



AJDS Newsletter

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The Australian Jewish Democratic Society

May 2010

Boycotts that make sense and some that don't

Boycotts are in the news again. And the economically most significant US state is leading the charge. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has called on fellow Californians to emulate his examples. State legislators are proposing to turn boycott into law.

Of course the target is not Israel, but it is not Iran either. It is Arizona. As CBS news reported, the state's new law, slated to go into effect in July, requires immigrants to carry documents verifying their immigration status. It also requires police officers to question a person about his or her immigration status after a 'lawful stop' if there is 'reasonable suspicion' that person may be illegally in the country. The movement against the new law is massive and the Arizona Tourism Board estimates losses so far at about A\$100 million.

It is a bad law that deserves to be opposed vigorously, but there are some implications for the Israel/Palestine conflict. All the usual arguments against such boycotts like the impact on poor workers in Arizona (many of whom are immigrant) seem to have been tossed out of the window. If the cause seems right, then people in Western countries will join such a boycott so perhaps the main lesson to be drawn is that the lack of success of the BDS movement [Boycott Divestment and Sanctions] against Israel is no guide to the future. Those who care about Israel should not be complacent.

From this point of view, as long as Israel continues to occupy Palestinian territories it will continue to lose ground. It is bound to have fewer and fewer supporters, especially among young Jews. As the veteran US activist Mitchell Plitnick put it: "On a personal level that I know is shared with a great many Jews around the world, Israel is becoming an indefensible country."

There may not be a ticking clock, but the sand is certainly flowing down. The recent vote at the University of California Berkeley campus demonstrated it is a losing battle. The student union body voted overwhelmingly to divest two companies with integral links to the Occupation. The student senate president vetoed it. How much comfort can one draw out of the situation where those who sought to overrule him gained a clear majority, but failed by one vote to reach the two thirds figure required?

It was a pyrrhic victory but the tactics adopted by both sides bear even worse news. The pro-divestment people concentrated on the facts and figures of the Occupation. Those who opposed them highlighted the fear and apprehension generated by such motions among Jewish students.

While Israel's critics conducted a brilliant tactical campaign in Berkeley, the same cannot be said on the global campaign to stop artists and others from visiting Israel. Here the hardliners have taken over and they countenance no compromises. It works with some people. African American artist Gil Scott-Heron, whose political poetry influenced a generation of rap artists, withdrew from a proposed appearance in Tel Aviv. But this was only to be expected: his views are on the same wavelength as the boycott organiser's. And for that matter so is his audience.

But the campaign has not had much traction with more mainstream entertainers like Elton John. It actually had a negative impact on the most notable highbrow visitors to Israel: Indian writer Amitav Ghosh and the Canadian Booker Prize winner Margaret Atwood, who also happens to be the International vice president of PEN, the worldwide organisation of writers. As Wikipedia explains, International PEN fights for freedom of expression; and its aim is to act as a powerful voice on behalf of writers harassed, imprisoned and sometimes killed for their views. It is the world's oldest human rights organisation. As a fighter against Apartheid in South Africa and as someone whose books often have human rights as a theme, Atwood would seem to be a key person for those who support Palestinian human rights to contact.

Instead they conducted the dialogue with Atwood in public, basically telling her to boycott Israel and decline the 1 million dollar Dan prize. No other choices were given: you are either with us or you are our enemy. Evidently, Atwood wasn't amused. She travelled to Israel, accepted the prize and said a few token words in favour of dialogue and reconciliation. There was nothing further on the subject.

But imagine what would have happened had the Palestinian supporters told her that if she didn't agree with boy-

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The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the AJDS. These are expressed in its own statements.

What we stand for:

- Social justice and human rights.
- Opposition to the vilification and mandatory detention of asylum seekers.
- The struggle against racism, antisemitism in particular.
- Non-violent paths to conflict resolution.
- In line with this, the search for a negotiated solution to the Israel/Palestinian conflict.
- Equal rights, including land rights and justice, for Indigenous Australians.

Vale Jeff Shaw

Sol Salbe

The NSW Parliamentary Labor Party is not usually the place to look for a mensch. But rules have exceptions and former NSW Attorney-General Jeff Shaw, who died earlier this month, was such a person. Like a lot of good people he made enemies, some of whom were nasty enough to dwell on his faults after he died. Yes, in his later years he had a problem with alcohol, one that brought his downfall as a judge. Trying to cheat one's way out of a certain conviction for driving with too much alcohol in your system is not something for anyone to be proud of. But it should not diminish his achievements.

I first met Jeff around the NSW Young Labor circa 1970. He was a highly committed young man who was very much opposed to the twin big issues of the day: the Vietnam War and conscription. His views were to the left of most and certainly didn't bode well for a parliamentary career. But somehow he managed to achieve it.

The *Sydney Morning Herald's* Andrew West met him nearly twenty years later and became his friend.

"Jeffery William Shaw was an authentic, committed Labor hero who never lost the faith. As a barrister, he defended workers and their right to fair wages, safe workplaces and freedom from discrimination. He was a son of the working class. His father had been a printer, and a stalwart of the Printing and Kindred Industries Union, and his mother was a secretary."



The ACTU Secretary, Jeff Lawrence highlighted Jeff's **Jeff Shaw** greatest achievements:

"He was a successful and far-sighted reformer — a true representative of the Australian labour movement. The lives of many working people have been affected in a positive way through the efforts of Jeff Shaw. As Industrial Relations Minister in the Carr Government, Jeff Shaw set an important benchmark for state industrial relations systems with his implementation of the 1996 NSW Industrial Relations Act.

"He developed the nation's strongest workplace health and safety laws, safeguarding workers by preventing untold numbers of workplace injuries and illnesses. By changing the law to allow the claims of asbestos victims to continue after their death, Jeff ended the appalling practice of asbestos companies avoiding liability by drawing out claims until their victims had died. Jeff Shaw understood how important it was for asbestos victims and their families to have justice."

Andrew West should have the last words:

"In the end, Jeff was in politics because he wanted to be attorney-general, to reform laws he believed were unjust, ill-considered, antiquated or just plain wrong. He did not need to be in politics; his character and self-esteem did not require the affirmation of ego that comes with political victory.

"I will simply say that Jeff Shaw towered above most of his peers in law and NSW Labor politics – and certainly towered above the generation that has followed.

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cotts, she should travel to Israel and emulate Roger Waters. The former Pink Floyd front person used his concert to hammer out a strong message against the Occupation, and particularly against "the Wall". A speech from Attwood denouncing the siege of Gaza and the suffering of the Palestinians would have made a strong impact in Israel and world-wide headlines. Donating some of her prize for a worthwhile cause would have only made her message reverberate further. Far more useful than grumblings against her on Facebook.

As long as the BDS movement is dominated by hardliners, imaginative, effective activities will always be trumped by feel-good and counterproductive actions.

Sol Salbe

JCCV adopts AJDS-initiated vilification policy

Harold Zwier

How controversial is it to suggest that if you want to argue on some issue about which you feel strongly, say Israel, antisemitism or politics, that you do so without vilifying or abusing anyone in the process?

Not controversial for most people. Yet just such a policy was debated vigorously at the May Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV) meeting and when the resolution to adopt the policy addition was put to the vote, a third of the delegates voted against it.

So what's the background, and why the controversy?

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has probably been the cause of more tension in the Jewish community than any other issue. Whether the argument is between people within the community debating the merits of different approaches to resolving the conflict, or between supporters of Israel and supporters of Palestinians, passion and hard words often accompany strongly-held opinions.

Often, where public debates involve Israel being criticised, passion spills over into abuse, vilification and sometimes threats. Most of the material sent to those who are deemed to be offensive is anonymous and can be quite vile. Sometimes the vilifying material is semi-coordinated with many similar emails directed to the "offender". Much of the material is not coordinated and can involve letters and phone calls as well as emails.

It is, of course, impossible to entirely stop bad behaviour of this sort and in any case bad behaviour is not restricted to one side of the debate. But there is benefit for the leaders of the Jewish community to articulate the values and behaviour they think are important as a means of providing guidelines to people in the community, setting a standard by which the wider community comes to understand the Jewish community, and to some extent isolating inappropriate behaviour.

The executive of the JCCV therefore proposed adding a new section, titled "Respect", to its Policy Platform. The JCCV Policy Platform is an eclectic compilation of more than 25 sections dealing with such diverse issues as Interfaith Relations, Antisemitism, Female Representation,

Climate Change, Stem Cell Research and many more. It is essentially a statement of issues which affect, or are of interest to the Jewish community and about which there is general, though not unanimous agreement.

The Zionist Council of Victoria (ZCV) expressed concern for the difficulty of wording the fourth paragraph in a way that properly protected all the groups who needed to be included. It was concerned at the possible impact the new policy would have on itself in the event that it need to tackle an anti-Israel groupings.

The argument of those who supported the fourth paragraph clarified the scope of the Policy Platform by acknowledging that it is not a set of rules to bind the Jewish community, but rather a set of guidelines, statements, principles and issues of interest on which there is general agreement. It is not a legal document.

When the resolution was put to the vote, JCCV affiliates were in favour of adding the new section by a majority of 20 to 11.

The outcome of the JCCV debate was not as positive as it could have been because the values and behaviour promoted by the leaders of our community not only provide guidelines for people in our community. They also set standards by which the wider community comes to understand our community and the things we regard as important.

To have two major organisations in the Jewish community vote against a set of guidelines for acting appropriately in the way we deal with views differing from our own, significantly blunts the message.

We have a Facebook page now!

The AJDS now has a Facebook page. It is designed for members, friends and supporters of the AJDS who can join and participate in an up-and-running group. So far we have already nine non-members join up. If you are on Facebook just type in the letters AJDS and apply for membership. You can read up-to-the minute contributions on all sorts of issues from Israel, the Jewish Diaspora and of course refugees and other Australian issues.

In this issue...

As much as I tried I haven't been able to squeeze in an article about Barack Obama's nominee for the Supreme Court, Elena Kagan. There have been some surprisingly horrible as well as pleasant reactions. Hopefully it would be topical next month as it is interesting.

*So what IS in this issue? Let's start with **Irfan Yusuf's** novel approach to burka (p11), 255 scientists look at the scientific method and climate change (p5), a letter from **leading labour figures** about refugees (p4), **Linda Briskman's** account of her visit to Christmas Island (p6), a tribute to Lena Horne and an obituary to a labour movement hero, Jeff Shaw on page 3.*

Something totally out of Left field is the article about Ronald McDonald and advertising to children on pp 14-15. (Yes, we have more readers for whom this is not a theoretical issue!). The original article was full of US references and I tried to find the equivalent Australian

allusions. However I wasn't sure if I should change Ronald McDonald being better recognised than Santa Claus to being better recognised than Eliyahu!

*On the Israel/Palestine conflict we have the issue of BDS and Margaret Atwood (disclosure: editor's favourite living writer) on the cover. Further the pseudonymous **Moshe Yaroni** looks at the eroding democracy in Israeli society on pp 8-9. It combines nicely with some facts and figures on East Jerusalem on the bottom of page 9.*

*Three highly recommended articles round off the issue. An Arab journalist writes why one state is not in the interest of the Palestinians on page 7. **Sasha Polakow-Suransky** talks about the glass housees of those who attack judge Richard Goldstone and **MJ Rosenberg** provides a terrific analysis of why younger Jews do not have the same Pavlovian reaction in defence of Israel that their grandparents do have (page 12). **Sol Salbe***

Asylum seekers: Unions write to PM

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to express our concern at the growing stance of indifference towards and demonisation of asylum seekers from both sides of Australian politics. Instead, Australian unions restate the need for strong political leadership from all sides of politics that recognises and deals with the push factors that cause people to seek asylum, and Australia's international obligations to protect the rights of those most vulnerable in our global community.

Political parties should not exploit fear and xenophobia through the dehumanisation of refugees. These attitudes have been building for more than six months, culminating in the recent policy change by the

Australian Government to suspend the processing of all new asylum claims by Afghan and Sri Lankan nationals. In devising this approach to deter "boat people", the Government has successfully alienated thousands of people seeking refuge from persecution, and forsaken Australia's "fair-go" spirit. The decision to reopen the isolated Curtin detention facility in Western Australia is also very concerning.

We want to avoid a repeat of the politics of fear that overcame Australia in the period of 2001 to 2004 – a period that brought shame upon Australia internationally, and divided the nation. It also created a situation of intolerable misery and anguish for asylum seekers, including children who arrived in Australia only to be shipped off to the Pacific Solution, locked into desert-bound detention centres, or placed in limbo through Temporary Protection Visas.

In using refugees as pawns in an election game, Australia is failing in its obligations as a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1976 Protocol to not discriminate in the treatment of refugees on the basis of race, religion or country of origin (Article 3). Sri Lankans and Afghans are being singled out purely based on race. Asylum seekers should be assessed case by case and this blanket decision to suspend asylum claims ignores real security threats existing in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.

The Sri Lankan Government's persistent harassment and intimidation of journalists and human rights activists, arrests of opposition party members and continued incarceration of tens of thousands of Tamil refugees highlights the continuing political and social instability in Sri Lanka. A recent US Department of State report notes Tamils in Sri Lanka are also victims to extrajudicial killings and disappearances.

In Afghanistan, civilian casualties remain high, with 2009 representing the highest number of civilians killed in the armed conflict, according to Human Rights

Watch. Ethnic and religious minorities, including the Hazara population – the largest percentage fleeing the country, remain at risk of persecution while journalists continue to face threats in the pursuit of truth.

Permanent migration – including the humanitarian and refugee program – has and will continue to play an enormous role in Australia's growth and prosperity. It is time to back the words of our national anthem about the boundless plains to share for anybody who has travelled across the high seas. We call on all sides of politics to show some compassion and humanity in a bipartisan way, and we urge the Australian Government to act now to uphold its international obligations and live up to its

election promise of a humane immigration and refugee policy.

Australian Council of Trade Unions, President, Sharan Burrow

Australian Education Union, Federal Secretary, Susan Hopgood

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, National Secretary, Dave Oliver

Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union, Federal Secretary, Brian Crawford

Australian Nursing Federation, Federal Secretary, Ged Kearney

Australian Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union, National Secretary, Allan Barden

Australian Services Union, NSW & ACT (Services Branch), Branch Secretary, Sally McManus

Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union of Australia, National Secretary, Peter Tighe

CPSU – SPSF Group, Federal Secretary David Carey

Evatt Foundation, Secretary, Chris Gambian

Finance Sector Union, National Secretary, Leon Carter
Independent Education Union of Australia, Federal Secretary, Chris Watt

Labor for Refugees (NSW & VIC), Convenor, Linda Scott (NSW) and Secretary, Robin Rothfield (VIC)

Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union, National Secretary, Louise Tarrant

Maritime Union of Australia, National Secretary, Paddy Crumlin

Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, Federal Secretary, Christopher Warren

National Tertiary Education Union, General Secretary, Grahame McCulloch

The Textile Clothing & Footwear Union of Australia, National Secretary, Michele O'Neil

Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA, Executive Officer, Peter Jennings

Unions NSW, Secretary, Mark Lennon.

[We received our copy from the AWU's Andrew Casey via Facebook]



Government is reopening the Curtin Detention Centre.

Climate change and the integrity of science

Opposition leader Tony Abbott's constant scepticism of climate change has had an impact on public opinion. But what he's being sceptical about is not so much specific aspects of climate science, but science itself. As letter writer Phillip Shehan pointed out in the Age: "Tony Abbott's statement that climate change is 'crap', Lord Monckton's that it is a communist plot for world government, columnist Miranda Divine's instantaneous assessment of the most recent findings of the CSIRO and weather bureau as 'just more propaganda', and Professor Ian Plimer's statements that there is no such thing as carbon pollution because the sky is not black are not examples of scientific scepticism. They are denial."

The following letter from 255 members of the US National Academy of Sciences was the lead letter in the first issue of Science magazine in May.

We are deeply disturbed by the recent escalation of political assaults on scientists in general and on climate scientists in particular. All citizens should understand some basic scientific facts. There is always some uncertainty associated with scientific conclusions; science never absolutely proves anything. When someone says that society should wait until scientists are absolutely certain before taking any action, it is the same as saying society should never take action. For a problem as potentially catastrophic as climate change, taking no action poses a dangerous risk for our planet.

Scientific conclusions derive from an understanding of basic laws supported by laboratory experiments, observations of nature, and mathematical and computer modelling. Like all human beings, scientists make mistakes, but the scientific process is designed to find and correct them. This process is inherently adversarial -- scientists build reputations and gain recognition not only for supporting conventional wisdom, but even more so for demonstrating that the scientific consensus is wrong and that there is a better explanation. That's what Galileo, Pasteur, Darwin and Einstein did. But when some conclusions have been thoroughly and deeply tested, questioned, and examined, they gain the status of "well-established theories" and are often spoken of as "facts."

For instance, there is compelling scientific evidence that our planet is about 4.5 billion years old (the theory of the origin of Earth), that our universe was born from a single event about 14 billion years ago (the Big Bang theory), and that today's organisms evolved from ones living in the past (the theory of evolution). Even as these are overwhelmingly accepted by the scientific community, fame still awaits anyone who could show these theories to be wrong. Climate change now falls into this category: there is compelling, comprehensive, and consistent objective evidence that humans are changing the climate in ways that threaten our societies and the ecosystems on which we depend.

Many recent assaults on climate science and, more disturbingly, on climate scientists by climate change den-

iers, are typically driven by special interests or dogma, not by an honest effort to provide an alternative theory that credibly satisfies the evidence. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other scientific assessments of climate change, which involve thousands of scientists producing massive and comprehensive reports, have, quite expectedly and normally, made some mistakes. When errors are pointed out, they are corrected. But there is nothing remotely identified in the recent events that changes the fundamental conclusions about climate change:

(i) The planet is warming due to increased concentrations of heat-trapping gases in our atmosphere.

A snowy winter in Washington does not alter this fact.

(ii) Most of the increase in the concentration of these gases over the last century is due to human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation.

(iii) Natural causes always play a role in changing Earth's climate, but are now being overwhelmed by human-induced changes.

(iv) Warming the planet will cause many other climatic patterns to change at speeds unprecedented in modern times, including increasing rates of sea-level rise and alterations in the hydrologic cycle. Rising concentrations of carbon dioxide are making the oceans more acidic.

(v) The combination of these complex climate changes threatens coastal communities and cities, our food and water supplies, marine and freshwater ecosystems, forests, high mountain environments, and far more.

Much more can be, and has been, said by the world's scientific societies, national academies, and individuals, but these conclusions should be enough to

indicate why scientists are concerned about what future generations will face from business-as-usual practices. We urge our policymakers and the public to move forward immediately to address the causes of climate change, including the unrestrained burning of fossil fuels.

We also call for an end to McCarthy-like threats of criminal prosecution against our colleagues based on innuendo and guilt by association, the harassment of scientists by politicians seeking distractions to avoid taking action, and the outright lies being spread about them. Society has two choices: we can ignore the science and hide our heads in the sand and hope we are lucky, or we can act in the public interest to reduce the threat of global climate change quickly and substantively. The good news is that smart and effective actions are possible. But delay must not be an option.

The signatories are all members of the US National Academy of Sciences, but are not speaking on its behalf or on behalf of their institution.

[255 signatures.] Our copy came via *Portside*.



It may be a theory for some, but there is compelling scientific evidence that the earth is not flat.

Asylum seekers on Christmas Island

Linda Briskman

In April, I visited Christmas Island for the third time. Although over the past 18 months the island has increasingly been transformed into a detention island, a substantial detention industry is now in place. What is most confronting is how the asylum seeker policies of the Rudd government are slipping back into the dark days of his predecessor when asylum seekers experienced long-term detention and there was a failure to have their rights recognised.

I was taken on a tour by immigration officials of the main detention facility at North West point, a maximum security facility that houses around 1600 people including in overcrowded tents and makeshift accommodation. I also visited people detained in that facility and the two other sites known as Phosphate Hill (around 200 men) and Construction Camp, which is "home" to women, families with children and unaccompanied minors. Although the mandatory detention of all "unauthorised" boat arrivals is unnecessary and cruel, it is the detention of children which raises the most serious human rights concerns.

The detention of children is a national scandal. At the time of my visit, there were days when up to 450 people were housed in Construction Camp, including more than 100 children with their families. Now with increasing boat arrivals with children on board, more children are likely to be in these unsatisfactory conditions. The Construction Camp was designed as temporary accommodation for the men who built the North West point facility. Now this ghetto-like, squalid collection of demountable buildings is perhaps akin to the conditions of a third world refugee

camp. Calling this facility an alternative place of detention masks the fact that it is a detention environment where people do not have freedom of movement and where children are denied access to playthings and the taken-for-granted joys of childhood. Although most children and unaccompanied minors thankfully attend the local school, this cannot compensate for the loss of liberty and uncertain futures. In a recent newspaper interview, Immigration Minister Chris Evans stated that the conditions at Construction Camp were "not ideal", an understatement indeed. Pressure is needed to let the government know that most Australians do not accept that children should be kept in such conditions and that families should be brought to the mainland and housed in the community while their claims are processed.

Detention on Christmas Island is a deterrence message from the government, a harsh policy for people fleeing persecuting regimes. A number of Jews have spoken out about how people smugglers saved their families from the Holocaust. The United Kingdom Social Action Forum reminds us that we are commanded 36 times in the Torah to look after the stranger, with no other commandment repeated this many times. This surely provides an impetus for Jewish action so that our shared humanity is in place for those arriving on our shores.

Linda Briskman is Professor of Human Rights Education at Curtin University. Together with colleague Lucy Fiske, she was on Christmas Island conducting research on how excision impacts on the human rights of asylum seekers and Christmas Islanders. See: <http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/stories/s2870551.htm>.

Mixed pickings at LimmudOz

Sol Salbe

The LimmudOz program must be designed in order to hone one's sifting abilities. Being charitable, there is fair bit of material for which there would be no point crossing the street, let alone the whole town. On the other hand there are some gems with high quality talks and discussions.

You would think that the overseas speakers, whose fares and accommodation are being paid, would provide the highlights. But in fact there is only one that I can recommend. As for the rest, on the whole they would make Binyamin Netanyahu sound like a starry-eyed leftist radical (and that is only a mild exaggeration). Really there is no point talking about Tzipi Hotovely, Shlomo Brown, Avi Jorisch, Efraim Inbar, or Daniel Landes, all of whom approach politics from the opposite end of the spectrum to the AJDS. There are no balancing speakers from the left.

While some of the non-political overseas speakers are of high calibre such as Yiddishist Jeremy Dauber, Anat Hoffman is the only one on the social-political front that I can recommend.

But there is no need to despair. You can get good value out of LimmudOz. Take the environment, for example. Pablo Brait will talk on Cutting-edge Solutions to the Climate Crisis. But LimmudOz being what it is, you can hear a classical climate change denialist in Manny Gross as well. Gershon Zylberman on Judaism and ethical eating

also sounds enticing. As for Environmental Projects Linking Israel and Australia, let's keep an open mind about it, but it has all the hallmarks of a JNF hasbara session.

As far as politics are concerned, the highlights would have to be Blogs, Soft Matza and New Leadership Strategies: the Changing Face of the Melbourne Jewish Community, several sessions in which Mark Baker is playing a leading role including his chat with Scottish-Palestinian journalist Maher Mughrabi, the Jew Media Q&A and more.

But whatever you do, don't miss our AJDS-initiated session: Zionism, Zionist, anti-Zionist, Antisemitism: Language wars in the Diaspora. Harold Zwier has been gathering a stellar line-up. Read about it: People debating around the same words can actually be having different conversations. How did words such as Zionism and antisemitism develop? How has their meaning evolved over time? How do people from different political perspectives understand these terms today? Have they become so battered by the war of words that they should be considered casualties of war?

Finally our Les Rosenblatt tackles How Inventive is Shlomo Sand?, Vivienne Porzsolt talks about her encounters with Israeli peace activists and the two of them together team up to present a fascinating session entitled Who is afraid of critical Jews? looking at their experience of taking a critical or non-mainstream stand.

Road to one-state solution is paved with good intentions

Emile Hokayem

An idea is gaining ground in the Arab world and beyond that -- the Palestinians would be better off opting out of a frustrating peace process, and that they should embrace the vision of a one-state solution. The emotional and intellectual appeal of a binational state of both Israelis and Palestinians is undeniable, especially for well-intentioned but distant academic and cultural elites. The argument speaks to a higher sense of justice and human dignity – that peoples can transcend their suffering and narratives to live side by side, forging a new identity.

A binational state may be inevitable due to rampant Israeli expansionism: settlements are growing and the wall, instead of marking the 1967 borders, is designed to keep much of the West Bank's most valuable land in Israeli hands. But Palestinian support for a binational state would indeed be a puzzling proposition.

The Palestinian people need to separate themselves from their long-time Israeli tormentors and repatriate the millions of Palestinians living in sometimes subhuman conditions in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan [Conditions in Jordan, where Palestinians are granted citizenship, are far superior to those in Lebanon – Ed.]. More importantly, they must be given an opportunity to build an identity based not only on victimhood, exile and resistance, but on the common purpose of nation-building and governance. This is the intrinsic value of the two-state logic. No intermediate solution, from trusteeship to confederation with Jordan to a binational state will accomplish this.

The Palestinian leadership failed in its first attempt at good governance in the 1990s because of Israeli intrusiveness, but also on account of its own inability to progress from resistance to institution-building. The current efforts of the Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad have injected a much-needed dose of self-responsibility. Coupled with a growing recognition of Israeli obtuseness, this is transforming how many in the international community think about a Palestinian future.

No panacea

There is a difference between being resigned to a single-state solution, using its perceived inevitability to pressure Israel and the US, and officially advocating it as a cure-all. Indeed, many Palestinian proponents of the one-state formula do so out of despair, and when the Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas warns about its consequences, it is to build leverage and create urgency. Only a radical yet vocal minority, taking comfort that demographic trends and steadfastness will somehow deliver total victory, rejects the idea of a future recognition of Israel conditional on peace.

It is also important to think through the motions that would bring about a binational state. It would require the Palestinians to do away with the modicum of autonomy they already have, only to sit and wait through many more years of occupation for the unlikely event that Israelis warm to the idea. In this situation, even greater suffering would descend upon the Palestinian people.

Espousing a one-state agenda is likely to harden the Israeli position even more. An already paranoid Israeli public will rally around its most radical leaders. The peace

camp will be discredited. Extreme scenarios include full-blown apartheid, ethnic cleansing and civil war. In the meantime, a distraught international community could withdraw political support and the vital financial backing that the Palestinian cause receives. It would also increase tensions with Israel's Arab neighbours and irreparably complicate the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese peace tracks. Sadly, many of those convinced of the inevitability of Israel's demise are oblivious to the human cost on all sides. Those who introduce such ideas do not live in Jenin or Gaza City.



Emile Hokayem

To be fair, some serious thinking has gone into what the contours of a binational state should be. But there has been little thinking about how the political implications of demographic evolution would be managed. When Arabs outnumber the Jewish minority, what will be the institutional guarantees that they will not impose a uniformly Arab identity on the new entity? What about the exodus and brain drain that would ensue? A binational state that results in a homogenous country does not square with the idealism of one-staters.

Another problem is the sad record of multi-confessional states in the Middle East. One-staters often hail the distant examples of South Africa and Northern Ireland. Next door, Lebanon has proven incapable of transcending its sectarian politics, descending into civil war every few decades. Since 2003 a bloody confrontation between Sunni and Shia radicals has bloodied Iraq, which is steadily losing its Christian and other minorities.

Furthermore while one-staters advocate secular democratic rule, little in recent Palestinian history suggests that its political elite is capable of abiding by it or containing its own radicals, and the Israeli record regarding the Palestinians and its own Arab minority is no more flattering.

Why would a unified state in the land of historic Palestine fare any better? To think that the land that has seen so much blood and rancour could become the laboratory of a postmodern state defies reason and sets the bar impossibly high for an already traumatised and battered Palestinian society. Single-state advocates, overwhelmingly idealistic non-Palestinians or non-Israelis in search of a romantic cause, see themselves walking in the footsteps of Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. In reality, they are projecting onto the Palestinian people their own expectations and ideals.

It is abhorrent for right-wing Americans to subsidise Israeli expansionism. But also it should not be up to students in California, professors in London and Arab émigrés in the West, however well-meaning, to dictate the peaceful outcome that Palestinians should accept.

Both Palestinians and Israelis are firmly attached to their own narratives. Their identities will evolve, not merge or dissipate, only when Palestinian rights are upheld in a state of their own.

Emile Hokayem is Political Editor of the major Gulf newspaper, the *National*, in the United Arab Emirates.

Prescription for survival

Moshe Yaroni

The time has come to ask the question: what is Israel turning into?

For decades, those of us who fervently support Israel but oppose with equal passion certain Israeli policies could make some allowances for Israeli behaviour because of its traumatic creation and long history of conflict. But now the actions of the government are becoming so onerous, and the support for such actions are becoming so widespread among the Israeli populace, that any supporter of Israel whose politics are anything other than far Right has got to be asking what Israel is becoming.

Just in recent months, we have seen two pieces of legislation designed to cripple progressive Israeli NGOs. There was the Anat Kamm affair, where a journalist was secretly imprisoned for months; Israeli newspapers were forbidden from mentioning it, while it was being reported by media outlets around the world. Violent police actions have become the norm in demonstrations in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah. Yet protests have been confined to the Left, while a recent Tel Aviv University poll found that nearly 58 per cent of Israelis believe that "human rights organisations that expose immoral conduct by Israel should not be allowed to operate freely."

Now, Ameer Makhoul, the director of Ittijah – The Union of Arab Community-Based Associations -- has been arrested in the dead of night, while he and his family slept in their home in Haifa. Let us be clear — Makhoul is an Israeli citizen. Yet the arrest of this high-profile activist has been again placed under a gag order. You're reading about it here, but Israeli reporters, news outlets and even blogs are forbidden from writing about it. [Several days later, after Israeli bloggers started ignoring the gag in a big way, it was removed — Ed.]

With the news blackout, any serious charge against Makhoul is unknown. A Petah Tikvah court extended his detention for six days and he is barred from consulting an attorney for at least two days. Makhoul had been barred from leaving the country in late April, by order of Interior Minister Eli Yishai.

No doubt Makhoul is a figure the Israeli government would love to keep quiet. He has been an outspoken critic of Israel, and he supports the international movement for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against the state. A year ago, he was interrogated by the Shin Bet for a day, and released, but he has never, as far as I can determine, been convicted of any crime or been demonstrated to have ties to any sort of terrorism. This would, then, seem to be a case where the state is obliged to publicly disclose the reason and nature of this arrest.

At this point, and lacking any information from the Israeli government, it seems very much as though Makhoul is being detained and severely harassed for exercising his right, under Israel's Basic Laws, to free speech and political expression.

Makhoul is one man, and perhaps we will learn something in coming days that offers some sort of explanation for what looks right now depressingly like KGB tactics. But the trend in Israel is moving toward a very frightening future; a future where most Jews will no longer be able to support Israel.

Israeli democracy is under siege, and it is no less stark than that. For years, peace groups in Israel have been warning that occupation cannot co-exist with democracy without one eventually strangling the other. It is no longer a theoretical argument.

Sure, in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa bubble, life feels as free as in any Western country. But the rising nationalism represented by fanatical groups like Im Tirtzu and moves by the government to unleash its own power from the watchful gaze of Israeli human rights groups are changing the very nature of the country. The idealism of Zionism has long since been surpassed by the cynicism of

Ido Erez



Ameer Makhoul's wife, Janan at 12 May demonstration outside court.

conflict, and that makes fertile soil for the continuing erosion of civil and human rights.

This is not just about how Israel treats the Palestinians, or even its own Arab citizens. Coupled with the ongoing problem of the disproportionate and anti-democratic influence of ultra-Orthodox segments of Israeli society, the erosion of rights is a dynamic that threatens every Israeli.

Consider even the words of Tzipi Livni, hardly anyone's idea of a raging liberal: "Israel 2010 is a country in which women ride in the back of the bus, dry bones take precedence over saving lives, conversion is a mission impossible, the Zionist vision has blurred and defining the Jewish state has been given to a monopoly of ultra-Orthodox politicians that are taking advantage of the system and politicians. Society is divided into cloistered groups, each studying in its language -- Hebrew, Arabic, Yiddish -- the curriculum it sees fit."

Livni is describing a society that is fractured and one where the gaps between groups are deepening. That also presents an opportunity for ultra-nationalist fervour to galvanise one segment of that society at the increased expense of another. When that society, one which was founded on high ideals, has maintained an occupation for 43 years which has been growing steadily more oppressive, consistently more disdainful of the rights of the occupied, it eventually turns a blind eye to the erosion of rights within its own borders.

The gag order on Anat Kamm's case involved her having

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leaked classified military documents to a reporter for *Haaretz*. One can at least argue that this was a security issue. But Ameer Makhoul's case does not, at this point, seem to have a security rationale.

Makhoul is a leading proponent of Palestinian identity among Arab citizens of Israel. This plays on the rising fear in Israel (one which has always existed, but has generally been trending downward over the decades



Author David Grossman at Sheikh Jarrah demo

until this past one) of an Arab "fifth column" within its borders. Makhoul's support for the BDS movement touches on the near hysteria this movement seems to generate among Israel and her supporters. And now, Makhoul is arrested at 3 AM, spirited away and his case is kept under wraps.

I'll say again that perhaps there will be some sort of explanation in the Makhoul case. But it no longer really matters. It is one more case in point demonstrating that Israel is simply tossing aside the democratic values that Jews

worldwide overwhelmingly embrace.

In the long run, Israel will face not only diplomatic isolation due to its unwillingness to halt its settlement project; it will also face declining Jewish support, down to a small corner of the right wing of the Jewish community. But this is far from a certain fate.

It can be averted by a change in Israeli actions and an increase in Jewish investment of values in the state. And for that to happen, liberal Jews in Israel and out, from Tel Aviv to San Francisco, must stop allowing the Jewish right to monopolise the shaping of both the state of Israel and of the nature of the pro-Israel community.

This is the call for the next generation of pro-Israel activists: take the face of Israel support away from the Marty Peretz, Ed Koches, Alan Dershowitzes and Abe Foxmans who refuse to admit that Israel's democratic structures, never entirely stable, are now under a mortal threat. They can't help with the problem if they won't even admit it is there.

In the 21st century, if Israel is to survive, it will only be because the new meaning of pro-Israel is not trumpeting Israel's shaky democracy, but defending and strengthening that democracy, making it the strong fabric Israel's founders thought it would be. That requires ending the occupation and allowing Palestinians their freedom, but it also requires true equality – in practice not just on paper — for all of Israel's citizens, freeing Israel from the grip of the rabbinate, and strengthening its courts and NGO communities.

Are there Jewish leaders willing to be truly pro-Israel?

Moshe Yaroni is the pseudonym of a Hebrew-speaking veteran US peace activist.

East Jerusalem in facts and figures

Less than 50 per cent of schoolchildren attend public schools; 1000 classrooms are missing; Only 3 Social Service Stations operate in East Jerusalem.

This past year East Jerusalem has been on everyone's agenda, making headlines in Israel and abroad. Unfortunately, despite all this attention, the harsh reality of everyday life of 300,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites remains unknown, ignored by both the authorities and the public.

Ahead of Jerusalem Day, marked on 12 May, the **Association of Civil Rights in Israel** published a new report titled *Human Rights in East Jerusalem: Facts and Figures 2010*. Presented to policy makers, Knesset members, Jerusalem municipality officials and the general public, the report provides up-to-date facts and figures about human rights violation in East Jerusalem.

Among the data published in the report:

- Poverty: 95,000 children below the poverty line
- - Education: Less than 50 per cent of schoolchildren attend public schools; 1000 classrooms are missing; 50 per cent dropout rate
- - Welfare: Only 3 Social Service Stations operate in East Jerusalem in comparison to 20 in the West
- - Home Demolitions: 80 homes were demolished in 2009, leaving 300 people without a roof over their heads
- - Planning and Building: Existing zoning plans for East Jerusalem are outdated and irrelevant; the Interior Minister is intentionally delaying the outline plan "Jerusalem 2000"
- - Residency Status: The Interior Ministry has escalated the revoking of residency status from Palestinian Jerusalemites
- - Sewage: Shortage of 50 km of drainage pipes; regular sewage overflow creates environmental hazards
- - Sanitation: Hundreds of streets do not receive garbage collection services; suitable dumpsters lack across East Jerusalem
- - Postal Services: 8 post offices operate in East Jerusalem compared with 42 in West Jerusalem
- - Civil Society: Pressure and harassment of community leaders and activists; Palestinian NGOs are shut down for undisclosed security reasons
- - Separation Barrier and Checkpoints: Jerusalem residents suffer long waiting periods at checkpoints, in violation of commitments made by the state to the High Court of Justice.

Gold stone, glass houses

Sasha Polakow-Suransky

The Israeli government has it in for Richard Goldstone. Ever since Goldstone, a Jewish South African judge, issued a report in September charging Israel (and Hamas) with war crimes during the January 2009 invasion of Gaza, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has attacked him -- and his report -- as a grave threat to Israel's legitimacy.

In early May, leading Israeli government officials escalated their campaign against Goldstone, [accusing him](#) of sending 28 black South Africans to their deaths while serving as a judge during the Apartheid years.

"The judge who sentenced black people to death ... is a man of double standards," Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin proclaimed. "Such a person should not be allowed to lecture a democratic state defending itself against terrorists." Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon insisted, "This so-called respected judge is using this report in order to atone for his sins," likening Goldstone's statement that he was forced to uphold the laws of an unjust regime to "explanations we heard in Nazi Germany after World War II."

And the newspaper [Yediot Acharonot](#) declared breathlessly that "the man who authored the Goldstone report criticising the IDF's actions during Operation Cast Lead took an active part in the racist policies of one of the cruellest regimes of the 20th century."

So did Israel's government.

Goldstone's Apartheid-era judicial rulings are undoubtedly a blot on his record, but his critics never mention the crucial part he played in shepherding South Africa through its democratic transition and warding off violent threats to a peaceful transfer of power -- a role that led Nelson Mandela to embrace him and appoint him to the country's highest court.

More importantly, Ayalon's and Rivlin's moralism conveniently ignores Israel's history of arming the Apartheid regime from the mid-1970s until the early 1990s. By serving as South Africa's primary and most reliable arms supplier during a period of violent internal repression and external aggression, Israel's government did far more to aid the Apartheid regime than Goldstone ever did.

The Israel-South Africa alliance began in earnest in April 1975 when then-Defence Minister Shimon Peres signed a secret security pact with his South African counterpart, P W Botha. Within months, the two countries were doing a brisk trade, closing arms deals totalling almost \$200 million; Peres even offered to sell Pretoria nuclear-capable Jericho missiles. By 1979, South Africa had become the Israeli defence industry's single largest customer, accounting for 35 per cent of military exports and dwarfing other clients such as Argentina, Chile, Singapore, and Zaire.

High-level exchanges of military personnel soon followed.

South Africans joined the Israeli chief of staff in March 1979 for the top-secret test of a new missile system. During Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, the Israeli army took South African Defence Force chief Constand Viljoen and his colleagues to the front lines, and Viljoen routinely flew visiting Israeli military advisers and embassy attachés to the battlefield in Angola where his troops were battling Angolan and Cuban forces.

There was nuclear cooperation, too: South Africa provided Israel with yellowcake uranium while dozens of Israelis came to South Africa in 1984 with code names and cover stories to work on Pretoria's nuclear missile program at South Africa's secret Overberg testing range. By



SA PM John Vorster in Jerusalem 1976. L to R: Menachem Begin, Moshe Dayan, Vorster, Yitzhak Rabin.

this time, South Africa's alternative sources for arms had largely dried up because the United States and European countries had begun abiding by the UN arms embargo; Israel unapologetically continued to violate it.

The blatant hypocrisy of the latest attack on Goldstone is nothing new. In November 1986, Binyamin Netanyahu, then Israel's UN ambassador, gave a stirring speech to the General Assembly denouncing

Apartheid and insisting that "Arab oil producers provide the umbilical cord that nourishes the Apartheid regime." (Never mind that Israel remained absent from the 1980 UN vote to impose an oil embargo on South Africa in deference to its friends in Pretoria.)

Netanyahu was right that Arab and Iranian oil was flowing through middlemen to the Apartheid regime, but he categorically denied Israel's extensive military and trade ties with South Africa, calling charges of lucrative arms sales "flat nonsense" and accusing his critics of trying "to defame Israel."

In fact, Israel was profiting handsomely from selling weapons to Pretoria at the time. Writing in the *New York Times*, Thomas Friedman estimated that the two countries did \$400 million to \$800 million of business in the arms sector in 1986. According to declassified South African documents, the figure was likely even greater: a single contract for modernisation of South African fighter jets in the mid-1980s amounted to "approximately \$2 billion," and arms sales in 1988 -- one year *after* Israel imposed sanctions against the Apartheid regime -- exceeded \$1.5 billion. As the former head of the South African Air Force Jan van Loggerenberg told me bluntly: "Israel was probably our only avenue in the 1980s."

Declassified South African arms-procurement figures (which exclude lucrative cooperative ventures and shared financing arrangements) reveal the full extent of Netanyahu's lie. The "independent IMF figures" he cited (which excluded diamonds and arms) suggested trade was a minuscule \$100 million annually. It was actually between five to ten times that amount -- depending on the year -- making the Apartheid regime Israel's second- or third-largest trading partner after the United States. Not all of the weapons Israel sold were used in external wars,

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Not just another burka column

Irfan Yusuf

In case you're wondering, this is not another one of those columns where a Muslim defends or attacks or expresses ambivalence about the burka. I am not going to enter the latest round of the burka mass debate. I'm not interested in burkas.

Why? Well, for a start, I don't wear one. My mum often says that I should wear one, especially when I'm having a bad facial hair day. Yes, it's true. I find shaving a pain in the face.

Another good reason not to write about burka is because I believe women should be allowed to do with their bodies what they wish. Whether they want to have an abortion or keep the product of a nasty sexual assault and/or incest is not my concern. Whether they shop at *Supre* or *Shukr* is none of my business. A woman's body is her own (and, if she believes in a supernatural being, her Creator's) business.

And there's yet another good reason to ignore burkas. Only a tiny proportion of Australian women tick the "Muslim" box on their census forms, and only a tiny proportion of these wear anything resembling a burka. Most of these women were born in Australia and are under 40. Their ancestors came from over 60 different countries.

Which makes me wonder -- when the Vice President of the Liberal Party argues that "any culture that believes only women should be covered in such a repressive manner is not consistent with the Australian culture and values", which culture is he referring to?

Then again, I'm not one of those moronic fruitloop fundamentalist politicians who wants to burn women at the stake for terminating a pregnancy. Or who wants to send women to jail for joining some Darth Vader Sisterhood.

I don't believe that Australia should turn into another Iran where religious police led by the likes of Ayatollah Cory Bernadi patrol our streets searching out those who dress in an un-Australian fashion. I believe that police should be granted greater resources to investigate and prosecute gender-based crimes like domestic violence and sexual assault.

The fact is that Australia is not a society where women are equal to men. If it was, we wouldn't have so many women applying for domestic violence orders, restraining orders etc in local and magistrates' courts across the country. A 2005 study from the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics showed that domestic violence episodes in NSW cities increased over the previous seven years by more than 40 per cent. So in around seven years time, domestic violence episodes would have doubled. And in regional towns the situation isn't much better.

According to Dr Michael Flood of La Trobe University, up to one third of Australian women will experience physical or sexual violence from a man at some point in their lives.

and there is no denying that Israeli arms helped prolong the rule of an immoral and racist regime.

Before casting stones from their glass house, Ayalon, Rivlin and Israeli journalists would do well to examine -- and acknowledge -- their government's own shameful

In the past year, around 10 per cent of women have experienced such violence. It doesn't just happen to women in burkas. If it was, it wouldn't cost our economy around \$13.6 billion.

And what about the attitudes of Australians towards physical and sexual violence? We still have 34 per cent of people believing that "rape results from men being unable to control their need for sex". Only around half the population believe that slapping and pushing a partner to cause harm or fear is a "very serious" form of violence.

When a large portion of 51 per cent of the community don't feel safe from a large portion of 49 per cent, I reckon we have a national security crisis on our hands which is far more serious than a couple of bank robbers who wear burkas instead of pantyhose on their heads.

I believe that politicians who rabbit on about burkas but devote hardly any time to violence against women across the community clearly don't regard such violence as an issue worth talking about. They obviously think it is perfectly acceptable that reported incidents of domestic violence are rising so sharply. It's as if in their small minds, women who wear burkas are un-Australian. Men who punch the crap out of their wives and girlfriends are true Australians.

In their miniscule minds, we're a nation where equality for women is a paramount value. We treat our women with respect. Real Aussie men respect women with their fists, knees, elbows and other respectful bits. The signs of this respect are gleefully displayed by tens of thousands of women in police stations, hospitals and court houses across the country -- bruises, black eyes, broken noses, cuts, broken bones.

If, as they say, Australia is a haven of gender equity, why waste time talking about burkas? Let's celebrate the freedoms we enjoy -- freedom to bash our wives (and, at worst, cop a two-year jail sentence) and freedom to be bashed by our husbands (and at best get some token restraining orders). Freedom to live in a country where perpetrators of sexual crimes more often than not get off scot-free because convicting anyone of such offences is extremely difficult.

So next time you hear your neighbour arguing with and threatening his wife, knock on his door and give him both a cricket bat and a flag. Tell him not to smash her face until he has draped himself with the flag. And remind him that, with each stroke, he's hitting a six for Australian values (or at least the values of certain Coalition backbenchers.).

See, I told you this wasn't going to be just another burka column.

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history of collaboration with the Apartheid regime.

Sasha Polakow-Suransky is author of *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Relationship with Apartheid South Africa* and a senior editor at *Foreign Affairs*, where this was first published.



Irfan Yusuf

The answer is Jon Stewart

M J Rosenberg

The *New York Times* has just published another major piece on the declining support for Israeli policies among American Jews. It is excellent reporting (replete with poll numbers) that confirms something most of us know: American Jews do not approve of the Israeli government, oppose the continued occupation, and support President Obama's policies over Prime Minister Netanyahu's.

And, least surprising of all, the "leadership" of the "major" Jewish organisations (AIPAC, American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League) speaks only for older Jews, and not for that many of them.

All this is obvious, especially to those with kids. In this context, the "kids" range from teenage to about 63 (ie the baby boomers -- born between 1946 and 1964 -- and their children). The Woodstock generation did not turn into an amen corner for our own government, let alone Israel's. And our kids are even less accepting of dogma.

This is especially true of the so-called Millennials. These are the children of the younger boomers and demographers call them Millennials because they came of age in around 2000. They are in their mid-20s to early 30s now.

I have an alternate label for them. They are the "Jon Stewart" generation. Whether they watch Stewart's *Daily Show* when it's broadcast or just on YouTube, he typifies their world view. Not surprisingly, he is a late Baby Boomer, about the age of the parents of the youngest of the Millennials.

And what is the worldview Stewart conveys? It is scepticism about any and all ideology, a belief that racial and ethnic boundaries between people are just plain dumb, and, above all, that true believers *in anything* are downright funny.

Not surprisingly, Jon Stewart is Jewish and assertively so. Being a Jew is part of his shtick. But he's clearly neither religious nor an ethnic chauvinist. As for his politics on Israel, I'd classify him as J Street. And that makes him typical of both the late boomers and their kids.

That is why all the free Birthright trips to Israel aren't changing anything. And it's why those cheering young AIPAC-ers do not represent anything.

The generation coming up now tries to think for themselves. And, although no smart kid would ever turn down a free trip to Washington, DC or to any foreign country with a beach, they take the propaganda with a grain of salt. It does not matter that they are told that the Palestinians are responsible for their own problems, these kids don't buy it. And neither do their parents (although their grandparents might).

I know a little about this from personal experience. I was

a pro-Israel activist back in my days on campus. I was the leader of about 50 kids (on a campus of several thousand) who tried to convince our indifferent fellow students of the importance of Israel.

I even was given a free trip to Israel where I was taught how to combat "anti-Israel" propaganda on campus. (It was not just a week, like the Birthright trip, but two free and wonderful months.)

All my friends (or almost all) felt about Israel the way I did then. We were an embattled minority, but we knew we were right. (The occupation, still new, was infinitely less onerous than it is now. There were no more than a few thousand settlers. And, back then, no Arab state recognised Israel's right to exist.)

Today, not one of my friends from those days feels the way we did then. It is not so much that our feeling for Israel disappeared, but that the situation changed. Even in the 1970s, none of us would have supported a settler-dominated Israeli government or the horrific Gaza war.

But there is another element as well.



M J Rosenberg



Jon Stewart has the occasional pro-Palestinian advocates, such as author Anna Baltzar and Civil society leader Mustafa Barghouti on his show.

Campus ethos

Even in those days, pro-Israel American kids were uncomfortable straying too far from the general campus ethos. Those were the days of the anti-war movement. Fortunately back then, Israel seemed to be pursuing peace while the Arabs weren't. There wasn't all that much space between us and our fellow students. The government in Israel was socialist, for heaven's sake, and the country's huge agricultural sector was dominated by communes! Israel was not that hard to defend.

But today there is a massive gap between the overall ethos and the pro-Israel one. Liberal young people, the kids who came out in unprecedented numbers for Obama, are not going to support Israeli policies designed to perpetuate an occupation by expelling Palestinians from their homes to make room for settlers. And the last thing that will convince them to support what they know is wrong is by telling them that "as Jews" they must. Or, God forbid, mentioning the Holocaust to justify those policies. They don't think that way. And history tells us that they never will.

Luckily, all is not lost for those of us who do care about Israel. No, the kids are not going to come around to seeing Israel as central in their lives. (It isn't -- they live here.) But an Israel that establishes peace with the Palestinians, that brings the settlers home, that ends the tyranny of the

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Farewell Lena Horne

Brandon Wallace

Lena Horne, actress, singer, and civil rights pioneer, was one of the most talented and influential women of her generation. Born in 1917 in an upper middleclass home in Brooklyn, New York, she was raised by her grandmother and grandfather, Cora and Edwin Horne. Lena found an early inspiration for the course she would take in life in the person of her grandmother, Cora Calhoun Horne. Cora Calhoun was a seasoned political activist, recognised during her lifetime as a major suffragist and one of the pioneers of the Niagara Movement, the movement that led to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP). Under her grandmother's guidance, Lena became a member of the NAACP as a toddler. Along with her social and political activism, Cora Calhoun was also a philanthropist and an advocate of education for Blacks.

In 1917, Cora Calhoun secured a scholarship that allowed a young Paul Robeson to attend Rutgers University. This legacy inspired an intense friendship between Lena Horne and Paul Robeson in later years.

At fifteen, Horne left her grandparent's home in order to live with her mother, Edna, an aspiring actress and former debutante. At sixteen, in an effort to support herself and contribute to the family income, she took a job performing in the chorus at the Cotton Club in Harlem. At the Cotton Club, Horne was influenced by such major figures as Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington.

After a while, she joined the orchestra of famed band leader Noble Sissle and toured the country. Horne first earned fame and recognition with his orchestra. She has credited Sissle's mentorship as the bedrock on which she built her future career.

In 1941, Lena Horne signed a contract with MGM Studios. She became the first Black actress to sign a long term contract with a major Hollywood studio. Considered too light to appear on screen in Black roles, the studio commissioned Max Factor to create a special make-up, known as "Dark Egyptian," to darken her skin. Her first major role came in 1942's *Panama Hattie*. In the film, she played a singer whose on screen performance had nothing to do with the plot. The reason for this was so the studios could cut out the role (as well as those of other Black performers) when the film was screened in the South, where Black performers could not be portrayed in major roles on screen. She followed

Panama Hattie with her two most successful efforts in Hollywood, *Cabin in the Sky* and *Stormy Weather*, both released in 1943. Both films were major Hollywood musicals that featured all black casts. *Stormy Weather* gave Lena her signature song. Since that time, the song has been identified with Horne and has been a hallmark of her long, illustrious career.

Beginning in the 1950s, Horne was blacklisted by Hollywood and the entertainment industry because of her friendship with Paul Robeson, her dedication to progressive politics, and her outspokenness on racial issues. Lena Horne literally embodied the turmoil of racial politics in the United States. Through the Calhoun family, she was the great-great-granddaughter of the staunchest pro-slavery senator to sit in the United States senate before the Civil War, Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. Her passion for justice matched his fervent calls for human bondage. During World War II, while performing on a USO tour, Lena decisively left the front of the room where the white soldiers sat along with several German prisoners of war and moved to the back of the room to sing for the Black soldiers. Horne was one of the earliest participants in the Civil Rights struggles of the 1950s and was a participant in the 1963 March on Washington. She was a close ally of Paul Robeson during his troubles with the United States government and the entertainment industry.

Horne has said, "Whatever petitions I've signed or benefits I've played I've not done because I had any broad or deep political program I was pushing. I had just learned from my father and from my grandmother not to take any nonsense from anybody."

In 1978, Horne played Glenda the Good Witch in the Diana Ross/Sidney Lumet classic film, *The Wiz*.

This tribute obituary was submitted to *Portside*.



(Continued from page 12)

Orthodox in matters that should be left to civil authorities, will have their support. Not their allegiance -- their support.

Imagine a leader like Yitzhak Rabin rising to power again. Better, imagine Rabin himself. I can see him walking on to Jon Stewart's set to the roaring applause of the audience. I can see Stewart treating him with the deep respect and affection he would feel, and even trying (unsuccessfully) to make Rabin laugh. I can see the kids at home watching and thinking that Israel seems like a cool place. They might even be willing to pay their own way there. I can see pride in Israel taking hold.

Of course, it's only a dream. Rabin is dead. But today, as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Theodor Herzl, it is more than appropriate to say, as he did, that dreams do sometimes become reality. In 1897, he said that in 50 years there would be a Jewish state. The world - including Jews - laughed. But in 1947, right on schedule, the United Nations passed a resolution that gave Israel its birth certificate.

MJ Rosenberg is the former Director of Policy Analysis for Israel Policy Forum (IPF). From 1982 to 1986, he was editor of Near East Report, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's (AIPAC's) fortnightly publication on Middle East Policy.

Why Ronald McDonald has no business talking to children

Raj Patel

Unionist Angela Budai clinched the argument for publishing this by telling us: It mirrors much of my own concerns with having young children and knowing that in every Australian food court it is cheaper to buy a "Happy Meal" complete with toy than a Vegemite sandwich and a bottle of water.

In 1963, Ronald McDonald broke every rule in advertising when he turned to the lens and stunned children by speaking to them directly, saying:

"Here I am, kids. Hey, isn't watching TV fun? Especially when you got delicious McDonald's hamburgers. I know we're going to be friends too 'cause I like to do everything boys and girls like to do. Especially when it comes to eating those delicious McDonald's hamburgers."

It's easy both to wince at how crass this sounds, and to overlook its audacity. With entire TV channels premised on direct marketing to children, it seems impossible that there might have been a time when kids were considered anything other than shorter, louder, more pestering versions of adult consumers. But it wasn't always thus. It took a canny cabal of admen to tap the pockets of a newly affluent generation of youngsters. They wanted to redefine the frontiers of what advertising in the television age could be. And they succeeded.

Today, the McDonald's corporation boasts that their frontman is more recognisable than Santa Claus. He's the champion of a \$32 billion brand. With a wink and a smile, Ronald has charged into

neighbourhoods around and inside schools, targeting children with a range of unhealthy food, plumbing every depth to keep his parent company's arches golden and bright in the minds of impressionable young eaters.

Adversing is supreme

McDonald's and other fast food corporations shelter behind the fact that their advertising is "free speech," as protected by the First Amendment to the US Constitution and that, in any case, the corporations clearly declare their commercial intentions. So, for instance, when children go to Ronald.com to play McD-themed games they'll see in small white letters on a pale background at the top right the words: "Hey kids. This is advertising!" This isn't terribly helpful. Although children may know that something is advertising, they are unlikely to understand what, exactly, that means.

Michele Simon, a lawyer and author of *Appetite for Profit*,

tells it straight: "McDonald's knows that vulnerable children are the perfect advertising audience, since they don't even know they're being marketed to." She suspects that for the group brave enough, and with deep enough pockets, there's a huge and successful lawsuit to be brought against McDonald's (and against all advertising against children) for deceptive practices. She's backed up by the medical profession: the American Academy of Paediatrics says that "advertising directed toward children is inherently deceptive and exploits children under eight years of age." In other words, the very idea of advertising to children is a fraud. Children are simply unable to generate and entertain rational opinions about goods and services, which cuts away the argument that advertising is just a more entertaining version of truth-telling. When it comes to children, advertising is far closer to brainwashing.

Parents are being hoodwinked too. One of the reasons that kids are permitted by pestered parents to enter a McDonald's is the possibility that they might choose a healthy meal when they're there. As Wendi Gosliner, a researcher at the Centre for Weight and Health at UC Berkeley observes, "Not one of the 24 Happy Meal combinations offered

contains the foods and nutrients children need to meet the dietary guidelines. Now, they're promoting processed fresh apples dipped in caramel sauce and sweetened milk as 'healthy' choices. Well, these meals and these choices are hurting our children's health."

There's a bigger picture story here too. Ronald isn't just a clown. He's

not just a pioneer in the marketing of food to children: he's also an architect. Without him, the food system we have today would look very different. Here and around the world, the way food is grown, subsidised, processed and eaten has been fashioned by the needs of the McDonald's corporation.

Intertwined economies

More sales for the clown mean bigger returns for Cargill and Tyson's factory farms, Archer Daniels Midland's high fructose corn syrup processing plants, and Monsanto's pesticide production facilities. [Or in Australia's case, FJ Walker, Ingham chickens, Buttercup bakeries and Kraft cheese.] And it's our tax dollars that go into everything from the cheap commodities that they depend on, to the small business loans and tax credits that allow fast food franchises to breed in and around our schools. For these

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subsidies, and for the lax regulations around health and advertising to children, the fast food industry has spent millions in lobbying fees, and aggressively courted political favour. Ronald McDonald may have a big smile, but his shoes are steel-tipped.

Cheat food

Ultimately, McDonald's cheap food is cheat food. Ronald is more of a Hamburglar, dipping into our pockets with our children's fingers, and leaving us with bills for long afterward. We pay for it all in the end. [The cost of diabetes in Australia is \$120 for every man, woman and child. The diabetes rate is much higher among Indigenous Australians.]

There are alternatives, of course. The sustainable agriculture that thrives in farmers' markets and cooperatives don't get the billions in subsidies that industrial agriculture does. Yet from the moment they are exposed to TV, our children are subject to the manipulations of Ronald and his friends. Corporations spend \$17 billion a year turning children into consumers. Globally, for every dollar spent promoting food that's good for you, \$500 is spent promoting junk.

For a parent wanting their kids to eat well, those are tough odds. Especially for those parents on restricted income.

Times are changing, though. Despite the millions that McDonald's spends in advertising, and despite most people having a favourable impression of Ronald as a consequence, a new survey shows that most parents who have kids under 18 want Ronald to go. The Corporate Accountability International, an organisation which I advise, has

released a terrific report entitled *Clowning with Kid's Health: The Case for Ronald McDonald's Retirement*, in which the survey data on Ronald is presented, and some tight legal and epidemiological arguments against him are made.

This isn't some curmudgeonly attack on fun. For those who want to watch clowns, there'll always be circuses and cable news. And it's certainly the case that there are bigger questions here. Why is it that junk food is cheaper than healthy food? Why is there persistent poverty driving people into the arms of the junk food industry? Why isn't there real choice in the US [or Australian] diet?

Public health issues

But as a matter of public health, as a way to give parents the chance to get their children eating well, as a way of making it possible to have fun with food without spending scarce cash on unhealthy food, the clown's gotta go.

There is a precedent: Joe Camel, once more widely recognised than Mickey Mouse, is now a symbol of shame for the cigarette industry. Sure, cigarettes are themselves bad, but worse was the conscious attempt by the industry behind them to hook kids on a lifetime of ill health. We're at a similar moment in the transformation of our food system. There's lots to do to transform how we eat, but along the way we all need to recognise that parents need the space to be able to feed their kids well, to give the next generation the freedom to choose to eat healthily, and to build a more sustainable food system. As part of that, and I'm talking to you here, it's time to retire Ronald.

Raj Patel is an activist, academic and author of *Stuffed and Starved* and more recently *The Value of Nothing*.

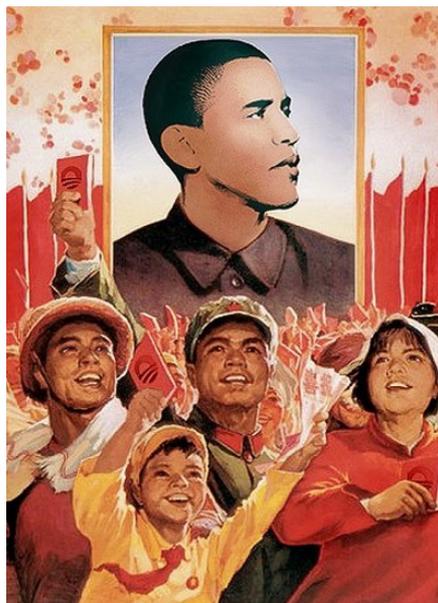
Red Dawn comes up... again

Steve Brook

By 1984, the Cold War was clearly sputtering to a halt. The economy of the USSR was almost at a standstill and the Russians were looking less demonic than they had for years. Time to revive the monster, thought many of those who had made a comfortable living out of the Cold War. So the film *Red Dawn* was hatched and displayed, to get reviews ranging from negative to sulphurously negative.

It depicted a successful Soviet-Cuban-Nicaraguan invasion of the United States, during which a group of high school students, calling themselves Wolverines after their school's football team, eventually beat the invaders by a combination of guts, patriotism and good ole American know-how.

In Australia the film disappeared without a trace, but not so in the US. In 2003, after the invasion of Iraq, the American army's hunt for Saddam Hussein was named Operation Red Dawn, and two sub-operations were titled Wolverine 1 and Wolverine 2. No coincidence.



Much water has gone under the bridge since then. Iraq is relatively calm, with explosions on a daily rather than an hourly basis; the Middle East remains a seething mess. But the US has a new President, a man quite unlike his predecessors. Obama is literate, forthright and as honest as one can be within the American system. He favours negotiation towards a two-state solution in the Middle East. And he is hated with a vehemence unknown in American politics possibly since the Civil War.

As one American columnist wrote, Obama has no opponents – he has bitter enemies who draw the line at nothing to thwart the will of the millions of electors who voted for him.

And surprise, surprise, there's an updated version of *Red Dawn* on the way, to be released here in November. According to internet blogs, Obama, by weakening the US's defences, has deliberately rendered the country vulnerable to foreign invasion. But this time around it isn't the Martians or the Russians – it's the Chinese. Our picture, from the film's pre-publicity, says it all. I can't wait for November.

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