by a survivor of the Holocaust.

The lead up to my Shabbos Project was writing an e-mail to a co-worker. It was monitoring my company's social media pages for the various brands I work on. It was being half-dressed in socks, smart trousers without a belt and 50 per cent of my cufflinks missing as I swore at my laptop. Stressed, late, and 20 minutes from Shabbat coming in.

You see, lately, my Egyptian office has led me to believe that maybe I'm the Pharaoh here. Maybe I'm the one cracking the whip. And maybe, once a week, I need to let it all go.

The truth is: Shabbat is work. A different kind of work, yes, but work nevertheless. It's a weekly decision to put yourself aside – to put the whole world aside. Shabbat has been described as "an island in time that exists outside of time" And swimming to that island every Friday, and doggy-paddling back after every Havdalah with heady spices to carry you a little further than your Shabbat-slackened sinews would ordinarily be able to, is hard to do. It's hard work, because we have to give up our egos for the entire day.

On Shabbat, we don't spend any money on anything. We don't even have a television or radio to mask our gaps in conversation, or provide a distracting refuge for an estrangement felt like a thick, hot smog in the air.

During Shabbat we can't hide from each other, or even ourselves. And that, reader, is work.

But, it's the kind of labour that lifts us, and doesn't weigh us down. Letting ourselves ease out of our egos once every seven days is scary. A collective sense of minority stress urges us to strive all week for bigger-better-higher-faster-more, only to have to abandon all that on Shabbos.

My Yiddish is a little rusty, but I'm pretty sure Gut Shabbos doesn't translate to "Shouldn't you be checking on that campaign?" At 25, I'm still learning that letting go of the need to work is what Shabbos looks like for me, but I quite like that.

**Christopher Mc Arthur**



**Johannesburg Challah Bake**

"This last Sunday I witnessed two incredible Challah Bakes. They were amazing events which created a truly unique and exquisite atmosphere: One of togetherness, unity, and celebration.

"With the Shabbos Project, besides enjoying big events which are fun and exciting, we are tapping into an innate desire that we have to connect to one another. This connection runs deep. We are one people with one heart. Going forward, the energy created through these events must translate into an organic movement of people reaching out one to another and coming together in a more intimate space to not only do together and dance together, but to talk together."

*- Rabbi Nitzan Bergman, co-president of the Baltimore Shabbos Project*

## An eternity in an instant

**DYLAN COHEN**

As exams approached, and the stresses of being a first year UCT engineering student studying away from home began to catch up with me and I was feeling stressed for the time, Shabbos had always been a time to take a step back from the stresses of day-to-day life, and truly reflect on what is important; spending uninterrupted time with family, discussing Torah thoughts around the dinner table, and finding a sense of pure spiritual connection in shul.

However, this close to exams, sacrificing an entire 25 hours seemed detrimental to my studies.

A friend and role model sent me a "Weekly Shabbos Shiur" that addressed a few ideas from that week's parsha of Lech Lecha.

The key concept of the message, was: "One should not lose track of the bigger picture.". The shiur ended with a quote by Shannon L Adler: "The secret to your purpose is to find what you feel is important, and not to pursue what others would think is important." This shiur made me stop and think.

We have been given a brief 25-hour period each week, in which we rid ourselves of the distractions of day-to-day living and can deeply reflect on our relationship with G-d. Sacrificing this time for a few hours of university study, now seemed senseless to me.

I immediately asked Rabbi Nissen Goldman (head of Chabad on Campus CT) to help me find accommodation in the hospitable community of the southern suburbs. He arranged for me to spend Shabbos with two other students in the Samson Student House, following a Friday night student Kabbalat Shabbat and supper there.

The Friday night service was one of the most meaningful I have experienced, as a small room of roughly 25 people felt like the grandest of shuls, singing through the familiar Kabbalat Shabbat songs in unison, everybody davening with a sense of unity and

spiritual connection.

The young congregants were made up of people from all over the globe, with entirely different backgrounds; students who grew up across South Africa and even three foreign exchange students from America, studying at UCT.

This personifies the true power of an idea such as the Shabbos Project, which hand-in-hand with the South African Jewry, can unify people from all walks of life, by setting aside just one Shabbos to disconnect in order to truly connect!

It's about Jews embracing their heritage, through practices that will remain unchanged from the first Shabbos till the last.

**Continued on page 11>>**

**Chabad on Campus Cape Town**





# THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

## Sharansky warns of new flare-up in Israel-Diaspora crisis

**RAPHAEL AHREN**

Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky, warned Israeli lawmakers on Tuesday that another major flare-up between Israel and Diaspora Jewry is brewing on the horizon, and will hit, if the government fails to take action on the Western Wall and conversion.

"I have to warn you that the crisis continues. And in two months we might have a new crisis," Sharansky said at the beginning of a special session of the Knesset's Caucus for Strengthening the Jewish People.

Addressing a room packed with Jewish leaders from across the world and Israeli MKs from various political parties, Sharansky thanked the government for its willingness to discuss the matters, but lamented that no progress has been made since June, when the Cabinet

surprisingly cancelled an agreement it had reached with non-Orthodox streams and Jewish organisations.

"We agreed to a six-month ceasefire, in which there would be no moves in the Knesset and no moves in the Supreme Court," he said. "But four months have passed and nothing happened. If in two months I will be asked again to organise a ceasefire, I won't be able to."

Sharansky went on to urge the gathered legislators to "take very seriously" the controversy over pluralistic prayer at the Western Wall in Jerusalem and proposed legislation on conversion to Judaism.

"This is not about coalition or opposition. It's about acting on behalf of the unity of the Jewish people."

In June, the Cabinet suspended the January 2016 agreement, reached after four years of negotiations, that promised



**Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky**

significant upgrades to the pluralistic prayer platform at the Western Wall. It also froze a decision to advance a controversial bill that would deny state

recognition to conversions conducted in Israel by rabbis – including Orthodox rabbis – not approved for the task by the state rabbinate.



**Ariel Erlj, third from left, poses with friends taking part in a high school reunion. Five members of the group, including Erlj, were killed when a terrorist rammed a truck into pedestrians in New York, on Tuesday.**

### JEWISH MAN AMONG FIVE ARGENTINIANS KILLED IN NEW YORK ATTACK

TOI STAFF and AP

Among the victims of Tuesday's terror attack on a bike path near the World Trade Centre in New York, were five Argentinian men, one of whom was a Jewish businessman, Ariel Erlj.

They were part of a group of eight friends celebrating the 30th anniversary of their high school graduation with a trip to New York City.

The Argentine foreign ministry identified them as Erlj, Hernan Diego Mendoza, Diego Enrique Angelini, Alejandro Damian Pagnucco, and Hernan Ferruchi. A sixth member of their party, Martin Ludovico Marro, was recovering from injuries at Manhattan's Presbyterian Hospital.

The group were celebrating the anniversary of their 1987 graduation from the Polytechnic School of Rosario, Argentina, with a US trip to New York and Boston, where Marro lives.

Argentina's consul in New York, Mateo Estreme, told La Capital in Rosario that the survivors in the group are in a state of shock. Only days earlier, before flying to the US, they had posed for a group photo, all of them wearing T-shirts with the word "Libre", or Free.

The trip was paid for by Erlj, the chief executive of Ivanar, an Argentine steel products manufacturing company, according to Argentina's La Nacion newspaper. Several of the victims were architects.

"Four died at the scene and another young man died when he was taken away by an ambulance," Jose Nunez, a national deputy who was a friend of several of the men, told La Nacion.

### HAMAS HANDS OVER ALL GAZA BORDER CROSSINGS TO THE PA

**DOV LIEBER**

Hamas handed control of the Gaza Strip's border crossings with Egypt and Israel to the Palestinian Authority on Wednesday, in a key test of the reconciliation accord it signed with Fatah last month.

Nazmi Muhanna, the Palestinian Authority's top official for border crossings, formally received control of the Rafah crossing with Egypt from his Hamas counterpart.

At the Erez Crossing with Israel, Hamas also began to dismantle its facilities.

Under the Egyptian-brokered deal, the Palestinian Authority is due to take full civilian control of Gaza by December 1.

The checkpoints had been due to be handed over by November 1, and were seen as a first test of the strength of the reconciliation agreement.

PA Minister of Civil Affairs Hussein al-Sheikh, immediately announced that all "illegal" levies imposed by Hamas since it took over the Strip in a violent battle in 2007, were cancelled.

Azzam al-Ahmad, the official leading negotiations for Fatah, the ruling party of the PA, also announced over official PA radio that by November 15, the Rafah crossing would be permanently opened on the Egyptian side.

Since 1996, most Gazans have left the Strip via the Rafah crossing into Egypt. But starting in 2013, Egypt has kept the crossing mostly closed, opening it periodically for only a few days at a time. This left most of the two million

residents of Gaza unable to leave the Strip freely, unless they were able to obtain permission to leave via Israel, which has strict requirements.

Egypt said it has been conducting construction at the Rafah crossing in recent months in order to prepare for its permanent opening.

"The handing over of the Gaza Strip crossings is an important step in the implementation of the reconciliation agreement, allowing for the movement of individuals and goods to become the responsibility of the national reconciliation government," Ahmad said.

At the Rafah crossing, Palestinian and Egyptian flags were flying, alongside large pictures of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Egyptian leader Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi.

The PA has said it will comply with the 2005 Movement and Access Agreement signed between the PA and Israel and overseen by the United States and the European Union.



**Palestinians put up a poster of Mahmoud Abbas, Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah and the late Yasser Arafat**

## IS said to be behind attempted assassination of Hamas security chief

TOI STAFF and AFP

Hamas officials in Gaza believe the Islamic State jihadist group is behind the attempted assassination of their security chief last Friday, reports on Saturday in Hebrew-language media said.

Tawfiq Abu Naim was moderately injured when his jeep exploded near the Nusseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza

Strip in what the Hamas interior ministry called “a failed assassination attempt”.

Hamas’ political leader Ismail Haniyeh, had initially blamed Israel for the attack, but top Gaza officials say that a preliminary investigation of the incident points to Islamic State, according to Channel 2.

Egyptian authorities are helping Hamas with the investigation into the explosion.

The incident comes at a time of tension within Gaza, as its Hamas rulers are to start handing over power to the

West Bank-based Palestinian Authority of Fatah leader and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

As part of the Palestinian unity deal that was brokered by Egypt, Hamas has had to crack down on the IS gunmen who have been active on both sides of Gaza’s border with Egypt. For the last several years, Egypt has been fighting a bitter insurgency in the Sinai that has killed hundreds of Egyptian soldiers.

Abu Naim has been leading the recent Hamas efforts against IS.

However, the Popular Resistance Committees, an umbrella of smaller terror groups in the Strip, blamed Israel, saying “the fingerprints of the Zionists are clear”.

Abu Naim was a former prisoner that Israel freed with hundreds of others, in exchange for IDF soldier Gilad Shalit in 2011.

Rival Palestinian movements Hamas and Fatah, signed a landmark unity deal last month aimed at ending their decade-long split.

The PA is due to resume control of the Gaza Strip by December 1 under the deal. However, previous such attempts at reconciliation have repeatedly failed. A major sticking point is expected to be Hamas’ refusal to disarm its 25 000-strong armed wing.

The Hamas terror group seized Gaza in 2007 in a near civil war with Fatah that followed an electoral dispute after



Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas terror group's political bureau, visits Tawfiq Abu Naim at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City

polls were won by Hamas. After Hamas’ victory, it faced demands from the international community that it renounce violence and recognise Israel, which it refused to do.

Hamas has faced increasing isolation and deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip in recent months, including a severe electricity shortage.

## Five Jewish apps that are paving the way to 2018

LENA ELKINS

Because of my need to keep my business thriving online, I depend on the latest and best tools to strategically maximise my time and resources.

And other times, I simply feel the need to use apps that are just for fun:

Today, there are a slew of apps out that provide an opportunity to embrace and enrich Jewish tradition and culture. Here are some that are paving the way into 2018:

### SHALOMOJI

Twinland LLC recently launched the Jewish emoji app, which includes GIFs (incorporating animated Jewish emojis), customisable stickers (including synagogue-related items, Jewish symbols, biblical images, Ashkenazi and Sephardic dishes), Jewish holiday icons, phrases (typical Jewish sayings like “Mazel Tov” or “Oy Vey”) and a rabbi holding each letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

“We created Shalomoji to serve as a fun, comical and entertaining way to keep the Jewish spirit alive in the digital space,” Berenice Famili, founder of Shalomoji says.

“It was important for us to make sure users could bring Jewish flavour to their messages through a plethora of options, whether within our app, keyboard extension or the iMessage app drawer,” Famili explains.

“At its core, Shalomoji’s goal is to function as a useful way for both the Jewish community and friends of the Jewish community to not only send cute holiday greetings, but to utilise meaningful Jewish emojis to fully reflect and share the Jewish culture via text messages and social media posts sent to family and friends,” Famili states.

Available on: App Store

### SHALOM

This newly-launched Jewish dating app created by two Sikh entrepreneurs, KJ Dhaliwal and Sukhmeet Toor, is the newest way to find your bashert. Shalom has a distinctive edge in its algorithms that suggest matches based on user behaviour and data such as location, partner preferences, and recent activity, which all help with increasing the chances of users seeing profiles that match their liking.

There are no limits on the number of matches you can see each day and no time limit once you match with someone.

The app gives users the optional opportunity to integrate both their LinkedIn and Instagram accounts in their profiles, to help create a better picture of

professional and social attributes.

Users also have the option of utilising the app via Facebook Messenger, where users chat with a bot that asks questions about themselves and suggests possible matches.

Available on: App Store and Google Play

### SHEMA

A project developed in English, Hebrew, and Spanish, the Shema app helps connect Jews build a closer connection to Jewish traditions. Shema offers a bunch of beneficial features such as a Jewish calendar with holiday alarms, prayer times, a basic siddur and weekly parsha.

It also offers minyanim maps, meat/dairy timers, a translator and a Jerusalem compass. Users can also enjoy listening to music while reading up on the latest news on Israel and Jewish communities around the world.

As a collaborative effort, users are asked to add Jewish institutions, synagogues, mikvahs, minyanim, kosher restaurants and markets in the locator section. The app additionally offers basic guides for Torah studies, mitzvot, cooking recipes and Jewish names.

Available On: App Store or Google Play

### Kosher GPS

Yitzchak Katz created Kosher GPS for kosher travellers who are looking to eliminate the stress involved in finding kosher restaurants, local minyanim, or mikvahs.

Updated daily, Kosher GPS helps travellers in the US, Canada and England, find information on thousands of kosher locations. By enabling the app to use your specific location, it automatically finds the closest kosher restaurants near you.

Users can utilise the search icon to search other areas by zip code or name.

Available On: App Store or Google Play

### Jake TV

Gary Wurtzel’s Jake TV app collects all the best Jewish videos in one place. As an independent channel, the app offers the very best Jewish videos in arts, education, and television.

Inspired by 4 000 years of Jewish heritage, Jake TV also features genres such as comedy, animation, live-action, music, and documentaries. The user can search from a list of video categories ranging from PragerU, Aish.Com, Accidental Talmudist, Jake TV Originals or Holocaust Stories.

Any videos users enjoy, can be bookmarked or saved in a likes folder once user tap the thumbs up button.

Available on: App Store or Google Play

## The Israeli NGO bringing relief to America’s disaster areas

RON KAMPEAS  
JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY  
WASHINGTON

For 17 years, the Israeli NGO IsraAID has been performing search and rescue, purifying water, providing emergency medical assistance and walking victims of trauma back to psychological health in dozens of disaster-hit countries.

But no season has been busier than this past summer and autumn, its co-CEO Yotam Polizer said in an interview – and nowhere more than in the United States.

“The last few months have been unbelievable,” he said, listing a succession of disasters that occupied local staff and volunteers since August: Hurricane Harvey in Texas, Hurricane Irma in Florida, Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico and then the wildfires in northern California.

Polizer recalls that he was wrapping up a visit to IsraAID’s new American headquarters in Palo Alto on October 8 and was on his way to a flight to Mexico to oversee operations after a devastating earthquake there, when he got word of the wildfires.

“I literally had to do a U-turn,” he said last week in an interview at the Israeli embassy in Washington.

He anticipated his teams would stay in Houston for another three months and in Puerto Rico for another year. An IsraAID team remains in Haiti eight years after a devastating earthquake hit that country.



Niveen Rizkalla working with IsraAID in Santa Rosa



**SOUTH  
AFRICAN  
ZIONIST  
FEDERATION**



**South African  
Friends of Israel**

## Ahead of Balfour 100, UK enshrines Churchill's headstrong case for Israel

**ROBERT PHILPOT  
LONDON**

Deep beneath the main London road of Whitehall lie the Cabinet war rooms. From this bunker, surrounded by a military and civilian staff who rarely saw daylight for the five years of the Second World War, Winston Churchill commanded Britain's war effort.

Now a museum to the country's wartime saviour, this month saw the opening of a new permanent exhibition on Churchill's relationship with the Middle East.

Supported by the Balfour 100 committee, it offers a timely - if at times incomplete - account of the key role played by Churchill in honouring the pledges made by Britain in 1917 to help establish a Jewish national home in Palestine.

A copy of Chaim Weizmann's 1918 pamphlet "What Is Zionism?" illustrates the decades-long relationship between Churchill and Israel's first president. The display correctly notes that Churchill was an avowed Zionist, but its suggestion that, due to "wider political concerns", he was inconsistent in his support, is somewhat misleading.

Critically, the exhibit fails to capture the origins of Churchill's Zionism. As Britain's current Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson wrote in his 2014 biography of the erstwhile leader, Churchill "admired the Jewish characteristics that he shared in abundance - energy, self-reliance, hard work, family life".

Churchill's philo-Semitism had deep historical and philosophical roots.

"The thought, the inspiration and the culture of the Jews," he wrote in 1950, "has been one of the vital dominants in the world history. There are none of the arts or sciences which have not been enriched by Jewish achievements."

This was indeed a constant theme. "No two cities have counted more with mankind than Athens and Jerusalem. Their messages in religion, philosophy, and art, have been the main guiding lights of modern faith and culture," Churchill argued in his memoirs.

In the early years of his political career, Churchill formed a strong bond with British Jews; his constituency of Manchester North-West was estimated to have an electorate that was one-third Jewish.

In parliament, he fought legislation designed to curtail



**Winston Churchill on a visit to the British Mandate of Palestine in March 1921**

Jewish immigration to Britain and, appalled by pogroms in Tsarist Russia, became a believer in the Zionist cause. At a rally in Manchester against the massacres that they were both addressing, Churchill met Weizmann for the first time. Shortly after, he wrote in a letter: "I recognise the supreme attraction to a scattered and persecuted people of a safe and settled home under the flag of tolerance and freedom."

Despite strong support from Jewish voters, Churchill lost his Manchester seat in 1908 and was then re-elected to a constituency in Scotland. But the absence of Jewish constituents did not alter his sympathies. As Martin Gilbert suggested in his book "Churchill and the Jews", Churchill "held in high regard both the Jewish religious ethic and the Zionist ideal".

Thus although Churchill was not involved in the discussions which led to the Balfour Declaration, he was nonetheless an enthusiastic supporter.

Writing in 1920 of Zionism as an "inspiring movement" - Churchill's son would later recall his father describing Weizmann as "just like an Old Testament prophet" - he argued: "If, as may well happen, there should be created in our own lifetime by the banks of the Jordan a Jewish State under the protection of the British Crown which might compromise three or four millions of Jews, an event will have occurred in the history of the world which would from every point of view be beneficial."

As the exhibition rightly notes, as Colonial Secretary in the early 1920s, Churchill would "play a key role in translating [the Balfour Declaration] into policy".

Any inconsistency in his approach thus stemmed from

the dilemma British governments would wrestle with throughout the time of the Mandate: how to square the circle of the promises Balfour had made both to establish in Palestine "a national home for the Jewish people" while also maintaining the "civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities..

But, both in and out of government, Churchill did more than many British politicians to fulfil those twin goals.

### How to square the Jewish-Palestinian circle

The challenge Churchill faced is illustrated by a copy of the map he ordered of the territory which, in the wake of the First World War, Britain now administered.

On a memo accompanying it, a civil servant has scrawled a warning to the new Colonial Secretary: the marked boundaries were "very approximate... dispute ... a guess."

Map in hand, Churchill departed for the Middle East in March 1921. At a conference in Cairo he laid the foundations for the Jewish national home by separating Transjordan from Palestine.

His decision disappointed Weizmann, but was later seen as crucial. As James de Rothschild wrote to Churchill in 1955, "without this much-opposed prophetic foresight there could not have been an Israel today".

In Jerusalem, Churchill bluntly refused Arab demands that Britain halt Jewish immigration and abandon its commitment to a Jewish national home.

"It is not in my power to do so," he replied, "nor, if it were in my power, would it be my wish." He went on to tell the delegation that the pledge was "manifestly right".

Meeting with a Jewish delegation in Jerusalem he urged: "You must provide me with the means... of answering all adverse criticism. I wish to be able to say that a great event is taking place here... without injury or injustice to anyone."

At a tree-planting ceremony on the site of the future Hebrew University at Mount Scopus, Churchill declared: "Personally, my heart is full of sympathy for Zionism."

The establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine would be "a blessing to the whole world, a blessing to the Jewish race scattered all over the world, and a blessing to Great Britain".

But, he reminded his audience, Britain's promise had been "a double one. On the one hand we promised to give our help to Zionism, and on the other, we assured the non-Jewish inhabitants that they should not suffer in consequence. Every step you take should be for the moral and material benefit of the Palestinians."

## Gal Gadot pulls out of event for Brett Ratner amid sexual assault scandals

**TOI STAFF**

Israeli actress Gal Gadot withdrew from an awards dinner honouring director Brett Ratner, amid growing scrutiny of sexual harassment in Hollywood following the allegations against producer Harvey Weinstein.

Gadot was scheduled to present the Tree of Life award to Ratner at an event for the Jewish National Fund on Sunday, before deciding to cancel her appearance, Variety reported last Friday.

Ratner's name has been linked to an incident with actress Olivia Munn.

Neither Gadot nor the JNF linked the cancellation to the widening scandal following the rape and sexual assault allegations against Weinstein, who was one of Hollywood's most powerful figures. But Gadot has spoken out recently against the need of women in Hollywood to stand together against sexual harassment.

The actress did not comment on her decision to pull out of the dinner, but a spokesman for the event said JNF was told Gadot had a scheduling conflict.

"Apparently she is stuck on promo stuff for 'Justice League' for China, and she's not going to be back in time," the spokesman told Variety.

"We just found this out and everyone is scrambling," the spokesman added.

Ratner was accused of masturbating in front of actress Olivia Munn. He denied the allegation but was forced to later apologise for falsely saying he slept with her.

The director, who along with US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Australian billionaire James Packer is a founder of movie production company RatPack



Israeli actress Gal Gadot, signing autographs for fans during the "Wonder Woman" premiere

Entertainment, is set to receive the honour for his support of Jewish causes.

Gadot was in China last week to promote the upcoming "Justice League" film. She attended the premiere last Thursday alongside co-star Ben Affleck, who apologised earlier last month for grabbing actress Hilarie Burton's breast in 2003 on the MTV show "Total Request Live".

Gadot spoke out against "bullying and sexual harassment" in an Instagram post after the Weinstein scandal broke.

"Bullying and sexual harassment is unacceptable!" wrote Gadot from her personal account.

"I stand by all the courageous women confronting their fears and speaking out. Together we stand. We are all united in this time of change."

## 'BE PATIENT, JEWS COME LAST'



**JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY**

A Jewish schoolgirl in London was told by a shopkeeper to "be patient, Jews come last".

The incident last week in Stamford Hill, in Northeast London, was reported by the Stamford Hill Shomrim, a neighbourhood watch patrol, to the Campaign Against Anti-Semitism, a British watchdog group.

The girl was dropping off items for a parcel service when the shopkeeper, in the middle of serving her, stopped to help another customer. When the girl politely asked for her receipt, so she could leave, the shopkeeper allegedly replied: "Be patient, Jews come last," the Campaign Against Anti-Semitism said in a statement on its website.

The incident has been reported to police.

Stamford Hill is known for its large population of Hasidic Jews. (JTA)

# Israel's judo warriors take the 'gentle way' in pursuit of athletic glory

ANDREW TOBIN  
TEL AVIV

Israel's national judo team put on a tutorial in sportsmanship last week in Abu Dhabi.

Despite being snubbed by opponents and officials alike, the athletes won five medals and treated the tournament and their opponents with respect.

Moshe Ponte, president of the Israel Judo Association, said the team was guided by the Japanese meaning of the word "judo" itself: the "gentle way", or using the strength of one's opponents against them.

But if you don't think that sounds like the Israeli way, you're not alone.

"The medals are a finger in Abu Dhabi's eye," Israel's Culture and Sport Minister Miri Regev said last Thursday, picking a decidedly un-judo-like metaphor after the first day of the three-day Abu Dhabi Grand Slam.

Israel won, she said, even though their opponents tried to hide the Israelis "in the dark".

Regev was referring to Abu Dhabi's ban of Israeli symbols at the tournament. The Israeli flag did not appear during medal ceremonies, and the national anthem was not played for Israel's gold medalist. Israel and the United Arab Emirates do not have relations.

The news of Israelis racking up medals at the tournament - and videos either of their opponents scurrying away during the handshakes or of one Israeli winner plaintively singing the words of Israeli national anthem despite the ban - set off torrents of Israeli pride and indignation.

And in Israel, it set off a debate: Should its athletes stay away from tournaments in regions where they are sure to be snubbed, or take part and try to shame (or even charm) their hosts into recognising them?

Throughout the UAW tournament, the Israeli athletes quietly found ways to highlight their national identity. Tal Flicker, who won gold last Thursday in the men's under-66

kilogram category, sang the Israeli anthem "Hatikva" while the International Judo Federation's anthem played in the hall. The federation's flag, not Israel's, hung above him.

After winning the bronze medal in the over 100-kilogram category, Israel's Or Sasson, who also won bronze at the Rio Olympics, pointed to the bare patch on his uniform where the competitors from other countries had their national flag.

"As you can see, I don't have the flag," he said. "But my heart is always, always with the State of Israel. I hope I made you proud, and I will always continue to represent you with pride."

At the end of at least two matches, athletes from Arab countries, one from Morocco and the other from the United Arab Emirates, refused the outstretched hands of the Israelis who defeated them. One of the Israelis, Tohar Butul, went on to win bronze in the men's lightweight category.

Meanwhile, in Israel, some questioned Ponte's decision to go to the tournament.

Itzik Shaso, a columnist for Israel's popular Yediot Aharonot newspaper, on Sunday outlined the divide in public opinion between the "patriots", who support boycotting the tournament, and the "pragmatists", who are displeased with the conditions, but welcome the chance to make a statement on the mat.

"According to [the patriots], the elevator music that played instead of the anthem for gold medal-winner Tal Flicker, was indeed embarrassing, and the [federation] flag on the athletes' backs indeed looked like some scribbles, but if they are letting us slam some goyim on the mat without the United Nations condemning it, wouldn't it be a shame to waste the opportunity?" Shaso wrote.

Regev acknowledged both viewpoints when she greeted the team on its return Sunday night to Ben-Gurion Airport. She said once Ponte decided to go to the tournament, she demanded he bring home medals.

"I fight everywhere for the flag and the anthem," said Regev. "Ponte decided to go [to the tournament], and I told him to win against all those who boycott us."

Similarly, Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely said that her ministry had not been involved in negotiations



Tal Flicker

over the tournament, given Israel's lack of diplomatic relations with Abu Dhabi. But she nonetheless touted the team's participation as a sign of Israeli power.

"The judo delegation left without the involvement of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, since Israel has no diplomatic relations with Abu Dhabi, because of the rising status of Israel in the Arab world," she said in a statement last Thursday.

"The time has arrived that the Arab countries will understand who their friends are in the world and who are the enemies."

Writing for Israel's Walla! Sport website on Saturday, reporter Yaniv Tuchman accused his fellow Israelis of enjoying being the victims a little too much.

"It is doubtful that all those who eagerly read about the exploits of our athletes could identify Tal Flicker on the street," he wrote. "It's just another opportunity to rise up. To be angry. Most importantly, to be a victim. 'Look at how miserable we are, what we are forced to go through, what other country must face such challenges, bless this nation for how good it is.'"

While righteous outrage may be good politics, the judo team's performance in Abu Dhabi seemed to produce results. On Saturday, the United Arab Emirates' top judo official publicly apologised to Ponte for the refusal by his athlete to shake his Israeli competitor's hand. (JTA)

## Palestinian official: Holocaust guilt led Fifa not to sanction Israel

DOV LIEBER

European countries opposed any intervention by world football controlling body, Fifa in a dispute between Israel and the Palestinians over soccer clubs in the West Bank, according to Palestinian Football Association (PFA) chief, Jibril Rajoub on Sunday.

Rajoub, speaking at a Palestinian Football Association press conference in the West Bank town Al-Ram, cast the Palestinian soccer players as "scapegoats" for European crimes against the Jews during the Holocaust, for which those countries were now purportedly compensating in refusing to come down on the Jewish state.

The PFA had demanded Fifa sanctions over six teams playing in the Israeli league, which are based in Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The international community considers all Israeli settlements in the West Bank illegal.

Last Friday, the world body's ruling council declined to adopt any of three possible actions recommended by an international commission that spent more than two years looking at the long-running battle.

The Fifa Council said it "must remain

neutral with regard to political matters", in line with the world body's statutes.

"It's a shame for some European associations to defend and try to protect the Israeli racist and fascist government policies," said Rajoub.

Rajoub suggested it was countries that had been complicit in the crimes of the Holocaust.

"I don't think Palestinian players should be scapegoats from what some European countries did against the Jews last century," he said.

He said that while the Asian Football Association had backed a decision by Fifa, it was pressure from European countries that tipped the international body in favour of inaction.

"He who tried to defend Israel was Uefa," said Rajoub, referring to the Union of European Football Associations.

Responding to the argument by Fifa that it must remain neutral in political matters, Rajoub highlighted Uefa intervention following the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014.

After the Russian invasion of the Crimean Peninsula, Uefa prevented Crimean teams from joining the Russian league because the annexation of the peninsula was not recognised by the international community.

## World Series 2017 highlights Jewish sluggers coming through

MARC BRODSKY  
JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

You wanna see Jewish power, forget AIPAC: It's been on display in the first two games of the World Series.

Joc Pederson of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Alex Bregman of the Houston Astros have each homered in the series, becoming the first Jewish players to go deep for opposing teams in the Autumn Classic.

Pederson, a lefty-swinging outfielder, pulled the Dodgers into a 1-1 tie in Game 2 last Wednesday night with his solo blast off the star right-hander Justin Verlander. Los Angeles would go on to lose, 7-6, in 11 innings.

Pederson was out of the game by then, having been pulled in a double switch a few innings earlier.

The Astros' Bregman, a third baseman who bats right-handed, likewise sent Game 1 into a 1-1 deadlock last Tuesday night with a bases-empty shot off Dodger

ace Clayton Kershaw. It was all Houston could muster in a 3-1 loss.

While Bregman didn't homer in his club's Game 2 victory, he was a vital cog, knocking in one run with a double and igniting an eighth-inning rally with another double and scoring as the Astros pulled to within one run. The American

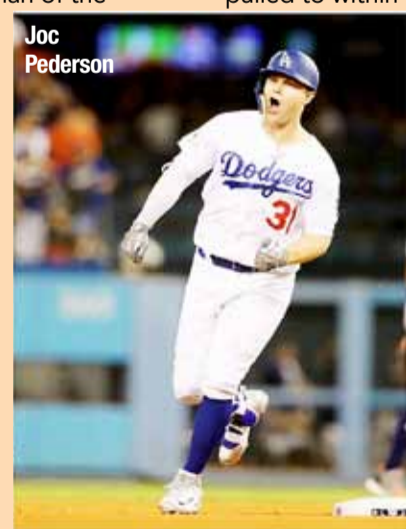
League champions would tie the score in the ninth before winning two innings later.

Both came to the majors as much-heralded prospects.

Bregman, 23, was the top draft pick of the Astros in 2015 and the second overall pick that year. In his first full campaign, he had 19 homers and 71 runs batted in and appears to be ready for the

stardom observers predicted.

The 25-year-old Pederson, whose father, Stu, pitched for the Dodgers, put up some prodigious power numbers in the minor leagues and made the National All-Star team in 2015, his rookie year.



Joc Pederson

# A year later and a real understanding dawns

JO GLANVILLE

My first Shabbos Project was last year and the conclusion to a difficult stretch. My partner, Rory, and I had fumbled our way into Cape Town from Johannesburg and were a little shell-shocked by the instant disappearance of the helping hands and compassionate ears we had become so accustomed to. At the risk of alienating some locals... man, Capetonians can be icy.

It was in this cold, seemingly impenetrable environment that one of Rory's aunts performed a gentle gesture I have now come to know as typical of Jewish women. She casually invited her cousin's son's girlfriend to a Shabbos Project challah bake.

One thousand women preparing challah was my first real introduction to the Jewish community in Cape Town. Everyone seemed so comfortable, like they knew exactly what they were doing; it was very intimidating.

That night I baked my challah at home

with some friends visiting from Johannesburg. It was terrible; less of a foodstuff and more of a potential weapon of the hammer throw variety.

Although it was disappointingly heavy, terribly plaited and a little burnt, my friends and I circled it gleefully, giggling and picking bits off. Despite the disaster, I had a quiet, almost unsettling sense of joy and calm on that Friday that I wouldn't have been able to place and quickly shrugged off.

For the rest of that Shabbos Project

I dipped in and out of the events with curiosity but limited commitment; I didn't think it was really intended for someone like me.

As the year wore on, my partner and I became more observant, resulting in a decision to keep Shabbat weekly. I'm not going to sugar-coat this for anyone considering keeping Shabbos; it can be an uncomfortable and intimidating process.

During the first months I was exposed to Shabbos in disjointed, uncomfortable chunks that, with my lack of context, rarely made sense. I went to shul, helped prepare the food, and spent ages trying to figure out the parameters and loopholes of how one goes about keeping Shabbos.

I was flooded with feelings of confusion, performance anxiety and, sometimes, fury at all of the limitations I was being presented with. I had many an awkward standoff with a mechitza and felt completely overwhelmed every time a new guideline was introduced into my weekend. That was until I had to miss one Shabbos after keeping Shabbat for a month.

The week following the missed Shabbos, I was inexplicably grouchy and exhausted but more acutely than that, felt untethered, as if the support was being jostled from under my feet with every step I took deeper into the week.

I tried relaxing, meditating, drinking an obscene amount of tea. It did not work. It was becoming an increasingly painful week, dragging, until it reached Shabbos and I was too tired to resist the restrictions or become infuriated by the

requirements.

The rituals washed me along the preparations before, drew me effortlessly onto a seat in shul and gently placed me between friends for chicken soup. My feet finally planted back on the ground and I felt the world solidifying.

The lights went on (proverbially, obviously, nobody panic). I needed the necessary time to connect, recharge and be in the world so I would have the necessary energy to create, think and do in the world.

I saw that the practices aren't there to limit but to create the potential for something else and I realised I couldn't not keep Shabbos.

I was at this revelation in my journey by the time the Shabbos Project rolled back around. When Rory's (and my now adopted) aunts and I arrived at the Challah Bake this year and I had a second look at everyone gathered, I realised that everyone was probably in varying states of being comfortable with Shabbos and this was the place where they were exploring it.

I overheard women instructing on braiding techniques in between giving advice after a difficult week. I watched a child comforted after she had broken her challah bag. I noticed someone awkwardly trying to mouth along to a bracha and watched a helpful hand point it out in the guide.

I almost cried with relief remembering my own insecurity and watching it being eliminated for someone else.

One of my aunts whispered to me that kneading the dough would be the only stress reliever I would ever need. I felt the dough become silky between my fingers and an inexplicable calm seeping into my hands as I remembered my first Challah Bake and everything it ended up meaning.



Jo Glanville



Durban Challah Bake

"Two years ago, my family decided to join the Shabbos Project. We had never before kept Shabbos. After the 25 hours was over, I had such a great feeling. We participated again last year, and for some reason I felt even better.

"This year everything just felt right. Tomorrow we will be moving to a new residence within the Plano eruv and within walking distance of shul, so we can keep Shabbos. I would like to thank everyone who showed us what Shabbos is all about."

- Ilana Panush, Plano, Texas

## An eternity in an instant

>> Continued from page 10

The friendly Claremont Wynberg Synagogue community made us feel very welcome and the service was uplifted by the outstanding voices of guest Chazzanim Ezra Altschuler and Shmuli Brill, and was followed by an incredible brocha.

It was admirable to see the lengths the congregation had gone to in order to enrich the Shabbos experience, and sustain this passion throughout the day, ending with a Havdallah concert.

The walk home, filled with questions and discussion, led to another delicious meal at the Samson Student House, and after an afternoon of fun and games, a Shabbos shloff was in order before Havdallah.

And just like that, Shabbos was gone... 25 hours, previously thought of as an eternity, had gone in an instant. The six days before the next one was now the eternity; true perspective had been attained.

This Shabbos, which was almost disregarded completely, proved to be one of the most meaningful I have experienced. In my eyes, it fully embodied the purpose of the Shabbos Project; revealing the joys of Shabbos, and the benefits that disconnecting, taking a step back, and discovering what seeing the bigger picture can do for you, particularly at the busiest of times.

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*Only short-listed candidates will be interviewed*

# The story behind the Arcadia Jewish Children's Home

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

It was a family tragedy that spurred the establishment of the South African Jewish Orphanage – the first such institution in the country – known today as the Arcadia Jewish Children's Home.

It began when Astrid Broll's mother was born on September 10, 1902. Three days later her own mother, Astrid's grandmother, died. Her grandfather was unable to cope with his other eight children and placed them in Nazareth House, a Catholic institution.

The new-born infant, named Anne after her deceased mother, was given to a family who changed her name to Elma Jacobs and raised her as a Catholic.

The eldest child, 12-year-old Sophia, was deemed to be too old for the orphanage so she was sent on her own by ship to the Norwood Jewish Orphanage in London. She stayed there until she was 18, then returned to South Africa at which point she changed her name to Vera.

"I remember meeting her for the first time," Astrid recalls accompanying her mother on a visit to her sister. "I was a little girl of five or six. Her husband was a tailor in Eloff Street in Johannesburg in one of the old 'broekie lace' buildings. When the Jewish community heard about the seven Jewish children who had been placed in a Catholic institution, they immediately took them and placed them in a rented house in Hillbrow and that was the beginning of Arcadia," officially opened on September 8, 1903.

"They were there for a short while," she says. "They did offer my grandfather (Benjamin Samuels) a house and help to take the children back – they wanted the children to be with the father obviously – but he said he couldn't."

Astrid had no idea what had happened to him until very recently, when she discovered that he had gone to the United States and remarried.

Also in 1903, Max Langermann donated four stands in the Johannesburg suburb of Kensington, with the idea of establishing an orphanage. With this in mind, it was decided that the house in Hillbrow be only temporarily rented and a matron, a cook-general and a "native servant" engaged, the then-named South African Jewish Orphanage being under the overall supervision of the Jewish Ladies' Communal League.

The house proved to be too small for the growing number of children, so a new building was erected on the Kensington stands and in October 1905, 20 orphans moved in. In 1922, the committee heard that Villa Arcadia in Parktown, designed by Sir Herbert Baker in 1909, was for sale and it was purchased for 30 000 pounds to house the orphans who had by then grown to 81.

Meanwhile Astrid's mom was blissfully unaware of her origins and the fact that she was Jewish.

"She had never been told that she was adopted – her mother and father subsequently had three children of their own, so she was the eldest.

"She went to church, had a cross over her bed, but was always interested in Jewish affairs. She went out with Jewish men, went to Jewish art exhibitions.

"When she was 21 and still living with her parents, her biological sister Ada came in through the gate – she looked a lot like my mother – and said: 'Are you Elma? Well, I'm your real sister.'"

Ada had searched for the whole family, no easy task as they had all been adopted from Arcadia by different parents.

"Of course there was a big upset – her adoptive parents came and explained the situation to her and she was devastated. The younger 'siblings' then changed their whole attitude towards her, both because she was Jewish and possibly because her 'mother' had always favoured her above the others," Astrid surmises.

Elma then embarked on a mission to connect with her true siblings. Her brother Louis had been adopted by the Goldman family of Springs and in the last five years, Astrid has connected



Astrid Broll

with his two daughters, her first cousins, one of whom lives near her son in London.

At the age of 29, after two prior engagements, Elma married Astrid's "very frum" father, William Leslie Kerby (originally Ludwig Kopelowitz), who was 22 years her senior. "He went to shul twice a day every day of his life," Astrid recalls.

Of her mother's siblings, Astrid met Louis, Vera and Ada. She also remembers going to visit her mother's adoptive family, with whom her mother maintained contact, despite their change in attitude.

She remembers her mother keeping a strictly kosher home.

In spite of the fact that she only met her biological family at the age of 21, she had no trouble integrating with them.

"When I met my first cousins in London for the first time, we just connected immediately," Astrid recalls.

Astrid's mother went to school until standard five (not uncommon for the times) but "basically educated herself. She was a very cultured person.

"She was a great art collector, as was my father, and was a patron of the arts, introducing young artists to the right people. That's how they knew Herman Wald," she says, referring to the well-known sculptor among whose works are the memorial to the Six Million in West Park Jewish Cemetery and the Stampede in central Johannesburg.

My mother was very great friends with Irma Stern," she says, referring to the renowned artist.

## Doing mitzvahs by giving so many people a chance

HELEN GRANGE

It's been 31 years since The Mitzvah School was started, as a crisis class providing a year of tuition to matric students from Alexandra township. It was during the heart of the country's political turmoil and South Africa was immersed in a State of Emergency at the time.

The school, started with the help of the Bet David congregation in Sandton, was "illegal" back then, and had only 25 students. Some of these pupils had – unbeknown to the

year.

This year, on Sunday October 15, when a number of its pupils received prizes for their achievements before kicking into their matric finals, it was no ordinary prize-giving. It was a testimony to the unerring dedication, through thick and thin, of the teachers and funders who made The Mitzvah School possible.

"We've had a very difficult and stressful year, not least because we've moved to our new premises at Bet David and there's been continual renovations here. But the resilience

not succeeding. Today the excuse is often our disadvantaged economic circumstance, but being poor and black is not an excuse for not succeeding... decide today how you are going to change your future," she said, to rousing applause.

More than 1 200 students have passed matric at the Mitzvah School. Some work in the banking and retail sector, and many study part-time to achieve their goals. One past student, Nonhlanhla Sithole, who came from an extremely deprived background, is a medical doctor today.

Another past student, Lebogang Ngobeni, attended the ceremony on October 15. He matriculated in 1996 and today is an office administrator in finance at Vodacom, as well as a Catholic minister with his own congregation in Alberton.

"I was 25 when I passed matric at Mitzvah School. I came from a very poor background in a rural area in North West Province, and in those years, I was struggling with health issues and disruptions in my education.

"I was assisted with a scholarship at Mitzvah School and when I got there, my English was very poor. But the teachers encouraged and pushed me every day, and I managed to finally pass my matric," says Ngobeni, who went on to do computer training and a year studying divinity at Unisa. He has worked at Vodacom for over 14 years.

Teachers and staff were heartily praised by the prize-winners, including the first principal Molly Smith, Ann Markunsky, English teacher, Jean Weinstein, extra English teacher, Ruth Steiner, psychologist and Dr Marianne Felix, yoga teacher.

"Through the kindness and love of these teachers, we are able to prosper and excel," said Nombuyiselo Tshoedi.

The Mitzvah School was recently

recognised by the Jewish Board of Deputies at their conference for the work it does.

With sponsorship from various companies and individuals, including the management and rabbi of the Bet David congregation in Sandton, the Mitzvah School continues its search for vulnerable learners in Alexandra township, to give them a fighting chance in a competitive world.

"We are also assisted by the Bet David Kehillah (Sisterhood) to help students who require food and clothing. Certain sponsors provide bursaries and we have set up a small bursary fund ourselves to help past students with tertiary education," says Rosenberg.

Students pay a nominal monthly amount for school fees and transport. The amount they pay does not cover the monthly cost per learner (some of the learners are unable to pay at all) and the shortfall has to be covered by the school's own fundraising efforts.

"We no longer receive a government subsidy as we have only one class and are considered an elite school.

"We are often able to find sponsorships for students who are unable to pay their school fees and these sponsors take an interest in their progress at school and sometimes even into tertiary education. We also have had a long and happy relationship with Afrika Tikkun and for many years they have sponsored the uniforms for the school," says Rosenberg.

The Mitzvah School also runs a feeding scheme in Eighth Avenue, Alexandra, providing breakfast and lunch daily for about 200 schoolchildren as well as indigent adults in the area. The students of Mitzvah School assist to collect food monthly, by standing outside supermarkets and asking the shoppers to assist with the feeding schemes.



Mitzvah learners greeting the audience

school – been political prisoners.

The school was meant to continue only until the crisis was over, but today, it is a school with a reputation for turning the fate of hundreds of disadvantaged children around, helping them transition with a solid matric to a brighter future.

The Mitzvah School has consistently produced a pass rate of over 90 per cent. By comparison, the national average is just over 50 per cent, and some of the schools from which the students come, have pass rates as low as 12 per cent. For many of its years, the Mitzvah School has achieved a 100 per cent pass rate, a remarkable achievement considering its students are there for only one

and commitment of our teachers and learners always pushes us through," said school principal Lesley Rosenberg.

Past pupils also visited the school to encourage the students to make the most of this golden opportunity to get the best matric marks possible. One of them was Noko Leopeng, from the class of 1988, currently heading the Skills Development Programmes unit at City of Johannesburg.

"Live your life like it's the second time around. Ask yourself: If I had nothing holding me back, if I had money, what would I do?" she told the learners.

"We used to blame apartheid for



# The cost of being Jewish



## INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman

As talk show host, listener feedback is critical in order to get a sense of the mood and thinking of the listener. There are days, however, when no matter what fascinating subject I try to discuss, that our listeners seem disinterested and even uncooperative. It is on those days, when all else has failed, and I feel somewhat desperate, that I simply pose the question:

“Do observant Jews get value for money when buying kosher chickens?”

In the highly unlikely event of this cheap trick failing, there is of course always the discussion about the death penalty, but that is less relevant to the matter at hand. What is relevant is that being Jewish, and being observant is expensive. And it is becoming more and more so.

There has recently been a flurry of articles dealing with the cost of being Jewish. Although these have primarily focused on Orthodox communities in the US, the stresses on South African Jews are no different. What is clear, is that the main cause of stress is the cost of tuition and the cost of kosher food.

Jewish day schools are notoriously difficult to manage. Besides trying to navigate Jewish parents and class moms, they have significant additional costs of multiple syllabuses – both religious and secular as well as the subsidy factor – where more and more parents are unable to fully service their children’s school fees.

Yeshiva Maharsha has recently announced that the 2018 school fees have been significantly reduced. Grades 1-6 will now cost parents R2 775 with the high school at R3 775. According to Rabbi Menachem Raff, “the main drive behind school fees reduction is to restore the DIGNITY of parents. With these new rates, 90 per cent and more of parents, will be able to pay their fees, rather than have to apply for subsidies.

“It does cause a major deficit, but we are banking on those people that have been blessed with more, to come forward and help meet the shortfall. Please G-d in this way everyone wins. Please G-d this will be the start and go a long way in sustaining and growing our community.”

Soon to follow was the Rimon Nursery School. According to Aaron Zulburg, “the Rimon Playschool and Nursery School, caters for children 14 months to grade 00. The fees will be R1 999 per month. (They should have been R3 300).

“The motivation was and is, as a result of the tremendous difficulty

that many families have in getting through each month financially, we decided to see if we could relook and change the current fee structure. We were able to make this change without sacrificing any quality in the education and so we made the change.”

There is little doubt that the other Jewish day schools too are sensitive and aware of the pressure on parents and discussions around affordability and rising costs is not something that is being ignored.

Friends Restaurant have taken a similar step with regard to the cost of kosher food. According to shareholder Craig Lazarus, “we have reduced prices by around 30 per cent. We have done so by reducing expenditure without compromising quality and by benchmarking our prices off NON-kosher establishments rather than kosher ones. We believe that as difficult as this is to achieve, we have no choice if we want people to continue to observe kashrut and to support our establishment.”

The reality is very simply that given the extreme hardship of a stagnant economy, the fact that the SA rand has low value, is placing significant stress on those who wish to observe a Jewish lifestyle. Thanks, however to some brave initiatives there seems to be the beginning of a trend to push back and to make life just a little easier.

# Rabin’s murder ‘ripped the fabric of democracy’

## TOI STAFF

The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995, was an “unforgivable” act that “didn’t just eat away at Israeli democracy, but ripped apart its very fabric”, President Reuven Rivlin said on Wednesday at a ceremony commemorating the 22nd anniversary of the murder.

Rivlin spoke at one of several official commemorations planned throughout the day, the anniversary of the murder according to the Jewish calendar.

Speaking at the President’s Residence in Jerusalem, Rivlin told an audience that included members of the Rabin family, that the former prime minister’s killer, Yigal Amir, “who murdered a prime minister and ripped apart Israel’s living tissue, can never be forgiven”.

“We have been trying to heal the breach ever since, and will continue to do so,” Rivlin said.

“The grief,” he declared, “is shared by us all.”

He went on: “A democratic society is like a broken vase. Free speech reveals the contradictions, clarifies

positions, and tests the ties between the broken parts. We must not be naive, or believe that all will be well. Even if our institutions are in need of change and reform, we must not give up on them or allow them to be undermined.”

The official state commemoration for the slain prime minister took place at 15:00 at the Mount Herzl cemetery where Rabin is buried, and attended by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Supreme Court Chief Justice Esther Hayut.

The Knesset held its own

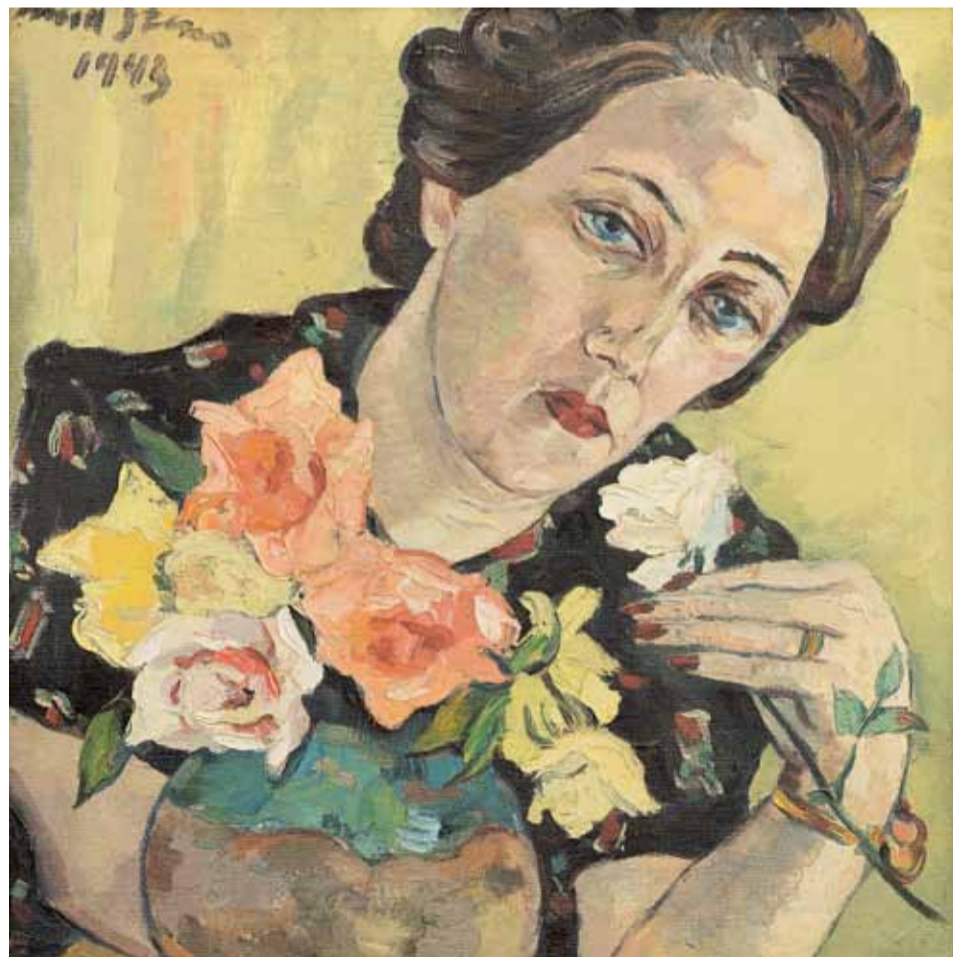


President Reuven Rivlin

commemoration of Rabin at 17:00 in the plenum, attended by Rivlin, Hayut, Netanyahu, opposition leader MK Isaac Herzog, deputy Knesset speaker MK Hilik Bar and members of Rabin’s family. It opened with a moment of silence.



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# Laurence Rees reflects on Holocaust characters' insights

STEVEN GRUZD

For 30 years, award-winning British historian, author and former head of BBC TV History Programmes, Laurence Rees has interviewed hundreds of people about their Holocaust experiences, from survivors to SS officers.

On Sunday evening, Rees delivered the second annual Mervyn Smith Memorial Lecture at a packed Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre. He spoke movingly about four interviewees – victims and perpetrators – that illustrate the complexity of the human condition and the horrors of the Shoah.

Tadeusz Smreczyński, a Catholic Polish political prisoner held in Auschwitz in 1944 for smuggling bread to hungry prisoners, was in his 90s when Rees met him in Krakow. He recalled watching the Jewish camp orchestra playing for the SS and their families at Auschwitz: “They had no dilemmas. The wind from Birkenau blew the smoke from the death camp in, but they were just sitting and listening to Mozart and others. This is what a human being is capable of...”

Smreczyński was inspired to become a doctor if he survived, by watching prison doctors treating victims of Allied bombing raids.

A brilliant scholar, Smreczyński's promising medical career was restricted, as he refused to join the hated Polish Communist Party after the war. He was forced to be an army doctor far away from his family, for six years. He said: “Life has sense only when one does good... I did not feel the urge to live a public life. I did not care about financial incentives that would let me compare my car with someone else's car. I did not need to impress anyone.”

Rees interviewed former Auschwitz SS official Oskar Groening in 2004. He spoke candidly, unaware that he would later be prosecuted when

German law changed. Currently 96, courts are deciding if he is too frail for imprisonment.

Unrepentant, Groening told Rees: “We were convinced by our worldview that there was a great conspiracy of Jewishness against us... what happened in the First World War must be avoided, namely that the Jews put us into misery. The enemies who are within Germany are being killed – exterminated if necessary... so we exterminated nothing but enemies.”

Of killing Jewish children, Groening said: “The children are not the enemy at the moment. The enemy is the blood in them. The enemy is their growing up to become a Jew who could be dangerous.”

Rees explained how the Nazis prized being “hard as granite”, relishing the chance to do something epic.

Petras Zelionka, a Lithuanian Nazi collaborator interviewed in 1994, said of killing Jews: “Everything short and clear. Without any ceremonies – nothing. We used to give them up for lost and that was it.”

Rees outlined motivations of Lithuanian perpetrators, including “revenge (against those who had allegedly helped the Soviets oppress the population); expiation (for those who wanted to show loyalty to the Nazis after collaborating with the Soviets); anti-Semitism; opportunism (a desire to adapt swiftly to the new situation in Lithuania); and self-enrichment”, plus sadism.

Zelionka said he felt a sense of “curiosity” as children were killed. “You just pull the trigger, the shot is fired and that's it.”

Finally, Rees introduced Toivi Blatt, a Jew who worked in the Sonderkommando (a unit of prisoners forced to assist with the disposal of gas chamber victims) at the Sobibor death camp. Blatt harrowingly recalled the killing of a



Laurence Rees

trainload of Dutch Jews: “When the job was finished, when they were already taken out of the gas chambers to be burnt, I remember thinking to myself that it was a beautiful night [with] the stars really quiet... Three thousand people died. Nothing happened. The stars are in the same place.”

Blatt told Rees: “My whole orientation, my thoughts, were how to survive. Because I will die, but right now I am alive and I don't want to die today. And then the next day would come and I don't want to die today either.” Blatt lived with guilt about the horrors he witnessed all his life.

Blatt said: “People asked me: ‘What did you learn?’ And I think I'm only sure of one thing – nobody knows themselves... All of us could be good people or bad people in

these [different] situations. Sometimes when somebody is really nice to me I find myself thinking; ‘How will he be in Sobibor?’”

Rees urged the audience not to judge how people behave in such extreme conditions. He said one of the problems with history is that we look back now, knowing what happened.

Asked if former SS men he interviewed showed remorse, Rees said he could not recall any.

Mervyn Smith, a revered Jewish communal leader from Cape Town and former chairman of the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, died in 2014. Smith's four children annually sponsor a prominent international speaker to lecture at the Holocaust and Genocide Centres in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg.

## World News in Brief

### Why Haredi Orthodox yeshiva student nearly missed his wedding

LONDON - British immigration officers detained a Haredi Orthodox Los Angeles man for three days who had come to the United Kingdom to marry a citizen there.

Yosef Goldenberg, who is studying in Israel and has citizenship there, arrived last Thursday at Heathrow Airport in London, carrying his American passport en route to his wedding on Monday in Newcastle, even though his request for a special marriage visa had been denied, Arutz 7 reported on Tuesday.

Goldenberg was hoping to enter as a tourist, but was barred from doing so because he had already applied unsuccessfully for the marriage visa.

He was finally allowed to enter the United Kingdom following intervention by Israel's Interior Minister Aryeh Deri, who had heard about Goldenberg's case and asked British authorities to give him a concession so he would make it to his own wedding to Yael Naomi Maimren of Gateshead, near Newcastle.

“I personally guarantee that within 10 days of the wedding, the bride and groom will leave England and move to Israel,” Deri wrote to British officials, according to Arutz 7. “My ministry has checked and found that the couple has rented an apartment in Israel, and that his yeshiva is waiting [for him to return].” (JTA)

## Taking on SAUJS leadership



Rachel Raff

Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Rachel Raff is the newly-appointed South African Union of Jewish Students national chairperson. She grew up in the heart of Jewish Johannesburg as the oldest of seven children. She went to Torah Academy Primary, Beis Yaakov High and did her matric at Eden College.

**What are you studying at Wits and what drew you to this career path?** I started my B Com degree with the

intention of majoring in accounting, as I have a passion for maths. I soon realised maths and accounting were almost totally unrelated, so I decided to follow my more artistic side and switched to marketing. It was a great way to incorporate an aspect of humanities in what had seemed like a really dry B Com.

**What do you see yourself becoming once you have qualified?**

Marketing for Birthright (a SAUJS annual trip to Israel which ignited my Jewish identity and is something I can speak of at length).

**How do you feel about being Jewish and a Zionist and how do these feature in your life?**

I have a very strong Jewish identity and am a proud Zionist. It is a daily feature in my life as each day I am learning something new, engaging with someone different, participating in dialogue on different aspects of Jewish identity and Israel.

**What drew you to take on a leadership role in SAUJS?**

My Birthright trip to Israel where I returned with a passion for the Land of Israel and a strong Jewish identity. It is this passion that

started my involvement in SAUJS, as I believed in being an active member on and off campus.

**How does this impact on your life and what does it mean to you right now?**

Less time studying and more time planning parties and combatting BDS.

But aside for that it's really important to me right now. Through my time in SAUJS I've been given exposure to local and international issues and been able to be further involved in the Jewish community. I'm excited to further relationships and take SAUJS to the next level of Jewish and South African activism.

**What do you believe will be your biggest challenge as SAUJS national chairperson and why?**

Providing exposure to unaffiliated students as to what SAUJS' aims and objectives are and getting them involved (we aren't just a body that reschedules exams written on Shabbos!).

**How do you plan to tackle Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) in general?**

This is tough to comment on at the moment; we are currently working on our IAW counter-programme. It takes months of preparation.

**BDS is very strong on campus. How does this impact on SAUJS and how do you believe it is best to deal with it?**

It inversely affects SAUJS, as BDS incites students to have a negative and distorted view of Israel and thus their Jewish peers. I think it best to deal with this with a more proactive approach by educating students through interfaith collaborations, allowing for a wholesome view of Jewish morals and values.

**How do you think the university authorities should be dealing with BDS and IAW?**

While I do believe in freedom of speech, I don't believe the BDS are using IAW to engage in discourse, but as an opportunity to incite hate. What occurs during IAW by the BDS is anti-Zionism which equates to anti-Semitism and should not be tolerated at any university. Essentially, the BDS campaign is one that is used to promulgate hatred against Israel and thus should be cancelled by the university authorities.

**What are the implications of IAW and BDS for Jewish students in SA and internationally?**

A myriad of implications; I could write an essay, but I'm worried about space.

# Fighting to free an innocent prisoner

SUZANNE BELLING

Thembekile Molaudzi, an innocent man, spent 14 years behind bars – being subjected to torture and four years' solitary confinement – after being sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of a policeman.

Carolyn Raphaely, a senior journalist at the Wits Justice Project (WJP), told the story at a Union of Jewish Women event recently of his conviction and titanic struggle, in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, to prove his innocence.



Photo: Cindy Kree

Carolyn Raphaely, with Thembekile Molaudzi, whom she helped in his fight for freedom.

For her, the story started four years ago, when Levi Maphakane, a warder at the Zonderwater prison, phoned her. He told her that for the first time ever he believed an inmate who insisted he was innocent – a view supported by Molaudzi's family, friends and co-accused.

Molaudzi had been trying without success for over eight years to obtain his trial transcripts, which was his constitutional right. As a result, he was unable to appeal his case.

The WJP had received numerous other complaints about missing transcripts, "an issue with serious human rights implications", Raphaely said.

"At that point, I had no idea I would learn some of my greatest life lessons – about patience, perseverance, persistence, courage, determination and resilience, from a man behind bars, wearing an orange uniform."

Molaudzi's nightmare began in 2002, when Dingaank Makuna, a Mothutlung policeman,

was killed in a botched hijacking. Eight men, including Molaudzi, were rounded up and arrested.

"During two ID parades, the policeman's daughter, who witnessed her father's murder, fingered four suspects. Thembekile, an easily identifiable two-metre giant of a man with an imposing presence, was not one of them," Raphaely said.

But he was convicted and sentenced, after "a bungled police investigation", with little evidence to incriminate him, other than a recanted confession by a co-accused who was later termed a "reckless liar" by the full bench of the North-West High Court.

His search for his transcripts proved fruitless for many years. When he received a transcript – after his family managed to raise R21 000 to pay private attorneys to find them, although inmates are legally entitled to their records at state expense – more than half the 1 000-page record was missing, including the most crucial evidence.

"With only a grade 10 education under his belt, Thembekile spent his time studying the Constitution, the Criminal Procedure Act and advising other inmates of their rights.

"Armed with only prayers, faith and the courage of his convictions, he soldiered on, bolstered by an overwhelming need to prove his innocence and be reunited with his wife, Paulina, and young son, Mark, who was three months old when he was arrested."

Eventually, under pressure from Lawyers for Human Rights, the trial judge, Monica Leeuw – now the North-West judge-president – ordered the trial records to be retranscribed.

Three weeks after receiving the record, Molaudzi was finally in a position to appeal, which he did, with six of his co-accused. However, the appeal was dismissed by a full bench, as was a subsequent appeal to the Supreme Court of Appeal.

At this stage, Legal Aid said they could not assist him any further.

"Undeterred, he roped in a former prosecutor to help him lodge a Constitutional Court appeal, but this was also dismissed because the court said no constitutional issues were raised and the case "had no reasonable prospect of success".

Molaudzi still did not give up hope. Two of his co-accused then launched their own Constitutional Court appeal, this time based on a constitutional principle.

Nigel Carpenter, the state prosecutor, told the court that the only evidence implicating the two of them was inadmissible and unconstitutional, adding that the same applied to Molaudzi as well.

The court overturned the convictions of the two co-accused, but there was a legal

difficulty facing Molaudzi. According to the legal principle of *res judicata*, "you can have only one bite at the legal cherry", Raphaely explained.

The court had heard and dismissed Molaudzi's application two years earlier. But three months later, "in the interests of justice, the court decided to reverse its own ruling for the first time ever. He walked out a free man, going on to achieve the same result for two other co-accused."

Raphaely admired Molaudzi's magnanimity – he "harbours no bitterness towards [the judge]. 'To err is human.'"

Raphaely said this case was "a salutary lesson for those still calling for the reinstatement of the death sentence.

"Not only guilty people find themselves behind bars."

Following on Raphaely's address, Molaudzi said he had written many letters, "but they were thrown into the dustbin". Nevertheless, he continued the fight, saying his body might have been inside prison, but his soul was outside. He prayed constantly.

He told the SA Jewish Report that he had received no compensation. He is still trying in that regard.

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# Photographing the desperately sad gaze of having lost everything

ROBYN SASSEN

The silence grabs you first as you walk into Gideon Mendel's Drowning World, a selection of photographs from his eponymous 10-year project, currently on show at Wits Art Museum.

It's the silence and the gaze of those photographed. And then you notice that everyone in every photograph is truncated as each one is standing in cold, dark water. This holds your heart in thrall, as you walk through the exhibition.

But Drowning World is more than just an exhibition. Having earned Mendel first prize in the inaugural New York-based Pollock Award for Creativity last year, in the name of American painter Jackson Pollock, it's about awareness of global warming.

Self-taught as a photographer, Mendel came of age in South Africa in the 1980s. Apartheid was at its most aggressive peak. He describes the country at the time as an intensely moral environment, rife with opportunities for self-expression, particularly if you had a keen eye, a strong sense of conviction and a great sense of empathy.

The images focus on the lives of people the floods have touched. They give you to understand the horror of the situation when you are looking at these people in their eyes.

"It was a privilege to work with such a clear sense of right and wrong at the time," he says. "I think that sort of marked me."

Leap forward several decades. Mendel now lives in London. "In 2007, there was a flood in England," he remembers. "I was experimenting with making portraits with a newly-acquired Rolleiflex camera. Six weeks later, there was a flood in India. And the die was cast."

"I was deeply struck by the contrasting impacts of these two floods, and the shared vulnerability that united their victims. Since then I endeavoured to visit flood zones around the world."

Working on the project has taken him to 13 countries, including Bangladesh and Thailand, France and Australia, England, Nigeria and the United States.

Referring to himself as a "global flood vulture", he says this is not documentation in any simple way with an environmental set of circumstances, or a bottomless budget. It's a deep, achingly human gesture. The images focus on the lives of people the floods have touched. They give you to understand the horror of the situation when you are looking at these people in their eyes.

Some of these photographed, are of the First World, others eke out a living at the bottom of the

world's economy. Some have the wherewithal to wear diving suits to protect their bodies from the rank water in which their furniture floats, others don't. They stand alone, or embrace their loved ones. They are old, young, black, white. It doesn't matter: the look in their eyes is the same. It says they have lost everything.

The project embraces four focuses: conventional images of waterlogged landscapes; submerged portraits of the flood victims; visual documents of the waterline inside domestic environments; and photographs peering through water damage at the mementoes of ordinary people.

"My subjects often invite me back to their homes," he adds. "To get there we travel together through deep floodwaters. When I take the photo, the subjects take up a conventional pose, in spite of their environment being grotesquely abnormal."

Here is a photograph of a child; the texture of the photographic paper is bloated and discoloured beyond recognition, just a little chubby hand on one side of a great



Christa and Salomon Raymond Fils Decade Village. Haiti September 2008

big stain, blooming like a cancer on the surface of the photograph that once was.

There is a couple standing in what was their lounge. The water is at waist level. And their horror of now having nothing, sits like a massive exclamation mark in this

silent wateriness. There are no tears. Just blank horror.

In another image, two young Muslim women stand, hijab in place, the world around them like a stage set. It gives you a jolt when you realise that the bold setting in which you see them, is

a by-product of the flood waters. And you experience another jolt when you lower your eyes to acknowledge the flat line of browning water that hides the lower part of their legs.

The body of displayed work, which comprises photographs from each of the project's components as well as a 39-minute-long looped video, opens up a collective empathy for human beings. At base we are all the same: We like to own things. We have a sense of our own importance. The weather is a great and relentless leveller.

Photography, by its nature stands in the oft rickety breach between art and documentation, an uncomfortable ethical place which is very clear in this exhibition. You do not emerge from looking at it with a sense of aesthetic victory. You emerge with awareness. And with a feeling of having touched the fabric of what makes life precious on this planet.

• *Drowning World* by Gideon Mendel is at Wits Art Museum, Braamfontein, until February 15, 2018.

## Art about silence

MATTHEW KROUSE

Artists Yda Walt and Cheryl Rumbak's exhibition titled *Where is Kovno?* at the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre, is deceptively easy to navigate. Its compartmentalised displays harbour complex ideas about our collective identity, and the county of our forebears, namely Lithuania.

The exhibition asks its rhetorical question – where is Kovno? – in the present tense. This nifty device brings what was once a proper geographical location into a 21st century consciousness.

By asking where the place stands today, we are forced to consider what might have transpired there, had the Holocaust not happened. We are made to wonder what has been retained in the minds of our community, and in the minds of Lithuanians who choose to revisit their history.

Where Kovno was, is not where Kaunas is now. Although Jews once called the city by its Yiddish name, the exhibition highlights the fact that remembrance of Jewish life that once thrived there, is lacking. There were approximately 40 000 Jews living in the area on the eve of the war.

In the research phase of the work, Walt travelled

to Lithuania to try to understand the landscape of lost Jewish life, of Jewish deaths, and the Lithuanian response to the mass killings that happened early on in the war.

The research trip happened as a result of a commission by the Kaunas Textile Biennale for an installation in 2009. Walt had first gone to present work there in 2007 and, in preparation for the next edition, presented a proposal that, she says, "they thought was far too historical – it was not an artist's proposal".

However, overcoming this hurdle meant that she now had a commission. At a Lithuanian workshop for research into the use of archives by artists, she confronted participants with the absence of Jewish memorialisation in present-day Kaunas. "I just felt the absence of this community so profoundly from the moment I landed in Lithuania.

"I started looking for the Jews. Where are they? How come there's no narrative? There are no plaques, there is nothing – it was gone."

In turn, she was confronted by a fellow artist who asked: "What does an artist do if they are shocked and angry? Now go back to South Africa, and come back in two years' time and do a project. And that's what I did."

A further research trip happened and writer Alice

Kentridge went along. In an essay introduction to the project, in the exhibition catalogue, Kentridge writes: "To go back was to be confronted with the absence, the violent absence of Jewish life that had so filled the streets."

Filling the exhibition space, however, has meant that Walt and Rumbak have taken the archive of Jewish memory – and we all have something of Lithuanian Jewish life within us – and placed it inside the gallery.

Artistically, *Where is Kovno?* is an exhibition of printed artwork on fabric. There are linocut prints of artefacts of Jewish life from the pre- and Holocaust era, as well as prints of Jewish buildings that have survived the decades in dereliction.

A "Kaddish Space" is animated by a soundscape composed by renowned composer Philip Miller. It is encircled by printed drapes containing the memorial prayer as well as Yiddish letters. At the centre is a telephone book from Kovno that once listed Jewish names and addresses active on the eve of the annihilation.

On the sides of the exhibition are fabric maps of Lithuania showing the size of the Jewish population at the height of the Jewish existence there, as well as the sites of mass murders.

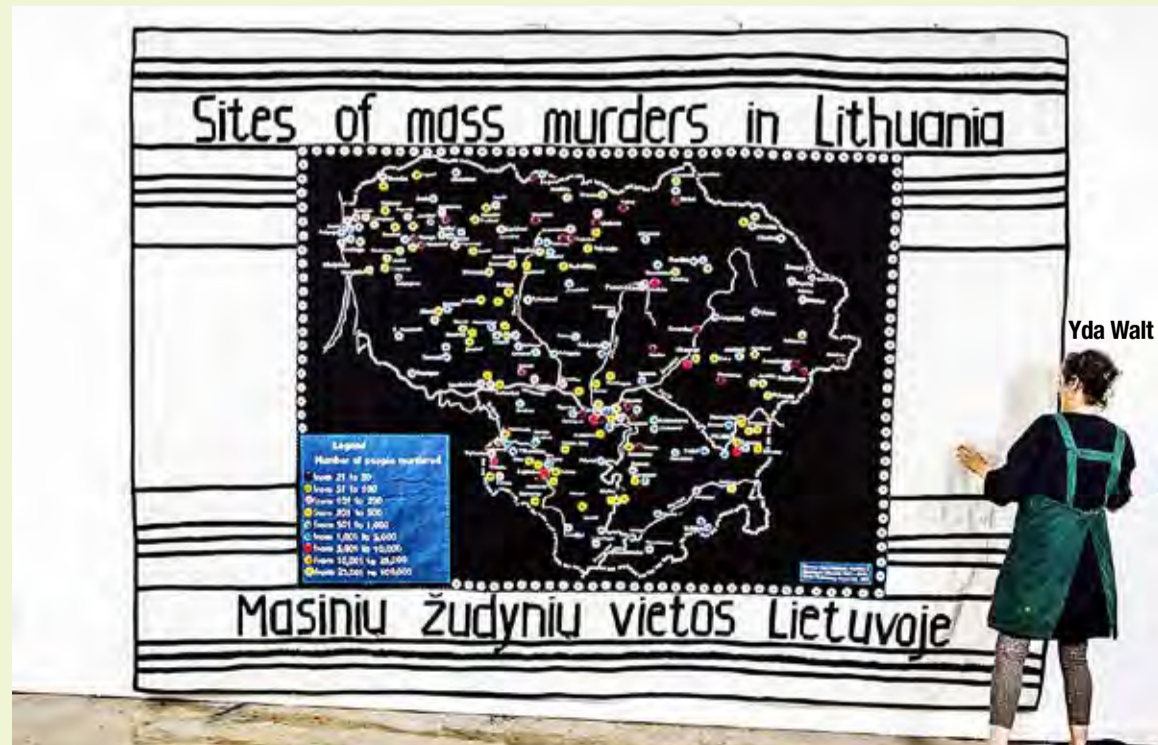
A small, walled-off section contains a photograph by David Goldblatt of a simple gravestone in the forest of Popolan, marking a massacre. Both he and Walt share family roots in that very town.

In a recorded response to his journey Goldblatt wonders aloud about whether the Holocaust experience has meant that Jews are above racism.

In recorded testimony, a survivor of the Kovno Ghetto, Irena Veisaite, asks Walt how many South Africans would have been prepared to shelter an African child under apartheid, had the lives of their children been threatened by such action.

These are questions possibly not intended to be answered directly, but to be used as the basis of introspection. They further the theme of silence.

"The elements of the installation, serve as a response to those silences," Kentridge writes. "In the work, there is the desire to show, to record, to map, to make visible. And then an attempt to make a way towards feeling, holding, and mourning."



• *Where is Kovno?* is showing at the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre until November 12. [www.jhbholocaust.co.za](http://www.jhbholocaust.co.za)

# Why murders on SA farms evoke knee-jerk racism



## TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

A farmer murdered while working his land is a shocking scene. Yet many people rejected this week's countryside protests, called Black Monday, by farmers against the plague of such killings in South Africa.

It was said they were privileged white Afrikaners concerned only about themselves who maltreated their black workers. The protesting farmers, dressed in black, blocked highways with hundreds of vehicles. But while this image is ominous, its underbelly may bring hope.

The Black First Land First group, which is itself racist, urged South Africans not to support the protests, claiming white farms are "zones of violence for black people". Sadly, there are indeed many racial incidents.

Last week, two Afrikaans farmers were sentenced to 14 and 11 years in jail for forcing a black man into a coffin and threatening to set it alight. But the overall

reality is more complex, containing good and bad.

The protests began in Cape Town with a group called "Enough is Enough" after Joubert Conradie was murdered on his Stellenbosch farm. In a video which went viral, farm manager Chris Loubser said if he were a magician, "the whole City of Cape Town would've been surrounded by tractors". Afrikaner-dominated lobby group AfriForum, backed the protest. A convoy of hundreds of vehicles arrived at Cape Town Stadium on Monday; farmers also gathered at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria and elsewhere.

Following last week's release of annual crime statistics for the country, consternation over deteriorating farm safety was voiced by various organisations, although farm crimes were not specifically mentioned in the figures. The national murder rate was 34 per 100 000 people in the 2015/2016 period. Freedom Front Plus MP Pieter Groenewald said in Parliament in April that the farm murder rate was 133 per 100 000, based on estimates by crime analyst Dr Johan Burger at the Institute for Security Studies.

Burger, however, saw the figure only as a

vague indicator affected by how one defines farm murders. Others estimate a lower rate, but all agree there is a serious problem.

Burger bemoans racialisation and politicisation of the killings: "The reality is that our farming communities are under siege." Farm attacks are not just about white farmers, he says: "Every year there are far more black workers killed than white farmers." This may reflect the larger number of workers compared to farmers, but it's not about race.

Events in this country quickly become racialised in knee-jerk fashion. White farmers protesting, are seen as protecting their interests while resisting transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. Unfortunately, that accusation contains some truth.

Certain farmers are also saying there is a "white-genocide". Worryingly, some protesters carried the old South African flag, and others sang Die Stem, apartheid South Africa's national anthem.

AfriForum, however, insists it told people to wear black but "did not call on them to bring flags or call for any political affiliations."

In the mid-1900s there were numerous Jewish farmers. For example, the 30-mile

strip between Ogies and Leslie (Leandra) in Mpumalanga province, consisted almost entirely of Jewish farmers. Almost all have left, having sold their farms to Afrikaners.

If they were still there, would they have joined the protests? Would there be an anti-Semitic backlash?

Last week's Sunday Times front-page headline blared: "Gangster Republic". Most people understood the meaning without even reading the article: The country has become a hotbed of criminality, violent and non-violent, under President Jacob Zuma.

South Africans from all groups and economic strata are affected, and are gatvol. Could white farmers, with all their imperfections, trigger a wider protest? It would be ironic for mass civil action to emerge from conservative white farmers. But from whatever source, it must be encouraged: it could represent a tipping point.

• Read Geoff Sifrin's regular columns on his blog [sifrintakingissue.wordpress.com](http://sifrintakingissue.wordpress.com)

## Community Column

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

## SA Jewish community happily boxes above its weight

Last week, in my report on the World Jewish Congress Community Directors' Forum in Cape Town, I observed how highly South African Jewry is regarded in global Jewish circles, to the point that we are today regularly described as being a model for other Diaspora communities to emulate.

Delegates were astounded by how much the community, despite its relatively small numbers, is achieving, from the comprehensive range of communal activities and services it is able to maintain to the high level of on-the-ground involvement by its members.

Two memorable events over the weekend further highlighted the vibrancy of Jewish life in South Africa. The first was the Shabbos Project, which again brought together people from across the religious spectrum in celebrating this precious aspect of our heritage. The second was a tribute evening showcasing the extraordinary work of the Chevrah Kadisha, Johannesburg Jewry's oldest communal organisation and one whose record

of selfless service has few parallels anywhere in the Jewish world.

I congratulate Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein and everyone else involved, for ensuring that the Shabbos Project was once again a resounding success. That this made-in-South-Africa initiative has since been enthusiastically adopted across the Jewish world, is itself indicative of the wider impact that SA Jewry is making on the global Jewish stage.

The Shabbos Project has from the outset been a great unifying force, cutting across religious and ideological affiliations. This is something that the SAJBD, one of whose core aims has always been to ensure that unity and shalom bayit is maintained, particularly welcomes.

Those of us in attendance at Sunday's tribute evening to the Chevrah Kadisha, were moved and inspired to learn at first-hand what is being done to alleviate hardship in our community, in both the material and emotional-psychological spheres.

"No Jew will be left behind" is the watchword of this outstanding organisation, and it is a testimony to the generosity of its many loyal donors, past and present, that it has consistently been able to realise this noble

goal.

There are enormous benefits in being part of a broader Jewish communal culture, whether it involves attending shul or shiurim, raising funds or contributing one's time and effort to charitable, educational or Zionist causes, volunteering for the CSO, promoting Jewish heritage and identity or other such activities.

It provides us with a sense of security and belonging, moral strength and direction, safety and general psychological equilibrium. In turn, it helps us to remain positive and resilient, particularly in the turbulent and uncertain times in which we are currently living.

In dwelling on the strengths of our community, I certainly do not wish to appear to be bragging, nor to be painting an unrealistically rosy picture of what Jewish life in this country is all about.

Naturally, we too have flaws that need addressing and challenges that have to be confronted. Nevertheless, there is every reason to take pride in what is being accomplished, to draw inspiration from it and thereby to look ahead with confidence to whatever the future may bring.

• 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**  
**Shaun Zagnoev**



## World News in Brief

### German soccer fans use photo of Anne Frank to mock rival team

DUSSELDORF – Stickers showing a doctored photo of Anne Frank wearing a German soccer team's jersey, appeared in Dusseldorf, Germany, a week after a similar incident in Rome.

Fans of the Borussia Dortmund club are believed to have created the stickers showing the teenage Holocaust diarist in a Schalke team jersey. Borussia Dortmund reportedly has a number of neo-Nazis as part of its hardcore fan base.

Photos of the stickers were first posted on the German blog Ruhr Barone.de.

Stickers, allegedly from BVB hooligan circles, have emerged in Düsseldorf depicting Anne Frank in a Schalke shirt.

German police are investigating the incident, according to reports. Anti-Semitism is a crime in Germany, as is Holocaust denial.

Last week a passage from "The Diary of Anne Frank" was read out prior to all soccer games – youth games, amateur and professional – throughout Italy after fans of the Lazio club posted stickers around Rome's Olympic Stadium showing Anne Frank wearing the shirt of the Roma team. The teams share the stadium. Roma is often associated with being left-wing and Jewish.

Also in response, Lazio President Claudio Lotito visited Rome's main synagogue, where he laid a wreath of flowers in memory of Holocaust victims and

condemned the actions of the fans. He also said the team would take 200 fans per year to visit Auschwitz.

However, after the synagogue visit, the Italian daily Il Messaggero released a recording of Lotito calling it a "charade". Lotito denied it was his voice on the recording.

Soccer fans at two matches last week also ignored the "Diary of Anne Frank" readings. At a game between Roma and the Calabria-based Crotona, fans shouted team chants during the readings at the same stadium where the stickers were displayed.

At a game between Lazio and Juventus, fans of the latter team turned their backs and sang the country's national anthem during the reading. (JTA)

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## WIZO pays tribute to long-serving members



Lorraine Shein, Ethel Amoils, Lee Joffe, Andrea Wainer, and Annette Price

It was a morning of WIZO celebration as a number of women were awarded the prestigious Rebecca Sieff Award for long service in recognition of their dedication to the organisation.

The longest serving award went to WIZO's Cyrildene branch. And then Suzie Alhadeff, Helen Aronowitz, Fanny Kampel, Mushe Kirsh, Lorna Sonnenberg, Bernice Videlefsky and the Johannesburg North branch were awarded for their 60 years of dedicated service.

Danny Kirsh, son of Mushe, gave a meaningful dvar Torah at the celebration in the Ohr Somayach Savoy Sukkah on Tuesday October 10.

Annette Price, honorary life president of WIZO South Africa, spoke about Rebecca Sieff, the woman who started WIZO so many years ago in recognition of the

needs of many of the citizens of what was then Palestine.

Psychologist and biblical scholar Adina Roth, spoke about Sarah Imeinu on hearing that she was to have a child so late in life and what we could learn from her about never giving up.

Lee Joffe, co-chairman of WIZO Johannesburg, called up each of the women and branches to receive their awards, giving an overview of their unique contributions. Special certificates, badges and flowers were handed out by Andrea Wainer, co-chairman of WIZO Johannesburg, and Annette Price.

The morning was a special reminder that we are all capable of achieving amazing things if we work together for the greater good.

## Machalnik veterans reunited

JULIAN POKROY

Two of the surviving Machal volunteers who left South Africa to volunteer in the 1948 War of Independence, met recently for an impromptu "reunion" at Jaffa (accommodation for the elderly) in Pretoria.

The sprightly nonagenarians – Eli Isserow and Mendel Cohen – captivated their informal audience as they regaled them with their stories from that time.

Isserow was born on a farm between Ogies and Witbank, where he lived until 1936, before moving to Johannesburg.

In April 1948 he volunteered for Machal and was sent to the Ramat David Airfield where he initially served until he was sent to the Weizman Institute where, due to his skills as an artisan fitter and turner, he participated in the building of the first Israeli radar system. While this was ongoing, he also graduated as an engineer in the process.

He was commissioned and became a lieutenant and then served two years at Tel Nof (formally Akir) for a further three and half years of service, before returning to South Africa.

Cohen was born in 1925 in East London and went to school at Selbourne College. He spent one and a half years studying law at the University of Cape Town before he volunteered for Machal duty in 1948, temporarily abandoning his studies.

Cohen was part of a group of 12 to be included in a cell of Irgun. He served in the 72nd Regiment as a rifleman and subsequently in the 4th Battalion as a Spandau gunman.

He saw operational duty in the Western and Northern Gallilee and was part of the group entrenched at the Syrian boarder at Mount Hermon, where he recounted, they "nearly froze to death".

Even after the war had been finalised and a truce declared there had still been continuing skirmishes. He moved to Kalkilya where they dug in approximately 100 metres from the Iraqi Brigade.

Cohen stayed on after the war on Kibbutz Atid in the Northern Gallilee and only returned to South Africa at the end of 1949, where he completed his law studies and practised law in Pretoria until his recent retirement.

And what's left of their incredible experience is a truckload of memories and stories.



Mendel Cohen and Eli Isserow

### Friday (November 3)

- UZLC hosts David Batzofin on "Shuls in Europe".  
Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 – 14:00.  
Contact: Gloria 072-127- 9421 or (011) 485-4851.

### Sunday (November 5)

- Nechama – Growth From Grief Support Group meets in the Jossel Card Room, Golden Acres. No need to book. Time: Tea from 09:30; group starts at 10:00 – 11:30. Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.
- Jaffa morning market in Pretoria from 10:00 – 14:00 at 42 Mackie Street, Baileys Muckleneuk. Entertainment by Dewald von Solms. Food, deli, secondhand clothing, books, Tombola, jewellery, etc. Information: (012) 346-2006.
- Second Innings hosts Fiona Capstick, sworn translator in the High Court, on "The Israeli Defence Forces – A Centennial Overview". Time: Tea at 10:00. Meeting starts at 10:30. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.



### Monday (November 6)

- UJW hosts Sharon Lage, apiarist at the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, on "The World of the Honey-Bee". Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 10:00. Donation: R40. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

### Tuesday (November 7)

- Cape Town Holocaust Centre, Gardens, hosts "The Stages of Memory", by James Young. Light refreshments. Time: 20:00.  
RSVP: Dianne (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

### Thursday (November 9)

- Cape Town Holocaust Centre, Gardens, hosts the exhibition "Breaking Porcelain". Light refreshments. Time: 18:00. RSVP: Dianne (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za
- Hebrew speakers meet at Beyachad, 2nd floor. Time: 11:00 – 12:00.

## Letters

### SMUTS WAS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

The report of the Balfour Declaration – intrigue and providence – by Rabbi Ramon Widmonte (SA Jewish Report, October 27), makes interesting reading.

It is perhaps worth noting that South Africa's prime minister, General Jannie Smuts, always harboured an affection for the Jewish people, whom he regarded as similar to the Afrikaners, in being godfearing, hard-working and without a homeland to call their own.

Smuts was the driving force of what became known as the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which became one of his dearest causes. He encouraged (British Prime Minister) Lloyd George and his foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, to issue the Declaration.

The Declaration contained an although ambiguously worded promise, that in the event of an Allied victory, Britain would establish a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine. In 1926 in fulfilment of the Balfour Declaration, a Jewish national home was (in fact) established in Palestine.

Many years later, disregarding what many believed would have disastrous consequences, Smuts wrote a letter in 1948 to Colonial Secretary Leo Amery, lamenting Britain's fumbling of it redemptive cause in Israel. (See Richard Steyn – Unafraid of Greatness p 86 and Churchill & Smuts also by Richard Steyn pp 237/8).

Ralph Zulman  
Johannesburg

### SIFRIN'S VIEW ON MIDEAST PEACE, 'MAKES ME SICK TO MY STOMACH'

".....amidst the harsh reality of a century old conflict in a region engulfed in turmoil, with terrorist group Hamas still vowing to eliminate Israel, and Iran Russia and the US embroiled with their own interests. And with the most right-wing government in Israel's history, still building settlements."

These words written by your columnist Geoff Sifrin, in his latest article on achieving peace in the Arab/Israeli conflict, literally make me sick to my stomach. Throughout his column he equates the unspeakable slaughter of scores of Israeli men, women and children by Arab murderers with issues such as building settlements and "cruelty" at checkpoints.

I strongly submit that before your newspaper prints any column by anybody with opinions regarding bringing peace between Arabs and Jews in Israel, the following facts be considered:

Why keep a population within your borders that dreams of your destruction? Why indulge an implacable enemy? Indeed, to do so is criminal, Throw the Arabs out. Those who oppose this normal, sane logical response, guarantee the wholesale slaughter of both Jews and Arabs.

They fail to understand the most fundamental law of political physics. Two nations, each claiming ownership,

can never occupy the same space at the same time.

These ideas are not merely logical, but eminently Jewish. In other words, permitting murderous anti Semites to dwell in Israel, is not only suicidal, but halachically forbidden.

Self-restraint in the face of terrorism is not only militarily insane, but Jewishly immoral.

Finally, caving in to pressure from international states, is not only embarrassing from a nationalist perspective, but smacks of lack of faith in G-d.

I would ask Mr Sifrin and like-minded people, from which sources they base their opinion on bringing peace to the Land of Israel. My sources are from the Torah. There are laws of Shabbos and there are laws of Arabs.

If a Jew studies Tanach, midrash and halacha, he will discover G-d's opinion on how to live a national Jewish life in the Land of Israel. Any other opinion should never be tolerated in a newspaper of your excellence.

May I remind Mr Sifrin that the mitzvah of building settlements in the entire Land of Israel is a mitzvah equivalent to the entire Torah.

Choni Davidowitz  
Johannesburg

# Creating cupcake joy at King David

King David Pre-Primary Linksfield, in conjunction with the Chief Rabbi's Office, are sharing some delicious joy in what they have called KDPPL Cupcake Project.

Dedicated moms baked, iced and packaged hundreds of beautiful cupcakes which were packed in their own individual cupcake boxes and will be distributed to all the Jewish old aged homes in Johannesburg, this Friday before Shabbat.

Each KD grade R pupil lovingly created their own picture and note to secure to each cupcake box .



Belinda Lipworth, Sheree Levy and Nicky Winik.

# KDVP's Jordan Arenstein excels in Computer Olympiad

King David Victory Park grade 12 pupil, Jordan Arenstein, earned a bronze medal in the provincial leg of the National Computer Olympiad.

Along with 12 finalists, Jordan spent two days writing six computer programs (correct) to solve problems, at the 34th South African Computer Programming Olympiad. A total of 227 schools from all nine provinces participated in the first round. The initial field of 2 348 participants was reduced to 478 for round

two and 13 reached the finals – all with perfect scores.

The finals took place over an October



Photo: Yael Gordon

weekend at UCT. The finalists came from five provinces. Jordan Arenstein of King David High School Victory Park earned a bronze medal.

He will be invited to attend training camps where he will join other finalists to compete to qualify for the South African team of four to go to Japan in September 2018, for the 30th International Olympiad in Informatics.

# Shoebboxes of love for the less fortunate

Sandton Sinai Primary School pupils had such fun packing their shoeboxes for the Shabbos Project's Shoe Box Collection 2017.

Pupils filled them with toiletries for distribution through the Chevrah Kadisha. This project sparked discussion among the children about our shared responsibility for those less fortunate.



The Primary School pupils decorating their Shabbos Shoe Boxes

# Torah Academy brings in the Shabbos Project with dancing and singing

In the build up to the Shabbos Project last weekend, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein attended a special assembly of the whole of Torah Academy.

Rabbi Goldstein told the children, against the background of joyous music, that he loved the atmosphere at the school, with its love of Torah, Hashem and Shabbos.

He said that the Shabbos Project was an

opportunity for all the Jews in the world to participate. He asked the children to make sure that all their friends – some of whom were not Shabbos observant – took part in the project.

"Shabbos is light. It comes in with the light and goes out with the light," he said. "We are trying to bring much light into the world."

Armed with "squishy emojis", the Chief Rabbi quizzed the children on aspects of Shabbos, presenting them to the pupils, who came up with the correct answers. He said that 1 357 cities in 96 countries were part of the project.

Rabbi Goldstein, Rabbi Dovid Hazdan (dean of the school) and Rabbi Mordechai Rodal sang and danced with the children.



Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein dances with boys from Torah Academy

# KD Primary Sandton shows off its pupils' creative talent

GILLIAN HORWITZ

King David Primary School Sandton opened its annual art exhibition on Picasso's birthday, October 25, at the Morningside Shopping Centre.

Picasso once said: "Every child is an artist." This clearly was the case when viewing the lower and upper courts of the centre that were brimming with over 600 two-dimensional and three-dimensional art works from grade R to grade 7 pupils.

The King David Sandton art department embraces a contemporary and broad concept of the visual arts, incorporating digital media, craft, and textiles. The primary school pupils employed diverse media and techniques in their photographs, drawings, paintings, prints and sculptures.

Art specialist Vivienne Weiner, used her talents to inspire the children to explore their artistic abilities, even though many believed they "can't do art!"

Yet, when they saw their work on display, all negative feelings were dispelled and they became empowered to continue to achieve and create boldly and confidently.

Viewers were drawn to touch the intense textural detail of the grade 5 oil pastel paintings of animals. The highly-skilled pencil techniques in the grade 7 still life drawings, prompted the same reaction to see if they were handmade or if they were prints!

In contrast to this closely observed subject matter, grade 6 pupils were exposed to the tenets of abstract art, which were realised in



Photo: Arnaldo Mandel

their powerful, rhythmical and balanced mixed media compositions.

With their work on public display, the children lived the life of a professional artist for a week. The praise and recognition they received together with their pride, were bound to strengthen their self-esteem.

An event like this contributes to nurturing a cultural education and revitalises the credence the Jewish people place on the arts.

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# Cecil Moss' impact on SA rugby 'broad and immense'

JACK MILNER

Anybody who watched the Currie Cup final between the Sharks and Western Province at King's Park on Saturday, would have noticed that as the teams lined up, a minute silence was observed for Dr Cecil Moss, who passed away last Friday at the age of 92.

died in August, people compared his loss to a big tree having fallen," said Kaplan on Tuesday from Canada. (Meads was known as Pinetree.) "I feel the same way about Doc Moss, not because of stature, but because of what he achieved in three different fields of rugby – player, coach and selector.

"While there are others who have done the same, it is a rare achievement and should be celebrated by not only the Jewish community, but the entire South African rugby community," says Kaplan.

Musikanth, who is currently with the Israel XV, was very close to Moss. "He was a great mentor to me as a previous coach of UCT and always had time for me when I needed advice during my campaign, coaching UCT for the Varsity Cup in 2014 and 2015.

"His razor-sharp rugby know-how and gentle care for all, made him a perfect coaching role-model. I will never forget my

afternoon teas with Doc Moss during the high-pressure moments as UCT coach, and also his continuous belief in me as their coach.

"His memory and inspiration will live on."

Former SA cricket captain Ali Bacher, called Moss "the most illustrious Jewish Springbok".

He said: "His achievements were phenomenal. He played in four tests, coached the national team and was a national selector. He was also an anaesthetist and a member of the Chris Barnard team that performed

the first heart transplants."

Even at the age of 90 his mind was as sharp as a proverbial razor blade. In 2012 he released a book called "Doc Moss, My Life In Rugby!".

He ended his Springbok career with an unblemished record of four wins although, with his customary humility, he said: "All of our games were at home and we had a very good team. The scores were very close and there were no easy wins."

He played those tests under two captains who are legends in Springbok history, Basil Kenyon and Felix du Plessis, father of another Bok captain, Morné.

Dr Danie Craven – who was close to Moss – always used to say all successful Springbok teams needed a Jewish player. If that was the case, it was clear why the 1949 team was so

Even at the age of 90 his mind was as sharp as a proverbial razor blade. In 2012 he released a book called "Doc Moss, My Life In Rugby!".

successful – they had two!

"Okey Geffen was also in that team, but of course he was a top forward from Transvaal and I was a Western Province wing, so we had a great rivalry," said Moss. "Later I got to know him better and of course, he was a very nice man."

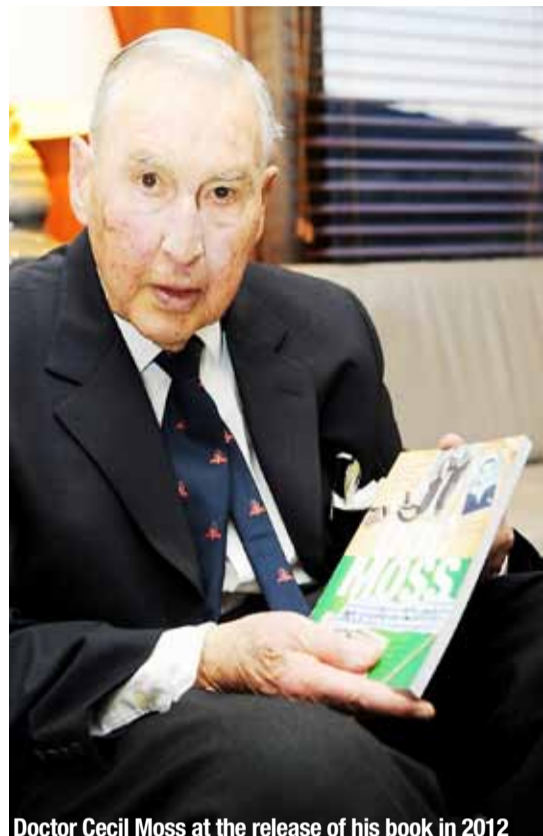
Moss explained that his interest in rugby started when he was "a little Jewish boy in Muizenberg. We

used to run a lot on the beach and I attended SACS, so I played at school level. At university I continued to play and when I was in the army I played for 6th Division in Italy.

"When I came back I finished my medical degree and then went to (then) Natal to complete my internship. It was then I was called up to the Springbok team."

Not only was he on Barnard's team that performed the first heart transplant, but in 1979 he was the anaesthetist at Woodstock Hospital for a medical procedure on a prisoner from Robben Island – Nelson Mandela.

He coached UCT from 1966 to 1976, Western Province in 1972 and 1973 and the Springboks from 1982 to 1989 and was a Springbok selector for those years.



Doctor Cecil Moss at the release of his book in 2012

Dr Moss was a member of what was called the "Jewish Minyan" – the 13 Jewish Springbok rugby players – and in 2015, at the age of 90, he became the oldest living Springbok when Piet Malan died.

Tributes have come from all over the world for a man who played four Tests for the Boks and in the 1980s became a Springbok coach. He had a major impact on the lives of many Jews connected with rugby, including referee Jonathan Kaplan and current Israel coach Kevin Musikanth.

"When All Black Colin Meads

## Kevin's campaign with Israel's Rugby XV hits a snag

JACK MILNER

Israel's campaign to move up into the higher rugby echelons took a dip at the weekend when they went down 17-32 to Croatia in their second match of the Rugby Europe International Championship qualifying games.

A week earlier they beat Andorra 27-22 after leading 7-5 at half-time. Both were away games for the Israelis.

However, according to their South African coach, Kevin Musikanth, all is not lost. "A lot depends on how the other teams do, but we do have to win our next two matches against Bosnia and Malta."

At least the final two matches will be played in Israel but, as Musikanth points out, Malta has a very good team.

Musikanth coached the South African team at the Maccabi Games in July. The Israelis liked the idea of having a top rugby coach who is also Jewish, and they offered him the opportunity to coach their 15-man team for this campaign.

Currently Israel plays in the South Division of the FIRA

Championship Division Two and if they are to progress to the next level, they will have to win the whole division.

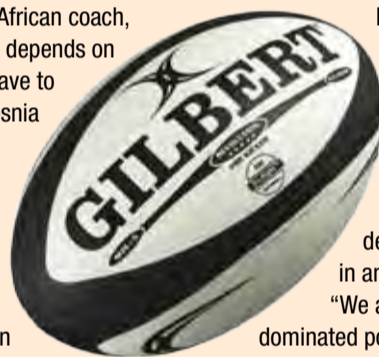
That means they need to finish top of the South Section which includes Andorra, Croatia, Bosnia and Malta. If they achieve that, they then have to play off against the winner of the North Section, which comprises Latvia, Sweden, Hungary, Lithuania and Ukraine.

Musikanth joined the team on October 10 and says he has little to complain about after the first match.

"I'm very happy with the way in which they played in the match against Andorra," he said. "They had a new coach and then five players who are overseas met up with us in Andorra. They then produced a solid defensive game which shows they are buying in and are committed to the programme."

"We are now working on finishing as we dominated possession and territory, but just didn't seem able to finish. We also need consistency at the line-outs, but overall there were many more positives than negatives."

Musikanth received his cap at an official capping ceremony, but typical of Israel, the "cap" turned out to be a kova tembel.



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