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Rising Star Teeger shines in sport and religion

HANNA RESNICK

When David Teeger, 18, accepted his award as the inaugural Rising Star of the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards, he dedicated it to the young soldiers fighting for Israel.

"Yes, I've been [given] this award, and yes, I'm now the Rising Star, but the true rising stars are the young soldiers in Israel," Teeger said.

Teeger is head boy of King Edward VII School (KES), the captain of the Proteas Under-19 team, and the Central Gauteng Lions Under-19 A team. He described the feeling of being selected captain as a sense of "pride, passion, honour, but ultimately humility".

In spite of these commitments, Teeger has stayed true to his Jewish faith, keeping Shabbat and kashrut throughout, even if it meant missing out on certain opportunities. In doing so, he hasn't just remained grounded, he has gained the respect of his coaches and teammates, so much so that they have joined him in walking to matches on Shabbat.

"As a leader at KES, I've experienced a microcosm of what South Africa is capable of and the diversity, the love, the brotherhood is something special. But I think the Jewish community provides that too," he said.

"Coming from a religious Jewish school and then being thrust into the biggest all-

boys school in Johannesburg was quite a shift, and it wasn't easy, but at all times, it was my Jewish faith that grounded me. So, to the Jewish community, thank you for being my home. My journey is truly about Jewish identity and whether it be standing out, missing cricket games, missing opportunities [in order] to observe my faith, those are crucial moments in my life."

In July, Teeger played in the 50-over series in Bangladesh, his first international cricket tour. He captained the team in three of the five matches, and was the top run scorer in the series.

Teeger is extremely family-oriented, attributing much of his success to the support of his family. "It doesn't matter how famous you are," he said. "It matters how good a father, a husband, a brother, and a son you are."

Just as South Africa comes together when the Springboks play, Teeger said, "Hopefully, I can inspire young, religious sportsmen to follow their dreams because, quite frankly, I didn't think it was possible."

Thinking about what's happening in Israel right now, he quoted Kohelet, saying, "There's a time to laugh, and a time to weep. A time to live, and a time to die."

"So, I'd like to dedicate this award to the South African family that married off one son while the other is still missing," he said, referring to the family of Rabbi Doron Perez, whose son, Yonatan, who was injured on Saturday, 7 October, got married last week while his other son, Daniel, has been missing since that fateful day. "And I'd like to dedicate it to the state of Israel and every single soldier fighting so that we can live and thrive in the diaspora."

Who doesn't love gifts?

Torah Thought



Rabbi Ryan Goldstein
West Street Shul

In this week's parsha, there's an interesting verse that makes us question whether according to halacha, one is allowed to accept presents.

When Avraham and Sara are about to enter Egypt, he says the following to his beautiful wife, "Say that you are my sister so that they will be good to me and my life will be saved."

Rashi says an astonishing thing on the words, "they will be good to me", that Avraham was saying, "they will give me presents".

The Maharal of Prague points out the most glaring problem with this statement and attitude of Avraham. First, in Mishlei, King Solomon says, "He who hates gifts will live." Second, later on in the parsha, when the King of Sodom says "give me the captives and I will reward you handsomely", Avraham refuses him and says, "I won't take a thread or a shoe-strap from you, so you can never say that you made Avraham rich." So what's Avraham up to at the borders of Egypt? Why does he suddenly want gifts?

Also, as I mentioned at the beginning, what does the halacha say about this advice from King Solomon? Are we really not allowed to accept presents? What can be so bad about getting a present or two?

Rashi explains that not taking gifts is a good trait to engender in our hearts and minds as it will distance us from theft and coveting the things that belong to others, which is the last of the Ten Commandments. This advice of King Solomon acts as a fence to these potential sins.

Rabbeinu Yona sees it a bit differently, saying that when you take gifts you become beholden to that

person and you'll compromise your standards, feeling bad about rebuking him when necessary or even worse, flattering him, which is the separate sin of *chanifut* - flattery.

Now returning to our original question about Avraham wanting gifts from Pharaoh, the Tchebiner Rav (Rabbi Dov Berish Weidenfeld), quoted by Rabbi Yissocher Frand, explains what was going through Avraham's head: King Solomon promises that one who refuses gifts will live. In the precarious moment that he and Sara were in, at the borders of Egypt, life was his main priority, no-one had offered him any

gifts yet to refuse. Avraham thought, "Let me set it up in such a way that they will offer me gifts, so that I can refuse them, and in so doing, Hashem will cause Sara and me to live and survive". Avraham was so great, he didn't want or need gifts, he was merely setting up an elaborate ruse so that he could pass the test and save his and Sara's lives.

In conclusion, as far as the halacha goes, the Rambam holds that perfect *tzadikim* won't accept gifts because their trust in Hashem is so complete, they know that Hashem will provide. But for us mere mortals, there's no problem in receiving presents.

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EFF promises to arm Hamas

TALI FEINBERG

“The EFF [Economic Freedom Fighters], when it takes over next year, is going to arm Hamas and make sure Hamas has the necessary equipment to fight for its freedom,” said EFF leader Julius Malema to thousands of supporters picketing outside the Israeli embassy in Tshwane on 23 October. In the crowd, people held up signs with the Hamas logo. One flag included the words, “We are all Qassam [Hamas’ military wing]. We are all jihad.”

“We’re not only going to arm Hamas, we’re going to remove this [Israeli] embassy because we can’t stay with murderers in the same area,” said Malema, leader of the country’s third biggest political party. “Condemning Hamas is an act of cowardice. I heard fools saying we can’t compare Hamas and Mandela, [but] they are the same. There’s nothing wrong with what Hamas is doing.”

His statements came as the full extent of the atrocities committed by Hamas on 7 October are being revealed, including torture while the victims were still alive. This includes cutting off fingers, toes, breasts and feet, gouging out eyes, castration and then putting the organ in the victim’s mouth, burning children alive in front of their parents, burning alive people of all ages, stabbing a baby through the head, raping until pelvises broke, and beheading civilians.

On the social media platform X, Floyd Shivambu backed Malema, saying, “Today, we categorically state that there’s nothing wrong with the activities of the Islamic resistance movement [Hamas] in defending the Palestinian land against the racist, apartheid, and Zionist state of Israel. Condemning Hamas is cowardice! No retreat!”

Advocate Mark Oppenheimer, who has appeared in the Supreme Court of Appeal and the Constitutional Court in a series of cases that seek to determine the boundary between freedom of expression and genuine hate speech, says, “The Brenthurst Foundation has just produced an election poll which shows the EFF climbing up from 11% to 17%, and with the ANC declining to 41%. The combination of those parties would allow them to form a government. This should send chills down every right-thinking South African’s spine on the basis that both of those organisations have come out in full support of Hamas.”

“The EFF said that when it’s in government, it intends to supply arms to Hamas. This isn’t a far-fetched scenario. Julius Malema has testified in open court that he intends to be the president of this country, and there’s clearly a coalition path that would allow for him to be part of the government,” says Oppenheimer.

“When you’re oppressed, the only option is to confront the enemy and shoot to kill,” said Malema. “This place [outside the Israeli embassy] will become our permanent residence. We must never allow them to forget that they are murderers. Identify where McDonald’s and Woolworths are found, very soon action will be announced. Remove anything ‘apartheid’



Thousands of EFF and pro-Palestine supporters protesting in Pretoria

from your fridge. Even our dogs don’t deserve to eat it,” he said.

He criticised McDonald’s as he believed it was “giving Israeli soldiers food. We want McDonald’s in South Africa to distance itself from those acts. It has until the end of this month to issue a statement distancing itself from what McDonald’s is doing in Israel, giving murderers food. Woolworths has got to by the end of this month remove any product on its shelves that comes from Israel. If it doesn’t do it, we’ll go and do it ourselves. We don’t want any product of Israel sold here in South Africa,” said Malema.

“Mr Malema states that there should be boycotts of Woolworths and McDonald’s for supporting Israel,” says Oppenheimer. “Jewish South Africans may want to take a similar view about the EFF, which is that they should boycott that organisation because it has shown an absolute hatred for Jews and for Israel, and has supported the killing of innocent civilians, the burning down of villages, and taking of hostages.

“Jews who have supported the EFF either by doing business with it or financially, may take this as an opportunity to no longer support an organisation that hates Jews,” says Oppenheimer. “Gabi Farber, who had been a member of the African National Congress for some time, recently resigned from the organisation on the basis that it had shown open support for Hamas and failed to condemn the horrific acts of terrorism by Hamas. That’s a shining example for other Jews to disassociate themselves both from the ANC and the EFF.”

Ian Levitt, attorney for the EFF, also speaking on behalf of Advocate Laurance Hodes, counsel for the party, told the *SA Jewish Report*, “We observe the principle of ‘never again’. We need to educate about the distinction between Palestinians and Hamas. We don’t cower or run anymore. We engage with the view to educating and resolving the issues. Hamas started a war against all Jews in accordance with its charter, but we’ll end this war against it once and for all. We begin with dialogue and engagement [with the EFF] with the view to education. If we don’t resolve the conflict in this way, we’ll reassess



EFF Leader Julius Malema

the situation accordingly.”

Malema reiterated a number of times that his fight was “not against Jews”. He also called for any academic ties between Israeli and South African universities to be cut. The University of Cape Town Palestinian Solidarity Forum (UCT PSF) shared almost all of Malema’s statements on its social media platforms and said it would “strive to make this [the cutting of academic ties] happen, starting with UCT”. The institution has allowed support for terrorism to flourish on its campus [see page 8].

The EFF was joined by Al-Jama-ah leader Ismail Moosa and African Radical Economic Transformation Alliance leader and former spokesman for MK (Umkhonto we Sizwe), Carl Niehaus, and their supporters.

Niehaus emphasised that there should be “no two-state solution”. “Palestine will be free from the river to the sea,” he said. “We understand why the people of Palestine raised arms against apartheid Israel,” he said. “And we stand with the people of Palestine in the armed resistance. We understand the armed resistance of Hamas and Hezbollah, and we’re calling on the South African government to arm Hamas.”

The EFF also wrote a letter to the speaker of Parliament requesting the removal of the Israeli embassy. “Given the sensitivity and nature of the proposed draft resolution, we respectfully request that the speaker, in the capacity of chairperson of the National Assembly Programming Committee [NAPC], convene an urgent meeting to ensure the draft resolution is tabled before the end of the week,” they wrote on 23 October.

“Mr Malema prides himself on causing division among fellow South Africans using his trademark hateful rhetoric. He’s a man full of hate,” says South African Jewish Board of Deputies National Chairperson Professor Karen Milner. “Malema has been remarkably quiet for the past two weeks, but chooses now to associate [South African] freedom fighters with rape, the murder of babies, and kidnapping. We’ve never seen any evidence to suggest that such tactics were used by South African freedom fighters.

“Fortunately, we have laws – locally and internationally – that prohibit incitement and threats to violence. We will keep all options open,” she says.

Benji Shulman, the director of public policy at the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), says, “The SAZF reaffirms that Hamas isn’t a liberation movement, but an internationally recognised terrorist organisation. The SAZF is in no way concerned that the EFF will be taking over or obtaining many more votes in the national elections next year. The SAZF believes that South Africans are fully aware of the EFF’s populist tendencies, and that South Africans won’t choose to support a violent and extremist party at the polls in 2024.”

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‘Run, Israel, run!’ says hate-filled mob

STEVEN GRUZD

The conflict between Hamas and Israel has spilled onto the streets of South Africa and around the world. Events thousands of kilometres away have brought out large, angry mobs against Israel in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. These demonstrations can quickly degenerate into naked Jew hatred, and cause consternation in the Jewish community.

Professor Rebecca Hodes, an academic at

the University of Pretoria, was at an African National Congress (ANC) rally in the nation’s capital on 20 October. She told the *SA Jewish Report*: “I attended because I thought it would be an important moment in popular politics in South Africa. I wanted to witness and write about it.”

Hodes said, “The rally was much bigger than I expected, showing the ANC’s power to mobilise popular support quickly and effectively, and showing the popular purchase that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict holds. The overarching sentiment among participants was that Israel is in the wrong, that it’s an apartheid state that’s terrorising Palestinians. The walk from where the march started to the Israeli embassy was relatively long, and the crowd chanted the entire way.”

“The march, and particularly the speeches that were given outside the Israeli embassy, showed how people struggle to maintain rhetorical divisions between Jews, Israelis, and Zionists. It was in these speeches outside the embassy that the most antisemitic and pro-Hamas remarks were made,” Hodes said.

In an article on *Politicsweb*, Hodes wrote, “Pro-Palestinian stalwart Firoza Mayet shouted, ‘Comrades, we have been in power for 30 years. Why is the Israeli embassy, the Zionist Jew Federation [sic], the Jewish Board of Deputies on our soil? Why? Why comrades? We are in power. They must be expelled now. Not yesterday. They must be expelled now.’”

She reported that a Muslim cleric said, “Hamas is a legitimate organisation. Hamas is defending its people. Hamas is defending its land ... [against the] Zionist beasts.”

According to Hodes, the ambassador of Palestine, Hanan Jarrar, said, “Together we gather here in front of this apartheid entity in Pretoria, united against the ongoing tragic Israeli genocidal war on our people, and the 75-year occupation. In this genocidal war, more than 15 000 Palestinians have been injured, excluding those from the Israeli bombing



Pro-Palestinian rally held by the ANC on Friday 20 October in Pretoria

Photo: Facebook

of the Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital.” Never mind that the accusations that Israel bombed that hospital had been disproven days ago.

Hodes reported the words of ANC Youth League President Tlhologelo Collen Malatji. He said, “We’re here today and we’re told that the ambassador of Israel isn’t here. Now we’re calling upon President Cyril Ramaphosa to expel them immediately. This embassy must be removed with immediate effect. If President Ramaphosa doesn’t remove them by Monday, we’re coming back on Monday. We’re going to occupy this building here. All we do is to protest and walk around.”

Hodes wrote, “An unnamed representative from the Congress of South African Trade Unions then shouted into the mic, ‘Run Israel run! Run to the sea, run! Comrades, we can no longer afford to live with Israel in our borders. They must be chased to the sea! They don’t like us, we don’t like them. Let them *fokof* and leave our shores.’ With this statement, the alleged peaceful intent of the protest was exposed as the lie it was, with explicit support for genocide of the Israeli people. The genteel mask of the ANC’s protest fell, and the threat of violence and expulsion were made palpable.”

“Problematically,” Hodes said, “there was no mention throughout the course of the day about the atrocities committed against Israelis on 7 October. The celebratory atmosphere of the rally, particularly in the morning, showed an erasure of the violence committed against Israelis.”

Not to be outdone – and it is, after all, election season – the red-clad Economic Freedom Fighters led another large march to the Israeli embassy on 23 October. Like the ANC rally, Hamas flags and emblems were in full view. Some marchers toted automatic firearms. The rhetoric of its leader Julius Malema was inflammatory, ugly, and vicious.

In Durban, there were six pro-Palestinian pickets and marches between 17 and 22 October. They took place outside the United States consulate, in Berea, and on the Durban beachfront, among other venues.

Daniel Bloch, the executive director of the

Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies, said that over the past two years or so, “Cape Town has become the hotspot of anti-Israel protest, unfortunately.” He noted that on 22 October, about 1 000 people converged in the afternoon on the Sea Point beachfront and there were 300 to 400 cyclists riding in support of the Palestinians in the morning from Camps Bay to Hout Bay. About 3 000 people gathered in Salt River.

“Right now, the Jewish community is upset, angry, and frightened,” Bloch said. “But we’ve urged it not to engage.”

They are showing their support for Israel. Almost 3 000 people attended a pro-Israel rally in Gardens in Cape Town last week. “It was civilised, and had a really moving service,” said Bloch. “People weren’t calling for murder and death. Compare this to the video footage of the other side. It’s like chalk and cheese. The security of the Jewish community is of the utmost importance. We need to remain calm and keep level heads, even as we express ourselves.”

Bloch recognised that a small incident could spark conflict and put everyone at risk. He agreed that the size and frequency of protests could grow if Israel launches a ground offensive in Gaza. “When Israel sneezes,” he said, “South Africa coughs and gets a cold.”

Guidelines from the Community Security Organisation (CSO) call for calm, discretion, not sharing unverified information, keeping the CSO informed, and being careful to avoid these gatherings or not draw attention to yourself if caught up in one. “Stay away from any pro-Palestinians protests, and don’t engage with anti-Israel activists, online or in person,” the CSO advises. It has comprehensive plans in place to secure the community in the unlikely event that this becomes necessary. “The CSO will continue to monitor the environment and update you as appropriate,” it said. In an emergency, call the CSO on 086 18 000 18.

With a long ground war expected in Gaza, the country and the Jewish community should brace itself for even more large protests.


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SA Cabinet likens Israel’s actions to Holocaust

TALI FEINBERG

The South African Cabinet is calling on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate Israel for the crime of “genocide” following the bombing of a hospital in Gaza, according to a post-Cabinet briefing on 19 October. This, in spite of it having been categorically proven that it was a missile that misfired from within Gaza on 17 October that hit the hospital car park, and the Jewish state had absolutely nothing to do with it.

“Cabinet calls on the International Criminal Court to investigate the 17 October bombing [of a hospital in Gaza], and the crime of genocide in this conflict, and on the international community not to allow the perpetration of another Holocaust under its watch,” said minister in the South African presidency, Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, at the post-Cabinet briefing. “The Jewish Holocaust is enough stain in the history of mankind for the international community to fold its arms while the Israeli government perpetrates a Palestinian Holocaust.” She said the government hadn’t approached the ICC yet.

Comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy and the Nazis is clearly considered to be antisemitism, according to the widely adopted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism.

Ntshavheni’s comments also came after British and American intelligence services and many international media houses examined the evidence and proved that the explosion, not a bombing, in the parking lot of the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza was

a misfired rocket by a Palestinian terrorist organisation from within Gaza. It killed more than 400 people and injured more than 300, according to the Palestinian health ministry in Gaza. United States intelligence agencies assessed a death toll between 100 and 300.

Local news outlets reported that Ntshavheni said the South African government “didn’t need to wait for a briefing from anyone to believe that Israel was responsible for the bombing”, and that the country “can’t run away from taking responsibility”.

“Since last week, thousands of Israelis and Palestinians have been killed, and far more injured. Many violations of international law have been committed, by all sides, and Cabinet calls for accountability and justice in response to all those crimes,” she said. “Cabinet condemned the cowardly attack by Hamas that killed and injured innocent people. Similarly, Cabinet condemned the heinous opportunism of the Israeli government to use Hamas’ cowardice to continue its genocide against the people of Palestine.

“Cabinet believes the international community must be seized with finding a permanent security solution for the people of Israel and Palestine through the settlement of the two-state solution founded on the 1947 borders,” she said. This was a departure from South Africa’s official position on the conflict, which usually calls for a return to 1967 borders.

In the same briefing, Ntshavheni said Cabinet had also been briefed on South Africa’s greylisting status by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in February. She



said several areas identified by the FATF showed that the country was not complying with anti-money laundering and terrorist financing standards.

Considering the South African government’s vocal support of terrorist organisation Hamas, many analysts have noted that this may come under further scrutiny. However, Ntshavheni didn’t make this connection, saying that the deadline to address the non-compliance was 2025 and so far, the country was on track in its efforts to do so.

The minister said a meeting at the end of October would consider whether the country had taken enough steps in adhering to the concerns raised by the FATF. “Greylisting has an impact on the economy and performance of the country,” she said.

Mary Kluk, the vice-president of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies and the

director of the Durban Holocaust & Genocide Centre, said, “It’s now widely understood that the Gaza hospital tragedy was, in fact, the work of Palestinian Islamic Jihad. It’s not surprising that the South African government hasn’t retracted its vicious accusations, but what lingers far longer is its ignorant use of the word ‘genocide’ in its judgement of Israel.

“To quote Stephen Smith, the UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation] chairperson on genocide education: ‘Genocide isn’t an opinion. It’s a crime. This crime was defined by the 1948 UN Genocide Convention shortly after the Holocaust, as well as the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.’

“It’s a legal term that requires a particular court of law to try such cases,” says Kluk. “The UN is clear that genocide is based on intent – it’s the intent that matters, specifically the intent to destroy in ‘whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group’.

“In fact, it’s Hamas’ brutal attack on southern Israel which was carried out with an ‘intent to destroy in whole or in part’ a national group – Israelis – a goal explicitly declared by Hamas, that has the hallmarks of genocide,” says Kluk. “Should the massacre of 7 October be brought to the ICC, there’s widespread legal opinion that it would meet the requirements of a genocide, but that’s for the courts to decide.

“What’s deeply disturbing is that senior members of our government continue their uneducated use of provocative language and false accusations at such a sensitive time for all humanity.”

Benji Shulman, the director of public policy at the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), says, “The SAZF reaffirms that the misappropriation, dilution, and sensationalisation of the very specific terminology of ‘genocide’ shouldn’t be used unless warranted. To do so minimises the suffering of those, like the Jews, who have actually experienced a genocidal assault on their people.

“Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni is correct in stating that the bombing of a hospital is an international war crime. As such, the SAZF expects her to file a complaint in the International Criminal Court against Hamas for bombing an Israeli hospital four times since its unprovoked attack on Israel began on 7 October 2023.

“The South African government’s full-throated support of extremist groups and the parroting of their propaganda, including the denial that Palestinian Islamic Jihad bombed its own hospital and blamed it on Israel, is appalling. The world continues to watch as South African foreign policy is misdirected against democratic values and human rights around the world.”



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Witness to a massacre

How is it that there are people questioning whether 1 400 Jews were killed on 7 October in the south of Israel? How dare people challenge the 5 240 Jews who were injured and the 222 Jews – mostly women, children, and the elderly – who were abducted into Gaza and are being held hostage? Why on earth does Israel need to prove that it happened?

How is it possible that when the Hamas killing squads used body cams to glorify their own depravity as they mowed through the country, butchering whoever they could find, there are many in this world who disbelieve it? They did to our people the most unspeakable atrocities that are more heinous than anyone’s worst nightmare, but there are many who disbelieve it quite simply, it seems, because it happened to Jews.

What must it have felt like for Israelis to have to call the foreign media to attend a showing of raw and unedited footage of the horrific crimes against Jews committed by the Hamas death squads? The footage was from the terrorists’ body cams. It was shown to prove that it happened, and to show the serious depravity and extent of Hamas’ brutality and perversion.

The Israeli government did it so that the international media who attended would bear witness to the horror that happened so that they could quiet the strange Holocaust-like denialism that’s spreading across the world.

Israeli government spokesperson Eylon Levy called on the international media to come and witness it “if they could stomach it” to tell the world what happened, saying, “I cannot believe as a country we have to do this.”

As a human being who has never had to face someone looking me in the eye with real hatred simply because I was born Jewish, I cannot imagine how or why anyone would want to do this to us.

People in Israel were attacked simply because they were Jews, no other reason. In most of our lifetimes, we’ve never faced true antisemitism, but it seems that slowly but surely, this sentiment is spreading and as a people, we need to stand together with love and be strong in the face of it.

Last Sunday, we held our Absa Jewish Achiever Awards 2023, which was truly phenomenal! But because we’re all still reeling from and mourning what happened in Israel, it was a much quieter and more sedate affair than normal. It wasn’t a great party, like last year. It wasn’t a big, sumptuous celebration, but it was a magnificent evening in which the community got together to honour the outstanding people in our community who have achieved so much.

It was noticeable how many of the winners focused on education and the upliftment of the people in our country. It was inspiring to hear that, while these issues may have fallen off our government’s radar, they are right up there on the priorities of the go-getters and people whose mission it is to make this country and its people better. Our Lifetime Achievement Award winner Robbie Brozin and Humanitarian Award winner Dr Taddy Blecher are forces to be reckoned with, and their achievements are so inspiring.

Every single one of our winners this year and in previous years prove how much our community punches above its weight. They prove just how much our community contributes to this country we love.

However, it certainly doesn’t feel as if our government, the ruling party, and the Economic Freedom Fighters values the lives of Jewish people as much as other folk. Hence, they clearly found it difficult to condemn what Hamas did to our brethren in Israel. In fact, in some cases, they overtly sided with Hamas.

As for our incredible array of winners and nominees, I’m always blown away at how every year, there are a whole new selection of phenomenal people who make it extraordinarily tough for our judges to select winners. This year was no different.

You can find out more about the winners, nominees, and actual awards in this newspaper and the magazine insert.

I have to say, many of us were astonished by our youngest winner, David Teeger. This young man, who is the Under-19 Proteas cricket captain, didn’t expect to win because he believed his competitors were far greater than he was. However, standing up in front of us, he proved he was so much more than a young sportsman – not that being top sportsman is something to frown upon. He’s clearly someone who will be remembered long after putting down his cricket bat for doing great.

Teeger said that although he was grateful to win the Rising Star Award, the true rising stars were the Israeli soldiers fighting for Israel.

It’s hard to keep being reminded of what happened and is happening in our beautiful Jewish state. It’s hard not to worry about the people we love. And it’s important to keep in touch with them so they know we’re thinking of them.

It’s also important for every one of us to stand up and be proud Jews. We don’t need to cower. We don’t need to hide our love of Israel and our support for the people going through such pain. We need to keep calling for the 222 hostages to be released.

As a mother, I do hear people worrying about Palestinian children. Unlike Hamas though, the Israeli army doesn’t go out to harm Palestinian children or innocent Palestinians. What so many don’t understand is that this isn’t a war between Israelis and Palestinians, it’s a war between Israel and Hamas, a terrorist organisation that calls for the death of Jews.

I hear the call for a ceasefire and a peace treaty, which sounds wonderful, but exactly how do you even consider it while 222 Israelis are being held hostage in Gaza and Hamas, which brutalised our people, is running free? Seriously, that’s too much to expect.

Israel didn’t ask for this war. Israel didn’t want this war. But the Hamas death squads and the people who planned the massacre on 7 October wanted it and made it happen. Israel has a right to defend its people! *Am Yisrael Chai!*

Shabbat shalom!
Peta Krost
Editor



ANC’s blindness when terror victims are Jews

OPINION

TONY LEON



Understandably, the South African Jewish population is absorbing the horrifying events in Israel on 7 October and the unresolved and unfinished consequences with great shock. Not least the responses, and tellingly non-responses of the African National Congress (ANC) government to the unfolding events.

A perspective from afar was offered by General David Petraeus, the former commander of United States wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and ex-director of the Central Intelligence Agency. He commented that the slaughter of 1 400 Israelis and kidnapping of 222 hostages by Hamas on 7 October was “far worse than 9/11”.

He was referencing the Hamas attacks and abductions to the infamous Twin Towers and Pentagon carnage in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001.

As he explained, the attacks on the Israeli targets, all within the borders of the Israeli state demarcated by the United Nations in 1947, killed a “a greater proportion of Israel’s much smaller population. This is the equivalent of the United States having experienced 40 000 losses rather than the 3 000 terrible losses we sustained,” Petraeus said.

When the world was shocked and shaken by the events of 9/11 22 years ago, there were two responses from the ANC in South Africa.

One of the first statements was offered by ANC premier of the Eastern Cape, Makhenkesi Stofile. He told an interviewer that the 9/11 attacks “weren’t cowardly acts” and that “America had to look to itself” for the cause of the attacks.

However, President Thabo Mbeki was having no truck with this opinion, and his office issued a statement expressing outrage at the attack and support for the victims of it in forthright and unambiguous terms.

The statement read, “On behalf of the people and government of South Africa, the president condemns these dastardly deeds. The South African government joins the world in unreservedly denouncing these senseless and horrific attacks. The government calls on the international community to unite against global terrorism.”

Stofile was forced by the ANC to retract his statement, and spokesperson Smuts Ngonyama, today South Africa’s ambassador to Japan, said, “He accepted that his views weren’t in line with the party’s position.”

Well, the party line has now changed dramatically along with changes in the presidency.

The “dastardly deeds” perpetrated by the Hamas terrorists at 20 different sites inside Israel on 7 October, in terms of their savagery – from beheaded babies to people being burnt to death in safe rooms inside kibbutzes, and music festival attendees being shot and raped – were, even in a violence-soaked world, in a league of their own.

However, in terms of the Hamas’ charter, there was a grim consistency to it. As two of Britain’s most eminent jurists, Lords MacDonald and Pannik wrote last Friday, 20 October, “Hamas has signalled its intention to destroy Israel and all Jews living within its borders. This is the horrifying context.”

Cyril Ramaphosa’s ANC response to this carnage was in sharp contrast to Mbeki’s ANC reaction to 9/11.

Nothing has essentially changed in its latter iterations from the party’s first response to the events in Israel on 7 October.

On 8 October, ANC National Spokesperson Mahlengi Bhengu-Motsiri announced that the events the day before “were unsurprising”. She stated that this was “a decision by Palestinians to respond to the brutality of the settler Israeli apartheid regime”. No word of condolence; no condemnation of the regime of terror unleashed against entirely innocent civilians; no notice that the attacks were not in “occupied Palestine”. In other words, the Jews had it coming to them, and the victims of these atrocities were somehow responsible for the horrors perpetrated on them.

It’s worth a side bar to note that the sites of the carnage were for the most part places where the inhabitants were, as members of socialist leaning kibbutzes and attendees at a rave music festival – prime sites for much of the slaughter – for the most part keen supporters of the peace process and opponents of the extremist government of Israel headed by Binyamin Netanyahu. But in line with the Hamas view that all Jews and Israelis are justifiable targets, it made no difference.

Ramaphosa maintained his silence for nine days until he offered an equivocal, difference splitting, temporising

remark that “the killing of civilians in Israel by Hamas just over a week ago and the ongoing killing of civilians in Gaza by Israeli forces goes against the tenets of international law”.

Doubtless, he waited until Israel had begun its right to self defence against Hamas which did, inevitably and sadly, entail civilian deaths, until he felt emboldened to say anything at all, truly terrified that any word of support hitherto could be conceived as diluting his government’s pro-Palestinian credentials.

That’s one explanation, and here’s another. In his book *Jews Don’t Count*, English comedian and author David Baddiel notes how the minority status of Jews is viewed differently from other forms of racism. He refers to this as “second-class racism”, or the antisemitism which aligns Jews with wealth and power and thus part of the oppressor group which allows discrimination – or in the case of the Hamas murder spree, killing them – to be overlooked, or as per Bhengu-Motsiri, essentially justified.

Doubtless, Ramaphosa, forever looking over his shoulder, is still haunted by the January 2017 *City Press* front-page story on the “ANC’s dirty war” in the run-up to the ANC conference, in which he narrowly won the party presidency. It quoted a major supporter of Jacob Zuma expressing concern that “Ramaphosa would be a liability because of his closeness to the Jews”.

The ANC’s response to both the 9/11 attacks and 7 October attacks by Hamas on Israel has shown its blindness

Perhaps I feel this keenly as a secular Jewish South African, just as likely International Relations and Cooperation Minister Dr Naledi Pandor, a converted Muslim, feels the need to comport with Hamas in telephone diplomacy. But what’s inescapable is that far from supporting “a two-state solution” rather like a blinded Samson in Gaza, South Africa is entirely sightless on balance and on one side of a heavily contested terrain. But there’s a big difference between Hamas and all Palestinians, a line the ANC keeps blurring. It’s entirely appropriate to contest the borders of Israel vigorously, but Hamas and its supporters question Israel’s very existence.

But Ramaphosa need have no fear about his perceived proximity to the Jews. The chief rabbi of South Africa, Dr Warren Goldstein, last week took the unprecedented step of rewriting the prayer for South Africa to exclude reference to the government of South Africa.

Noting that the prayer will now be for the people and country of South Africa, Goldstein asked, “How can we pray for a government which supports an organisation responsible for the worst attack on Jews since the Holocaust?”

How, indeed, is the question; and likely asked by many, not just the Jews.

• *Tony Leon is the founding leader of the Democratic Alliance; the longest serving leader of the official opposition in Parliament since the advent of democracy; and a former ambassador. He is the chairperson of a communications company.*

Hate is the new love

OPINION

MIKE ABEL



I woke up this morning, with friends of mine sending photos they had taken of posters on the Sea Point promenade showing the faces of the hostages kidnapped by Hamas in Gaza.

It was, to my mind, such a tragic but powerful gesture to put names and faces to the blunt number of 222 people.

It showed us the babies, the children, the men, women, and elderly, who must be terrified out of their minds, given the sheer depraved horror they saw while being kidnapped. And the orgy of excitement and delight, as reported by some survivors, who literally hid under the dead bodies of their friends to witness this joyous barbarism.

And then, less than an hour later this morning, I was sent pictures of some of these posters having been torn down, like we have also witnessed around the world.

It simply adds insult to injury. Why would anyone tear down photographs of hostages?

The hatred you must have for Jewish people must be all consuming.

That's why I say that perhaps "hate is the new love". That in order for people to sympathise or empathise with one group means that today, in 2023, you need to hate others as part of your "compassionate" state.

Is the new expression of solidarity wishing death on others?

If you live in Sydney, and support Palestine – not Hamas according to many – is shouting, "Gas the Jews!" the best way to express one's humanity?

This saying obviously means, "Give us another Holocaust." Something that occurred in many of our parents' lifetimes and most certainly all of our grandparents' lifetimes.

There are those still in our communities with their concentration camp numbers tattooed on their arms. Imagine their horror and disbelief to hear these horrific words chanted again within their lifetime?

And endless videos of students in America and across the world on campuses shouting for the elimination of Israel "from the river to the sea". If they don't know what this ditty means, we need to add the crime of ignorance to that of passionate, blind hate.

The fact that people are already pulling down these brand new and freshly applied posters of Jewish hostages begs another key question.

How long was Israel, the Jewish diaspora, or non-Jewish, good, decent, and caring humans around the world allowed to mourn those 1 400 murdered or the 222 missing?

The answer is two days.

For just two days, Israel and the global community could watch in disbelief and horror as "never again" became "yet again".

The latest chapter in the continuation of the tragic history of the Jewish people. A people so small in number, yet so high in hateful sentiment towards them.

After just two days, and bearing in mind the formal mourning period is an initial seven days of *shiva*, then 30 days of mourning, followed by another 11 months of saying the prayer for the dead daily, the Jewish people were given two days.

Why do I say two days?

Because the moment Israel retaliated against these murders and hijackings, the sentiment of the mainstream media started to turn.

The well-funded and well-oiled (pun intended) hate machine against this global speck of land, the great and enormous Israel, displacer of billions of people, yet factually smaller than the Kruger National Park, began to run into overdrive.

The world began to demand pictures of actual

beheaded babies because the ones of shot and burnt infants weren't enough proof for them that an actual horror of unimaginable proportions had taken place.

The other rinse-and-repeat strategy, taken out of this well-hashed mainstream media and their enablers' playbook, was not to normalise any form of retaliation.

What would be obvious and absolutely expected, demanded even, was denied to the only Jewish country in the world. And Israel is in every way "the Jew of the world".

How often do we hear "we like Jews, we just have a problem with Israel", which is what gets that speck of land 40 times more condemnation at the United Nations than North Korea; Russia – even currently; China – with all the poor Muslims in Xinjiang internment camps, which seems to have everybody else unfazed.

Israel suffers more condemnation than Iran, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. Combined and multiplied.

So, with this frenzied backdrop and the ghoulish and bloodied demand for headless baby pictures, the media rushed to the entirely fake news that Israel had obliterated a hospital with rockets in Gaza.

I watched in dumbfounded disbelief that before any proof was put forward, and with my distraught wife literally in tears next to me, how the media condemned Israel outright. With no proof, and believing the very organisation that calls for the total annihilation of Israel and all her people, as the credible, objective source.

Then, as suspected tons of evidence emerged, verified now by independent countries and news sources, that in fact Islamic Jihad/Hamas had accidentally blown up their own hospital.

But the facts don't suit the narrative, and so the outrage continues in spite of it not being Israel.

Imagine the madness one must have, the levels of hatred, to still believe something in spite of knowing that it's false. It's beyond comprehension.

Where is the anger in the Arab world towards the actual perpetrators of this crime? Are those 400 people no longer dead because it wasn't Israel?

Will there be no justice? Will Iran and its proxy, Hamas, succeed in destabilising growing peace between the Arab world and Israel? Be sure, the Arab world absolutely understands what Iran and Hamas are doing. So if it allows this lie and horrific attack on Israel to scupper peace, it's only because it wants this. For no other reason.

I feel desperately sad for the innocent Palestinians caught up in this war. The situation on the ground is utterly heart breaking.

And my heart continues to ache for the murdered Israelis and other nationalities, and for the hostages. It's a horrific situation. War is incredibly cruel.

I have the capacity, like any normal and compassionate human being would, to be able to simultaneously hold two truths.

What happened and is happening in Israel is horrific. What innocent Palestinians are going through, as Israel targets Hamas terrorists and seeks to bring back more than 200 hostages – assuming many are still alive – is also truly heart breaking.

To be a decent person is to feel for all people. Not just some. And yet, what I've seen in the marches and rallies in London and around the world in favour of Palestinians, with nary a thought or concern for more than 1 400 people murdered less than two weeks ago, says everything. It's sick. It's horrific. It's unconscionable. Nothing less than a lost generation.

A generation which, because of social media, propaganda, and society, can express true sadness only for one people by wishing death on others, regardless of whether 1 400 of them were murdered first, and in spite of five attempts to have a two-state solution thrown in the bin so far.

I pray for peace. I pray for life and light.

For now, the world has truly lost its way. The question we now need to start asking is how did this happen? Because it's clear this antisemitic campaign has been well strategised, funded, and promoted, while Jews around the world just tried to rebuild their lives after the last attempt of their genocide. Can't we just love each other rather?

- Mike Abel is the founding partner and executive chairman of M&C Saatchi Group South Africa.

Posters of Israeli hostages on the Sea Point promenade



World Jewish Restitution Organization

WJRO

לשכת רכוש יהודי העולם

Announcement by the

World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO)

regarding

Compensation for Immovable Private Property in Lithuania Program

ATTENTION LITHUANIAN JEWISH PROPERTY OWNERS AND HEIRS

Lithuanian Jews whose property was nationalized or otherwise illegally expropriated during the Holocaust and/or communist rule, or certain heirs, may be eligible for a one-time symbolic payment made by the Good Will Foundation on behalf of the Republic of Lithuania.

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Completed applications must be received by
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For additional details, criteria, and application forms, please visit:
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WJRO is not involved in the implementation, administration, or application processing of these payments. For information or assistance please contact the Good Will Foundation directly.

'UCT no longer safe for us' – SAUJS leader

TALI FEINBERG

"I'm writing to you as a hurt, terrified, and angry Jewish student," South African Union of Jewish Students (SAUJS) Western Cape Chairperson Erin Dodo told the authorities at the University of Cape Town (UCT) on 19 October.

"On 7 October 2023, my people experienced the worst genocide since the Holocaust. Twelve days later, this university remains silent," wrote Dodo. "Two days ago, the UCT Palestinian Solidarity Forum [UCT PSF] hung up Hezbollah and Hamas flags. Two days ago, I and three other Jewish students tried to hang up posters of people

kidnapped by Hamas. We were met with verbal abuse, slander, and vilification. Thirty people screaming at us, all while Campus Protection Service (CPS) guards did nothing.

"Yesterday, an older man, whom I can only assume is a lecturer, tore down posters of kidnapped people. Yet we must remain calm. We must be okay with a Hamas flag being flown, the very terrorist organisation murdering our families," she said. She noted that the posters had been approved by the student representative council and stamped by it.

The UCT PSF stated its support for terrorism throughout 2023, even inviting terrorist leaders to address students on

campus. "We're tired of your silence," Dodo told UCT in the letter. "Your inaction has caused anguish, anger, and devastation. Your Jewish students, whom you claim to care about, are being attacked. As the leadership of this university, it's incumbent on you to protect all students. You have failed. This university is no longer a safe place for us. As chairperson of SAUJS Western Cape, I call on you to protect Jewish students on campus."

In response to a request for comment from the *SA Jewish Report*, UCT spokesperson Elijah Moholola said, "The university isn't aware of any incident on campus in relation to recent

developments in the Middle East which posed a safety threat, or was unlawful or in violation of UCT rules. UCT also wishes to state that events on campus [16 to 20 October 2023] have been monitored closely by the relevant departments.

"The university has noted correspondence by a student in relation to developments in the Middle East. UCT will



Hamas logo seen on the UCT campus on 22 March 2023

Party stops for Farber-Cohen as ANC kowtows to Hamas

LEE TANKLE

Three days before Gabriella Farber-Cohen resigned from the African National Congress (ANC), she was still hoping the party would say something meaningful about the massacre of Jews in Israel on 7 October.

"At this time of such great grief and trauma, I was hoping my own party would show a level of compassion to what I and my Jewish community were experiencing and condemn those responsible," said Farber-Cohen on 16 October, then the spokesperson for the provincial executive committee of the ANC Women's League.

"For a whole week, I waited. I engaged with my structures and political leadership, explaining the hurt and pain that I, as a Jew, felt in the face of such savagery and hatred towards Jews. Time and time again, I stressed that condemning Hamas' atrocities wouldn't in any way sell out the ANC's support for the Palestinian cause. I asked why the ANC, a party that stands for human rights, refuses to recognise the painful violation of my people. However, no answer was given," she wrote in a public statement that day.

After three days, it became clear to her that the ruling party wasn't going to budge. And so the only Jewish office bearer in the ruling party resigned, a party which once had numerous Jews in the hierarchy, among them Ruth First, Albie Sachs, Arthur Goldreich, Harold Wolpe, and Gill Marcus.

"It has become starkly clear that the organisation is unable to stand with the Jewish people during this time, engage faithfully and fairly with both parties, or see my – the Jewish – side of the story. Thus, it has been made clear to me that there's no space for a proud Jew to belong in the ANC, no matter how hard I try," Farber-Cohen said.

She told the *SA Jewish Report*, "I felt joining the ANC was an incredible opportunity and privilege. The Jewish community can be somewhat of a bubble. I didn't feel like I was a part of the South African community because I would see only a small portion of the country. I felt like I was contributing to the

African project as a part of the ANC.

"Up until recently, my views were aligned with the ANC policy on Israel. The ANC was supportive of a two-state solution in which Palestinians and Israelis have the right to self-determination and to live side by side in peace. I could understand why the ANC would support the Palestinian cause and have a relationship with the Palestine Liberation Organization."

Farber-Cohen stood by her decision to be a part of the ANC in spite of criticism from all sides. "I believe it's important to work within an organisation, especially when you see that there are problems with the organisation. When you know that you're doing the right thing, you can get through it no matter what people say," Farber-Cohen told the *SA Jewish Report*.

"I knew I was doing the right thing for myself and my community. The hatred was extreme. I never expected it to be that way. I received criticism from within the ANC when I started with the Progressive Youth Alliance at Wits [University of the Witwatersrand]. I was criticised for being white, for being Jewish, for my connection to Israel, and for being young. The more I got involved, the more I understood why I got this criticism. I felt that it was because the Jewish community never fully engaged with the ANC," Farber-Cohen said.

The animosity didn't end with the ANC. Farber-Cohen said she was also criticised by members of the Jewish community. "People couldn't understand why I would join an organisation so hostile to the Jewish community and white people, and filled with corruption. People couldn't understand why I would advocate for something that people

believed had ruined South Africa."

What made her question her alliance with the ANC, Farber-Cohen said, was the fact that "President [Cyril Ramaphosa] couldn't condemn Hamas' brutal and inhumane mass killing, slaughtering of babies and children, and raping of women in an unequivocal and meaningful way. I could no longer understand the ANC's position. I could no longer believe that this organisation advocated for human rights, peace, and negotiation. It became clear to me that it didn't respect the Jewish community. I tried to talk to members, and they refused to engage with me as an equal. It was all about them and their opinions, without them having a part in the story. I thought, 'Wouldn't you want to hear from someone who has a connection to the land?'" Farber-Cohen said.

"The last straw was when I saw that they couldn't respect my views. I sacrificed so much for this organisation. I sacrificed my physical and mental health as well as my academics for the ANC. I even sacrificed some of my relationships for the organisation, yet it couldn't respect me as a Jewish person.

"The way the ANC condemned Hamas was disgraceful. By stating in the very next sentence after its condemnation, that Israel was causing a genocide in Gaza, while the very word 'genocide' originates from the Holocaust, is offensive in describing the situation in Gaza. It's hurtful and degrading. If this is the way it condemns inhumane killing, then what would it say about my life? I realised that it didn't respect me as an individual and a life worth defending," Farber-Cohen said.

"I see now that the ANC is unwilling to listen to other opinions. It will stand with



Gabriella Farber-Cohen

Continued on page 10>>

investigate the allegations and engage with the student. Any member of the UCT community who feels their safety is threatened and needs any support should reach out to the relevant UCT offices to report any incident."

Meanwhile, Dodo says SAUJS members put up 30 more posters on the evening of 22 October, and by the morning of 23 October, they had all been pulled down. Other posters were defaced with the words "Zionist propaganda".

She says the only response to her letter from UCT so far is the CPS asking which area it was that she and others were harassed so it could check security footage.

Meanwhile, the UCT PSF continues to support terrorism, sharing the post of one follower, which stated, "Students of UCT: there's no fence sitting in this war. You are either on the side of the axis of resistance comprising of Hamas and other Palestinian factions, Hezbollah, Yemen, Iraq, and Iran, or you are on the side of the Zionist terrorist regime. You are not truly supporting the Palestinian resistance if you condemn the actions of Hamas."

The person who posted the message then shared a photo from a UCT PSF event earlier in the year, at which Hamas representative to Iran, Dr Khalid Qaddoumi, is clearly seen addressing students in a UCT lecture theatre with a Hezbollah flag draped over the podium.

Rowan Polovin, the national chairperson of the South African Zionist Federation, says, "UCT continues to provide a platform for internationally-designated terrorist organisations to promulgate hate and propaganda. The UCT PSF continues to advocate extremist rhetoric. This behaviour has long-term consequences, some already visible today, following the removal of posters on campus."

Continued on page 13>>



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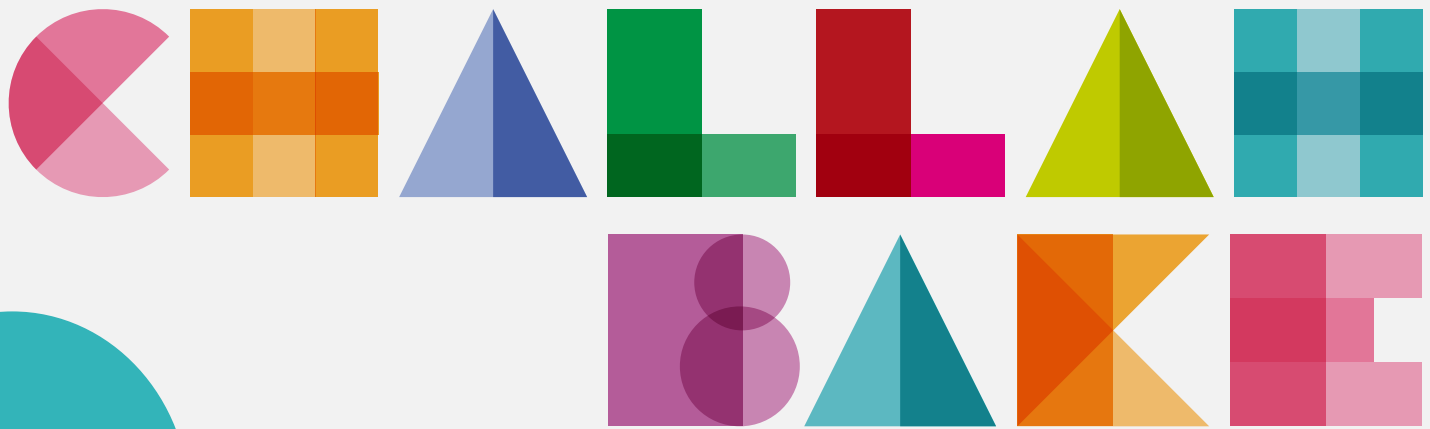
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From ‘Ramaphoria’ to ‘Ramorse’ in six years

OPINION

STEVEN GRUZD



When Cyril Ramaphosa became president in February 2018, many South Africans were elated. We had survived the cesspool of corruption and state capture that characterised the “lost decade” of Jacob Zuma’s rule. We had narrowly avoided Zuma’s faction of the African National Congress (ANC), represented by his ex-wife, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, assuming power.

We trusted the man who had skilfully steered the negotiations for a peaceful transition, helped to develop our much-praised Constitution, and who had made enough money not to be a kleptocrat. They even invented a term for this feeling of relief and hope – “Ramaphoria”.

Almost six years later, Ramaphoria has evaporated. The president has shown himself as weak, indecisive, inconsistent, and unable to prioritise the country over the flailing fortunes of the ANC. Crime is up, unemployment is up, and electricity supply is down, as is the rand.

For a president who reputedly doesn’t like foreign policy, he’s doing a lot of it, racking up air miles as he flits from one meeting to the next, crisscrossing the globe.

He has steadily lost the support of South Africa’s small but influential Jewish community. This has been especially so in the past three weeks, in response to how his government has reacted – or not – to the Hamas pogrom that killed 1 400 Israelis and took 222 hostages into Gaza, and the Israeli reaction to that incursion.

But it hasn’t always been so. Back in 2013, Ramaphosa said, “There needs to be an area where we find balance; where we

look at the Middle East, particularly Israel and Palestine, and say we are in full support of peace efforts. A peace effort that will lead to a solution where both countries can live in peace. And that’s something which we should support unreservedly.”

On the day after he became president in February 2018, the

community based on the view that he understands the economy after many years of accumulating business knowledge and personal wealth.”

This story continued, “It’s no secret that Ramaphosa has built up close friendships within the Jewish community, and has always been open to them. He has faced criticism over this and been accused by comrades in the ANC and by other politicians of being aligned with white monopoly capital.”

I heard it once said, “Our enemies always commit human rights atrocities; our friends never do.” Over the years, Ramaphosa’s government has issued statement after vituperative statement condemning Israel for every move it makes in the Middle East, totally ignoring heinous acts by Hamas or the Palestine Liberation Organization.

When violence was unleashed in May 2018 at the Gaza border fence, only Israel was to blame,

and South Africa withdrew its ambassador to Israel in pique and hasn’t replaced him since. The ANC resolution to downgrade the embassy has effectively been realised.

Another example is the fact that his government expressed “concern” about the Abraham Accords normalising relations with Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates in September 2020, and called them

“regrettable”.

Pressure from within his party and ongoing violence in the Middle East have pushed Ramaphosa firmly into the anti-Israel camp.

Now, the gloves are off. Last week, Jewish businessman Johnny Copelyn, a backer of Ramaphosa’s campaign to win the ANC presidency in 2017 told the *SA Jewish Report*, “The fact that Cyril sought to justify in some way the savagery of the Hamas attack on unarmed civilians in Israel and the kidnapping of 222 people including children and babies, is utterly atrocious, and will be remembered by all for the rest of his life.”

“A red line has been crossed,” said the national director of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies Wendy Kahn. “Our government’s bias on the conflict is bad enough. This is different. This was a systematic massacre. Any government with a modicum of humanity would have immediately issued unequivocal condemnation and sympathy for the victims of these heinous atrocities. Our government’s response was completely out of kilter with any decency and compassion. And its lack of concern for this traumatised community is a disgrace.”

The government and the president took many days to utter a half-hearted, equivocating acknowledgement of this sickening attack. Ramaphosa’s regime couldn’t bring itself to criticise its friend, Hamas, for these atrocities. Instead, the president called for “all sides” to come to the table and talk, in the tired, old South African model for peace making, which unravels over time. Just look at Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the

Congo.

The political theatre of the president wearing a Palestinian keffiyeh on 14 October while denouncing Israel’s retaliation for the Hamas massacre and the blockade of Gaza clearly showed where his true sympathy lies.

This was compounded by his minister of international relations and cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, first calling Hamas on the phone and then travelling to Tehran for discussions with the Iranian regime. Iran has been arming Hamas and Hezbollah for decades.

These actions will further complicate South Africa’s relations with the United States, which were damaged by South Africa’s not-so-non-alignment vis-à-vis Russia regarding its unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. This is after months of damage control with Washington. Thousands of jobs will be at risk. And don’t forget, Ramaphosa’s government has welcomed Iran, a country hellbent on obliterating the Jewish State, into the club of the BRICS+ (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, now to be joined by six other countries).

Ramaphosa’s trip to Cairo to seek peace for Israel and the Palestinians last week has predictably proven fruitless. With so much hurt caused, will the South African Jewish community ever be able to trust our president again on Israel, or on anything else?

• *Steven Gruzd is a political analyst at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg. He writes in his personal capacity.*



Photo: Guy Lerner

President Cyril Ramaphosa at the Gardens Shul in Cape Town in 2018

SA Jewish Report reported, “Ramaphosa is arguably one of the few politicians with an intrinsic understanding of the local Jewish community’s deep connection to the state of Israel. He has shown himself to be open to engagement on the complex nature of the conflict in the Middle East and has openly called for dialogue on the issue. His election has been welcomed by the Jewish

How to be strong in the eye of the storm

OPINION

BENJI SHULMAN



War is hell. As a community, along with world Jewry, we’re in the eye of the storm between Israel and Hamas. It’s so difficult to navigate through the information, the emotions, and often the fear – all while constantly dealing with the updating of events, here and abroad.

How do we stay sane? How do we make a difference? Here are some tips.

Get educated

“In the age of technology, there’s constant access to vast amounts of information. The basket overflows; people get overwhelmed; the eye of the storm isn’t so much what goes on in the world, it’s the confusion about how to think, feel, digest, and react to what goes on.” Criss Jami, a modern-day philosopher, hit the nail on the head with these words.

Knowledge, facts, and information are at your fingertips. This is the time to upskill, read, and research. You don’t need to be a professor in Middle East history or politics or military strategy. You just need to be able to understand the frameworks that can help you make sense of what’s going on.

It’s essential that you source solid, reliable resources that can help you remain on top of current events. At the same time, they can give you an understanding of terms and previous events that are critical to our present situation. Groups like Stand With Us and Jewish Unpacked provide great bite-sized chunks of information on key topics.

Sign up to the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) for a WhatsApp group that curates daily summaries of the fast moving news cycle so that you can limit having to be part of a million groups. The SAZF has also partnered with the Academy of Jewish Thought & Learning to create relevant educational courses that are accessible, short, and impactful so you can level up on Middle East knowledge.

Be proud, be safe

We’ve seen the countless images and videos of Israeli flags shining on world sites or listened to the words



Photo supplied by the SAZF

People outside the Jewish community have come to show their support for Israel

of *Hatikvah* with a renewed sense of pride. The recent communal events have provided a space for our community to gather and for us to show our pride collectively in the state of Israel and our support for her people.

Even members outside of our community have come to show their support. This has spilled over into the personal space, whether it be our clothing, our flags, or the icons and posts on social media. We can and must show our love, connection, admiration, and support.

South Africa is a country where the right to free speech and free association is in the Constitution. We cannot let extremists take that away from us. Hiding away has never saved Jews. A proud Jew is a safe Jew. This doesn’t, however, mean we must put ourselves at risk. The Community Security Organisation (CSO) has been incredible in protecting us – in our shuls, our schools, and at events. Always follow its advice, and sign up for regular updates.

Find your voice

It’s important to remember that you’re not alone in this. In your school, on campus, or at work, there are often other Jews who are feeling vulnerable. Connect with them and work together – there’s power in unity.

If a non-Jewish colleague shares an offensive video or picture out of ignorance, maybe consider a polite discussion about why you feel hurt. If a conversation with such a person wouldn’t be constructive because they have

extreme views, consider talking to others who may be open to learning about why you find this unacceptable.

Should you find yourself in a more challenging environment, know who to speak to. Physically, the CSO has a 24-hour hotline with the aim of protecting Jewish life and the Jewish way of life. But if you experience intimidation or antisemitism online or elsewhere,

the SAZF and the South African Jewish Board of Deputies have your back and will support and guide you. They are able to assist with information and resources to empower you to stand your ground.

Make sure you reach out to family and friends in Israel and locally if they are feeling anxious and afraid. Help share with them the resources they need to cope in the current environment.

Get active

It’s so easy to slip into feelings of helplessness and disempowerment as we are so far from family and friends fighting or running to shelters. The best way to deal with

that helplessness is to get up and do something.

You can fight the spiritual battle with *tehillim*, learning, and candle lighting. Help the Zionist Youth Council by writing letters to terror victims, make art, create poems, generate memes, tweets, or grams with social media teams, pack boxes at shuls, even produce beanies with the Knit for Israel project!

You can get involved in monetary collections and fundraisers that help support victims of terrorism, just make sure that you check that they are authentic. You can even volunteer to join a humanitarian mission to Israel. Local organisations also need help with money and volunteers so that they can assist in organising relief efforts.

We’ve always been a light unto the nation. So, let’s continue by always remaining polite yet powerful, strong in our stance. We can educate those around us with the facts we’ve learnt and the knowledge we can share. Not everyone can be the ambassador of Israel, but everyone is an ambassador of the Jewish nation. Now is the time to strengthen our community until we get through the storm.

• *Benji Shulman is director of public policy for the South African Zionist Federation.*

Party stops for Farber-Cohen as ANC kowtows to Hamas

>>Continued from page 8

Hamas, and it will throw its comrade, who has stood by it, who has advocated for it, who has fought for it, and who has committed herself to it, to the dogs. It doesn’t want peace, it doesn’t want negotiations. I therefore cannot be a part of this organisation anymore,” Farber-Cohen said.

“I naively thought that the ANC advocated for human rights, and was inclusive of all walks of life and races. This has been the hardest decision of my life. I hoped and believed that it respected me and I was a part of the organisation. I called it my home, my friends, my family, but instead it threw me and the Jewish people

to the dogs.”

When the *SA Jewish Report* contacted the ANC Women’s League for comment, Teliswa Mgweba, the league’s spokesperson, said, “Gabi joined us voluntarily, and leaves voluntarily.”

Asked why her organisation wouldn’t seriously condemn the massacre, she said, “We have a long standing resolution to support the Palestinians, and will continue to do so.” On explaining that it wasn’t ordinary Palestinians that committed this atrocity, but Hamas terrorists, she said she couldn’t comment, other than to repeat, “We support the Palestinians.”

‘Our blood is green and gold’

JULIE LEIBOWITZ

“I’ve made so many mistakes,” former Springbok coach and SuperSport analyst Nick Mallett told the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards Breakfast on 20 October, chief among which was to exclude Gary Teichmann from the 1999 Rugby World Cup squad.

Mallett used the story to illustrate how important it is to earn the trust of your team when making difficult decisions. His no-holds-barred account of the corridors of power of professional rugby shed light on a subject critical to all South Africans: what makes a good leader.

After the South African team was defeated by England at Twickenham in 1998, Mallett was forced to make a quick decision by the South African Rugby Union and decided to drop the captain, Teichmann, from the squad. He turned to none other than current Springbok Director Rassie Erasmus to captain the team. Erasmus wouldn’t accept the position as he said the team didn’t agree with Mallett’s decision.

Late rugby titan Joost van der Westhuizen captained the team, and there was distrust between him and Mallett,

according to the latter. South Africa was knocked out by a drop goal by Stephen Larkham, but Mallett said it was dropping Teichmann from the team and not having the trust of 14 players that actually cost South Africa the cup.

In South Africa’s recent performance in the World Cup 2023 quarter final against France – the home team – 70 000 people were screaming in the stadium for the other side, but the Springboks fought “like nothing else” to win, Mallett said, and didn’t give away a penalty. “That’s what you get when your team trusts you,” he

geopolitical instability, but praised the contribution of the private sector.

The intensity of loadshedding this year was greater than the crisis years of 2007 and 2022, he said, posing sustained risk, and the rising cost of electricity was a challenge to households. The greatest impact was in mining and manufacturing.

However, the private sector had contributed to South Africa’s economic resilience, in particular through its investment in solar power, increasing its contribution from 1GW last year to 4.8GW – 10% of Eskom’s nominal capacity

Achiever Awards Chairperson Howard Sackstein.

“It’s complicated to put on an award ceremony in the middle of a war,” he said. “We proceeded because we need to highlight the remarkable contribution of our community to South Africa.”

The awards highlight the hundreds and hundreds of South Africans making a disproportionate difference in South Africa, he said, everything from employers to professionals, those feeding people, to educators, and business owners. “Our blood is green and gold. Our roots are deep



Head of Private Banking Segment, John Tshabalala



Economist at Absa Corporate and Investment Banking, Miyelani Maluleke



Nomsa Moeketsi (Regional Segment Head Wealth), Nick Mallet, Howard Sackstein, Geoff Rothschild, and Nerissa David (Regional Executive Private Wealth Banking)



Nick Mallet



Regional Segment Head Wealth Absa, Nomsa Moeketsi

said. “The team is selected on merit, irrespective of colour,” Mallett said, “and Rassie has found players he believes will fit in. Why can’t we do the same in all sport, and every other facet of South Africa?”

Absa economist Miyelani Maluleke said South Africa was negatively affected by weak growth, “sticky” inflation, and

generation. Maluleke is confident the finance minister will announce greater private-sector participation in his Medium Term Budget this November.

“Everyone in this room, every business has to find their voice. It’s time to speak up to power; time to tell everyone we’re more than this, and we deserve so much more,” said SA Jewish Report and Absa Jewish

in the red, dusty soil of South Africa. We’re not here as guests,” Sackstein said.

“Others want to emulate what we do in South Africa,” he said, “but they don’t understand that we have a secret source – our community, which helps each other to succeed and recognises that we need to uplift those around us. South Africa needs heroes.”



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BERTIE LUBNER HUMANITARIAN AWARD in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris
Taddy Blecher

KIRSH FAMILY LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD in honour of Helen Suzman
Robbie Brozin

ABSA BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARD
Hylton Kallner

MANN MADE MEDIA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
Raelene Tradonsky

ART, SPORT, SCIENCE AND CULTURE AWARD
Raymond Hack

We laud your achievements and efforts to change our world. For Good.



A celebration amidst heartbreak

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

Navigating a complex mix of heartbreak and pride, the 2023 Absa Jewish Achiever Awards, held at the Sandton Convention Centre on 22 October, struck a bittersweet chord. Filled with sombre reflection coupled with doses of celebration and red-carpet glamour, the event highlighted our community’s contribution to the country.

Opening the evening’s formalities, *SA Jewish Report* Chairperson Howard Sackstein said he wasn’t giving the speech he intended to make. His address was meant to highlight the contribution our community has made to South Africa, how we built this economy, and created jobs for so many South Africans, how we were at the forefront of the struggle against apartheid, and how our community has spearheaded multiple initiatives to feed the poor and train and educate people.

“I wanted to talk about the disproportionate contribution made by our community,” he said. “But this isn’t that speech. That speech was thrown away two weeks ago, the day that more Jewish civilians were massacred on any other single day since the Holocaust.” Instead, Sackstein spoke of how the community mourned the children, babies, teenagers, fathers, mothers, and grandmother who was shot in the head. “We think about the hundreds of hostages who are being held captive tonight,” he said. “For them, there’s no celebration.”

Usually sung during the Passover seder, a moving and timely rendition of *Vehi Sheamda* by Oshy Tugendhaft formed part of the opening address. “It tells a story that in every generation, people will rise up and try to destroy us, and with the help of G-d, we shall be protected and overcome,” Sackstein said.

We are the people of South Africa. We'll determine its values, and we'll not be cowered at a time like this.

Another poignant performance came from legendary South African soul musician Vusi Mahlasela, who sang *Weeping*, “one of the great anthems of the anti-apartheid movement”, originally composed by Jewish national serviceman Dan Heymann. Continuously tardy as a serviceman, Heymann ultimately moved to the United States and was late for work on the morning of 11 September 2001, which saved his life, Sackstein said.

In spite of some arguing against hosting the awards at this time, Sackstein said it was vital to send an important message to the people of South Africa that, “Even though we’re here tonight mourning our dead, we’re proceeding with these awards because we recognise the hundreds and hundreds of South



African Jewish members of our community who have contributed so much to this country. We love this country dearly. Our love runs deep. Even if at times, it feels that our love is a little unrequited.

“We are the people of South Africa. We’ll determine its values, and we’ll not be cowered at a time like this,” Sackstein said.

Acknowledging the *SA Jewish Report* for being a credible news source at a time where one is sorely needed, Sackstein also paid tribute to Absa which has sponsored the awards for 20

years.

“Together with Absa, we have been determined to build role models for South Africa, people the entire country can emulate,” Sackstein said.

Honouring such role models, the evening was punctuated by moving

musical performances, much-needed laughs from seasoned comedian and master of ceremonies Alan Committie, and an endless array of delicious food from Delores Fouché’s Food by Flavours. As many attendees agreed, coming together to celebrate our inspiring community provided a spark of hope in the darkest of days.



Oshy Tugendhaft



Howard Sackstein

Alan Committie

Robbie Brozin changes lives ‘one chicken at a time’

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

Nando’s co-founder Robbie Brozin, the recipient of this year’s Kirsh Family Lifetime Achievement Award in honour of Helen Suzman, has done much more than pioneer a chicken empire. Brozin has focused his fiery entrepreneurial spirit on uplifting South Africa, Africa, and the world.

“Great ideas are really what’s going to change the world, and what’s going to change South Africa,” said Brozin. “From a Nando’s point of view, I really believe that great art makes our chicken taste better. There’s a South African soul to the brand, and it’s that soul that we’ve exported, we’ve exported that creative energy.”

This energy was honed by then-new advertising agency, Hunt Lascaris (TBWA Africa), which Brozin and his founding partner, Fernando Duarte, hired once they’d opened their third Nando’s store.

“We proposed that Nando’s become an irreverent brand,” said John Hunt, the chairperson of TBWA Global Creative. That was the start of Nando’s creativity, said Brozin.

Today Nando’s has 1 200 restaurants in 23 countries. “All the magic, all the things that Nando’s believes in, everything that has made it successful, emanated from those first few restaurants with Robbie – from the values of the business being all about people,” said Rob Papps, the group chief executive of Nando’s Group.

Once Nando’s grew to 1 000 stores, Brozin stepped down as chief executive, realising that he needed professional management and support to scale up the business. Though it was the correct decision, it left him feeling lost. “The magic, the inspiration, and the thing that makes Nando’s so special was Robbie, so if Robbie lost his soul, the

business would lose its soul,” said Papps.

Once Papps pointed this out, Brozin sought a new purpose, co-founding social-benefit organisation Goodbye Malaria, which has had a massive impact on Africa’s fight against the disease. “Robbie’s lighthouse seems to be, ‘How can I make this world a better place?’ not just ‘How can I sell more chicken?’” said Hunt. “He just sees things differently.”

Aside from his work to eradicate malaria, Brozin is dedicating himself to uplifting Johannesburg through multiple initiatives including renovating the inner city and igniting a project to digitise health records at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital.

“There’s a second struggle that’s emerging, and it’s a struggle against poverty,” Brozin said, expressing his regret for not being part of the struggle against apartheid. “For me, if we can’t fix Joburg, the whole country and then the whole continent really is in serious trouble. I found my courage to do that through the Constitution of South Africa.”

It’s Nando’s that enabled him to live his purpose by tackling this second struggle, Brozin said. “Listen to the music under the noise,” he said. “South Africa and Africa is full of music, and that music is driven by the creators. It’s the crazies that are going to wake the nation.”

Accepting his award, Brozin said stressful times like these can redefine the platform of future generations. “It’s through these moments of chaos that true change occurs. It’s through taking optimistic action and having hope that opportunities are created. There’s no greater purpose in life than building a shelter that we might never sit under, but that we know is for future generations. The projects we’re doing are all about the future.”

His hope is based on the words of Rebbe Menachem Mendel Schneerson, that South Africa will be good until Moshiach comes, and even better afterwards. But it’s also rooted in the words of the Constitution, which is a “pact made in the name of the people of South Africa and our blueprint for change”. Brozin urged ordinary people to take charge of creating such change.

“I accept this award on behalf of everyone who works tirelessly two shifts a day, seven days a week, with our vision to have fun and make money, to change the way the world thinks about chicken, and to change lives one chicken at a time,” he concluded.



Robbie Brozin

Education, purpose, people – the mission of Taddy Blecher

HANNA RESNICK

"I'm so grateful and proud to be just one of many Jews in this country who have devoted so much of their lives and resources to serving our fellow men and women in South Africa," said Dr Taddy Blecher on winning this year's Bertie Lubner Humanitarian Award in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris.

"So many of the key supporters of our work to help marginalised youth in our country are Jewish South Africans, here and across the world," Blecher said.

"It's an unbelievable, unimaginable honour to receive this [award] from my beautiful Jewish community," he said.

Blecher said Bertie Lubner, in whose name the award is made, was a great hero and an inspiration to him, describing him as "a saintly person, a *tzadik*, somebody I deeply looked up to".

As chief executive and co-founder of the Maharishi Invincibility Institute, Imvula Education Empowerment Fund, and the Invincible Group, among other notable organisations, Blecher's primary goal is the provision of affordable and accessible higher education. "Education is a lifelong passion," he said. "It was almost like a religion in my family."

"Maharishi was an individual who brought out this approach to education that the human being matters as much as what they learn," he said. "That's so obvious to me and yet it's such a foreign concept in education in the world today and there's no real focus on the student as this great, infinite child of G-d with infinite potential."



Dr Taddy Blecher

"If we educate people for skills that are actually needed in a modern economy, we don't need unemployment and poverty, and that's what we set out to prove with this educational journey. We can take marginalised and excluded people, 70% of whom don't have a matric exemption or a degree pass, and we can prove that they've got genius in them, that they can still be just as successful as any of us and that these youngsters can go on and become leaders in our economy."

In September last year, the first cohort of 19 students graduated from the cyber security academy, having completed a three-year programme with the Maharishi Invincibility Institute. These students will now be permanently employed in the Absa chief security office from 1 October.

Just less than 25 000 people have been educated or are currently being educated by the institute. It's

estimated that graduates will earn about R10 million over their full working career, "which means proper housing, proper healthcare, proper education, proper nutrition," Blecher said.

"Service and caring for others is in our culture and our DNA. It's how we all grew up," he said. "So many of our families came to this country struggling and had so little. I love this community because of what we've built."

"Jewish people understand more than anything the power and value of education," he said, "And that if you can teach a person how to fish, rather than give them a fish, you can change their lives. We estimate that just

less than R60 billion will go into the hands of poor families because of teaching them how to fish.

"But more than just jobs, we desperately need leaders in this country. Leaders bring light, they lift the light so that others can see, and this we also see as our role: to bring up a new generation of leaders in South Africa, enlightened leaders who can take our country forward."

"I want to say what a great country we have. I believe we'll make it, as the Rebbe [Menachem Mendel Schneerson] advised so many times about South Africa," Blecher said. He compared the country's recent rugby triumphs to the progress of the country itself. "We're late starters; we have lots of problems in our country. If you look at last night and last week in the rugby, it takes us time to get it right. But we'll clinch it in South Africa in the end. So let's keep faithful. We'll make it."

'UCT no longer safe for us' – SAUJS leader

>>>Continued from page 8

"The weakness of UCT's leadership and management, which refuses to prevent the ongoing and flagrant abuse of the campus by hate-traffickers is deplorable, and must be condemned in the strongest terms," he said.

"The brutality unleashed during the Hamas massacre included horrifying acts, which the university should take into full consideration in its response to UCT PSF speakers in future," says Polovin. "Innocent Israeli civilians were beheaded with blunt objects, massacred in bomb shelters, and lynched. Babies were burnt alive or shot point-blank. Innocent civilians were grotesquely mutilated while women's naked bodies were paraded through the streets of Gaza like spoils of war. There should be no place for Hamas or Hezbollah on campus."

Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Cape Board) Executive Director Daniel Bloch said in a letter to university authorities, "We've explained why the displays of Hamas, Hezbollah, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad flags and video messages cause anguish and fear. We've implored UCT to take action in protecting not

just Jewish students, but all students, and warned that something may happen on campus.

"The vice chancellor interim, Daya Reddy, responded promptly, stating that he had referred our email to the director for properties and services who has overall responsibility for campus security," said Bloch. "The director mentioned that nothing official had been reported other than the email from the student. The director of risk services then responded, stating that UCT has a security plan in place."

Bloch believes Jewish students should continue as normal. They should feel safe to walk on campus, he said, but encouraged students not to engage [with protesters].

"If any student wishes to report anything of an antisemitic nature, they can send voice notes, images, and comments to the Cape SAJBD antisemitism WhatsApp line: 079 994 5573. We've also recently launched the Cape SAJBD community wellness helpline: 079 875 3902. Students can also make contact with a SAUJS representative."



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Raelene Tradonsky – the powerhouse behind King David

HANNA RESNICK

Having been a “subsidy kid” herself, Mann Made Community Service Award winner Raelene Tradonsky, the executive director of the King David Schools Foundation, was able to raise funds to ensure that all Jewish children could get a Jewish education because she knew just how important it was.

Rabbi Ricky Seeff, the general director of the South African Board of Jewish Education (SABJE), said, “You can have a person who is a brilliant fundraiser, but if they don’t have the passion for our community and for King David, they never could have done what she has done. You can’t achieve what Raelene has unless you are driven by something bigger and more altruistic.”

Discovery Chief Executive Adrian Gore, in his role as chairperson of the King David Schools Foundation, agreed, saying, “To enable the school system to be excellent and well-funded at the same time – that combination is her legacy.”

“Raelene’s ferocious fundraising skills are unsurpassed,” said comedian Nik Rabinowitz.

About 13 years ago, Tradonsky left her corporate job at Dimension Data to join the King David Schools Foundation. The foundation has since raised more than R500 million, surpassing Tradonsky’s goal of an endowment fund of R100 million. There are more than 500 children on some form of

subsidy across King David schools.

In her speech, Tradonsky quoted the late Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, who famously said, “The Egyptians built pyramids, the Greeks built temples, the Romans built amphitheatres. And the Jews built schools. They knew that to defend a country, you need an army. But to defend a civilisation, you need an education.

“History has shown over and over again that the one thing that has held Jewish communities together is a Jewish education and a strong Jewish identity,” said Tradonsky. “Our Jewish community in South Africa is unique, borne out of unique circumstances. We have one of the highest percentages of children in Jewish schools in any diaspora community. This ensures that Jewish knowledge, tradition, and connection to Israel are conveyed to subsequent generations.

“The foundation was formed in 2002, with the idea to connect with alumni all over the world, and it has transformed into a global village of alumni, connected by a single thread: their South African roots and King David education. I’ve had the privilege of visiting countries where many of our alumni live, and I’ve seen firsthand the positive impact our alumni have made,” she said.

“Our alumni are proud Jews, community leaders, and global icons in business, medicine, the arts, and in Torah learning – people who have changed the world for good.”

Today, King David is the largest Jewish



Shayne Mann, Raelene Tradonsky, and Mic Mann

school in the southern hemisphere. “We stand proud as a community school with a very special ethos,” said Tradonsky. “To offer all Jewish children access to a world-class education, regardless of their parents’ financial circumstances. But this requires huge funding, with a subsidy budget of almost R14 million.”

“I can testify to the lifelong impact a person

can have by funding a Jewish education of excellence,” Tradonsky said.

“We walk a fine line between planning for the future and seeing to the school’s present needs,” she said, “investing millions of rands in our three campuses, while funding Jewish children whose parents cannot afford the fees, all while building an endowment fund for the sustainability of our schools.

“My late colleague, mentor, and dear friend, Elliot Wolf, was associated with King David for more than 50 years, and played a pivotal role in the foundation. He would have been so proud of its growth and the impact we have made.

“It’s a privilege to be part of this amazing Johannesburg Jewish community,” she said, “and I’m proud to have played a small part in its sustainability.”



Marise Mishan, Jenna Blend, Zoe Blend, and Lisa Koppel



Martin Lydall, Taryn and Daryl Marcus, Phil Holder, Oshy Tugendhaft, and Dawn Nathan-Jones



Mic Mann, Yaakov Goldfein, Shayne Mann, Rael Lasarow, and Dorianne Weil

Raymond Hack, the proud patriot of SA sport

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

From football to athletics, swimming, cycling, and even boxing, Raymond Hack has dedicated much of his life to the administration of multiple sporting disciplines. This year’s Art, Sport, Science, and Culture Award winner, Hack says he will continue to be involved in sport for as long as he’s able.

Described by activist and sports administrator Dr Sam Ramsamy as a “genuine patriot”, Hack has played a pivotal role in South Africa’s proud sporting history. “He’s a great ambassador, not only for South Africa’s Jewish community, but probably for the Jewish community worldwide, and he carries that flag proudly,” said the chief executive of Golden Gloves, Rodney Berman, Hack’s long-time business and personal associate.

“As importantly or maybe more importantly, he carries the South African flag proudly.”

Hack looked back on being involved with the 2010 FIFA World Cup with pride. “I’ve never seen a country so passionate, so together as it was during 2010,” he said. “It was an unbelievable experience. The people I worked with were fantastic. I always said that I was the luckiest person in the world to be chief executive of SAFA [the South African Football Association]. I didn’t have one coach for the national team, I had 62 million people who were the coaches for the national team.”

Joking that Hack has to wear a name tag for his wife whenever he comes home so she can

recognise him, Berman said his friend was on a plane virtually every day. “He’ll go to Azerbaijan for day, come back, get on the plane to Scotland. He’s



Raymond Hack

of Nelson Mandela, who said, only sport can bring a country, can bring a people, can bring a nation together.” Yet Hack also acknowledged the words of politician and activist Steve Tshwete, who said that you have to make sure that that happens.

Paying tribute to sports “trailblazer” Sam Ramsamy; “Mr Boxing” Rodney Berman; and Irvin Khoza, with whom he helped form the Premier Soccer League, Hack discussed the lessons they taught him. “All three of those gentlemen have always said, never, ever follow. Create your own path. If you [do so], you’ll be able to ensure that people will follow, and you’ll leave that legacy. That’s something that has stood by me.”

Hack thanked his wife of nearly 50 years, without whom he said he would never have been able to chase his passion. He also acknowledged the support of his three children. “I’ve been able to do sport for the past 55 years because of my love for it,” he said, “and I want to say to everybody here, if you have a love and a passion, follow that passion. If you wake up in the morning and you don’t want to go to work, you’re in the wrong job. Sport isn’t a job, sport is a love, it’s a passion.”

“As importantly or maybe more importantly, he carries the South African flag proudly.”

Hack looked back on being involved with the 2010 FIFA World Cup with pride. “I’ve never seen a country so passionate, so together as it was during 2010,” he said. “It was an unbelievable experience. The people I worked with were fantastic. I always said that I was the luckiest person in the world to be chief executive of SAFA [the South African Football Association]. I didn’t have one coach for the national team, I had 62 million people who were the coaches for the national team.”

Joking that Hack has to wear a name tag for his wife whenever he comes home so she can



Michael Stein and Gabriella Kaplan



Adrian Gore, Raelene Tradonsky, and Dina Diamond



Dorianne Weil and Joan Joffe

Cyprus offers THE BEST residency programme in Europe

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A growing number of South Africans are exploring the option of purchasing a property overseas to acquire permanent residency to leave a legacy for their family, but the choice of where to invest can be daunting.

Cyprus, a full member of the European Union, has the best permanent residency programme on offer, in which two generations of the same family all secure permanent residency for life through the purchase of a single property. Residency is issued in three months, plus you don't need to live in Cyprus for the residency to remain valid.

In Cyprus, not only is there no inheritance tax applicable, but the cost of living and property ownership costs are less than what we pay in South Africa. Being voted the safest country in the world, with a population of less than five million, investing in Cyprus is a good option.



There are a number of other reasons why Cyprus is so appealing:

No language barrier: Cyprus is a former British colony, so everyone speaks English. The road signs are in English, your telephone accounts and municipal accounts are in English; and you feel right at home;

Strong economy: Cyprus' economy is booming, with increased foreign investment pouring into the country. There's a massive infrastructural drive, with the building of new marinas, a casino resort, and new golf courses. And Paphos, the province on the west of the island similar to the Western Cape, has been named the European Capital of Smart Tourism for 2023. The province is expecting more than 1.6 million additional tourists this year alone. Cyprus is an appealing investment destination because of its solid fiscal policies, offering tangible benefits to investors and having the perfect location where East meets West;

Politically stable: Cyprus has a democratically elected government, and has a president with zero tolerance for bribery and corruption;

Incredible lifestyle: You have every modern convenience, coupled with incredible outdoor living, a plethora of outdoor activities, and loads to do. Being on the cusp of the Mediterranean means travelling to Europe and the United Kingdom is quick and cheap;

Culture like South Africa: With gorgeous outdoor walks, nature reserves, golf estates, and open spaces, you'll feel right at home. Plenty of expats have made their home in Cyprus. The Cypriots are warm and friendly, and don't have any xenophobic attitudes or prejudices.

Advantageous tax benefits:

- a. No inheritance tax (death tax). In South Africa, you are taxed 20%;
- b. Low personal tax: The first €19 500 of your worldwide income, including pension income, is exempt from personal tax; and
- c. Low municipal rates: Rates are 75% cheaper than South Africa, being calculated at between 0.1% and 0.2% of property value.

English-speaking universities: On offer is a medical school faculty from Oxford University; a variety of postgraduate and undergraduate degrees; and a host of colleges. You can secure your child's future by educating them in Cyprus.

Cyprus represents an excellent Plan B investment destination, and property is affordable. The choice of where to buy is personal, and the type of property depends on your lifestyle requirements, budget, and long term plans. With an impressive portfolio of more than 330 completed projects, every style and location of property is available, from seafront and hillside villas to beachfront apartments and townhouse complexes. We'll find you your ideal home.

Be clear on the reason why you want a Plan B in Europe. You'll approach your investment

decision with a different mindset if you're seeking residency/citizenship, are wanting to relocate and create a legacy for the children and grandchildren, versus investing in a property to rent to earn a subsidiary income.

Buying a home overseas is a major financial and emotional commitment, but the decision is made easier when you get advice from professionals. It's recommended that you always check exactly what you're buying before signing any contracts. The cost of an inspection trip to view property opportunities and do the groundwork will save

you thousands in the long run.

Cypriot Realty is a pioneer in actively and consistently promoting property opportunities primarily in Cyprus. It has been doing this successfully from its Cape Town and Sandton offices since 2008. As a result, the company is recognised and respected as southern Africa's authoritative investment specialist for promoting Cyprus as an ideal destination for acquiring permanent residency/citizenship, property investment, and immigration/retirement.

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Whitehead and Wiener – two women make history

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

In an Absa Jewish Achiever Awards first, two deserving winners, Gia Whitehead and Mandy Wiener, took top honours in the Europcar Women in Leadership category. Accepting their awards, Whitehead, the chief executive and co-founder of TSIBA Business School, spoke of the power of education, while Wiener, a renowned journalist, author, and broadcaster, stressed the importance of media credibility.

The calibre of nominees in this year’s Europcar Women in Leadership category was so high that selecting just one winner proved to be too challenging, said the judges. “These two winners were the epitome of resilience, determination, focus, authenticity, social responsibility, putting truth to power, being creative, and spurring others to follow them. They are both absolute leaders in their fields,” said clinical and organisational psychologist Dorianne Weill, who formed part of the judging panel.

TSIBA is a free-to-student business school which opened in 2004 and is working to challenge high rates of youth unemployment and create South Africa’s future entrepreneurs and leaders.

“My leadership style is about having a strong sense of who I am and what my purpose is – to make a place better,” Whitehead said. “If other people are aligned to that vision, then things flow easily.” While being intuitive and tapping into her innately feminine skills is key, she said, having a strong voice and showing decisiveness while maintaining integrity and humility is also important.

Accepting her award, an emotional

Whitehead spoke of the almost 20 years she’s dedicated to TSIBA. “It feels like there’s something about the people in this room specifically that are here and making a big difference in this country,” she said. “If it wasn’t for all of this power, we wouldn’t still be here today.” She emphasised the role our community is playing in creating a strong sense of hope for South Africa.

We don’t always find our purpose early on in our careers, said Whitehead, and some spend their whole lives searching for a sense of meaning. “TSIBA has been that place for me, really finding something that you’re so passionate about because you’re seeing so many people’s lives changing daily.”

Some TSIBA students are the first members of their families to go to university, let alone be part of the working world, and the shift this creates is huge. “We speak about this gemstone and our students are these shards of amazing,” Whitehead said. “They may have this potential already inside of them, but it just takes that ignition of who they are to build and change. We’re not just creating job seekers but job creators that are going to change the lives of South Africans.”



In the business of helping to craft the South African narrative, Wiener reflected on her career highlights. “I’ve had the great privilege of having a front-row seat to history for the past two decades, and there’s nothing quite like a breaking news story,” she said. From the Oscar Pistorius trial to former South African President Jacob Zuma’s court appearances, she’s covered some of the country’s biggest stories. “There really is an adrenalin rush that comes with a big breaking news event but then also just the ability to be able to digest it, break it down, and give context and analysis is something I love to do.

“Our problems are deep, they are profound, they are complex, and I think that we need real solutions.” Deeply invested in South Africa, Wiener works to motivate others to act in the face of the challenges we face. As a journalist, holding power to account and exposing wrongdoing is vital, she said, yet she’s also cognisant of her role in influencing how people talk and think about the country.

Acknowledging her phenomenal fellow nominees, Wiener reflected on breaking news in Israel in recent weeks. “It’s been a bad week for journalism,” she said. “What we’ve seen over the past fortnight is so much disinformation, misinformation, and bias and

it just goes to show how important it is to have credible, trustworthy sources.” We need to know who to believe and trust, and we need to be discerning about our news sources, she said.

“I’m incredibly honoured and grateful that many in this community consider me to be one of those sources that’s trustworthy,” she said. “I do consider that an enormous responsibility – to make sure that I always try and tell the truth and be as credible as possible.” Growing up in Pietersburg, now Polokwane, Wiener said she’s always felt the Jewish values that were instilled in her by her parents and community, values that have endured throughout her career. “I’ve always felt very much celebrated by this community, and I’m very grateful for that,” she said.

Acknowledging all those working at the Achievers event, Wiener made special mention of the CSO (Community Security Organisation), who were working extra shifts. Thanking her husband, Wiener ended her speech by reflecting on a meeting she recently had with 102-year-old Holocaust survivor, Ella Blumenthal, whose mission it is to remind people of the atrocities she lived through.

“She is just one of the most amazing women, who lost so many of her own family members in the *Shoah*, who survived the gas chambers of Majdanek, who survived Auschwitz and still has the most remarkable outlook on the world,” said Wiener. “I thought about her a lot these past two weeks and the comments she always makes. When I had tea and biscuits with her, I asked, ‘Why do you do this, why do you always tell people’, and she said, ‘There’s no room for hate.’ I think about that a lot, and I think about the power of women like Ella Blumenthal.”

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World-class people put Kallner in first place

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Hylton Kallner, who received this year’s Absa Business Leadership Award on 22 October, said that if he had to select a Springbok team of actuaries, doctors, engineers, and bankers, he would choose the people he works with at Discovery.

“I work with a remarkable group of people who are in the community, a group of people who are truly world-class,” said Kallner, the chief executive of Discovery South Africa and Discovery Bank.

“I’ve got the best job in the world,” he said. “I joined Discovery 27 years ago as a young actuarial student, and it’s been an incredible journey.” He didn’t join because



Hylton Kallner

of the size of the organisation, rather due to the people at the company. “With hindsight, you often think that you could make better decisions. In my case, it’s the opposite,” Kallner said.

During his time at Discovery, Kallner said he had “seen the launch of Vitality, our behavioural programme, all our international operations, and our bank”.

He became chief executive of Discovery South Africa three months before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. “It gave me a clear sense to galvanise the entire team around our corporate, and make people healthier,” he said.

“We’re absolutely committed to the country, to our communities, and to being a force for social good in the environments in which we operate. One of the incredible accolades for Discovery Bank over the past year was being recognised by *Fortune* magazine as one of the top companies changing the world. I’ve always been part of the product team and had a deep interest in ensuring we build products that are brilliant for our clients.” He’s currently involved in the research and development of all Discovery South Africa’s products.

Kallner said he carries with him “the benefit of learning from a father who was dedicated to his family, and a mother who epitomised all that was absolutely good and made us believe that anything is possible”.

He has a busy schedule, but wouldn’t change it for anything. “I typically start at about 07:00 in the office, and end at about 19:00. I try to ensure that I’ve got time to have dinner with my family, and then catch up on reading and emails late at night to prepare for the next day.”

He’s grateful for having “the most remarkable support system in my wife, Leora, of 25 years, which truly is the only reason I’m standing here, and my four kids who make it all worthwhile”.

Chasing dreams pays off for entrepreneur Jonathan Goldberg

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

“Entrepreneurship is about taking an idea and a dream and converting it into something tangible,” said *SA Jewish Report* director Herschel Jawitz on presenting this year’s award.

Winner Jonathan Goldberg, the chief executive and co-founder of Preference Capital, hasn’t just realised his dream of building a successful financial services company, but with this award, has fulfilled a dream held for 20 years.

“The first time I came to these awards was in 2003,” Goldberg said. “I was here as a guest. At the time, I was the financial director of The Prepaid Company, which is part of the Blue Label Telecoms Group. My good mate, Brett Levy, won the Entrepreneurship Award that evening, and that night, I said to myself, ‘One day I want to come back and win this award.’ It’s been a hell of a journey. It took me a little bit longer than I had hoped but we did it.”

In providing financial services, mainly in the form of loans, to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and family-run businesses, Preference Capital offers nine different solutions. It’s therefore able to offer fit-for-purpose services to help businesses grow, which ultimately uplifts the South African economy and creates employment.

“There’s nothing better than growing a business, employing, and looking after people,” said Goldberg. “For me, it’s about job creation, helping people, and growing businesses.”

Some of Preference Capital’s clients have grown so much, they’ve have to move on from the company and turn to traditional banks because they’re no longer SMEs. “That’s a great success story for us,” Goldberg said.

Accepting his award, Goldberg paid tribute to his wife, Tanya, describing her as “by far the smartest person I know”.

“My wife is a successful businesswoman in her own

right. She’s a chartered accountant and she’s been at Investec for 20 years. Without her stable, reliable salary and support it would have been impossible for me to be an entrepreneur. Without this, it wouldn’t have happened, I couldn’t have been here, and I wouldn’t have been able to chase my entrepreneurial spirit and my dreams.”

Goldberg also thanked his business partners, who provided the early capital needed to grow the business; chairperson Graeme Montgomery for his counsel and ongoing support; and his executive team, which he said deserved the award more than he did. Addressing recent partner Old Mutual, he said, “Thank you for getting behind us and helping us to keep growing Preference Capital and to uplift small and medium-sized South African businesses. This, in turn, has created thousands of jobs, and this is one of Preference Capital’s core objectives.”

Quoting his late grandfather, who used to say, “Everything in moderation,” Goldberg said, “In life, there are instances where moderation is fitting. However, if genuine success is your aim, whether in business, sport, or with your family, give it your all. Embrace your goals with unwavering determination. Live your dreams without compromise, and refuse to settle for mediocrity.”

It’s this philosophy that has led to Goldberg’s considerable achievements, and those that will undoubtedly follow.



Herschel Jawitz and Jonathan Goldberg

Philip Krawitz cuts cloth to suit SA’s upliftment

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Inasmuch as a pair of Cape Union Mart hiking shoes can get you to a mountain summit, the pinnacle of company chairperson Philip Krawitz’s life has been making South Africa a better place.

Krawitz said he felt embarrassed but also grateful to receive the Absa Business Icon Award at the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards on 22 October. “The award isn’t because we’re the biggest company or employ the most people. It’s because we realise that businesses are simply vehicles for societal change and achievement,” said Krawitz, who also serves as chairperson of the United Jewish Campaign board of trustees.

“Philip is an outstanding example of what business leadership can contribute to making this world a better place,” said Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein. “He’s a dear friend, and I’ve known him for many, many years. What I admire and love about Philip is that he brings together so many different worlds. He’s a brilliant business leader and chief executive.”

Krawitz’s daughter, Martine, said, “My dad is an absolute visionary. He’s a serial entrepreneur, and he lives and dies by the values upon which he lives.”

Krawitz’s parents worked together to build

Cape Union Mart from the ground up. “My real beginning in Cape Union Mart was in the 1970s,” he said. “We had just one little store. I started to grow it and open a few stores. The rest is history.”



Philip Krawitz

Today, the company has about 250 stores across three chains – Cape Union Mart, Old Khaki, and Poetry. “We do our designing and manufacturing locally,” he said. “We’re proud of the fact that we have this South African brand reflecting all the values we have.”

“Ever since I was a little girl, my memories of my dad were that he was investing all the time and energy he had into building this little business,” Martine said. “He always told us that he would put the time back in because he was just trying to build a

business for the benefit of all of us.”

Business aside, Krawitz is involved locally and globally with the Jewish community. Among other positions, he’s a governor of the Jewish Agency for Israel. “I’m committed to the Jewish Cape Town community, but I’m also committed to the greater South Africa, which is so important to us all.”

He said he did “the unthinkable” in the 1980s by calling for the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the African National Congress.

Helen Lieberman, who has worked with Krawitz at the Ikamva Labantu non-profit organisation she founded, said, “The big thing about Philip is that he has such a breadth of wisdom, and he sees, understands, and interprets things so well.”

Krawitz believes South Africa will be as good as we make it. “The first thing we have to do is create jobs,” he said. “If we create jobs, we’ll reduce poverty. If we reduce poverty, we’ll reduce crime. If we reduce crime, we’ll get foreign direct investment. If we get foreign direct investment, we’ll grow our economy, and create even more jobs.”

Krawitz quoted Rolls-Royce founding engineer Sir Henry Royce, “Strive for perfection in everything you do. Take the best that exists, and make it better. When it doesn’t exist, design it.”

South Africans should apply this philosophy to our country, he said. “If we can have unity and peace among us, this country will reach its potential.”



Marilyn and Erin Lazarus with Ros Rafel



Shaun, Saul, and Lauren Fox



Demi and Dean Gerber, Chava and Josh Alter, Dineo and Mariri Sekwele

Ryan Blumenthal speaks for dead to protect living

SAUL KAMIONSKY

Forensic pathologist Professor Ryan Blumenthal’s day job is in the cold world of the mortuary, not up in lights on a stage in front of 600 people, which is where he found himself at the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards on 22 October, taking home the Absa Professional Excellence Award.

Most days, he said, he has to look past mud and blood to try to solve why people die.

“Forensic pathology services and the people practising forensics in South Africa need to be acknowledged,” said Blumenthal, on receiving his award. “These are special people. They are at death scenes using science. They are up at the wee hours of the morning. They work under dire conditions.”

Blumenthal described the award as an honour and said it was unexpected. He dedicated it to his colleagues, working in awful circumstances.

Colleagues in war-torn Israel are doing hugely important work, Blumenthal said. “The world needs to know what happened. Forensic pathologists are key players in documenting it.” This work is crucial especially because of the conspiracy theories and denialism that arises in “about five to 10 to 20 years” after an atrocity happens.

“No-one else can combat this except for forensic science and forensic pathology. We literally speak for the dead to protect the living. When I first heard this quote by Thomas D’Arcy McGee, I thought it a bit arrogant. I mean, who am I to talk for the dead? I must talk for myself. But now, as I get older and do more autopsies, I realise that this is what this job is.

“Ultimately, there’s always a need for truth and integrity in society. No-one else is going to solve how and why people die. This is what we do. We’re the final catch net to keep society civilised.”

Blumenthal described an autopsy as “the biggest procedure in medicine”, saying there should be no questions about the cause of death after the autopsy is conducted.

Sporting a tie which featured a lightning strike, he said, “I did my PhD on lightning. I was the star of *Lightning Pathologist*, the eight-part documentary on [environmental news channel] People’s Weather, which was seen by about 2.2 million people.”

In August, Blumenthal received the National Research Foundation Award for the communication of science. “I don’t do stuff for honours and awards though,” he said, “I do stuff just for doing stuff. So that was a totally unexpected surprise. The award is a trip to America to attend the American Academy of Sciences Conference, one of the

top science conferences next year.”

Although Blumenthal spends his days in the mortuary and his office, he appears be a “Ryan of all trades, master of at least some”. “I’m a sleight-of-hand magician. I’m



Professor Ryan Blumenthal and Sanah Gumedde

a writer, bird watcher, mountain biker, and poet,” he says. He holds the South African record for one of the longest-running sleight-of-hand magic shows, and has published a bestselling book, *Autopsy – Life in the Trenches with a Forensic Pathologist in Africa*.

“I’ve recently written a new bestseller titled *Risking Life or Death*. It’s about the reader. It’s about the viewer, the watcher. It’s all about lessons for the living from the autopsy table.”



Jamie Mighti and Benji Shulman



Nkosinathi Mabana and Mpho Phalatse



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Absa Jewish Achiever Awards

2023

Absa Jewish Achiever Awards 2023

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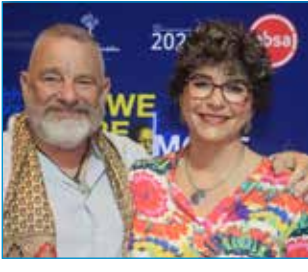
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MEET THE HERZLIA ALUMNI FAST-TRACKING CHANGE IN FOREX

Josh Kotlowitz



Harry Scherzer



In February last year, the *SA Jewish Report* featured the success story of Future Forex, a local business founded by two Herzlia alumni who decided to start the venture at an Ohr Somayach event, which was making waves in the financial sector with its digital asset arbitrage investment service. Fast forward a year and half, and the pair have grown Future Forex to be the biggest arbitrage service of its kind in South Africa.

Co-founder and chief executive Harry Scherzer (class of 2011), a University of Cape Town (UCT) graduate and qualified actuary with a strong background in finance and risk management, along with friend, co-founder, and chief technology officer Josh Kotlowitz (class of 2010), a UCT and University College London graduate who received his MSc in space science and engineering at the top of his class, have been riding high on the success of scaling up a business that now has more than 50 dedicated specialists situated in all the major metros, including MBA graduates, accountants, engineers, and lawyers.

Their stringent adherence to regulatory norms paved the way to the firm being granted a license as a financial services provider (FSP 51884). This places Future Forex among the ranks of the country's largest and most trusted financial providers.

Using a now-proven formula that capitalises on the power of collaboration, innovation, and a client-centric approach, the pair introduced a foreign exchange service to the South African market this year, adjacent to their booming digital asset arbitrage investment service.

This service assists businesses and individuals to move money to and from abroad. Though banks are also able to do this, their levels of service and pricing are well off the mark, says Scherzer. "When entering the foreign exchange market, we were amazed at how poorly clients are being serviced by the major banks. Not only is the pricing often exorbitant, but businesses and individuals are left to fend for themselves if there's any issues or special instructions for a payment. Future Forex is here to change that for good, and ensure that processing forex transactions can become client-centric, as it should be.

Everyone can relate to being put on hold by a call centre after explaining your issue to the fifth different person, with no resolution. This simply isn't acceptable to us when moving sums of money internationally."

Future Forex assigns every client a dedicated account manager who is always available to assist. Its ethos has always been one of client-centricity, which is why its account management team knows the ins and outs of its clients' use-cases to ensure that it can assist in the most efficient way, understanding the nuances of different industries and unique client needs. From regulatory Approvals of International Transfers (AITs) - formally known as FIAs - for individuals wanting to send sums of more than R1 million overseas, to assisting with the completion of the Reserve Bank's mandatory BOP (Balance of Payment) forms as complimentary services; Future Forex is transforming the industry by always going the extra mile for its clients..

Usually with increased levels of service, clients would expect costs to increase. This is one of those rare cases where, because of the exorbitant margins charged by banks, Future Forex is able to offer a significantly better and more personalised service, but at reduced cost. "The aim is to improve service significantly while reducing our margins in order to ensure that it becomes an easy decision for clients to move across," says Scherzer.

But the sub-par level of service and often-ludicrous pricing offered by banks aren't the only areas which the Future Forex team believes are ripe for disruption. They have also found bank operations to be decades behind technologically, which translates to poor levels of service when onboarding, making changes, or transferring funds internationally. Future Forex uses its cutting edge technology to ensure that all "paperwork" is performed online in a streamlined manner, and that the system can remember all details of clients so that the same information never needs to be provided twice.

This leads to huge time savings for businesses and individuals alike when making a payment. "Right from the outset, we identified key areas in the client journey where digitisation and automation could be leveraged to improve traditional processes," says Kotlowitz. The technological changes being made by the Future Forex team are essential to improving client experience, and have been easily identifiable given the low level of streamlining in the current market.

"We've started by improving the 'low hanging fruit' like removing the need for a pen and paper and going into a bank, or not repeating details multiple times when onboarding or booking a deal; but we're now moving to more nuanced changes which will further improve client experience like allowing you to transact through whichever platform you please, from email to WhatsApp to our online platform, and even reading details off your identity document or proof of address, so you don't have to input this yourself. We develop technological solutions based on what we're seeing our clients struggle with on a day-to-day basis," says Kotlowitz.

A recent survey performed by Future Forex confirmed the team's belief that levels of service in the industry are far off the mark, with 76% of respondents saying that they weren't fully satisfied with their current level of service from their forex provider.

The two Herzlia friends are reshaping an industry that is riddled with over-the-top pricing, and surprisingly poor levels of service. As Future Forex continues its meteoric rise, one can only wonder what's next on the horizon for Harry and Josh. Given their trajectory, we're sure to revisit their story soon.



If you'd like to investigate switching to Future Forex for your foreign-exchange payments, visit www.futureforex.co.za or get in touch by calling 021 518 0558 or emailing info@futureforex.co.za and one of its specialists will be in touch to improve your service and pricing.

Perhaps these idiots are useful

According to an intersectional feminist on X, we shouldn't be calling Gaza an "open-air prison". No, says the she-pronoun person, because "prison" denotes criminality. And it's not fair to label those who live there. Rather, she suggests, we should call it what it is, which is a "concentration camp".

I didn't want to respond. But then my fingers itched, and I replied that as the Palestinian cause had already co-opted the "apartheid" term, I could see no issue with making the Holocaust its cause as well. I suggested further that when this is done, they should move along to the Spanish Inquisition. Because no-one had used that terminology for years. And why let the Spanish get away with them making it all about them and their Jews?

If I have learned anything since 7 October, it's that intersectional people, as a rule, aren't so smart. I have seen "Gays for Palestine"; "Reproductive organ freedom fighters"; along with feminists of the intersectional kind marching in support of Hamas. A terror organisation, which, let's face it, would offer their reproductive organs way less freedom than they currently receive. And which had a tendency to throw gay people off buildings – while it still had them.

If like me you were unsure about what intersectionality actually was, it's the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. In essence, this means that given that they aren't the sharpest tools in the social shed, it's unlikely that most intersectionalists will have a clue what they are. Other than the fact that they are it proudly.

And then, there's the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), perhaps lesser known for their intersectionality. And more for their need for attention. They marched to the Israeli embassy, demanding that McDonald's stop supplying food to Israel and that Woolworths cease and desist immediately from selling Israeli tomatoes. All in the name of humanity. They even wheeled in this column's regular visitor, Carl Niehaus, who had recently

INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman



returned from losing his mother yet again. An affliction that he can't seem to shake.

"Hamas did nothing wrong!" said Malema, wearing what looked like a Mr Price dishcloth on his head. And everyone cheered, no doubt wondering when the whole thing would be over so that they could get out of the hot Pretoria sun. Not everyone had the luxury of having their heads decked with an Italian picnic blanket.

Where one would have thought that the Palestinian movement would have delighted in the charade, this was far from the case, with activist – since 1976, according to his X profile – Zackie Achmat stating clearly that EFF support for the cause will do damage and not assist. A little concerning, given that the cause has Hamas and Iran as part of its team.

To avoid confusion, it needs to be noted that in spite of how it may look, Dr Naledi Pandor isn't an intersectional feminist. Her recent visit to Iran, where they routinely oppress women; and cozy telephone call with Hamas, who rape them, for Pandor of the department of international relations and cooperation, it's far less complicated. She simply detests Israel, and cares not a fig for Jews, who seem to be a constant source of annoyance for her.

And in a way, this is preferable. Because for Pandor, there's no confusion. Her mission is simple, her goals are clear, and the consequences are irrelevant.

Whereas Hamas and Iran might be the curses of our time, they can succeed only if they are aided and abetted by the likes of Pandor and assisted by useful idiots. By naïve people and by those who can't distinguish apartheid from a concentration camp, which is not the same as the Spanish Inquisition and the star chamber.



Unthinkable sorrow: SA community reels and rallies

OPINION

DR ROBYN ROSIN



In the realm of trauma psychology, I've often witnessed the capacity of the indomitable human spirit to weather even the darkest storms. Today, I write not only as a counselling psychologist but as a member of the South African Jewish community. We find ourselves on a journey through an unfathomable nightmare that unfolded on 7 October 2023.

In the wake of the most horrifying events to befall the Jewish people – the massacre of 1 400 Israelis, wounding of 3 500, and abduction into Gaza of 222 people – the psychological scars run deep.

The horrifying events unfolded almost before our eyes in real-time news and social media projected the horrors of this massacre even further. The shock has been felt by every Jew around the world. The 7 October events shattered our basic assumption of safety and security in the state of Israel.

As the South African Jewish community is so closely connected to Israel, with most of us having friends and family there, the shockwaves are ripping through us as a community.

This heinous attack was sudden, unexpected, and out of the range of normal human experience, threatening our basic assumptions of safety and security. People died and the lives of many more hang in the balance. As humans, in an effort to survive, we respond accordingly.

When we experience trauma, our system goes into survival mode in order to try and cope and make sense of the experience.

As the news of the attack began unfolding, many of us were glued to social media and television to keep informed of what was going on in Israel in an attempt to make some kind of sense of the chaos we saw unfolding.

Disbelief and shock set in, we began to feel scared and sad. As more and more information about the horror of the atrocities suffered become apparent, we either froze or were spurred into action.

This is consistent and appropriate behaviour in the face of a trauma, where our body's natural flight-or-freeze response is engaged, and our systems either shut down or become ready to fight.

As we're out of Israel, most of us in the community feel a desperate need to help in any way that we can. However, the fact that we're not physically in Israel leads to feelings of helplessness and a sense of being out of control. As we seek to regain equilibrium and a sense of control, we attempt to pick up the shattered pieces.

Everyone's response to trauma is different.

We cannot forget that as a Jewish people, we have faced these kinds of atrocities as recently as World War II, when many in our grandparents' era fell victim to the Nazis.

We cannot underestimate the impact of the intergenerational trauma we carry as a community. An attack such as the one that occurred on 7 October, when we witnessed our people treated like they were by the Nazis, triggers traumatic memories in each of us.

The idea of such inhumane atrocities happening again to the Jewish people is something we don't have a frame of reference to deal with. We've always felt safe in the knowledge that the existence of the state of Israel is there to protect all Jews from such a thing happening again. The strength of the promise of our slogan "never again" is shattered.

With the shattering of this illusion, we're left vulnerable and exposed.

Our community has been gripped by acute stress, and the scars are deeply personal and poignant. These include:

- 1. Anxiety: Constant gnawing worry about the safety and well-being of our loved ones in Israel and concerns about our security at home;

- 2. Helplessness: The profound feeling that we're powerless to alter the course of events, a sense of being unable to change the situation;
 - 3. Hyperarousal: A heightened state of vigilance, in which every news alert or unexpected noise feels like a fresh emotional wound;
 - 4. Flashbacks: Intrusive memories of that fateful day, our minds dragging us back into the horror of 7 October; and
 - 5. Depression: A heavy cloud of sadness, grief, and despair that casts a long shadow over our lives.
- The feeling of helplessness is a double-edged sword in our community. In some, it has the power to immobilise us, leaving us unable to move, speak, or engage in any discussion of the situation. The knowledge that we're helpless to change the unfolding tragedy burdens our hearts.

Yet, in others, this feeling of helplessness has transformed into a fierce determination to act. The trauma of history has engraved within us a resolve to prevent further suffering. Many among us have channelled this distress into advocacy, fundraising, and support for humanitarian causes related to the conflict.

Our community's response to this trauma has been profound. It includes:

- 1. Support networks: South African Jewish organisations have swiftly established support networks and counselling services, providing a lifeline for those wrestling with trauma;
- 2. Solidarity rallies: Peaceful demonstrations such as the South African Zionist Federation rally held on Sunday, 15 October, and prayer gatherings have provided a platform for our community to voice its concerns and show solidarity for those affected by the conflict; and
- 3. Fundraising: Numerous community members have been involved in fundraising campaigns to provide vital aid to those impacted by the conflict. Our collective distress has transformed into a powerful force for good.

The journey through trauma is a deeply personal one. Coping mechanisms vary from individual to individual, but they underscore our collective strength and unity. They include:

- 1. Counselling: Mental health professionals offer guidance and support to individuals grappling with acute stress, helping them to navigate their emotions and find ways to heal; and
- 2. Narrative therapy: Sharing personal stories and experiences of trauma has given us a space to connect on a profound level, forging a network of understanding and empathy.

We're living in a constant state of fear and high alert. We're bombarded with news and images on social media platforms, a double-edged sword that brings us closer to the unfolding tragedy yet weighs heavy on our collective psyche. The information inundation has both positive and negative effects on our mental health, keeping us informed but simultaneously stoking our anxiety.

The South African Jewish community together with Jews the world over have embarked on a painful journey through trauma. The horrors of 7 October 2023 have left an indelible mark, but they haven't defeated us.

Our journey is marked by unity, resilience, and a firm determination to forge a world where such atrocities are relegated to the annals of history. We move forward as a testament to the enduring strength of the human spirit and a beacon of hope for a brighter tomorrow.

• Dr Robyn Rosin is a counselling psychologist in Johannesburg.



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31 OCT TO 02 NOV 2023

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Double whammy for SA Jews

We're into our third week since the massacre of 7 October. Our grief and desolation hasn't abated and our horror mounts as we continue to watch the worldwide protests celebrating and justifying the wholesale murder of Jews. Foremost in our minds, however, is the plight of the 222 innocent people criminally abducted by Hamas and held as bargaining tools in conditions that can only be imagined, their very lives hanging in the balance. Along with Jewish organisations across the globe, we call on our government to demand the unconditional release of the hostages.

The fall-out from the terror attacks and their inevitable bloody aftermath is having a severe impact on diaspora Jewry, with antisemitism levels skyrocketing globally. We'll continue to communicate with the broad South African Jewish community through our community briefings, which this week will focus on expert advice for how to deal with the challenges we're facing as a community. The briefing includes input from the Community Security Organisation (CSO) on security.

During times of heightened emotion, social media invariably becomes a place of hate and incitement. Confronting cyberhate and social media engagement is therefore a critical area where our responses need to be appropriately considered. It's important to respond with reasoned, factually sound arguments without becoming aggressive or abusive. Should you experience antisemitism or threats online, screen shot them immediately and send them to sajbd@sajbd.org and report them to the relevant social media host. You don't have to put up with objectionable, offensive, or hateful social media content. Block the bigots, haters, and idiots who troll deliberately to upset and enrage.

How we respond to what appears in the mainstream

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

ABOVE BOARD

Karen Milner

media is another area that our briefing addresses. Our media department has extensive experience in engaging with media houses to address biased and incorrect reporting, and we're working tirelessly to ensure that our voices are heard. Where there's a case to be made that any media house has transgressed the press code, we'll take it up, but we have to give these processes time to take their course.

Though we're thankful for not seeing the kind of violent attacks that have become commonplace in other parts of the world, our community has experienced a sharp increase in antisemitic activity. Anyone who has experienced or is aware of threats, verbal abuse online or offline, in graffiti, comments in the workplace, or on university campuses, report it to sajbd@sajbd.org. We'll assist you to assess the incident and propose the best way forward. If you experience violent antisemitism or if you believe there's a credible threat of violence, call the CSO 24-hour hotline immediately on 0861 800 018.

At this time of great anguish for global Jewry, South African Jewry has in addition been confronted with a lack of understanding by our own government of how the Jewish community has been affected by these events, along with continued blinkered anti-Israel bias. As you will have seen in the media, the South African Jewish Board of Deputies is taking an unequivocal stance against this. To keep updated on all our media statements, comments, and interviews, visit our website <http://www.jewishsa.co.za/> and our social media.

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



A column of WIZO South Africa

WIZO contributes to rehabilitation of Israel

Our hearts are bleeding. The gruesome Hamas attacks weren't political or in support of a cause, they were a savage onslaught with the sole purpose of killing Jews.

Gaza is governed by this terrorist organisation. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) gave a warning to evacuate Gaza City, yet Hamas told citizens to stay because they use their people as human shields. Hospitals and civilian structures have become launching pads for weapons.

More Jews were killed on 7 October than any other day in Jewish history since the Holocaust. The numbers escalate daily, with more than 1 400 Israelis murdered, of which 306 are IDF soldiers. A total of 5 431 people have been injured, and more than 7 400 rockets have been fired. The number of hostages held by Hamas is 222.

During this war against terrorism, the Women's International Zionist Organisation (WIZO) is playing a major role in the rehabilitation of our beloved Israel. With educational institutions in Israel closed, WIZO convinced the government to allow us to open 11 WIZO day care centres. Now, parents, who are essential medical staff can devote themselves to work knowing that their children are in the best WIZO care.

WIZO's Youth Villages have welcomed guests evacuated from southern Israel with a warm embrace. Two WIZO shelters for women and children suffering from domestic abuse, two emergency centres for troubled teens, and WIZO foster homes are open. WIZO's parents' home for the elderly, some of which are Holocaust survivors, is operational. A new programme, called "WIZO you are never alone" offers support for



WIZO South Africa
Shelley Trope-Friedman
President

women whose partners have been called up by the IDF.

As we grieve with the victims of this heinous terror, the latest indication from the South African government is one of pure Jewish hatred. Rowan Polovin, the chairperson of the South African Zionist Federation stated, "Our solidarity with the government of South Africa has been shaken in that President [Cyril] Ramaphosa and the ANC [African National Congress] have taken sides with terrorists against peace and democracy. What a disgrace!"

WIZO South Africa expresses solidarity with the Israeli people. The Israeli people have had to pay a high price to ensure that we, as Jews, will always have a homeland and prevail.

Sixty-three employees of World WIZO have been called up by the IDF, and graduates from our WIZO schools and youth villages are serving in the IDF. We're grateful for the ultimate sacrifice they have made for Israel

and Jews in the diaspora.

Unfortunately, Hamas has prioritised the killing of Jews over the welfare and advancement of its own, who suffer deeply. As Jews, we'll come back stronger! We'll fight and we'll rebuild!

We have an amazing group of committed WIZO women, whose passion and emotion has been remarkable. WIZO South Africa has joined our federations around the world to raise funds for the emergency campaign to rebuild WIZO in Israel.

Hug your families a little tighter. This is our fight, and we'll win it!

Together, we pray for the urgent and safe release of the 222 hostages held by Hamas.

Am Yisrael Chai.

This column paid for by WIZO SA

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1923 to 1950 • R60
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ONE SHILLING

1931 • R500 to R3000
1939 • R30 000
1923 to 1965 • R25
1949 • R400 to R4 000



SIX PENCE (6D)

1931 • R500 to R3000
1939 • R30000
1923 to 1964 • R10



THREE PENCE (3D)

1931 • R20 000 to R50 000
1925 • R10 to R200
1923 to 1964 • R5

Family sings Benny Michel’s praises at 100

Renowned former musician Benny Michel celebrated his 100th birthday surrounded by friends and family in Killarney, Johannesburg, on Sunday, 1 October.

Michel was born in a small shtetl in Lithuania on 1 October 1923, and moved to South Africa with his family in 1927.

In spite of many health complications throughout his life including polio as an infant, Michel had a music career spanning more than five decades, earning him legendary status locally and internationally. His band was a staple at weddings, Barmitzvahs, anniversaries, and many other events during the 1960s and 1970s.

“My dad is a very knowledgeable man and taught me many skills. Most of all, he taught me love and compassion. Benny has a great sense of humour and an engaging personality. He was such a prankster,” said his daughter, Estelle Ash.



Benny Michel

KDVP teen wins place on JTA journalism programme

When Economic Freedom Fighters member of the provincial legislature, Aishah Cassiem, called for the deregistration of United Herzlia Schools in Cape Town for its pro-Zionist education, she didn’t realise it would inspire Danella Cassel, a Grade 10 student at King David High School Victory Park in Johannesburg, to take the first step in her career as a journalist.

Danella entered an article on Cassiem’s



Danella Cassel

beliefs into the JTA Teen Journalism Fellowship programme, and was accepted. Ninety-seven teens from seven countries entered this virtual journalism fellowship for high-school-age Jewish teenagers, and 20 candidates were accepted, with Danella the only Johannesburg-based delegate.

The fellowship aims to train young Jewish teenagers between the ages of 15 and 18 who are interested in reporting community news through the lens of a Jewish teen. It was recently awarded the Global Youth & News Media Prize for its work.

“I’m nervous about the workload,” Danella said, “but it seems fun, and there’s a lot of support.”

Letters

ISRAEL IS JUSTIFIED, BUT IT DOESN'T CHANGE PUBLIC PERCEPTION

I’m outraged at the terrorist attacks carried out in Israel against its civilian population by Hamas, and so should everyone be. To see evil and not call it evil, is evil. As a sovereign state, Israel’s military has every right to enact the reprisals against those responsible that justice demands and to eradicate them from the civilian population in Gaza. Indeed, has it not a moral responsibility to do that?

What has now unfolded at the hospital in Gaza City is a tragedy for sure. Even not knowing the exact number of lives lost, this must surely rank as one of the largest single losses of Palestinian life in the history of the conflict.

In a press briefing following the incident, the spokesperson for the Israel Defense Forces claimed that the explosion at the hospital was, in fact, caused by the misfiring of a Palestinian rocket, as was reported on the BBC. A report on CNN likewise stated that there was no

blast crater, indicating an aerial attack by the Israeli Air Force hadn’t been carried out. But this particular incident highlights the value of perception. When it comes to public opinion, perception is everything, as what people perceive to be true is then true for them regardless of the facts.

Whoever was responsible, it doesn’t negate the fact that Israel continues to hold the moral high ground, and that this war which is being waged against Hamas is justified in its execution and legal under international law.

It’s my hope that this situation will be resolved peaceably, and will result in the release of the Israeli hostages so that it won’t escalate into a regional conflict with further loss of life. Because as history has shown us there may be victors, but there are never any winners in war. – **David Millard, Johannesburg**

WE STAND WITH ISRAEL, EVEN IF ANC GOVERNMENT DOESN'T

I don’t know where I can express my positive sentiments to the Jewish community.

Even though the African National Congress government openly stands against Israel, we stand with Israel. We love Israel, and pray for the peace of Jerusalem (as per Psalm 122:6-7)

We regret our government doesn’t do so. – **Pierre and Marian Rousseau, Boesmansriviermond**

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13⁹⁹

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KEDEM CREAM PINK 750ML

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10⁹⁹

THREE STAR MATCHES 10 X 1'S

1.8⁹⁹

OK FIRELIGHTERS 12'S

19⁹⁹

ORITS PREGO & BURGER ROLLS 4'S EACH

87⁹⁹

ETOSHA CHARCOAL 5KG

18⁹⁹

MONTAGU APRICOT FRUIT ROLL 80G

104⁹⁹

MONTAGU SALTED & ROASTED CASHEWS 250G

23⁹⁹

LOVIES UNSCENTED BABY WIPES 72'S

64⁹⁹

MR SHEEN OXI LIQUID ULTRA WASH 2L

29⁹⁹

FRY'S VEGAN ORIGINAL BURGER & CHICKEN STYLE NUGGETS 380G EACH

21⁹⁹

KOO HOT AND SPICY & SWEETCORN CHAKALAKA 410G EACH

58⁹⁹

ALL GOLD TOMATO & ONION MIX & BRAAI RELISH 410G EACH

16⁹⁹

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13⁹⁹

KEDEM CREAM PINK 750ML

13⁹⁹

NOU GAAN ONS BRAAI BASTING & STICKY CHICKEN 750ML EACH

10⁹⁹

THREE STAR MATCHES 10 X 1'S

1.8⁹⁹

OK FIRELIGHTERS 12'S

19⁹⁹

ORITS PREGO & BURGER ROLLS 4'S EACH

87⁹⁹

ETOSHA CHARCOAL 5KG

18⁹⁹

MONTAGU APRICOT FRUIT ROLL 80G

104⁹⁹

MONTAGU SALTED & ROASTED CASHEWS 250G

23⁹⁹

LOVIES UNSCENTED BABY WIPES 72'S

64⁹⁹

MR SHEEN OXI LIQUID ULTRA WASH 2L

29⁹⁹

FRY'S VEGAN ORIGINAL BURGER & CHICKEN STYLE NUGGETS 380G EACH

21⁹⁹

KOO HOT AND SPICY & SWEETCORN CHAKALAKA 410G EACH

16⁹⁹

ALL GOLD TOMATO & ONION MIX & BRAAI RELISH 410G EACH

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