

COMMENT

Do you have something to say?
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Inside: 'We will endure, we will survive, we will flourish' • Rebirth of Jewish life is a modern-day miracle

YOUR SAY

'Our thoughts, prayers'

WHEN I was attending the Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University last Shabbat in Berrien Springs, Michigan, I was shocked to hear of the tragedy that had unfolded that morning at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, just 400 miles away.

When the 2000+ congregation was told of the events there was an audible gasp from the audience. A prayer was offered in regards to the senseless loss of innocent people and the subsequent pain that this terrible attack will cause.

Being back in Australia now, I wanted to write a letter of encouragement and support to our Jewish community here. As our church is located in Woollahra, we have many great Jewish friends in the Eastern Suburbs community.

We want to express our support for all of you and your extended families abroad. We want you to know that our thoughts and prayers are with you all at this time. We recognise that for so long the Jewish communities here and abroad must be living in a state of near constant vigilance – and sadly we are witnessing an escalation of the many brutal and unkind people in the world we live in. We pray for safety and for Divine intervention on behalf of the innocent.

At times of tragedy, we are led to wonder why too often the good people suffer and the wicked prosper and Psalm 73:16-17 comes to mind where the Psalmist writes, "When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me – until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end."

Together, may we all endeavour to be a light to this dark world and may the humanitarian work of the

Tree of Life synagogue continue and be blessed by God.

Please let me know if there is anything we can do to support the Jewish community as we endeavour to make this world a better place. We are here for you.

Daniel Przybylko
Woollahra Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Beware Australia

ANTISEMITISM and Islamophobia, and the gap between the rich and the poor in America is the poison currently separating the US, politically and culturally.

It has been growing over the last several decades. This polarisation is even worse than many people think. Don't think a civil uprising in America is even on the cards. Trump politics is dividing Americans and Trump-style politics is growing in Europe and elsewhere.

With the disenchantment of our two major parties in Australia, there is also a similar rise of populist politics with culturally and racist polarising views that can destroy our valued democracy. Beware Australia.

Jeffrey Kelson
Pahran, Vic

Old animosities

I COMMEND *The AJN* on their coverage of the atrocity that occurred in Pittsburgh and the inclusion of many statements of condolence and personal stories of the innocent victims. However, the heading on the left-hand column on page 6 of last week's Melbourne *AJN* should have been "Orthodox Melbourne Jews show solidarity" rather than simply "Melbourne Jews show solidarity" as we, Kehilat Nitzan, the only Masorti/Conservative shule in Melbourne were not invited even

though the Tree of Life synagogue was a Conservative kehillah.

Perhaps in the future the Jewish community of Melbourne can be more like that of Pittsburgh as described by Devi Werdiger, who grew up there, when she said, "It didn't matter where you davened or which shule you went to. We were all just the Jews of Pittsburgh ..."

At Kehilat Nitzan we held our own memorial service as reported also on page 6, on Monday evening to which were invited Orthodox rabbis, none of whom attended.

As Melbourne born and bred, I had hoped the old animosities of the past between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews were over, but it seems as if they have never gone away.

Rhona Rosenberg
President, Kehilat Nitzan

Lessons not learnt

THE horrendous Pittsburgh shule massacre left me pondering the well-known Jewish saying that to save a life is to save a world. Whoever destroys a "soul" destroys a world. How many "souls" and minds are being destroyed in a globe of growing killings, hatred, non-understanding, downright lies, false news power plays, privilege, race, colour, do it my way (rightly or wrongly) and, above all, hypocrisy and growing antisemitism almost worldwide, including in Australia.

Issues are being twisted, promises made that can't be kept and almost anything said and done (or not done) to win a vote and, perhaps in turn, an election. One wonders whether people-kind and humanity, and are we failing to learn the lessons of thousands of years where a mad leader and an error or accident can cause a conflagration or a global war which is out of control and too late to prevent or stop?

Stan Marks
Caulfield, Vic

We must protest

IN *The AJN* of October 26, the article "Setback for BDS" gave the impression that the awarding of the obnoxious Jerusalem Peace Prize by Bob Carr to BDS advocate Professor Stuart Rees would no longer be taking place at the Victorian's Parliament's prestigious Queens Hall.

It may well be that the free

Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). The Arabs did not accept the vote and declared war on the fledgling State of Israel. This is a special day for Jews worldwide; hence it is galling for the Palestinian community to be awarding an anti-Israel prize on this very day.

We should be planning a protest rally to show our great displeasure at this scurrilous event that is giving a prize to somebody who doesn't have peace in mind, but rather the continual demonisation and delegitimisation of Israel.

David Schulberg
Caulfield North, Vic

Refugee realities

ALAN Freedman (*AJN* 02/11) says that after the Holocaust, Jews had nowhere to go except countries like Australia. Perhaps he is unaware of a country called Israel that was very welcoming to all Jews seeking a new home, while Jewish refugees continued to come to Australia right through to the 1980s.

Then he criticises the Islamic countries that won't resettle Muslim migrants. Quite right! But then how does he expect Muslim refugees to go there?

Finally, he praises Australia for its humanity in allowing in Jewish refugees. Is he calling for Australia to now be less humane? Could he please clarify whether he is calling on us to adopt the Gulf states as our role models?

Doodie Ringelblum
Elsternwick, Vic

Shallow support

SOMEONE forgot to inform Daniel Weil (*AJN* 26/10) that government policy in relation to Iran and in moving the Australian embassy in Israel to Jerusalem has in fact not been acted upon, as he seems to imply that it had.

Moreover he is treading a dangerous path, in asserting the Liberal party is far more closely aligned to supporting Israel than the opposition. Support for Israel by governments of any persuasion are transient, and over time, are shallow and without conviction. Should the chair of the Liberal Party Caulfield State Electoral Conference read some Australian political history, he would discover that members of the Menzies Liberal government in the

