

THE JEWISH STANDARD

JUNE 15, 2018



FRIENDS OF SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES (FSWC) was joined recently on Parliament Hill by numerous Members of Parliament and Canadian Senators for the launch of the new Jewish Heritage Month Resource Guidebook. The event was sponsored by NDP MP Randall Garrison, Liberal MP Marco Mendicino and Conservative MP David Sweet. FSWC President & CEO Avi Benlolo discussed the work of FSWC and the natural step that was taken to create the Jewish Heritage Month Resource Guidebook. "The suggestions, activities, and resources are a part of the work that we do each and every day as we work with thousands of students across this province and, increasingly, across the country," stated Benlolo. FSWC Board of Governor Alan Wainer shared his own personal experience working with FSWC: "For the past eighteen years plus I have been part of an organization that is committed to social justice and human rights and that promotes tolerance, respect and Canadian democratic values through advocacy and education." Seen above, left to right, are MP Randall Garrison, MP Marco Mendicino, Avi Benlolo, MP David Sweet & FSWC Board of Governor Alan Wainer. Readers can download the Guidebook by going to www.friendsofsimonwiesenthalcentre.com

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ENSURES MEDIOCRITY

By MICHAEL HAYMAN

The validity of the concept of equal opportunity is beyond question. It ensures that everyone, regardless of gender, race, or religion, has the opportunity of making a maximum contribution to the growth and development of his or her native or adopted homeland. And it ensures everyone of an equal chance to share in the rewards to which this contribution entitles them. It is the application, in all its fullness, of the merit system.

Affirmative Action, on the other hand, is based on a system of reverse discrimination. It seeks to redress the unfavourable balance which women, Indigenous people, visible minorities and those with disabilities have faced by lowering the standards which would be required from male white applicants.

We are long passed the day when medical and engineering faculties discriminate against Jews or when a Chinese-Canadian

The following article appeared as an editorial in the Toronto edition of The Jewish Standard.
- the Editor

graduate from a Vancouver high school is denied a position because "the company does not hire anyone from minority groups." But it was not Affirmative Action which enabled Jews and other immigrants to enter Canada's most prestigious schools. To suggest that we establish a hierarchical order of discrimination, giving out a grade based on the extent to which his or her natural ability was aborted by society, in effect to give them a priority number in a queue, is not the way to ensure that all Canadians have full access to the corridors of power.

Governments, companies and institutions who succumb to the demands of the crusaders of Affirmative Action are being counterproductive. Sooner or later the beneficiaries of these attempts at restitution will be com-

pelled to adapt to the merit system. The inevitable result will be that those perceived to have graduated solely because of an

institution's Affirmative Action program or been promoted to fulfil a company quota will have their credentials questioned. And those women and minorities who achieve distinction by virtue of
(Please turn to page 10)

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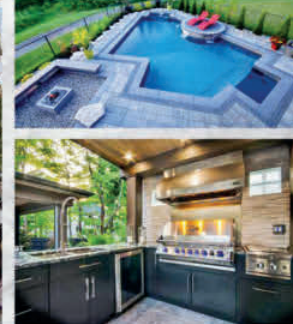
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WORLD IN REVIEW

NEWS OF THE RECENT PAST IS REVIEWED

By NOAH FREEDMAN

Courts Order London Coroner to Change

Senior St. Pancras Coroner Mary Hassell in central London, England had made it crystal clear to Jews and Muslims that she would not give priority to their burials despite the fact that both Jewish and Islamic law stipulates that burial take place as soon as possible following a death. She cared little that her jurisdiction covers the

largest concentration of haredi Jews in Europe and the largest Muslim community in the United Kingdom. For Hassell it was first come, first serve. One woman claimed she had to make over 200 phone calls before she received a commitment that her father would be buried within days of his death. Another said she was told she would have to wait two weeks for an autopsy before the funeral could take place, Hassell

unmoved by Jewish law on traditional autopsies.

Now Britain's High Court has ordered the stubborn Hassell, who has served the district since 2013, to respect the religious convictions of the deceased when she is determining the order in which bodies are to be buried.

The High Court called Hassell's "cab-rank rule" policy "unlawful, irrational and "discriminatory." London based Adath Yisrael

Burial Society had launched the lawsuit alleging "widespread distress" among the Jewish and Muslim communities. "The fundamental flaw in the present policy", wrote Lord Justice Singh, is that "it fails to strike any balance at all, let alone a fair balance". The Lord Justice continued: "What on its face looks like a general policy which applies to everyone equally may in fact have an un-

(Please turn to page 12)

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THE GHOST KEEPER

NOVEL AROUSES AWARENESS AND STIRS EMOTIONS

Reviewed by ELAINE COHEN

Ottawa resident Natalie Morrill, recent winner of Harper-Collins UBC prize for best new fiction, captivates readers with *The Ghost Keeper*, a compelling novel set in Vienna between the two world wars and beyond. Morrill presents a poignant love story haunted by harrowing deeds incited by Hitler's Third Reich.

Austria's Jewish community numbered some 200,000 before World War I

and Vienna was considered one of Europe's most vibrant centers. Although many managed to flee the country after the Anschluss in 1938, more than 65,000 were murdered in Nazi death camps.

Morrill's first person narrative opens with protagonist Josef Tobak contemplating how to begin his story. One point of entry describes his early childhood friendship with Friedrich Zimmel, an affluent, educated Christian, who ultimately dons a Nazi armband but enables Josef to survive the Holocaust. Besides using his influence to sneak a sickly Josef into New York, Friedrich arranges passage to Shanghai for Josef's wife Anna and their child, plus hides Josef's teenage cousin.

Nevertheless, Morrill shows how betrayal, cruelty and evil enter the picture, when people are forced to make difficult choices. The author is adept at describing characters' physical traits and demeanor, whether it's the protagonist's sister Zilla's powerful personality and mesmeriz-

ing gaze or his wife Anna's dainty frame and compassionate nature. Readers experience enslaved Jews' humiliation as they scrub streets with burning lye penetrating their bodies, while Nazis poised with bayonets poke their backs.

Growing up, Josef is tormented by his parents' insistence on shunning Yiddishkeit and observant religious Jewish traditions to fit in with Austria's German speaking milieu.

Bewildered, Josef seeks solace in two dilapidated cemeteries where generations of Jews are buried beneath toppled grave-stones but birds and rodents thrive. Here is another instance of Morrill's skill. She deftly builds intrigue and enriches the story with allegory, imagery and shades of Jewish folklore.

Fortunately, many readers appreciate the merit (Please turn to page 9)

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LEAVING LABOUR

LIFELONG JEWISH MEMBER OF BRITISH
LABOUR LEAVES PARTY

By DAVID SUSSKIND

Dear Ms. Formby,

I wish to resign my membership of the Labour Party.

I joined Labour as a teenager and have been a member for more than a decade. During that time I was proud to serve as secretary and co-chair of my university Labour Club, on the Executive of the Society of Labour Lawyers, and as deputy chair of Young Labour Lawyers. I worked for Ed Milliband during his candidacy for the leadership. I have spent many happy hours attending meetings and canvassing for Labour candidates.

I joined Labour because I was unhappy about the state of the world and anxious to do something about it. The party opened up a universe of campaigns and causes, and allowed me to meet remark-

able people from all over the country who shared my restless idealism. Labour became my political home, and for many years I loved it.

Perhaps without realizing it at the time, I also joined Labour because I am Jewish. My most deeply held political values are those I learned at the Sabbath table: the urgency of social justice, the importance of family and community, the power of education. I was taught that our duty as Jews was to stand up for those who suffer; and that there is no higher cause than tikkun olam – to heal the world. I see in retrospect that my beliefs were also heavily shaped by what I learned about the Holocaust. There is something fiercely politicising about the knowledge that my dad's granddad Ralph

(Please turn to page 10)

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TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

SADDLEBROOK RESORT: Some 25 years ago I was part of a press tour to Tampa. Our group was hosted at the spectacular Saddlebrook Resort (www.saddlebrook.com) in the suburb of Wesley Chapel – a half hour drive from downtown Tampa. I could not believe my good fortune when I was given the keys to my own private town house condominium.

I never forgot my experience at Saddlebrook, so when we recently set our sights on another trip to Tampa I targeted this 480 acre property for a return visit. We were fortunate to spend five nights there. The three of us booked a 950-square-foot two-bedroom suite. It included a spacious living room, sepa-

rate dining area and a fully-equipped kitchen with a serving bar. The master bedroom boasts a King bed as well as a separate dressing area and elegant marble bathroom. The second bedroom is thoughtfully-appointed with a Queen bed, as well as an additional dressing area and marble bathroom. Both bedrooms offer complete privacy. These spacious two-bedroom suites also feature a private patio or balcony that is accessible from the living room. There were two in-room safes.

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(Please turn to following page)

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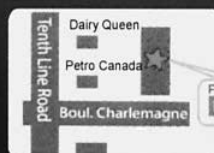


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TRAVEL TALES

(Continued from preceding page)

out the need of a transportation system while providing sanctuary to nature. It is completely self-contained, with restaurants, spa, golf, tennis, fitness facilities, three pools and an outdoor team building course all on-site.

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sand volleyball courts, a regulation-size basketball court and a Field Turf sports field. The refreshing waters of the 500,000-gallon free-form Superpool are a highlight of any stay. There are two additional pools at the resort, including the adults-only Serenity Pool.

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morning power walks and group fitness classes to poolside games. Families visiting the resort can take advantage of S'Kids Club, a fun-filled program for guests.

To reserve your stay today at Saddlebrook Resort or to contact a Reservations Agent call toll-free at 800.729.8383 or locally at 813.907.4401. You might enjoy the place so much you will consider buying a unit. The sales office is located right next to the registration center.

JEWISH COMMUNITY: On September 11, 2011, following years of meeting in hotel conference rooms, and composing services in the living rooms of each other's homes, the Jewish community in Wesley Chapel (and northern New Tampa) opened a synagogue of its own. The Chabad Jewish Centre at Wiregrass opened its doors under the spiritual leadership of Rabbi

Mendi Yarmush. It is located at 2124 Ashley Oaks Circle. Each year the Centre filled with dynamic events and exceptional programming making Judaism an accessible reality for all Jews regardless of background or affiliation. "No matter how you see yourself, at Chabad we see you as Jewish," their website states. "No labels. No differences. At Chabad you are family. You will find the atmosphere casual, the service traditional, and mood uplifting. Our community is a budding family and our motto is Jewish. Done Joyfully!"

Rabbi Yarmush was born and raised in Toronto. He studied in rabbinical schools in Toronto, New York and Los Angeles.

Mike Cohen can be reached at info@mikecohen.ca. Follow his travels at www.sandboxworld.com/travel and on Twitter @mikecohenCSL

THE GHOST KEEPER

(Continued from page 5)

in diverse genres. However, some readers favor hard-hitting nonfiction, while others prefer fiction. Morrill reaches both audiences with her exemplary contribution to historical literary fiction. She creates believable characters and reveals real attitudes and conventions of the times. Morrill

guides readers with an accurate timeline and relevant facts. The author attained her MFA at UBC. Her poetry and fiction have appeared in Canadian journals and the Journey Prize Stories Anthology.

For more information on *The Ghost Keeper*, visit www.harpercollins.ca

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

(Continued from page 3)

their own exceptional merit will be stereotyped and degraded.

How can the merit system be maintained and yet justice done? The answer is simple: make equal opportunity mean exactly what it says. Ensure that equal opportunity also connotes equal education given by qualified instructors and not those who have been hired solely to meet a mandated university hiring quota. Equal opportunity must ensure that women and minorities perceive that their ability,

their drive and their ambition will be rewarded through equal opportunity and equal pay.

Affirmative Action is a repudiation of the merit system on which our society should be based. It is a snare, a trap and a delusion insofar as its presumed beneficiaries are concerned. Forcing companies to diversify their work force by means of preferential treatment and embarrassing them every time they hire a white male, is an invitation not to excellence but to mediocrity.

LEAVING LABOUR

(Continued from page 6)

was eradicated from this earth, together with six million others, just for being a Jew like me. Being Jewish, being British, and fighting for social justice are therefore all wrapped up together in my identity. Until recently, Labour was part of that identity too.

I will not name here the many insults and indignities that the Jewish people of this country have endured at the hands of the Labour party over the last few years. They are apparent to anyone who is willing

to see them. I am resigning my membership because I can no longer belong, in good faith, to an institution that has allowed itself to become the foremost platform for anti-Semitism in British public life. Holocaust deniers and racists have been emboldened by the silence (and in some cases complicity) of senior figures in the party. In part, therefore, I am leaving Labour for the same reason that I joined: because I am Jewish.

I know that the vast

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majority of Labour members are not anti-Semites. Quite the opposite. Many have been courageous in opposing the direction in which the party is heading (and I hope they know how much it means to their Jewish friends). But that is no longer what matters most to me. In the last few months, I have been unable to take solace in the fact that my values are essentially Labour values, or that I have tried in my own small way to change the culture from within. There is no greater good so important that it allows me to disregard the safety and dignity of the Jewish community. My continued membership has become an insult to them and to my heritage. Labour was meant to be about fighting hatred, not playing host

to it.

I do not know whether Labour will form a government under its present leadership. But I am certain that I wish to play no part in helping it do so. Electoral success is not the same as moral legitimacy. An institution that turns a blind eye to the injustice festering in its own ranks surrenders its claim to moral leadership of the country. And "comrades" who tacitly offer a safe space for intolerance, or turn their faces from the suffering caused by racism (or misogyny, or any of the ills that afflict Labour) are not really comrades at all. There is life beyond Labour, and I will try to find it.

Yours sincerely,
Jamie Susskind

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WORLD IN REVIEW

(Continued from page 4)

equal impact on a minority. In other words, to treat everyone in the same way is not necessarily to treat them equally."

This is not the first time Hassell has faced legal challenges. Eighty-six year old Sarlotta Rotsztein died six hours after being admitted to a London hospital with low blood pressure. Her GP concluded that she had died of a heart attack but the hospital doctors were not willing to rule out infection as the cause of death. Mary Hassell ordered an invasive autopsy.

Rotsztein's five children offered to pay for a renowned pathologist to perform a non-invasive CT scan and coronary angiography. Hassell refused to authorize the test and also refused to provide her contact information. The family then obtained an emergency injunction and finally after repeatedly ignoring the demands of the family's solicitors, Hassell had no choice but to release the body. The family continued its court case and ultimately received the verdict they sought. Hassell was ordered to pay most of the family's legal costs and the

cost of her own office's legal bills, an amount of some \$200,000 pounds. Tax-payers will foot that bill.

Jewish and Muslim leaders are calling on Hassell to resign if she does "not uphold the religious freedom of the diverse communities she is meant to serve." Even embattled Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has joined the chorus of criticism.

Haredi Candidate Forced to Withdraw

Aron Berger has withdrawn his candidacy for a seat on the Antwerp city legislature following a fraud conviction handed down by The Correctional Tribunal of Antwerp. Berger was convicted of stealing \$34,000 from an older and "vulnerable" person.

Berger had occupied the Christian Democratic and Flemish party's ninth slot in an attempt by the partly to appeal to the haredi community of 18,000 potential voters.

But even before Berger's conviction he had become a source of controversy even within his own

(Please turn to page 14)

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WORLD IN REVIEW*(Continued from page 12)*

center-right party. His refusal to shake hands with women violated the party's policies on the integration of Muslims and other immigrants into society and their duty to live by Belgian principles.

Berger maintained that while he had received

permission from his wife and rabbinical leaders to shake the hands of women during the campaign he acknowledged that doing so "is not within my faith." He continued: "I would like to stress that I understand society in Antwerp and in Belgium and that I under-

stand the sensitivities. The teachings of my faith don't state that you can't shake a woman's hand. However, in my community we are taught that not touching someone of the opposite sex is a form of respect. It is for that I have decided to no longer be a candidate."

Christian Democratic and Flemish party leaders told reporters that Berger was "appointed by his whole community as a spokesperson". Jewish leaders denied the claim. "The Jewish communities", said Pinkas Kornfeld and Laurent Trau, "never in their history put forth a candidate in their name".

Quicken Loans And Orthodox Jews

Detroit based Quicken Loans, which claims it is America's largest mortgage lender, is owned by Dan Gilbert. Now Orthodox Jews who have a mortgage with the company

mortgage with the company or with its online mortgage agency Rocket Mortgage, have been placed in an uncomfortable position.

Agudath Israel of America has issued a legal ruling which prohibits Jews from taking out loans from the company. Halacha, says the major haredi Orthodox organization, prohibits Jews from charging interest to other Jews. Nor are Orthodox Jews permitted to take out a mortgage with the Jewish-owned company. Doing so is a transgression of Ribbis D'oraisa, the Hebrew biblical commandment against interest.

There is, however, a way around the problem. In the Middle Ages rabbis devised a "heter iska" or business permit which transforms the loan into a co-investment. The two parties are now "business partners". One person supplies the capital and the other uses it in whatever manner he sees fit. It is the

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"heter iska" which enables Israeli banks to lend to its customers.

Quicken Loans has indicated it is open to the idea of finding a "solution to the observant Jewish community." With Agudath Israel making its position crystal clear, the mortgage company has little choice.

A Rabbi Nowhere To be Found

"Wedding Factory" is a Brazilian TV reality show. It gives couples seven days to prepare for their wedding and some \$300,000 to spend on the arrangements.

Participant Allan Pavlovsky de Boucherville Borges is Jewish. His bride-to-be, Carolinne Salvio Frôes, is not. Frôes asked the producers of the show to find a rabbi to officiate at their ceremony. And so the reality show producers invited local rabbis to marry the couple. Actually they invited 70 rabbis. All of them turned the producer's request down.

On the night of the show the host put it to the couple in rather blunt terms: "So do you want to stay on the show and not have a Jewish wedding? Or do you leave, have the ceremony prepared in the traditions of the religion and get married later?"

Carolinne and Allan
(Please turn to following page)

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WORLD IN REVIEW

(Continued from preceding page)

decided to have their wedding with as much Jewish flavour as possible. There was a huppah, yarmulkes were on the heads of all the men, Allan wore a tallit and broke a glass, and people danced the Hora while wishing the couple “mazel tov.” The seven story cake was decorated with Stars of David.

Rabbi Gilberto Venturas was ordained at an Orthodox seminary in Israel. But he helps non-Jewish Brazilian partners such as Carolinne convert, even if the conversion is not recognized in Israel. Rabbi Venturas agreed to bless the couple although he did not actually participate in the ceremony.

We are sure, however, that the rabbi has a smile on his face. Carolinne is committed to converting to Judaism and the couple will spend their honeymoon in Israel. The \$300,000 will also help to ensure that the couples and their families are not in debt.

Jewish Governor Finally Gives Up

Readers who follow World in Review on a regular basis are aware by now of the saga of Missouri Governor Eric Greitens, the first Jewish governor in the history of the state.

Greitens seemed destined for a distinguished political career. He was a former Navy Seal, well decorated for his achievements, and presumably lived happily with his wife and two young sons.

But before Greitens was elected governor in March of 2015 he had decided he needed more than his wife to fulfil his needs. He began an affair with his married hairdresser.

Whether the affair was “consensual” as Greitens claimed, or whether he initiated unwanted sexual contact as she maintained, was not an issue in the criminal case against Greitens for invasion of privacy. What was in question was whether Greitens had taken nude photos of the woman without her consent and made them available on the internet.

Now, however, St. Louis Circuit Attorney Kimberly Gardner has been forced to drop the case, partly because a judge ruled that the accuser, who thus far has not been named, could be called as a witness and also after reports surfaced that investigators could not find any evidence that Greitens took any photos. They found no nude or blindfolded photo of the woman on the governor’s cell phone, email and icloud accounts.

Until now Greitens has refused to resign. And his wife has stood by him. But despite the Circuit Attorney’s decision Greitens has finally thrown in the towel.

And his legal troubles are far from over. Gardner says she will refile the charge and appoint a special prosecutor to handle the case. And Greitens is also charged with a felony of computer tampering for allegedly using a veterans’ charity donor list to raise funds for his political campaign for governor.

A Moment of Silence For Palestinian Victims

The Beacon School, a public school located in the Hell’s Kitchen area of Manhattan, and one that

"tends to lean left", compelled its students to observe a moment of silence for those Palestinians who died recently on the Gaza border with Israel.

Jewish parents of children who attend the school were not pleased. "I am extremely upset because I did not send my child to a New York public school to pray for Hamas operatives," said one parent. "I just don't think any school should be promoting a moment of silence for terrorists", said another parent.

British Muslims Say "Shalom"

Leaders of Britain's Muslim community recently took out a

full page ad in a British newspaper condemning anti-Semitism. While acknowledging that most Muslims in Britain support the Palestinians and their "right to a sovereign state", the ad signed by a group called Muslims Against Anti-Semitism urged the community to be "ever vigilant against those who cynically use international issues to vilify Jews or promote anti-Semitic tropes."

The board of Deputies of Britain's Jews was grateful for the sentiments. "Incredible solidarity - a full page ad by Muslim sisters & brothers in today's Telegraph... Thank you. Together we will defeat the twin evils of antisemitism & anti-Muslim hate."

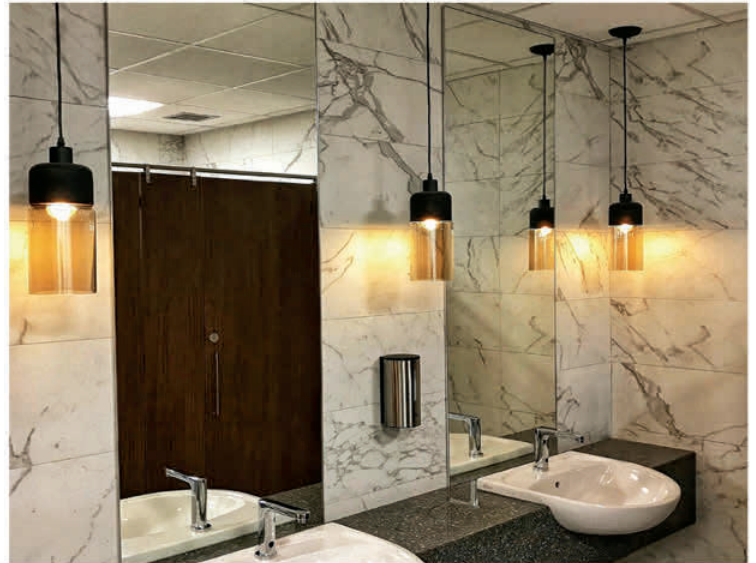


ISRAEL'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UN, DANNY Danon, met with the US Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, in honor of the opening of the American Embassy in Jerusalem. He presented her with an ancient coin from the Great Revolt of 68 CE with a personal dedication: "This is a historic day for Israel and the United States. I thank you, Ambassador Haley, for your strong support of this great move." Ambassador Danon explained the significance of the coin. "Written in Hebrew on this ancient coin, nearly 2,000 years old, are the words, "Freedom of Zion," on one side, and "Year Two of the Revolt," on the other, referring to the second year of the Jewish revolt against the Romans. This coin proves that Jerusalem has always been the capital of the Jewish people."

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WORLD IN REVIEW

(Continued from preceding page)

**Fellow Graduates Glad
Kushner Stayed Away**

Like other Harvard school graduates Jared Kushner was invited to the 15th anniversary of his graduating class. Kushner skipped the event and, given the remarks that appeared in Harvard's "Red Book", a tradition for alumni to submit notes about themselves ahead of reunions, it's perhaps a good thing that he did.

"I never imagined a resurgence of Nazism as I grew up", said one submission. "Mostly I feel a low grade, constant horror as I watch attacks on refugees, minorities, my most at-risk patients, women's rights and the environment.

Shame on you, Jared Kushner." Said another note: "I, for one, am actually relieved that our class of '03 has a real, live fascist among us...Who says Harvard isn't diverse!" And said Chanda Prescod-Weinstein: "Shame on you...He was in Jerusalem with his wife while people were being massacred. I feel so emotional about that...He's a person who is doing horrible things. As a black woman and a Jewish woman, I think it's disgusting."

It is perhaps worth noting that of the 1600 members there were relatively few protests. And as for Kushner, he declined to submit an entry to the Red Book.



IN HONOR OF ISRAEL'S 70TH ANNIVERSARY, SodaStream has unveiled its limited edition 3-pack bottles featuring three prominent figures from Israeli history: Golda Meir, David Ben Gurion, and Theodore Herzl. To learn more go to SodaStream.ca

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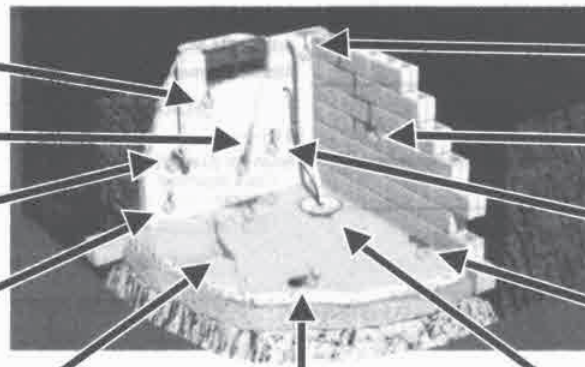
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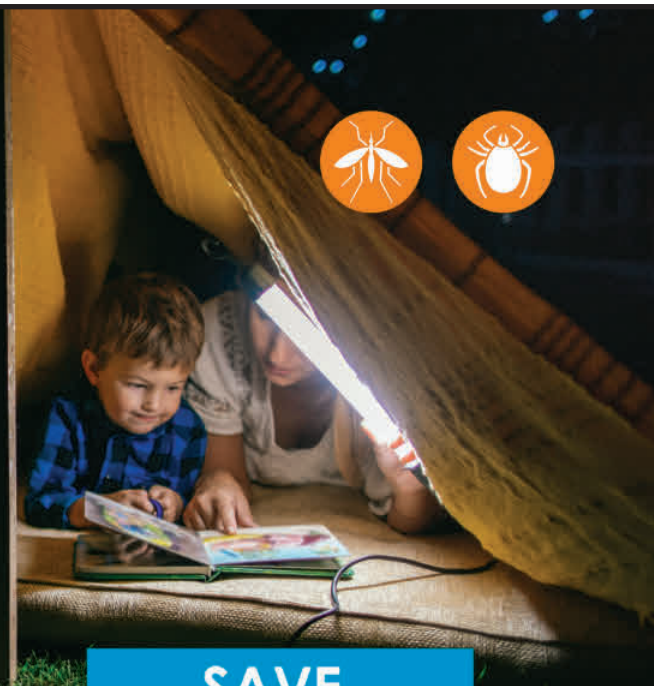


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