

Cape Argus

FOUNDED IN 1857

Matching the greatness

Perhaps the most important lesson to be learned from Helen Suzman's exemplary career in public life is that for all the unanimity of the praise for her in 2008, she was, for much of her long campaign for human rights and justice, an almost lone voice, indefatigable, but often vilified.

For too long, the constituency she spoke for lacked her courage; life was too good to risk on an ideal.

This was especially true of the 13 years - from 1961 to 1974 - when Suzman was the sole MP of the liberal Progressive Party, forerunner of the DA.

Had more white voters supported her, the ruling Nationalists might have been compelled to engage in more imaginative and humane politics, and much waste and suffering could have been averted.

The truth, though, was that South Africa had every appearance of being a success story, with a growth rate through the 1960s of some 6% a year and foreign investment rising from R3 billion in 1963 to R7bn a decade later.

Instead of coming under any sort of pressure to shift politically, the Nationalists began to attract new support from the avowedly liberal constituency, gaining 21 seats from the Opposition in the 1966 election, the largest gain since 1953.

The good life came at a cost, though. The huge disproportion in wealth and opportunity could only be sustained by harsher discrimination and, increasingly, force.

Suzman said as much, often.

Yet, as she herself told the House of Assembly in 1968, "the vast majority ... simply want the maintenance of the status quo. And that is, to put it quite bluntly, the maintenance of vast reservoirs of cheap black labour for the benefit of white employers in this country and the maintenance of white domination."

In praising Suzman, it is worth remembering our part in this unpalatable history. As always, the challenge lies less in honouring the great than in matching the greatness.

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Meditations

The ideas that have lighted my way and, time after time, have given me new courage to face life cheerfully have been Kindness, Beauty, and Truth.

Albert Einstein

After what we can say you can be sure the happy heart will make the happy day.

Unknown Source

Press Ombudsman

Joe Tholoe
The Cape Argus subscribes to the South African Press Code that prescribes news that is truthful, accurate, fair and balanced. If we don't live up to the Code please contact the Press Ombudsman at 011 484 3618 or fax 011 484 3619.



Middle East

● Strange how the our local Jewish community who supported the apartheid regime are now also in support of Israel's murderous slaying of innocent civilians. They have become so audacious that they even label Tutu a liar for condemning Israel's human rights record. Shame on them!

● The anger in the Muslim world is palpable. The initial blockade and this current invasion of Gaza may just be the spark that topples those corrupt Arab regimes siding with the US/Israel axis - N Omar

● The Jews came from Europe en masse and stole Arab land. They must go back to Europe and create an Israeli state in Germany where the Holocaust occurred!

● Does Allah (peace be unto Him) approve of Muslims inciting hatred and murdering others?

● Why is Meshal, the leader of Hamas, in "exile" in Syria? He should have been in Gaza if he were worth anything, sharing responsibility for his rocket-

firing policies.

● To Mr Gentile, we are not only Muslims in Palestine, we are also Christians. All with inter-religious family ties. - Sam

● I totally agree with Gentile. The whole world condemns Israel for the attack on Palestine but forget that the Palestinians are directly responsible for thousands of Jewish lives lost through what they call Jihad. Muslims are ordered to kill the "infidels" in the Qur'an. Mohamed(PBUH) ordered Jews to be killed in Medina more than 1 000 years ago. Regrettably lives are lost, but no matter what anyone says, God gave the Jews that land, as prophesied in the

Holy Bible. - Gentile for Jews

● So, Gentile, reading your SMS, I assume you feel Israel has every right to murder people ill equipped to defend themselves? I refer to women and children. - Sumaya C

● Why don't those corrupt Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, stop the supply of oil temporary until those cowards (Israelis) cease to bomb from the air? - Solly

● Rabbi Yisroel Weiss, an anti-Zionist Jew, spoke in front of 6 000 mosque worshippers. His message: Zionism is a political entity and has nothing to do with Judaism, which is a pure faith. It (Zionism) must be disbanded peacefully

and we must encourage dialogue between peace-loving Jews and Muslims and Christians. Zionism is bound to fail.

● All Israel will achieve is more hatred and more calls to wipe out the state of Israel. How does this create security for Jews in Israel and everywhere else?

● If you want an end to the war in Gaza, then tell Hamas to stop firing rockets. Why pick on Israel? They are the defenders, Hamas are the aggressors. - Rob Gould

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● We salute Helen Suzman, who was an anti-apartheid fighter. She was against racism and by nature against Zionism, which is based on the same principles of apartheid.

● As a tribute to a wonderful lady who would not have wanted an official funeral but rather have spent the money on homes, I would like to see her bench in Parliament, as she sat alone, engraved with her name.

Others

● I am all for the Klopse Carnival as a traditional spectacle and tourist-attracting event. Unfortunately, it has become a huge disruption in the lives of city dwellers, going on for weeks and weeks, causing chaos and unpleasantness, and is not done justice by the arrogant, belligerent and selfish attitudes displayed by too many of the people associated with it! I say hold the carnival in all its glory on the first three days of the year and then give the city its streets back!

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● My daughter had yet another cellphone stolen out of her bag - this time at FTV cafe. She reported it to the manager, who didn't give a fig! Says it happens all the time. She phoned her cell number a few times and the thief had the gall to answer!

● Although by no means well-off, I give R25 every month to the SPCA to feed an animal! I challenge other animal lovers to do same. Don't talk, do. - Lucille

● Beware of TV adverts which say SMS whatever, because one can hardly read the cost of responding. For example it says R5 a day or R10 a week and then you have to unsubscribe to a number which is hardly visible and it says errors will be charged for. So if you find your air time has disappeared, don't wonder why. These ads should be stopped or hidden costs high-lighted!

● How can we call ourselves proudly South African when we expect others to pick up our trash after a fireworks display? Or our soft drink and liquor bottles at the beach after a day in the sun? If you can carry your stuff to picnic or braai spots or the beach, why don't you take them home with you in the same bags? Stop complaining that there aren't enough bins. We always take a few black bags with us wherever we go and take our trash home with us.

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● Why does Pick n Pay not just lower their prices at the shelf instead of including coupons in newspapers since it does not benefit the poor as they do not buy newspapers. In any case, many shoppers usually forget their coupons at home, so who actually benefits?

And finally

Thanks go out to all the police and other essential services people who were on duty over the festive season. Your work and efforts resulted in a very pleasant and generally crime-free period. We could finally have some fun in the sun. The only people complaining are those who drink too much and normally spoil it for others. So thanks very much. The majority of families are truly grateful and wish you all well in 2009.

Why so long to notice Hamas's actions?

While being ever mindful of the emotion attached to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and the partisan nature of the divide, it is a mystery to me how nothing has been said about the hundreds of rockets that have been launched into Israeli territory from Gaza in the past year or so.

Not a word from the UN, the Arab League and those now shouting from the rooftops about Israeli atrocities. In the end it must be asked what Hamas thought the Israelis were going to do?

It seems surreal to suppose that Israel would do nothing. If you prod a lion with a sharpened stick over a protracted period the lion is eventually going to turn around and rip your head off!

Colin Bosman
Newlands

Really taking licence

On the October 13 my husband and I went to Gallow's Hill to renew our driver's licences.

We were pleasantly surprised at how efficiently and courteously we were attended to. Four weeks later, as promised, the licences were ready and I collected them.

Imagine my surprise when on December 30 my husband received a card from Gallow's Hill telling him to collect his licence.

The card was date-stamped October 14 and the post stamp was dated January 2, 2009!

Ruth
Camps Bay

Tired of mail tampering

Of about a dozen letters I mailed some time ago, not a single reply. Almost another dozen "Did you receive...?" Not a single reply.

This smacks of deliberate interference with private mail and I am sick and tired of it.

I intend to report it to the Universal Postal Union and would like any other evidence of mail tampering. Contact 021 461 2169.

R Pentecost
Gardens

Play the game, SABC3

I would like to know if SABC television is controlled by the government.

If so, why are they depriving the underprivileged people of watching sports on the SABC3 channel between 1am and 5am?

Could anyone please enlighten me?

Jeff Brown
Bishop Lavis



GAZA STRIP

Chip 01-01-09

Mid-East war is not simply a case of right vs wrong

War is an abomination that nobody should ever dare boast about. That's why war, no matter where it occurs, tears at the heart, especially where the innocent are concerned. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is no different. What is indeed different is the number of hypocrites who come out of the shadows to condemn Israel.

Like millions of non-Muslims across the world, I have an extremely difficult time understanding the psychology and behaviour around radical Islam. And sadly it is they who call the shots in Islamic countries. Israel is by no means innocent. But radicals push even those of us who wish to stand over the cultural precipice.

To Muslims, Israel is wrong and they are right. Of course this is nonsense. Most Muslims understand the state of Israel merely came about in 1948. Before that, so they assume, all the Middle East belonged to Muslims. But this is not what history says. History tells us there was a Jewish state 3 000 years ago peopled by famous

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A full address and daytime telephone number are required. The letter editor reserves the right to edit or reject.

characters whose names still live in the religions of today.

There's Moses, the law-giver, and Abraham, the great patriarch and father of Jews, Christians and Muslims; King David, of whom we have not only Solomon but that Hebrew rabbi who changed the face of the western and indeed eastern world: Yeshua (Joshua in English) but better

known by his Greek name, Jesus. If Muslims denounce the state of Israel and wish it no longer exists then they should also denounce these Jews who are part of their Qur'an. Of course such a concept is madness. But madness is indeed what we are dealing with here. Either Israel has legitimacy or it has not. If not, then the Qur'an must be denied.

For the SA Council of Churches the same logic applies. It can't willy-nilly condemn Israel yet forget which God they pretend to worship. Jesus was a Jew, not a follower of Christianity. Surely these learned men of the Bible should know this. But the SACC makes itself guilty of gross hypocrisy and indeed blasphemy by equally calling for Israel to be reprimanded.

Where was the SACC when thousands of Zimbabweans and other victims of war were butchered? Where are they to chastise the ANC for siding with tyrants and dictators? This sickening bunch of clerics should rend their clothes and hide under rocks.

They disgrace their congregations and are an insult to the God of Israel.

By all means let us criticise. But let's be fair too. Radical Islam is as much to blame for the terrible war. Eight hundred missiles were fired into Israel in one month. Multiply this by 10 in one year and then ask yourself if this is not sheer madness and gross irresponsibility. What nation can continue to endure such relentless provocation?

By firing their missiles from within densely populated areas, surely Hamas should know what the consequences of Israeli retaliation would be. Yet they persist in exposing their women and children to death. What madness is this? Where are the demonstrations in the Muslim world to tell Hamas to stop this insanity? Where are the Muslims to stand up for countless Islamic bombings of mainly innocent victims across the world?

CB Jantjies
Rugby

City takes cleaning services seriously

In response to Brian Cox's letter ("Litter in public places is an embarrassment", Cape Argus, December 30), I can confirm the following services are in place with regard to the areas and events he refers to.

All four Clifton beaches are cleaned from 4am until 11pm on an ongoing basis during the festive period. Clifton First Beach has five bins on the walkway down, Second Beach has six dustbins on the walkway, Third Beach has 12 bins and Fourth Beach has 20 bins on the walkway. This is more than sufficient for the volume of litter, especially considering that they are serviced numerous times in the day.

We do not put bins in the sand on any beach as our studies have proved that this results in even more litter on

the beach. We do ensure there are sufficient bins on the periphery of all beaches, on the roadsides leading to the beaches and the parking areas. It's a simple matter of taking your litter to the bins on the way back from the beach to your vehicle.

With regard to the cleaning of the CBD and in particular the night market area, the first shift starts at 4.30am and the last shift ends at 4 the next morning. That is almost 24 hours of cleaning. In the area referred to, there are 18 permanent litter bins. An extra 16 770 large rubbish bins were placed in strategic places for use by the vendors and public. Over and above that an extra 20 100 litter bins were placed in the area. This is an exceptional cleaning service and certainly nothing

to be embarrassed about.

In the Golden Acre area, the litter blows from above on the station deck. There is a wind litter collection point just outside the Golden Acre. Over and above the regular services in place, the station deck is cleaned every evening when all the traders and taxis have left. The Golden Acre area is cleaned again during the evening and night as well as the early morning. I can assure Mr Cox that our mayor takes the issue of cleanliness of the city extremely seriously and is often personally involved in inspecting and problem-solving any issues in this area.

Claire McKinnon
Manager: Area Cleaning
City of Cape Town

Burden of doctor's bills

Although it is still too early to get excited about the appointment of our new Minister of Health, Barbara Hogan, her enlightened views, after the bizarre ideas of her predecessor, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, are like a breath of fresh air.

Hogan must have many problems on her slate, but one she must look into as soon as possible is seeing that every South African is covered medically, and people who belong to medical schemes must be better protected. I have been faithfully paying my medical costs for about 10 years.

Recently, my son insisted I get on to a medical aid scheme and I joined a hospital scheme. However, I was astounded when I discovered that the doctors can charge fees that are much

more than the recommended fees. I consider myself fortunate that I have only been to doctors a few times over the past years and I am not on medication of any sort.

But I know of people (mainly elderly) who are really devastated after having to go to hospital for an operation and having to spend a small fortune on medication. I find it hard to understand why some doctors can accept the rates that are recommended by the medical schemes, yet others charge much higher. I believe that Hogan will do a wonderful deed if she looks into this matter, where many are ruined through ill health.

Max Greenstein
Sea Point



SMS
FEEDBACK
SMS your views to 32027
Each SMS costs R1

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