

NEWS REVIEW



THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE BODY
OF NSW JEWRY

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Support the Board of Deputies through the JCA

The Jewish Communal Appeal is in the midst of its 2009 fundraising campaign. The Board of Deputies urges you to support the JCA -the financial lifeblood of our community – and to attend the JCA Gala Function on 15 August.

We also urge women to attend one of the JCA Women's Campaign events on August 18 and September 9.

At the Women's Campaign functions you will have the opportunity to nominate the organisation(s) to which you wish to direct your donation; please consider the valuable work of the Board of Deputies when making your decision.

Positive step to peace

Editorial | The Australian | 29 July

A great deal of good can come from US attempts to enlist Syria in the cause of peace between Israel and the Palestinians. A successful effort by US President Barack Obama's special envoy, George Mitchell, to enlist Syria in a peace offensive would increase pressure on Palestinian leaders to accept Israel's existence. While most governments in the Middle East are reconciled, albeit uncomfortably, to Israel's existence, popular opinion in the region is adamantly opposed to the Jewish state. And Iran is keen to keep the Palestinian problem centre stage, in part out of a hatred of Israel, but also to divert Arab attention away from its nuclear ambitions. Syria breaking ranks with the Iranian-Palestinian axis could be the change required to start everybody talking.

But the Middle East needs giant leaps from the Palestinians. [READ MORE](#)

The Arab World: Waking from its sleep

The Economist UK | 23 July

The UN Development Program last week published the fifth in a series of hard-hitting reports on the state of the Arab world. Six Arab countries have an outright ban on political parties and the rest restrict them. Despite their oil, two out of five people in the Arab world live on \$2 or less a day. Overpowerful internal security forces often turn Arab states into a menace to their own people.

In almost every Arab country, fertility is in decline, more people, especially women, are becoming educated, and businessmen want a bigger say in economies dominated by the state. A revolution in satellite television has broken the spell of the state-run media and created a public that wants

the rulers to explain and justify themselves as never before. Taken together, these changes are creating great agitation under the surface. The old pattern of Arab government - corrupt, opaque and authoritarian - has failed on every level and does not deserve to survive. [READ MORE](#)

Arabs vs. Palestinians

Khaled Abu Tomeah | Hudson New York | 28 July

Tens of thousands of Palestinians living in Jordan have been stripped of their Jordanian citizenship over the past few months.

The Arab governments want the Palestinian issue to be Israel's problem alone. "The Palestinians should be allowed to return to their homes in Palestine."

Like most of the Arab countries, the Jordanians have never felt completely comfortable playing host to large numbers of Palestinians.

The Palestinians who were expelled from Jordan to Lebanon later played a major role in the Lebanese civil war. Palestinians living in Lebanon's refugee camps are still being subjected to draconian measures that include, among other things, severe restrictions on their movements. In Syria and Iraq, the other two Arab countries with large Palestinian "refugee" populations, the situation has not been any better. The Palestinians had become the price for Arafat's public support for Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, one of several Arab countries that used to give the PLO billions of dollars each year.

Since the liberation of Kuwait, almost all of the Arab countries have stopped channelling large funds to the Palestinians. Obviously, the Arab governments do not want to play any significant role in solving the plight of the Palestinians living in the Arab world. [READ MORE](#)

How settlements became 'illegal'

Moshe Dann | The Jerusalem Post | 23 July

In 1967, under attack, Israel struck back and conquered the Golan Heights from Syria, the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem (the West Bank) from Jordan. Israel had been threatened with a second Holocaust, and few questioned its actions. No one spoke of a Palestinian state; there was no "Palestinian people."

Many legal experts accepted Israel's right to "occupy" and settle its historic homeland, because the areas had been illegally occupied by invading Arab countries since 1948.

One organisation, however - the International Committee of the Red Cross - disagreed.

Meeting secretly in the early 1970s in Geneva, the ICRC determined that Israel was in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Based on The Hague Convention, GC IV was drawn up after World War II to protect innocent civilians and restrict brutal occupations. Unilaterally, the ICRC turned it into a weapon to delegitimise and demonise Israel. As far as is known, the ICRC did not rely on any legal precedents; it made up "the law." [READ MORE](#)

Become a Member

Ensure that the voice of your community is heard by supporting the work of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.

Join us in the work of strengthening Jewish life.

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Tisha B'Av



The remains of the Second Temple, the Western Wall

Tisha B'Av is a Jewish holiday that usually occurs in July. This year, the holiday begins at sundown on July 29th and ends after sundown on July 30th. The word Tisha B'Av translates to a date: the 9th day of the month of Av. Initially a day to mark the destructions of both Temples, Tisha B'Av is, coincidentally, a day when Jews suffered a number of unbearable losses.

On Tisha B'Av:

- The Old Testament describes the return of the 12 scouts to Canaan who said it was not yet time for the Jews to return to the Promised Land.
- The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E.
- The Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E.
- The razing of Jerusalem following the destruction of the Second Temple.
- The unsuccessful revolt of Bar Kokhba in the last Jewish/Roman War (132-136 C.E.)
- Jews were expelled from England in 1290.
- The Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492.
- On Tisha B'Av in 1914, Germany declared war on Russia. Some people believe that this was the beginning of events that eventually led to the Holocaust.
- In 1942, there was a mass deportation of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka concentration camp.

Traditionally, Tisha B'Av is more than just a day of fasting. It is also a day of mourning. On a fast day such as Yom Kippur, Jews refrain from eating, drinking, working, bathing, and enjoying all forms of physical affection. However, what differentiates Tisha B'Av from a regular fast day is the addition of mourning traditions. During a period of mourning, many Jews do not sit on regular chairs; they prefer to sit on low stools close to the floor. They refrain from idle conversation and reading the Torah (except for tracts that specifically discuss mourning). Some people sleep on the floor or, in modified tradition, sleep without a pillow.

Tisha B'Av is actually the last day of a three week period of mourning. From the 17th of Tammuz to Tisha B'Av, many Jews will refrain from cutting their hair, eating meat and drinking wine (except on the Sabbath), going to concerts, or swimming. Jewish weddings are not held during these three weeks.