

South Africa

National Affairs

NOTWITHSTANDING A DECREASING budget deficit, growing exports, and progress in housing, schooling, health clinics, and other social programs, the government, led by the African National Congress (ANC), faced growing criticism. Complaints focused on its handling of the crisis in Zimbabwe, its floundering HIV/AIDS policy, apparent irregularities in arms dealings, and the slow pace of economic privatization.

Taking into consideration the global economic slowdown and the effects of the terrorist attacks in the U.S., the economy performed well, growing at nearly 2 percent. However, the value of the currency declined precipitously in the last three months of the year, with the rand falling by 25 percent against the U.S. dollar, ending the year 37 percent down, as inflation increased to 10 percent. The sudden, massive decline in the value of the rand sparked accusations of “sinister practices” from the head of the South African Chamber of Business, Kevin Wakeford. A Commission of Inquiry into the Rapid Depreciation of the Exchange Rate of the Rand and Related Matters, under John Myburgh, was established in December to determine what caused the free fall.

President Thabo Mbeki devoted considerable energy to regional problems, including ongoing instability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, and Zimbabwe. Within the framework of the African Renaissance—a high-priority project of President Mbeki—the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) was established, its executive headquarters to be located in South Africa. NEPAD was to make the international community aware of world poverty and of the need to reform multilateral institutions so as to deal with it.

Rampant crime, the need for job creation, and extensive corruption in official circles remained important issues on the government agenda. The ANC chief whip in the National Assembly, Tony Yengeni, was charged with accepting a special deal on a vehicle for his own use from a company that was bidding on contracts to provide arms to South Africa. A

special report drawn up by the South African Medical Research Council (MRC) described the scourge of HIV/AIDS in the country as a “plague of biblical proportions.” HIV infections had increased from 1 percent of the population in 1990 to almost 25 percent a decade later, and the pandemic was expected to kill an estimated five-to-seven million people by 2010. MRC president William Makgoba said that there was “no greater threat to the African Renaissance than the spectre of HIV/AIDS in South Africa.” Professor Barry Schoub, an epidemiologist, told the 41st National Congress of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBOD) in Johannesburg in August: “Until recently it was perceived that HIV/AIDS did not effect the Jewish community. Gradually and progressively, the Jewish community has been touched more by this pandemic.”

The New National Party (NNP) withdrew from the opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) in October, resulting in the DA losing political control of the Western Cape province. NNP leader Martinus van Schalkwyk announced that his party would be working with the ANC in the interest of nation-building and reconciliation.

Issues of race and the legacy of apartheid remained. Over 30 percent of the labor force was unemployed and the distribution of wealth was hardly changed, despite the emergence of a black middle class in the cities.

At the end of August, the South African government hosted the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) in Durban (see above, pp. 85–111). As predicted by Helen Suzman, the liberal veteran of South African politics, the anti-Israel lobby hijacked the occasion, turning it into an anti-Zionist fiasco and a “waste of time.”

The South African government, which did its best to keep the meeting on track, made no public expression of empathy with the Jews’ sense of vulnerability at the conference. Nonetheless, shortly afterwards President Mbeki delivered his message of goodwill on the occasion of the Jewish New Year, praising the SAJBOD for having adopted the theme “South Africa—*Ikhaya*—Our Home” at their national conference in August. “Clearly,” he went on, “Jewish South Africans have taken their place in the South African nation, secure in their religious and cultural practices” (*SA Jewish Report*, Sept. 28).

South Africans on the whole shared in the trauma of Americans in the wake of the September 11 attacks. President Mbeki responded unequivocally, acknowledging the right of the United States to act in self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter. South Africa offered nonmilitary

cooperation, a decision praised by the chairman of the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC), Sheikh Ebrahim Gabriels. However the U.S.-led military operations in Afghanistan provoked substantial anti-American feeling, including marches against the American embassies in Pretoria and Cape Town. There was sympathy for Osama bin Laden in certain Muslim circles as well as reports of young Muslims planning to join the Taliban resistance. Achmat Cassiem, leader of the radical Muslim movement Qibla, called on Muslims to respond to the call of jihad (*Sunday Times*, Oct. 14).

Israel-Related Activity

In January, Tova Herzl took up her position as Israeli ambassador to South Africa. Ms. Herzl spent her formative years in South Africa where her father was director of the board of Jewish education and spiritual leader of the Rondebosch Hebrew Congregation, both in Cape Town. Tova Herzl attended Herzlia High School and obtained a B.A. from the University of Cape Town. Discussing her new position, Herzl said she would concentrate on areas of mutual interest between South Africa and Israel, "what we have in common rather than what divides us." In particular she wanted to bring tolerance and understanding to the Middle East conflict. "The big challenge for me and for you," she told a Zionist welcoming function in Cape Town, "is to show that Israel has a viewpoint, that in the Middle East there are two sides to the story."

Speaking at the annual meeting of the South Africa-Israel Chamber of Commerce, Tito Mboweni, governor of the South African Reserve Bank, expressed hope that trade between the two countries would continue to grow. South Africa's exports to Israel rose by 4.2 percent in 2000. Coal, diamonds, base metals, and agricultural products made up the bulk of the exports. South Africa, in turn, imported mainly machinery and electrical equipment from Israel. The acquisition of high-tech equipment from Israel grew by 21 percent from 1999 to 2000. South Africa, according to the governor, was running a trade surplus with Israel of about 19 percent. Israeli companies continued to invest in South Africa, mainly in telecommunications, chemicals, and agricultural equipment. A report in November from the Israel Trade Center claimed that trade between South Africa and Israel was worth \$500 billion.

In February, after the election of Ariel Sharon as Israel's prime minister, the *SA Jewish Report* (Feb. 9) noted editorially that his success was "largely a consequence of Palestinian violence and rejectionism." In the newspaper's view, "Israelis should not be demonized because they chose

Sharon in response to the aggressive war they have been subjected to over the past few months. . . . South African President Thabo Mbeki and the ANC—with their longstanding close links to the Palestinian leadership—will have to decide how to respond to Israel's new political leadership. By displaying the appropriate understanding of Israel's position, and not only that of the Palestinians, they could potentially play a constructive role in the search for peace.”

South African Jews maintained ongoing contacts with Israel. The community introduced the Na'aleh program, which allowed children to complete the final two or three years of high school in Israel. Fourteen teenagers signed up. The program, initiated in the former Soviet Union, was based on the idea that parents will follow their children to settle in Israel. A solidarity mission of Jewish leaders visited Israel in April. Three months later the Southern African Rabbinical Association held its annual conference in Israel as another mark of solidarity with the Jewish state. To bring rural South African Jews in touch with events in Israel, the SAJ-BOD and the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) brought speakers to visit small towns. The South African Union of Jewish Students (SAUJS), together with the international organization Birthright Israel, gave 100 students the opportunity to visit Israel at no personal cost. In June, an Israel Action Committee (IAC) was established in Johannesburg under the auspices of Rabbi Raphael Katz. This was a project of the Tzeirei Zion Shul of Yeshivah College Johannesburg, and the SAZF.

Yossi Beilin, the former Israeli cabinet minister, visited South Africa as a guest of the labor Zionist group Habonim Dror, which celebrated its 70th anniversary. Beilin told the gathering that peace would require the dismantling of the settlements, and he called their construction Israel's biggest mistake since 1967.

Although 5,000 Jews attended Israel Independence Day events in Johannesburg and 4,000 gathered to celebrate in Cape Town, the *SA Jewish Report* wrote of declining Zionist passion among South African Jews. In an article commenting on Israeli prime minister Sharon's observation that Argentina and South Africa were ideal sources for a new wave of immigration, the paper, in its May 5 edition, lamented the weakening of Zionism in South Africa:

Anyone who remembers the powerful role that Zionism played in this community 30 years ago, and the enormous influence of Zionist youth movements like Habonim and Betar on young people's lives, can hardly fail to be saddened at how things have changed.

A significant percentage of SA Jews still pay lip-service to support

for Israel, notwithstanding the fact that another significant proportion of the community refuses to support the Jewish state for religious reasons.

But the truth is that aside from a trickle, Jews who are emigrating from South Africa are not going to Israel, but to Australia, Canada and other Western countries.

David Saks, senior researcher at the SAJBOD, disagreed, noting the successful Independence Day celebrations and a slight uptick in South African aliyah during 2000. However, Rabbi Ben Isaacson, speaking in Johannesburg in June, noted a decline in Zionist commitment within South African Jewry, evident in the second-fiddle role that the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) played in communal affairs. Isaacson pointed to the seeming paradox of a huge increase in Torah observance among South African Jews at the same time that identification with Israel was decreasing.

In May, Yasir Arafat attended the meeting of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM) held in Pretoria. He told the gathering that the Palestinian people had decided "not to walk away from the peace process under any circumstances" and that he accepted Egyptian-Jordanian peace proposals. In turn, President Mbeki called for the logjam between the Israelis and Palestinians to be broken. The situation, he noted, was "very grave." NAM remained committed to an independent Palestinian state, and Aziz Pahad, the deputy foreign minister, said that South Africa supported the peace effort. In a separate arrangement, South African and Palestinian representatives signed an agreement to train Palestinian doctors. "The agreement will also assist in developing technical assistance and build institutional capacity of the ministries of health from both countries," was the way a South African spokesman explained the initiative.

Jewish reaction to Arafat's comments at the NAM conference was mixed. According to Tova Herzl, Arafat's actions would be more important than his words. She contended that South Africa, with its moral authority, could play a constructive role and was, indeed, already doing so: "South Africa has been making an active effort to tone down the rhetoric and we really do appreciate it," she said. In contrast, Kenny Katz, chairman of the SAZF, argued that Arafat was only going through the motions of peace. He believed Sharon was handling the situation correctly and expressed disappointment with Mbeki.

DURBAN CONFERENCE

Well before the World Conference Against Racism was to convene in Durban, leaders of the South African Jewish community warned that it would be—in the words of the *SA Jewish Report*—“A Jamboree of Hypocrisy.” Shortly before the conference, the SAJBOD lodged a strongly worded complaint with the South African Nongovernmental Organization Coalition, the official coordinating body of South African NGOs, after several of its representatives visited the Palestinian territories in early July on a “fact-finding mission” as guests of a pro-Palestinian group. These visitors, who declined to meet with Israeli officials, afterward publicly attacked Israel, despite lacking the legal right to make political statements on behalf of all South African NGOs.

The week before the opening of the conference, South African Jewry got a taste of what to expect as some 15,000 Muslims marched through Cape Town to the Parliament, bringing the city to a halt. They were protesting what they termed atrocities that Israel committed against the Palestinians. The marchers carried banners proclaiming Zionism a form of racism, condemning Sharon as a war criminal, and lauding Hamas. Sheik Achmat Sedick, secretary general of the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC), appealed to the government to “take immediate action against Israel by breaking off all diplomatic and trade relations.”

The biennial general meeting of the Israel United Appeal-United Communal Fund (IUA-UCF) was in session at the time, and Judge Richard Goldstone sought to calm the delegates. Noting that the demonstrators were “only a very small percentage of our population,” he remarked that “Islam has not become attractive in southern Africa—there’s no mosque in any township that I’m aware of. Our constitution outlaws hate speech, the government doesn’t tolerate racism and I don’t believe it to be a serious threat to the integrity and security of the Jewish community” (*SA Jewish Report*, Aug. 24).

Predictably, the NGO Forum of the conference lambasted Israel in an ugly display of venom and anti-Zionism (see above, pp. 96–104). Attempts to present a positive view of Zionism were drowned out by Palestinians and their allies, who pushed the equation of Zionism with racism and Israel as an apartheid state. This was “anti-Semitism in the guise of anti-Zionism,” exclaimed Marlene Bethlehem, national president of the SAJBOD. “The onslaught on Israel and the Jewish people is an absolute scandal and it is racism and anti-Semitism of the worst kind,” said

Mervyn Smith, former national president of the SAJBOD. Particularly galling was the Muslims' use, for propaganda purposes, of a few ultra-Orthodox Jewish opponents of Zionism and of Uri Davis, a secular Jewish anti-Zionist from Israel. Davis, in fact, participated in a lively meeting in Cape Town, under Jewish auspices. Not surprisingly, the *SA Jewish Report* applauded the withdrawal of the United States and Israel from the conference, which South Africa's President Mbeki, in contrast, deeply regretted.

"Radical Islam is on the march," noted the *SA Jewish Report* three weeks after the conference ended, "and Israel has been identified as the 'little Satan' and lumped together with America, the 'big Satan.' Both are seen as enemies to be destroyed at all costs in a holy war." One-time anti-apartheid activist and founder of the New Zionist Organization, Rabbi Ben Isaacson, drew an ominous lesson for South African Jews, warning that there was "no long-term future for Jewry in the country we have contributed so much to and the country that we love" (*SA Jewish Report*, Sept. 28).

On September 23, Jews in Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg joined other Jewish communities around the world in public demonstrations of solidarity with the State of Israel.

In the wake of the Durban conference, South African Jewish leaders increasingly questioned the government's self-declared policy of evenhandedness in the Middle East. Toward the end of the year, a delegation of the SAZF met with Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad and the director of the Middle East desk, Malcolm Ferguson, to discuss the matter. The delegation expressed concern at the blatantly pro-Palestinian posture of the ANC—the leading party in the government—and of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Pahad reiterated the government's policy of evenhandedness and distinguished it from the positions of the ANC and COSATU. He said that the government strongly backed the existence and security of Israel, and stressed the urgent need for interaction between Jews and Muslims in South Africa. In December, when it was reported that the ANC and the South African government were seeking to play a role in negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, the *SA Jewish Report* (Dec. 7) urged: "one message the South Africans should hammer home to the Palestinians is that terrorism cannot be justified by any ideological cause. "

About 2,500 Muslims marched in Cape Town on al Quds Day in mid-December, many wearing kaffiyehs. Three children dressed up as suicide bombers held wooden machine guns that had "Hezbollah" written on

them. Achmat Cassiem, leader of the radical Muslim organization Qibla, said that what “was seen as the final solution for the Jews in the diaspora, that is the creation of the Zionist Terrorist State of Israel, has become its worst nightmare and possibly its final nightmare.”

THE KASRILS/OZINSKY DECLARATION

In October, Ronnie Kasrils, the minister of water affairs and forestry, launched a powerful attack on Israel during a special Middle East debate in the National Assembly. The session was held against the backdrop of a report by the Parliament’s “fact-finding mission” that had visited the Middle East in July. Despite dissent from a number of DA parliamentarians, the report noted parallels between “the oppression experienced by Palestinians under the hand of Israel and the oppression experienced under apartheid.”

Kasrils chose the occasion to read a statement he had coauthored with an ANC member of the Western Cape provincial legislature, Max Ozinsky. Drawing comparisons with apartheid South Africa, the statement identified the fundamental cause of the conflict in “the suppression of the Palestinians’ struggle for national self-determination.” Quoting former Israeli foreign minister Shlomo Ben-Ami, the statement developed the notion that a people under occupation could not be expected to honor its agreements with its “occupier.” Kasrils argued:

The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 inflicted a great injustice on the Palestinian people, compounded by the subsequent Israeli rule of the occupied territories and denial of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian refugees.

A recognition of the fundamental causes of the ongoing violence does not—and I say this as a South African of Jewish descent—constitute anti-Semitism nor does it amount to a denial of Israel’s right to exist. Rather it constitutes an urgent call on the Israeli government to redress and satisfy legitimate claims, without which—and this is the point—peace negotiations will fail.

Kasrils went on to explain how the Holocaust informed his moral outlook. After the enormous suffering of European Jewry, he was “utterly appalled at the ruthless security methods employed by the Israeli government against Palestinians, much of which smack of the way fascism in Europe dealt with people that they considered to be non-people.” In his view, the security of Israelis and Palestinians were “inseparably intertwined” and there was no alternative to a negotiated settlement that

recognized both Palestine and Israel "as fully independent sovereign states" living in peaceful coexistence and cooperation. Kasrils went on to argue that if Israel wished to become a "respected society" it would have to "grant full, equal rights to all who dwell within its borders." He called on South Africans of Jewish descent, and Jews everywhere, to support justice for Palestine and peace and security for all in the "Holy Land."

The SAJBOD, perhaps anticipating the thrust of his remarks, had provided "information packets" to all parliamentarians prior to the debate, hoping to counter the expected flood of anti-Israeli invective that might induce the government to veer away from its policy of even-handedness in the Middle East. The speech drew a harsh response from Jews. Russell Gaddin, national chairman of the SAJBOD, described Kasrils as uninformed about the Israel-Palestinian conflict and suggested that the minister was using his Jewish background to gain credibility for the ANC's pro-Palestinian stance. All Jews, added Gaddin, sought a peaceful solution to the conflict (*Cape Argus*, Oct. 25).

The *SA Jewish Report* (Nov. 2) noted Kasrils's particular timing: "Coming a few months after the UN conference against racism in Durban, where the Arab and Muslim bloc was so successful in convincing South Africans that Israel is an apartheid-like state, Kasrils's statement pours salt into a wound an anxious Jewish community is already feeling." Some Jewish critics, including leading rabbis, charged that not only was his analysis of the Middle East situation mistaken, but that he had no right to comment on the matter because of his position in the cabinet and/or the fact that he was a nonpracticing Jew.

A vicious public debate ensued that received intense media coverage. It featured a "Declaration of Conscience on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" in support of Kasrils, launched with 284 signatures of Jews in Cape Town and Johannesburg in November. Among the signatories were a number of veteran anti-apartheid activists including Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer. Helen Suzman and a number of other well-known Jewish liberals refused to sign.

Anti-Semitism

There was a substantial increase in anti-Semitic sentiment during 2001. Evidence of this could be found in reports of harassment of individuals, vandalism of Jewish property, offensive comments on radio talk shows and on television, tasteless editorial comment and newspaper cartoons in the mainstream press as well as some outright anti-Semitic letters-to-

the-editor, and the sale of books denying the Holocaust and alleging Jewish conspiracies.

While the far-right newspaper, *Die Afrikaner*, occasionally carried offensive articles, the anti-Zionist rhetoric that developed in connection with the Durban conference dominated, and it increasingly blurred with classic anti-Semitic motifs. Hostile rhetoric was driven by the Muslim population, which numbered about 650,000, far outstripping the 80,000 South African Jews. Over half the Muslims resided in greater Cape Town. An Islamist group, the Media Review Network (MRN), linked to the Free Palestine Campaign and the Palestinian Solidarity Committee and in contact with radical Muslim groups internationally, consistently engaged the media over the Israeli-Palestinian question, and a local Muslim Web site carried vicious anti-Jewish material.

People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD), an essentially Muslim group, was declared a foreign terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department following the attacks of September 11. PAGAD had been associated with urban terror in the late 1990s, but the arrest and conviction of many of its members had ended its terror campaign.

The SAJBOD maintained a vigilant posture and took action against anti-Semitism whenever possible. At the SAJBOD's 41st annual conference in Johannesburg in August, speakers called on the community to speak out assertively. Delivering the keynote address, Mendel Kaplan, former chairman of the World Jewish Congress, maintained that it was time Jews stopped being timid and defensive. "We should speak up for our rights as South African citizens. What do we have to apologize for?" asked Kaplan. Similar sentiments were heard at the annual conference of the Cape Council of the SAJBOD in November. Michael Bagraim, the chairman, called for a more proactive policy against anti-Semitism: "No longer can we say as we did in the 60s, 70s and 80s that 'we must not rock the boat,' and no longer can we say as we did in the 90s that we are doing things 'behind the scenes.' It is now necessary for us to be in your face." His words were greeted with loud applause (*SA Jewish Report*, Aug. 24, Nov. 16).

Holocaust-Related Matters

In May 1998, Radio 786, a Cape Town Muslim community station run by the Islamic Unity Convention (IUC), had broadcast an anti-Semitic interview with Yaqub Zaki on Zionism and Israel. Zaki, a Scottish convert to Islam, spoke of world Jewish conspiracies and denied the Holocaust. At the time, the SAJBOD complained to the Independent Broad-

casting Authority (IBA) that the interview violated the code of conduct for broadcasting services. This code outlawed anything offensive to the religious convictions or feelings of any section of the population, or likely to prejudice the safety of the state, the public order, or relations between sections of the population. The IUC, for its part, claimed that the legislation establishing the code was unconstitutional since it infringed on civil rights and freedom of speech.

In April 2001, the Johannesburg High Court ruled in favour of the IUC on technical and procedural grounds. The decision did not deal with the substance of the matter. Justice D. Marais was highly critical of the IBA and its complaints department, finding that its officials had been grossly incompetent in dealing with the SAJBOD complaint (*SA Jewish Report*, Apr. 27). The SAJBOD appealed the case, and it was heard by the Constitutional Court in November. The issue, again, was not the substance of the SAJBOD complaint, but whether the broadcasting regulations under which Radio 786 was granted its licence contravened freedom of expression. No decision had been reached at year's end.

In March, the SAJBOD wrote to the Lebanese ambassador to South Africa, requesting a meeting to convey strong objections to a planned conference in Beirut promoting Holocaust denial. The SAJBOD also wrote to Aziz Pahad, South Africa's deputy minister of foreign affairs, asking the government to protest the event. In the end, the conference was not held.

The Cape Town Holocaust Centre (CTHC) maintained its prominent role in human-rights education. In May, it hosted a special reception to honor its patron, Nobel Laureate and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu. Speaking on the occasion, Tutu noted how much blacks in South Africa owed to Jews, "who were in fact some of the very few white people who thought that we were human" (*Cape Jewish Chronicle*, July). Prof. Michael Marrus, eminent historian and dean of the Graduate School at the University of Toronto, gave the second anniversary lecture at the CTHC. His topic was the Vatican and the Jews of Rome.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

A national census was undertaken in October, and preliminary results would not be known till 2003. Though religion was an optional category,

communal leaders urged Jews to indicate their Jewish identity in the 2001 census.

Even in the absence of hard data, the major demographic fact was clearly emigration. Delivering the keynote address at the 61st annual meeting of the United Herzlia Schools, Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris spoke of the “awesome responsibility” of schools to guide their pupils on controversial issues such as emigration. “I don’t think it is our job to create wonderful South African expatriates, but wonderful South Africans to stay. We’re hemorrhaging in the immediate postgraduate age group and, in 20 to 30 years time, the Jewish community in this country will be old and poor.” While recognizing that it was a basic human right to live where one chose, Rabbi Harris said the country was going to be “in great trouble” if the present trend were not reversed. “A personal decision may be a selfish one when viewed from the point of view of the country’s needs,” he said (*SA Jewish Report*, June 8).

Communal Affairs

A SAJBOD investigation revealed that almost every Jewish organization in Johannesburg—many of which were responsible for national projects—was experiencing financial difficulty. According to Russell Gaddin, the SAJBOD chairman, the problem was not emigration, too much money going to Israel, or the impoverishment of the community. Rather, he claimed, it was the changing nature of religious life in Johannesburg where insular, “right-wing” Orthodoxy had grown, and the result was unnecessary duplication. “Can Johannesburg afford 50 synagogues and temples? And can the northern suburbs afford 17 *shtieblach* [small prayer houses]?” asked Gaddin. There were 12 Jewish day schools, including four new “Torah” schools, in Johannesburg, the latter combined accommodating fewer than 80 pupils. There were three systems of kashrut in operation. “The end result,” complained Gaddin, “is that everyone of these little groups is funding its own and not contributing to the mainstream organizations of the community. And when these fringe organizations run into financial difficulty, they turn to the mainstream community for their funding” (*SA Jewish Report*, Mar. 23).

Consolidation was clearly necessary. The Johannesburg Jewish Helping Hand and Burial Society (Hevrah Kadisha), the largest Jewish welfare organization on the African continent, took over the activities of Our Parents’ Home. This move followed the society’s successful takeovers of Jewish Community Services in 1999 and Sandringham Gardens Jewish

Aged Home in 2000, as well as the subsequent move of the society's administrative offices from Houghton to Sandringham. "Consolidated resources such as accommodation, services, finances and medical care will undoubtedly lead to a more enhanced and effective technique," explained Colin Datnow, the chairman. In another move toward integration of community services, Arcadia Jewish Children's Home moved from Parktown to Raedene, Johannesburg.

Johannesburg was not the only community facing difficulties. According to the incoming chairman of the Cape Council, Philip Krawitz, Cape Town Jewry was undergoing a transition. It was no longer wealthy, did not have the ear of the government, and faced a difficult job market against the backdrop of affirmative action for blacks. He believed the situation was ripe for a religious revival.

In April, Israeli ambassador Tova Herzl officially opened Beyachad, the building in Johannesburg that would house all the major South African Jewish organizations, including the three key bodies: the SAJBOD, SAZF, and IUA-UCF. Collectively, the work of the organizations was built around the concept of four "pillars": education, religion, welfare, and society. Beyachad ran the joint services of the organizations and also took responsibility for the societal pillar.

Crime continued to be a major source of concern. At a joint forum of the Gauteng Council of the SAJBOD and 12 Jewish members of the Johannesburg city council and Gauteng provincial legislature (all members of the DA) held in February, general pessimism was expressed at the ANC's handling of crime. Concern also surfaced about Jewish youth being supplied with alcohol by parents. According to Lionel Stern, chairman of the Johannesburg Community Policing Area, some of the robberies in Jewish homes were the work of "children who stole from their parents' belongings to get money to buy drugs and alcohol." He advocated an educational program for the parents to make them aware of the dangers of alcohol.

A number of prominent individuals visited South Africa during the year. Among them were talk-show host and educator Esther Jungreis, who was the guest of the Union of Jewish Women (UJW); Shlomo Grawitz, co-world chairman of the Jewish National Fund; and Judge Hadassah Ben-Itto of Israel, guest of the Cape Town chapter of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists.

In January, 64 underprivileged Jewish children attended the annual Bikkur Cholim camp at Lakeside, Cape Town.

Community Relations

There were a number of outreach initiatives during 2001. Jewish leaders joined in a march in Cape Town against violence towards women and children. The Hebrew Order of David in the Gauteng area participated in several charitable endeavours.

The UJW opened a “comfort zone” at a police station in Atlantis, outside Cape Town, to provide help to traumatized victims of sex crimes, and a “comfort room” at the Somerset Hospital in Cape Town. For its efforts, the UJW was presented with a “white ribbon award” by Woman Demand Dignity, an organization founded to protect women from abuse. In October, the UJW held a seminar on dealing with prejudice and stereotyping, where a number of speakers from different ethnic and religious groups shared their understandings and experiences.

Tikkun, a Jewish program to help the underprivileged, substantially increased its programs. It established a community center that included a library in the poverty-stricken area of Delft outside Cape Town, and partly funded a joint initiative on farming education for some 4,000 schools nationwide. Tikkun also distributed 1,000-rands worth of blankets at two of its projects. Tikkun held a museum day in Cape Town on September 11 linking students from the Herzlia Middle School with those from Luhlaza Senior Secondary School, a disadvantaged “black” school. “It was quite bizarre,” said Tikkun’s Cape director, Barbara Miller, “because the event took place on the same day as the terrorist attacks in New York. On the one side of the world there was a hugely bridge-building process happening, while on the other side there was this totally destructive act (*SA Jewish Report*, Oct. 26).

The seventh He’atid leadership group left for Israel in March. He’atid focused on preparing leaders for South Africa, particularly among the black population, and imparting entrepreneurial skills. There was an active alumni organization of 114 members with centers operating in Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth, East London, Cape Town, and Durban. Alumni had already established 70 community and business projects and secured the participation of 34 companies and organizations.

Religion

Demographic changes resulted in the opening and closing of a number of synagogues. The Pretoria Hebrew Congregation opened a new synagogue complex, including the new Adath Synagogue. Ohr Samayach, an

outreach movement founded in 1987 by Rabbis Larry Shain and Shmuel Mofson, moved into expanded premises in Glenhazel, Johannesburg. Ohr Samayach, which now ran the Shaarei Torah Primary School, also opened a synagogue in Sea Point, Cape Town, attracting a large number of newly Orthodox Jews. The movement organized a four-day educational retreat program, outside Johannesburg, for secular Jews.

The Schoonder Street Synagogue in Cape Town closed down and services moved to the Herzlia High School campus under a new name, Kehillat Shira Chadasha. The Jeppestown Hebrew Congregation in Johannesburg closed. The historic Kimberley synagogue held its centenary commemoration. Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, founder and director of the National Jewish Outreach Program in the U.S., spent six days in Cape Town in March as a guest of the United Orthodox Synagogue.

In Cape Town, the Bnei Akiva minyan merged with the Arthur's Road Synagogue. The combined congregation became a center of Torah learning with more than 20 classes each week, in addition to the activities of the Yeshivah of Cape Town, which was housed in the same premises.

Sixty-two people participated in a special Shabbat held on Robben Island, the prison where former president Nelson Mandela had been incarcerated. The event was organized by the Yeshivah of Cape Town in cooperation with the Cape Council of the United Orthodox Synagogue. Torah study sessions dealt with the relation of religious values to political issues. This was the first time a Jewish prayer service had ever been held on the island. The *SA Jewish Report* (Nov. 30) noted the contrast between this affirmation of South African national values in a Jewish symbolic context and the "increasingly insular attitude of many South African Jews, who are seeking sustenance in self-imposed ghettos—physically or of the mind or spirit—or who are quietly packing their bags and leaving for distant shores where they believe the grass is greener."

Education

Financial problems continued to plague the King David schools in Johannesburg. For the first time in 50 years, children whose parents could not afford tuition were turned away at the start of 2001. "We have always lived up to our credo that no Jewish child will be deprived of a Jewish education through inability to pay fees—but we no longer have money for the provision of subsidies," said a distraught Glynn Ismay, chairman of the South African Board of Jewish Education (SABJE). Ismay called on the community "to save the situation" (*SA Jewish Report*, Jan. 26). En-

rollments dropped from 3,850 to 3,600. Ismay said the crisis had been caused by the withdrawal of government subsidies (from 7.7 million rands in 1995, to 6.7 million in 1999, to zero in 2000), emigration of full-paying families, abnormally high outstanding debts and past school fees, demographic changes, and a large overdraft of 24 million rands (\$2.1 million). According to the SABJE financial director, Tony Roth, the fee structure was in line with other private schools.

An editorial in the *SA Jewish Report* (Mar. 3) commenting on the crisis echoed Russell Gaddin's criticism of the Johannesburg community:

While there has been a large degree of rationalization, there are still organizations, small and large, intent on doing their own thing. This ranges from fringe communities, who have built their own ghetto, with their own private sources of income, to smaller bodies, which essentially undertake the same work as recognized community-funded institutions. This includes the plethora of smaller Jewish schools, which could well find a home in the mainstream Jewish day schools of King David, Yeshivah College and Torah Academy.

In February, a Pretoria-based trust responded generously to the financial crisis, and by June an innovative plan to solve the King David schools' financial crisis had been put into place. Allan Zulberg, a senior executive with proven business skills and an understanding of the Jewish community and its educational needs, was appointed to manage a re-organization.

The Jewish community faced a considerable challenge from Jews for Jesus, which worked in conjunction with the Olive Tree Foundation, a Christian organization. A major campaign took place in Johannesburg, where the missionary group targeted shopping centers and the University of the Witwatersrand, and held weekly Friday night prayer services. In response, a "Jews for Judaism" actively countered Christian missionizing. Its director, Rabbi Graeme Finkelstein, said that Jewish education was the best answer.

The Johannesburg College of Adult Jewish Education was launched in February under the auspices of the Sydenham/Highlands North Synagogue. Rabbi Yossy Goldman, spiritual leader of the synagogue and prime mover of the educational project, said the "grassroots out there are interested in learning about their heritage" (*SA Jewish Report*, Feb. 2). An internationally renowned author and speaker, Rabbi Maurice Friedman, gave the opening lecture at the launch.

In November, a group of Jewish educators from Jerusalem visited South African Jewish day schools on behalf of the Jewish Agency.

Culture

An exhibition of children's art from the Terezin concentration camp opened in Johannesburg, a joint project of the embassy of the Czech Republic and the SAJBOD.

Saul Reichlin performed *Sholem Aleichem in the Shtetl* at the South African Jewish Museum, Cape Town, and at the Chief Rabbi Harris Communal Centre in Johannesburg.

The *SA Jewish Report* celebrated its third anniversary. The Jewish weekly prided itself "for allocating space for opinion from all streams of Jewish thought and activity" and for its "independence unprecedented in Jewish publications in South Africa." In August, Anton Harber, the highly respected former editor of the *Mail & Guardian*, was elected chairman of the board of the *SA Jewish Report*. "I accepted the position because I think it's important," he explained. "I think it's run by an excellent and dedicated group of people and it deserves to succeed, but it will not succeed if elements of the community try to hijack it for their sectional interests."

Publications

Some noteworthy publications of Jewish interest were *The Jews of South Africa—An Illustrated History to 1953*, edited by Naomi Musiker (based on an unpublished manuscript by Gus Saron); *E-mail for a Jewish Mother* by Mona Berman; *Pictures of a Strange Town: A Story of the Terezin Shtetl* by Sandra Lee Braude; *Hearing Grasshopper Jump: The Story of Raymond Ackerman as told to Denise Prichard*; *Contemporary Jewish Writing in South Africa: An Anthology*, edited by Claudia Bathsheba Braude; and a photographic history, *Looking Back: Jews in the Struggle for Democracy and Human Rights in South Africa*, compiled by Milton Shain, Adrienne Folb, Albie Sachs, Jon Berndt, Jon Weinberg, Barry Feinberg, and André Odendaal.

Personalia

Tony Leon, leader of the opposition DA, married an Israeli, Michal Even-Zahav; Ali Bacher, appointed executive director of the 2003 Cricket World Cup Policy Committee; Rachel Shapiro, appointed executive of the West Province Zionist Council (WPZC); Jeanne Futeran, elected president of the Maccabi World Union; Myra and Elliot Osrin, presented the

Lexus Lifetime Achiever Award for 40 years of communal work; renowned paleontologist Professor Phillip Tobias and philanthropist Helen Lieberman received the SAJBOD Human Rights Award; Rabbi Abraham Tanzer, head of Yeshivah College and spiritual leader of the Glenhazel Yeshivah Congregation, Johannesburg, received the Distinguished Rabbinical Services Award from the Rabbi Aloy Foundation; veteran communal leader Solly Yellin awarded an honorary doctorate from Ben Gurion University of the Negev; and Shea Albert appointed director of the South African Jewish Museum.

Dayan Gross, executive director of the Cape Council of the SAJBOD, took up a position with the Jewish federation in Cleveland, Ohio, in the United States. He was replaced by Suzanne Belling.

Among prominent South African Jews who died during 2001 were former Johannesburg mayor and member of Parliament Alec Gorshel; communal leader Ian Sachs; Zionist stalwart Dr. Allen Berman; Dr. Moses Cyrus Weiler, the first rabbi to serve the Progressive community in South Africa; entrepreneur and philanthropist Jack Goldin; historian Phyllis Lewsen; Josephine Freeman, founder of the Zionist Luncheon Club; Gus Levy, cofounder of the Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir; distinguished lawyer Victor Mansell; communal leader Rubi Chaitman; Zalman Levy, doyen of Yiddish culture in South Africa; former mayor of Johannesburg Max Neppe; distinguished jurist Alec Oshry; cricket benefactor Wilfred Isaacs; and distinguished communal leader Hanns Saenger.

MILTON SHAIN