



# GLASNIK

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## VOICE of B'nai B'rith „Gavro Schwartz“ Croatia

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## Uz petnaesti broj BB Glasnika



**P**oštovane čitateljice i čitatelji,

**B**'nai B'rith loža "Gavro Schwartz" održala je 3. lipnja 2019. svoju Izbornu skupštinu. Na njoj je izabran novi upravni odbor. Za novog predsjednika izabran je Ninoslav Perović. Dopredsjednik i tajnik ostali su Mjenko Bernfest i Mira Altarac Hadji-Ristić. Novom upravnom odboru želimo uspješan rad

**P**'okrenuli smo ove godine susrete Židova iz Hrvatske i okolnih zemalja. Zamisao je, da se svake godine u mjesecu svibnju održi sastanak članova židovskih zajednica s ovog područja, jer njih veže dugogodišnja suradnja i prijateljstvo. Te susrete nastojimo održati u mjestima koja imaju objekte od značajne za židovsku kulturu. Ove je godine izabrana Subotica, grad u kojem je nedavno obnovljena velika i značajna sinagoga. Uz odličnu suradnju s Jevrejskom opštinom Subotica, ovaj susret imao je veliki uspjeh i na njega je došlo oko 80 članova iz pet zemalja. Donosimo članak o ovom susretu.

**Z**a Hrvatsku i njene odnose s Izraelom u prošlom je mjesecu bio značajan službeni posjet predsjednice Kolinde Grabar Kitarović. Taj posjet kao i izjave koje je predsjednica dala tom prilikom bili su predmet mnogih rasprava u hrvatskim medijima. U ovom broju donosimo osvrt na ovaj posjet. Također donosimo intervju što ga je tim povodom dao veleposlanik Države Izrael u Hrvatskoj, gospodin Ilan Mor.

**O**ve godine navršava se 20 godina obilježavanja Europskog dana židovske kulture. Ovaj otvoreni dan židovskih udruga pokrenuo je baš B'nai B'rith Europe. Zadovoljstvo nam je sjetiti se, da su se židovske općine Hrvatske rano uključile u ovu akciju i da se danas ovaj dan početkom rujna obilježava u svim većim židovskim općinama u Hrvatskoj te da postoji dobra suradnja s europskom centralom koja potiče ovaj događaj. O obilježavanju ovoga dana u proteklim godinama u Hrvatskoj donosimo članak Nives Beissmann, koordinadora ovih događaja u Hrvatskoj

**T**akođer donosimo sjećanja Izaka Druttera na svog ujaka, liječnika Jozefa Konfortija, koji je pobjegao iz zloglasnog logora Jasenovac.

*Darko Fischer, editor of "Voice of BB"*

### ***Editorial to the fifteenth issue of The Voice of BB***



**D**ear readers,

**B**'nai B'rith Lodge "Gavro Schwartz" on its electoral convention from June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019 elected a new board. The new president of the lodge is Mr. Ninoslav Perović. The vice-president and secretary are again Mr. Miljenko Bernfest and Mrs. Mira Altarac-HadžiRistic. We wish many a success to our new leadership.

**O**ur Lodge initiated meetings of Jews from Croatia and surrounding countries. Our idea is to organize gatherings every year in May for Jewish people who share a long lasting friendship and cooperation. We will try to organize these gatherings in different places with some attractive Jewish history and objects. This year we chose Subotica in Serbia, the town with recently refurbished grand synagogue. With an excellent cooperation from the local Jewish community of Subotica, this gathering was a memorable experience and success. There were around 80 visitors from five different surrounding countries. You can find the article about this event in this issue of "Voice".

**R**ecent visit of Croatian president Mrs. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic to Israel was important for Croatia and its relationship with Israel. Both the visit and the statement of Croatian president were much commented in Croatian media. You will find a review of this visit in this issue of Voice. Also we present the interview Mr. Ilan Mor, Israeli ambassador to Croatia recently gave to a Croatian paper.

**I**t is 20 years since B'nai B'rith Europe started with European day of Jewish Culture. It is an open day of Jewish institutions in many countries. It is our pleasure to remind that Jewish communities of Croatia joined this manifestation very early and now this day is marked on first Sunday in September in several Croatian towns with a significant Jewish community. There is also a good cooperation with European headquarters which coordinate the activity. Mrs. Nives Beissmann, Croatian coordinator for this open day manifestation writes in our "Voice" about this.

**A**lso in this issue you can find a text from Mr. Isak Drutter. He is writing about his uncle dr. Jozef Konforti, a man who escaped the notorious Jasenovac concentration camp.

## Šabat u Subotici

Na poticaj B'nai B'rith lože "Gavro Schwartz" iz Zagreba i u organizaciji Jevrejske opštine Subotica, u Subotici je od 17. do 19. svibnja održan susret Židova iz Srbije, Hrvatske i okolnih zemalja. Na zadovoljstvo organizatora na ovom susretu okupilo se oko 70 učesnika, uglavnom starije generacije, ali željnih susreta s vršnjacima i razmjene uspomena koje ih vežu u razdoblju duljem od 60 godina. Veličanstvena zgrada nedavno obnovljene subotičke sinagoge bila je doživljaj za sve.

Organizatori su priredili privlačan program sa židovskim sadržajima: doček Šabata, nekoliko koncerata, druženja uz šetnje Suboticom, ručke i večere.

Susret je počeo u petak poslije podne okupljanjem u prostorijama Jevrejske opštine Subotica. Slijedila je vjerska ceremonija u "maloj sinagogi" koju je vodio Robert Kovač. Zatim je slijedio violinistički koncert Zoltana Maga i njegovog orkestra u velikoj sinagogi. Koncert nije bio prvotno planiran, no kako je ovaj poznati mađarski orkestar organizirao koncert za građane Subotice u prostoru vrlo akustične sinagoge, gosti "Šabata u Subotici" mogli su mu prisustvovati. U podužem nastupu violinisti iz Budimpešte pokazali su raskoš svoje glazbene virtuoznosti. Glazbene točke bile su popraćene i objašnjenjima na mađarskom jeziku, te su

posjetitelji koji ne znaju mađarski bili uskraćeni za razumijevanje izjava kojima se voditelj orkestra obraćao publici.

Nakon ovog koncerta, u prostoriji Jevrejske opštine Subotica održana je večera i druženje učesnika "Šabata u Subotici". U pozdravnim govorima predsjednik subotičke Jevrejske opštine J. Štajnfeld i predsjednik B'nai B'rith udruge Hrvatske D. Fischer naglasili su zadovoljstvo što je organiziran ovakav susret. Potvrdili su mišljenje sudionika, da su ovakvi

susreti potrebni jer nastavljaju višegodišnju tradiciju sastanaka Židova iz država bivše Jugoslavije. Iako se ove male židovske zajednice sada nalaze i djeluju u zasebnim državama, njihovi članovi imaju osjećaj pripadnosti istoj skupini jer ih veže zajednička prošlost, tradicija i privrženost židovskim vrijednostima. Istaknuta je i želja da ovakvi susreti postanu tradicionalni. B'nai B'rith Gavro, Schwartz već radi na tomu da se ta želja ispuni već iduće godine.

Turistički obilazak Subotice priređen je idućeg dana prije podne. Pod vrlo stručnim vodstvom Branke Banjanin i Roberta Kovača učesnici su najprije razgledali veličanstvenu zgradu subotičke sinagoge. Učesnici su dobili detaljna objašnjenja o građevinskim i umjetničkim osobinama ovog sakralnog objekta, kako njegovog vanjskog izgleda tako i unutrašnjosti sinagoge. Uslijedio je obilazak Subotice sa zaustavljanjem na mjestima i ispred zgrada značajnih za židovsko nasljeđe Subotice. Druženje učesnika istoga dana nastavilo se na ručku u Jevrejskoj opštini Subotica. Nakon slobodnog poslije podne učesnici su se opet okupili na terasi hotela



**Unutrašnjost subotičke sinagoge**



**Koncert Stefana Sablića**



Galleria na koncertu i večeri. Sudionici su uz glazbu sastava Gabora Lendela mogli uživati i u krasnoj panorami Subotice koja se u večernjim satima nudila s terase hotela.

Posljednjeg prije podnevna ovog susreta održan je vrlo zanimljiv, poučan i inspirativan koncert. Nama dobro poznati glazbenik iz Beograda, Stefan Sablić, uz sviranje na gitari i pjesmu izveo je koncert i predavanje o sefardskoj glazbi. Oduševljeni gledatelji imali su priliku slušati - pa i zapjevati - dobro im poznate sefardske pjesme uz vrlo poučna objašnjenja beogradskog umjetnika, kojega su slušatelji ispratili zaslužnim aplauzom.

Rastanak sudionika protekao je uz želje za ponavljanjem ovakvog događaja.

*Darko Fischer:*

### **Shabat in Subotica**

Vom 15. bis 17. Mai 2019 fand in Subotica, Serbien ein Treffen von Juden aus dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien

statt. Die Initiative für das Treffen, gab die B'nei B'rith Loge aus Zagreb, die das Treffen gemeinsam mit der Jüdischen Gemeinde Subotica organisiert hat. Zur Freude der Organisatoren versammelten sich über 70 Personen, um gemeinsame Erinnerungen von mehr als 60 Jahren miteinander zu teilen. Die prächtige, vor kurzem renovierte Synagoge von Subotica, war ein attraktiver Anziehungspunkt für alle.



**Die Synagoge Subotica**

Nachdem sich die Teilnehmer am Freitag Nachmittag versammelt hatten, feierten sie gemeinsam den Shabat Gottesdienst in der

„Kleinen Synagoge“. Danach besuchte die Gruppe ein Violinkonzert des Budapest Gypsy Orkestras in der neu renovierten „Großen Synagoge“. Das Konzert wurde von der ungarischen Gemeinde von Subotica organisiert.

Bei dem darauf folgenden Abendessen, zeigten sich der Präsident der Kultusgemeinde von Subotica Josip Steinfeld und der Präsident von B'nei B'rith Kroatien Darko Fischer zufrieden, dass es gelungen ist, das Treffen zu organisieren.

Die jüdische Gemeinde von Jugoslawien hatte seit 1954, bis zum Ausbruch der Kriege im ehemaligen Jugoslawien 1991 regelmässige kulturelle und gesellschaftliche Treffen. Bei diesen gab es neben Möglichkeiten gemeinsam Zeit zu verbringen, auch zahlreiche Konzerte, Vorträge und Ausstellungen jüdischer Kulturschaffender des ehemaligen Jugoslawiens.

Die Tradition wurde dann nach dem Krieg ab 1996 weitergeführt, bis sie 2013 mangels Finanzierung wieder einschlof.

Das Treffen in Subotica möchte die Kontinuität wieder aufleben lassen. Obwohl die Juden aus dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien seit dem Zerfall des Staatenbunds in den einzelnen Staaten leben, haben ihre Mitglieder oft ein starkes Gefühl der Zusammengehörigkeit. Sie teilen Vergangenheit, Kultur, Traditionen und jüdische Werte.

Die Organisatoren bereiteten ein attraktives Programm mit jüdischen Inhalten: Eine Stadtbesichtigung mit dem Schwerpunkt jüdisches Subotica, insbesondere auch die Besichtigung der 1901 erbauten und vor kurzem renovierten „Großen Synagoge“. Die Synagoge im Art Nouveau Stil gilt als zweitgrößte Europas. Seit ihrer Renovierung, wird sie von der Stadt Subotica für kulturelle und gesellschaftliche Ereignisse genützt.

Am letzten Vormittag gab es dann ein sehr interessantes und lehrreiches Konzert des Kantors der Synagoge von Belgrad Stefan Sablic. Der Künstler brachte den Teilnehmern die Tradition der sephardischen Musik näher.

Die Veranstaltung endete mit dem Wunsch in Zukunft weitere ähnliche Treffen zu organisieren. In diesem Sinne: Nächstes Jahr in Subotica!

*Nives Beissmann.\**

## **20 godina obilježavanja Europskog dana židovske kulture**

Europski dan židovske kulture (EDJC) počeo se obilježavati još davne 1999. godine, u početku kao mala manifestacija predviđena da stavi naglasak na bogato naslijeđe koja je židovska zajednica ostavila u



**Dan židovskog naslijeđa, Osijek 2004, ples djece**

europkim zemljama, ali i da pomogne u borbi protiv kolektivnog zaboravljanja te zajednice. EDJC su pokrenuli B'nai B'rit Europe, Savez europskih židovskih općina i Udruženje španjolskih sefarda. Ove organizacije su u svrhu što bolje organizacije i predstavljanja židovske kulture u Europi, formirale zajedničku organizaciju pod nazivom AEPJ (Europsko udruženje za promociju Judaizma).

U početku se EDJC obilježavao u svega nekoliko zemalja, međutim, kako je prepoznat kao izuzetna manifestacija koja javnosti pokazuje raznolikost i bogatstvo židovske kulture i tradicije sa čvrstom namjerom promocije dijaloga i koegzistencije kroz razne aktivnosti koje se nude, proširio se kroz cijelu Europu. Tako se prošle godine obilježavao u 28

zemlje, u preko 400 europskih gradova. Posjetitelji, kojih je ukupno bilo preko 180 000, sudjelovali su u preko 1000 različitih aktivnosti.

Posebnost ove manifestacije je činjenica da se održava u svim gradovima na isti dan (prva nedjelja u rujnu), da postoji zajednička tema koje se manje-više drže svi učesnici i koja je drugačija svake godine, kao i to da je manifestacija koordinirana, te se o njoj skupljaju podaci na jednom središnjem mjestu. Moram

napomenuti da je ideja zajedničke teme pokrenuta tek od 2004. godine. U nekim je zemljama ovaj događaj, poznat još kao i Dan otvorenih vrata, evoluirao od jednodnevnog do jednodnevnog, a negdje traje čak i mjesec dana. Također, broj gradova i broj aktivnosti raste svake godine. Ove će se godine uključiti židovske zajednice i organizacije iz čak 34 europske države, pripremajući pregršt različitih aktivnosti i događanja, počevši od



**Izložba na Dan židovskog naslijeđa, Osijek 2010**

otvorenih vrata u sinagogama, grobljima i muzejima, preko izložbi i koncerata, pa sve do kušanja hrane, kazališnih predstava, projekcija filmova, promocija knjiga, raznih radionica i igraonica za djecu.

Prije četiri godine u manifestaciju se uključila i Izraelska nacionalna knjižnica, pripremajući materijale vezane za teme EDJC-a i šaljući ih svim koordinadorima, pomažući na taj način da aktivnosti budu još raznovrsnije.

U Hrvatskoj, najdulju tradiciju obilježavanja EDJC-a ima osječka židovska općina, jer je Osijek prihvatio ovu inicijativu još 2001. godine. Ubrzo se priključio Zagreb, a nakon toga Split, Rijeka i Koprivnica.

Ove se godine Europski dan židovske kulture zvanično obilježava 1. rujna, premda svaka europska židovska zajednica ima mogućnost da odabere i neki drugi datum, ukoliko joj više odgovara. To su iskoristile neke naše općine, pomičući događaj na koji tjedan kasnije, prvenstveno zbog turističke sezone i godišnjih odmora. Ovogodišnja tema je prvotno trebala biti naziva *Inovacije*. Kasnije se ipak odlučilo da bude *20 godina EDJC-a*, dajući na taj način priliku onim organizacijama koje su uključene već dugi niz godina, da naprave svojevrsnu retrospektivu – šetnju kroz prethodne teme. Teme su tijekom godina bile zaista raznovrsne – Judaizam i edukacija, Židovska kuhinja, Europske rute židovskog naslijeđa, Svjedočanstva, Glazba, Židovski praznici i tradicija, Umjetnost i judaizam, Gledajući prema budućnosti, Židovski humor, Židovsko naslijeđe i priroda, Žene u judaizmu, Mostovi, Židovski jezici, Dijaspore i Storytelling (Pripovijedanje).

Danas u Europi živi oko 1.5 milijuna Židova. Sastavni su dio multi-kulturalne Europe i aktivni sudionici u svim aspektima javnog života u zemljama u kojima žive. Doprinos Židova u umjetnosti i znanosti u Europi nesmanjeno se nastavlja, kao što je bio slučaj i u svim prethodnim godinama i stoljećima. Međutim, sjećanje na sve nemile događaje u dvadesetom stoljeću još uvijek postoji, te time raste i potreba za stalnom tolerancijom i međusobnim razumijevanjem između židovskih zajednica i njihovih susjeda.

Ovogodišnje obilježavanje jubilarnog EDJC-a je jako bitno, posebice zbog jačanja ekstremne desnice širom Europe. Svakodnevno se suočavamo s raznim antisemitskim ispadima i napadima u sve više europskih gradova. Nadajmo se da će promocija židovskog naslijeđa i kulture pomoći u sprječavanju širenja stereotipa, predrasuda i netolerancije.

\* *Nives Beissmann je koordinador Dana židovskog naslijeđa za Hrvatsku*

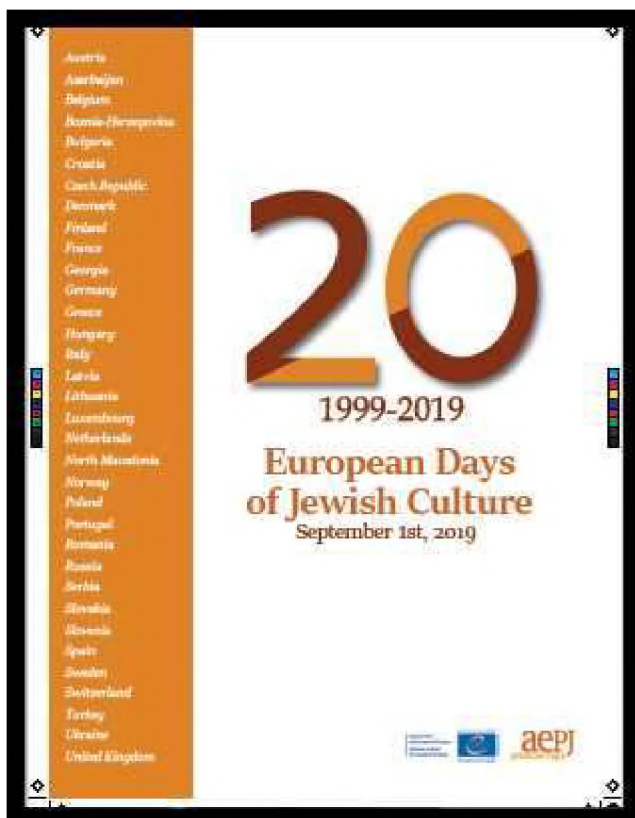


## 20 Years celebrating European Day of Jewish Culture

The European Day of Jewish Culture (EDJC) started as an activity as early as in 1999. In the beginning, as a small manifestation, it emphasized the rich heritage of Jewish community in European countries, but also its goal was to help fighting the collective forgetting of the community. The EDJC was launched by the B'nai B'rit Europe, the Union of European Jewish Communities and the Spanish Sepharda Association. These organizations have formed a joint organization called AEPJ (European Association for Promotion of Judaism) for the purpose of making better organization and representation of Jewish culture in Europe.

Initially, EDJC was marked only in several countries. However, it was recognized as an exceptional manifestation showings diversities and richness of Jewish culture and tradition with the solid intent of promoting dialogue and co-existence through various activities. It was soon spread throughout Europe. Last

year it was celebrated in 28 countries, in over 400 European cities. The visitors, which were in total over 180 000, participated in more than 1000 different activities.



The specific feature of the manifestation is the fact that it is held in all cities on the same day (first Sunday in September), there is a common theme all participants present and the theme is different every year. The manifestation is coordinated, and results evaluated in a unique European center. The idea of a common theme was launched only in 2004. In some countries, this event, known as the Open Door day, evolved from one-day to one-week, and somewhere lasting even a month. Also, the number of cities and the number of activities grew every year. This year, Jewish communities and organizations from even 34 European countries will be involved, preparing a handful of different activities and events, starting with open doors in synagogues, cemeteries and museums, through exhibitions and concerts, including also food tasting, theatrical performances, film screenings, book promotions,

various workshops and playroom for children.

Four years ago, the Israeli National Library joined this event, preparing materials related to the topics of EDJC and sending them to all coordinators, helping to make the activities more varied.

In Croatia, the longest tradition of marking the EDJC has the Jewish Community Osijek, they started this initiative in 2001. The initiative was soon joined in Zagreb, followed by Split, Rijeka and Koprivnica.

This year, the European Day of Jewish Culture is scheduled for September 1<sup>st</sup>, but it is left for communities themselves to choose a different dates. Some communities in Croatia (Rijeka, Zagreb) will postpone their EDJC due to a long lasting summer vacation season. This year's theme was originally supposed to be "innovations". Later, however, it was decided to be 20 years of EDJC, giving the opportunity to those organizations that have been involved for many years, to make a kind of retrospective – a walk through previous topics. Over the years, topics have been quite varied – Judaism and education, Jewish cuisine, European routes of Jewish heritage,

testimonies, music, Jewish holidays and traditions, art and Judaism, looking towards the future, Jewish humor, Jewish Heritage and nature, women in Judaism, bridges, Jewish languages, Diaspora and Storytelling .

Today, about 1.5 million Jews live in Europe. They are an integral part of the multi-cultural Europe and active participants in all aspects of public life in the countries in which they live. The contribution of Jews to art and science in Europe continues undiminished, as has been the case in all previous years and centuries. However, the memory of all the unhappy events of the twentieth century still exists, and the need for constant tolerance and mutual understanding between Jewish communities and their neighbors is still very important.

This year's marking of the EDJC Jubilee is very important, especially because of the strengthening of the extreme right across Europe. Every day we face various anti-Semitic outings and attacks in many European cities. Let us hope that the promotion of Jewish heritage and culture will help to prevent the spread of stereotypes, prejudices and intolerance.

*\* Mrs. Nives Beissmann is EDJC national coordinator for Croatia*

*N. Perović i D. Fischer:*

### **Posjet predsjednice Kolinde Grabar Kitarović Izraelu**

Predsjednica Republike Hrvatske Kolinda Grabar Kitarović posjetila je Izrael od 27. do 29. srpnja i tom prilikom po drugi put je posjetila i Yad Vashem.



„Izražavam svoju duboku tugu zbog žrtava Holokausta u Hrvatskoj, Europi i cijelom svijetu i duboko suosjećanje s obiteljima žrtava i njihovim potomcima. Upravo ovdje još jednom naglašavam da se holokaust nikad neće i ne smije zaboraviti. Te dalje: “Kao predsjednica Hrvatske, zemlje utemeljene na antifašizmu i Domovinskom ratu posebice sam ponosna na sve Hrvate – pravednike među narodima - i mnoge druge Hrvate koji su u tami rata i neizrecivih zločina bili simbol svjetla i hrabrosti“

Nažalost, uz ovu ovu vrijednu posjetu imali smo prilike čitati i drugačije izjave. Komentari na intervju izraelskog veleposlanika u Hrvatskoj Ilana Mora (pogledajte slijedeći članak), objavljenog na jednom internetskom portalu bili su anti-semitski, protu-Izraelski i krajnje neprihvatljivi. Nekoliko komentatora pokušalo je prikazati NDH kao vlast u kojoj su učestvovali i Židovi, "jer je određeni broj Židova služio u Hrvatskoj vojsci", pa je čak i Pavelićeva žena navodno bila židovskog porijekla. Sve to je potpuno izmišljeno i neosnovano. Također, (standardno) optuživati Izrael za "genocid prema Palestincima", što su komentatori navodili, je krajnje neprimjereno, pogotovo kada to upućuje netko iz Hrvatske.

Nadamo se, da pisci ovakvih komentara nisu reprezentativni uzorak hrvatskog javnog mnijenja. Nažalost postoji i širi kontekst, kao na primjer stalni postav izložbe u Jasenovcu – najvećem koncentracionom logoru izvan granica Trećeg Reicha, koji predstavlja taj logor više kao radni logor a manje kao logor smrti; nadalje, dovoljno je sjetiti se i izjave u Hrvatskom Saboru izrečene od saborske zastupnice Brune Esig da je 9. Maj 1945. dan poraza a ne pobjede za Hrvatsku, dovoljno je sjetiti se ustaških simbola svjesno i relativno nedavno postavljenih u neposrednoj blizini logora smrti pa da se jasno zaključa da se neki krugovi u Hrvatskoj još ne

mogu, suočiti sa zločinima u Drugom svjetskom ratu te jasno prihvatiti odgovornost za ustaške zločine koji su u ime Hrvatske i hrvatskog naroda počinjeni između 1941. i 1945.

Ostaje međutim nada će se govor gospođe Grabar Kitarović kao i jasni stavovi većine političkih aktera u Republici Hrvatskoj jednog dana pretočiti u hrvatsku stvarnost.

*N. Perovic, D. Fischer:*

### **The visit to Israel by the Croatian president Mrs. Kolinda Grabar Kitarovic**

The President of the Republic of Croatia visited Israel between 27th and 29th of July. At this occasion Mrs. Grabar Kitarovic visited for the second time Yad Vashem.

„I express my deep sadness to the victims of holocaust in Croatia, Europe and the whole world as well as my deep compassion with the victims’ families and descendants. Right here I once again emphasize that holocaust cannot and must not be forgotten. As President of Croatia, a country that is founded in antifascism and Homeland War (one of the Balkan wars in 1990s) I am specifically proud with all Croatian Righteous Among the Nations - and many other Croats who were a symbol of light and braveness during the dark times of war and unspeakable crimes “



Unfortunately, parallel to the news about this respectable visit and statements, we witnessed quite opposite comments related to the interview given on a Croatian internet portal by his Excellency, the ambassador of Israel in Croatia, Mr. Ilan Mor (see the next article on this interview). These comments were anti-Semitic, anti-Israel and obnoxious. Some comments tried to present the so-called NDH (the Croatian puppet state during the Second WW) as a regime in which Jews took part because “a number of them were drafted in the NDH army”. Even the wife of the NDH president - Mrs. Pavelic – was apparently of Jewish descent. All of this, including many other comments were baseless and invented. The (standard) accusations of Israel for genocide against Palestinians was utterly inappropriate particularly when coming from somebody in Croatia.

We do hope that the writers of such comments are not a representative sample of Croatian public opinion. Unfortunately, there is a wider context that cannot be ignored, such as permanent exhibition in Jasenovac – the biggest concentration camp in Europe outside the borders of Third Reich - that presents the death camp more as a labor camp; or the recent statement in Croatian Parliament made by MP Ms. Bruna Esig that the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1945 is not a Victory Day for Croatia but a day of defeat; the recent (and authorized) installations of fascist ustasha symbols in the vicinity of both Jasenovac and Jadovno camps also leads to the conclusion that there are forces in Croatia that still cannot confront the crimes done in the Second WW and accept the responsibility for the Ustasa crimes that were done in the name of Croatia and the Croats between 1941 and 1945.

However, there is hope that the speeches like one at Yad Vashem by Mrs. Grabar Kitarovic as well as clear statements and positions of the majority of political parties will one day be transferred into Croatian reality.

*Darko Fischer:*

## Sjećanje na Jadovno

Hrvatska marionetska država od 1941. do 1945., groteskno nazvana Nezavisna država Hrvatska ili skraćeno NDH, je gotovo odmah po svom nastanku 1941. počela uspostavljati koncentracione logore. Važan cilj državne politike je bio pročistiti hrvatsku naciju, što je značilo ukloniti ili bolje rečeno uništiti što je više moguće Srba, Židova, Roma i komunista. Ova tužna sakupljališta ljudi koje je trebalo uništiti nastala su, među ostalim i u prelijepim krajolicima Hrvatskog Primorja i na padinama planine Velebita u Lici. Geološki su to krajevi puni rasjeka, pukotina i jama koje su u vrijeme postojanja logora korištene kao masovne grobnice mučenih i ubijenih logoraša, a neki su u njih bacani još živi.

U spomen žrtvama Jadovna neposredno uz najveću, Šaranovu jamu, srpski su svećenici održali potresno opijelo uz molitve i pojanja. Zbor koji je otpjevao pučke pjesme nastale u tom vremenu dodatno je atmosferu napunio tugom. Hrvatski rabin Luciano Moše Prelavić izmolio je tradicionalne židovske molitve uz sjećanja na židovske stradalnike ovog i mnogih drugih stratišta Židova u vrijeme Holokausta.



Na ceremoniji je bilo mnogo uzvanika, među kojima uz predstavnike Židova i izraelski veleposlanik u Hrvatskoj Ilan Mor, koji su na spomenik žrtvama položili vijence.

Okupljenim gostima, antifašistima, potomcima žrtava i pripadnicima Srba u Hrvatskoj obratili su se Franjo Habulin, predsjednik Udruženja antifašista Hrvatske, Ognjen Kraus, predsjednik Koordinacije židovskih općina Hrvatske i Milorad Pupovac, predsjednik Srpskog narodnog vijeća. U obraćanjima je istaknuto kako je važno ne zaboraviti žrtve ustaškog režima NDH i tako spriječiti da se bilo što slično ikad ponovi. Nažalost, nisu mogli zaobići činjenicu da u današnjoj Hrvatskoj nacionalni sentiment raste te da se ustaškim zločinima umanjuje značaj, a katkada se čak glorificiraju kao i njihovi simpatizeri. Iako ima pozitivnih pomaka u osudi mračne hrvatske prošlosti, sadašnje vlasti su suzdržane u suzbijanju procesa ustaške rehabilitacije.

**Jadovno, spomenik žrtvama**

Važno je spomenuti se svakog pojedinca koji je stradao kao nevina žrtva onih koji su začeli zločinačke ideologije i u ime njih mučili i ubijali. Samo tako možemo spriječiti da se ne ponovi mračan period hrvatske povijesti i osigura miran život našim potomcima. Bilo bi dobro kad bi naše potomke mogli naučiti i našim primjerom pokazati da su tolerancija i prihvaćenje raznolikosti među ljudima preduvjet za sretan život.



## Remembering Jadovno

Almost immediately after its inception in the summer of 1941 the Croatian puppet state, grotesquely named the Independent State of Croatia or abridged NDH, started to erect concentration camps. The important goal of the state's policy was to purify the nation, namely to remove or rather exterminate as much as possible Serbs, Jews, Roma people, and communists. Sadly, many camps were scattered around the beautiful country side scenery of Croatia in the region of Croatian sea side (Hrvatsko Primorje) and on slopes of the mountain Velebit in the region of Lika. There, the geologically karstic area is full of big gorges and caves – pits, which were used as common burying places for tortured and killed inmates of concentration camps - apparently some people were thrown in the pits alive.



**Jewish delegation laying wreaths**

One group of those pits in Lika is called Jadovno. After the World War II as late as 1988 a monument commemorating the victims of the fascist NDH regime was erected, the author being the sculptor Ratko Petric. Unfortunately it was destroyed in the Homeland War (one of the wars fought in ex-Yugoslavia in the nineties) along with many others monuments that were either marking anti-fascist movements or the victims of fascism. It was rebuilt in 2011. From then the 24<sup>th</sup> of June was designated as the “Day of Remembrance of Jadovno Camp” when a commemoration ceremony is traditionally

held. The organization of this year memorial was trusted with the local Serb National Council, the Coordination of Jewish Communities in Croatia, the Antifascist Veteran Ligue, and the Eparchy of Gornji Karlovac.

Next to the biggest cave, honoring the victims of Jadovno the Serbian orthodox priests gave a poignant religious ceremony, which was followed by a chorus singing folk songs of the period. The atmosphere was overwhelmed with sadness. The traditional Jewish prayers were prayed by Croatian chief rabbi Luciano Mose Prelavic who also referred to other execution sites where Jewish people fell victims in NDH during the time of Holocaust.

The ceremony was attended by many invitees, among them the Israeli ambassador Mr. Illan Mor, who laid wreaths on the site. In the speeches given for the occasion the president of Croatian Antifascist Association, Mr. Franjo Habulin, the president of Jewish Communities in Croatia, Mr. Ognjen Kraus, and the president of Serb National Council, Mr. Milorad Pupovac emphasized the importance of not forgetting the victims of the NDH ustase regime so it could never happen again in future. Sadly they could not omit the fact how in the present Croatian state the fascist sentiment is gaining ground, the crimes of that times are lessened or even glorified along with the sympathizers. Although there have been some positive turns in condemning the dark period in the history of Croatia, the present authorities are rather shy in repressing the process of ustashe rehabilitation.



**Religious ceremony at Jadovno**

Today we have to commemorate every single person who fell as innocent victim of those who foster ideologies created and perpetrated crimes. By doing so we should prevent the return of the darkest period in the history of Croatia and may ensure that our descendants have better and peaceful life. We should teach our descendant and give them our own examples that tolerance and acceptance of descent varieties should be a base for our

happier lives.

Isak Drutter:

## Sjećanje na dr. Jozefa Konfortija

Mnoge uspomene iz mojeg najranijeg djetinjstva i dječjačke dobi vezane su uz Travnik. Roditelji su mi bili iz Travnika. Do drugog svjetskog rata tamo su živjeli moj nono Moše, nona Sara i njihov sin Jozef sa suprugom Elzom. Osjećali su se starosjediocima Travnika. Njihov davni predak Jeruham Konforti doselio je u Travnik iz Novog Pazara zajedno s doseljenicima sefardima još 1805 godine.



**Autor Isak Drutter,  
nećak Jozefa  
Konfortija**

Nono je do umirovljenja bio trgovac žitaricama. Bio je dobro prihvaćen, kako među Jevrejima, tako i među ostalim Travničanima. Do Drugog svjetskog rata u Travniku nije bilo izraženije netrpeljivosti među pripadnicima različitih religija i nacionalnosti, pa tako niti antisemitizma.

Moj ujak Jozef bio je liječnik. Studij medicine i postdiplomsko usavršavanje iz interne medicine, kirurgije i akušerstva završio je u Beču. Oženio se bečankom Elzom Fischer. Pripravnički staž završio je u Zemaljskoj bolnici u Sarajevu. Zaposlio se kao glavni liječnik Okružnog ureda socijalnog osiguranja u Travniku. Afirmirao se kao izvrstan liječnik. Imao je preko deset tisuća tvorničkih radnika i drugih osiguranika o čijem zdravlju je brinuo. Posebno je bio cijenjen po tome što se odazivao na pozive u kućnu posjetu kada god je to trebalo, i danju i noću, po svakom vremenu. Siromašne je liječio besplatno.

Ugled je stekao i u jevrejskoj zajednici. Kao dijete išao je u elementarnu trogodišnju školu „Maldar“. U doba dječastva, a naročito za vrijeme studija u Beču, bio je vatreni cionist i kao takav bio je stalni član Akademskog cionističkog društva „Bar Giora“. Dvanaest godina do rata bio je predsjednik Jevrejske općine Travnik. Bio je angažiran i izvan jevrejske zajednice kao aktivan društveni radnik.

Osim Jozefa nona i nono imali su četiri kćerke i još jednog sina: Rifku–Bukas udatu Alkalaj u Sarajevu s tri sina i jednom kćerkom, Dianu udatu Kalderon u Beogradu s jednom kćerkom i jednim sinom, Reginu udatu Drutter (moju majku) u Šibeniku s jednom kćerkom i jednim sinom i Tildu udatu Musafija u Splitu s jednom kćerkom.



**Obitelj Konforti, Travnik 1939.**

Imali su još jednog sina Izaka, koji je umro je mlad, neposredno pred moje rođenje. Po njemu sam dobio ime. Možda me zato nono tako jako prigrlio pa se taj odnos razvio u veliku uzajamnu ljubav.

Provodili smo dane u bezbrižnoj igri i nestašlucima. Nona i nono su nas štitili od pokušaja naših majki da nas „stave u red“. Nono nam je posvećivao svu svoju ljubav i pažnju. Izvodio nas je u prelijepu prirodu, vodio nas

Kćerke i unučad none i nona okupljali su se gotovo svake godine u Travniku. Nona i naše mame imale su pune ruke posla da nas sve porazmjeste i zbrinu. Bile su sretne da su kao nekada opet u roditeljskom domu. Sada još i sa svojom djecom. Najsretniji smo bili mi, dječurlija.

fijakerom na teferiće, nudio nam razne bosanske gurmanluke. Četvrtkom i petkom mene je vodio na sajam i u templ.

Barba Jozef, kako smo ga zvali mi dalmatinski nećaci, imao je prekrasnu njemačku ovčarku Lolu. Bila je to moja velika ljubav. Lola me svako jutro u isto vrijeme budila, donosila svoju uzicu i požurivala da što prije izjurimo van. Do večeri igri nije bilo kraja, naročito kada je imala mladunčad.

Iz godine u godinu rasli smo i sazrijevali. Nestašne igre ustupale su mjesto novim, ozbiljnijim sadržajima. Kada sam već imao petnaestak godina poveo me barba Jozef sa sobom u jednu dosta udaljenu kućnu posjetu. Ovaj put došli su po doktora s dva osedlana konja kako bi mogao i mene povesti sa sobom. Jahali smo uz prekrasne proplanke podno Vlašić planine. Mali bosanski konjići sporo su se uspinjali. Nakon dugoga puta stigli smo do malene trošne kućice na osami. Jozef se dugo zadržao kod bolesnice. Siromaštvo koje smo tamo vidjeli potaklo nas je da na povratku razgovaramo o tome kako je moguće da usred tako lijepe i raskošne prirode ljudi žive u krajnjoj bijedi i siromaštvu. Barba Jozef mi je govorio o povijesnim uvjetima koji su do toga doveli kao i o primjerima što ih je sam upoznao kao liječnik. Godilo mi je to što mi se obraćao ne više kao djetetu, već kao zrelijem dječaku.

Bila je to posljednja godina naših travničkih susreta. Dolaskom ustaša na vlast stigle su patnje i stradanja travničkih Židova. Pljačkali su ih i maltretirali na svaki mogući način dok ih najzad nisu pokupili, utrpali u stočne vagone i otpremili u logor smrti Jasenovac. U prvom transportu 20. studenog 1941. odveli su sve odrasle muške osobe. Bilo ih je oko 90. Drugi transport u logor Jasenovac bio je mnogo strašniji. Po najžešćoj zimi 25. siječnja 1942. godine odveli su stočnim vagonima u Jasenovac 200 Jevreja – žena, staraca, djece i dojenčadi. Taj transport morao je Jozef pratiti kao liječnik. Trećim transportom 24. ožujka 1942. odveli su u Jasenovac i samoga Jozefa, njegovu majku, oca, suprugu i njenog oca. Majku i suprugu su odvojili, odveli u Novu Gradišku i ubili ih odmah po ulasku u logor. Jozefa i oca odveli su u logor Jasenovac i razdvojili ih. Jozefa su koristili kao liječnika za vlastite potrebe, a oca su kao taoca ostavili neko vrijeme na životu.

Jozef je i u logoru stekao reputaciju izvrsnog i savjesnog liječnika. Ustaše su vjerovala da će ih on savjesno liječiti, ma da je u njima mogao vidjeti samo svoje smrtne neprijatelje. Stekao je još veće povjerenje kada je otkrio i suzbio epidemiju tifusa koja je prijetila da se proširi i na ustaše. Zato su ga sve češće koristili za vlastito liječenje, kao i za liječenje bolesnika izvan logora. Jednom su ga čak povelili na mjesto borbe ustaša s partizanima da liječi ranjene ustaše.

Početak 1943. godine odveli su ga u Kupinec da liječi Vladka Mačeka i članove njegove obitelji. I tu je bio zatvoren i pod kontrolom stražara. Obećano mu je da će, dok je u Kupincu, moći jedanput mjesečno pisati ocu i primiti od njega pisma. Primio je samo jedno i više nijedno. Ubrzo saznao je da ni njegov otac više nije živ.

Dr. Jozefa su i iz Kupinca slali u kućne posjete. Jednog dana poslali su ga u pratnji stražara u neko selo k bolesnoj ženi mlinara. Kada je trebalo da se bolesnica skine do pojasa, stražar je morao izaći iz sobe. Čim su ostali sami žena mu je prišapnula: "Želite li, doktore, pobjeći u partizane? Mi Vam to možemo osigurati". Jozef je sav sretan to prihvatio, tim više što je znao da mu se ustaše više nisu mogle osvećivati na ocu. Dogovorili su dan kada će on doći da joj dade drugu injekciju, a oni će organizirati njegov bijeg, tako da to izgleda kao otmica.

Dogovorenog dana doktor je došao u pratnji jednog stražara naoružanog strojnicom. Tek što je doktor stavio špricu u vodu da prokuha, čulo se da je mlin prestao raditi. Mlinar je pozvao stražara da mu pomogne postaviti remen. Kad su mlinar i stražar krenuli prema mlinu, kroz prozor se začulo kako dijete izvana viče u

sav glas: "Mamoooo! Eno partizaaaanaaa!" Taj tren stražar zgrabi strojnicu i daje vjetar petama. Mlinarev sin pokupi doktorovu torbu i zajedno s doktorom otrči do obližnjeg šumarka. Tamo ga je dočeka samo jedan partizan koji ga je poveo ka njegovom odredištu. Nakon dva dana stigli su u Žumberak, gdje je Jozef ostao u "Hrvaškoj in Slovenskoj partizanskoj bolnici in šoli" na samoj granici između Hrvatske i Slovenije. Tako je završila "otmica" doktora u kojoj je sudjelovala čitava mlinareva porodica - porodica neznanih pravednika.

Dok je moja obitelj bila još na okupu u Šibeniku doznali smo da se Jozef spasio bijegom iz Jasenovca u partizane, ali poslije toga nismo znali da li je živ i hoće li dočekati završetak rata. Nakon duge neizvjesnosti konačno smo se barba Jozef i ja nenadano našli. Bilo je to tek dan – dva nakon oslobođenja Zagreba, odnosno onoga dana kad je ZAVNOH selio iz Šibenika u oslobođeni Zagreb. U koloni autobusa koja je krenula za Zagreb bio sam i ja. Zaustavili smo se na polusatni odmor u Slunju. Mještani su se okupili oko nas. Sjetio sam se da smo jedanput čuli da je Jozef bio viđen i na tom području. Zato sam upitao prvog mještana koji nam je prišao znade li išta o partizanskom liječniku koji se zove Jozef Konforti. Odgovorio mi je: "Pa to je naš doktor. Eno ga u ambulanti, dole kraj potoka". Ostavio sam i autobus i kofer, neka idu u Zagreb bez mene. Otrčao sam strminom do potoka i našao ga živa i zdrava. Susret s barba Jozefom bio je za nas obojicu najradosniji trenutak nakon svega što smo proživjeli, ali i vrlo tužan zbog gubitka najmilijih. Ostali smo budni čitavu noć razgovarajući o njihovim stradanjima kao i o našim vlastitim patnjama. Kada je svanulo, krenuli smo vojnim kamionom u Zagreb. Tu smo se razišli. Ja sam se javio na svoje odredište, a barba Jozef se javio Vojnoj komandi na Krešimirovom trgu kako bi ga ona uputila Vojnoj komandi Bosne i Hercegovine u Sarajevo. Nastavio je rad u sanitetu JNA u Sarajevu.

Za svoj osamdeseti rođendan, kada je već bio u mirovini, barba Jozef je okupio preživjele članove travničke obitelji Konforti da se nekoliko dana družimo kao nekada. Rezervirao je samo za nas jedan mali planinarski dom u Kruščici blizu Travnika. Odatle smo napravili izlet u Travnik. Obilazili smo mjesta gdje smo proživjeli mnogo radosnih dana i obnavljali lijepe uspomene. Kuda god smo prolazili, gdje god smo došli, ljudi su Jozefa zaustavljali, dugo i srdačno se rukovali s njim, tapšali ga, pa i grlili. Među travničanima, koji su ga tako rado dočekivali, Jevreja nije bilo. Travničke Jevrejske zajednice, nekada najveće poslije Sarajevske, više nije bilo.

U spomen na nestale i preživjele pripadnike bivše Jevrejske zajednice Dr Jozef Konforti napisao je i u vlastitom izdanju objavio knjigu „Travnički Jevreji“, Sarajevo 1976. Detaljno je opisao život i običaje Jevreja od nastanka zajednice 1699 godine do njenog nestanka 1941 godine. U zaključku je napisao: „Pod neopisivo okrunim okolnostima u strahovladi ustaša od oko 380 Jevreja skupa s izbjeglim iz drugih mjesta i iz Austrije, iz Travnika je uspjelo da pobjegne svega 20-25 Jevreja. Svi ostali – stari, bolesni, žene i djeca – otpremljeni su u logore smrti.

Dr. Jozef Konforti objavio je još jednu značajnu knjigu – „Sećanja Jevreja na logor Jasenovac“, u izdanju Saveza jevrejskih opština Jugoslavije, 1972 godine. U toj knjizi dr. Konforti i još dvadeset šest preživjela logoraša, pod svojim imenom i prezimenom, ne znajući jedan za drugoga i nemajući nikakav uvid o tome što su ostali napisali, opisali su i potpisali svoja sjećanja na zločine počinjene u logoru i izvan njega. Od tih dvadeset sedam osmorica preživjelih logoraša svjedoče o radu na nasipima. Slijede njihovi navodi onako kako su ih oni napisali, bez ikakvih ispravaka i to samo oni navodi koji se odnose na rad na nasipima:

*Adolf Fridrih iz Velike Gorice kraj Zagreba:* "Rad na nasipu je sve zatočenike toliko izmoždio da su masovno umirali, ili su ih kada posve oslabe i ne mogu više da rade jednostavno ubija. Svakoj grupi je određeno koliko metara nasipa ima u određeno vrijeme da izrade. Ona grupa koja nije mogla izvršiti zadatak, osim stalnog batinanja na samome radu, bila je i kažnjavana i tzv. 'radom na zicu' (od njem. Sitz, sjedeći položaj; op.



ur.) i bez hrane. Taj posao se morao obavljati u samoj vodi klečeći ili čučajući. Preko noći su ih zatvarali, a po danu tjerali na rad bez ikakve hrane. Neke su nalazili mrtve u baraci, a neke izvlačili mrtve iz zica. Imali su i posebnu žicom zatvorenu jamu u koju su žrtvu preko noći ubacili, a ujutro mrtvu vadili.

*Isidor Levi, električar iz Sarajeva:* Kad se kišni period produžio gonili su nas da radimo na dizanju nasipa. Prozvali smo ih brzo "nasipi smrti", jer su mnogi na njima stradali, bili su pobijeni. Svakog dana ostajalo je na nasipima najmanje po desetak zatočenika.

*Jakov Atijas iz Sarajeva, trgovac špeceraja:* Najgori i najteži posao u Jasenovcu ipak je bio "Nasip". Ustaše su htjele, da zatočenici izgrade nasipe ne samo zemljom i kamenom nego i leševima zatočenika koje su ustaše inače namjeravale likvidirati. Od izmrcvarenih i iznemoglih ljudskih kostura tražilo se nemoguće. Ako se raskvašena zemlja nije mogla prevoziti civarama, ili prenositi korpama i sanducima, tražili su od zatočenika da nose to blato lopatama. Ako se zatočenik, onako slab, spotakne ili oklizne u blatu sa lopatom, udarali su ga tako nemilosrdno da se nije više ni digao na noge, pa su ga tako premlaćenog strijeljali i ostavili u nasipu.

*Jakov Kabiljo, imao je papirnicu u Zagrebu:* Kolona od 1000 ljudi bila je brzo postrojena. Svaki je dobio lopatu ili kramp. Trebalo je da zatočenici podignu nasip dug 25 km uz rijeku Lonju i Strugu, Radilo se i zimi od 7 – 12 i od 1 – 5 sati popodne pod vrlo teškim uslovima. Zatočenici su morali puniti do vrha civare (tačke) zemljom ilovačom i voziti ih po blatu na nasip. Teško onome, kod koga bi ustaše primijetile da nije tačke posve ispunio. Batinali su nas stalno toljagama i kundacima po tijelu i po glavi. Poslije velikih kiša voda je bila i pola metra visoka. Ustaše su nas tjerale da kopamo i vozimo kroz vodu. Stalno su nas tukli.

*Leon Koen, bakalin iz Sarajeva:* Gradnjom nasipa na Lonji nastalo je fizičko i psihičko uništavanje zatočenika. Za sve vrijeme jedina je hrana u tom logoru bila u podne i navečer kuhana voda sa par listića kupusa. Na nasipu se radilo u desetinama. Svaku desetinu kontrolisale su po dvojica – trojica ustaša, koji su batinama nemilosrdno tjerale zatvorenike da kopaju zemlju. Pošto se više nije moglo kolicima, tjerali su nas da prenosimo zemlju lopatama i bacamo tako na nasip. Grupa ustaša koja se zvala "kaznena ekspedicija" navraćala je više puta dnevno i premlaćivala zatočenike. Svaki dan je ostajalo 20 – 30 mrtvih.

*Leon Maestro Sarajevo:* Najgori i najteži su mi bili radovi na nasipu i na sječi drva u šumi, odakle smo se uvijek vraćali u daleko manjem broju, nego kada smo polazili. Vidio sam, a i lično sam povremeno radio na nasipu kod Save, gdje su ljudi od teškog rada i batinanja masovno umirali. Grobari bi skupljali leševe noću i bacali ih u Savu.

*Albert Maestro:* Na izlazu iz logora uzimao je svaki zatočenik lopatu ili kramp, kako je to ustaša određivao, a mlatili su svakoga tko se predomišljao kod uzimanja alata. U trku smo morali prevaliti put do nasipa, a koji je bio veoma blatani. Jame i jarci kod Nasipa bili su već puni vode i mulja. Zemlju smo morali nositi po 50 do 100 metara. Ilovača se nije mogla više prevoziti, jer je teren bio jako klizav. Zato smo je morali nositi lopatama. Teško onome, tko je u blatu zapeo. Na svakom koraku su nas batinali, po 5-25 po golom tijelu. Već prvoga dana smo donijeli u logor 5 mrtvih i trojicu teže povrijeđenih. Prvih dana smo mrtvace morali nositi s nasipa u logor i tamo ih zakopavati. Sarajlija Neveš bacio se već treći dan pod voz koji je prolazio upravo u času kada smo morali preći preko pruge. Malo kasnije otrovao se dr. Vita Kajon, direktor bivše Gradske štedionice u Sarajevu.

*Jeruham/Jerka/ Gaon, trgovački pomoćnik, Travnik:* Odmah po dolasku u logor radio sam na užurbanoj izgradnji Velikog i Malog nasipa na obalama Save. Teren je često bio poplavljen poslije kiša, a kada se snijeg topio u sredini logora je bilo i veliko jezero. Cijeli teren je bio vrlo blatani i teško smo se kretali, a ustaše su nas

batinama tjerale na rad, pa su mnogi zatočenici na tim nasipima stradali. Mnogi su bili strijeljani na tom radu bez obzira na starost i opću fizičku kondiciju, ako su zastajali pri krajnje napornom radu.

Danas, kada je već prošlo punih sedamdeset pet godina otkako je u ustaškim logorima smrti počelo svirepo ubijanje Židova, i ne samo Židova, pokušava se uz punu podršku države i crkve prikriti zločinački karakter tzv. Nezavisne države Hrvatske (NDH), a naročito prikriti zločine počinjene u logoru smrti Jasenovac. Jedan od takvih pokušaja je pojava knjige „Radni logor Jasenovac“ autora Igora Vukića. U toj su knjizi radovi na nasipima opisani na samo jednoj stranici. Iako je među brojnim izvorima navedena i knjiga dr. Jozefa Konfortia „Sećanja Jevreja na logor Jasenovac“, iz te knjige nije iznesen niti jedan podatak o radovima na nasipima. Navedena je samo izjava ustaše ing. Franje Beretina pred Komisijom za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača.

Pred Komisijom za utvrđivanje zločina Franjo Beretin je rekao: "Što se tiče zlostavljanja i ubijanja pri radu, to ja nisam vidio, ali sam dobio pritužbu od zatočenika, koji su mi javili da je neki ustaša udario zatvorenika kundakom ili nogom. Na to sam se pritužio ustaškoj straži, rekavši da oni imaju vršiti svoju dužnost praćenja i čuvanja. Referirao sam o tome i tadašnjem zapovjedniku logora ustaškom poručniku Tomi Sabolu, emigrantu. Taj nasip gradio se oko dva mjeseca. Za zlostavljanje poslije nisam čuo. U kasnu jesen počeo je i rad na nasipu za zaštitu samog logora. Na njemu je radilo oko 700 zatočenika pod mojim nadzorom. Za ubijanje sam čuo od drugih zatočenika i od mještana Jasenovca". Jednom je vidio da je pratnja Vjekoslava Luburića tukla nekog zatočenika. "Rekao sam Luburiću da nema smisla tući ovu rajnu jer je teren raskvašen pa se i ne može bolje raditi. O tome sam telefonom izvijestio Dragutina Kobera u Zagrebu, Predstavnik Ministarstva domobranstva kod Ministarstva javnih radova".

U knjizi se, dakle, kao istina o radovima na nasipu prezentira izjava ustaškog zločinca kojom on pokušava uvjeriti Komisiju za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača da on za ništa ne zna i da za ništa nije kriv. Knjiga je promovirana u više crkava. Dobila je visoku ocjenu od nekih državnih dužnosnika, klera i neoustaških revizionista.

Na pitanje zašto je važno sačuvati sjećanje na počinjene zločine dr. Jozef Konforti napisao je u predgovoru knjige "Sećanja Jevreja na logor Jasenovac":

„Sa svoje strane, kao bivši logoraš, mogu, a i želim da potvrdim da je sve što je zapisano u ovim 'Sećanjima' nažalost istinito, da ništa nije izmišljeno niti pretjerano crno prikazano.

Mi, preživjeli logoraši ustaških logora smrti, želimo da ova 'Sećanja' ne budu korištena u svrhu bilo kakve odmazde ili osvete, bilo kada i bilo protiv koga. Želimo da ova naša 'Sećanja' posluže cilju udovoljenja pravde, a još više želimo da služe općem zbliženju svih naroda i podizanju čovječnosti, za kojom su vapili naši supatnici u svojim najtežim i posljednjim trenucima života s vječnim 'Šema Jisrael' “.

## **Remembering dr. Jozef Konforti**

Many memories of my early age are related to Travnik a town in Bosnia. My parents were from Travnik. By World War II my grandparents Moshe and Sara and their son Jozef, my uncle with his wife Elsa lived there. They felt the natives of Travnik. Their ancient ancestor, Jeruham Konforti, moved to Travnik from Novi Pazar in Serbia together with Sephardic settlers in year 1805.

My grandfather was a cereal merchant until his retirement. He was well received both among the Jews as among the other citizens of Travnik. Until the Second World War in Travnik there was no pronounced intolerance among the members of different religions and nationalities, and there was no anti-Semitism.



**Jozef Konforti and his fiancée  
Elsa Fischer, Vienna 1922**

My Uncle Jozef was a doctor. He completed his studies in medicine and postgraduate training in internal medicine, surgery and obstetrics in Vienna from where was also his future wife Elsa Fischer. After finishing his internship at the State Hospital in Sarajevo he moved to Travnik as the head doctor of the county Health office in Travnik. He was recognized as an excellent doctor responsible for the healthcare of over 10 000 people. He was particularly appreciated for answering calls for home visit at any time, day or night, and for treating poor people without charge.

He has gained a reputation in the Jewish community. As a child, he went to the elementary three-year school "Maldar". In the age of boyhood, and especially during his studies in Vienna, he was a fiery Zionist and as such was a permanent member of the Academic Zionist Society "Bar Giora". During a period of twelve years before WW II he was the president of the Jewish community in Travnik. He was also engaged outside the Jewish community as an active social worker.

My grandfather and grandmother had four daughters and a son: Rifka – Bukas married Alkalaj in Sarajevo and had three sons and one daughter, Diana married Kalderon in Belgrade and had a daughter and a son, Regina (my mother) married Drutter in Sibenik and had a daughter and a son, and Tilda who married Musafija in Split had a daughter. The only son Isaac died as a young man immediately before my birth. I was named by him. Perhaps that is why my uncle embraced me so deeply that it evolved into a great mutual love.

The large family, daughters with their husbands and children gathered almost every year in Travnik. Our grandmother and our moms were busy with us. They were happy to be again in the parents' home, now with their children. We kids were the happiest. We spent our days in a carefree game and mischief. Grandmother and grandfather protected us from our mothers' attempts to make us obedient. Uncle devoted all his love and attention to us. He carried us out into the beautiful countryside, drove us in a carriage to typical Bosnian parties where we tasted Bosnian delicacies. On Thursdays and Fridays, he took me to the fair and the Temple.

Barba (for uncle) Jozef, as we, Dalmatian nephews, used to call him, had a beautiful German sheepdog Lola. She was my great love. Lola was waking me up at the same time every morning, bringing her leash and rushing me out as soon as possible. Such games were endless, especially when she had cubs.

Year after year we grew more serious. Playful games have given place to new, more serious content. When I was fifteen, Barba Jozef took me to a distant place to cure an ill lady. They came for him with two saddled horses so he could take me with him. We rode along the beautiful glades at the foot of the Vlastic mountain. Little Bosnian horses have been climbing slowly. After a long time we arrived at a small, crumbling cottage in a secluded area. My uncle spent a long time with the patient. The extreme poverty we saw inspired us on the way back to discuss how it is possible that in the midst of such a beautiful and luxurious nature people live in such utter misery and poverty. Barba Jozef spoke to me about the historical conditions that led to this as well as the examples of what he himself had met as a doctor. I was glad that he spoke to me no more as a child, but as a mature boy.

It was the last year of our meetings in Travnik. With the arrival of the ustashe (Croatian Nazi) to power, the sufferings of Travnik Jews began. They robbed and mistreated them in every possible way until they finally picked them up, loaded into the cattle wagons and shipped them to the death camp of Jasenovac. The first transport was on October 20<sup>th</sup> 1941. They took all grown men - about 90 of them. Another transport to Jasenovac camp was much scarier. In the cold winter day on January 25 1942, 200 Jews – women, old men, children and infants were taken to Jasenovac death camp by cattle carriages . Barba Jozef had to escort this transport. With the third transport on March 24 1942 Barba Jozef was also taken as well as his mother, father, his wife and her father. Women have been separated and taken to Nova Gradiška camp and killed immediately after entering the camp. Jozef and his father were taken to Jasenovac camp and separated. Jozef was used as a doctor for ustashe' own needs. His father was left as a hostage and stayed alive for some time.

In the camp Barba Jozef earned the reputation of an excellent and conscientious doctor. The ustashe trusted him to treat them conscientiously, in spite of being his mortal enemies. He gained even greater confidence and appreciations when he discovered and suppressed the typhoid epidemic that threatened to spread to the ustashe. They used him more and more often for their own needs, as well as for the treatment of patients outside the camp. Once they even took him to a place of battle, to heel ustashe wounded in a battle against partisans.

At the beginning of 1943. he was taken to Kupinec to treat Vladko Maček (a Croatian pre war politician) and his family members. While being there, he was locked up and under guard control. He was promised that while in Kupinac he would be able to write to his father once a month and receive letters from him. He only received one letter and he soon found that his father was no longer alive.

From Kupinec Barba Jozef was often sent under guard to visit sick people in surrounding villages. One day, he was escorted by a guard to a village to examine the sick wife of a miller. Prior to examination, the guard was asked to leave the room because the women had to undress. As soon as he was gone, the woman whispered to my uncle: "Would you, doctor, flee to the partisans? We can provide this for you". My uncle joyfully accepted this offer, he knew ustashe could no more use his father's life to assure his cooperation. The woman and Jozef fixed the day of his next visit and the woman promised to arrange his escape in form of a kidnapping attack by partisans.

On the agreed upon day the doctor came to the village escorted again by a guard armed with machine gun. Just as the doctor put a syringe in the water to boil, the mill stopped working. The miller called the guard to help him set up the fallen belt. When the miller and the guard headed for the mill, a child started shouting from the outside: "Maaam! Partisans are around". Having heard that, the guard grabbed the machine gun and escaped in panic. Miller's son took the doctor's bag and ran with the doctor to the nearby woods. There he was met by only one partisan who led him to his destination. After two days they arrived in Žumberak, (a mountain



west of Zagreb) where my uncle joined the "Croatian and Slovenian hospital and school" on the border between Croatia and Slovenia. So ended the "kidnapping" of a Jewish doctor in which the entire miller's family of the unknown righteous was involved.

In Sibenik where my family was living at that time, we learned that Jozef was rescued from Jasenovac to Partisans, but we did not know whether or not he survived till the end of the war. After several years of uncertainty I met my uncle Jozef quite unexpectedly. It was only a day or two after the liberation of Zagreb - the day when ZAVNOH (Croatian war government) moved from Sibenik to the liberated Zagreb. I was in a group of buses that headed for Zagreb. We stopped for a half-hour rest in Slunj. The townspeople have gathered around us. I remembered that we heard several years ago that Barba Jozef was seen in the area. So I asked one of the locals who approached us if he knew anything about a partisan doctor named Jozef Konforti. He said, "Well, that's our doctor. He's in the infirmary, down by the creek". I immediately left the bus together with my suitcase, so it could reach Zagreb without me. I ran down to the creek and found my uncle alive and well. The encounter with Barba Jozef was for both of us the emotional moment after all that we have experienced. It was also very sad because of losses of our loved ones. We stayed up all night talking about their horrors as well as our own sufferings. When it dawned, we went to Zagreb with a military truck. That's where we split up. I have responded to my destination, and Barba Jozef contacted the military command on Krešimir's Square where he was assigned to the military command of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo. He continued working in the Yugoslav Army Medical authorities in Sarajevo.

For his eightieth birthday, when he was already retired, Barba Jozef gathered the surviving members of the Konforti family to socialize for a few days as we used to do before the war. He booked for us a small mountaineers' home in Kruščica near Travnik. From there we made a trip to Travnik. We were touring the places where we experienced many joyful days and recalled our nice memories. Wherever we went, wherever we passed, the people stopped dr. Jozef, long and cordially shook hands with him, clapping him, and hugging him. Among the people of Travnik, who welcomed him so warmly, there were no Jews. The Jewish community of Travnik, once the second largest in Bosnia after Sarajevo existed no more.

Dr. Jozef Konforti prepared and published in his own edition - a sort of samizdat - the book "Jews of Travnik", (Sarajevo 1976) in memory of the missing and surviving members of the former Jewish community. He described in details the life and customs of the Jews from the creation of the community in the year 1699 until the destruction of the community in 1941. As a conclusion, he wrote: "Under indescribable circumstances, a terrible ustashes' terror out of 380 Jews of Travnik and refugees from Austria and other places, only some 20 to 25 survived. All others — old, sick, women, and children — were shipped to the death camps.

Dr. Josef Konforti has published another important book – "The Memories of the Jews at Jasenovac camp", published by the Federation of Jewish Communities of Yugoslavia in 1972. In that book, Dr. Konforti together with twenty-six surviving inmates described and signed their memories of the crimes committed in and outside the camp. They did so giving their full names, and having no insight into what the others wrote, Of these twenty-seven, eight survivors testified about works they were forced to perform on the dam of two rivers. Here are texts as they wrote it, without any corrections, regarding only this works on the dam.

*Adolf Fridrih from Velika Gorica near Zagreb:* "The work on the dam was so hard, all detainees were exhausted and many died very soon, or if they were completely weakened and couldn't work anymore, they were murdered. Each group was forced to build certain length of the dam in a given period of time. The group that could not carry out the task, in addition to permanent beatings during the work, was also punished with so called "Work on the Wire".

These detainees were left without food. The work had to be done kneeling or in squat position in the water. Overnight, they were locked up, and in the daytime they were forced to work without any food. Some of them were dead in the barracks, and some were pulling the dead out of the wires. They also had a special wire-sealed pit in which the victims were dumped overnight, and by the morning they were dead.

*Isidor Levi, an electrician from Sarajevo:* During extended rainy period, they forced detainees to work on the dam. We soon called this "The dam of death", because many of them died or were killed. Every day on the dam at least a dozen detainees were found dead.

*Jakov Kabiljo, had a paper shop in Zagreb:* A queue of 1000 people was quickly lined up. Each one got a shovel or a cramp. The detainees were supposed to raise a 25-kilometer-long dam along rivers Lonja and Struga, and we worked in the winter from 7 to 12 a.m. and from 1 to 5 p.m. under very difficult conditions. We, the detainees, had to fully load strollers with loam and drive them through the mud on the dam. Those who couldn't perform this were severely punished. We were beaten with clubs and butts all over bodies and heads. After the big rains, the water was half a meter high. The ustashe made us dig and drive strollers through the water. They have beaten us all the time.

*Jakov Atijas, a grocery merchant from Sarajevo:* The worst and hardest job in Jasenovac, besides all others, was "the dam". The ustashe forced detainees to build the dam not only with clay and stone, but also with the bodies of dead detainees, those, whom ustashe intended to kill anyway. Men, looking like human skeletons were forced to make impossible. If a disordered soil could not be transported by strollers, or transferred in baskets and crates, they asked the detainees to carry that mud in shovels. If a weak prisoner, stumped or slipped in the mud with a shovel, he was beaten so relentlessly that he didn't even get up on his feet, he was beaten to death or was shot and his body left in the dam.

*Leon Koen, grocer from Sarajevo:* The construction of the dam on Lonja river resulted in the physical and psychological destruction of the detainees. All the time the only food in that camp was at noon and evening, boiled water with a couple of cabbage leaves. The work at dam was performed in groups of ten. Each group was controlled by two or three ustashe, who relentlessly forced the prisoners to dig the land. Since it could no longer be transferred by strollers, they were forcing us to carry it with shovels and throw it on the dam. A group of ustashe called "punitive expeditions" dropped in several times a day and beat prisoners. Every day some 20 to 30 prisoners were left dead.

*Leon Maestro Sarajevo:* The worst and hardest were the works on the dam and the chopping wood in the forest, from where we always returned to a far smaller number, than when we were leaving. I saw, and I myself occasionally worked on the riverside of Sava, where men were massively dying of hard labor and beating. The grave-diggers would collect corpses at night and throw them in Sava river.

*Albert Maestro:* Leaving the camp, every prisoner had to take a shovel or a cramp depending on an ustashe's order, At the same time they beat everybody who hesitated taking

the tool. We had to run all way to the dam, the way was very muddy. The pits and ditches near the dam were already full of water and mud. We had to carry the soil some 50 to 100 meters. Often it was impossible to transport the loam, the terrain was too slippery. We had to use shovels to carry the soil from one site to another. Those who could not make it were severely beaten, some by 5 to 25 kicks on a naked body. Already on the first day we brought back five dead and three severely injured. That first day we had to carry dead bodies from the dam to the camp and bury them there. On a third day a man from Sarajevo named Nevesh threw himself under a train passing at the moment we had to cross the railroad. Not much later, dr. Vita Kajon, director of the former City Savings bank in Sarajevo took a poison and died.

*Jeruham/Jerka/Gaon, commercial Assistant from Travnik:* Immediately upon arriving at the camp, I worked on the busy construction of the big and small dams on the shores of the Sava river. The terrain was often flooded after the rains, and when the snow melted in the middle of the camp there was a big lake. The whole terrain was very muddy and we hardly could move. Ustashe beat us as we worked, and many of the detainees died on those constructions. Many have been shot at this work regardless of age and general physical fitness if they have tried to have a break during this extremely laboriously work.

Today, seventy five years after these tortures in the ustashe death camps, where we witnessed ferocious killing of Jews, and not only Jews, we can notice activities to conceal the criminal character of the so-called Independent States of Croatia (NDH) and especially crimes committed in the death camp Jasenovac. This is made with the support of some state structures and the church. One of these attempts is the appearance of the book "Labor Camp Jasenovac" by Igor Vukic. In this book, the works on the dam are described on only one page. Although the book of Dr. Jozef Konfortia "Memories of the Jews at Jasenovac camp" was listed among many sources, there was no record of the works on the dam. Only the statement of one ustasha under investigation for war crimes , Franjo Beretin is specified, a statement given to the Commission for identify war crimes of the occupants and their co-laborators. (A very trustful source)

For this Commission Franjo Beretin said: "As for the abuse and labor killings, I didn't see it, but I got a complaint from the detainees, who told me that some ustashe hit a prisoner with a butt or leg. I have been complaining about this to the ustathe guard, saying that they have to do their duty of monitoring and guarding. I referred to that and the then-camp ustashe commander to Lieutenant Tomo Sabol. That dam was built about two months. I didn't hear about later abuses. In late autumn, the work on the dam protecting the camp itself began. There were some 700 detainees under my supervision. I heard about killing only from the other detainees and from the locals in Jasenovac ". He once saw how men escorting Vjekoslav Luburic (the camp commander) have beaten by some detainees. "I told Luburic that there was no point in beating this folks because the terrain was so difficult, they couldn't work better. I phoned about it to Dragutin Kober in Zagreb, a representative of the Ministry of Homeland and Public Works."

In this book the truth of the works on the dam is presented according to the statement of the ustashe villain when he tried to persuade the Commission how he knows nothing and was not guilty. The book has been promoted in several churches. It received a high score from some state officials, clerical and neo-Nazi revisionist in Croatia.

When asked why it is important to preserve the memory of the crimes committed, Dr Jozef Konforti wrote in the preface of the Book of Remembrance of the Jews at Jasenovac camp:

"From my point of view, as an ex-detainee, I can, and I want to confirm that everything that is written in these memories is sadly true, that nothing are fictions or excessively worsened.

We, the surviving inmates of the ustashe death camps, want these memories not to be used for the purpose of retaliation or vengeance, anytime, or against anyone. We want our memories to serve the purpose of satisfying justice, and even more we want it to serve the general bonding of all peoples and the raising of humanity, for which our co-martyrs have cried in their most difficult and final moments of life with the eternal 'Shema Jisrael'".

*Preneseno s jednog hrvatskog WEB portala:*

## **Intervju s Ilanom Morom veleposlanikom Državom Izrael u Hrvatskoj**

Sretan sam što sam u Hrvatskoj. Iza mene je duga karijera karijernog diplomata Države Izrael. Kao mladi diplomat počeo sam u Liberiji, pa sam otišao u Los Angeles, grad zvijezda i Hollywooda, a zatim sam otišao u Njemačku. Jako sam želio kao Židov i Izraelac služiti u Njemačkoj, zemlji koja je izvela najveći zločin nad mojim narodom iako nemam njemačkih korijena. Kad sam došao u Koeln nisam ništa razumio, ali sam odlučio uložiti potreban napor i naučiti jezik. Nakon boravka u Izraelu otišao sam u Kinu gdje sam bio zamjenik ambasadora da bih se potom vratio u Berlin kao zamjenik ambasadora, pa ambasador u Mađarskoj i sada u Hrvatskoj. A u intermezzima u Izraelu sam se bavio strateškim pitanjima važnim za sigurnost Izraela.

*Strateška pitanja važna za sigurnost Izraela. Je li to Mossad, Shin Bet, tajne službe ?*

Ne, ne, ja sam karijerni diplomat, služim svojoj javnosti i nemam veze sa spomenutim organizacijama. Ima i drugih pitanja koja imaju stratešku važnost za moju zemlju jer živimo u politički nestabilnom okruženju, uz mnogo neprijatelja Izraela koji niti nakon 71 godine postojanja naše države nisu prestali sanjati o tome da nas unište. Prije svega to je Iran, ali tu su još dvije terorističke organizacije, Hamas i Hezbolah. Ima strateških izazova s kojima se ne može suočavati samo vojno već i na građanskoj, diplomatskoj razini.

*Kakve su Vaše impresije nakon tri mjeseca u Hrvatskoj?*

Imam dva odgovora na to pitanje: kratak i dugi. Koji želite prvi?

*Kratak.*

Dobre.

*A dugi?*

Jako dobre. (Smijeh). Osjećam se kao da sam ovdje već dulje vrijeme. Sve pripreme za početak mandata su prošle vrlo glatko. Dočekan sam prijateljski i s temeljnom željom za suradnjom. Moj je prvi službeni posjet bio Vukovaru. To je bilo simbolično kako bih se mogao identificirati s patnjama lokalne zajednice. Prije toga sam otišao u Spomen područje Jasenovac. I nastavljam svoja putovanja.

*Što smatrate najvećim izazovima u Vašem mandatu?*

Ne bih rekao izazov. Rekao bih ono što je važno učiniti, a to je približiti ljude iz Hrvatske i Izraela. I to ne samo kroz hodočašća, mnogi Hrvati posjećuju Izrael, Svetu Zemlju, što je sjajno i to pozdravljam, nego kroz upoznavanje modernog Izraela. Stari smo 71 godinu, dakle to je doba za umirovljenje, ali kao država i društvo nemamo takvih ideja. Imamo toliko toga u planu. I želim da nas ljudi iz Hrvatske upoznaju kao moderno, otvoreno, demokratsko, židovsko društvo u kojem je ekonomska situacija dobra i koje želi surađivati s Hrvatskom na mnogim područjima, od poljoprivrede preko inovacija, znanosti, tehnologije u sklopu EU programa i svakako kulture. Nadam se dovesti Izraelski filharmonijski orkestar u Hrvatsku i to sa Zubinom Mehtom. Postoji veliki potencijal za suradnju. Hrvatska je, primjerice, poznata po smart mobility, a na tom planu Izrael nije tako dobar. Pa možemo učiti od vas.



*Kakav je Vaš stav o dvije komemoracije u Jasenovcu?*

Sudjelovat ću na obje. Imam dobre odnose s profesorom Ognjenom Krausom i židovskom zajednicom, kanim izgraditi dobre odnose sa srpskom zajednicom, sreo sam se sa zastupnikom romske zajednice u Saboru. I zbog toga odluku prepuštam profesoru Krausu i zajednici te drugim organizacijama.

*Bili ste u Njemačkoj, pa Mađarskoj, sad u Hrvatskoj. Kako tumačite jačanje neonacizma?*

Gledajte, nije to samo pitanje pojave neonacista. Zašto ih zovemo neonacisti? Oni su nacisti. Nije se promijenila ideologija, samo ljudi. Problem je rastući val antisemitizma, rasizma, novog antisemitizma protiv Države Izrael. Antisemitizam je kronična bolest, ne možemo je iskorijeniti, ali se moramo protiv nje boriti. Želio bih da sve zemlje u Europi i svijetu, koje su bile na pogrešnoj strani povijesti u Drugom svjetskom ratu i na bilo koji način sudjelovale u istrebljivanju židovskog naroda, slijede primjer Njemačke. Ono što Njemačka radi nije savršeno, ali Njemačka je od samog početka, manje od deset godina nakon kraja Drugog svjetskog rata nedvojbeno preuzela odgovornost. Ustala i rekla: "Mi smo odgovorni za ono što su nacisti u ime Njemačke i njemačkog naroda napravili diljem svijeta, a posebno židovskom narodu. Pogledali su se o zrcalo i rekli: "Mea culpa!". I studenti, mladi ljudi, oni nemaju straha u suočavanju s nasljeđem svojih predaka. Moj je san da države prihvate njemački obrazac i preuzmu odgovornost za svoju povijest, da se sjećaju svoje židovske braće i sestara koji su bili dio društva u Europi, Hrvatskoj, Mađarskoj, Poljskoj... Jer ta su braća i sestre pridonosili prosperitetu tih država u kojima su živjeli.

*Da se nikad više ne ponovi*

Obrazovanje, ono je ključno kako se ono što se dogodilo između 1941. i 1945. nikad više ne ponovi. Niti Židovima, niti Romima, niti homoseksualcima niti bilo kojoj drugoj manjini, malenoj ili velikoj. Obrazovanje, ono je odgovor. I ne počinje se u prvom razredu osnovne škole. Počinje se kod kuće, majka i otac su GPS svoje djece. Ako u GPS stavite pogrešnu adresu nećete doći do pravog cilja. Samo će vas prave koordinate - tolerancija, empatija, razumijevanje za drukčije od vas, uključivost, a ne isključivost - tada ćete stići na pravu lokaciju, ponosni i sretni. I živjet ćete u društvu u kojem je ugodno živjeti. Zatim kao GPS dolaze učitelji pa političari, posebno u zemljama u kojima se shoa (holokaust) dogodio. I političari imaju odgovornost, kad god dođe do antisemitskog ispada, bilo da su to grafiti, rušenje grobova, kad se Izrael izjednači s nacistima ili kada su pripadnici židovskog naroda napadnuti na ulici, oni moraju ustati i progovoriti neovisno o tome koliku će političku cijenu za to platiti ili misle da će platiti. Antisemitizam, rasizam, fanatizam, to se ne smije politizirati. Tako i u Hrvatskoj treba učiti učitelje kako da poučavaju o holokaustu. Ljudima treba reći istinu. A istinu znaju stručnjaci. Vjerujem da je otvaranje arhiva bilo gdje dio procesa otkrivanja istine.

*Vidite li pozitivne njemačke trendove u Hrvatskoj? Ili neke druge?*

Dva tjedna nakon dolaska sudjelovao sam na seminaru Ministarstva obrazovanja u Istri. Održao sam govor učiteljima o tome kako poučavati shoa (holokaust). Gotovo dvije stotine učitelja je bilo u Izraelu temeljem sporazuma memorijalnog centra Yad Vashem i hrvatske vlade. Vidim pokušaje, razvoj u pravom smjeru. U službenim kontaktima osjećam iskrenost u pokušajima borbe protiv negativnih trendova, antisemitizma i drugih. No, za potpuni odgovor pitajte me ovo za godinu dana.

*Imate li što reći o kupnji izraelskih zrakoplova?*

Nakon nominacije za ambasadora u Hrvatskoj nadao sam da ću moći uživati plodove tog posla. A onda su došle loše vijesti. Žao mi je što je posao propao. To je sada iza nas. Gledajmo naprijed.

*Izrael je otkrio plin u podmorju. Kakve planove imate?*

Geografski, geostrateški, Izrael je izoliran. Okruženi smo zemljama s kojima nemamo prekograničnu trgovinu. Imamo nešto s Jordanom, nešto s Egiptom, ali u odnosu prema trgovini s EU i SAD-om, to je beznačajno. Dio plina ćemo prodavati Jordanu po povlaštenoj cijeni, isto tako i Egiptu. A za suradnju smo potpuno otvoreni. I Hrvatska može biti dio tog posla. Počnimo pregovore. Vi imate iskustva s energijom, Mi ne. Istražimo mogućnosti suradnje.

*Trump je priznao Golan dijelom Izraela. EU i UN se tome protive.*

Ima stvari u kojima je stvarnost jača od svega. Ostavimo politiku sa strane, mislim da postoji konsenzus da bi povratak tog teritorija bio samoubilački. Osvrnimo se na građanski rat u Siriji, iranski utjecaj u toj zemlji, djelovanje Hezbolaha i Islamske države i zamislite da Izrael nije na Golanu nego 800 metara ispod, u dolini rijeke Jordan. To bi bila noćna mora za naš narod. Mislim da je Trumpov čin iznošenje na vidjelo činjenice da je Golan dio Države Izrael. To je i jamstvo da Izrael neće biti napadnut s te strane. EU i UN, neka pričaju. Mi se moramo pobrinuti za našu sigurnost. Ako to ne učinimo sami, nitko drugi neće. Niti SAD.

*Vidimo nastojanje Izraela da pripoji dijelove Zapadne obale.*

U Izraelu su izbori. Pitanje Judeje i Samarije i pregovora s Palestincima nije u žiži. To je pitanje svakako na dnevnom redu, u budućnosti moramo doći do nekog oblika prilagodbe između nas i Palestinaca. Oni su podijeljeni između sebe, Hamas kontrolira Gazu, Abu Mazen (Mahmud Abas) kontrolira Zapadnu obalu. S teroristima iz Hamasa ne pregovaramo, Abu Mazen koristi sve trikove kako bi izbjegao bilo kakve pregovore. Traje status quo kad je riječ o političkim pitanjima. Moramo pričekati novu izraelsku vladu i koliko će visoko na njihovom dnevnom redu biti palestinsko pitanje. Judeju i Samariju ne nazivamo okupiranim već osporavanim područjima. A da biste riješili spor, morate razgovarati.

*Rat u Siriji ide svom kraju. Što Izrael vidi glavnim prijetnjama, a što mogućnostima u toj zemlji?*

Glavna je prijetnja iranska prisutnost u Siriji, koji ondje ostaje, zajedno s prisustvom Hezbolaha. Naš premijer je u redovitom kontaktu s ruskim predsjednikom Vladimirom Putinom s kojim raspravlja o pitanju iranske prisutnosti u Siriji koja je destruktivni element. Mi to ne možemo prihvatiti. Konvoji sofisticiranog oružja iz Irana preko Sirije dolaze do Hezbolaha u južnom Libanonu. I to je apsolutno neprihvatljivo. Ovog je tjedna otkriveno da Iran u samom Beirutu počinje projekt za sofisticirane rakete. U južnom Libanonu je 150.000 različitih raketa i projektila koji u doseg imaju pola Izraela. Nakon izlaska Irana i Sirije sve je moguće. Ne vjerujem da ćemo uspostaviti neko razumijevanje s Asadom, krvnikom iz Damaska. Malo ljudi zna da smo tijekom rata imali bolnicu s druge strane sirijske granice u blizini grada Quneitra (Golan) gdje smo liječili ranjene sirijske civile. Mnogi od njih su bili u šoku kad smo im pomogli, kad su vidjeli da nismo nikakva čudovišta. Mi nemamo ništa protiv Sirijaca. Ali imamo puno toga protiv njihovih lidera. Bolja budućnost će doći, inšallah, kad ti lideri odu.

*U Iranu vidimo niz problema.*

Iako dolazim iz zemlje proroka, bilo bi vrlo arogantno kad bih rekao da mogu proricati. Posebno kad je Iran u pitanju. A to je zemlja koju nikako ne treba podcijeniti. Treba im dati "respect, but with suspect" (uvažavati ih uz pozornost). U toj zemlji otkucavaju tri sata: previranje javnosti je jedan, dob vođa drugi, a treći je sat nuklearni uz pitanje programa dalekometnih projektila. Pitanje koji će sat otkucati ponoć - a to ne znam. Zato je dobro da je predsjednik Trump ne samo istupio iz iranskog nuklearnog sporazuma nego je i vratio sankcije, a nadam se da će EU slijediti SAD. Nema drugog načina da im se objasni da, ponašajući se kao slon u staklani, prijeteci suverenoj državi da će je razoriti, stvarajući ne samo nuklearnu bombu nego i sustave lansiranja, dalekometne projekte koji se temelje na sjevernokorejskoj tehnologiji, uz njihovu fanatičnu ideologiju, sve to čini zastrašujući kombinaciju. Izrael nema ništa protiv Iranaca i nadam se da će oni shvatiti da trpe zbog svojih vođa. I da moraju nešto napraviti. Iako to nije lako budući da Revolucionarna garda kontrolira gotovo sve aspekte života. Ali, nada umire zadnja.

*Možemo li onda očekivati približavanje arapskih zemalja Zaljeva Izraelu?*

Ne mogu reći da znam što se točno događa, ali činjenica je da je premijer Netanyahu bio u javnom posjetu Bahreinu. Imamo hladan mir s Egiptom, ali mir. Strateški mir, već 40 godina. Želite li osobnu priču?

*Da.*

Sjećam se kad sam kao mladi vojnik gledao na malom crno bijelom televizoru egipatskog predsjednika Sadata kako izlazi iz zrakoplova u zračnoj luci Ben Gurion. Plakao sam jer sam bio sretan što je došao u Izrael. Iskreno. U govoru u Knesetu je rekao - Ne ratu, ne krvoproliću. Uslijedili su drugi ratovi, u Libanonu, brojni teroristički napadi, ali s Egiptom je bio mir. Isto s Jordanom, mi ih snabdijevamo vodom, sada i plinom. Nešto se događa u umjerenom arapskom svijetu. Koji konačno shvaća da Izrael nije njihov neprijatelj, da nije problem

na Bliskom istoku, da Izrael može biti rješenje. A da je problem na Bliskom istoku Iran. Jednu stvar trebate imati u vidu: koncept vremena na Bliskom istoku nije isti kao u Europi. Ako nakon 40 godina ostvarite svoj cilj, ljudi na Bliskom istoku će vam reći - žurili ste se. Polako. Shvatit će. Evo, Air India leti iz Delhija u Tel Aviv preko Saudijske Arabije. Snovi iz prošlosti su današnja realnost.

*Taken from a Croatian WEB site:*

## **Interview with Mr. Ilan Mor, ambassador of Israel to Croatia**

I am happy to be in Croatia. Behind me is a long career as a career diplomat of the State of Israel. As a young diplomat I started in Liberia, after that I went to Los Angeles, the city of stars and Hollywood, and then I went to Germany. As a Jew and an Israeli I very much wanted to serve in Germany, the country that had committed the greatest crime against my people, even though I had no German roots. When I came to Köln, I didn't understand the language but I decided to make the effort and learn it. After my stay in Israel I went to China where I was Deputy Ambassador and then returned to Berlin as Deputy Ambassador; after that I was Ambassador in Hungary and now in Croatia. And in the intermezzo in Israel, I dealt with the strategic issues relevant to Israel's security.

*Strategic issues important for Israel's security. Is it Mossad, Shin Bet, Secret Services?*

No, no, I'm a career diplomat, I serve my public and have nothing to do with the organizations mentioned. There are other issues that are of strategic importance to my country because we live in a politically unstable environment, with many enemies of Israel who, even after 71 years of existence, have not stopped dreaming of destroying us. First of all it is Iran, but there are also two terrorist organizations, Hamas and Hezbollah. There are strategic challenges that can be faced not only militarily but also at the civilian, diplomatic level.

*What are your impressions after three months in Croatia?*

I have two answers to that question: short and long. Which one do you want first?

*Short.*

Good.

*And the long one?*

Very good. (Laughter). I feel like I've been here a long time. All preparations for the start of the term went very smoothly. I was greeted friendly and with the fundamental desire to cooperate. My first official visit was to Vukovar. This was symbolic so that I could identify with the suffering of the local community. Before that I went to Jasenovac Memorial Area. And I continue my travels.

*What do you consider the biggest challenges in your tenure?*

I wouldn't call it a challenge. I would say what is important, and that is to bring people from Croatia and Israel closer. Not only through pilgrimages, many Croats visit Israel, the Holy Land, which is great and I welcome this, but through getting to know modern Israel. We are 71 years old, so it is a retirement age, but as a state and society we have no such ideas. We have so much going on. In addition, I want people from Croatia to know us as a modern, open, democratic, Jewish society in which the economic situation is good and which wants to cooperate with Croatia in many areas, from agriculture through innovation, science, technology within the EU program and certainly culture. I hope to bring the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra to Croatia with Zubin Mehta. There is a great potential for collaboration. Croatia, for example, is known for smart mobility, and Israel is not so good in that area. Well, we can learn from you.

*What is your position on the two commemorations in Jasenovac?*

I will attend both. I have good relations with Professor Ognjen Kraus and the Jewish community and I intend to build good relations with the Serbian community. I met with the Roma community representative in the Parliament. And that's why I leave that decision to Professor Kraus and the community and other organizations.

*You were in Germany, then Hungary, now in Croatia. How do you interpret the strengthening of neo-Nazism?*  
Look, it's not just a matter of the emergence of neo-Nazis. Why do we call them neo-Nazis? They are Nazis. The ideology has not changed, just the people. The problem is the growing wave of anti-Semitism, racism, new anti-Semitism against the State of Israel. Anti-Semitism is a chronic disease, we cannot eradicate it, but we have to fight it. I would like all countries in Europe and the world, which were on the wrong side of history in World War II and in any way participated in the extermination of the Jewish people, to follow the example of Germany. What Germany is doing is not perfect, but Germany has undoubtedly claimed responsibility from the very beginning, less than ten years after the end of World War II. Germans stood up and said, "We are responsible for what the Nazis have done all over the world, especially to the Jewish people, on behalf of Germany and the German people". They looked in the mirror and said, "Mea culpa!" And students, young people, they have no fear of coping with the heritage of their ancestors. It is my dream for states to accept the German form and take responsibility for their history, to remember their Jewish brothers and sisters who were part of society in Europe, Croatia, Hungary, Poland... Because these brothers and sisters contributed to the prosperity of those countries where they lived.

*Never again*

Education, it is crucial in never repeating what happened between 1941 and 1945. Not to the Jews, not to the Roma, or to gays or any other minority, small or large. Education, it is the answer. And it doesn't start in the first grade of elementary school. It starts at home, mother and father are GPS of their children. If you put the wrong address in the GPS, you will not reach the right destination. Only the right coordinates - tolerance, empathy, understanding for those different than you, inclusivity, not exclusivity - will take you to the right location, proud and happy. And you will live in a comfortable society. Then teachers and politicians come as GPS, especially in countries where the Shoa (Holocaust) took place. And politicians have a responsibility, whenever there is an anti-Semitic outburst, whether graffiti, the demolition of graves, when Israel is equated with the Nazis or when members of the Jewish people are attacked on the street, they must stand up and speak no matter what the political cost they pay for it or think they will pay. Anti-Semitism, racism, fanaticism, should not be politicized. In Croatia, too, teachers should be taught how to teach about the Holocaust. People need to be told the truth. And the truth is known by experts. I believe that opening an archive anywhere is part of the process of discovering the truth.

*Do you see any positive German trends in Croatia? Or some others?*

Two weeks after my arrival I attended a seminar of the Ministry of Education in Istria. I gave a lecture to teachers about how to teach on Shoa (Holocaust). Nearly two hundred teachers were in Israel under the agreement between the Yad Vashem Memorial Center and the Croatian Government. I see attempts, development in the right direction. In official contacts, I feel honest in trying to combat negative trends, anti-Semitism, and more. But, for the full answer, ask me this in a year.

*Do you have anything to say about buying Israeli aircrafts?*

After being nominated for Ambassador to Croatia, I hoped that I would be able to enjoy the fruits of this work. And then the bad news came. I'm sorry the business has failed. That's behind us now. Let's look ahead.

*Israel has discovered offshore gas. What plans do you have?*

Geographically, geo-strategically, Israel is isolated. We are surrounded by countries with which we do not have cross-border trade. We have some with Jordan, some with Egypt, but in comparison to trade with the EU and the US, it is insignificant. We will sell some of the gas to Jordan at a preferential price, as will Egypt. And we are fully open to cooperation. Croatia can also be part of that business. Let's start the negotiations. You have experience with energy, We don't. Let's explore the possibilities of collaboration.



*Trump has acknowledged Golan as part of Israel. The EU and the UN opposed.*

There are things where reality is stronger than anything else. Leaving politics aside, I think there is consensus that returning of that territory would be suicidal. Let's look back at the Syrian civil war, the Iranian influence in that country, the actions of Hezbollah and the Islamic State, and imagine that Israel is not in Golan, but 800 meters below in the Jordan Valley. It would be a nightmare for our people. I think Trump's act is to bring to light the fact that Golan is part of the State of Israel. This is also a guarantee that Israel will not be attacked from that side. EU and UN, let them talk. We must take care of our safety. If we don't do it ourselves, no one else will. Not even the USA.

*We see Israel's efforts to annex parts of the West Bank.*

There will be elections in Israel. The issue of Judea and Samaria and the negotiations with the Palestinians are not in focus. This is certainly an issue on the agenda; in the future we need to come to some form of adjustment between us and the Palestinians. They are divided between themselves, Hamas controls Gaza, Abu Mazen (Mahmud Abbas) controls the West Bank. We do not negotiate with Hamas terrorists; Abu Mazen uses all tricks to avoid any negotiations. There is a status quo when it comes to political issues. We have to wait for the new Israeli Government and see how high on their agenda the Palestinian issue will be. We do not call Judea and Samaria occupied but contested - disputed areas. And to resolve the dispute, you need to talk.

*The war in Syria is coming to an end. What does Israel see as major threats and opportunities in that country?*

The main threat is the Iranian presence in Syria, which remains there, along with the presence of Hezbollah. Our Prime Minister is in regular contact with Russian President Vladimir Putin to discuss the issue of Iran's presence in Syria, which is a destructive element. We cannot accept that. Convoys of sophisticated weapons from Iran via Syria reach Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. And that is absolutely unacceptable. This week it was revealed that Iran is launching a sophisticated missile project in Beirut itself. There are 150,000 different rockets and missiles in southern Lebanon that can reach half of Israel. After Iran and Syria emerge, everything is possible. I do not believe we will establish any understanding with Assad, the executioner from Damascus. Few people know that during the war, we had a hospital on the other side of the Syrian border near the city of Quneitra (Golan) where we treated wounded Syrian civilians. Many of them were in shock when we helped them, when they saw that we were no monsters. We have nothing against the Syrians. However, we have a lot going on against their leaders. A better future will come, inshallah, when these leaders leave.

*We see a number of problems in Iran.*

Even though I come from a land of prophets, it would be very arrogant to say that I can predict. Especially when it comes to Iran. Moreover, this country should not be underestimated. They should be given "respect, but with suspect". In that country, three clocks are ticking: public turmoil is one, the leader's age is second, and the third clock is nuclear clock, with the question of long-range missile programs. The question is which clock will strike midnight - and I don't know. Therefore, it's good that President Trump not only withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal but also returned sanctions, and I hope the EU will follow the US. There is no other way to explain to them that by acting like an elephant in a glass factory, threatening a sovereign state to destroy it, creating not only a nuclear bomb but also launch systems, long-range missiles based on North Korean technology, along with their fanatical ideology, all that makes a frightening combination. Israel has nothing against the Iranians and I hope that they will realize that they are suffering because of their leaders. And that they have to do something. Although it is not easy since the Revolutionary Guard controls almost every aspect of life. But, hope dies last.

*Can we then expect the Arab Gulf countries to get closer to Israel?*

I cannot say that I know exactly what is going on, but the fact is that Prime Minister Netanyahu was on a public visit to Bahrain. We have a cold peace with Egypt, but peace. Strategic peace, for 40 years. Do you want a personal story?

*Yes.*

I remember when as a young soldier I was watching on a small black-and-white television set the Egyptian President Sadat getting off an airplane at Ben Gurion Airport. I cried because I was happy that he came to Israel. Sincerely. In a speech to the Knesset, he said - Not war, not bloodshed. There were other wars in Lebanon, many terrorist attacks, but with Egypt, there was peace. Same with Jordan, we supply them with water, now with gas. Something is happening in the moderate Arab world. Which finally realizes that Israel is not their enemy, that it is not a problem in the Middle East, that Israel can be the solution. And that the problem in the Middle East is Iran. One thing to keep in mind: the concept of time in the Middle East is not the same as in Europe. If you reach your goal after 40 years, people in the Middle East will tell you - you are in a hurry. Slowly. They'll understand. Look, Air India flies from Delhi to Tel Aviv via Saudi Arabia. Dreams of the past are today's reality.

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I will attend both. I have good relations with Professor Ognjen Kraus and the Jewish community and I intend to build good relations with the Serbian community. I met with the Roma community representative in the Parliament. And that's why I leave that decision to Professor Kraus and the community and other organizations.

*You were in Germany, then Hungary, now in Croatia. How do you interpret the strengthening of neo-Nazism?*  
Look, it's not just a matter of the emergence of neo-Nazis. Why do we call them neo-Nazis? They are Nazis. The ideology has not changed, just the people. The problem is the growing wave of anti-Semitism, racism, new anti-Semitism against the State of Israel. Anti-Semitism is a chronic disease, we cannot eradicate it, but we have to fight it. I would like all countries in Europe and the world, which were on the wrong side of history in World War II and in any way participated in the extermination of the Jewish people, to follow the example of Germany. What Germany is doing is not perfect, but Germany has undoubtedly claimed responsibility from the very beginning, less than ten years after the end of World War II. Germans stood up and said, "We are responsible for what the Nazis have done all over the world, especially to the Jewish people, on behalf of Germany and the German people". They looked in the mirror and said, "Mea culpa!" And students, young people, they have no fear of coping with the heritage of their ancestors. It is my dream for states to accept the German form and take responsibility for their history, to remember their Jewish brothers and sisters who were part of society in Europe, Croatia, Hungary, Poland... Because these brothers and sisters contributed to the prosperity of those countries where they lived.

*Never again*

Education, it is crucial in never repeating what happened between 1941 and 1945. Not to the Jews, not to the Roma, or to gays or any other minority, small or large. Education, it is the answer. And it doesn't start in the first grade of elementary school. It starts at home, mother and father are GPS of their children. If you put the wrong address in the GPS, you will not reach the right destination. Only the right coordinates - tolerance, empathy, understanding for those different than you, inclusivity, not exclusivity - will take you to the right location, proud and happy. And you will live in a comfortable society. Then teachers and politicians come as GPS, especially in countries where the Shoa (Holocaust) took place. And politicians have a responsibility, whenever there is an anti-Semitic outburst, whether graffiti, the demolition of graves, when Israel is equated with the Nazis or when members of the Jewish people are attacked on the street, they must stand up and speak no matter what the political cost they pay for it or think they will pay. Anti-Semitism, racism, fanaticism, should not be politicized. In Croatia, too, teachers should be taught how to teach about the Holocaust. People need to be told the truth. And the truth is known by experts. I believe that opening an archive anywhere is part of the process of discovering the truth.

*Do you see any positive German trends in Croatia? Or some others?*

Two weeks after my arrival I attended a seminar of the Ministry of Education in Istria. I gave a lecture to teachers about how to teach on Shoa (Holocaust). Nearly two hundred teachers were in Israel under the agreement between the Yad Vashem Memorial Center and the Croatian Government. I see attempts, development in the right direction. In official contacts, I feel honest in trying to combat negative trends, anti-Semitism, and more. But, for the full answer, ask me this in a year.

*Do you have anything to say about buying Israeli aircrafts?*

After being nominated for Ambassador to Croatia, I hoped that I would be able to enjoy the fruits of this work. And then the bad news came. I'm sorry the business has failed. That's behind us now. Let's look ahead.

*Israel has discovered offshore gas. What plans do you have?*

Geographically, geo-strategically, Israel is isolated. We are surrounded by countries with which we do not have cross-border trade. We have some with Jordan, some with Egypt, but in comparison to trade with the EU and the US, it is insignificant. We will sell some of the gas to Jordan at a preferential price, as will Egypt. And we are fully open to cooperation. Croatia can also be part of that business. Let's start the negotiations. You have experience with energy, We don't. Let's explore the possibilities of collaboration.

*Trump has acknowledged Golan as part of Israel. The EU and the UN opposed.*

There are things where reality is stronger than anything else. Leaving politics aside, I think there is consensus that returning of that territory would be suicidal. Let's look back at the Syrian civil war, the Iranian influence in that country, the actions of Hezbollah and the Islamic State, and imagine that Israel is not in Golan, but 800 meters below in the Jordan Valley. It would be a nightmare for our people. I think Trump's act is to bring to light the fact that Golan is part of the State of Israel. This is also a guarantee that Israel will not be attacked from that side. EU and UN, let them talk. We must take care of our safety. If we don't do it ourselves, no one else will. Not even the USA.

*We see Israel's efforts to annex parts of the West Bank.*

There will be elections in Israel. The issue of Judea and Samaria and the negotiations with the Palestinians are not in focus. This is certainly an issue on the agenda; in the future we need to come to some form of adjustment between us and the Palestinians. They are divided between themselves, Hamas controls Gaza, Abu Mazen (Mahmud Abbas) controls the West Bank. We do not negotiate with Hamas terrorists; Abu Mazen uses all tricks to avoid any negotiations. There is a status quo when it comes to political issues. We have to wait for the new Israeli Government and see how high on their agenda the Palestinian issue will be. We do not call Judea and Samaria occupied but contested - disputed areas. And to resolve the dispute, you need to talk.

*The war in Syria is coming to an end. What does Israel see as major threats and opportunities in that country?*

The main threat is the Iranian presence in Syria, which remains there, along with the presence of Hezbollah. Our Prime Minister is in regular contact with Russian President Vladimir Putin to discuss the issue of Iran's presence in Syria, which is a destructive element. We cannot accept that. Convoys of sophisticated weapons from Iran via Syria reach Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. And that is absolutely unacceptable. This week it was revealed that Iran is launching a sophisticated missile project in Beirut itself. There are 150,000 different rockets and missiles in southern Lebanon that can reach half of Israel. After Iran and Syria emerge, everything is possible. I do not believe we will establish any understanding with Assad, the executioner from Damascus. Few people know that during the war, we had a hospital on the other side of the Syrian border near the city of Quneitra (Golan) where we treated wounded Syrian civilians. Many of them were in shock when we helped them, when they saw that we were no monsters. We have nothing against the Syrians. However, we have a lot going on against their leaders. A better future will come, inshallah, when these leaders leave.

*We see a number of problems in Iran.*

Even though I come from a land of prophets, it would be very arrogant to say that I can predict. Especially when it comes to Iran. Moreover, this country should not be underestimated. They should be given "respect, but with suspect". In that country, three clocks are ticking: public turmoil is one, the leader's age is second, and the third clock is nuclear clock, with the question of long-range missile programs. The question is which clock will strike midnight - and I don't know. Therefore, it's good that President Trump not only withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal but also returned sanctions, and I hope the EU will follow the US. There is no other way to explain to them that by acting like an elephant in a glass factory, threatening a sovereign state to destroy it, creating not only a nuclear bomb but also launch systems, long-range missiles based on North Korean technology, along with their fanatical ideology, all that makes a frightening combination. Israel has nothing against the Iranians and I hope that they will realize that they are suffering because of their leaders. And that they have to do something. Although it is not easy since the Revolutionary Guard controls almost every aspect of life. But, hope dies last.

*Can we then expect the Arab Gulf countries to get closer to Israel?*

I cannot say that I know exactly what is going on, but the fact is that Prime Minister Netanyahu was on a public visit to Bahrain. We have a cold peace with Egypt, but peace. Strategic peace, for 40 years. Do you want a personal story?

*Yes.*



I remember when as a young soldier I was watching on a small black-and-white television set the Egyptian President Sadat getting off an airplane at Ben Gurion Airport. I cried because I was happy that he came to Israel. Sincerely. In a speech to the Knesset, he said - Not war, not bloodshed. There were other wars in Lebanon, many terrorist attacks, but with Egypt, there was peace. Same with Jordan, we supply them with water, now with gas. Something is happening in the moderate Arab world. Which finally realizes that Israel is not their enemy, that it is not a problem in the Middle East, that Israel can be the solution. And that the problem in the Middle East is Iran. One thing to keep in mind: the concept of time in the Middle East is not the same as in Europe. If you reach your goal after 40 years, people in the Middle East will tell you - you are in a hurry. Slowly. They'll understand. Look, Air India flies from Delhi to Tel Aviv via Saudi Arabia. Dreams of the past are today's reality.