



AT THE BOARD

Working for the political and physical security of the community



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Mayors in historic gathering

120 MAYORS, councillors and leaders of the Jewish community gathered for a first-ever Local Government Passover Dinner.

Guest of honour at the groundbreaking event was Minister for Local Government Barbara Perry MP. Shadow Minister Chris Hartcher MP and Local Government and Shires Association President Genia McCaffery, the Mayor of North Sydney, were also in attendance.

Held at Randwick Town Hall, the function highlighted the themes of community and family as they apply in the wider Australian context. Guests enjoyed an interactive evening of discussion, ritual, music and dancing.

Minister Perry emphasised her close ties with the Jewish community and her recognition of its commitment to social justice.

Elias Farah of the Australian Federal Police Community Liaison Team, Dai Le, Community Relations Co-ordinator for the NSW Liberal Party who arrived in Australia as a child refugee from Vietnam, and Holocaust survivor Olga Horak all related moving stories of their struggles for freedom.

The Passover Dinner was led by Board Education Manager Lynda Ben-Menashe and funded by the JCA Lotben Fund in loving memory of Lotke and Bernard Ferster.

The Board of Deputies has previously held an outreach Passover Dinner with Unions NSW, an Interfaith Passover Dinner and an Educators Passover Dinner.



Back from left: Ryde City Council Mayor Vic Tagg, Shoalhaven City Council Mayor Paul Green, Gosford Mayor Christopher Holstein, Randwick Mayor Bruce Notley-Smith, Leichhardt Mayor Jamie Parker, Kogarah Mayor Nickolas Varvaris, Willoughby City Council Mayor Pat Reilly, Woollahra Mayor Andrew Petrie, Botany Bay Mayor Ron Hoenig, Board of Deputies Vice President Yair Miller. **Front:** North Sydney Mayor Genia McCaffery, Board of Deputies President Robin Margo S.C., Local Government Minister Barbara Perry MP, Liverpool Mayor Wendy Waller, Waverley Mayor Sally Betts, Board of Deputies Vice President Roma Shell, Board of Deputies CEO Vic Alhadeff. Photos: Ingrid Shakenofsky



Olga Horak, CRC Chairman Stepan Kerkyasharian.



Michael Levy, Renée Ferster-Levy.



Melissa McCurdie, Gilla Liberman, Gael Hammer.



The choir: Natalie Lotkin, Andrea Catzel, Judy Campbell, Aaron Robuck, Jocelyn Robuck.



Uri Windt, Anne Conron.



Waverley Mayor Sally Betts, Dr George Foster, Josie Lacey OAM.



Dai Le



Elias Farah



Chris Hartcher

Top analyst in the media

THE Board of Deputies brought Israel's foremost political analyst, Ehud Ya'ari (pictured), to Australia as its contribution to Limmud-Oz.

While in Sydney, he addressed print, television and radio media on Iran, Lebanon, the two-state solution and President Barack Obama's speech in Cairo.

He also addressed a packed public meeting in St Ives and spoke several times at Limmud-Oz.

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Ya'ari on air

FOLLOWING is an extract of an interview with Israeli political analyst Ehud Ya'ari by Mark Colvin on the *PM* program.

MARK COLVIN: There are strong signs from the President and the Secretary of State down that the US is no longer prepared to be flexible about Israel's controversial settlements. That's alarmed and thrown into question some of the policies of Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu.

Ehud Ya'ari is senior commentator for Israel's Channel 2 Television and regarded as one of the country's most experienced political observers. I asked him about the Obama speech.

EHUD YA'ARI: He tried to demonstrate to his audience in the Arab countries that here is a piece of evidence that I am serious. I am asking Israel to freeze settlements. It's very symbolic.



Ehud Ya'ari being interviewed on SBS Radio.

MARK COLVIN: But do you think it's only symbolic? Because we know from his reading for instance, he said in the past that one of the books that really influenced him was *The Yellow Wind* by David Grossman - a book which is all about the experience of Palestinians under Israeli rule.

EHUD YA'ARI: Yes and he spoke about that and he has no problem with Israelis about it. Israelis would love to get rid of the occupation.

MARK COLVIN: But the settlers would not.

EHUD YA'ARI: The settlers would not but the settlers are not a majority. You have a consensus in Israel of 70, 80 per cent for a two-state solution, including the removal of almost all settlements. It's repeated in all the polls.

MARK COLVIN: But isn't it also becoming clearer that the Obama administration has a fairly strong view that there should be two states and that they should go back to the pre-1967 boundaries?

EHUD YA'ARI: We don't have a problem with the US when it comes to the boundaries.

MARK COLVIN: But some of the settlements are beyond the '67 boundaries aren't they?

EHUD YA'ARI: Most of them are beyond the '67 boundaries.

MARK COLVIN: So it's not quite as simple.

EHUD YA'ARI: The previous government offered Mr Abbas a withdrawal from 98.2 per cent of the West Bank, dismantling the settlements there, and a territorial swap for the rest, and it was rejected by the Palestinians.

When we speak about the two-state solution the problem is the Palestinians are perceived more and more to be running away from statehood.

MARK COLVIN: Obama is a man of the left, broadly. Netanyahu is a man of the right. Are they going to be able to coexist? There have been some people even predicting that working with Obama will bring Netanyahu down.

EHUD YA'ARI: You will see tension remaining between Israel and the US. It serves the US to engage the Arab world at the same time that they are engaging Iran.

A certain amount of difference between the Israeli Government and the US is not something we have not seen in the past. So while not trying to belittle the tension that may exist, I think that there is room for manoeuvring towards understanding.



SZC President Frank Levy AM, Israeli Ambassador Yuval Rotem, ECAJ President Robert Goot AM S.C., Board of Deputies President Robin Margo S.C., Premier Nathan Rees, Jewish Agency Board of Governors member Ron Weiser.

Photos: Ingrid Shakenofsky

Premier addresses community

PREMIER Nathan Rees joined 400 members of the Jewish and broader Sydney community to celebrate Israel's 61st year of independence.

Mr Rees, who visited Israel on an Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce mission before becoming Premier, spoke of his support for Israel, the commonalities which exist

between Australia and Israel, and the advances Israel has made in water technology. "I salute the free and democratic State of Israel," he declared.

The function was organised by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, State Zionist Council of NSW, Executive Council of Australian Jewry and Zionist Federation of Australia.



Hillel Director Sarah Myerowitz, AUJS Executive Director Brandon Srot, AUJS NSW President Nicky Beutum.



Israeli Trade Commissioner Ehud Gonen, NSW Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell, Alex Gottshall.



Ady Halevi, Auryt Jacobson, Liat Kedmi, Monica Morgenstern, Jeanette Cohen, Lynda Ben-Menashe.

Teaching the teachers

FIFTY educators from universities, colleges, TAFEs and schools across Sydney participated in a course on "Talking about Israel".

Designed by Board of Deputies Education Manager Lynda Ben-Menashe, participants met fortnightly over a five-week period.

The objective was to increase their knowledge about Israel and issues facing the Jewish world. Topics included "The Jewish right to Israel", "1948 and refugees", "1967 and Occupation", "Human Rights and the United Nations" and "Answering The Tough Questions".

2000 mark the Shoah

THIS year's Yom Hashoah ceremonies attracted record numbers, with a total of 2000 people turning out.

Organised by the Board of Deputies, the communal functions held at Moriah College and Masada College featured Holocaust survivors and their grandchildren, the latter recounting their grandparents' experiences.

The guest speakers were former Premier Bob Carr (Moriah) and Member for Isaacs Mark Dreyfus QC MP (Masada).

The guest speakers at the memorial service, held in the shadow of the Martyrs Memorial at Rookwood Cemetery, were Board of Deputies President Robin Margo S.C. and Israeli Ambassador Yuval Rotem.

The moving name-reading ceremony, *Unto every person there is a name*, featured NSW Education Minister Verity Firth as guest of honour. This event



Board of Deputies President Robin Margo S.C., Education Minister Verity Firth, Israeli Ambassador Yuval Rotem and students from Emanuel School, Masada College and St Paul's Catholic College Manly.

Photos: Ingrid Shakenofsky

was held in conjunction with the Sydney Jewish Museum.

The Board of Deputies Mitzvah of Memory program for bar/bat mitzvah-aged students attracted 60 students, with survivor Litzi Lemberg recounting her experiences and students participating in a "walk-through" timeline.



Frank Lowy with former Premier Bob Carr.



Holocaust survivor Litzi Lemberg with Mitzvah of Memory participants.



Member for Isaacs Mark Dreyfus QC MP.



Grandchildren Shelly Kalinko, Romi Savitz, Jordan Milch, Dean Fremder, Tahlia Trijbetz. Front: Survivors Zelda Farbenblum, Halina Robinson, Leon Milch, Morris Fremder, Kurt Blecher, with Gaby Trijbetz.

Building bridges

THE largest ever number of students from the three Abrahamic faiths attended this year's Youth Encounters events at venues across Sydney.

Almost 500 students from Jewish, Muslim, Christian and state schools participated in events held at three venues: Moriah College in the eastern suburbs, Sule College in the western suburbs and Shore School on the north shore.

Initiated by the Board of Deputies in 2004, Youth Encounters is a joint project with the Affinity Intercultural Foundation and Kincoppal Rose Bay - its Muslim and Christian partners respectively.



Paul Sheehan, Sabina Van Der Linden-Wolanski, Janet Albrechtsen, Peter Charley, Jacinta Tynan.

Senior journalists visit Israel

AN overflowing Board of Deputies plenum heard four senior journalists report on their participation in the Board of Deputies' annual Journalists Mission to Israel. The group comprised *Sydney Morning Herald* senior writer Paul Sheehan, *The Australian* senior writer Janet Albrechtsen, Sky News journalist Jacinta Tynan and SBS TV Insight producer Peter Charley. The mission is supported by Sabina Van Der Linden-Wolanski and the JCA Haberman and Kulawicz Fund. The mission was accompanied by four journalists who travelled as guests of AIJAC.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

WITH 25% of its population born overseas and 50% with an overseas born parent, Australia is a very special place in having welcomed and embraced so many and so diverse a range of communities.

That imposes a very special responsibility on us as Australians to maintain social cohesion and mutual respect.

This cannot be taken for granted. As has happened with economic downturns in the past, the Global Financial Crisis will encourage xenophobia and racism that threatens to fracture Australian society. Who would have thought that Indian students would be the first to feel its brunt?

And we have reports already of the revival of an anti-immigration political party.

What we all want is a "safe space", personal and communal dignity, and equal opportunity to learn, to earn and to contribute to our society.

The Jewish community opposes racism of any kind, be it against Muslims, Aborigines, refugees or any other group or individuals. And we expect our non-Jewish fellow Australians to support us in turn, by opposing anti-semitism in whatever forms it raises its ugly head.

This edition of *At The Board* describes some of the work the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies does to oppose racism and antisemitism, to build alliances, and to develop and support understanding, respect and social harmony for all in multicultural Australia.

Robin Margo S.C.



Member of the JCA family of organisations

Opinion-makers at lunch

THE Board of Deputies Luncheon Club provides a forum for opinion-makers to engage with the community. Recent speakers included: Unions NSW Secretary Mark Lennon, Member for Pittwater Rob Stokes, former *Sydney Morning Herald* Editor Alan Oakley, Community Services Minister Linda Burney, former Fairfax Corporate

Affairs Director Bruce Wolpe, former Mossad Director Danny Yatom, Nationals Leader Andrew Stoner, former 2GB host Philip Clark, Sky News anchor John Mangos, Vanderbilt University New Testament Studies Professor Amy-Jill Levine and German History Professor Norbert Frei.



Nationals Party Leader Andrew Stoner.



Unions NSW Secretary Mark Lennon.



Jennifer Symonds, Community Services Minister Linda Burney, Professor Bettina Cass, Ilona Lee.



Sydney Young Labor President Glen Falkenstein, 2GB host Philip Clark, Ryan Edelmuth.



Professor Amy-Jill Levine, ABC broadcaster Dr Rachael Kohn.



Yvonne Coburn, Sarah Constable, Mark Sheldon.



Roma Shell, Professor Norbert Frei, Mariela Sztrum.



Bruce Wolpe



Alan Oakley



Judi Hall, Angela Budai, Associate Professor Lucy Taksa.



John Mangos, Yaron Finkelstein.



Member for Pittwater Rob Stokes, Hilary May Black, Robin Margo S.C.



Bridges for Peace director Cheryl Hauer, Wizo NSW President Esther Wakerman, Jaimi Primrose-Levy.

FROM THE CEO



THE strategy was simple, yet effective. Austrian energy giant OMV had signed a \$22-billion deal with Iran to develop its oilfields and produce liquefied natural gas.

It was the largest energy contract in the history of the European Union, with the Austrian Government the major shareholder at 31.5 per cent.

Simone Dina Hartmann, a young woman with a penchant for speaking her mind, is the spokesperson for Stop The Bomb – a Vienna-based coalition of Greens, Jews, gays, Kurds and Christians.

Hartmann purchased a single share in OMV, which gave her the right to attend a shareholders' meeting. At an opportune moment, she rose and told fellow-shareholders that the deal would advance Iran's intention of developing nuclear weapons, and OMV should therefore have no part of it.

Her intervention was not well received, but she stood her ground and the issue attracted unwelcome attention for the company. The \$22-billion deal was shelved.

That remarkable demonstration of the power of one person to make a difference is an example of the motivation which drives many of our exceptional volunteers who get involved in

the work of the Board of Deputies in so many areas.

As the roof-body of the NSW Jewish community, our work encompasses a vast range of activities, from the proactive to the reactive, from building bridges and breaking down barriers to generating understanding of Israel and equipping members of the community with the tools to advocate on its behalf.

While we have a superb professional staff who form the engine-room of the Board of Deputies, we also have an extraordinary corps of volunteers, who dedicate unquantifiable hours to every facet of our endeavours, all for the benefit of the community.

We are currently in the midst of the JCA Women's Campaign. We encourage members of the community to support this vital cause - and to direct your donation to the Board of Deputies. Your support of our work is critical.

• The Board of Deputies runs sessions on Answering The Tough Questions, the objective being to give members of the community the tools to advocate on Israel's behalf. If your organisation would like to host such a session, contact us.

Vic Alhadeff

Israeli novelist in Sydney

ACCLAIMED Israeli author Nava Semel addressed a Board of Deputies breakfast on the influences on her upbringing as a first-generation Israeli, child of Holocaust survivors and mother. Semel is the author of six novels, a collection of short stories, a book of poetry, two plays and six children's books. Her novel *And The Rat Laughed* has been converted into an opera. Semel participated in the Sydney Writers Festival.



Author Joanne Fedler, Israeli writer Nava Semel, *Sydney Morning Herald* Literary Editor Susan Wyncham.