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Series D: International Relations Activities. 1961-1992

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P.S. Please do not circulate this and shall be attempting to find an acceptable periodical.

From RABBI SHERWOOD H. WEIL

February 22

Dear Rabbi Tannenbaum,
Enclosed is a copy of the article I have worked up on South Africa. I've tried to pack a lot into a few pages and am concerned about superficiality, however, it's all I've got on paper right now. *Fordest regards*
Sherwood Weil

The Jews of South Africa: Another Interpretation

by Sherwood H. Weil

I have not spoken to Dick Lampert since June, 1976. It was then that I phoned many of my friends to bid a sad farewell. After living in Cape Town for four years, and sharing in the affairs of the Jewish Community of South Africa, I had come to know and love many friends.

Leaving meant more than the mere adios, or shalom which easily rolls off the tongue and does not involve one's guts; my friends and I knew we might never see one another again.

Since then, Dick Lampert preached a sermon to his congregation, which inspired quick and active response. It was on Yom Kippur. A member of the congregation considered the rabbi's message to be stimulatingly controversial and reported the matter to the security police. The rabbi was visited at home by the security branch. They carefully perused his library shelves, searching for banned books no doubt, and, regardless of what they said (South African Police are ordinarily quite polite) they scared the hell out of Dick and his family. The irony lies in the fact that Dick loves his country and its peoples. He speaks English and Afrikaans and deeply appreciates the ethnic identity of the Afrikaner. It was he who laughed at my reasons for wanting to get my family out of that country. He had visited the U.S. only months before and was thrilled to return home. Why, he asked, would anyone in his right mind want to leave so beautiful and wide a land, a country of majesty, human and mineral resources? I am afraid to write to him now. I somehow feel that my interest may inspire the

security branch to pay another call. I also believe that my previous letters to him were not delivered. I do not want to be the cause of further embarrassment or heartache for Dick. However, I do want to make public the dilemma with which Jews live in South Africa.

Although South Africa is in the news nearly every day, there is an abysmal lack of understanding among informed Americans of the problems confronting that society; the complexity of South African politics is kaleidoscopic. There are at least nine African tribes, or nations, two major white groupings, the Coloured Community, the Indian and Malay Communities as well as peripheral white groups such as Jews, Italians and Greeks. Rarely do any of these groups agree on anything.

South African Jews are undoubtedly part of the white population. It is perfectly legal for Jews to marry non-Jews (providing they are white), to live in those parts of cities and towns reserved for white occupancy, to hold any job in the economy, to eat in restaurants, attend theaters without restriction, and fully participate in sports. Like other whites, Jews cannot marry non-whites, enter non-white areas after dark without the appropriate government pass, or have lunch out with a black colleague or black friend. Jews are also subject to South Africa's security legislation which permits the arrest and indefinite incarceration of anyone deemed a security threat, by the Minister of Police, with no recourse possible through the courts. There is no Bill of Rights. There is no separation of the powers of government. These unique institutions of American Law are not part of the parliamentary form of government as practiced in South Africa. The legislature writes the laws, the executive, being a branch of the parliament enforces them, and the judiciary, though independent,

has the power only to determine the merits of particular cases. There is no mandate by which the judiciary reviews legislation. Consequently, security laws which fly in the face of human decency and which echo the decrees of other tyrannies cannot be thrown out by the courts. A judge can decide who is guilty or innocent, but if the accused is never brought to trial the entire facade of justice cracks.

What constitutes a threat to state security? Why was a rabbi "interviewed" after criticizing his country's government from the pulpit? Outside of the obvious activities of terrorists and real or imagined subversives, just about any political activity can be interpreted to fit the bill. For example, on November 18th and 19th, 1976, the New York Times reported the arrest of nine men who were aiding black workers in their efforts to organize a labor union. The black worker has no rights. He lives in a township in which most homes deserve to be condemned and demolished because they are unfit for human habitation. His wages are pathetically low. Work stoppages or strikes result in hungry black children and have little effect on industry. The black worker pays taxes, but free education is provided only for white children. This is to say nothing of the migratory, contract labor system whereby black men leave their homes to work in cities. They cannot bring their families with them. In many cases they will visit their wives and children for only one month a year. The alternative is starvation for them all. There are many nuances, and the grosser aspects of apartheid are already well known.

The Jew who lives in this environment has a number of choices. He can close his eyes to the realities of South African Life and enjoy the material fruits of a high standard of living. He thereby tacitly cooperates with the structure and, perhaps, contributes to its success. Or, he can become an exponent of the cause and actually join in the effort to suppress criticism of the government. He can also emigrate, leaving behind family and lifelong friends, as well as the majority of his material wealth (South Africa has a limit to the amount of capital an emigrating family can take out of the country). Those who, unfortunately, have joined themselves to the Afrikaaner cause and who have supported the government's tragically stupid policies have chosen the coward's response. Few Jews have done so, for this requires making friends with arrogance, bigotry and white supremacy. Those who disagree with government policies but love the country of their birth hope for the best but continue, it is true, to enjoy the advantages of white people in South Africa.

The majority of Jews are, in fact, in disagreement with the Nationalist Party's program and they vote for one or another of the opposition parties which, though articulate, are politically powerless in the face of the overwhelming majority of the Nationalist Party in Parliament.

Jewish youth are quiet. Student activist groups, when they arise are rapidly infiltrated by the Security Police and broken up. Public protest is not a legal right in South Africa. Such gatherings, when they occur, are immediately confronted by strong, if, at first, polite police action; the leaders are arrested or banned.

Others simply emigrate to England, Australia, the United States or Israel. Those who leave are often highly qualified doctors, dentists, teachers, technicians and scientists. This "brain-drain" weakens the Jewish and general community, and actually exacerbates the problem by skimming off many of those who might function as valued members of a meaningful opposition.

From an American's point of view the Southern African problem seems to be fairly cut and dried. With an iron hand, a white minority government rules a disenfranchised black majority. This is immoral and requires reactions of revulsion and righteous indignation. For American Jews it is particularly puzzling that South African Jews, for the most part, sit idly by, do not cry out prophetically against the sins of their society, but fully participate in the easy life-style even though they know better. They may privately voice their dismay over their government's actions. However, they choose the easy privilege of South African Whites rather than the moral stance of opponents to tyranny.

But the simple answer is inadequate, the glib judgement is insufficient. It does not account for the complex reasons South Africa is the way it is, nor for the serious difficulties that country's history imposes upon the present. It does not account for traditional Afrikaaner respect for Jews, generous contributions by Afrikaans speaking South Africans to the Israel emergency war fund in 1973, nor the good diplomatic and economic ties binding Israel to South Africa. If any understanding of South Africa and South African Jews is to be achieved it is not through smugly self-righteous denunciations of co-religionists who choose to remain in the country of their birth (in many cases the country of the birth of their fathers and grandfathers as well).

It is true that Jews born in South Africa legally enjoy all privileges attending to that country's white population. However, when Jewish objections are raised to the National Education Act, for example, which makes Christianity an integral part of the public school curriculum, Jews are reminded that they are living in a Christian Country. The same applies to adherents of Islam whose children are receiving Christo-centric education in the government schools for non-whites. As a result of this evangelical attempt to convince each child that "Jesus is his or her personal savior" Jews are rapidly subsidizing the expansion and further construction of day schools.

Jewish children remaining in the government (public) schools can be released from the religious education classes upon the request of the parent, but such release often takes the form of the child being sent to the rear of the classroom to read or do homework while the religious lesson proceeds. In the Cape Province a program organized by the Jewish Community sends teachers into the schools to offer the Jewish Children their own religious instruction classes. Problems then arise in arriving at an approach acceptable to Jews of all persuasions. Additional problems are created for the synagogue centered religious schools which are meeting the new difficulty of rewriting their materials because the children are now receiving their Jewish Education at public school. There is the possibility that synagogues and Temples in the community will be weakened by the attrition in their schools; however, my experience has led me to believe that the opposite is the case. Youth work, for example, is only beginning to be explored in meaningful ways.

The benefit to children participating in youth programs centered in the religious institutions will more than make up for the diminishing need for synagogue and temple schools. Furthermore, the children and youth receive inducement to attend youth programs as they become increasingly isolated from their non-Jewish peers. The South African Jewish Community now boasts four national Zionist Youth Movements involving several hundred youngsters. While there is no doubt that there is reticence among some segments of the community concerning Zionism, South Africans have a better record as Zionist supporters than do American Jews. Furthermore, South Africans who make Aliyah, are far less likely to return to South Africa than are their American counterparts who have a high rate of return from attempted Aliyah.

There is no separation of church and state in South Africa. The national Christian Education Program is also exacerbating latent anti-Semitism because the Jewish Community is withdrawing its children from government schools in greater numbers. Children, therefore, do not have the benefit of peer group interchange with those of different faith and cultural background. This breaking down of the general community is not out of context for South Africa, however, as children of English and Afrikaans background have long attended separate schools. In English schools English is the language in which instruction is given. In Afrikaans schools the language of presentation is Afrikaans. There are few English Schools in country areas and Jews who live in the farming regions send their children to boarding schools in the cities or to the local Afrikaans School where their Jewishness becomes a very tenuous commodity. Within the Jewish community in the cities tension

often arises between children who attend day schools and those who do not, adding yet another stratum of complexity to an already complex set of variables.

How is it that South African Citizens are not quite at home in their country? How is it that the Afrikaaner will remark that the Jew is not really a South African, but a guest, a foreign people in South Africa and that the English are still Colonials?

Concerning the Jews, the Afrikaaner is a Zionist. His own nationalism and ethnicity, comprising a history (with attendant myths and legends), a unique language and religion, dominates his world-view. As the Afrikaaner believes that South Africa is his country so he believes that Israel is the land of the Jews! He, therefore, considers the Jew who does not live in Israel to be somewhat weak in character. The remark that the Jew is a guest nation in the land of the Afrikaaner is not a traditional form of anti-Semitism. Jews are not persecuted. The institutions of our people are not defiled. Relations with governmental leaders and with bureaucrats are cordial and polite. On several occasions I had reason to contact government agencies and invariably received courteous, helpful responses.

There is respect for the Jewish Clergy and community leadership among the Afrikaans speaking people and a willingness to have Jews live in South Africa and participate in its economy to the fullest -- but this tolerance does not extend to politics. Politics and the welfare of the state are the province of the Afrikaaner and he will not kindly

accept criticism or opposition activity from people who are guests in his country (Jews) or descendants of Colonials (English) or conquered nations (Black Africans).

This analysis of Afrikaaner Nationalism, perhaps, requires further development. Were we to consider the history of South Africa we would find that the Cape Colony was established early in the 1650's when Jan van Riebeeck arrived with colonists who were responsible for the establishment of a food and watering station for the ships of the Dutch East India Company. By the 1750's the Dutch settlers had given birth to white African people. As they settled and cultivated the land they coped with harrassment and conflict with the indigenous Hotentot and Bushman population. Later on, the English arrived to take the settlement as a part of their empire. By the time the British exercised their Imperial might in South Africa, however, the descendants of the Dutch and the few Hugenot families who had joined them had become the Afrikaaner people. From their point of view the British conquered a white African country and were not merely setting up shop in a backward, "uncivilized" territory. The British-Afrikaaner encounter culminated in the Boer War. The Afrikaaner also fought numerous battles with Black African Tribes who were colonizing Southward from central Africa. One of the quirks of South African History is that the Black and the White settlers arrived in a relatively uninhabited land at the same time. During the first three hundred years of his history the Afrikaaner tried in vain to establish his own country. With the breakup of the British Empire and the taking on of independent status the Afrikaaner finally gained control of the country he believes to be his own, God given land. (It is important to recognize that Afrikaaner Nationalism

is in part a religious phenomenon tied to one of the wars between a small white army and a large Zulu force.) In 1948, when the Nationalist party won control of the Parliament and in 1960 when full independence was declared the Afrikaaner ideology was fulfilled. In order to safeguard his country and assure that it would not be taken from him again he set about building an industrial economy, separating racial groups and tying them down to defined geographical locations, and erecting the artificial, legal barriers of the policy called apartheid.

The government of South Africa perceives any strenuous objection to its rule as sedition or subversion because of fear and insecurity. Its fear is founded upon the belief that its land will be taken away again. Its insecurity lies in the never articulated knowledge that its policies are morally reprehensible and regressive responses to the needs of the African sub-continent. The white minority government in Rhodesia is not considered absolutely necessary by South Africa because Rhodesian whites are primarily British. Therefore, even the Afrikaaner can agree with black leaders that the Smith government is an extension of colonialism! Whether one agrees or disagrees with the Afrikaaner concerning his nationalism and religious belief in his right to rule South Africa, the fact remains that, unlike former British subjects, foreign nationals or Jews, the Afrikaaner has no claim on the passport of another country. Unlike the people of Portuguese descent who left Angola and Mozambique for the mother country, the Afrikaaner cannot return to the land of his ancestors. He has no claim on Dutch citizenship; he has no other country.

There are solutions to the dilemma, but they will prove painful. Whites will have to relinquish their unbridled privilege. The Afrikaaner will have to awaken to the reality that his national ideology is based upon a mentality that is as tribal and primitive as the tribalism he often criticizes in the Black nations who, by the way, are not united in religion, language, cultural traditions nor political aims. The Afrikaaner has a right to his religion, his language and his cherished ethnic identity. He does not, however, have the right to utilize this identity as a means of denying the majority of the people living within the state: political power, a voice in the education of their children, adequate housing, common equity nor human dignity.

For the Jew in South Africa, the enigma deepens as the crisis in his country widens. Does one remain and attempt to work for the improvement of the society or does one accept the Afrikaaner definition of South Africa and cut and run, perhaps, in the long run contributing to an even greater conflagration? There is no easy answer. There is no doubt that the Jews have had a good life and have lived unmolested in South Africa. Some are copious consumers of the worst that is South African life. Many, if not a majority, are fair-minded. They are not wont to always treat blacks unfairly and often manage their own attache' cases and suitcases at airports and train stations. Availing themselves of porters at such facilities is no more, or less, obnoxious than it is when travelling in the U.S. providing one is courteous and generous. It is not easy to leave the land of one's birth, be you an American, a South African, or a German, especially when one is, for the most part, a member of the privileged elite. Jews who decide to stay and to continue their efforts to live meaningfully in a sea of iniquity

are no more guilty than was Lot when he lived on in Sodom, the ancient city of wickedness. While the search continues for the righteous people who will lead South Africa out of the Cul de Sac down which it still travels, perhaps Jews have the responsibility to stay -- but only if they awaken to their moral, religious responsibilities, only if, like Dick Lampert, they speak out against policies which can only result in confrontation, bloodshed and pain. Speaking out unequivocally and acting in defiance of South African law requires courage, not mere sentiment. Jews will have to stop hiding their true feelings from visiting dignitaries, and cease playing the part of the "liberal" humanitarians who supply jobs to poor people in their homes -- jobs as maids, nannies and cooks which pay dreadfully low wages. If the Jewish community in South Africa survives the rising tidal wave of Black power it will be as a result of true courage, personal risk by worthy leaders, total rejection of Nationalist Party legitimacy and the forsaking of privilege.

SUMMARY REPORT OF TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA

FEBRUARY 15 - MARCH 7

DAVID PETERSON

My long overdue third visit to South Africa was very productive. In three weeks I met 17 of the 23 advisors it was possible to see (three were not in South Africa, two are in detention), viewed at least 20 projects or potential projects, interviewed six of more than thirty applicants for the position of field organizer, and met with other South Africans for a total of about 80 formal meetings. I went on a three-day field trip with Operation Hunger to Lebowa and Gazankulu, visited Cape Town, Crossroads, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Edendale, Johannesburg, Alexandra, Soweto, Sebokeng, Pretoria and many other towns. Despite the radical political developments in the year since I was last there, I am convinced that Project South Africa is in a stronger position than ever to contribute to the process of genuine non-violent, democratic change.

I had six questions to ask our advisors: 1) Should Project South Africa accept funds from the U.S. Agency for International Development or the National Endowment for Democracy (a quasi-governmental agency) to distribute to South African organizations that have been approved for assistance? 2) Do the advisors have any recommendations for a field organizer? 3) Are the advisors satisfied with the quality of the groups that have been approved? 4) What procedures should we use to get funds to approved projects? 5) What technical and political precautions should the Project take? and, 6) Should the Project restructure its advisory group?

1) There was a surprising consensus on the first question. Most advisors seemed to believe that there is now less resistance in the community towards receiving funds from the U.S. government. As long as there are no strings attached and no propaganda is made of it such funds could serve a beneficial purpose in assisting community organizations.

U.S. government funds would still raise suspicions among some groups, if not among the advisors. When I put this question to community groups being assisted by Project South Africa most said it would be a matter they would have to bring before the membership. In general, they advised caution. If such monies were to be accepted, Project South Africa would have to be completely open about the source. Some advisors felt NED would cause confusion. In any case such funds should probably comprise no more than half our total budget.

However, for the Project to take on the burden of itself distributing funds on a larger scale would distract it from its original objective of creating links between American and South African organizations. The Project could become one more American funding agency with little to distinguish it from what USAID and many other foundations are already doing. Reporting procedures might also consume an inordinate amount of time and resources.

After discussion upon my return to New York, it was decided that the Project would not, in the near future, initiate an application to USAID or NED for funding South African groups. If, however, a South African group requests that

funds from USAID or NED come through the Project, we could be willing to assist in this after consultation with our advisors.

2) Our advisors offered many suggestions about what to look for in a field organizer and proposed quite a few candidates, some of whom Barbara Nell, our South African coordinator, and I subsequently interviewed. We also ran an ad in the New Nation. Altogether, we received more than thirty applications. Our main criteria were that the organizer be black, able to speak several languages, be familiar with community work and acceptable to community groups, and be highly motivated and competent. The organizer will have the highest profile of anyone involved with the Project and the success or failure of the Project will depend greatly on that person's performance. I was advised that female candidates and organizing or trade union experience should be sought. We should pay between R 1200 and 1800 a month, with a car and insurance package.

Barbara and I were impressed with the high quality of many of the applicants we interviewed. We have narrowed the field down to about six, and it will be Barbara's task to cull these to the final one or two, in consultation with some of our advisors. Once we have hired an organizer we would like for that person to begin by becoming familiar with the Project through meeting with as many of our advisors and project people as possible.

3) The advisors seemed quite satisfied in general with the organizations that have applied for assistance to the Project lately. As before, our advisors emphasized that the Project should be empowering grassroots community organizations that might not otherwise be able to find help and that would most benefit from the kind of moral and material assistance the Project seeks to provide. At some point the Project may decide to drop some of the better-funded organizations from our list.

4) The Project now has a modest discretionary fund that we are proceeding to distribute, according to the recommendations of our advisors, among the groups that seem to need such assistance the most.

5) The advisors generally felt that the Project should continue its activity as it has, remaining low-profile and cautious. Many felt that our activity is quite innocent, but that we cannot avoid being considered political. If the authorities decide they don't want us around, we can be shut down no matter how we behave. The New York office will remain careful not to jeopardize our advisors or staff in South Africa.

6) There seemed to be much sentiment among the advisors for expanding the advisory group with more members who would have better contacts at the grassroots. I collected the names of about 24 candidates, but we will want our new organizer to assist in finding more. Eventually, their names will be submitted to the current advisors for approval. In the future an attempt will be made to circulate project applications among advisors on a more regional or area-of-expertise basis. Advisors who wish to receive all applications will still be able to. All advisors will receive at least brief descriptions of all projects that have applied for assistance.

Those advisors who feel they can no longer evaluate applications, but who continue to endorse the general aims of Project South Africa can have themselves listed as patrons. Several advisors have already indicated a desire to be listed this way.

SO J'F AFRICA REVISED

By David Peterson

In the wake of South Africa's depressing whites-only election results and nearly a year of the State of Emergency, South Africa's cycle of escalating repression and resistance shows no signs of subsiding.

The South African government has not crushed its opposition. Perhaps it has taught it some lessons or sobered it up. Compared to the South African Defense Forces' massive firepower, the ANC's limpet bombs or the young "comrades'" molotov cocktails might as well be bows and arrows. The government finds such violence easy to control and manipulate for its own ends.

"It is the non-violence they are most afraid of," opposition leaders such as Rev. Beyers Naude, of the South African Council of Churches, emphasize.

When I visited South Africa in March, 1986, the Revolution was at hand, or so it seemed to many. Six hundred anti-apartheid organizations had banded together to form the UDF (United Democratic Front), which was growing in size, influence, militancy, and confidence. Trade unions were also growing rapidly and had merged into a new federation, COSATU.

Community organizations were usurping the government's control of the townships and refusing to pay rents. Students were staging massive boycotts of the schools. Economic boycotts were wringing concessions from businessmen. ANC, the exiled African National Congress, seemed to be on everyone's lips. Every day the newspapers reported more violence.

A year later I returned to find that the State of Emergency, declared on June 16, has hit South Africa's democratic opposition movement hard. Thirty thousand have been jailed; thousands more have gone into hiding, fled the country, or been intimidated by the police. Resistance to the regime is not nearly as bold as it was a year ago; the euphoria has vanished. The press is severely restricted.

"South Africa has always been a police state," one activist reminded me, but the regime had left some openings for organized protest. Once the unrest began to mushroom,

however, repressing it was easy. The government sealed off the townships. The white conscripts and "instant cops" then rolled in with machine guns, tear gas, and armoured cars.

With methodical precision, the security police consulted their lists, and in the course of the Emergency, often in midnight raids, rounded up activists, "trouble makers," and, inevitably, quite a few innocent bystanders, including young children and mothers with babies. Newspapers have reported killings and torture. A government spokesman reported to the South African parliament that certain jails are packed to three times their capacity.

Many black South Africans simply want to get on with their lives unmolested, but the essentially totalitarian nature of their oppression makes such an ordinary life impossible. Apartheid severely restricts where they must live, where they can go, where they can work, what they can own, what they can learn, what they can read, who they can trust. Hatred of the system is broad and deep and growing more so. Thus, despite the State of Emergency, new leaders are replacing those in jail, gaining experience, devising new strategies, seeking new allies.

In areas such as Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg especially, community organizations have at least maintained their structures, even if their activity has been severely curtailed. I met activists who now live clandestinely, moving from house to house, periodically issuing statements or appearing at meetings. Block committees are enforcing rent boycotts, trying to address issues such as crime and waste disposal, and foiling the soldiers and security police by, for example, removing all the house addresses to make it more difficult to find activists. Protest graffiti are everywhere.

Unions seem to be more powerful and militant than ever. The Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (CCAWUSA) won a long strike against OK Bazaars, a large food and department store, at the end of February and won substantial wage increases from another chain store without a strike. The railway workers (SARHWU) have just lost a hard-fought strike.

Students have given up their boycotts and returned to school, independent private schools in particular. Where the slogan had been "liberation before education," it is now "liberation with education." Recently students launched a new national organization, the South African Youth Congress, that claims half a million members. Their slogan is "Freedom or Death."

A few alternative papers bravely publish accounts of the resistance. "Our lawyers still manage to come up with creative ways of finding holes in the censorship," a journalist explained. The courts still occasionally acquit an activist. Legal advice centers are doing their best to help those in detention or those having trouble with unemployment benefits.

America has an opportunity it must not allow to slip away. Most activists I spoke to said the divestment movement, the sanctions bill passed by congress last fall, Secretary of State Schultz's meeting with ANC President Oliver Tambo, and the steady increase in aid to anti-apartheid groups from the U.S. is beginning to allay the anti-American suspicions of many South Africans.

They are cynical about American intentions. They still criticize the policy of "constructive engagement" and American support for Pretoria's allies in Angola. But most also seem willing to accept help from whomever is offering it, including the U.S. Whatever influence the U.S. may or may not have in South Africa, it is still perceived on all sides as the key broker.

Significant change will not come quickly or easily. Activists now speak of five, ten, or twenty years until liberation. Since the Nationalists and the right-wing did unexpectedly well in their election, the government may decide that its repressive policy pays. When it seemed that time had almost run out and the pot threatened to boil over, the government just put on a tighter, heavier lid.

The pot continues to boil. Some experts predict a lull in activity, such as occurred after the 1960 Sharpeville massacre. Repression could turn the opposition in on themselves, increasing factionalism and stifling democratic debate. One opposition leader, just released from jail, was concerned about this. "The prisons used to be seen as a kind of school, an opportunity

to debate various questions about the struggle," he said. "Now, even among the same political formations, there is much less tolerance towards differences of opinion, especially among the younger detainees."

But the current period may be a chance to regroup. Many opposition leaders say they will stress certain strategies that have proved successful, such as the decentralized street committees and economic boycotts. A few suggest that coalition-building and cooperation, especially between the black-consciousness and UDF groups, possibly even including Inkatha, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's controversial Zulu organization, and the white liberal Progressive Federal Party, could channel energy against the real enemy—the apartheid system. Most activists regard structures such as the legal advice centers and self-help groups as nuclei for community-building.

Many groups are seeking new kinds of international assistance such as funds for striking workers and their families, higher-profile recognition of a broader range of opposition leaders (which is what many think have kept Archbishop Tutu and Rev. Alan Boesak safe), and more contact with overseas sympathizers. Some support continued pressure from the divestment movement to make sure those companies that decide to leave do so in a principled way and that those companies that choose to remain actively oppose apartheid and support democratic change, at least. Few, however, predict that divestment alone will topple the system.

Many optimistic scenarios for a peaceful, democratic South Africa are now being proposed. In A Way Out, Federalist Options for South Africa, edited by Michael Briand with a forward by Bayard Rustin, no less than seven options are discussed. To encourage any of these happy resolutions, Briand himself concludes that the American role should be, first, to enforce sanctions rigorously for the time being. American diplomatic initiatives could then create opportunities for negotiations between the government and the various opposition organizations. Eventually the U.S. may be able to offer incentives for genuine concessions made by the government, such as the legalization of the ANC, the abolition of the Group Areas act, or the release of political prisoners. As dark an era as this is in South Africa's history, there is still hope. ■

Oil, Guns and Gold

The Arab-South African Connection

Arye Oded





Arye Oded is a lecturer in Middle East and African History at Tel Aviv University.

As part of their effort to gain the support of African states for their Middle East policies, the Arab states publicly proclaim their solidarity with Black Africans against South Africa's apartheid regime. Arab leaders frequently declare that South Africa is the common enemy of both Black Africans and Arabs, and press the Africans to reciprocate by condemning Israel. To help construct this coalition, the Arabs repeatedly claim that significant economic and military links exist between Israel and South Africa. A specific political aim of this argument is to influence African countries not to renew diplomatic relations with Israel, most of which were severed following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war as a demonstration of "Afro-Arab solidarity."

Arab states, furthermore, claim that they adhere to the November 1973 Arab League resolution, which called for the severance of diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with South Africa. Arab condemnation of the apartheid regime has become standard rhetoric at international forums.

What the Arabs do not say is that important links between themselves and South Africa -- ties that have continued despite the 1973 official Arab boycott resolution -- are far more extensive than those between Jerusalem and Pretoria. The following report, based on open sources, documents the extent of Arab ties to South Africa and the outrage these ties have caused among Black African observers.

Military Links

In September 1974, Britain officially announced that Jordan had admitted selling British-made tanks and surface-to-air missiles to South Africa (BBC, September 22, 1974). The British magazine Africa (November 1974) published a detailed article entitled "Apartheid's Secret Friends," which revealed the existence of documents proving that the Jordanian arms sold to South Africa were to be transferred to Rhodesia. The report concluded: "Jordan's arms deal with South Africa has cast bitter doubt upon the Arab world image in Black Africa." Jeune Afrique (Paris, December 26, 1974) also commented on this, adding that Jordan

supplied about 50 percent of all the heavy weapons South Africa had purchased in 1974, and that some of the weapons were resold to Rhodesia.

These disclosures, as could be expected, aroused widespread African dismay. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) officially protested to the Arab League and expressed its deep concern (BBC, September 22, 1974). The Nigerian Daily Express (September 24, 1986), commenting that "Africans should reassess their relations with the Arabs," demanded an emergency meeting of the OAU. New Nigeria (September 23, 1974) called on the African countries to sever diplomatic relations with Jordan. The Daily Graphic of Ghana urged the Arabs to expel Jordan from the Arab League, charging that the sale of British-made weapons to Rhodesia and South Africa made King Hussein "an errand boy of Western imperialism." Africa Magazine (Dakar, Senegal, December 1974) commented: "There is a feeling among some Africans that their demonstration of solidarity with Arab nations during the war with Israel has been met with little evidence of reciprocal Arab generosity. The scandal with Jordan arms sales to South Africa has exacerbated African suspicions."

Adebayo Dele Opawoye of Liberia wrote in the same magazine (January 1975): "King Hussein's arms deal with South Africa need not be a surprise. Members of the OAU are to blame for slavishly breaking ties with Israel. Black Africans are now the losers....One can only hope that when next the Arabs call for help, Black Africans will remember this Arab hypocrisy."

A writer for the Tanzanian Daily News commented (September 30, 1974): "It is really a pity to see Jordan selling arms to the most racist and apartheid country in the world. Though the action may have been a mere trade, it's really a political blow to Africa."

Arab-South African arms trade moves in both directions. According to information published in the British press last year, the South African state-owned armaments company Armscor sold 100 G-5 155mm Howitzers to the Iraqi government in 1985 (Africa Confidential, London, April 10, 1985; Foreign Report, London, April 11, 1985). This information was later circulated among members of the United Nations by Iran, which quoted from the British press reports and complained to the UN Secretary-General (UN General Assembly A/40/464; Security Council S/17326, July 5, 1985). African newspapers, such as The Ghanaian Times (July 10, 1985) called the transaction a flagrant breach of the UN boycott of South Africa.

Shortly thereafter, an arms deal between South Africa and Somalia was disclosed. According to press reports, Somalia, a member of the Arab League, granted South Africa access to the port of Berbera, as well as airline landing and refueling rights. In return, South Africa agreed to supply arms, military training and financial aid to Somalia (Foreign Report, London, April 11, 1985; Africa Confidential, London, July 17, 1985). According to Newsweek (August 20, 1984), South African military advisers were also training several Moroccan army units.

Trade Relations

Arab links with South Africa are not limited to arms deals and military training. Throughout 1975, African and Western sources uncovered evidence of growing trade relations between Arab states and South Africa, such as Saudi Arabia's direct bid to the Reserve Bank in Pretoria for gold purchases. A Saudi trade mission visited South Africa at the beginning of 1975 to discuss the possibility of increasing food imports. At the same time, the Saudis contracted for the import of several million pounds sterling worth of prefabricated building materials. South African businessmen toured Egypt and Jordan to discuss package tours and to expand trade. A number of Persian Gulf states, including Dubai and Bahrein, traded openly, while others, such as Abu Dhabi, adopted a lower profile. Until the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war, South Africa maintained an Office of South African Interests in Beirut, and South African diplomats openly drove around the city with diplomatic license plates on their cars, despite the lack of official relations between Lebanon and South Africa (The Observer, London, March 18, 1975; Daily Nation, Kenya, August 27, 1975).

In 1976, the London Sunday Times (June 13) reported that South Africa was believed to be building closer ties with Egypt. It revealed that a South African government official had made several secret trips to Egypt that year, and that "Cairo was mentioned as one of the Arab cities to be visited later this year by a top-level South African delegation." The article mentioned that even though South Africa and Egypt were still a long way from resuming diplomatic relations (broken off after the Suez crisis in 1956), covert ties between the two countries had strengthened markedly since Cairo's 1972 break with Moscow. Dr. Connie Mulder, the South African Minister of Information, was believed to be in the forefront of the Cairo initiative.

A report from South Africa published in the Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv on January 27, 1978, indicated that trade links between Saudi Arabia and South Africa continued to grow in 1978, and that Saudi purchases of South African gold exceeded those of any other country in that year. In fact, in 1978 more than one-third of Pretoria's gold output was sold to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Moreover, the report added that Saudi agents were recruiting skilled technical workers, engineers and medical personnel in South Africa.

The Kenyan Daily Nation reported on September 2, 1977: "Arabs are buying South African gold like hotcakes, thus helping to sustain that country's abominable policy of Apartheid. Arabs who sought and continue to woo our support have become business partners in building the South African economy."

Reporting on the soaring price of gold, The New York Times on November 4, 1977, remarked: "Today the hungriest market for gold is the oil-rich Middle East, which last year absorbed almost 16 million ounces, or one-third of the total mine output."

The British metallurgy journal Metal Bulletin (June 14, 1977) was even more specific, naming Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Yemen as major gold markets, and commenting that "direct shipments to these countries amounted to 500 tons of gold, one-third of the global supply."

Black Africans are particularly perturbed about Arab oil sales to South Africa. Though in late 1973 Arab oil producers pledged to comply with the OAU request that they impose an oil embargo on South Africa, there is evidence that this understanding has been violated. According to 1975 UN data, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates supplied over 50 percent of South Africa's oil imports that year -- 7.87 million tons of the total 13.66 million tons imported by South Africa (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistical Office, Statistical Paper, Table 7, 1975). African representatives at a meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee for Afro-Arab cooperation, held in Cairo in July 1975, maintained that South Africa continued to receive 65 percent of its oil from the Middle East and the Arab world. At that meeting, the Arab League's Secretary-General Mahmoud Riad assured the Africans that the Arab states would respect the embargo on South Africa (Africa Research Bulletin, Exeter, England, August 15, 1975; Togo Press Agency, July 12, 1975).

In 1980, The London Observer (December 14) disclosed that a Norwegian supertanker (the Thorsholm) had been used to run a "shuttle service" of oil supplies to South Africa, violating the embargo ostensibly imposed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The paper reported that the supertanker regularly loaded at Gulf ports, usually Saudi Arabia's Ras al-Tannurah. While false destinations were often given to suggest it was bound for legitimate customers, the tanker reached either Durban or Capetown. The Observer also reported that in the two preceding years (1979 and 1980), the tanker had shipped millions of tons of crude oil to South Africa, estimated at about 10 percent of its total needs (quoted in the Daily Nation, Kenya, December 15, 1980). Although the South African government employs elaborate methods to conceal the sources of its oil, substantial amounts of information on these sources have come to light from time to time.

One source of information about oil shipments to South Africa is the Shipping Research Bureau, an anti-apartheid organization based in Amsterdam and associated with the UN Center Against Apartheid. The Bureau monitors oil tanker deliveries to South Africa and notes their ports of origin. In 1982, the Bureau reported that several tankers sailed from the Arabian Gulf to South African ports and back again in a shuttle service. Of the 52 ships "most likely" to have delivered oil to South Africa monitored from 1980 to mid-1981, 28 -- over half -- sailed there from the Arab states along the Persian Gulf (Research Report of the Shipping Research Bureau of Amsterdam, 1982).

In its 1984 report, the Bureau traced 49 oil shipments to South

Africa, valued at \$1.1 billion and equal to about 50 percent of South Africa's total oil imports, from mid-1981 to the end of 1982. Of those, 37 (or 75 percent) came from four Arab countries: Saudi Arabia (39 percent), United Arab Emirates (24 percent), Oman (10 percent) and Kuwait (2 percent). Another 6 percent came from Iran (quoted in Near East Report, Washington, September 3, 1984).

These data, reprinted in the Arab press, embarrassed the Arab states implicated in the reports. The countries concerned denied that they had any trade contacts with South Africa, and claimed that they had no control over the oil companies (ibid.; Al-Watan, Kuwait, April 5, 1985). In fact, however, the companies are either government-owned or must follow government instructions. In July 1985, Norwegian Foreign Minister T. Froyenes stated that 95 percent of the oil supplied to South Africa arrived from the Gulf states (Norwegian News Service, July 9, 1985).

Black African Reaction

These continuing disclosures angered many Africans. Tanzania's government-owned newspaper, The Daily News, in its editorial of November 7, 1975, called on Arab oil-producing countries to impose a total oil embargo against South Africa. The newspaper, which reflects official Tanzanian thinking, said the Arab states would be well-advised to remember that the principle of reciprocity is an important aspect of international relations. The editors pointed out that "only a total oil embargo against South Africa by the oil-producing Arab states would definitely confirm the truth that the Arab and African peoples' struggles are complementary."

The Daily Times of Nigeria reported on July 27, 1977: "Arab oil still finds its way to South Africa. Arms and armaments from some Arab countries still find their way to South Africa."

An editorial in the Nigerian Sunday Times (April 10, 1977), entitled "We Should Reopen Diplomatic Ties with Israel," comments: "It is disgusting to see that we are prepared to go to any length with the Arabs even when they supply oil to South Africa. Do we pretend not to know that the Arabs still sell oil to the apartheid regime in Pretoria?"

Even commentators sympathetic to the idea of Afro-Arab solidarity felt compelled to address this point. Among others, Olayiwola Abegunrin of Nigeria's Ife University strongly criticized the Gulf states in a research paper that was otherwise favorable to the Arabs: "In spite of all the OAU and UN resolutions demanding that member-nations stop sending oil to South Africa, Arabian Gulf states nevertheless continue to allow their oil to flow to South Africa." ("The Arabs and the Southern-Africa Problem," International Affairs, London, Vol. 60, no. 1 (Winter 1983-1984), pp. 97-105; see also letter to the editor by E. Alexander, Daily Nation, Kenya, September 22, 1983).

Reporting the findings of the Shipping Research Bureau on December 10, 1984, Man Less Diaj, the editor of the Senegalese weekly Le Politicien, voiced sharp criticism of the Arab Gulf states, in which he questioned the very existence of Afro-Arab solidarity.

Conclusion

Black Africa is keenly aware of Arab economic and military ties to South Africa. Ongoing disclosures of these links expose the falsehood of the Arabs' claims that they are boycotting South Africa while Israel deals extensively with the apartheid regime. Upon examination of the data, Israeli trade with South Africa pales in comparison to that between Pretoria and the Arab capitals. Informed Black Africans deeply resent the hypocrisy of their Arab "friends."

AMERICAN JEWISH

For further reading, see: Israel and South Africa, by Kenneth Bandler and George E. Gruen, The American Jewish Committee, 1985; Fallacies About Israel's Ties With South Africa, by Allan L. Kagedan, The American Jewish Committee, 1985; "Apartheid's Oil," by Robert Whitehill, The New Republic, February 10, 1986.

Edited by Harry Milkman
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Prepared for the
International Relations Department
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
Institute of Human Relations
165 East 56 Street
New York, NY 10022

March 1986

Single Copy 50¢
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Biographical DATA on
HELEN SUZMAN



SA

HELEN SUZMAN ... REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY ... MEMBER OF THE PARLIAMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA ... IS ONE OF THE MOST OUTSPOKEN OPPONENTS OF APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA.

FORMERLY GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN AND UNIVERSITY LECTUREE ON ECONOMICS.

SHE WAS ONE OF 12 MEMBERS OF THE UNITED PARTY WHO BROKE WITH THEM IN 1959 TO FORM THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY. HERS IS THE SOLE VOICE IN PARLIAMENT THAT SPEAKS IN SUPPORT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S DISENFRANCHISED POPULATION.

HER FATHER CAME TO SOUTH AFRICA AS AN EMIGRANT FROM LITHUANIA. SHE GREW UP IN JOHANNESBURG AND WAS EDUCATED AT THE PARKTOWN CONVENT.

SHE STUDIED ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND IN JOHANNESBURG. IN 1945 SHE JOINED THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC HISTORY AT THE WITWATERSRAND UNIVERSITY.

IN 1962 THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESENTED HER WITH THE LEADER AWARD. IN 1966 THE WORLD COUNCIL OF SYNAGOGUES CONFERRED A SPECIAL AWARD ON HER IN RECOGNITION OF HER "DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP IN THE BATTLE TO TRANSLATE THE PROPHETIC VISION THAT 'ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL' INTO A LIVING REALITY." IN 1978 SHE WAS AWARDED THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS PRIZE.

SUZMAN, Helen. B. Com. (Rand) M.P. (Houghton). Born Germiston, 7th November, 1917, daughter of late Samuel and Freda Gavronsky. Educated Parktown Convent, Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand. Member of Parliament. Previously Lecturer in Economic History, University of Witwatersrand. Member Womans Street Synagogue, Union of Jewish Women, Zionist Federation. During World



War II was Statistician to War Supplies Board. Married Dr. Moses Suzman, 12th August, 1937. Two daughters. Member Houghton and Wanderers Clubs. Recreations: Golf, Bridge. Hon. Doctor of Laws, Oxford University, Hon. Fellow, St. Hugh's College, Oxford, Hon. Fellow London School of Economics. Hon. Doctor of Laws, Harvard University. Hon. Doctor of Laws, Wits. University. Human Relations Award, Philadeopia Chapter, American Jewish Committee. Add: 49 Melville Road, Hyde Park, Sandton, Transvaal.

SWARTZ, Benjamin. Simon. Doctor of Naturopathy and Homoeopathic Medicine. D.HOM. M. N.D., A.F.C.S., A.I.B.A. Born Johannesburg, 17th July, 1933, son of Michael and Mary Swartz. Educated Athlone Boys' High School, Faculty of Secretaries, Guildford U.K., S.A. Faculty of Homoeopathic Medicine (S.A.) Previously Manager and Sales Manager of Engineering concern, Member of the American Foundation of Homoeopathy (1973). Foundation Member Sydenham-Highlands North Hebrew Congregation. Member Chaim Weizman Lodge H.O.D. Chairman Yiddish Folk Nursery School 1962 and 1969, and Chairman of Parent's Teacher's Association, Orange Grove School, 1975-1976. Married Beryl Copans, 24th May, 1956. One son, two daughters. Recreations: Gardening, Travelling and Bowls.

SWEIDAN, Desmond David. Director of Companies. Born Johannesburg, 23rd February, 1943, son of Seftel and Sabina Sweidan. Educated Vaal High School. Director Furnvaal Holdings (Pty) Ltd., Elegant Fashions (Pty) Ltd., Moshav Investments (Pty) Ltd. Treasurer Vanderbijlpark Hebrew Congregation since 1974. Married Sharon Brudno, 12th April, 1970. One son. Member Emfuleni Golf & Country Club, Iscor Recreation Club, Allenby Country Club. Recreations: Tennis, Golf. Add: 30 Toselli Street, Vanderbijlpark. P.O. Box 1019, Vanderbijlpark.

SWEIDAN, Melvyn. Chartered Accountant (S.A.) Born Aliwal North, 2nd May, 1944, son of Israel and Edith Sweidan. Educated Queen's College, University of Witwatersrand. Partner in firm of Chartered Accountants. Member of Glenhazel Hebrew Congregation. Married Jennifer Ann Taitz, 24th November, 1968. Two sons. Recreations: Tennis, Reading, Rugby and Cinema. Add: 4B Dartford Avenue, Lyndhurst, Johannesburg. P.O. Box 17785, Hillbrow, 2038.

SWEKE, Isaac Albert. Manufacturer's Agent (Semi-Retired). Born Cape Town, 10th March, 1902, son of Jacob and Rachel Sweke. Formerly Sales Representative Lever Bros. 1916-1951. Member of Kensington Hebrew Congregation. Served in World War II - Civic Guard 1940-1945. Married Rebecca Herman, 8th February, 1931. Clubs: Rhodes Park Bowling Club. Recreation: Bowls. Add: 35 Nympe Street, Kensington, Jhb.

SYMON, Israel (Sonny) B.D.S. (Rand) Dental Surgeon. Born Wepener, 15th October, 1920, son of Morris and Bertha Symon. Educated, Aliwal North Primary and High School. Previously Director Springsfontein Stores. Served in World War II, President Steyn Regiment, wounded Battle of Sidi Rezegh, subsequently on Staff of General Headquarters Cairo & Helwan. Released to Attend Wits University 1944, qualified 1948. Married Pauline Swiel Cape Town 6th September, 1951. Two sons one daughter. Has been Treasurer, Vice-Chairman, Chairman and now Hon. Life Vice-President & Trustee Northcliff Hebrew Congregation - Past President HOD Lodge Maccabee 1971-1973. Member: Transvaal Automobile Club, White River Golf Club. Recreation: Golf, Farming, Numismatist, Philatelist, Gardening. Add: 190 Senior Drive, Northcliff.

SYMON, Michael. M.B. B.Ch. Medical Practitioner. Born Zastron, 26th April, 1926, son of Harry and Jenny Symon. Educated Zastron High School, University of Witwatersrand. Director of Private Company. Committee Member Delmas Hebrew Congregation. Chairman on two occasions, Treasurer for 6 years. Committee Member P.T.A. Governing Body, member Hillel High School, Benoni. Married Sadie Mousowitz, 3rd May, 1959. Two sons, one daughter. Member Delmas Bowling Club, Shalom Country Club. Recreation: Bowls. Add: 4, 8th Street, Delmas. P.O. Box 188.

SZAPIRA, Lionel Edward Myer. M.I. Mkt.M. Real Estate Broker and Director of Companies. Born Cape Town, 27th October, 1918, son of Solomon and Jessie Szapira. Educated Sea Point Boys' High School. Director Tabcorn (Pty) Ltd. Fair Holdings (Pty) Ltd. Previously retired and 1973 as Regional Manager (Western Cape) for Shell SA (Pty) Ltd. Member and Council Member Cape Town Jewish Reform Congregation since 1963. Temple Brotherhood. Served World War II "Q" Services Corps and then staff officer British Army, 1940-45, promoted as Major at the age of 23 years. Married Betty Wilson, 8th November 1942. Two sons, one daughter. Member Netherlands Club, Cape Town Metropolitan Golf Club, Crusaders Memorial Sports Club, Impala Sports Club. Recreations: Golf, Bowls. Past President Temple Brotherhood and S.A. Federation Temple Brotherhoods. Add: 8B Mutual Place Beach Road, Sea Point, Cape Town. P.O. Box 5091, Cape Town.

SZAPIRA, Lionel Edward Myer. M.I. Mkt.M. Real Estate Broker and Director of Companies. Born Cape Town, 27th October, 1918, son of Solomon and Jessie Szapira. Educated Sea Point Boys' High School. Director Tabcorn (Pty) Ltd. Fair Holdings (Pty) Ltd. Previously Retired and 1973 as Regional Manager (Western Cape) for Shell SA (Pty) Ltd. Member and Council Member Cape Town Jewish Reform Congregation since 1963. Temple Brotherhood. Served World War II "Q" Services Corps and then staff officer British Army, 1940-45, promoted as Major at the age of 23 years. Married Betty Wilson, 8th November 1942. Two sons, one daughter. Member Netherlands Club, Cape Town Metropolitan Golf Club, Crusaders Memorial Sports Club, Impala Sports Club. Recreations: Golf, Bowls. Past President Temple Brotherhood and S.A. Federation Temple Brotherhoods. Add: 8B Mutual Place Beach Road, Sea Point, Cape Town. P.O. Box 5091, Cape Town.

South Africa

SUZMAN, HELEN

Suzman received the UN Human Rights Prize in 1978 for her unwearying campaign against apartheid in South Africa.

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By HOPE MacLEOD

H. A.

NY Post 43

Daily Closeup

5-15-74

A LITTLE MORE HOPE



SUZMAN

Helen Suzman, member of South Africa's Parliament, no longer stands alone in her fight against apartheid, the gov-

ernment's policy of segregation—and she's delighted. few who have watched her fearless one-woman battle of opposition in Parliament think that is anything more than wishful thinking.

Mrs. Suzman, described as talkative, logical and practical, has won her opponents' grudging respect. They tell her, "Helen, I always say to my friends that I like you as a person. I just hate your politics."

In private, Mrs. Suzman, 118 pounds, with sparkling blue eyes, is a modest, softspoken person who insists she deserves no credit for doing anything special.

"Don't call me Joan of Arc," she said. "I didn't do anything brave, just what I believed in . . . I hate injustice . . . Really and truly, it has been jolly rewarding to say things I know a great number of people want said in South Africa and to speak up in behalf of millions of disfranchised people."

Born Nov. 9, 1917, in the goldmining town of Germiston near Johannesburg, she was the youngest of two daughters of Samuel Gavronsky and the former Freda David, both Jewish immigrants from Lithuania. Her mother died when she was born so she and her sister, along with their father, went to live with an aunt and uncle in Johannesburg.

The father built up a prosperous business as a merchant of hides, skins and their byproducts, and because a convent-school in Johannesburg offered a good education, that's where the girls were sent.

Helen went on to the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg where "I had a somewhat inglorious career—I left in mid-college. I married, had a baby, and then went back and got a degree."

She had wanted to become a lawyer but after her father refused to let her go to England to study because he felt she was too young, she didn't "apply" herself. Eventually she earned a bachelor of commerce degree.

Her husband, Dr. Moses Suzman, a specialist in internal medicine and 13 years her senior, was educated in England and trained here, at Harvard on a Rockefeller fellowship and at Massachusetts General Hospital. Their elder daughter, Frances, Mrs. Jeffrey Jowell, is an art historian with a Ph.D. from Harvard whose husband, a Harvard Law graduate, teaches law at the London School of Economics. The Suzmans' other daughter, Patricia, is a doctor at Massachusetts Memorial Hospital, Boston.

Mrs. Suzman was "always interested in arguing and in justice. Instead of practicing law, I've had a ringside seat at law-making by sitting in Parliament, although I've spent most of the time arguing against laws that are being made."

In 1945 as a university lecturer in economic development, she helped prepare materials for the Institute of Race Relations on laws affecting black Africans and "was so appalled at what I found that I took an active interest in the politics. It was the only way I could see of really doing something about it." Her husband, she said, has encouraged her all the way.

She likes golf, bridge, fishing and biographies, greatly admired President Kennedy who, to her, "rekindled idealism," and she thinks Golda Meir "is a great old girl."

She has never been threatened physically because of her fight against apartheid, Mrs. Suzman said, but "I get a lot of abusive telegrams, calls and letters. You simply have to ignore them. They go straight into the wastebasket."

"It will be nice to have someone say 'Hear, hear' again," said the tiny, tough-minded woman who has been called everything from a "flea in the ear" to "a cricket chirping in a thornbush."

"I usually sit down in a mass of deathly silence or a buzz of disapproval," she said. "But I was becoming very dejected. I don't know if I could have carried on alone."

The wife of a Johannesburg doctor, in New York for an International House symposium on "The Making of a Global Society" this week, she was discussing the recent election in which the Progressive Party, of which she for years had been the sole representative in Parliament, leaped from one seat to six.

"It's a breakthrough on the opposition front," she said. "It doesn't affect the power structure [Prime Minister Vorster's Nationalist Party won its 25th year of uninterrupted power with a slightly increased majority], not now, and not for probably quite a long time . . . Changes that are coming are slow and one hopes they are not going to be too little and too late."

She now contemplates "a life of considerable ease in Parliament while my colleagues carry on the work," but

SUZMAN (née Gavronsky), HELEN (1917-). South African politician and parliamentarian of liberal views. Born in Germiston, Transvaal, she lectured on economic history at the University of the Witwatersrand. She was first elected to Parliament as a member of the United Party, the official opposition (1953), but, with 12 other members, broke away in 1959, because of differences on race policies.



Helen Suzman, South African Progressive politician.

They formed the Progressive Party and continued to sit in Parliament as a separate opposition group. Helen Suzman was reelected for the same constituency (Houghton) as a candidate of the Progressives in 1961, and again in 1966, being the sole representative of her party in Parliament. A formidable debater, she was a determined opponent of discrimination based on race or color, and a champion of the rights of the African people. Her autobiography, *Time Remembered*, was published in 1968. [L.S.]

SUZMAN, HELEN (GAVRONSKY)

Nov. 7, 1917- South African Member of Parliament

Address: b. House of Assembly, Cape Town, South Africa; h. 49 Melville Rd., Hyde Park, Johannesburg, South Africa

As the solitary representative of the Progressive party in the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Mrs. Helen Suzman plays a unique role on her country's political scene. In a nation where the strict policy of racial segregation, known as apartheid, is the law of the land, she has constituted an articulate minority of one in behalf of multi-racial government, and she has spoken out against the repressive measures by which the South African government has tried to enforce its policies. A former government statistician and university lecturer on economics, she entered the House of Assembly—the lower house of the South African Parliament—in 1953, as a member of the United party, representing Houghton, a Johannesburg suburb. In 1959 she was one of twelve Members of Parliament who broke with the United party to form the Progressive party, and since 1961, when all of her party colleagues were defeated at the polls, she has been carrying on the struggle alone.

Although Mrs. Suzman has virtually no power to influence legislation, her role is highly important. She not only represents her constituency and her party but is the sole voice in Parliament that speaks in support of South Africa's disenfranchised non-white majority—consisting of some 12,750,000 black Africans, 1,859,000 Coloreds, or persons of mixed race, and 561,000 Asians, out of a total population of about 18,733,000. Thus, as Joseph Lelyveld noted in the *New York Times Magazine* (March 20, 1966), Helen Suzman "represents more South Africans than all the . . . other Members of Parliament combined."

Mrs. Helen Suzman, whose maiden name is Helen Gavronsky, was born in the city of Germiston near Johannesburg on November 7, 1917, the daughter of Samuel and Freda (David) Gavronsky. She has one sister, Mrs. Gertrude Posel. Her father, who came to South Africa as a Jewish immigrant from Lithuania, was a dealer in hides, tallow, and soap, and later made his fortune in real estate. Helen Gavronsky grew up in Johannesburg and was educated there at the Parktown Convent, from which she graduated in 1934. She studied economics and economic history at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, and she obtained her bachelor of commerce degree there in 1940. On August 12, 1937 she married Dr. Moses M. Suzman, who became one of South Africa's most prominent physicians.

From 1941 to 1945 Mrs. Suzman worked for the South African government as a statistician with the War Supplies Board. In 1945 she joined the faculty of the department of economics and economic history at Witwatersrand University, where she served until 1953 as a part-time lecturer on the economic development of South Africa. Her interest in disadvantaged urban Africans was aroused by the



HELEN SUZMAN

information she acquired while preparing evidence for a commission of inquiry. The commission was appointed in 1945 by the government of Prime Minister Jan Christiaan Smuts for the use of the South African Institute of Race Relations, of which she was a council member. In her university lectures she stressed the deplorable conditions of nonwhite labor in South Africa.

Mrs. Suzman began to take an active role in politics following the 1948 election, which ousted the previously dominant, mildly liberal United party from power and for the first time brought the South African government under the control of the National party with its rigid policies of apartheid. Casting her lot with the United party, she organized a branch among her faculty colleagues at the university and became its chairman. In 1952, after unsuccessfully trying to recruit a suitable United party candidate for the parliamentary constituency of Houghton—a prosperous and largely Jewish suburb to the north of Johannesburg—she decided to run for the seat herself and was elected. Entering the House of Assembly in 1953, she became one of the party's most successful backbenchers. As a member of the United party, Mrs. Suzman also served as honorary information officer of its women's council and as secretary of the constituency committee.

As the United party became a less effective party of opposition to the government, a division developed within its ranks. In the summer of 1959 a group of twelve liberal Members of Parliament, including Mrs. Suzman, broke away from the United party and formed the Progressive party under the chairmanship of Dr. J. van A. Steytler. At its first congress the Progressive party adopted a program that called for the establishment of a South African nation based on Western principles; the right of all, regardless of race or creed, to take part in government "in accordance with their degree of civilization"; and constitutional safeguards, including limitations on the power of the central government as well as a bill of rights that would guarantee fundamental freedoms.

Despite the high caliber of its membership, the Progressive party failed, however, to make any great impact on the South African political scene, and in the general election of October 18, 1961 eleven of the twelve Progressive candidates were defeated. Only Mrs. Suzman was reelected—by the narrow margin of 564 votes in a constituency of some 13,000 people—becoming the only candidate, since the first South African Parliament was established in 1910, ever to be elected by a white constituency on a platform that clearly rejected racial discrimination. Her success has been attributed to her ability and her personal popularity, and to the fact that her wealthy constituents had less to fear from nonwhite competition than voters from the less prosperous economic classes.

As the lone voice of real opposition in Parliament, Mrs. Suzman spoke out against the apartheid policies of the government of Dr. H.F. Verwoerd and the repressive legislation initiated by Minister of Justice (now Prime Minister) Balthazar Johannes Vorster. She usually stood alone in opposing such measures as Vorster's Sabotage Act of 1962, which she renamed the "Intimidation bill," or the ninety-day detention measure of 1963, which, she maintained, brought South Africa "further into the morass of a totalitarian state." In 1964 she introduced a motion calling for repeal of all "enactments under which citizens can be deprived of their liberty without recourse to the courts of law," but she failed to receive a second for the motion. When the South African Press Commission issued a report in May 1964 calling for restrictions on foreign newsmen, she declared that such a measure would make South Africa "the laughing stock of the civilized world." Mrs. Suzman was the only member of Parliament to condemn the white supremacist government of Rhodesia, which unilaterally declared its independence from Great Britain in 1965. Addressing a public rally in Johannesburg in 1966, she condemned the use of arbitrary powers by the Minister of Justice and excoriated the leaders of the South African government as "narrow-minded, prejudice-ridden bullies."

Mrs. Suzman maintains that "apartheid makes economic nonsense," and that the self-governing states for African natives, called Bantustans, which had been planned by Verwoerd, could never become self-supporting under existing economic conditions. She especially criticizes government policies that designate an African worker as a "temporary sojourner" in areas outside his tribal home and restrict his movements by such measures as pass laws and group area laws. In her conception of a multiracial society Helen Suzman does not insist on absolute equality or universal suffrage, but she stresses equality of opportunity, with free and compulsory education for everyone and the removal of all obstacles to economic advancement. She would grant the right to vote to those who have had seven years of schooling, or four years of schooling and two years of employment. Under such a plan some 100,000 or 200,000 of the country's 12,750,000 black Africans would immediately have the right to vote, and that number would increase with the improvement of educational and economic opportunities.

Commenting on her parliamentary tactics in an interview in the London *Sunday Times* (August 13, 1967), Mrs. Suzman said that she did "an awful lot of talking" and kept "the vital issues before the public." She also pointed out that her votes as a "minority of one" were being recorded. Although she sees little hope for any significant change in South Africa in the foreseeable future, she expects to continue her struggle. "I fight . . . because . . . I have a moral duty to do so," she has said, as quoted in *Newsweek* (June 21, 1965). "But I also hope that I can convince the white population that . . . it is impossible to maintain this position indefinitely. At the same time, I hope to show the nonwhites that not all whites are racists and keep a few bridges open for us to meet across when the time comes."

Although Mrs. Suzman was reelected to her parliamentary seat by an increased majority on March 31, 1966, the elections swung to the right, with the Nationalists controlling 126 out of 166 seats in the House of Assembly. The accession of Vorster as Prime Minister in September 1966, following the assassination of Verwoerd, appeared to herald little change in the repressive policies of apartheid. Additional restrictive legislation, introduced in March 1968, included the Prohibition of Political Interference Bill, which barred involvement of one racial group in the political affairs of another and appeared to make Helen Suzman's goal of a multiracial society more remote than ever.

Mrs. Helen (Gavronsky) Suzman and Dr. Moses M. Suzman have two daughters: Frances Barbara (Mrs. Jeffrey Jowell), an art historian who has done graduate work at Harvard University and is married to a lawyer; and Dr. Patricia Ann Suzman, a physician. Mrs. Suzman, who is five feet three inches tall, weighs 125 pounds, and has blue eyes and graying hair, is a chic, attractive, and brilliant woman with overflowing vitality and a sharp wit. Although she is occasionally subjected to such epithets as "Mother Superior" or to anti-Semitic caricature in the pro-government press, she is generally respected by her adversaries and venerated by the people for whom she speaks. She often contributes to newspapers and magazines. Despite her heavy work schedule, she finds time for such favorite recreations as golf, bridge, and swimming. Mrs. Suzman is a member of the Wanderers Club, Wanderers Golf Club, Houghton Golf Club, and Glendower Golf Club. Her religious affiliation is with the Great Synagogue in Johannesburg. She received the Leader Award of the United States Department of State in 1962. The World Council of Synagogues conferred a special award on her in August 1966, in recognition of her "distinguished leadership in the battle to translate the prophetic vision that 'all men are created equal' into a living reality."

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SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES

SUID-AFRIKAANSE JOODSE RAAD VAN AFGEVAARDIGDES

ANTI-SEMITISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

From the time that Jews started arriving in South Africa in appreciable numbers in the 1880's until the 1930's anti-Semitism was not a major problem for the Jewish community. However, with the advent of Nazism in Germany aspects of its ideology appealed to elements of the White population, particularly certain sections of the Afrikaner community. A movement known as the Greyshirts consequently came into existence. In propagating an anti-Jewish policy it agitated against Jewish immigration, the undue control by Jews of the economy and the preponderance of Jews in the professions, as they perceived those things. The main opposition party in Parliament at that time, the Purified National Party, also had a number of virulent anti-Semites within its ranks who influenced the party to some extent. After the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 the Greyshirt movement ceased to exist. The National Party also rejected anti-Semitism which was no longer a central issue in political life, except for relatively minor manifestations.

Anti-Semitism within the White community in South Africa today manifests itself largely amongst the right-wing elements. In certain cases such anti-Semitic attitudes are an incidental, or even temporary part of their platform, whilst in other instances it is an element of their underlying philosophy. Nevertheless because the dominant issue in South Africa is the issue of black/white relations anti-Semitism is not a major plank in any of these programmes, nor does it feature as a central issue within the Muslim and Black communities, among whom as it will be indicated later anti-Semitism also finds expression.

Within the white community and more especially the Afrikaner community the previously unchallenged role of the National Party as the principle spokesman of the Afrikaner population has in the face of the reform process, initiated by the National Party, led to a split in the ranks of the Afrikaners. As early as 1969 the Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP) was formed to counter any deviation from the apartheid philosophy. This party which is conservative in character and committed to Christian Afrikaner nationalism, has not adopted anti-Semitism as part of its manifesto and anti-Semitism is not a feature of its leaders public speeches and addresses. The party's official organ, Die Afrikaner, however, frequently carries articles that are regarded by the Jewish community as anti-Semitic. The paper regularly seeks to introduce a Jewish angle into many of its aspects. In the past it has used the flimsiest pretext to connect Jews and Communists to attack the leaders and the State of Israel, to exaggerate the influence of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, and to challenge South African Jewry's loyalty to South Africa. With considerable regularity Die Afrikaner publishes articles that emanate from Revisionist historians who seek to deny the truth of the Holocaust and the systematic and deliberate murder of six million Jews.

In an exchange of correspondence between the South African Jewish Board of Deputies and Mr J R Stephens, the manager of Die Afrikaner, Mr Stephens elaborated on his newspaper's attitude towards Jews. He wrote that it was "a newspaper with an

undeniable political preference for the Afrikaner nationalism, a cause for which Jews in general have never shown any sympathy. The leaders of the HNP have been at the receiving end of attacks from the same sources. There may be things which Jews do not find agreeable, but that does not mean that such reports or articles emanate from hostility or prejudice towards Jews as a whole and South African Jews in particular." In his acknowledgement of the letter the Board's Executive Director wrote "For the sake of the record we wish to point out that it is inaccurate to express or imply that Jews are hostile or unsympathetic to Afrikaner nationalism."

The Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), a radical organisation with extreme racist views, became active in 1981. Its leader Eugene Terre'Blanche told a Sunday newspaper in 1982 that South African Jews would be deprived of political rights under an Afrikaner Christian people's government controlled by the AWB. He said that "the Jews must decide between two things in this country - political rights or economic freedom. They cannot have both. They cannot have political rights. It is Israel, not South Africa, which they recognise as their fatherland." The Board of Deputies reacted by issuing a statement condemning Mr Terre'Blanche's views. The then Prime Minister, Mr P W Botha, expressed his criticism of the views of the AWB in the course of a speech in Parliament. Mr Terre'Blanche later backed down by stating that he had not intended to indicate that Jews could not vote, merely that they could not join the AWB as they were not Christians or white Afrikaners. Towards the end of 1982 it was reported that the police had uncovered arms caches throughout the Republic in a nationwide sweep on the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging, and that nine men, including Mr Terre'Blanche, were detained. Following these arrests and the conviction of several members of the movement, including Mr Terre'Blanche, who received a suspended sentence, there appeared to be a reduction in the activities of the AWB.

Mr Terre'Blanche was among the speakers at a public meeting held in Pretoria in May 1984 which resulted in the formation of (a new cultural organisation) Die Afrikaner Volkswag (AV). At that meeting Mr Terre'Blanche concluded his speech with a Nazi type salute that caused considerable consternation to many who saw a television report on the meeting. Prof Carl Boshoff, Chairman of the Volkswag, has repeatedly stated that his organisation, which has a strong right-wing stance and is opposed to the policies of the National Party, is not a party political one but a cultural movement which, in his words, was intended to move back to the routes of the Afrikaner Volk. The Afrikaner Volkswag which attracted some 7 000 people to its inaugural meeting, according to one Johannesburg newspaper report "drew together the Conservative Party, Die Herstigte Nasionale Party and Die Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging."

The Conservative Party (CP) referred to in that newspaper report was formed in 1982, following a further split by the right-wing in the National Party over the issue of political reform. Dr Andries Treurnicht, the leader of the Conservative Party, indicated at the time of his party's inception that "it believed in liberty of conscience and in religious liberty - and Semitism or anti-Semitism as such was not an issue for his party and the Party has never, in fact, adopted an anti-Semitic stance."

The strict Christian nationalist basis of the Conservative Party was, however, highlighted in an interview with Dr Ferdie Hartzenberg, Deputy leader of the Conservative Party, that was published in *Buurman*, the Board of Deputies' Afrikaans publication. The essence of Dr Hartzenberg's remarks were that in a Conservative Party government there would be religious freedom - but no religion other than Christianity would be promoted. Thus Jews aspiring to hold office, such as members of Parliament, would not be able to do so unless they publicly promoted Christianity. He also said that in a Conservative Party government education would be Christian national and there would be no provision in schools for other religions. Commenting on Mr Hartzenberg's remarks, Mr A Goldberg, Executive Director of the Board of Deputies, said that if being a member of the Conservative Party was conditional upon promoting Christianity, it meant that no Jew could really become a member of the Party, and that the

Conservative Party was limiting membership to Christians. As far as Jewish children in state schools were concerned, he said that children attending those schools should have the same rights and privileges as other denominations and that in the present system they could be exempted from religious instruction if they so wished.

Insofar as the Muslim, Coloured and Black communities are concerned, recent times have witnessed increased expressions of anti-Semitic sentiments from sections of these communities. Whilst the anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic stance of the Muslim section of the South African population can be attributed to a large extent to the bond of Islam and Third World countries that the Muslim community shares with the Arab people of the Middle East, the same does not hold true for some of the Black communities. Nevertheless, they too, share certain of those anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic views.

In light of the political struggle of all the Black people of the country (i.e. all those people who are not white) anti-Semitism from that quarter is considered by some as largely a form of surrogate for the real problems that beset them. Others perceive such anti-Semitism to also be in part a consequence of the image of the Jews as wealthy, as being part of the prevailing political system and having, as an element of the white population, benefited from it.

Whilst anti-Semitic articles were for a long time a feature of many pro-Arab Muslim publications, which hold rabidly anti-Israel and anti-Zionist views, the Peace for Galilee campaign in the Lebanon radicalised Jewish/Muslim relations in South Africa and resulted in a sharp increase in incidents such as demonstrations on the university campuses and daubings of synagogues. Shortly after these events, several Board leaders met with leading members of the Muslim community in Johannesburg. In the course of a forthright discussion, they were assured that there were no widespread feelings of animosity against the Jewish community amongst Muslim citizens.

Amongst the more pernicious anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic leaflets to be circulated in South Africa was one distributed by the extremist Islamic Propagation Centre of Durban. That leaflet attacked the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr Menachem Begin, and described him as a "mass murderer and sadistic torturer." Without any instigation whatsoever from the Jewish community the Publications Control Board (which monitors the distribution of literature and cinematic material) appealed against a decision at one of its own committees in passing the leaflet for circulation. The finding of the appeal was that the leaflet was "harmful to relations between South African Jews and South African Muslims" and was accordingly undesirable.

Black sympathy for anti-Zionism may derive from the solidarity that the Black population wish to pledge with what they perceive to be their oppressed brethren elsewhere, particularly the Palestinians. The Black communities of this country in their struggle for equal rights and opportunities are supported at the United Nations and elsewhere by the Arab and Black African States and as these countries are anti-Israel, and by extension anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic, it is not difficult to understand why some local Blacks should have adopted a similar attitude. Coupled with the support shown by the Afro/Asian countries for the Black cause in South Africa are exaggerated reports of the co-operation between Israel and South Africa. Such reports unjustly portray Israel as propping up and reinforcing the prevailing political system in the Republic, and Israel and South Africa are inaccurately depicted as sharing a common policy in respect of their Arab and Black citizens. A recent report of the International Relations Department of the American Jewish Committee highlighted the fact that Israel's interaction with South Africa in both the economic and security fields was negligible when compared to South Africa's relations with other countries. Notwithstanding the availability of such reports the routine condemnation of Israel-South African ties persists, fanned by sections of the Black press, certain Black leaders

and by elements of the Muslim community who identify with and participate in the political movements of the Black people.

United in their opposition to the new constitution and to the exclusion of Blacks from the process of political decision making certain organisations have emerged and some such groups have also come to include to some extent an anti-Zionist plank in their platforms.

Black opposition to apartheid and to the Republic's new constitution has manifested itself through two distinct camps, grouped around the United Democratic Front(UDF) and the National Forum in which AZAPO (The Azanian People's Organisation) is a principle element. The former includes elements of all South Africa's population groups within its ranks whilst the latter has a strong black consciousness bias and excludes whites from membership. Although the United Democratic Front has not adopted a specific stand in respect of Jews and there are Jews within the organisations ranks, the UDF has nevertheless shied away from formal contact with the organised Jewish community and has demanded a denunciation of Zionism as a pre-condition for such contact. Within the leadership of AZAPO anti-Zionism is accompanied by anti-Semitism which stems from the fact that Jews are perceived as an integral part of the ruling white minority. Furthermore since it rejects co-operation with whites in its efforts to change the status quo, AZAPO also negates the contribution made by individual Jews to the struggle for liberation.





SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES

SUID-AFRIKAANSE JOODSE RAAD VAN AFGEVAARDIGDES

THE SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY - AN OUTLINE

The South African Jewish community enjoys a reputation for being well organised and generous with a deep attachment to Jewish traditional values and strong emotional bonds with the State of Israel.

Numbering close to 120 000 this community has contributed much to the development of South Africa, making its mark on every facet of public life, commerce and industry, science and medicine, art and music, philanthropy, sport and entertainment.

THE IMMIGRANTS

Persons of Jewish descent found their way to the Cape from the earliest beginnings of white settlement. However, they could not be professing Jews before the turn of the 19th century, because the Dutch East India Company's rules required that all who were in the service at the Cape must profess the Reformed Christian religion. Only after freedom of religion was introduced at the Cape under the Batavian Republic in 1803, was it possible for anyone who openly professed his adherence to the Jewish faith to live in the country.

From that time onwards a small trickle of individual Jews, for the most part from England and Germany, began to arrive. Some remained permanently, while others later returned to their home countries. There were among them colourful and adventurous personalities.

In 1841 seventeen Jews organised the first Hebrew Congregation in Cape Town. They named it Tikvat Israel Congregation (The Hope of Israel). By the end of the 1860's several hundred Jews were living in South Africa. They played a significant part in the cultural and civic life and added materially to the country's economic progress. Some had settled in remote places. A number lost their identity as Jews.

The discovery of diamonds and gold in the 1850's which opened up the country, attracted a number of Jews who were among the early pioneers. Men like Barney Barnato, Isaac Lewis, Alfred Beit, the Joels, and Oppenheimers were among the founders and developers of South Africa's rich diamond and gold mining industries. Their achievements gave them status and influence beyond their numbers. They were friends and confidants of national figures and some became civic leaders.

In the early 80's much larger numbers of Jews began to arrive in South Africa from England and Eastern Europe. It has been estimated that in the thirty year period from 1882 to 1912 some 40 000 Jews entered this country and in the next forty years another 25 000 arrived from Lithuania, Latvia and England. A further 8 000 came as refugees from Nazi Germany in the 1930's. Their children and grandchildren constitute the South African Jewish community today.

DISTRIBUTION

Roughly half of South African Jewry lives in Johannesburg (63 620). The East Rand (Benoni, Boksburg, Germiston, Kempton Park) (4 440); Balfour, Brakpan, Delmas, Heidelberg, Nigel, Springs (1 660); West Rand (Krugersdorp, Randfontein, Roodepoort, Westonaria) (940); Vanderbijlpark and Vereeniging (440), account for a further 10%. Cape Town and Peninsula (28 000) account for another 20%. The remaining 20% is spread over the rest of the country, from substantial Jewish communities in Durban

(6 420), Port Elizabeth (2 740), Bloemfontein and district (500) to small communities ranging from a few hundred Jews to a handful of Jewish families in the rural towns. These figures are based on the 1980 census.

COMMUNAL LIFE

In its communal life South African Jewry is well organised with bodies which cater for: religious, cultural, fraternal, educational and philanthropic interests.

THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES

The central representative institution of the community is the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, to which most of the country's Hebrew congregations and Jewish societies are affiliated. Its biennial congresses (which decide the Board's policies and elect its President) constitute a broad cross-section of South African Jewry. The Board was founded on the basis of separate entities in the Transvaal in 1903 and the Cape in 1904, "to watch and take action, with reference to all matters affecting the welfare of Jews as a community"; the two entities merged into one body in 1912.

The Board, as it is known, has intervened with the authorities to prevent Jewish immigrants suffering discrimination or disability on account of their race. It has helped Jewish immigrants to become naturalised citizens. It has maintained contact with Jewish organisations abroad and has assisted in universal Jewish causes. During two world wars it assisted the South African war effort by attending to problems specifically affecting Jewish soldiers, as well as participating in the provision of comforts for the troops. Domestically, the Board of Deputies renders a variety of services to the Jewish community, including a variety of cultural programmes; it also runs a central Jewish museum and library, and it renders invaluable assistance to small country communities through the services of a country communities rabbi. It furthermore maintains a Chaplaincy Department which serves Jewish servicemen in the S A armed forces. Its publications Jewish Affairs and Buurman reach a wide readership amongst South Africa's English and Afrikaans speaking citizens.

ZIONIST FEDERATION

The South African Zionist Federation is the representative body through which Zionist work in the Republic is co-ordinated. The various Zionist groupings, organisations and societies are affiliated to it. Established towards the end of the last century, the Zionist Federation enjoys a status co-equal with that of the Board of Deputies. Its various departments deal with organisations and information, fund-raising, youth activities, women's work and immigration to Israel.

South African Jewry is predominantly a Zionist minded community and this has given the Zionist Federation its stature and influence. Zionism (the movement for the establishment of the Jewish National Home) has enjoyed the understanding of successive South African leaders and governments.

Affiliated to the Zionist Federation are a number of Zionist youth movements, namely: Habonim, Bnei Akiva, Betar and Maginim, which conduct cultural programmes, organise youth activities and run highly successful summer camps. In addition University youth have their representative organisation, the South African Union of Jewish students, which is affiliated to the Zionist Federation as well as the Board of Deputies.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

In the main South African Jews belong to Orthodox congregations with about one-fifth being members of Progressive congregations. These are autonomous bodies, each

controlling its own affairs, with religious authority vested in its spiritual leader. Most of them, however, are affiliated to representative organisations which endeavour to strengthen Jewish religious life. The Federation of Synagogues of South Africa, covers the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal. The United Council of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations of the Cape and South West Africa serves the Western Province and SWA/Namibia. Within the Reform sector, the S A Union for Progressive Judaism is the co-ordinating body for Reform congregations. Rabbis and ministers have similarly established their own representative institutions.

EDUCATION

Traditionally, Jewish education in South Africa was conducted by the Cheder or Talmud Torah (afternoon classes run by Hebrew congregations, which required the attendance of the children of members after their day's studies at Government schools). Jewish educators, however, had long felt that this system was inadequate and a movement developed to create Jewish Day Schools which would combine general and Jewish education.

Side by side with Talmud Torahs which still account for some 4 000 pupils, twenty Jewish Day schools have been established in the main centres affiliated to the South African Board of Jewish Education: King David Junior and High Schools, Linksfield; King David Primary and High Schools, Victory Park; King David Primary School, Sandton a total of 3 571 pupils. United Hebrew Schools in Cape Town with a total of 2 192 pupils; Carmel College in Durban with a total of 617 pupils; Hillel Primary and High Schools Benoni with a total of 248 pupils; Theodor Herzl Primary and High Schools in Port Elizabeth with a total of 356 pupils). These day schools provide a full education following the Government syllabus from the primary classes to matric and in addition teach Jewish studies (Hebrew language, Jewish religion, history and literature) as normal school subjects.

A more intensive Jewish traditional education is provided by the Yeshiva College (554 pupils), the Torah Academy of the Lubavitch Foundation (280 pupils), the Beis Yakov Girls School, the Sha'arei Torah Primary School (125 pupils) and Yeshivat Torat Emet (25 pupils), all in Johannesburg, as well as the Hebrew Academy in Cape Town.

The Progressive Movement maintains a network of supplementary Hebrew and Religious classes at temples affiliated to it. These schools are all affiliated to the Union for Progressive Jewish Education.

The Jewish community has also built up an excellent network of Hebrew Nursery Schools, conducted according to the standards laid down by the Nursery School Association of South Africa, with an enrolment of nearly 3 000 children. A total of 15 000 Jewish children currently receive Jewish education through the Jewish Nursery Schools, afternoon Hebrew schools and Jewish Day Schools.

Whereas a generation ago, Hebrew teachers had to be imported, South African Jewry is today providing many of its Hebrew teachers from its own ranks. The Rabbi Zlotnick Hebrew Teachers Training College in Johannesburg has graduated many teachers since its inception in 1948.

The Jewish Students University Programme (JSUP) which combines traditional Jewish studies with university studies through UNISA (the University of South Africa), operates in Johannesburg. Through the Department of Hebrew and the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Cape Town, the Department of Hebrew at the University of the Witwatersrand and the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at Natal University in Durban, students are afforded an opportunity to study Hebrew and Jewish studies at a tertiary level.

An intensive post-school religious programme is offered by the Yeshiva Gedolah of Johannesburg and the Yeshiva Maharsha at Glenhazel, Johannesburg from which graduates,

who have been ordained as rabbis, are now serving the South African Jewish community. A Lubavitch Yeshiva has also opened in Johannesburg to meet the needs of the Chabad congregation.

WELFARE BODIES

Apart from caring for its needy through Jewish welfare agencies in all the major centres, the Jewish community has also created a number of institutions for the aged, orphaned and handicapped. In Johannesburg the Witwatersrand Jewish Aged Home and Our Parents Home accommodate aged members of the Jewish community principally from the Transvaal. Beth Shalom in Durban caters for the Jewish aged of Natal and Highlands House in Cape Town accommodates the Jewish aged of the Cape Province. Arcadia Children's Home in Johannesburg and the Oranjia Home in Cape Town care for Jewish children from broken homes. The Selwyn Segal Hostel in Johannesburg attends to the needs of some 155 physically or mentally handicapped residents and some 60 day care members. The Kibbutz which the hostel maintains is run by a further 16 residents and Hatikvah House which is also under the hostel's auspices accommodates 11 residents engaged in sheltered employment. Glendale in Cape Town also caters for the mentally handicapped.

COMMUNAL WORK

A major women's organisation is the Union of Jewish Women of Southern Africa which has branches throughout the Republic, Zimbabwe and South West Africa. Its policy is to render service to the Jewish community as a whole; to the South African people, irrespective of race, colour or creed and to Israel. Goodwill meetings are a regular activity of the UJW, to which Gentile groups such as the Vroue Federasie, the Women's Agricultural Societies and the National Council of Women, etc are enthusiastically drawn. The participation of the UJW branches in welfare work is impressive. They are concerned with problems of the under-privileged and the under-nourished - the aged, the mentally ill, the sick and with children. They express their concern in a variety of ways - by introducing feeding schemes for under-privileged of all races, such as soup kitchens or the supply of essential foods to creches, nursery and primary schools; by the provision of family centres and by work for Red Cross, Blood Transfusion, etc. They provide transport to hospitals and clinics and assist in occupational therapy. They arrange outings and entertainment for orphans and the aged. The Union of Jewish Women also runs a thriving Adult Education Division.

The spectrum of Jewish communal work is broad and includes specialist agencies like the S A Ort as well as friendly societies and Fraternal Orders like the Hebrew Order of David and B'nai B'rith.

Specific interests are served by such bodies as the S A Jewish Ex-Service League and the Maccabi, the latter being primarily a Jewish sporting body through which teams from South Africa are sent (every four years) to participate in the Maccabiah in Israel.

There is still a considerable, though diminishing, number of Yiddish-speaking Jews in South Africa. The S A Yiddish Cultural Federation strives to cater for their needs and promotes a knowledge of Yiddish among their children. It motivates the running of a Yiddish Nursery and Folk School and publishes a Yiddish bi-monthly "Dorem Afrika".

While congregations and other bodies raise their own finances among members there are two country-wide Jewish fund campaigns in which all co-operate. The Israel United Appeal raises funds for causes in Israel. The United Communal Fund helps meet the budgets of national Jewish organisations like the Board of Deputies and the Board of Jewish Education.

THE JEWISH PRESS

The community is well served by a vigorous weekly Jewish press consisting of the "S A

Jewish Times", an independent newspaper; the "Zionist Record and S A Jewish Chronicle", the organ of the S A Zionist Federation and the "The Jewish Herald", a newspaper published by the Zionist Revisionist organisation.

Compiled by:

Dr. Stephen Cohen - Deputy Director

With acknowledgements to:

Edgar Bernstein, "A Bird's-Eye View of South African Jewry Today"
from South African Jewry 1967/68

The Jewish Heritage in South Africa published by SATOUR

Gus Saron: "From Immigrants to South Africans"





SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES

SUID-AFRIKAANSE JOODSE RAAD VAN AFGEVAARDIGDES

THE BOARD AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The issue of racial discrimination has been one of concern to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies for a long time. Although there have been differing views on the matter, they have been ones of approach and not of principle.

On the one hand there have been demands that the Board condemn all racial discriminatory practices, even if it meant actively entering the political arena. On the other hand, there has been the more cautious approach. It has stated that although racial discrimination is contrary to Jewish ethical and moral tenets, taking an active stand against it in specific political terms was the prerogative of the individual and not that of the Jewish community as a collective body.

The latter view was the official policy of the Board. Thus the 23rd National Congress in 1962 reaffirmed that "Congress deplores any attempts from within or outside of the Jewish community to introduce Jewish issues into the political controversies of South Africa. It affirms that there is no collective Jewish attitude on political issues". It emphasised that, in common with other South Africans, Jewish citizens as individuals had the right and duty to hold and express views on such questions and to "exercise their civic responsibilities through the political party of their choice."

However, the 1962 Congress recognised that the fundamental racial problems of South Africa concerned members of the Jewish community as vitally as they did all other sections of the population. It urged every Jewish citizen to make his individual contribution in accordance with the teachings and precepts of Judaism, towards the promotion of understanding, goodwill and co-operation between the various races, peoples and groups in South Africa. Furthermore it encouraged the achievement of a peaceful and secure future for all the inhabitants of the country based on the principles of justice and the dignity of the individual. This point of view was reiterated in similarly worded resolutions at Board Congresses in 1965, 1967, 1970 and 1972.

The moral responsibilities of the Board of Deputies and the Jewish community in respect of South Africa's political affairs was drawn into sharper focus in the course of an address by the late Mr A Suzman, QC, then a Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Board's Public Relations Committee, to the 28th National Congress in 1974. He said, *inter alia*, "The non-intervention of the Board in political issues does not imply that we are indifferent to the inequities of our existing political, social and economic structure. We are not, however, a political body and we cannot take up the cudgels for or against the policy of any particular political party. We cannot, as a body, align ourselves with or against any of the existing political parties. Nor, for that matter, are we a religious body. Does this then mean that the Board must remain an impotent and silent spectator of all those aspects of our society of which we disapprove, concerned only with our own domestic affairs?"

"As has been repeatedly emphasised, the moral arena is not closed to us. Though we cannot canvass men's votes, we can canvass their moral values. Indeed it is my firm belief that it is only through a constant affirmation of moral values that the

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ground can be prepared for significant political changes. ...By precept and practice we must, at least among our own community, seek to restore the moral values of compassion and justice and so help reawaken the conscience of mankind. ...The time is long past when our community can concern itself solely with its own domestic affairs. Every individual, irrespective of his party affiliations or lack of them, must be concerned and involved in the deeper issues which now face South Africa."

Once more the Congress adopted a resolution which called on the Jewish community "to share in the great challenge and opportunity involved in establishing a just, stable and peaceful relationship between all races and groups in South Africa, which acknowledges the right of all to live in dignity and security, to maintain their group identity and distinctive culture, and to exercise the opportunity to advance in all spheres."

In an historic address at a banquet in May 1976, held to mark the visit to Israel of the Prime Minister, Mr B J Vorster, Mr D K Mann, President of the Board of Deputies, gave expression to the Board's increased outspokenness in respect of South African affairs when he said "...I believe that there is a wide consensus today that attitudes and practices, the heritage of the past, bearing upon the relations between our various racial groups are no longer acceptable. I believe that there is a new sense of urgency abroad in our land, a realisation that we must move away as quickly and effectively as it is practicable, from discrimination based on race or colour, and that we must accord to every man and woman respect, and human dignity, and the opportunity to develop their fullest potential. Our task is to translate into concrete patterns of living and of relationships between man and man, and group and group; the great injunction of the Bible, "Justice, justice shalt thou pursue, that thou may live and inherit the land which the Lord thy G-d gave thee ..."

Increasingly sensitive to the aspirations of many South Africans to effect a juster society in the Republic, the Board adopted a more specifically worded resolution at its 29th National Congress in 1976. It stated "that the attainment of an equitable society necessitated changes in the existing political, social and economic conditions." The resolution urged every member of the Jewish community to strive for peaceful change - "in particular, for the elimination of unjust discrimination - so that all - regardless of race, creed or colour - be permitted and encouraged to achieve the full potential of their capabilities and live in dignity and harmony."

At a monthly meeting of Deputies in June 1977, Dr I Abramowitz, Chairman of the Board, addressed himself to the role of South African Jewry in respect of inter-group relations. He said it was important to continue in word and deed, to put into effect those thoughts and suggestions that had been made as to how a more acceptable and equitable society could be achieved. This was important otherwise all the statements and utterances of the past, on behalf of the Jewish community, would be construed as irrelevant and pious.

A forcefully worded resolution adopted at the 31st National Congress in 1980, stated that "While welcoming recent reforms, Congress believes that unless more meaningful and more significant changes in our social, economic and political structure are initiated, the ever-mounting external and internal pressures may well erupt into violence and bloodshed. Only in this way, can we hope to stem the widening gulf and dangerous polarisation between our different population groups and establish that common bond of trust and loyalty essential for a peaceful, united and just society." An editorial "A unique voice" in the Rand Daily Mail commented on the Board's resolution stating, "Coming from this community at this time, it is a view of special significance which demands special attention."

In an address to the monthly meeting of Deputies after the 31st National Congress, the

late Mr A Suzman, QC, President of the Board, referred specifically to the South African scene. In his speech, he observed that "when the voice of legitimate protest goes unheeded, bombs would be heard." He continued by saying that the future of the white group in South Africa, and, with it, that of the Jewish community, ultimately depended on the maintenance of harmonious race relations in a multiracial society. It was this problem which overshadowed all else in South Africa. Commenting on the significant toughening of the language which Jewish leaders adopted at the Congress and which was reflected in Mr Suzman's address, the Sunday Times quoted a former President of the Board, Mr D K Mann, who explained that, "The change in the language reflects the increasing urgency of the situation ..."

In July 1981 the Cape Committee of the Board of Deputies criticised a specific incident which was a consequence of Government legislative policy. It joined the Western Province Council of Churches in condemning evictions from the bachelor quarters in Langa, near Cape Town, and the arrest of many on pass law offences. In its statement, the Cape Committee attacked the circumstances of the evictions and said that married people had a right to a family life and home, no matter how humble. "In the entire exercise, basic human rights had been ignored ... In particular, we are appalled at law being enforced in this way ... We appeal to the authorities to reconsider their actions and call on people of goodwill to support appeals to relieve the homeless."

When, in 1982, the issue of detention without trial became one of intense public debate, the Board of Deputies directed its attention to the matter. A Board statement, issued to the press, recognised that in appropriate circumstances, strict measures might be necessary in the interests of State security. "However, the wider the discretionary powers vested in the authorities, the greater the necessity for adequate safeguards to prevent abuse ... Detention without trial in solitary confinement should never be resorted to as a punitive measure. Recent events have reinforced the view that prolonged solitary confinement is indeed an extreme form of punishment. Punishment should be the sole prerogative of the Courts ..."

In 1983, the Government presented legislation to Parliament empowering the Minister of National Education to limit the admission of Blacks to White universities, according to a quota. The Board among others wrote to the Minister requesting the withdrawal of the legislation. In a subsequent press statement it said, that during periods of its history, the Jewish people had been at a disadvantage as a result of the quota systems in education. It appealed to the authorities to relinquish the Universities Quota Bill. It expressed the view that publicly funded educational institutions should have "the right to admit any prospective student irrespective of race, colour or creed." The legislation, to which there was much opposition, particularly from the English medium universities, was subsequently shelved.

In the spirit of resolutions urging the Jewish community to co-operate in achieving peaceful change, the Transvaal Council of the Board issued two leaflets which were widely distributed. In the first, entitled "You and Your Fellow South African" appropriate Jewish attitudes towards other racial groups were emphasised. The second focused largely on suitable conditions of employment and wages, with particular reference to domestic workers.

A resolution submitted by the Cape Committee to the 32nd National Congress in 1983 specifically dealt with squatters in the Cape. It recorded that the South African Jewish Board of Deputies "viewed with concern the profound and ongoing suffering of those who, from time to time, were removed from place to place as the K T C camp in Cape Town. Such actions by the authorities, if indeed they were essential, should be pursued with compassion and consideration for the feelings, dignity and basic human rights of those who, through circumstances beyond their control, found themselves rejected and lacking effective means of rectifying their situation."

The concern felt in the Cape over the treatment of squatters prompted the Cape Committee to issue a further statement in September 1983. It noted with dismay that despite its previous protests of other concerned institutions and persons, the destruction of shelters at Crossroads continued. The Board urged the authorities to desist from the inhuman practice.

As the demolition of those shelters persisted into the following year, the Board decided to ask for an interview with the Hon Dr P J Koornhof, the then Minister of Co-operation and Development. It took place in July 1984 and the Board's delegation handed a memorandum to the Minister which, inter alia, stated: "The Board considers the destruction of shelters for human beings, particularly during the winter, to be an action which is abhorrent to South Africans of all faiths. ...The Jewish community, on humanitarian grounds, and on the grounds of its own history of suffering, urges the Honourable Minister to use his power and authority to put an end to this practice."

In July 1983 Prof M Katz, the National Chairman of the Board, commented publicly on an important change in Government policy related to the permanent residence of Black people in urban areas. He welcomed the Government's decision to make home ownership available to Blacks by means of a 99-year leasehold. Whilst indicating that freehold would have been preferable to leasehold, he, nevertheless, urged every employer to assist Black employees to acquire their own homes under the new system.

During the same year the Government turned its attention to a piece of contentious legislation, which had been on the statute books for a long time. The Minister of Internal Affairs appointed a Select Committee, to enquire into the possibility of amending the controversial prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, which prohibited people of different races from marrying, and Section 16 of the Immorality Act of 1957, in terms of which all sexual relations across the colour line were forbidden. In a letter to the Select Committee the Board recommended that "the racially discriminating provisions in the legislation be repealed."

The escalating violence and civil unrest in the country was reflected in a resolution adopted at the 33rd National Congress of the Board in June 1985, when it recorded its dismay at the violence and unrest occurring in the Republic and called on all concerned to do everything possible to ensure the establishment of a climate of peace and calm in which dialogue, negotiation and processes of reform can be continued." The resolution further recorded the Board's support and commitment to justice, equal opportunity and removal of all provisions in the laws of South Africa which discriminated on grounds of colour and race and rejected apartheid.

After a clash between rioters and police in Langa township near Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape, the Cape Committee issued a statement which expressed its deep concern and apprehension at the recent unfortunate and tragic loss of life at Langa township in Uitenhage. It called upon all "to exercise restraint and tolerance, and to use their utmost endeavours to find a solution for the problem which lead to these tragic events."

Police action against demonstrators in Cape Town in the latter half of September 1985 also evoked a reaction from the Cape Committee of the Board. Speaking on behalf of the Jewish community of Cape Town it condemned "the acts of violence by the police on men, women and children assembled in peaceful and orderly gatherings. The community is aware that this is a time of trial and tension for all in our city but nevertheless believes that the police should uphold law and order in a reasonable manner ..."

The Board's recorded stand against racial discrimination is manifestly evident from its numerous statements and resolutions on the subject. It should be noted, however, that in recent years the expression of its views has become more forceful and forthright.

Published
in SA Jewish
Times

THE RABBI'S MESSAGE:

A CALL FOR CALM AND CONFIDENCE

South African Jewry will approach Rosh HaShanah 5746 with more than the usual "Aymat HaDin" -- trepidation over the impending Judgment. This is because we are taught that on that Day of Judgment, the Creator conducts an Annual Review of His handiwork, assessing both men and nations and deciding their fate.

Jews are understandably nervous about South Africa's future, not only because we are seen as part of what is feared might become a beleaguered white minority, but also because of our long history of being caught repeatedly between the grinding forces of action and reaction.

All the more reason that we must see what is taking place in South Africa today in correct perspective.

To my mind, the most frightening phenomenon in the world is a mob, because in it we see human beings who have abdicated their faculty of reason. They have allowed themselves to be reduced to being manipulated, mindlessly herded and stampeded like wild animals. One cannot reason with them because they have ceased for the time being to be rational people, and there is nobody to talk to. Subsequently, they will probably wonder how they could have done such things and feel ashamed, but while mob psychology holds sway, they are de-humanised and unapproachable. This is what is so terrifying about the scenes we have been reading and hearing about and seeing in the newscasts.

But just as great a danger faces us in our evaluation and under-

standing of what is happening, for we must be careful that we do not abdicate our rational faculty as well, and rush to unwarranted conclusions and impulsive, panic reactions. We must be very discerning about how we interpret what we are witnessing in this country at this moment.

Panic emigration is almost always ill-considered, because the motive is entirely negative and emotional: a frantic desire "just to get away!" In such a frame of mind, not enough time or calm contemplation goes into deciding to leave, nor selecting and preparing the destination. The result, more often than not, is disappointment and despondency. The upheaval and frustration commonly take a heavy toll on individual and familial stability. Naturally, there are happy exceptions, but most usually end up feeling socially rootless and financially insecure -- "displaced persons" in an alien society.

And where should one run to, anyway? In today's world, all countries have serious problems that should be as worrying as South Africa's. Very few, however, are working as conscientiously on resolving them. Hardly any can offer as good an atmosphere in which to live and to raise children. This is not a place one should leave hastily, without very careful thought and comparative assessments.

When I first came to South Africa twenty years ago, this was virtually the only country so behind the liberal trend

of the times that it was still officially seeking to entrench and to enforce racial apartheid and discrimination. Even then, for a variety of reasons, I was optimistic that a society based on liberty and justice for all would eventually evolve here. Today, South Africa, too, is caught up with the commitment to promote the dignity, welfare and prosperity of all its peoples.

Strangely enough, I would go so far as to say that what makes South Africa different in the present era is that, of all the countries trying to bring about inter-racial harmony and co-operative co-existence among varying factions, South Africa is probably the most likely to succeed! I say this not merely as wishful thinking, but as a considered assessment based on several significant factors:

- (a) In contra-distinction to the bad feeling and open hostility that so tragically characterises race relations in most other countries, remarkably, but none the less definitely and indisputably, there still exists in South Africa a great measure of basic goodwill and kindly feeling between black and white.
- (b) For all but a relatively small minority, apartheid in South Africa is based not on bigotry but on protection of vested interest. This means that when vested interest is best served -- as right now -- by dismantling apartheid, racial discrimination in this country can be legislated out of existence. Thus, we have never had to call out the army or the police to enforce integration or to quell inter-racial fighting. I don't recall a

single "incident" arising from the painting over of the "Whites Only" signs on park benches; or the introduction of integrated queues and lifts; or non-white shop assistants, bank tellers and traffic cops serving, directing and ticketing whites; or integrating hotels, theatres and restaurants; etc., etc.

- (c) The free world cannot and will not allow South Africa, with its vital mineral resources and geographically strategic position, to fall under communist control.

It is vital that, both within South Africa and abroad, the multi-dimensional purpose of the present disturbances be fully understood. Everybody knew and anticipated that with heightened black expectations would come heightened demands and impatience. But, far more than only demands for redress of legitimate grievances, the violence, intimidation and school boycotts in the townships are also manifestations of a power struggle between black groups -- some of whom want, not a peaceful transition to a just society, but nothing less than the total revolution it would require to turn this country into a communist state.

The vast majority of South Africans of all races want meaningful reform within a free, capitalist system. P.G., they, together with the authorities, will soon succeed in re-establishing law and order, so that real progress can be made in implementing the necessary changes.

(d) I believe that the Government is sincerely determined to persist in trying and negotiating until the right formulae are found. Of course the world was disappointed by the State President's failure to announce startling concessions in his August 15th speech. But all should realise that the artificially exaggerated expectations created by the media would have rendered any specifics inadequate. Under the circumstances, enunciating a general but unequivocal commitment to genuine reform through negotiation was the wisest course.

(e) It will eventually be realised by more and more overseas decision-makers that the reality in South Africa is very different from the wilfully distorted picture portrayed by the "news" media. The discomfiting and unwise pressures will correspondingly be relieved.

(f) South African Jewry has undergone a remarkable religious renaissance, that is still gaining momentum and affecting an ever-increasing number, especially of our younger people. The closer we are to G-d and His Torah, the more we will enjoy of His providential care and protection.

(g) Encouraged by the unequivocal blessings and prophetic reassurances of the greatest Rabbinic visionaries of our times (and who did not counsel complacency regarding the then impending Nazi Holocaust!), our confidence in the future stability and prosperity of this country should remain completely unshaken

by the disturbances we are experiencing at the moment.

I conclude, therefore, with a call for calm and confidence, even in the present situation in South Africa.

We are well on our way to meaningful, far-reaching reforms that will end discrimination and give equal justice and opportunity to all races. This means that we are on the verge of a new era wherein South Africa will, with G-d's help, be able to realise to the fullest its tremendous potential. To panic now and to be stampeded into foolish and costly decisions, is to play right into the hands of those who do not want a peaceful solution in South Africa.

South African Jewry should stand firm and contribute of the Jewish genius to building a brighter future for itself and for this great country as a whole.

The only justifiable alternative is a positively motivated Aliyah to Israel. As I am fond of telling you: "To go from one Galut to another is no Chochmah. Either go Home, or stay home!"

RABBI N M BERNHARD



PEACE

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Original documents
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Historical background

Stephen Cohen



AMERICAN JEWISH
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The early period

The history of South African Jewry parallels that of white settlement on the African sub-continent. Although, comparatively speaking, it is not as long as the history of Jewish communities in other parts of the world, it nevertheless shares many similarities with them in that it is a story of adaptation, of survival, and of the creation of a framework for the preservation and advancement of the Jewish faith and culture. Like Jews the world over, the Jews of South Africa have made a unique contribution to the country of their adoption, and have enriched it in a wide variety of fields; so that many of them are as much a part of the history of the country as they are part of the history of the Jewish community that lives there.

Having always been a section of the privileged minority within the country, the Jews have benefited from the opportunities this status afforded them, although on occasion they have had to endure hardships never experienced by their white neighbours. In spite of such vicissitudes, the Jewish community shares the love and loyalty which its fellow citizens feel for the country, which is, for the majority of Jews in South Africa today, the land of their birth.

Jewry's earliest association with South Africa, has been traced back to the Jewish cartographers, astronomers, navigators and sailors who assisted the Portuguese in their voyages of discovery, which opened up a sea route around South Africa to India and the East.¹

When the Dutch East India Company established a permanent set-

tlement at the Cape in 1652, it adhered to the policy (notwithstanding the fact that a number of Jews in Holland were shareholders in the Company) of only admitting Protestant Christians into its service. Consequently those Jews who did settle at the Cape during the Company's administration, were either non-conforming Jews or Christian converts. Samuel Jacobson and David Hylbron, for instance, who were the earliest recorded Jews in the Company's service, converted to Christianity in 1669.

The prohibition against practising Jews settling at the Cape persisted until 1803, when the Colony came under the Batavian Republic, and the principle of religious tolerance was established. The British took over in 1806 and continued the policy of religious freedom. There were Jews among the immigrants who settled at the Cape under the British administration but in the absence of an organized Jewish community most of them assimilated into the gentile population.⁴ A notable exception was Dr Siegfried Frankel, who settled there in 1808, and is the first known settler to have professed the Jewish faith.⁵

The earliest expression of organized Jewish life was on September 26, 1841, the eve of the Day of Atonement, when a service was held in Cape Town at Helmsley House, the home of Benjamin Norden, an 1820 Settler.⁶ A week later, a permanent congregation named 'The Society of the Jewish Community of Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope' or *Tikvath Israel* was established. The congregation, which was almost entirely English and German, drew its membership not only from Cape Town, but also from elsewhere in South Africa. One such member was Joseph Mosenthal of Port Elizabeth,⁷ who, with his brothers, set up stores and trading posts throughout the Cape Colony, and also introduced merino sheep into the country, thereby laying the foundation of South Africa's wool industry.⁸

When, in 1842, services for the Day of Atonement were again arranged by the *Tikvath Israel*, the number of declared Jewish residents of Cape Town was 17, out of a total white population of 9 359.⁹ By this time, a number of Jewish immigrants had struck roots in the Eastern Cape, some having come to the Colony as 1820 Settlers. Subsequently, Jews were to be found in a host of small towns and outposts the length and breadth of the Cape.¹⁰

As the extent of the British influence increased with the annexation first, of Natal (1843),¹¹ and then of the Orange River Sovereignty (later the Orange Free State) in 1848,¹² Jewish pioneers were among those who settled in these territories. The British adventurer, Nathaniel Isaacs, first visited Natal in 1825 when it was still dominated by the Zulu nation;¹³ he was followed by other Jewish pioneers, like Daniel and Aaron de Pass. They developed the sugar industry in Natal¹⁴ and the coastal trade, as well as other significant economic enterprises in the Cape and South West Africa.¹⁵ Jonas Bergtheil also contributed to the economic advancement of Natal, and initiated a scheme for organized white settlement in the area. He participated in public life and became a member of Natal's first legislative council in 1857.¹⁶ As the Jewish population of Natal increased, the community came to be concentrated in Durban, with smaller numbers in Pietermaritzburg, Vryheid and lesser-known towns.¹⁷

In the Orange Free State, a German settler, Isaac Baumann, came to be closely identified with the growth and development of Bloemfontein, of which he and his family were the first Jewish residents.²⁰ Baumann, his son-in-law Wolf Ehrlich, and other members of the family, contributed much to commercial and political life there.²¹ Bloemfontein was the only place in the Free State that could boast an organized Hebrew congregation²¹ until the end of the nineteenth century, although Jewish pioneers had long established themselves in a number of other centres.²²

The discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West in 1867²³ and of gold in the Transvaal in 1873 (especially the main reef at Roodepoort in 1886),²⁴ focused international attention on South Africa. Prospectors from all over the world were drawn to the diggings, and Jews, principally from Great Britain and central Europe, constituted a large number of them. They included men like Barney Barnato, who, together with Cecil John Rhodes, founded the De Beers Consolidated Mines.²⁵ There were mining magnates like David Harris, George Albu, Max Michaelis, Woolf Joel and Lionel Phillips, all of whom were associated with De Beers,²⁶ and a host of less successful men. The Jews among these fortune hunters laid the foundations of Jewish life in Kimberley and, more significantly, in Johannesburg and its environs. By 1890, when the population of Johannesburg was first enumerated, approximately one-tenth of a total of 10 000 white people were Jewish.²⁷

East European immigration

The era characterized by the gold rush was a period of particular significance for South African Jewry, since it heralded the immigration of Jews from eastern Europe. They came principally from Lithuania, especially from the provinces of Kovno, Vilna, Grodno and Northern Suwalki, and from Russia — the areas of Vitebsk, Minsk and Mogilev.²⁸ This immigration swelled the Jewish population from about 4 000 in 1880 to 38 101 in 1904, and 49 926 by 1911, so that it totalled 3.7 per cent of the white population.²⁹ It affected both the size of the community, and its structure and direction. Many of these immigrants were initially shopkeepers, traders or itinerant pedlars, drawn to South Africa by stories of prosperity and the presence of family and friends. Some came to avoid long delays in England while waiting to gain admission to the United States.³⁰

Naturally the composition of South African Jewry was considerably altered by this wave of Yiddish-speaking immigrants. They enlarged existing communities, and helped to form many new ones. However, leadership of the established institutions remained in the hands of the Anglo-Jewish section until the 1930s, when some of the children of the east European immigrants took over;³¹ but the impact of the new arrivals on the community was felt far earlier.

In the religious sphere, the presence of so many east European Jews resulted in synagogues which conformed to the standards and practices with which they had been familiar, and which they were unable to find in the Anglo-Jewish congregations.³² Their predominantly Lithuanian background and their consequent identification as *misnagdim* or opponents of the *Chassidic* movement within Judaism, accounts too, for the

life in the process of acculturation.⁴² There were a number of reasons for this: the Anglo-Jewish origin of the organized community; high urbanization in a culture that was predominantly English; upward economic mobility stabilizing at the mainly English middle-class level, and the superior magnetic force of the English language and culture.⁴³

Reaction to Jewish immigration

The influx of Jews from eastern Europe eroded the equilibrium that had existed between the Jewish community and the Afrikaner and English population.⁴⁴ Antipathy towards the immigrants first became evident in the rural areas of the Cape, where the east European pedlar, or *smous*, was the focus of resentment.⁴⁵ The resentment was articulated in Parliament, as well as in the urban press.⁴⁶ This was partly due to the process of urbanization and the consequent economic and social upheaval: Jews served as a convenient scapegoat.⁴⁷ Elsewhere in South Africa, anti-Semitic prejudice was also apparent, and was reflected in a number of newspaper articles published in Johannesburg.⁴⁸ In the light of the mixed attitudes displayed by Afrikaners and English towards Jews, the reactions of the Jews towards the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) were far from uniform.⁴⁹

With the conclusion of the war, Jews came increasingly to value British rule because of the benevolence of the British, who abolished all the discrimination which had previously existed in the Transvaal, and proclaimed themselves the champions of civic and political liberties. Anti-alien agitation nevertheless, persisted principally against the east European Jews. In 1902, the Cape Legislative Council passed an Immigration Registration Act. This was intended primarily to control the influx of Asians, but it also curtailed east European immigration⁵⁰ by insisting that applications be written out and signed by an immigrant in the characters of a European language.⁵¹ A similarly restrictive law was enacted in Natal. Although these laws only affected the maritime colonies, and did not apply to the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, they were naturally disadvantageous to Jews wishing to settle in the interior. Admission to the Transvaal was further compounded by the need to secure an entry-permit and by difficulties of naturalization thereafter.⁵²

Against this background, steps were taken by Rabbi Dr Joseph Hertz and Max Langermann in 1903 to create a Board of Deputies for the Transvaal and Natal. It determined to 'take action in reference to matters affecting the welfare of Jews as a community'.⁵³ A separate Board of Deputies, with similar objectives, was set up in the Cape in 1904, largely at the instigation of Morris Alexander and David Goldblatt, the editor of the *Jewish Advocate*.⁵⁴ Through the efforts of these two bodies, the authorities in the Cape and Natal came to amend their Immigration Acts and to accord to Yiddish the status of a European language.⁵⁵ A similar clause was incorporated into the Transvaal's Immigration Restriction Act of 1907.⁵⁶

Despite the initial element of discord between the Anglo-Jewish leaders of the two Boards of Deputies and their Yiddish-speaking fellows on whose behalf they acted, the creation of the Boards reflected an accep-

tance of responsibility on the part of the community's leadership: a responsibility to defend the rights of the east European immigrant.⁵ Discrimination against Jewish immigration was viewed as a stigmatization of the Jewish community as a whole, for if certain Jewish immigrants were regarded as undesirable, then by implication, even established Jewish citizens were regarded as undesirable too. Attempts to hinder the flow of Jews from eastern Europe were, moreover, considered to be very harmful for the demographic and cultural future of the community.⁶

The creation of the Board of Deputies ended the overall dominance which the South African Zionist Federation had previously enjoyed in community life. Indeed, the Federation recognizing the challenge, initially fought vigorously to prevent the Board's establishment. It also heralded a decline in community leadership of the synagogue and its ministers, placing it in the hands of secular leaders instead. The secular organization came to be viewed by the authorities as the mouthpiece of local Jewry.

Following the unification of South Africa in 1910,⁷ the two Boards of Deputies merged to form the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, which retained the same objectives as its predecessors.⁸ The Board fought, among other things, for the continued right of Jews to immigrate.

As a result of the representations made by the Board of Deputies, the Immigration Regulation Act No 22 of 1913 specified that for the purpose of the Act, Yiddish would be regarded as a European language.⁹ However, the struggle to ensure the unhindered immigration of Jews to South Africa continued. Although it may have been the English, with their experience of anti-alien agitation in their own country, who taught the Afrikaner the terminology of anti-Semitism,¹⁰ it was the Afrikaners who opposed Jewish immigration, and among them that anti-Semitic agitation was most vehemently articulated. This state of affairs was caused by a number of factors.

In the post-Union period, Jews by and large identified with the English-speaking population and the pro-imperialist political parties, primarily because it was believed that Jews' rights could best be guaranteed in this way.¹¹ This tendency was reinforced when, in 1914, General J. B. M. Hertzog formed a largely Afrikaner party, the National Party, which was opposed to British imperialism and republican in sentiment.¹² Jews in general appear to have turned their backs on Hertzog's party; they increasingly came to believe that their future was best secured by supporting General J. C. Smuts, who not only opposed secession from the Empire, but was regarded as a friend of Zionism.¹³ The general support for Smuts continued, despite dissatisfaction in 1923, with the discriminatory aspects of the Immigrant Act (the exclusion on economic grounds of certain Jewish immigrants had been included despite promises by the Government that this clause would not be applied to Jews). Although there is evidence that in the 1924 and 1929 general elections, support for Smuts and his South African Party among Jews was whittled down because of its immigration policy,¹⁴ there does not appear to have been a decisive swing towards the Pact Government, made up of

National and Labour Parties under General Hertzog.⁵⁶

By 1930, South Africa, like the rest of the world, was experiencing a severe economic depression.⁵⁷ South African Jewry also had to contend with the introduction of the Immigration Quota Bill, intended to restrict immigration from eastern Europe, and, in effect, to limit the number of Jews entering the country. With a suddenness which caught the South African Jewish community almost unawares,⁵⁸ the Minister of the Interior, Dr D. F. Malan, secured the first reading of his Bill on January 29, 1930.⁵⁹ It created a storm of indignation within the Jewish community, particularly as Dr Malan sought to win Jewish support by claiming that the restrictions on their east European co-religionists would be to the community's economic and social advantage. Jewry equally vociferously rejected the Minister's allegation that uncontrolled immigration of Jews from eastern Europe would disrupt the racial homogeneity of the country and would create serious economic problems. In spite of opposition from certain members of Parliament the Bill became law.

The Immigration Quota Act was of enormous significance in that it highlighted a wide cross-section of public support, cutting across party and linguistic lines for limitation on Jewish immigration.⁶⁰ In the light of the opposition to Jewish immigration which had last manifested itself in 1923-1924, it is surprising that the Jewish community should have been so unprepared for the Act and apparently so unaware of popular feeling.

The community's surprise, however, can be partly explained by the fact that until 1930, Hertzog's National Party had not shown itself unfavourably disposed to Jewish immigration. In fact in 1924, Dr Malan, as the newly-appointed Minister of the Interior in the Pact Government, had rejected the policy of his predecessor in Smuts' Cabinet, who sought to curb Jewish immigration on economic grounds.⁶¹ The change which this Act signalled in National Party policy may have been an indication of the Party's inability to draw Jewish support away from the South African Party.⁶² Having failed in both the 1924 and 1929 elections to capture the Jewish vote, it has been argued that 'it was the National Party's disappointment with the Jews which cleared the path for a radical change in policy'.⁶³

The broad base of public opinion in favour of the Quota Act becomes easier to understand in view of the prevailing socio-economic conditions. By this time, the problem of the 'poor whites' had reached serious proportions. Large numbers of impoverished Afrikaners had come to live in the towns and cities, where they were confronted by black competition in areas of unskilled labour, and predominantly English-speaking employers. It thus became a major issue in the consciousness of Afrikaner nationalism and was related to the Afrikaner's national struggle.⁶⁴ The Jewish community, with its extensive involvement in commerce and its predominantly urban location, became a natural scapegoat for the ills of the 'poor whites'.

The Immigration Quota Act generated grave suspicion and animosity between the Jewish community and Hertzog's National Party, which was worsened by the increase in fees for naturalization certificates imposed in 1931. This response set a dialectic process in motion, 'whereby the Jewish reaction to the Government's policy in turn set up an increas-

ingly negative response from the Nationalists who came to suspect that the Jews as a whole were now becoming their enemies'.

Despite the Immigration Quota Act, Jews living in South Africa continued to identify with their English-speaking fellows and to vote accordingly. Consequently, the Jewish population favoured the fusion of Smuts' South African Party and Hertzog's National Party into the United South African National Party, or as it came to be known, the United Party.⁷ Jewish support was probably based on the hope that it would result in a moderation of the Hertzog Party's attitude towards Jewry, through the moderating influence of Smuts and his colleagues, such as Jan Hofmeyr. The formation of the United Party left extremists in both Smuts' and Hertzog's parties dissatisfied. In the National Party those who opposed amalgamation rallied around Dr Malan and formed the Purified National Party, although it was known thenceforward simply as the National Party.⁸

Period of the Alien Act

This process of political realignment took place against the rising spectre of Nazism in Germany, culminating in Hitler's appointment as Chancellor in 1933.⁹ The intensification of anti-Semitic policy in Germany evoked general sympathy in South Africa for the Jewish victims of Nazism — in contrast to the widely-based support for the Immigration Quota Act. It would appear that while the general public, and the English press in particular, opposed overt acts of anti-Semitism, they reacted differently to covert activities, especially those of immediate concern to them. At no time would it seem that sympathy for persecuted Jewry abroad corresponded with a desire to have those Jews in the Union. When restrictions were later placed on German-Jewish immigration they aroused little opposition from the voters or the press in South Africa.

Close on the heels of fascism's rise in Europe, sympathizers organized themselves into movements in much of the English-speaking world, including South Africa. The Afrikaner nationalists centred on Dr Malan and his National Party were particularly susceptible to National Socialism because of their race-consciousness, their anti-British sentiment, their economic and political frustration and their vague affinity with Germany (many of them were of German origin).¹⁰ Although the National Party never adopted the German programme of National Socialism, the Party's anti-Semitic stance at this time is now acknowledged.¹¹ A mode of indigenous Nazism acceptable to Afrikaner nationalists, because it was adapted to local conditions, did emerge after 1933 and was manifested in the Greyshirts and similar organizations.¹² Although their numbers were never large, these organizations, with their nationalistic and republican leanings and their unashamed anti-Semitic platform, had considerable influence, and kept the so-called 'Jewish Question' in the forefront of public attention.

In an effort to counter the local Greyshirts, the Jewish Board of Deputies adopted a three-pronged programme: to promote better relations between the Jewish community and other white groups, to monitor incidents of anti-Semitism, refuting them by publishing suitable literature,

and to press for anti-defamation legislation against anti-Semitic acts.⁵⁷

Within the United Party, a faction led by General Smuts and Jan Hofmeyr was unquestionably sympathetic to local Jewry but other elements, including the Prime Minister, General Hertzog, while not sympathizing with the Greyshirts, were not as articulate in their sympathy or solidarity. With the Jewish question very much a political issue, expediency forced Smuts and Hofmeyr to compromise their principles and limit their activities on behalf of Jewry.⁵⁸ This became especially apparent in 1937 with the passing of the Alien Act, whereby immigration of German Jews was effectively curtailed.

The Act of 1937 was introduced by the Government in answer to mounting pressure to halt German-Jewish immigration. This came mainly from the National Party, which had imbibed Greyshirt propaganda and believed that the solution to 'poor whiteness' lay in solving the so-called Jewish problem.⁵⁹ The Alien Act differed from the Quota Act in that it provided a uniform system of assessing applicants, irrespective of country of origin or ethnic group, so it was less of an affront to Jewish dignity. The Alien Act was not directed against Jews in particular, although its purpose was the limitation of German-Jewish immigration, so even Jewish members of Parliament found themselves forced to support it as the lesser of two evils.⁶⁰

The stand taken by Dr Malan and his supporters during the passage of the Act through Parliament, showed what a hard line the Party had adopted towards Jewry. Dr Malan not only admitted that he was advocating discrimination against Jews, but, insisted that until Jewish involvement in commerce had been checked, and Afrikaners had gained a foothold in the business world, the problem of the 'poor whites' would remain.⁶¹ The National Party's feelings towards Jewry were made abundantly clear by the official decision of the Transvaal branch to disqualify Jews from membership of the Party, followed by the Free State branch soon after.⁶²

At the time when Dr Malan was expressing fears about the growing influence of South African Jewry (1936), it in fact numbered 90 645 and constituted 4.52 per cent of the white population.⁶³ Over the previous ten years, it had risen by 18 829, or 26 per cent.⁶⁴ Of this figure, 20 per cent could be accounted for by immigration.⁶⁵ The fear that German-Jewish refugees would radically alter the composition of the white population was confounded by the figures: from 1929 to 1932 only 31 German Jews immigrated;⁶⁶ between 1933 and 1936, (when immigration was restricted) 6 132 German immigrants entered the Union, of whom only 3 615 were Jews.⁶⁷ The total number of German Jews to gain admission from the time of Hitler's accession to power to the outbreak of war in 1939 totalled a mere 5 334⁶⁸ (although a further 200 German Jews were admitted from 1940 to the end of 1944).⁶⁹

The curtailment of immigration of Jews from Germany ended the third significant wave of Jewish immigration to the Union. Despite the fact that it was stopped, and that the immigrants themselves were much poorer than their east European counterparts had been, this influx nevertheless had a profound and lasting effect on Jewish life,⁷⁰ and benefited the country in general.⁷¹ At the end of the Second World War,

South Africa's political situation was such that it no longer attracted Jewish immigrants on the same scale and the growth of the community was largely due to natural increase.

Not content with the Alien Act, the National Party continued to agitate for restrictions on Jewish immigrants, and its members became increasingly anti-Semitic in their speeches.¹⁰⁷ While Dr Malan did not adopt the racist terminology of the Greyshirts, he did endorse their view of the Jew as a major source of Afrikaner troubles.¹⁰⁸

Reconciliation and reaction

The Second World War witnessed a realignment of the political loyalty of Nationalist Afrikaners. Following his resignation from the United Party because of the Union's entry into the war,¹⁰⁹ General Hertzog joined Malan's Opposition in Parliament¹¹⁰ and with his resignation, precipitated the creation of the short-lived Afrikaner Party.¹¹¹ Antagonism and prejudice towards Jews, who came increasingly to be coupled with communism, remained a consistent element, both of National Party policy,¹¹² and extra-parliamentary groups such as the *Ossewabrandwag*. Despite this, members of the Jewish community served with distinction in the South African forces during the war.¹¹³

Because of the National Party's views on Jewish immigration and its opposition to the Union's involvement in the war, Malan's electoral victory in 1948,¹¹⁴ filled South African Jewry with trepidation.

Prior to the election, Malan had sought to soften his party's stand on the Jewish question,¹¹⁵ and in fact, the misgivings of the Jewish community proved largely unfounded. Malan soon made it clear that his Government did not intend to discriminate against any section of the white population.¹¹⁶ In fact his desire for a reconciliation between his Party and the Jewish community was proved by the sympathetic help he gave them in their efforts to support the new State of Israel, which was struggling to establish itself.¹¹⁷

The fears of many Jews were further dispelled when an early attempt was made to incorporate a pro-Government Jewish movement into the National Party, despite the die-hards. Although in 1948 Jews were still barred from membership of the party in the Transvaal, they were already members in the Cape; it was not until 1950 that the Transvaal ban was lifted.¹¹⁸

This shift by Dr Malan and his Party appears to have been influenced by two things: first, local political considerations; and second, confidence that the problem of Jewish immigration had been solved by the creation of the State of Israel, (which evoked sympathy and respect in the Calvinist Afrikaner¹¹⁹). Moreover, having gained political ascendancy, the Afrikaner no longer felt threatened by Jewish economic competition. The removal of the Jewish question from public life, the Government's fair dealings with the Jews and its friendship with Israel, did not mean that Jews necessarily began to support the National Party; but it did allow them to judge political parties by their policies for South Africa as a whole,¹²⁰ rather than their attitude to Jews.

Although the policy initiated by Dr Malan continued under his successors, J. G. Strijdom, H. F. Verwoerd and B. J. Vorster, two major stumbling-blocks remained in the path of Jewish-Afrikaner relations.

The first was Jewish involvement in opposition circles; and the second was Israel and its attitude to South Africa.

South African Jewry, as an integral part of the privileged white community, had worked through Parliament to defend and protect the interests of the community. Because of the divisive nature of South African society, the plight of other disadvantaged groups, especially the Asians¹¹⁷ and blacks, had largely been ignored. During the struggle to ensure the continued admission of Jews to the country in the 1930s, the community's leadership concerned itself solely with Jewish rights, because the issue was urgent and the community was in a precarious position. The political advancement of the Afrikaner, culminating with Dr Malan's victory in 1948, saw discussions between the Jewish community and the authorities based on clarifying Jewish-Afrikaner relations, with scant attention paid to the wider issues of race relations which South Africa faced.

Individuals within the Jewish community, however, had long striven for the advancement of all South Africa's peoples. While the organized Jewish community was preoccupied with its own interests, individual Jews were among the first whites to take up the cudgels on behalf of the underprivileged and disenfranchised. In the first decade of this century, for instance, Mahatma Gandhi was helped in his struggles on behalf of the Indian population by the Jewish community. They included Henry Polak, who edited Gandhi's newspaper *Indian Opinion*, Hermann Kallenbach, who was closely involved with him in the *Satyagraha* struggle, and Sonja Schlesin who was Gandhi's secretary.¹¹⁸

Among the Yiddish-speaking immigrants were some who were imbued by socialist ideology, and wanted to contribute to the class struggle. One such, Yeshaya Israelstam, was a founder of the Yiddish Speaking Group within the South African International Socialist League.¹¹⁹ Jews also attained prominence in the trade union movement, two outstanding examples being Ben Weinbren, who served for many years on the executive of the Trade Union Council, which aided in the development of the Federation of Non-European Trade Unions; and Solly Sachs, who rose to prominence as the general secretary of the Transvaal Garment Workers' Union.¹²⁰

For the most part, however, South African Jews tended to confine their political activities to white party political matters and the electoral success of Dr Malan did not greatly alter this. Although grateful for the shift in the National Party's attitude the community remained wary of the Government and generally supported the United Party.

Nonetheless, there were Jewish elements to be found in leftist organizations.¹²¹ Some were motivated by the moral imperative of their faith, while others had despaired of their community for not responding to their religious impulse, and severed their bonds with it, preferring to be 'universalist' in outlook. However, when the Government embarked on its programme of apartheid which involved much restrictive legislation and the repression of opposition, Jewry was singled out for castigation and rebuke. This was mainly due to the high proportion of Jewish individuals among the Government's most vehement and articulate opponents, like the Communist Party and the Congress of Democrats. The many Jewish names in radical groups at the forefront of the struggle

Against apartheid, resist to these detainees in political trials, councils for the defence of those tried in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, and those involved in the founding of the non-racial Liberal Party in 1953, and the Progressive Party in 1959 which supported a qualified franchise. This involvement by Jews in the opposition to apartheid was strengthened when South Africa became a Republic in 1961. In the wake of acts of sabotage, the authorities discovered that the white leadership of *Umkhonto We Sizwe* (the Spear of the Nation, an underground offshoot of the banned African National Congress) included a number of Jews, as did the African Resistance Movement and the now banned Communist Party.¹²⁷ Furthermore, large numbers of Jews were among those detained under the 90-day clause of the General Law Amendment Act of 1963.

Coping with criticism

Although the Jewish community could hardly be classified as either overwhelmingly radical, or reactionary, because some of its members were active on both sides of the political spectrum, nevertheless it was the butt of increased criticism from the Government and the Afrikaner press. In 1963, for example, the Afrikaner newspaper *Dagbreek* asked the Board of Deputies why such a high percentage of white persons detained under the ninety-day clause were Jews.¹²⁸ During 1964, several newspapers published letters which remarked on the same thing.¹²⁹ In the following year, Major-General H. J. van den Berg, Chief of the South African Security Police, said that he was often asked why so many of our Jewish friends were listed as communists. He expressed the opinion that Jews tend to be involved because communism was an extreme form of capitalism.¹³⁰ A further incident occurred in 1969 when, in the wake of student unrest on several university campuses in protest against apartheid, the newly-appointed Minister of Police, Lourens Milder, claimed that many of the leaders of the student protests had Jewish names, as did many listed Communists.¹³¹

The Jewish community's response to such allegations was to continue to research, through individual members of the community, and through the Board of Deputies, that Jews participated in public life as citizens of South Africa and had no collective attitude to the political issues confronting the country.¹³² The Board consistently reiterated its policy of not entering the political arena except when Jewish interests were directly at stake. Jewish citizens acted in political affairs as individuals, not as members of a community, and the diversity of political viewpoints within the general population was mirrored in the Jewish community. In response to allegations that a disproportionately large number of Jews were in the forefront of the opposition to apartheid, the Board of Deputies declared that individual Jews had the right to their own political views and actions — always of course, within the framework of the law. The Board consistently emphasized that the Jewish community neither wished, nor was able, to control the political freedom of the individual Jew, nor as a community, could it accept responsibility for the actions of individuals.¹³³ As has been noted elsewhere, this fundamental policy of political non-involvement, was a function of the Jews

collective interests as perceived by the leadership of the Board of Deputies'. It was 'a characteristic minority group phenomenon, better understood in sociological terms as a function of self-preservation, than in ideological terms as a function of Judaism. What was at stake, was simply the preservation of full rights for Jews as white citizens of South Africa and the unhindered free existence of a Jewish communal life.'¹²²

Quite clearly, the moral aspects of South Africa's racial problems had to be grappled with, both as individuals and as a community. While individual Jews adopted a variety of ways to express their moral convictions the Board of Deputies, in response to pressure at home, and from Jewish organizations abroad, came to accept the view that, although there could be no collective Jewish attitude to political issues, there should be a common attitude to moral issues which related to political matters. The earliest manifestation of this became obvious at the Twentieth Congress of the Board in 1955, when the following resolution was adopted:

Congress repeats its conviction that the welfare of all sections of the population depends on the maintenance of democratic institutions and the enjoyment of freedom and justice by all. It believes that the elimination of intergroup conflict and the abatement of racial prejudice are vital for the national good, and urges support of efforts directed to these ends.¹²³

At successive Congresses, resolutions of a similar nature, which became increasingly less vague in their wording, were unanimously adopted.¹²⁴ These highlighted the Board's constant struggle to maintain its political impartiality while at the same time giving expression to the moral and religious imperatives of its community's faith.

The delicate position in which the Board of Deputies found itself was shared to some extent by the Jewish community as a whole. This did not, however, inhibit members from enunciating their views: the rabbinate, both Reform and Orthodox,¹²⁵ radical members of the community,¹²⁶ Jewish public figures committed to both the policy of the Board and to the liberal cause,¹²⁷ all had their say. Their varied pronouncements indicated that the Board was indeed correct in saying there was no common Jewish response to such issues.

It is very difficult to discern a pattern of Jewish political behaviour in the two decades following the 1948 elections, but from some studies it appeared that Jews gravitated towards the centre and supported the United Party, with a growing segment to the left of centre represented by the Progressives. At the same time, there was a segment which identified with the National Party.¹²⁸ One observer, in discussing the diversity of Jewish voters, has noted that while 'it is correct to say that many white liberals and radicals were Jews, it is equally correct that not many Jews were liberals and radicals'.¹²⁹

Israel-South Africa relations

The sympathetic stance adopted by Dr Malan towards Israel (evidenced by his willingness to allow the Jewish community to assist the newly-emerged national homeland) and the overwhelming understanding and respect for the Jewish State evinced by the Afrikaner community, prompted a re-examination of Afrikaner-Jewish relations and an effort to restructure and develop them.¹³⁰ The dialogue between Afrikaner and

Jew, while pleasing to the Jewish community, also caused some consternation because of the increasing references to Israel and Jewry as the epitome of apartheid. Jews might concede that Afro-Asian diplomacy against South Africa, and increased Soviet penetration of Nasser's Egypt, suggested a geo-political similarity between South Africa and Israel, but they denied that Israel embodied the apartheid principle. It was true that Jews strove for their national and religious survival through separatism, but the difference arose in the way they did it.

A strain was placed on Afrikaner empathy with Israel as a result of the Jewish State's support for United Nations resolutions condemning South African racial policies. This led to pressure on South African Jewry by certain Afrikaner newspapers to dissuade the Israeli authorities from taking this line.

The strains which arose in Afrikaner sympathy for Israel in the fifties, escalated in 1961. Firstly, a joint statement issued by Premier David Ben-Gurion and the President of Upper Volta, following the conclusion of a treaty of friendship between the two countries, condemned colonialism and apartheid in Africa. This aroused considerable resentment in South Africa, and *The Transvaal*, a pro-government daily, condemned the government as unman and invited the local Jewish community to do a little enlightenment work in Jerusalem. The response of South African Jewry was to emphasise that it had no influence on Israel's foreign or domestic policies.

A few months later Israel joined the Netherlands, the Afro-Asian states, the Soviet bloc, and some Latin American countries, in voting for a motion of censure on South Africa's foreign minister for a speech delivered in defence of apartheid at the UN General Assembly. Both Prime Minister Verwoerd and Foreign Minister Eric Louw criticised Israel and the Netherlands for not abstaining, as the other western states had done. Louw also expressed the hope that South African Jews would disapprove of the hostile and ungrateful action of the Israeli delegation to the United Nations. In a break with precedent, both the South African Zionist Federation and the Jewish Board of Deputies breached their rule of not commenting on Israel's foreign policy, by issuing muted criticism of Israel's action, while at the same time acknowledging her right to formulate her own foreign policy. The placating effect of these statements, however, was overtaken by the publication in the Johannesburg *Sunday Times* of a private letter from Verwoerd in reply to one from a Cape Town Jew, Sydney East, deploring Israel's vote. In his reply, the Prime Minister agreed with East that

the attitude taken up by Israel in the United Nations, is a tragedy for Jews in South Africa. Fortunately, the reaction of many Jews and Jewish organisations was such that, what might have been worse, was relieved to a certain extent by this pro-South African reaction.

Disturbing enough for South African Jewry by its implications, the letter continued that

the fact that during the last election, so many Jews supported the Progressive Party and so few, the National Party, did not pass unnoticed, and this act of separate development, is, as you say, a real tragedy.

The English language press sharply criticized the Prime Minister's letter as a threat to the Jewish community and an attempt to hold local Jewry hostage for the actions of Israel. In contrast, the Afrikaans press defended him. In an address to the National Party Conference in November 1961, Dr Verwoerd responded to the outcry by denying that the letter was intimidatory. He stated that 'there have been times when one could have spoken of anti-Semitism in South Africa, but during the Government's thirteen years of office, there had not been one single action against Jews'. He furthermore urged 'that nobody must allow himself to be impelled by propaganda to participate in the arousing of racial hatred'.¹⁴²

Whatever feelings of discomfort Dr Verwoerd's letter may have aroused and however much his allegations resembled statements issued by the National Party during the Greyshirt period, it could not be denied that the Government had not engaged in anti-Semitic agitation, nor had it allowed a single Jewish issue to cloud subsequent elections.

South African Jewry's dual loyalty was further challenged by Israel's continued support for United Nations' resolutions condemning South Africa. In 1961, following Israel's vote in favour of sanctions on South Africa, the Treasury notified the Zionist Federation that the special permission which the Government had given the Federation to transmit funds to Israel, in excess of foreign currency regulations, was being withdrawn. Henceforth funds transferred to Israel would come under the same restrictions as those transferred to any other country.¹⁴³ This caused a crisis in Zionist circles as the principal expression of their commitment to Zionism was through fund-raising from Israel's human needs.¹⁴⁴

A further strain resulted from Israel's vote in favour of a General Assembly resolution in November 1962, which included a demand for sanctions against South Africa. Once again South African Jewry found itself forced to reiterate its patriotism to South Africa whilst reaffirming its spiritual links with the Jewish State.¹⁴⁵ The deterioration continued with the down-grading of Israel's diplomatic representation in South Africa following the recall of its minister plenipotentiary.¹⁴⁶

While Verwoerd persistently spoke out against any manifestation of anti-Jewish feeling in South Africa in consequence of Israel's foreign policy,¹⁴⁷ the discomfort caused by Israel's actions at the United Nations, coupled with the persistent allegations of Jewish prominence in anti-apartheid activities, did result in anti-Semitism and the appearance of more anti-Semitic literature.¹⁴⁸

The turning point in restoring harmony between Israel and South Africa was the Six Day War of 1967.¹⁴⁹ General admiration for Israel's achievements resulted in Prime Minister Vorster (Verwoerd's successor) waiving his Government's ban on the transfer of funds to Israel, as a gesture to the Jewish community.¹⁵⁰ Gradually, ties strengthened between the two countries and, despite a number of setbacks,¹⁵¹ grew in extent over the ensuing years, especially after the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and the severance of diplomatic relations between Israel and a large number of African states. With Israel no longer subject to pressure

from these countries over her relations with South Africa, the pace of diplomatic normalization and trading contacts was accelerated, although Israel continued to reject apartheid.¹⁵ In 1974, Israel's diplomatic representation in South Africa was raised to embassy level, and a year later South Africa reciprocated.¹⁶ Following the exchange of ambassadors, Prime Minister Vorster and Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller visited Israel, with the result that a programme of economic, scientific and industrial co-operation between the two countries was instituted.¹⁷ Pragmatic self-interest, which in Israel's case included its inherent concern for the welfare of South African Jewry, had at last become the overt basis for Israel-South African relations.¹⁸

Bilateral ties at all levels of mutual interest were continued and expanded following the electoral victory of Menachem Begin's Likud Party in Israel in 1977. This naturally caused satisfaction in Jewish circles, but it was not without detractors. Criticism came from within the Jewish community, especially from young people, who felt that such links only reinforced allegations made abroad that Zionism was equated with racism, and that this policy would alienate black sympathy for Israel and Jewry.

The current situation

The improvement in Israeli-South African relations co-incident with a period of political and social readjustment in South Africa. Against a background of continued legislation, designed to enforce and entrench apartheid, and widespread detention without trial, intended to repress the radical opposition,¹⁹ differences in attitudes among members of the National Party became increasingly apparent. On the one hand there were those who supported Prime Minister Vorster, who, in pursuit of an outward-reaching policy, was willing to adjust the official line. On the other hand, there were those who represented the conservative Afrikaner and opposed steps which were viewed as a threat to Afrikaner identity such as greater co-operation with English speakers, the forging of diplomatic links with black states, and cross-colour sporting activities. These two schools were dubbed respectively *verligtes* and *verkramptes*. In 1969, the *verkramptes* were expelled from the National Party and they formed the *Heersigte Nasionale Party (HNP)*.²⁰ While the HNP has never gained a seat in Parliament it has enjoyed a measure of support among conservative Afrikaners. With its combination of ultra-conservatism and religious fundamentalism, the Party has remained a source of conservative political ideology and continued anti-Semitism, particularly through its newspaper *Die Afrikaner*.

A more alarming expression of right wing agitation was the *Afrikanerweerstandsbeweging (AWB)*, a radical organization with racist views, including anti-Jewish ones, which was formed in 1981 when its spokesmen advocated that Jews be deprived of political rights. There was reaction not only from the Jewish community, but also from Prime Minister P. W. Botha, who, in a speech to Parliament, soundly condemned the AWB and its leadership.²¹ The attitude of the *Afrikanerweerstandsbeweging* towards violence as a political means was revealed when some

