

Cotler warns against demonisation

HUMAN rights champion Professor Irwin Cotler MP undertook a whirlwind visit to Sydney, engaging with a broad spectrum of opinion-makers in the political, media, legal, academic, union and NGO sectors.

The former Attorney-General and Justice Minister of Canada was in Sydney as a guest of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and the ADC.

Among other engagements, he addressed: 44 MPs and advisers at State Parliament; the NSW Bar Association; members of the judiciary; senior editors; 50 university academics; leading human rights activists and 350 members of the community at Moriah College at the Gandel Oration under the joint auspices of the Board of Deputies.

Professor Cotler warned of the four-fold threat posed by Iran – nuclear, terrorist, genocide-inciting and domestic repression of its own people.

He also cautioned – in an op-ed article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* – that “the enduring lesson of the Holocaust and of the genocides in Srebrenica, Rwanda and Darfur is that they occurred not simply because of the machinery of death, but because of the state-sanctioned incitement to hate and genocide.

“This teaching of contempt, this demonisation of the other, is where it all begins.”

Professor Cotler criticised the “corruption” within the UN Human Rights Council, “which singles out one country for demonisation – it happens to be called Israel – while granting exculpatory treatment to human rights violators such as Iran and Sudan.”



Justice John Basten, Justice Tricia Kavanagh, Robin Margo SC.
Photos: Giselle Haber



Acting Chief Justice James Allsop, Justice Peter Jacobson, ECAJ President Robert Goot AM, SC.



Justice Ronald Sackville QC AO, Professor Irwin Cotler MP, Acting Chief Justice James Allsop.



Yair Miller, Gabrielle Upton, Professor Irwin Cotler MP, Vic Alhadeff.



Graham Segal OAM, Professor Irwin Cotler MP.



Ted Baskerville, Kylie Nomchong, Justice Stephen Rothman AM.



Gregory Burton SC, David Knoll AM.



Howard Liebman, Gladys Berejiklian MP.



Sue and Alan Lipman.



Vivienne Olian, Pam Krail, Dorryce Rock, Jenny Hillman.



David Clarke MLC, Sonia Hornery MP.



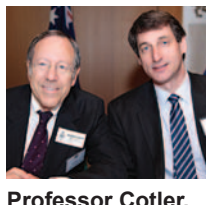
Marie Ficarra MLC, Jonathan O'Dea MP.



Ruth and Bob Magid.



Don Harwin MLC, John Ajaka MLC, Melinda Pavey MLC.



Professor Cotler, Treasurer Eric Rozenaal MLC.



Jonathan and Reëe Pinshaw.



Pru Goward MP, Jillian Skinner MP.



Ben Zipser, Julie Wilcsek.



Professor Irwin Cotler (centre) with Jennifer and Robert Gavshon.

Unique perspective on the conflict

LEADING Palestinian journalist Khaled Abu Toameh offered a unique perspective on the Middle East during a visit to Australia.

In Sydney as a guest of the Board of Deputies and UIA NSW, Abu Toameh quashed a suggestion that apartheid existed in Israel. “If Israel

was an apartheid state, I wouldn't be living in a Jewish area or sending my daughters to a Jewish school. I wouldn't have freedom of speech.

“I believe in equality and democracy for Palestinians. You can't be pro-Palestinian just by calling the Israelis bad. Most kids I meet making these

comments here, I ask them: ‘Why not, instead of having Israel Apartheid Week on campus, have Palestinian Democracy Week? If you want to help Palestinians, go there. Teach kids English. Promote women's rights in the territories. Then you can tell me you are pro-Palestinian.’”



Khaled Abu Toameh.
Photo: Henry Benjamin

Opinion-makers at lunch

THE Board of Deputies Luncheon Club provides a forum where public figures engage with members of the Jewish community. Recent speakers included:

The Sydney Morning Herald columnist **Miranda Devine**, Knesset Member **Tzipi Hotovely**, *Daily Telegraph* Editor **Garry Linnell**, Women of the Wall Chair **Anat Hoffman**, *Quadrant* Editor **Keith Windschuttle**, ALP NSW General Secretary **Matt Thistlethwaite**, NSW Opposition Depu-

ty Leader **Jillian Skinner MP**, Shadow Minister for Community Services and Shadow Minister for Women **Pru Goward MP**, Shadow Minister for Police **Mike Gallacher MLC**, NSW Attorney-General and Minister for Citizenship **John Hatzistergos MP** and International Association of Jewish Lawyers UN representative **Dr Efraim Chalamish**.

The Luncheon Club meetings are generously hosted by Shaw Stockbroking and Deoitte Touche Tohmatsu.



Yaron Finkelstein, Jeremy Spinak, William Nemesh.



Marc Levin, Judy Kaye, Daily Telegraph Editor Garry Linnell.



ALP NSW General Secretary Matt Thistlethwaite, ECAJ President Robert Goot AM SC, Yair Miller.



Shadow Police Minister Mike Gallacher MLC, Peter Phillipsohn, Steven Gross.



Gilla Liberman, Shadow Minister for Community Services and Women Pru Goward MP, Dr Allan Shell, Roma Shell.



Daniel Rod, Glen Falkenstein, Dikla Blum, Knesset Member Tzipi Hotovely, Sarah Constable, Daniel Krochmalik.



Sydney Morning Herald columnist Miranda Devine, Robin Margo SC.



David Knoll AM, Women of the Wall Chair Anat Hoffman, Kati Haworth, Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins, Melissa McCurdie.



Anna Berger, Shadow Health Minister Jillian Skinner MP, Judi Hall, Sarah Constable.



Quadrant Editor Keith Windschuttle.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is an honour to have been elected at our recent Annual General Meeting to lead the elected representative body of NSW Jewry, particularly having regard to my august predecessors as President over the 65 year history of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.

While the *raison d'être* of the Board has not changed significantly since its foundation, the methods and expertise we have had to develop to represent our community have. The Board is now engaged in a variety of projects and campaigns that have little precedent in our history.

This has become necessary to counter a steadily increasing rise in antisemitism, taking new forms, and to ensure the safety and security of our community in the face of new threats. Much of this new antisemitism takes the form of virulent anti Israel sentiment which crosses quickly from genuine criticism of Israel into arguments against Israel's legitimacy as a Jewish state. 2009 was a record year for antisemitism worldwide.

This development, coupled with the change in the way people communicate and the speed with which information is passed on, has required the Board to

respond in ways that we did not contemplate a few short years ago.

Much of the work done by the Board does not show immediate results. And many considered decisions that we take about *hasbara* may not seem from the outside to reflect conventional wisdom. But we act on the best advice available and in the best interests of our community and the harmony of Australian society in general.

I urge you to assist us wherever possible. It is not a mission we can manage in isolation. Each and every member of the community can make a contribution in some way – by becoming a member of the Board, by supporting the Jewish Communal Appeal which provides our funding, by reporting incidents or experiences to our office or taking one of our Talking About Israel courses. Every individual contribution counts and the whole that results is greater than the sum of its parts and benefits us all.

Yair Miller



Member of the JCA family of organisations

Working together, hand in hand

WILLIAM Cooper's greatness emanated from the fact that "he was not only aware of the injustice perpetrated against a faraway people, but was willing to demonstrate his anger at these wrongs".

Thus spoke Israeli Ambassador Yuval Rotem at a ceremony to mark the courage of Aboriginal activist William Cooper.

In 1938, as leader of the Australian Aborigines League, he led a march on the German Consulate in Melbourne to protest the Nazi persecution of Jews on Kristallnacht.

Dr Anne Sarzin and her daughter Lisa Sarzin documented this episode, and numerous social justice initiatives between the indigenous and Jewish people, in a book titled *Hand in Hand: Jewish and Indigenous People Working Together* - an initiative of the Board of Deputies Social Justice Committee.

Hand in Hand was launched by Minister for State Plan and Community Services Linda Burney MP at a function hosted by the National Council of Jewish Women at Council House.



Hand in Hand authors Lisa Sarzin and Dr Anne Sarzin, with Clarence Slockee, who presented the Acknowledgement of Country.



Robin Margo SC, Minister for Community Services Linda Burney MP.



Social Justice Committee Chair Professor Bettina Cass AO, Interfaith Committee Chair Josie Lacey OAM, Nora Goodrich.



Ian Thorpe, Jeff McMullen and Pastor Ray Minniecon at the book launch.



Bob Magid, Tanya Oziel, Jenny Symonds. Photos: Ingrid Shakenofsky

FROM THE CEO



I USED to argue that criticism of Israel was criticism of Israel, antisemitism was antisemitism, and rarely did the two meet. Sadly but increasingly, the gap between the two has steadily narrowed and inexorably blurred.

In episodes as seemingly unrelated as the Gaza flotilla and the bid to erect an eruv in St Ives, we have witnessed criticism of an Israeli action descend into racist imagery, and justifiable lack of understanding of an unfamiliar concept descend into bigotry, with malice towards Israel thrown into the mix for good measure.

Criticism of Israel is of course legitimate, as it is of any political entity. The problem arises when the criticism fails Sharansky's test of 3 D's, which says criticism becomes antisemitism if it meets one of the following criteria - if it Demonises Israel; if it Delegitimises Israel; or if it is an application of Double Standards. There is a fourth criterion: it also becomes antisemitism if the focus - and the animus - shift from Israel to Jews.

The crises that have beset Israel and our community in the past 12 months have prompted a heightened sense of unease.

Responding to the community's need for education and information, the Board of Deputies devised and runs Talking About Israel courses.

Over 300 people have done the 10-hour program to date - a welcome indication of the keen desire of members of the community to acquire the ability to advocate on Israel's behalf.

The work of the Board of Deputies is proactive and reactive. The reactive work is the need to respond to antisemitism in various guises.

The proactive work is about relationships - building relationships with key sectors so that they hear our issues and are receptive to our concerns.

It is assuredly a work in progress.

Vic Alhadeff

Board officers elected

THE following officers were elected at the Board of Deputies' 2010 AGM:

President: Yair Miller

Consultant in emergency management and lectures in Middle East politics. On the Alumni Board of the International Nahum Goldmann Fellowship and a graduate of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Diplomatic Seminar for Young Jewish Leaders. Director of the Council for Jewish Communal Security.

Vice-President: Yaron Finkelstein

Senior political and media adviser to organisations, governments and companies in Australia and overseas. Has worked on public affairs and advocacy issues affecting the Jewish community.

Vice-President: Jeremy Spinak
Senior Executive at a leading

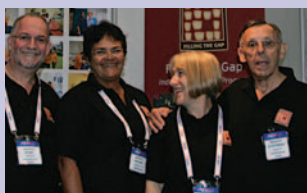
property consulting firm, advising on property transactions. Worked as political adviser to NSW ministers and to a US senator. Has provided strategic advice to Jewish organisations.

Honorary Secretary: Judi Hall

Lecturer in business law and medical practice manager. President of WomanPower, a member of the Board of Deputies Executive and Education Committee, and has established and facilitates the Intra-Community Dialogue group.

Treasurer: Sam Zweig

After a long career in finance with international companies, he manages a property company. Previously served on the boards of Masada College and of Montefiore Home. Now in his fifth year as Treasurer.



Marion Norrie (second from left) from Wuchopperen, an indigenous health service in Queensland, with Filling The Gap board members Uri Windt, Gael Kennedy and Dr David Rosenwax AM.

Filling the gap

FOUR Deputies were involved in recruiting dentists for the Filling The Gap indigenous program at a dental industry expo: Uri Windt, Dr David Rosenwax AM, Jennifer Symonds and Gael Kennedy, all members of the Filling The Gap Board of Directors. The program provides free dental care to indigenous areas.

Diplomats at Holocaust ceremony

FIFTEEN consuls-general attended a moving ceremony *Unto Every Person There is a Name* at the Sydney Jewish Museum.

They joined Holocaust survivors, students and members of the wider Jewish community in reading aloud the names of several hundred of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis.

Dignitaries included German Consul-General Hans Gnodtke, Polish Consul-General Daniel Gromann and Austrian Consul-General Guido Stock, whose father is Jewish and who lost relatives in the Holocaust.

Other Consuls-General who attended were Pedro Colombi, Argentina; Richard Morris, Britain; Angela Dark, Canada; Robert Perez De La Sala, Costa Rica; Mirhan Ana-Maria Piskulic, Croatia; Amit Dasgupta, India; Aldis Birzulis, Latvia; Fu Amin and Wang Wenqing, Consuls of the Peoples' Republic of China; and Marius Dragolea, Romania.

The ceremony was organised by the Board of Deputies and the Sydney Jewish Museum.

Three other Holocaust ceremonies were held: ECAJ President Robert Goot AM, SC addressed a service at the Martyrs Memo-



Board of Deputies CEO Vic Alhadeff (centre) with members of the Betar youth movement at the north shore Holocaust ceremony.

Photos: Ingrid Shakenovsky, Jenny Kahn



Italian Consul-General Benedetto Latteri, Paul Fletcher MP, Jonathan O'Dea MP, Dai Le, Robin Margo SC, Israeli Deputy Chef de Mission Eli Yerushalmi, Turkish Consul-General Ozgur Sahin, Dr George Foster, Margaret Foster.

rial; Israeli Deputy Chef de Mission Eli Yerushalmi addressed the eastern suburbs ceremony at Moriah College; and Board of Deputies CEO Vic Alhadeff

spoke on the Jews of Rhodes at the north shore event at Masada College, with a focus on Turks and Greeks who saved Jewish lives.

Recognition for bravery

IRENA Szumska-Ingram was 20 when she met Bernard Hellreich - a Jewish doctor - at a hospital in Poland. She had been sent there for treatment.

As the Holocaust closed in, Irena hid Bernard in the apartment she shared with her mother and sister. When the threat to his life became too great, she found him safety with a university friend.

Moving again to escape the Nazis, Bernard found work as a medical student with a fake ID, which Irena facilitated.

After the war, Irena and Bernard married and moved to Australia in 1948, raising their children Christopher and Vivienne in Newcastle.

In a moving ceremony, Irena was posthumously honoured with the award of Righteous Among The Nations at the community's Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration. Bestowed by Yad Vashem, the award was presented by Israeli Ambassador Yuval Rotem and Premier Kristina Keneally.

The event was organised by



Vivienne and Christopher Ingram, Israeli Ambassador Yuval Rotem, Premier Kristina Keneally.

the Board of Deputies, the NSW State Zionist Council, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the Zionist Federation of Australia.

Solidarity gathering: Member for Isaacs Mark Dreyfus QC MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Dr Mike Kelly AM MP and Member for Wentworth Malcolm Turnbull MP addressed a gathering at Central Synagogue, hosted by the Board of Deputies and NSW State Zionist Council, to express solidarity with Israel following the Gaza flotilla incident.



Talking About Israel: The Board of Deputies runs Talking About Israel courses. The 10-hour program explores Israel's history, with an advocacy edge. Over 300 people have graduated from the course. Enquiries: benmenashe@nswjbd.com or 9360 1600.

Antisemitism in Dubbo classroom

TWO Board of Deputies emissaries were confronted with antisemitic comments blurted out by a teacher in the presence of a classroom of senior students at a Dubbo high school.

Interrupting a presentation on the Holocaust, the History and English teacher said Jews should not "exploit the Jewish victimology of the Holocaust", particularly at a time when "Israel is perpetrating a genocide of the Palestinians".

In other comments, he said Jews should not focus on "the spin" of the Holocaust; "every Palestinian death is a genocide"; and "every Israeli prime minister would like to kill all the Arabs". When challenged to back up the latter allegation, he added: "Well, they probably think that way."

Board of Deputies CEO Vic Alhadeff and Education Manager Lynda Ben-Menashe were on a two-day bridge-building tour to Dubbo, engaging with a broad range of church audiences, school students, civic politicians and media outlets, when they encountered the teacher in question.

The offensive remarks "constituted a small - albeit disturbing - exception to what was otherwise a very well-received visit", Alhadeff said.

"But the egregious nature of the remarks illustrates the importance of these bridge-building visits. Challenging people who hold and disseminate such views is essential, and these trips provide an opportunity for the community to do that, as well as to engage with others who know little about Jewish issues and Israel."



Board of Deputies Education Manager Lynda Ben-Menashe with students in Dubbo.