

קולנו

KOLEINU

5776



Issue 36  
Volume 1



*I Care*

*I don't care if you are fat or thin  
I don't care about the colour of your skin  
I don't care if you believe in God  
I don't care if people think you are odd*

*I care because you are honest and true  
I care because I can rely on you  
I care because you are a great friend  
I care because you'll be there at the end.*

*Daniella M Sciamia*

Proudly Supporting  
Habonim Dror



BEAVERBROOKS

Exceptional Jewellery & Watches Since 1919



[beaverbrooks.co.uk](http://beaverbrooks.co.uk)

# IN THIS ISSUE

Movement Worker Update  
06-09

Kuppah -10-11

We're All Human- 12

Growing Old 14-16

Residential Weekends-18

Jewish or Jew-ish? -19-20

A word from Treblinka-21-22

Goodbye To Shnat-24

An Unexpected Yom  
Ha'atzmaut-25-27

Don't Say The Day Will come,  
Bring on The day-28-30

Classic "Two Tours" Habo-31

An Insight To the Life of a  
Madrich- 33-34

Jews, Christmas, and Social  
Responsibility- 36-37

A Compendium of Chaggim-  
38-43

Rabin's Legacy - 45-50

Tolerance Without  
Relativism-52-54



# EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello all, welcome to this year's Koleinu.

The year is coming to a close, with machane right around the corner, this Koleinu stands as a monument to the incredibly hard work that has been put in this year by everyone in the movement.

There is still work to be done, as there is always work to be done, however the commitment we have seen from our madrichim this year has been exceptional. Whether it be staffing our numerous residential weekends, running ken, showing up to hadracha, organising Mifgash, schlepping to the Peak District and even Frankfurt, on behalf of the entire tzevet, thank you.

This year, we've had fierce, and important debates over the direction of this movement, and it's been inspiring to see people with so much passion and care for the movement I fell in love with over 12 years ago. Should we be educating about gender more than we educate about Israel? What role should Judaism be playing in our movement? How large is the range of opinions we educate on?

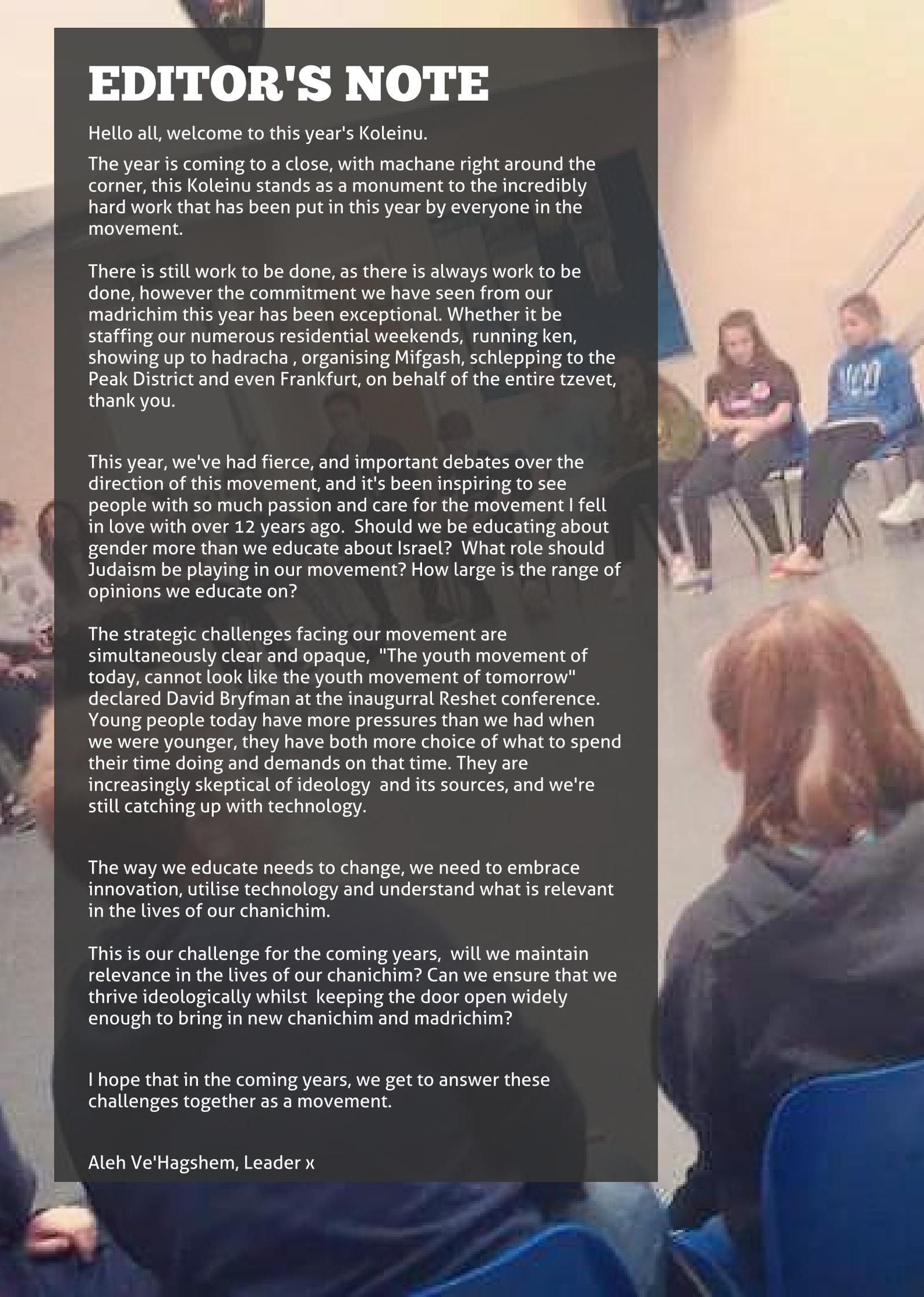
The strategic challenges facing our movement are simultaneously clear and opaque, "The youth movement of today, cannot look like the youth movement of tomorrow" declared David Bryfman at the inaugural Reshet conference. Young people today have more pressures than we had when we were younger, they have both more choice of what to spend their time doing and demands on that time. They are increasingly skeptical of ideology and its sources, and we're still catching up with technology.

The way we educate needs to change, we need to embrace innovation, utilise technology and understand what is relevant in the lives of our chanichim.

This is our challenge for the coming years, will we maintain relevance in the lives of our chanichim? Can we ensure that we thrive ideologically whilst keeping the door open widely enough to bring in new chanichim and madrichim?

I hope that in the coming years, we get to answer these challenges together as a movement.

Aleh Ve'Hagshem, Leader x





## **Talia Simpson** **Northern Fieldworker**

The year so far has proven to be a major success due to high numbers of chanichim and a great retention rate in madrichim. In Manchester every day is booming, from schools to kenim to major events being held within the community. Every day Jake and I go into different schools to run lunch time activities for years 3-6. These schools being King David, North Cheshire and Bury & Whitefield. The kids here absolutely love the movement and can't wait for Habo Lunch Club each week, playing their favourite games and enjoying being a part of something communal and 'cool'.

Another success we had was our fantastic Pesach Half Term Scheme. For 3 whole days at Yeshurun Synagogue engaging in exciting activities all based around the Story of Pesach. We had nothing but incredible feedback and are already planning our next one.

Ken has also been running every Sunday for the last few months. Running every Sunday for years 5&6 (both in North & South Manchester), proved to be very successful and will continue to run weekly for years to come due to high demand. Muchanim Hadracha is something new that we introduced this year and has been one of the most successful choices we have made yet, as we have received outstanding results. This monthly activity allows them to continue developing their hadracha skills and learning about what it means to be a leader within the movement after having already been involved as a madrich/a for a year. I think the most successful part of this year so far has been the amount of kids we already have signed up for camp. With 2 camps selling out within the first month and for the first time in 6 years having TWO TOURS is absolutely phenomenal. I'm proud to be a part of this major increase in numbers and hope it continues for many years to come.

Aleh Ve'Hagshem, Tal x



## **Jonny Leader Mayor of London (SADIQ KHAN - Mazkir)**

Wowzers. What a year its been. I joined this movement when I was 12, arriving at Ofarim 2004 with no confidence, mixed feelings towards puberty and a much more popular twin sister. Let it suffice to say I wasn't quite sure what to make of the summer when I first arrived. However, without me knowing it, it was the most influential 2 weeks of my life.

Here I am today, 12 years later, as your mazkir, I've got more confidence than back then, and I'm pretty much over puberty, my sister is still probably cooler than me, but I've come to terms with it.

Anyway, this year has been the most challenging, inspiring, rewarding and tiring year of my life. I've had the privilege to work for the movement that built me as a person, work with a great tzevet around me and have experiences I'll never forget.

To Tachlis, what's been going on? Well, quite a lot actually. We started off with yomei bogrim for over 30 bogrim in September, Mifgash brought the madrichim body together to debate the ideology of the movement and the direction it needs to go in. Choref b'yachad got over 20 madrichim away together for more empassioned ideological exploration. EuroSem saw us schlepping to Germany for one hell of a weekend, the introduction fo the "webinar" has proven to be a success.

The movement is in a good place this year, we're carrying on the work of those before us and are building step by step, but there's always more work to be done. We can always be better educators, more ideological, more committed, better partners, better people. Success is not an end point, it's what we strive towards.

It's up to all of us to keep on building.

Aleh Ve'Hagshem, Leader x



## Josh "JT" Traurig Southern Fieldworker

Firstly I would like to say that it has been an absolute honour and privilege to work in HDUK and I hope to continue working with you all in the future. I would like to thank you all as well for welcoming me and listen to the crazy ramblings of a random Australian Boger. In London we have engaged kids in their schools, through our ken and even broken into other community centres leadership programs! The London movement is definitely on the rise (with over a third of HDUK chanichim now from London) and hopefully we will sustain this trend as we continue growing and branching out into more and more schools and growing our ken numbers.

I am personally very proud of the newly founded Muchanim (2nd Year leaders) Hadracha course and what that has meant for their engagement. As this was the first year for this to happen, and some saying that it would be impossible, I am extremely happy and proud of HDUK for taking this structure on board.

I honestly believe that HDUK is heading in a great direction with amazing navigators moving it forward. I hope that the movement continues to gain traction in the UK Jewish Community and that you only grow and grow.

I would only add that it is up to every single person in the movement to take responsibility for the movement. It is not just up to the Movement Workers! We are all responsible for this giant crazy thing that we call Habonim Dror UK ("Don't call us thy sons, call us thy builders"! ). This a great (although sometimes stressful) experience and for being genuinely unbelievable people that all have such a care for the direction and health of the movement.

Aleh Ve'Haghsem, JT



## Jacob "Goobs" Inerfield Northern Fieldworker

First, let me begin with London. What has been considered a periphery for so many years can no longer be viewed as such in the movement's eyes. Running weekly kenim for a pool of 30+ chanichim means we are constantly replenishing the younger years with new members. For older chanichim we have managed to maintain our strong presence in JCoSS and run a course for every year 7 student on the Power of Youth Movements. I strongly believe that the foundations are now deeply buried, and we now have a community that is desperate for Habonim Dror; it just needs that bit of TLC.

With six months of the Movement Work egg-timer up, a switch back up to The North beckoned, where I would see out the remaining grains of sand. Our recent "home" faces increasing battles to remain the number 1 Youth Movement of choice past the Watford Gap. As such, constant action has been required to ensure Mancunian chanichim are engaged and strongly identify as Habonim Dror. I feel we have been very successful in doing this. However, it cannot lie solely at the feet of the Movement Workers- and I can say categorically that it has not.

This year we have had a strong group of Lomdim and particularly Muchanim, who have been the driving force of the movement. They have been massively guided and led by some exceptional Bogrim at universities in Manchester and in Leeds. All their hard work resulted in: numerous camp reunions and pre-camp weekends (totalling over 250 chanichim - almost the same number of chanichim on Machaneh 2015!), weekly kenim, educational seminars, murder mysteries, hadracha sessions, FNDs, the list could go on...

But this should not be a one off; it should be the norm. It does require a little extra work, especially when the days grow short and external pressures amount. But I challenge you to find a single madrich/a who would say it was not worth every second? Habonim Dror is only worth as much as you put in, and the effort shown this year has to be built on going forward. Not only to maintain us, but to grow. An old movement adage somewhat lost for years states: "*Al tikra lanu benayach. Elah Boniyich!*", "Don't call us thy children. Call us thy builders!" What are you going to build next year?

Aleh Ve'Hagshem, Jake

# My Thoughts on Kuppah

By Robert Berman

Socialism is a hugely important pillar within the movement, we actualise this in a number of ways, the most prominent of which is kuppah. However our understanding of kuppah is incomplete, which results in our actualisation of it being limited as well. Kuppah is a structure put in place without any thought; no matter what age you are, whether chanich or madrich, kuppah is there without a second thought. However is this a good thing? We as a movement should speak about kuppah more and if we feel it necessary change it. Our movement's socialism, and indeed the movement more broadly should not be limited to old structures purely because it's the norm. We should be constantly striving to innovate and put in place structures which are relevant for us now.

There's no doubt that Shnat changed my perception of kuppah, a far cry from the "go and spend it" system on tour, kuppah on Shnat primarily achieves two things: Firstly, it allows truly democratic control over the kvutza's money; and allocates "from each according to their ability to each according to their needs. Secondly, it deliberately causes tension, conflict and ultimately; conversations that deepen our relationships.

My current interaction with kuppah is much clearer than it has ever been, it affected my daily life. Kuppah was my bank account in israel , when buying 5 shekel falafel during messimah that money came from kuppah, when traveling to Jerusalem for the weekend that money came from kuppah; no matter what I bought the money I used wasn't just mine it was my whole kvutza's and it came directly from our kuppah. Kuppah was a huge part of my life and I would like to see that transfer to the lives of my chanichim and fellow madrichim.

My understanding of kuppah grew immensely on Shnat, it affected my daily life. Kuppah was my bank account in israel , when buying 5 shekel falafel during messimah that money came from kuppah, when traveling to Jerusalem for the weekend that money came from kuppah; no matter what I bought the money I used wasn't just mine it was my whole kvutza's and it came directly from our kuppah. Kuppah was a huge part of my life and I would like to see that transfer to the lives of my chanichim and fellow madrichim.

As a members of the movement we all have an understanding of what kuppah is, however do we really take part in kuppah to the fullest potential? In my opinion we as a movement do not. I would like to start by looking at kuppah through the eyes of a chanich/a, it's improved a lot since I was a chanich, but essentially my only interaction with kuppah on camp was handing over an envelope. My second thought on kuppah as a chanich is an incident that happened on tour. I was one of the few people on tour that didn't bring 'shnide' money with them bought stupidly extravagant gifts for their family at home. fter this shopping trip we had a talk about the social



**Socialism:**  
the radical  
idea of  
*sharing*

protests, I was so annoyed at the shopping that I ended up sitting at the back and crying due to not being able to buy such gifts. These are two very negative experiences with kuppah and I believe that I am not the only chanich that doesn't understand where the envelope of money is heading and what is being bought with it; I believe this should change.

Firstly I would suggest that we no longer call 'Shnide' money 'Shnide' money but instead call it "personal money", my reasoning behind this is that I believe many people don't understand the word schnide, I am one of those people. The term to me means very little other than the money that you don't put into kuppah, is my money in my bank account 'shnide' money? Therefore I believe the term has no meaning. On the other hand I believe that the term personal money has more of a connection to the chanichim as they can easily understand the difference between their money being personal and money from kuppah being social, I also believe that this can help educate about kuppah being social money due to the clear understanding between personal money and kuppah.

Secondly, education is the key. The fact is until we begin to educate our chanichim properly about the positives of kuppah, what benefits and drawbacks it has, what it is supposed to achieve, we cannot be surprised when it is implemented poorly.

For most chanichim, their relationship with kuppah is superficial; however it doesn't have to be this way. Simple changes on tiyul for example, like actually putting control of the kuppah into the hands of the chanichim. I believe that if we try hard enough this is a possibility and we can make kuppah a much more meaningful and educational experience for our chanichim.

The problem however is of course not isolated in the experiences of our chanichim, the role that kuppah play's in the lives of our madrichim needs to be reassessed also. Being perfectly honest, is the kuppah structure which exists in the madrichim body drastically better than that of our chanichim? I think not. The essence of the problem is very similar, I.E. a lack of democratic control over kuppah which is one of the key educational rationales for having kuppah in the first place. Without that democratic process in place, the second goal, that of group building and conflict resolution can't even began to be met.

In conclusion kuppah can be an amazing experience for our chanichim and madrichim alike to partake in but it can be made a lot better with the introduction of some ideas and a little bit of effort. Kuppah teaches young chanichim the ideals of sharing and teaches older chanichim about the kibbutz movement, Habonim wouldn't be Habonim without kuppah. Making kuppah stronger is something we should strive to do and I strongly encourage you all to think on ways in which to actively affect how kuppah works on machane.

Aleh Ve'Hagshem, Berman



# We're All Human

We are all guilty of walking past homeless people on the street, avoiding eye contact in order to prevent the potential guilt evoked as we overlook another human being, convincing ourselves that there is nothing we can do to help. Generally, we view them as being on an inferior social level to us, and even believe they are there due to their own failures. It's as if they are a different species, and therefore unable to relate to our privileged experiences. A huge flaw in humanity, that affects the majority of us, is that we don't question the social hierarchy we have been born into. Why does one's financial or social situation determine whether they are worthy of our time and compassion, or even if they are capable of holding a conversation with us?

Homelessness can happen to people no different to you and me; it may have been redundancy, a divorce, or a familial dispute, which leaves someone with nothing. Once finding yourself in the situation where you cannot provide for yourself, one can only imagine how difficult it would be to escape from. Without access to a shower or the money to buy smart clothes, how can one find employment? The homeless shelters in England are heavily overcrowded, so finding a bed to rest for the night is hard enough, let alone a shower. By no means am I demanding that we all open up our homes to the homeless within our community (although it'd be great if we did), however, most of us are in a position to help in some way – no matter how small. Whether that means making a little extra of your Friday night dinner in order to provide a hot meal for the homeless person nearby, or donating old clothes to a shelter, we all have something that would benefit others – even if that is merely the time for a conversation.

We pass homeless people every day unknowing of their interests and experiences, indifferent as we already have enough people to share our day's happenings with. Upon contemplating this further, I felt extremely disheartened; we seem to have lost the compassion and empathy that once distinguished us from 'animals'. We're always ready to express our sorrow and willingness to help, if those enduring hardship are deemed similar to us (generally western civilisation). But when it comes to those from different backgrounds, cultures or simply those with a different life experience, such as the homeless, we turn a blind eye and are merely glad it isn't 'one of us'.

Strip it back. We're all humans. We're all born into the same world and are simply given a different set of cards which determines how privileged we will be, and therefore how easy it'll be to achieve our ambitions.

Every single person you meet in your life will have something different to share with you, and one conversation with a stranger could enlighten your understanding of the world, and of your own personal experiences. It's time to change our perception of those deemed 'different' to us. It's time to realise that we are all victims of the inherent social hierarchy in one way or another, and there is nothing wrong with challenging what we have been brought up to perceive as 'the way society works'.

**Disclosure: please stay safe and preferably in public. Unfortunately, not everyone you meet may be friendly.**



# Sole-utions Ltd

*Sole-utions Ltd for all your First Aid requirements.*

Do you need to update your first aid provision? At home or at work.

Do you need to provide first aid cover for an event?

If so, we are you're problem solved. Your Habonin Dror Summer Camp cover company for the past 4 years

*Fully insured and regulated by Quallsafe & AoFa.*

Contact Linda Varley-England at [Sole-utions@hotmail.com](mailto:Sole-utions@hotmail.com) or call on 07889 270957

# GROWING OLD IN A YOUTH MOVEMENT

By Gary Sakol

Whenever anyone asks me what I do and I tell them that I work for the Youth Movement Habonim Dror, you can immediately see the look of pity on their face at how old I look if I am a movement worker straight out of uni. I assure them that I am not the oldest looking movement worker ever, I am not mazkir and it is a new position to help support the movement workers.

It is a strange concept for oldies (like me) of having an old guy in a youth movement. And I Two and a half years ago this position never existed - movements successfully ran with just movement workers. Recently I have got worried that for most of our madrichim it is the norm - they know no different and don't know a time when I wasn't here.

So why am I here? Am I turning it from a youth movement to an old movement? Whilst I may have significantly increased the average age of the office staff - I can promise you that I am not. My official title may say *Executive Director*, but when I speak to anyone who knows anything about youth movements I tell them that my title is 'the long term guy here to support the movement workers, add some organisational memory and experience and help with the finances'.

Catchy, eh? But that is it. My position is most definitely not to tell the movement workers, bogrim or madrichim what to do.

I always tell movement workers at the beginning of the year that this is **your** movement, and I am only here to try and help you achieve your goals as effectively and efficiently as possible.

So again, why am I here? To be perfectly honest - a few years back the movement started to struggle.

Numbers were decreasing and the money we were losing each year was enough to make my hair fall out. The trustees (volunteers who are legally responsible for the movement) decided if things were going to change the movement needed a bit of help - a bit of guidance.

This is no reflection on the movement workers over those years. Times are changing and we are in a tricky and difficult situation. In my opinion, youth movements these days have two (ok, upon reflection maybe four) key struggles:

1. The increase of Jewish day schools. With more and more chanichim going to a Jewish school, parents no longer feel the need to send them to a Jewish youth movement as they are already getting their Jewish engagement. They don't understand the value of informal education. Back in my day when most people were at non-Jewish schools, parents made sure we went to a Jewish youth movement to have Jewish friends. Now I meet some parents who want their children to go to scout camp or tennis camp to meet non-Jewish friends.
2. The Shnat Reduction. With fewer and fewer shnatties, the movement has fewer and fewer bogrim. I often hear tales of people older than myself (they must be dinosaurs - right?)

who fondly regale us with stories of what their roles were in the movement when they were a boger and how involved they were. The reality is, we have fewer bogrim and thus our output is obviously going to be smaller. In addition, school and uni pressures have increased over the years so our madrichim and bogrim have less time to give. (My favourite story is when one of the vatikei members had been accepted to go to Leeds uni, but a movement worker phoned them up and said they needed to change to Liverpool uni as they were going to have no rosh ken at Liverpool uni - and so the person changed uni! Can you even imagine this kind of thing happening these days? - times have changed!).

3. The world is smaller. There is of course a problem of technology and the world being a smaller place. With Facebook and games consoles, people don't need a youth movement to entertain them. And with mobile phones etc, the world is a smaller place making it easier and safer for people to travel - they no longer need a movement for a gap year.

4. Lack of continuity. Due to the reasons above, it is rare that someone stays with the movement every year / every summer. And that lack of continuity is hard. Most years people are learning the same things again, and making similar mistakes to previous years - their journey through the movement is going slower. Roshim are getting younger, only roshing / rakazing for one summer instead of two and so it is no surprise that we are not able to make as vast improvements as we would like.

These are four big challenges. There is no easy or obvious solutions, but I am here to help ensure we stay relevant so as we can keep educating and keep changing the world.

Whenever I explain how Habo runs with movement workers (coming in straight after uni for one year only) I always tell them that yeah, it is the worst business model known to man-kind - but it is also the most inspiring and empowering model too. And that is not worth trading in for anything.

And when I am asked what success looks like for me in my role? I tell them that a success would be making myself redundant. Increasing our number of bogrim by so many that we have enough incredible people that can move this movement forward without as much help needed from the office. It is a big dream, but it is not impossible.

This year's tsevet has made incredible steps in putting the movement back into your hands. It was unbelievably inspiring to see a group of committed madrichim set up mifgash in October. This is what the movement is for. Madrichim doing things because they are passionate and want to - not just because a movement worker asks them.

Movement workers (and me) are responsible to you - our madrichim and bogrim. Make us accountable. Tell us what you want to see happen, take responsibility and help organise it. Whether it is a day of education, or a social action campaign, starting Norwich Ken or whatever you are passionate about - the movement is a perfect avenue for you to make a difference in the world.

Over the years I think the paid staff have taken on too much responsibility and not inspired and included you enough to give you space to do your own thing. Or maybe you haven't been responsive enough in standing up and saying 'I will take responsibility'? As the great President Josiah Bartlet said "So are we failing you, or are you failing us? It's probably a little of both". If you will join me, I promise to help the movement workers give you that space and inspiration that will allow you to make a real difference in the movement - in a way you are passionate about.

Few of my friends can go home after a days work feeling satisfied and knowing that they are helping to change British Jewry. I can and I do. I see amazing things that come out of this movement and the amazing education we are passing onto our chanichim - I genuinely can't stop smiling when I think about the long term impact it is going to have on the future generations.

I am here to support the movement workers. And we are here to support you in making this your movement. Tell us what you want to achieve. Tell us what we can do to help you. Hold us accountable. This is your movement - make sure it is a movement you care about and are proud of.

Im tirtzu, ein zo agada; ve'im lo tirtzu, agada hi ve'agada tisha'er

*If you will it, it is no dream;  
and if you do not will it, a  
dream it is and a dream it will  
stay*

**Gary Sakol**

*Glasgow Ken Rosh  
1999-2001*

*Shnatty 2001-2002*

*Movement Worker  
2005-2007*

*Old guy in Habo 2014-???*



# Imagine what you could do with an **extra 60 minutes every day...**

DMC Canotec are helping businesses across the country manage processes to save time, money and resources. We can deliver intelligent systems to help your business and staff be more efficient.

If you're looking to save a few extra minutes every day, perhaps we can help...



## Printing

Save as much as 75% on your existing desktop printer and copier running costs, with our Managed Print Service.

## Process

Streamline your manual paper workflow and business processes, including forms and invoices, saving hours, even days.

## Archive

A million scanned documents committed to a digital archive, yet retrievable in an instant - from anywhere.

## Control

Deliver visibility on document costs. Improve document security and compliance. We can help your business to evolve with the latest advances in technology.

**020 8688 4243**

[www.dmcplc.co.uk](http://www.dmcplc.co.uk)

DMC Canotec 59 Imperial Way | Croydon | Surrey | CR0 4RR

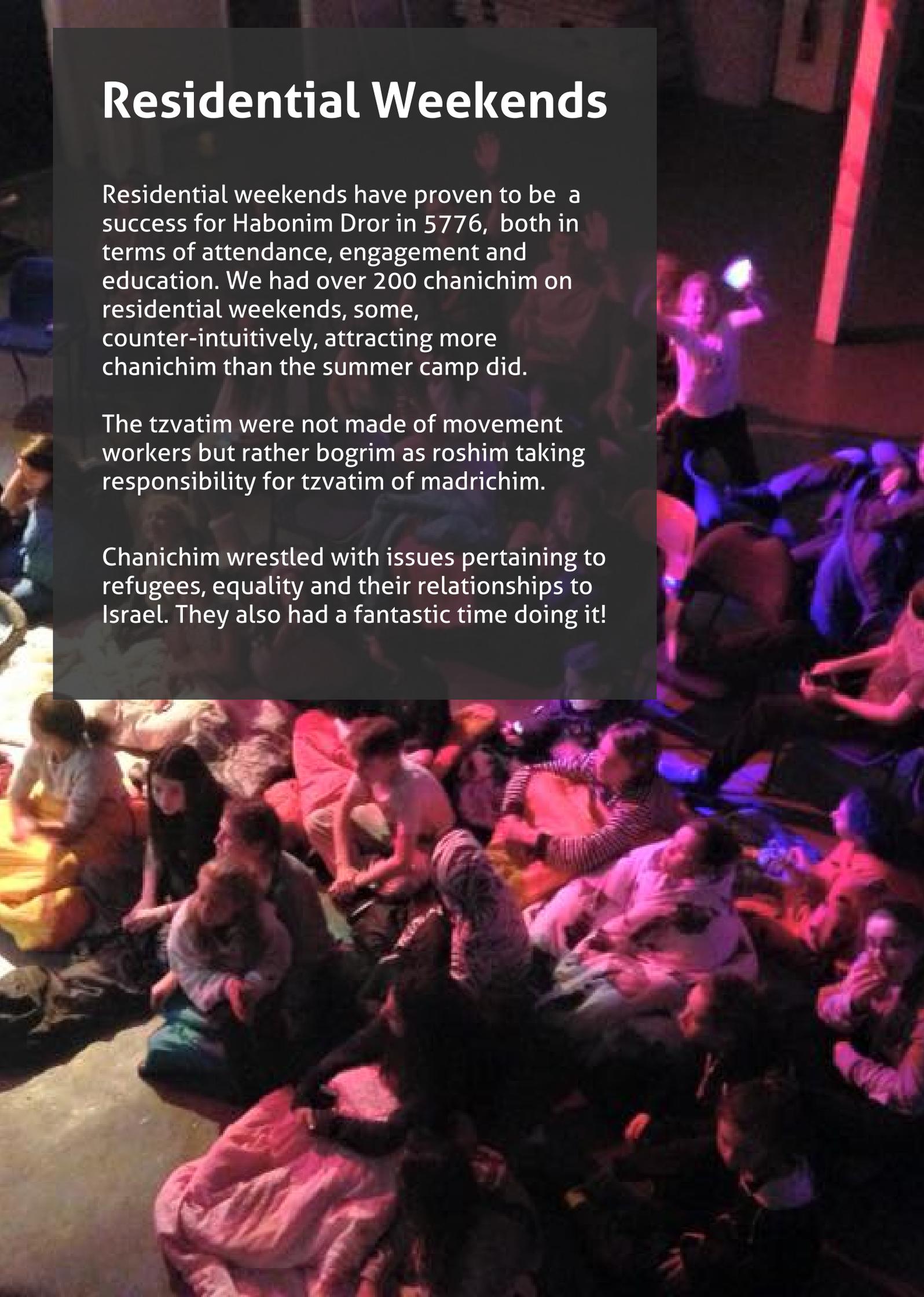


# Residential Weekends

Residential weekends have proven to be a success for Habonim Dror in 5776, both in terms of attendance, engagement and education. We had over 200 chanichim on residential weekends, some, counter-intuitively, attracting more chanichim than the summer camp did.

The tzvatim were not made of movement workers but rather bogrim as roshim taking responsibility for tzvatim of madrichim.

Chanichim wrestled with issues pertaining to refugees, equality and their relationships to Israel. They also had a fantastic time doing it!



# JEWISH OR JEW-ISH? A LETTER FROM KVUTZA MISHEHU ACHER



The movement is constantly evolving; it is a journey that we are creating together. This journey revolves around trust: trusting each other to be the best madrichim possible and being committed and passionate towards everything we do. If we do not unite and walk the path together, the goals we set throughout our journey will continue not to be met.

This journey will mean constant criticism of the movement, but what must be remembered is: we are criticising ourselves. If you're willing to demand of the movement, you must be accepting of the demands placed on you. Our movement is in need. We must now take responsibility for its collective future, just as it has been responsible for shaping our individual futures. We must be willing to prioritise it, instead of making excuses as to why other parts of our lives take precedence.

The movement does not need madrichim who are attending to satisfy their social lives. The movement needs madrichim who desire to be an active participant within not just the movement, but also wider society. We must demonstrate this through hard work, co-operation and dedication. For some of us, it is the social aspects of Habonim Dror that drew us to the movement, but for this to be the sole reason for continued participation is not enough. A desire for furthered education is what we're missing. We're missing the motivation to understand ourselves. The more we understand, the better we teach, the more the chanichim will engage and the more we as Habonim Dror will have an impact on our wider communities.

The actualisation of our beliefs outside of Machaneh is becoming stagnant. We have lost our way through lack of desire and consequent apathy to discuss the ideas we educate about.

Without proper education how can we call ourselves a youth movement? Our lack of proper education on Judaism also renounces our right to call ourselves a Jewish Youth Movement. The fundamental education that unlocks the door to a thriving future of our movement is Cultural Judaism. Only once we understand what this pillar truly means can we understand the responsibilities that stem from being labelled Socialist and Zionist. These three pillars are not separate; they are three inextricably linked ideas that without one, the others cannot evolve. Members of Shnat 15/16 are striving towards creating a long term culturally Jewish Shabbat service as an example of our journey to reclaiming our 'hollow' pillar. Only once this is again strong, and our knowledge of Jewish values are centralised, can we put into practice all three of our pillars. This then allows us to call ourselves Cultural Jews rather than Jews who simply reject traditional orthodoxy.

We don't need to pretend that we already understand. There are no tests, no grades and no judgement. Receiving your first chultza does not signify the peak of your education. It has only just begun. The chultza is an invitation to becoming a machrich/a and is a symbol of your acceptance to embark on this journey. We are not solely here to gain knowledge for the sake of it, we are also gaining knowledge in order to educate. The quality of knowledge that we obtain and impart on others, manifests itself not on a piece of paper, but through each graduating shichva of chanichim into lomdim and the existing knowledge, ideas and concepts they bring to the table. To point out our flaws is easy, but to answer how are we going to provide our madrichim with the correct education in order to pass this on to our chanichim is where the mifgash is integral.

The movement is you and me. That's not to say it's yours or mine, for it is ours. Our collective vision can form the hard core of HDUK and dictate the position we fill in society. Words are empty in this world, it is the actions we can hold accountability for that will validate our right to be a movement. There is nobody else waiting with a pen and paper, eager to write down your ideas in order to fulfil your aspirations. You are somebody else. Somebody else who wants to educate a new generation of chanichim, only once we begin to understand what that education is. Somebody else is ready to improve the movement we are all a part of. That somebody else is you.

Aleh Ve'Hagshem

Kvutzah Mishehu Acher x

# A WORD FROM TREBLINKA

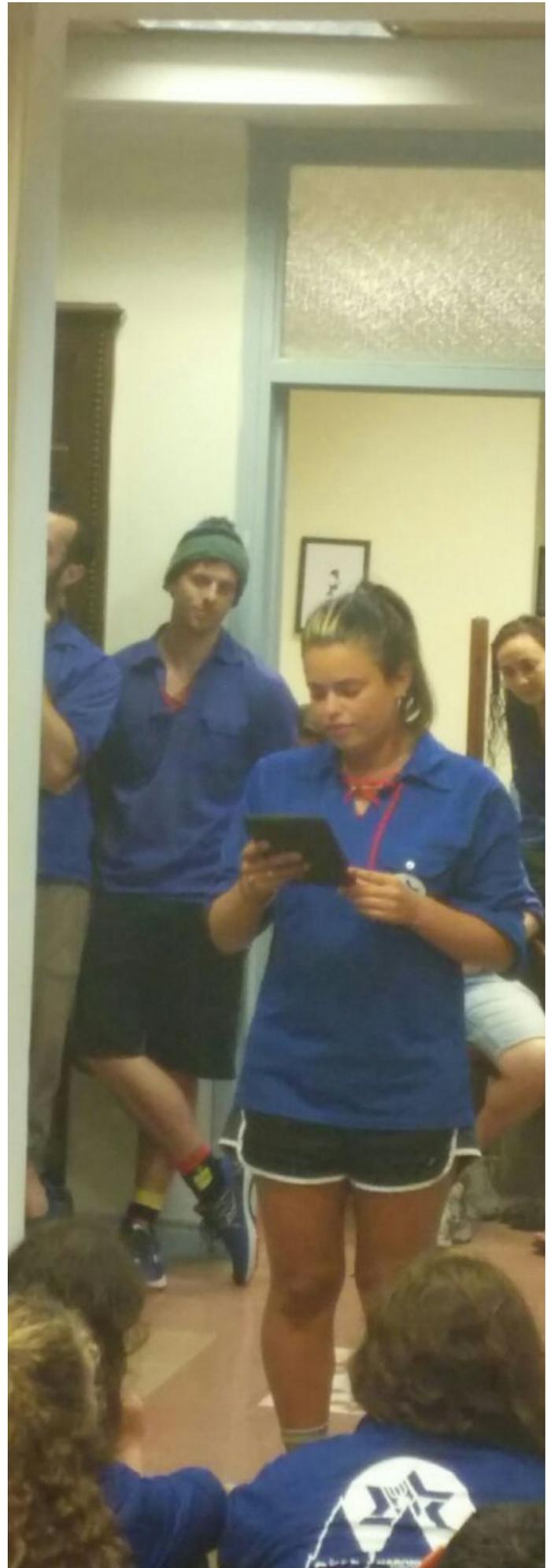
**BY ELLA KRIKLER**

False hope. A comfort continually used to help us believe our circumstances will change through the actions of someone else. A comfort, symptomatic of feeling unable to alter your own reality, ultimately blinding you from truths. This helplessness, this intimidation of reality causes absence of responsibility and inherent apathy. But this apathy is an illusion; for those who don't try can never say they failed.

Empowerment. The solution leading us to influence, change and create our own alternatives, enabling us to see the reality we stand within. Empowerment allows choice. Empowerment allows choice to rebel and be alive, not resist in order simply to survive.

Those in Warsaw were empowered through belief and conviction, which stemmed from a vision for a place that did not meet their reality. The critique of that reality allowed for the act of rebellion. The youth had the foresight to dream for the future amidst their deep dissatisfaction with reality, and plant the seed for that future to prosper. In going against apathy, in choosing to eradicate false hope, in choosing to go against something, you create something. But to just go against is to deconstruct. To fight for, is the act of rebellion. It is dismissing the ability of ignorance to dictate action, or lack of.

False hope that the realities of what lay past the ghetto was untrue prevented people from accepting responsibility and confronting the truths. They blinded themselves from the realities of Treblinka. It was left to the action of others to pave the way for them to silently walk. But it was those who stood up, even in the smallest actions like sharing a loaf of bread and retaining a moral center that allowed rebellion not to be a distant fantasy but a very real reality.





False hope today, sees us accept other, louder definitions of Zionism, Judaism, Feminism through want for someone else to change it and maybe a belief that we ourselves cannot. We accept other definitions of peace and humanity to shy away from the responsibility of confronting the truths and the hard path we have to walk in order to get there. But we are the pavers. We have the power to reclaim and the power to dictate what the vision should and can look like. We are the ones with the power to rebel and create a vision bigger than us and bigger than now. We need to accept that apathetic, passive avoidance of confrontation and lack of advocacy and action for what we believe in is in a sense, false hope. It allows the problems of the world to be left to someone else. But no one else is waiting to fulfill our vision.

We have the power to unite and rebel not simply resist. Don't be just be against something, be for something else. Tell people what it means to be Zionist. Tell people what it means to be Jewish. Open new space for creation and be empowered in order to empower future generations.

We have the power to rebel, and in that rebellion, make the choice to be apart of reshaping our reality.

Without WIZO he wouldn't be able to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah.



Through WIZO's Bar/Bat Mitzvah Campaign, hundreds of vulnerable teens can enjoy their special day.

*Please share your simcha and help realise their dreams.*

020 7319 9169  
central@wizouk.org  
www.wizouk.org

 **WIZO UK**  
Caring for the people of Israel

Registered Charity Number 1125012 Registered Company Number 6634748  
Registered Address: WIZO.uk, Charles House, 108-110 Finchley Road, London, NW3 5JJ



# GOODBYE TO SHNAT

**By Ella Krikler**

This process has provoked conversations, debates and disagreements. We have been provided with a platform to look towards our future with a vision. A vision for change, for rebellion, for better. The uniqueness of this process is that throughout it, we have been surrounded by like minded people, who are part of a movement that values each and every one of us. We have been shown the importance of partnership in this vision for change. Being member of a collective working toward a common goal makes the impossible possible - it shows us that we are not alone.

Being a part of the wider collective is not always easy, it sometimes makes finding the 'right time' or 'right climate' for the implementation of the changes we want to see or conversations we need to have harder. We are forced to consider the individuals within the collective, but the frustrations only allowed us to reap so many more rewards. We have challenged each other ideologically, we have challenged each other socially and we have made mistakes. But those mistakes have created more shared experiences and propelled us further along our shared process.

We will face an array of challenges in the next chapter of our lives and we will not always be within arms reach of those from this year we have been supported by and come to rely on. But we have the privilege of being part of a wider network - a people within a people. Knowing that there are others working toward the same future as you across the world proves the extent of our vision. Seek comfort in knowing you have both partners and friends that are continuing to grow and develop in parallel to you. We need to realise and harness the potential we as partners have in creating the vision we see for the future.

We have been shown it is ok to define, redefine and reclaim so many things that have been wrongly warped by society. We have had the space and ability to dictate how our lives look and the values we have been grounded in this year. The absence of these structures demands of us to demand of each other to continue to push and challenge the things we do, the people we meet and the opinions we form. We must continue to question in order for those values to remain a large part of our lives.

You have opened us up to so many ideas and concepts that were absent to us previously. You have been integral in breaking down societal norms and shown us just because things are, it does not mean they have to be. The educational process we have embarked upon together 8 and a half months ago does not end here. We welcome the next part of our lives and we ask you to continue to be a part of it. Challenge us and support us. Let us not be 3 individual kvutzot, part of 3 individual journeys, but one international shichva. We need to recognise the importance of unity and see this process as ours and together we can make that difference.

Aleh V'hagshem.



# AN UNEXPECTED



# YOM HA'ATZMAUT

By Josh "JT" Traurig

This Yom Ha'atzmaut was quite possibly one of the most random but amazing and inspiring Yamim I have had in a very long time. It combined so many different aspects of my life into one day that I felt truly inspired by it. For the first time in my life I spent a serious amount of time learning about and discussing Mizrahi culture in Israel. I never realised to the fullest extent the experience of the Mizrahi communities during their Aliyot and their general experience of the culmination of the Zionist enterprise (i.e. Israel). I never quite grasped just how much Ashkenazi privilege there was in the State of Israel (a place that was meant to be a 'Light Unto the Nations' and be a beacon of equality and social justice). I'm still not sure that it was intentionally set up that way or whether it was an unfortunate by-product of Ben-Gurion's Zionism.

What do I mean by this? I mean that at the beginning of the Modern Zionist enterprise it was a predominantly Ashkenazi movement. The modern philosophers of Zionism, the first waves of Aliyot and the first establishments in Israel were all Ashkenazi. What did this mean for those then who came from Arab and Muslim countries? It meant that when these communities started arriving into the Yishuv they were sent to the periphery. They were sent to start up new communities in the most isolated places. Their seemed to be a perception that they were the brothers and sisters of the Ashkenazim but they were somehow lower. A few reasons have been suggested for this: the Mizrachim relied more on Oral Tradition (folklore) rather than written tradition, Mizrachim spoke Arabic and had appropriated Arabic music into their prayer and cultural song. Was this something that the Ashkenazim consciously thought about as they greeted their supposed brothers and sisters? I'm not sure. I'm not even sure they would know if I could ask them today.

But isn't this just history? Isn't this just a thing of the past that we can learn from and simply move on? Unfortunately not. The effects of sending the Mizrachim to the periphery are still felt today. Currently a Jew in Israel of Ashkenazi descent is twice as likely to go to university than their Mizrahi counterpart.



There are still fewer Mizrahi representatives in the Knesset. There are still only a few pages in school history textbooks that discuss Jews of Mizrahi descent and their journey to Israel. What does this tell us? I think that it tells us that Israeli society (although admittedly it has been getting better in the last few decades) doesn't see the Mizrahi culture as equal to the Ashkenazi. Mizrachim are identified with Arabs, which are supposed to be the "enemy". How can it be that they are equal if they speak, sing and act like the "enemy"? It's because they grew up in those countries! It's because that's where they are from and that should be ok!

On Thursday night I had the absolute pleasure of cooking and eating with Drori Yehoshua (along with his daughter, Graham Carpenter and Tom Francies). Drori is an Israeli of Kurdish descent (i.e. a Kurdish-Mizrahi-Israeli Jew) and an activist for the promotion of Mizrahi culture and thought. Drori wanted to share with us a traditional Kurdish dish, Kubbeh. Step-by-step, he took us through how to make the dish (which, by the way, was amazing). The joy on his face as he was showing us how to make Kubbeh was unparalleled. He loved sharing his culture with us. But he didn't just see it as his culture, he saw it as part of the wider Jewish culture and therefore as ours. His main point was that whether a dish, idea or song has its origin in Ashkenazi or Mizrahi culture, it is all Jewish. It is all ours. I fell in love with this idea. As a cultural Jew, I want to draw on as much of our culture as possible (whether that be Ashkenazi or Mizrahi).

Over dinner Drori shared his story. He shared how he works with under-privileged youth, prisoners going through rehabilitation and with Arab-Israelis. He explained how he sees the Mizrahi community as the perfect bridge between Jews and Arabs. He explained how, even during the recent turmoil in Israel, he refused to be driven by a Jew and would only get into an Arab taxi (with the condition that they talk about their fears the "other" the entire journey).

As we said good night, Drori gave me a hug. Actually it was more than just a hug. It was an embrace. It was as if through that embrace he was trying to convey his love for me as a fellow Jew and fellow human being. Even though I only met him for a few hours, I was enchanted by this incredible person. I'm not sure if our paths will ever cross again but all I can do is hope that they will.



# **DON'T SAY THE DAY WILL COME BRING ON THE DAY**

**By Jonathon Leader**

I, like the vast majority of world Jewry, and even some non-Jews, am a Zionist. I say this proudly, and with no apologies.

But what does it mean? In short, it means I subscribe to the idea that Jews, in addition to a cultural, or religious identity, also have a national identity; and that national identity renders us worthy of national self-determination in \*parts\* of the land of Israel.



In practice, this also means that I am committed to Israel's existence as both a Jewish and democratic state, grounded in the values of equality and peace espoused in Israel's declaration of independence.

But how did I get there? I became politically aware at around the age of 14-15 and instantly identified with leftist politics, the rhetoric of equality, human rights and the union, for whatever reason spoke to me. Maybe it was because of the stories I'd heard of my grandfather fighting alongside trade unionists against Oswald Mosley's black shirts at Cable Street in the 30s or my great uncle's commitment to USDAW, the "Union for Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers". In terms of my life experience, unlike many of my peers I'd never been to Israel by that time, I had then, and still have now, no family in Israel, and when my family talked about Israel it was largely in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; suffice it to say that I didn't like much of what I heard in those conversations. My formal Jewish education, if anything, nearly sent me further the other way.



There was however, one Jewish and Zionist space where I felt fully at home, both socially and ideologically; the youth movement I now have the privilege to work for, Habonim Dror. There, cool leaders in blue shirts and red strings spoke about Zionism as a Jewish revolution, a movement to liberate a people yearning for a homeland for millennia, they spoke of the idealism of the chaluzim and the Kibbutz movement as a project to create a new, more egalitarian society. This Zionism was different from that I'd heard about at school or at home. It wasn't about European anti-Semites or Palestinian terrorists. It was infectious, aspirational and, at times, critical.

This Zionism was one of responsibilities, social justice and partnership. Yes, it's OK to criticise Israel when necessary, but when you do it you have to take responsibility for that. You don't criticise the occupation or growing economic disparity to disengage from Israel but rather to bring you closer to it, you have to understand the problem before you can be part of the solution. Despite this deep, historic commitment to the Jewish people, the Jewish state and the Zionist project, the charge of Anti-Zionism is occasionally levelled at us by the Zionist hard right.

Now for a while, I asked myself the following question, "Why do these people believe something which I know for a fact to be untrue?" In fairness the answer came to me quite quickly, and forgive me if the answer I've come to seems too simplistic, but here it is. These people don't truly understand what the Zionist vision and ethos is really about. They mistake an ideology, which in its modern inception was a socialist one aimed at liberating

the Jewish people, with an ideology of “supporting the Israeli government”. This is, to my mind a farcical mutation of the original Zionist dream. A dream which aimed to recreate and revolutionise the way Jews all over the world related to themselves and their identities. This is the key aspect of Zionism which our critics seem unable to grasp. Zionism is a revolutionary force. At a time when religious Orthodox Judaism was offering less and less answers to less and less people, secular Zionism aimed to unite the Jewish people around the idea of nationhood. The idea that we cannot afford to wait for our emancipation but must take it with both hands and make Jewish sovereignty a reality for the first time in over two millennia.

Mistakes have been made along the way, that’s for sure, Jewish terrorists from the Irgun blew up market places and hotels full of innocent people, 1948 was not pretty, nor was the way Mizrahim were treated on arrival; fleeing their own persecution in neighbouring Arab countries, the occupation that began in 1967 is now nearing its 50th birthday, economic disparity is a crisis and Yitzhak Rabin’s assassination; coupled with the 2nd intifada has shattered the Israeli peace camp.

For a long time now, I believe that for the most part the revolutionary view of Zionism, which we as a movement hold dear and what was intended by its creators is slowly dying out. The values of Jewish collective responsibility and social justice have been eroded by the values of individualism and the need to make a fast shekel. The Declaration of Independence’s pledge that the state will “foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex” has been replaced by the exclusion of Arabs, of Ethiopians of the poor and even, in some places of women.

Yet none of this makes me waver in my support for the Zionist project; the most important project of the Jewish people certainly in my lifetime. All it means is that there is more work to be done. Israel has the capacity to become a more peaceful, equal and democratic society; however it needs the kind of Zionism I was imbued with in my youth movement to make it happen. It needs a Zionism that is aspirational, not defeatist, a Zionism that has the strength to look Israeli society in the eye and see its beauty and its flaws in equal measure; and a Zionism that commits itself to the values of freedom, justice and peace, as envisaged by the prophets of Israel.

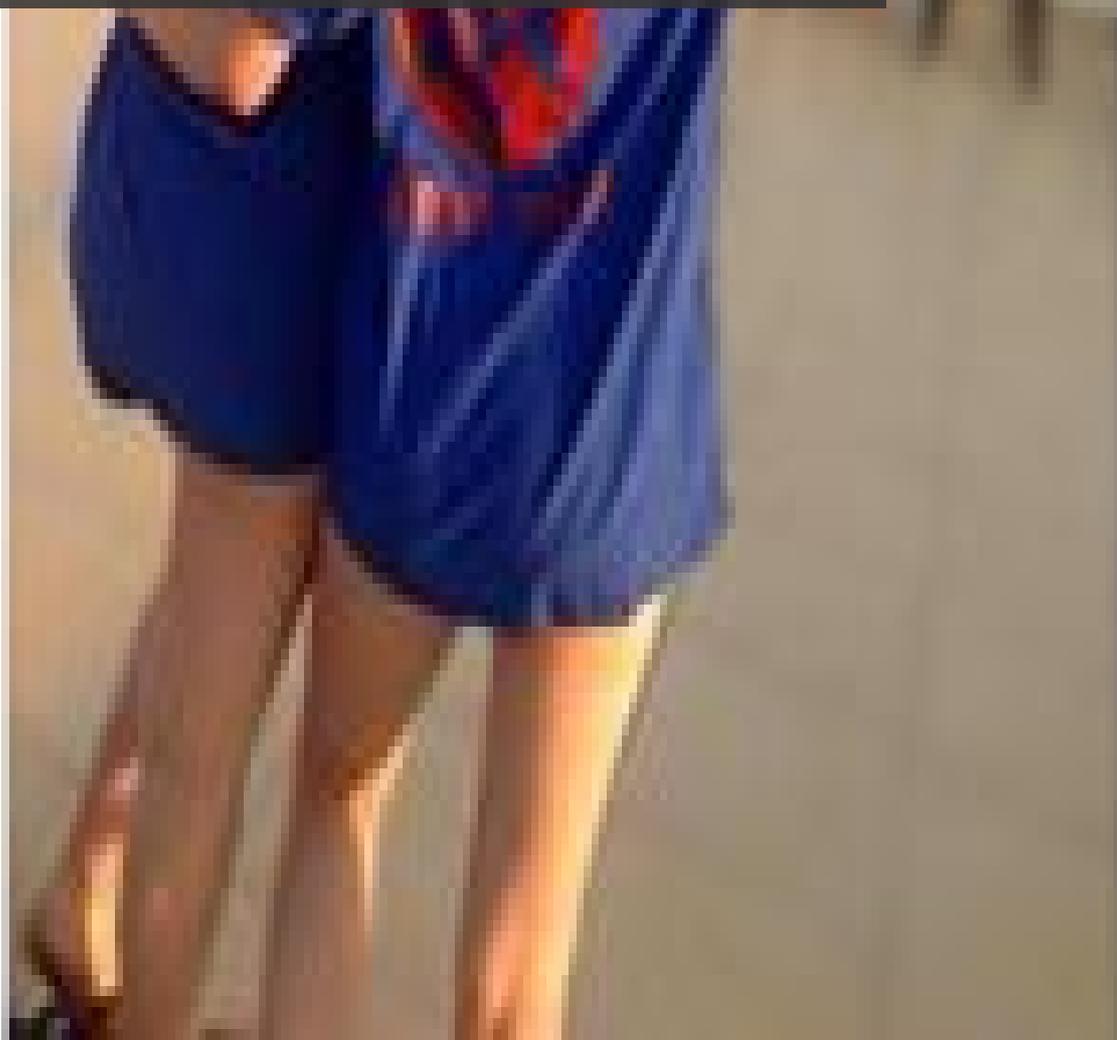
Some might call it naive, but despite everything I still believe this is all still possible, however as the ever resonant Shir LaShalom tells us, “Don’t say the day will come, bring on the day, because it is not a dream.”

Aleh Ve'Hagshem, Leader x

# Classic "Two Tours" Habo.

**This year, for the first time since 2010, we're able to send 2 full tours to Israel this year, which is a huge achievement and a reward for the years of work which have gone into this shicvah. Clearly, Sayarim 2015 had quite the impact!**

**Let's hope that Shnat 18-19 see's the benefits!**





Delighted to be supporting Habonim Dror.

We look forward to hosting you on summer camps for many years to come.

Self Catering Cabins available throughout the year too.

[www.landaoutdoorcentre.co.uk](http://www.landaoutdoorcentre.co.uk)

[info@landaoutdoorcentre.co.uk](mailto:info@landaoutdoorcentre.co.uk) 01639  
885

# **AN INSIGHT INTO THE LIFE OF A MADRICH**

**BY NATHAN KEMP**



Looking back on Machaneh, after the reunion, it became clear the direction that I as a Madrich wanted the movement to go e.g. knowing what the movement offers; such as the ability to make ones inner self feel truly comfortable within its surroundings. I witnessed this from not just being a madrich but also a chanich. The environment that is created is a socialist utopia breaking down the constraints and rigors of the competitive outside world. The environment that was created this year and I'm sure among previous years, was unique and sometimes surreal.

This is achieved by the educational Hadracha course where Madrichim complete the second stage of their transition from Chanich/a to Madrich/a after Israel Tour. However the transition is a hard one, as the skills that are acquired on Hadracha can only teach you so much. It is often a test of character when dealt with similar situations that you will find yourself in as a Madrich/a on camp. The role of a Madrich/a is to both educate in both a social and humanistic sense and the introduction of Hadracha has set the movement on the right track to maximize both the Chanichim and Madrichim experience.

To further this I believe that it is integral for the Madrichim to create a cohesive

where there is such a trust in the hard work put in by each Madrich/a that this is clearly reflected in the behaviour of the Chanichim. Due to the decentralized nature of Habo it is often said that even the first year Madrichim are the focal point of the movement, just like the rest of us Madrichim. I experienced this over Mifgash where all different aged Madrichim came together and voiced their opinions of the direction of the movement and each voice was heard democratically. This means that the current crop of Madrichim can effectively dictate the direction of the movement to hopefully breed a successful generation of the future of the movement which are of course, the Chanichim.

“Be the change you wish to see in the world”

Aleh V'Hagshem,

Nathan Kemp



# StandWithUs

UNITED KINGDOM

*StandWithUs UK is delighted that the participants on the Habomin Dror Israel trip will be visiting the StandWithUs Education Centre in Jerusalem and engaging in education sessions there. We wish the trip every success and we look forward to future working together in the UK.*

[www.standwithus.com](http://www.standwithus.com)



# merje

Bringing Talent Together

MERJE is a niche recruitment business operating within the areas of Finance, Compliance, Customer Contact, AML, Fraud, Risk & Audit.

For further information please visit our website [www.merje.com](http://www.merje.com)  
Call 0203 637 1600 or 0161 883 2740 or email [info@merje.com](mailto:info@merje.com)

# JEW, CHRISTMAS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**BY SOPHIE FISHER**

November has begun. Having attended a multi-faith school for 7 years, I know that this means, the start of the countdown to Christmas for my non-Jewish friends. As a traditional Jew, it always felt a little strange; my friends chatted and buzzed about what presents they wanted and deeply debated with watering mouths, the key elements to the ultimate Christmas dinner and I would sit back and watch. It was always interesting for me to listen to their excitement over a large meal and seeing their extended family after so long, and laughing about how seeing the family and grossly overeating was an annual event for them, and yet it was a weekly Friday night occurrence for most traditional Jews! It certainly made me think about the nature of my own Judaism, and how it centres so much on people coming together as a community (especially over a bowl of chicken soup). With that in mind, I wasn't ever sure where to place myself as a Jew at this time of year; for most Jews attending Jewish schools, this situation was never a point of consideration.

For me on the other hand, it was one of the times of the year in which I was actively aware of cultural diversity in my mixed faith school, and my own difference, almost like I stood out. One thing I do remember, that made this time of year feel inclusive, was how my school would run an annual charity donation event, in which each form group would organise family donation boxes to go to homeless and struggling families in the hardest time of the year. My form group was made up of a mixture of people who practiced all sorts of religions, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Christianity, a whole variety, and yet we all came together to do a good deed at the time of a national holiday that not all of us practiced.

So what does this all mean when I don't practice Christmas myself, but live in an environment where it is such a big deal?

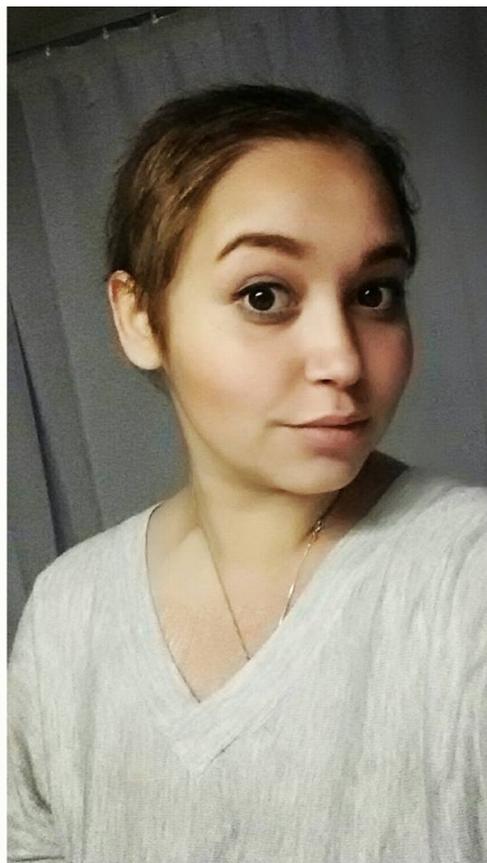


Well, recently I have found myself questioning general attitudes towards this time of year, from an outside perspective. From what I gathered from my RE lessons in high school, Christmas is supposed to be a time of “good will and giving” – thinking of others before yourself right? Whilst I think it’s lovely that people put so much effort into giving each other gifts, I can’t help but think that Christmas has actually become just a commercialised and consumerist cesspool. People are so busy rushing into Argos to spend hundreds of pounds on presents that will most likely be stuffed into the back of the cupboard after a month, to notice the person wrapped up in a sleeping bag in the doorway. Now I’m not saying that people should stop buying presents and celebrating, we are human beings living in a capitalist world, but it’s almost like the Christmas hysteria turns people blind to harsh realities of life that are even more apparent when winter comes.

“But what does this have to do with me? I’m Jewish!” To me, a huge part of what makes me Jewish is my responsibility towards the world. To me, I feel my purpose as a Jew is to recognise my own privilege, and use it to help those who are less advantaged than me. To me, a fundamental value that lies within my religion is to put others before yourself, Tzedakah. That being said, I see Christmas as a great opportunity to do good, even when it’s not a holiday I celebrate, and I think that this should be an opportunity that we all take. It is easy to feel lost in something that we don’t connect to, but I see that as my place, that is what I can do. This could take shape in many forms, whether it be something like creating a food bank for families, or something as small as giving an extra blanket to someone who sleeps on the streets. Don’t be afraid to question your own privilege, it holds great potential for justice and social change! You also don’t have to feel alone in this, strength comes in numbers, and you could organise something with you course faculty or housemates. The possibilities are endless! It doesn’t matter what religion you are, you can still take part in the spirit of giving and social action. There’s no better time than now.

Aleh V’hagshem

Sophie Fisher x



# **SUKKOT AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS: WHAT WE LEARNED FROM 40 YEARS OF WANDERING BY JONATHON LEADER**



We are currently in the process of celebrating Sukkot, the Jewish chag which simultaneously serves to celebrate and give thanks for a bountiful harvest “mmm wheat” the ancient Hebrews would declare; and also to commemorate our time, 40 years to be precise, of wandering the desert and living in temporary sukkot (booths or dwellings). Traditionally, this has always been one of the most joyous occasions on the Jewish calendar, we shake lulavs and etrogs to our hearts content, we eat pomegranate seeds, we sit in our lovely sukkot; and celebrate that after those hard 40 years, we were granted our salvation; altogether, a great time is had by all.

However this year, perhaps more than other years, commemorating our own time “meandering” in the wilderness, stateless; with nowhere to go is particularly poignant; in a not so joyous way. Currently we are witnessing the largest global refugee crisis in history; in 2014 the number of global refugees exceeded 50 million for the first time since the Second World War. Many of those refugees are fleeing the horrifying scenes broadcast globally from Syria, stuck between the rock of the brutal Assad regime and the hard place of the genocidal fanatics of the Islamic State. There are a number of sources in Jewish tradition which lay out our

responsibilities to these people, most poignant of these is surely:

*"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not taunt him. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be as a native from among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."*

I don't feel it necessary, in this blog, to remind the Jewish world of all the other experiences we've had as strangers, those experiences have become a central theme of the Jewish story. We know them, because not so long ago, it was our great-grandparents and grandparents, arriving on the shores of Britain from Russia, Poland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, France, the list goes on.

Now in fairness, the Jewish response to this crisis has been admirable, we've seen the youth movement world mobilise, arranging donation drives, helping sort donations, sending volunteering missions to Calais, in many ways, this has been a fine example of empowered youth taking action when necessary. However, like in all struggles, there is still work to do.

We can also not forget those asylum seekers currently in detention in the UK, our government is currently the only one in Europe to still have no time limit on detention. In Israel for example, \*thanks to the Supreme Court\*, asylum seekers being held in the Holot detention centre can only be held there for a maximum of one year. In the UK, those being held in Yarl's Wood "Immigration Removal Centre" (yes that's actually what they call it) can be held indefinitely.

So when you're next sat in your Sukkah, thinking about our time spent wandering in the desert, and how we were eventually granted our salvation, please take some time to think about those still wandering, still stateless, still oppressed and still, ultimately, strangers.

Aleh Vehagshem,  
Leader. x

# CHANUKAH: PRESENCE OR PRESENTS?

BY SAMMY LEE



Chanukah presents are great, but it's the presence of Chanukah that really matters.

Chanukah has always been one of everyone's favourite chaggim – and rightly so! Who wouldn't love an eight-day binge fest on sugary, extra jammy doughnuts, deep fried latkes and chocolate gelt! Not forgetting about singing the remixed rendition of Ma'oz Tzur whilst lighting the chanukiah (it somehow never ceases to be funny to change the lyrics to 'the cat's in the cupboard and you can't catch me' no matter how old you are). Even during our primary school years Chanukah was a big deal.

There was always that nerve-racking moment of finding out who would get the starring role of Judah the Maccabee in the school Chanukah concert, so that you wouldn't have to face the shame of going home to tell your parents you would be starring as a mere chanukiah candle... for the third year in a row. There was nothing quite like the feeling of being entrapped in a large piece of coloured card, wrapped in a cylindrical shape around your body – restricting all movement to an awkward shuffle-waddle. Not forgetting the red-orange paper flame plonked on top of your head, which happened to blend nicely into your flushed, bright-red face as you stood on that stage absolutely mortified. Of course it was always recorded on your dad's camcorder so that the embarrassment could come back to haunt you for years to come (not that I am talking out of a bitter personal experience of course!)

But even still, these typical Chanukah traditions that we engage in, year on, year out have always seemed pretty futile to me. It's hard to attribute any sort of meaning

and value on seemingly trivial traditions. Of course the story of Chanukah is about miracles: The Maccabees defeating the Greek army against all odds, the rededication of the Beit Hamikdash, and that little drop of oil that lasted for a whole eight days. But how can we relay any meaning onto a story set over 2000 years ago? Especially when we never see any open miracles like that today. Chanukah truly is an enigma. Given that we Jews can't even agree on its very spelling (Chanukah? Hanukah? Hanukkah?!?!) it's no wonder that a shroud of mystery surrounds its celebration. So, I'll try and give my own interpretation of what Chanukah has come to mean to me...

Last year, Chanukah took on a very different meaning for me and I was finally able to attribute a true sense of value onto Chanukah and its corresponding traditions. Although doughnuts with three extra shots of jam was enough to edge Chanukah up there amongst my favourite chaggim (giving Purim a close run for its money), I suddenly realised that Chanukah holds a much more intrinsic and familial value and will continue to do so for the rest of my life. My grandpa passed away around Chanukah time last year, and although his loss brought deep sorrow and despair upon my family, we believed it wasn't so coincidental that his passing coincided with Chanukah – the festival of light.

Chanukah tends to shed light on what is usually a dark, cold and miserable time of year. Last year, amidst a time of mourning and grief, Chanukah exerted a special warmth and comfort, whilst reigniting uplifting and filial memories that brought us all together. Throughout my childhood Chanukah was always a big family affair; we would all gather at my grandparents' house for an evening of chanukiah-lighting, doughnuts and presents. Every single year my grandpa would buy us all 'shmy-buys' – a term he coined for the funny, gimmicky little gifts that he used to go out and buy for us all. The adults of the family would receive such things as rolls of tin-foil, and us children would usually receive gifts designed for children half our age – that we all pretended to love with a feigned look of excitement. There never really was a dull moment during these Chanukah gatherings, especially with the little tricks my grandpa would play on us all. Like the time he masterminded the one-man pass-the-parcel trick, whereby he wrapped up a present with what must have been about ten layers of immaculately-wrapped wrapping paper, which had everyone doubled over in fits of laughter... only to reveal that we had waited expectantly for five minutes for the grand unwrapping of a pen!

In retrospect, what I have come to learn from all of this, is that on Chanukah it's not about the presents we receive, it's about the presence of those who surround us that fills the festival of Chanukah with light. This is what my grandpa wanted us to understand; all the Chanukah traditions are great – the doughnuts, the latkes and even the presents – but these very traditions are not the core essence of Chanukah, they are merely instrumental in bringing us all together to create real experiences and memories.

If we take a step back and think about the mad world in which we find ourselves living in today, with the most recent atrocities occurring in Israel, Paris, Mali, Syria, it is difficult to see how we can shed any light on the world. It is easy to lose sight of the positives, but it is vital that we do not succumb to such negativity. In light of such atrocities, what truly inspired me was to see the wedding of Sarah Litman and Ariel Beigel going ahead just two weeks after Sarah's father and brother were murdered in a terrorist attack. An open invitation meant that thousands of people attended the wedding, with hundreds even flying in from abroad.

It's incredible to see the Jewish people arise from such horrendous grief and mourning in order to unite together in solidarity and celebrate something so special. Again with Paris, amongst the shock and despair from the immediate aftermath of the Paris attacks, we witnessed the rest of the world stand in solidarity with Paris in this time of crisis. We saw the '#PorteOuverte' hashtag flooding twitter, as concerned Parisians were offering their homes as an 'open door' for those who were stranded to find comfort in a safe place. We may no longer see the explicit miracles of the Chanukah story today, but even at times when we have reached the deepest despair, there are those that are still able to shed light on terrible situations, which is truly miraculous in itself. It just goes to show that there is always a light at the end of what can appear to be the deepest and darkest of tunnels.

It is up to us, as HDUK, to not only find that light, but to BE that light. There are so many positive things that we can achieve as a collective, counter-culture movement. Although at times it may feel like we are fighting a losing battle, similar to the Maccabees, we must always remember that the darkest hour is just before the dawn. Yet, we can avoid reaching the 'darkest hour' through our endeavors to share our vision of Shivyon Erech Ha'Adam (The Equality of Human Value). Combatting our struggles will seem worth it in light of the better world that we are striving to create. HDUK can and should be the Ner Tamid (everlasting light) of the Jewish community that cannot be extinguished.

Aleh V'Hagshem,  
Sammy Lee



# WEST END TRAVEL



INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AGENTS

West End Travel are please to support Habonim Dror and wish them every success.

For Israel and Worldwide travel please call: 0208-958-3188  
or email: [info@WestEndTravel.co.uk](mailto:info@WestEndTravel.co.uk)



## How does Chai Care?

ת"ב



Chai works in schools nationally to provide expert cancer support and care for anyone affected by a cancer diagnosis in their family.

To find out more please call  
our freephone helpline  
**0808 808 4567** or visit  
[chaicancercare.org](http://chaicancercare.org)

Registered Charity No. 1078956

  
chai cancer care  
together we can cope

# **NOT LEFT OR RIGHT, A NEW CAMP IN ISRAEL**

**By Barak Sella**

The 20 years that passed since the murder of Yitzhak Rabin are the years that shaped the lives of those who were young teenagers on that life-changing day. Today they know: a change must be done; we must join forces in order for us to move us forward to a better place. Barak Sella recalls the day that changed everything

"Moti is on duty today, and I have to stay with the kids," said Sari, my mother's friend when asked if they are planning on coming to the rally that night. This was on the morning of November 4th, 1995. We all stayed home that night, Sari as well. Her husband Moti, also known as Professor Guttman, was on duty in Ichilov hospital. That night he operated on Yitzhak Rabin.

That night, at home, my parents told me Rabin was murdered. I don't remember many details. But I do remember that this was the first time I felt what true fear and anxiety are. I went to bed but wasn't able to fall asleep. I remember thinking, "I can't believe that because of one man, an entire country is doomed."

The next morning a depressing atmosphere was felt in my fifth grade class. It was my first year in the youth movement "HaNoar Haoved VeHaLomed" (The General Federation of Working and Learning Youth, A major and large Zionist-Socialist youth movement in Israel). The memorial ceremony for Rabin was one of the first experiences I've taken part in the movement.

20 years passed since the murder that coloured my 20 years of adolescence. Every year on that day we would plan and hold a memorial ceremony, plan activities and talk about incitement and democracy and go to Rabin Square for the national rally. There we would sing "Shir LaShalom" ("A Song for Peace") and at the end, of course, sing "Yihiye Tov" ("Things Will Get Better") by David Broza on the way to the bus that would take us home.

With the years that passed, on the day of the murder, it became a ritual to re-encounter the events from the night of the murder. My friends and I from the movement continued to come to the memorial rally every year. But as a movement that dedicated itself to remembering the murder, we felt a disconnection. The left wing camp, "my" camp, got together every year to talk about peace but refused to talk about the deep meaning of the murder of a prime minister.

Five years ago, we demanded that in the next memorial rally we must talk about the incitement against Rabin before his murder, as well as "Sefer HaToeva" ("The Book of Abomination") and "Torat HaMelech" ("The Torah of the King") – two books that were published then and now, and proclaimed anyone who's not Jewish is a threat to Israel and must be killed, including children. The organizers of the rally refused. On the other hand, the representatives from the "right wing" refused to take place in the rally and were busy shaking off the blame pointed towards them.



**The memory of the murder and its crucial meaning was in a real threat to be forgotten.**

Therefore, we decided to create a coalition **"Remembering the Murder. Fighting for Democracy"**. Due to the great worry for the future of the Israeli nation, we called all movements and organizations from all over the country and the political spectrum and asked them to start on a new journey; a different one, not opposed to the current one. We decided upon the fact that the Memorial Day for Rabin should belong to the entire Israeli society. Together we will remember the murder. We will remember the incitement that led to the murder and turn it into a giant warning sign. We decided that no matter how deep the controversy between us might get – **we would let democracy decide.**

### **We are still scared**

We've worked very hard on the 20th rally. We felt a great responsibility and decided to create a rally the centers around the joined fight for democracy. On Saturday eve, thousands attended, as well as teenagers from the "Bnei Akiva" youth movement (a religious movement). And finally, not only peace with Arab states was spoken of, but thousands of Arab teenagers attended, as well as 100,000 more people.

However, it turns out that many people are afraid of change. From the Left they said that we forgot Rabin, as if he was mistakenly stabbed in an argument over parking space. From the right they said that we are still not open to everyone. That we're still blaming the entire right wing for the murder and trying to push the Oslo agreements through the back door. They said Rabin Square is a square for the left wing. I say – if you're being attacked on both sides, you're doing something right.

**I say – they are scared.** What all of them have in common is their fixation. According to them, the long-lasting identity of the right or left wing camps are more important than standing up to joined challenges we have in Israel.

In their vision, they see the Israeli society being torn apart into two – just to keep their identity as the peace camp (left) or settlements camp (right). They want everything to stay the way it was, even if the memory of the murder will pay its price.

We decided to take a different path. We decided to establish a new camp – **the democratic camp**. A camp the Israeli society needs like oxygen. A new camp that represents the majority – only the majority isn't aware of it.

A camp that will go to the army and protect Israel's border, and at the same time will fight racism in the streets. A camp that will volunteer for a year of national service (pre-army) and will fight for the freedom of speech; a camp against terror but refuses to participate in the terrible lynching atmosphere that has taken over.

A camp that will fight the incitement together, a camp that commits to the idea that the Jewish nation will be free in its country – but only in a Jewish-democratic state, without compromising.

Because this new camp – a civil and democratic one – is the foundation for handling the challenges and the controversies. We will argue and we will listen to each other, and will not stay focused on keeping our traditional camp's identity. Rabin was murdered because the democratic camp wasn't able to stand for its boundaries. Now, we have the responsibility to remember the murder and fight together for a new future. A new camp.

# Rabin's Legacy: Peace or Democracy?

By Jonathon Leader



Shnat 10-11 at the 15th anniversary rally for Rabin

One of the single most meaningful, inspiring and all round positive memories I have from my Shnat year in Israel is attending the annual Rabin memorial rally in Kikar Rabin, Tel-Aviv. The energy in that square was electric, the sea of the blue chultzot and red strings made me feel part of something truly special. We were joined by representatives from Meretz, Shalom Achshav (Peace Now) Hashomer Hatzair, Avodah, the list goes on. The Israeli left had united and created something truly memorable. We heard speeches from the likes of Shimon Peres, the whole crowd bellowed out Shir LaShalom, as a kvutzah we got a strong rendition of Od Yavo Shalom Aleinu (Saalam) going, it was a truly fantastic experience, and one that I will never forget. The fact that it happened to be the 15th anniversary of Rabin's assassination only served to add an extra sense of occasion.

Today, amongst those Israelis still proudly working towards carrying on the legacy of Israel's slain Prime-Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, there is increasing debate as to what that legacy actually is. On the one hand, some argue that Rabin's legacy is one of peace, that his commitment to finally ending the age old conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is what caused his assassination, and that therefore every year, particularly at the annual rally in Kikar Rabin, the message of reaching a peaceful resolution to that conflict should be the emphasis. This is largely why signs saying "No Security Without a

Solution" were so prominent at this year's rally, the 20th anniversary.

On the other hand however, is the argument that his legacy is one of democracy, that it was not his pro-peace stance which killed him but rather the breakdown in Israeli democracy which occurred in the run up to his assassination. The democracy camp cite pictures of Rabin drawn up as Hitler, the grotesque incitement lead by the Israeli hard right and silently accepted by Netanyahu, as the main reasons why Yigal Amir decided it was OK to undercut Israeli democracy and vote with a bullet, as opposed to the ballot. This camp decides to emphasise cross-communal unity, a renewed commitment to Israeli democracy and democratic values as the focal point of how Rabin should be remembered.

But which has got it right? In a least copout-esque way as possible, both of them. There is no doubt that Rabin's commitment to reaching a peaceful solution with the Palestinian leadership, going as far to shake the hand of Yasser Arafat, made him deeply unpopular with the Israeli right. There is also, no real reason to doubt that Rabin's commitment to peace was based on the recognition that a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not only in line with Israel's national interest, but a vital facet of it. Therefore to recognise those two factors would naturally lead one to argue that yes, the legacy left behind by this "soldier of peace" is to further the prospects of that ever elusive solution to the greatest extent possible.

On the other hand however, the peace platform is one that divides rather than unites Israelis, and makes the prospects of healing the wounds in Israeli society which were revealed in the run up to Rabin's assassination all the more difficult. This is where the strength of the democracy camp's argument comes in, that the best way to honour the legacy of Rabin is to fight incitement, promote dialogue and at a grassroots level, reaffirm democratic norms. If more of this was going on during the Oslo process, then maybe the incitement wouldn't have reached such despicable levels, maybe Rabin wouldn't have been so vilified, maybe he even wouldn't have been killed.

In the same way that both have got it right however, both have got it deeply wrong. Emphasising the need for a genuine peace-process with the Palestinians, and emphasising the need for a healthy, vibrant and civil Israeli democracy are simply two sides of the same coin that is Rabin's legacy. To choose one over the other misses out one of the two things that Rabin fought, sometimes literally for. An Israel who is strong, secure, democratic and at peace with its neighbours. As a movement, when talking about Rabin's legacy, we need to make sure we take both into account.

Aleh Vehagshem,  
Leader.

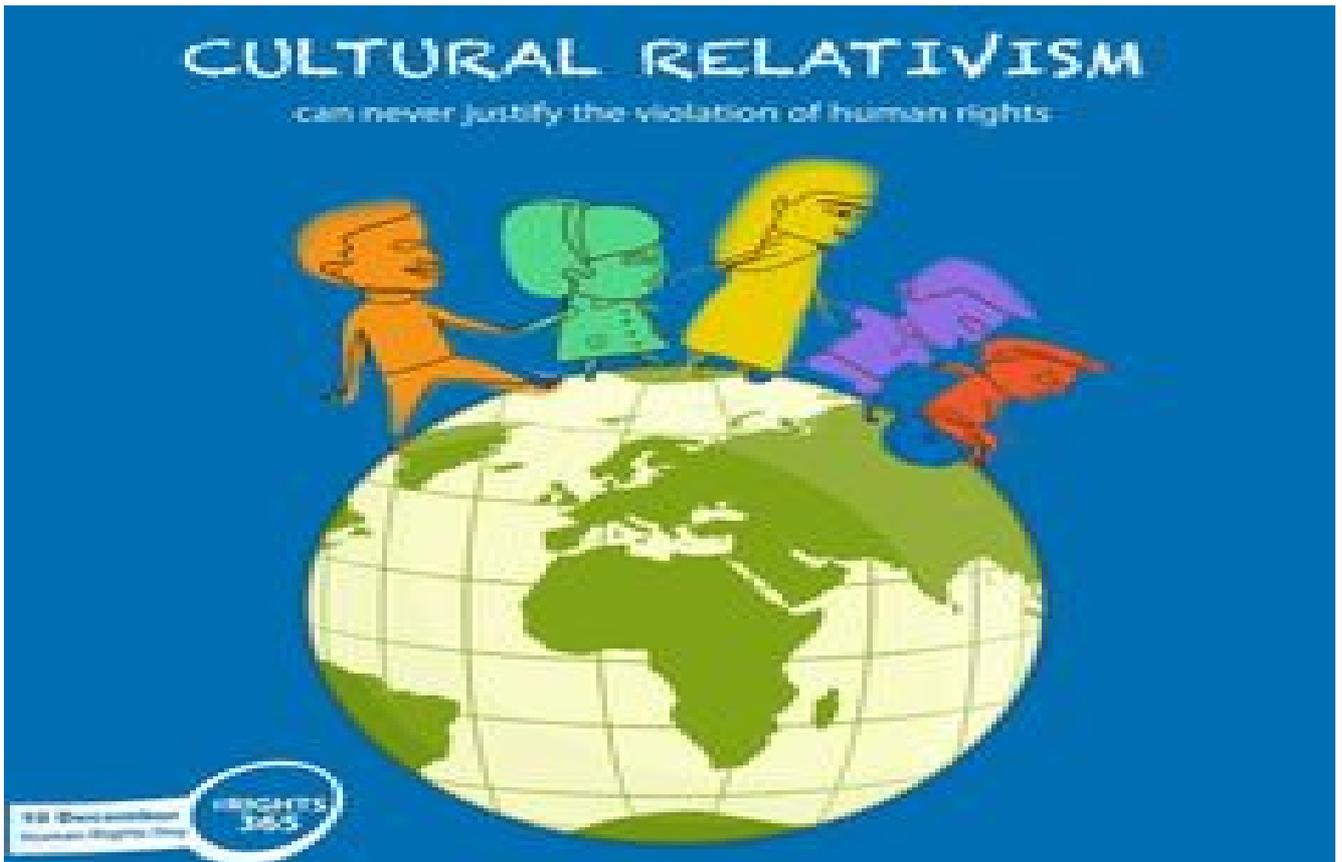


**Laura Marks and Dan Patterson  
are delighted to support  
Habonim Dror**



# Tolerance Without Relativism

By Noa Krikler



As a self-identifying leftie, I find the British left ruthlessly confusing, which is probably a bit worrying.

Recently, what's been bothering me the most is the way the current Labour Party leadership and, more generally, the British liberal left relate to the question of cultural difference. I'm going to start this by stating my personal position: in my mind, a deep tolerance of other societal structures, cultures, religions etc could not be more crucial to the world today. By extension, the West's relatively recent recognition that they may not have all the answers to how a society should be structured has been massively important. Like fundamental. Western cultural imperialism has been responsible for some pretty disturbing phenomena in the world today - from political instabilities to systematic cultural oppression, to give just a few of the more palatable examples. I'm engaging in this conversation on the assumption that we can all agree that these pretty abhorrent policies and attitudes of white/western superiority should be left firmly in the past. I am not questioning whether cultural tolerance has value. It does.

Where I am struggling is navigating tolerance of cultural difference without falling into the murky abyss of post-modernist relativism in which the left now seems to find itself. Surely there are some values that transcend borders and language barriers but I'm not sure quite what they are/how I can assert them.

I don't think I'm alone: the British left no longer seems sure of itself or the values it is prepared to stand up for. It is slowly but surely retreating into the cosy little corner of free-floating, weak evasiveness that protects it from having to actually to defend its values. To quote Nick Cohen (who wrote a wicked book called 'What's Left' which I highly recommend): as 'relativism infected leftish intellectual life, all the old universal criteria, including human rights, the search for truth and the scientific method, became suspect instruments of elite oppression and western cultural imperialism'. In other words, the Left is no longer speaking out against issues that cannot be directly blamed on the west. This is why we so often see leftists ally themselves with political/terrorist groups that are often deeply misogynistic, homophobic, totalitarian and oppressive. They compromise on some of their fundamental beliefs for fear of being perceived as culturally imperialist, because ultimately what matters most is the common enemy: America and the capitalist west.

I fully support the cautious checking of privilege before acting. I am by no means advocating that the West storm into other countries and establish their own idea of 'correct' government. But at some point, we are confronted with issues in other cultures that we cannot and should not condone just because 'who are we to say we are the bad west and all the bad things in the world are because of us'. A lot of it is!! But at some point that can't be the top trump card that renders us blind and helpless in the face of discrimination and violence. Take the brutal tradition of 'sati' in Indian cultures in which Indian widows forced by convention to throw themselves on to their husbands' funeral pyres. I have read astonishing texts written by left-wing academics that claim that this custom cannot be condemned unequivocally by western outsiders, and that western feminists are hypocrites by allegedly targeting issues in other cultures but staying silent about the domestic violence that is taking place under their noses. Saying this does nothing to tackle the issue at hand; the culture perpetuates, and the conversation is stifled.

And here's what it comes down to: if something is morally wrong in London, that means it is morally wrong in Moscow, Buenos Aires, Shanghai, Cairo, Tel Aviv, Islamabad etc. I'm not just talking about putting apple in salads, which is obviously morally offensive, but like actual universal issues of liberty and freedom of expression and respect. I've been talking about the line between respecting cultural difference without surrendering our underlying fundamental values. But 'what are these underlying fundamental values??' you cry. What could be the anchor that keeps us from floating off into the sea of paralysing relativism? I think it all boils down to **shivyon erech ha'adam**, aka equality of human value.

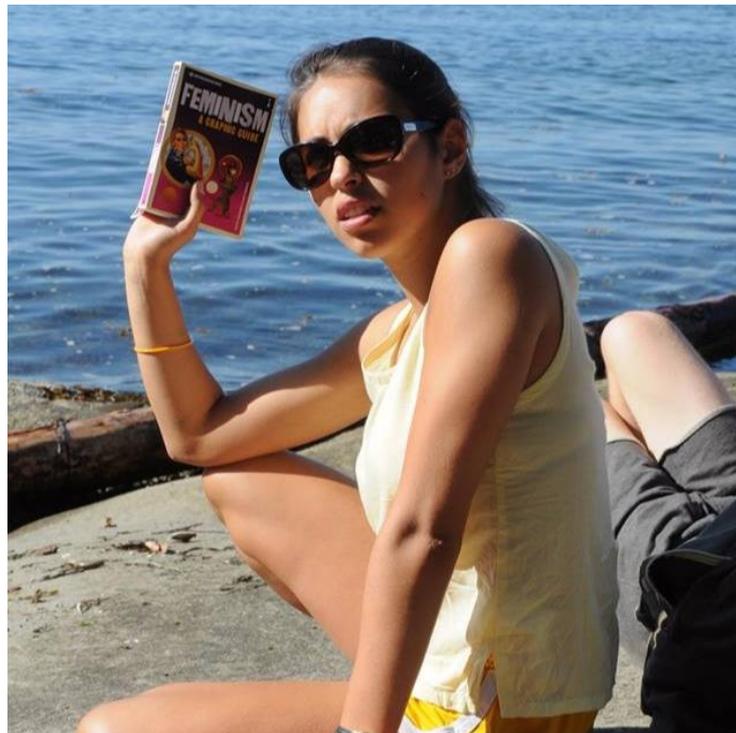
Shivyon erech ha'adam means we as a global community act when people's basic freedoms to exist unharmed and to be free and happy and have choice and autonomy are denied. And the best thing about shivy is that this does not and should not come from a place of cultural superiority or white privilege. It is accessible to everyone, rather than being a Western tool of influence, which means that this is not a one-way system. Indian feminists should have as much right to criticise the shameful ratio of men to women in English politics, for example, as anything flowing in the other direction.

The world is an infinitely more beautiful and colourful and interesting place thanks to the fact that we are not all the same. How boring a world like that that would be. But we must refuse to accept the abuse of shivyon erech ha'adam wherever it happens to take place, and not allow ourselves to be crippled by anxious relativism.

The world is an infinitely more beautiful and colourful and interesting place thanks to the fact that we are not all the same. How boring a world like that that would be. But we must refuse to accept the abuse of shivyon erech ha'adam wherever it happens to take place, and not allow ourselves to be crippled by anxious relativism.

I know this isn't the end of the conversation. There's a lot more thought that needs to go into refining this. But where we must always start and where we must always return is shivy: putting humans and life first. However you identify politically and religiously, whatever social structure most make you tick - if shivyon erech ha'adam is at the centre, I think we'll be onto a winner.

Aleh ve'hagshem, Noa





"Let me explain it this way. We have five apples  
the Inland Revenue want six."

# WITH BEST WISHES FROM BDO

For general enquiries or advice on how we can help you  
grow your business, please call **0870 567 5678** or visit  
our web site [www.bdo.co.uk](http://www.bdo.co.uk)

BDO LLP is authorised and regulated  
by the Financial Conduct Authority to  
conduct investment business.



# TMAX

is T-SHIRTS

Quality printed shirts  
delivered in Israel  
and the U.K.

Contact Maxie:  
maxie@tmax.co.il

"We make a  
living  
by what we get,  
but make a life  
by  
what we give"  
Winston  
Churchill



*Best Wishes from  
Charlotte Benjamin Millinery*

Custom Made Hats, Hatinators,  
Fascinators, Pillboxes, Trilbies & Chuppah  
Combs in contemporary & vintage styles

To make your appointment  
Call on 07961 185 480

See my work on Facebook: Charlotte Benjamin Millinery



# Thank you to Irgun Vatikei Habonim for their generous sponsorship

## Join Irgun Vatikei Habonim

Irgun Vatikei Habonim is a group of older ex-Habonimniks who still remember fondly their Habonim days and the influence Habonim has had on their lives. They live in the UK and meet for a reunion weekend once a year. We are a sister organisation of a similar group who are based in Israel, whose title is Irgun Bogrei Habonim. The Israeli group produces a twice yearly magazine, to which the UK group may contribute, which is sent to all paid up members of both groups. Members of both groups are very welcome to attend the functions of the other. The UK group would welcome some younger members to attend our reunions, which are always very friendly and great fun. Northern and Southern based members take it in turns to organise the weekends. If you would like to join the organisation for £15 email Dr Jenny Green [mike\\_jen\\_green@btopenworld.com](mailto:mike_jen_green@btopenworld.com) or call 0113 268 0825.

**A BIG THANK YOU (AS EVER)  
TO SOCIALISM FOR FUNDING  
THIS MAGAZINE**



**HABONIMDROR**

Building Israel's future for over 80 years

ONLINE PRINTED BY

**SAXOPRINT** 



Make your mark  
on the Jewish story