

Australia

National Affairs

AUSTRALIA ENTERED 2006 with the Liberal-National coalition government under Prime Minister John Howard approaching its tenth anniversary, and the economy in good health.

The year was marked by rising concern about the impact of climate change. Severe drought and brushfires scorched the south and east of the country, and provincial and local authorities across Australia took measures to preserve the dwindling water supply. Meanwhile, Cyclone Larry laid waste to Innisfail in northern Queensland, Cyclone Glenda stormed across Western Australia, and Cyclone Monica battered remote communities in the Northern Territory.

Australia's military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan continued amid ongoing debate over the scale and duration of these deployments. Australia recorded its first death in the Iraq conflict when Private Jake Kovco died in an accidental shooting. The government suffered a double embarrassment: the wrong body was initially sent back home for burial, and Kovco's grieving family expressed disbelief and outrage after an inquiry found that he had shot himself.

Closer to home, Australia faced a series of crises in failing states on its doorstep. Violence broke out in East Timor in April, as troops and police fought among themselves in the streets of the capital, Dili. Fiji's military chief staged the country's fourth coup in 20 years, toppling the democratically elected government. Instability and economic deterioration continued in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea as well. These developments highlighted Australia's need to maintain adequate military and security resources for possible local needs.

There was considerable pressure on the federal government to resolve the situation of Australian David Hicks, who had been captured by American forces in Afghanistan in 2001 and held since then in Guantánamo Bay prison on charges of supporting terrorism. In 2006 he accepted a plea bargain. The remainder of his sentence would be served in Australia.

The Australian government was cleared of any wrongdoing in relation to kickbacks that the Australian Wheat Board (AWB) paid to Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq (see AJYB 2006, p. 535). Terence Cole, head of

the commission of inquiry looking into the case, recommended that a task force be established to investigate possible wrongdoing by several former AWB executives.

In domestic politics, Prime Minister Howard announced he would stay on to lead the Liberals in the 2007 elections, much to the disappointment of Treasurer Peter Costello, his presumed successor as party leader. In the ranks of the opposition Australian Labor Party (ALP), growing dissatisfaction with party leader Kim Beazley led to his replacement by Kevin Rudd in December, with Julia Gillard as his deputy—a change that triggered high approval ratings. Labor also won four state elections—in South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland, and Victoria.

Israel and the Middle East

The government, led by Prime Minister Howard and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, continued to offer remarkably consistent support to Israel in 2006. Moreover, despite some differences in approach and emphasis, the opposition ALP leadership made that support bipartisan.

The victory of Hamas in the Palestinian Authority elections in January was greeted with dismay by the Australian government, which indicated it would not deal with Hamas unless three conditions were met: recognition of Israel, renunciation of violence, and a commitment to honor all previous agreements entered into by the PA. In striking contrast, the success of the centrist party Kadima in the Israeli elections in March and the subsequent formation of a government were warmly and enthusiastically welcomed.

Addressing a United Israel Appeal function in Melbourne on April 5, Foreign Minister Downer reiterated Australia's policy toward the Hamas government: "Remember, as a listed entity under the Charter of the United Nations Act 1945, it is illegal for Australians to provide assistance to Hamas. This will constrain any Australian support to the PA as long as Hamas retains its current charter."

Australia's preferences were especially evident when Israel carried out military operations in Gaza and against Hezbollah in Lebanon. On July 16, Prime Minister Howard told ABC TV: "As much in all as I deplore the violence and wish it would stop, one has to understand Israel's position. Israel has a right of self-defense. This country has been under constant attack for almost 50 years since it was founded and there's still an unwillingness on the part of many in the region to accept Israel's right to exist." In an interview the next day, Opposition Leader Beazley echoed

Howard, adding that the onus was on Syria and Iran, as supporters of Hezbollah, to disarm it. Even as intense media coverage focused on the plight of the 25,000 Australian nationals caught in Lebanon and steps being taken to evacuate them, the federal government maintained its support for Israel.

On July 19, Kevin Rudd, the ALP foreign affairs spokesperson, called for a ceasefire between Israel and both Hezbollah and Hamas, and the dismantling of the two terror organizations as called for by UN Security Council Resolution 1559. But Julia Irwin, a federal MP for the ALP, and federal Senator Kerry Nettle of the Green Party marched at an anti-Israel rally in Sydney on July 22, where many banners compared Israel to the Nazis and its actions to the Holocaust. A good number of Hezbollah flags were also seen there.

Twenty-six-year-old Asaf Namer, an Israeli-born Australian citizen who was serving in the IDF, was one of nine Israeli soldiers killed in southern Lebanon on July 26 in a blast outside a mosque in the town of Bint J'beil.

Following the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 in August, both Prime Minister Howard and Foreign Minister Downer expressed doubts that it would achieve its desired results. The latter said, "There are a lot of ifs and buts about the resolution," but he nevertheless called on Iran and Syria to support it. Australia declined to contribute troops to an expanded UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Downer denied this was due to any lack of confidence in UNIFIL's ability to disarm Hezbollah.

In an interview with the *Australian Jewish News* in September, Prime Minister Howard explained that his support for Israel was "based on merit" since "the essential justice of the cause of Israel's survival has always been quite manifest." He defended the government's decision to ban the military wings of Hamas and Hezbollah but not their political bodies on the grounds that "we have taken the view that you can separate them out."

In September, Iran's nuclear program and its president's call for the destruction of Israel figured prominently in Australian foreign policy. The government supported imposing sanctions on Iran if it failed to adhere to the demands of the UN and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In New York, at the opening of the UN General Assembly session in September, Foreign Minister Downer, in a meeting with his Iranian opposite number, warned that President Ahmadinejad must stop threatening to wipe Israel off the map. Downer also held talks there, for the first

time, with Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni, who thanked him for his country's support during the Lebanon war. Downer then met with the wife of kidnapped Israeli soldier Ehud Goldwasser, promising to assist with the release of all three kidnapped soldiers.

On October 16, the ALP shadow defense minister, Robert McClelland, moved a bill in Parliament condemning suicide bombing and proposing the negotiation of an International Convention on Suicide Terrorism that would define terrorism and make it an international crime.

A potential scandal in Israeli-Australian relations was discreetly handled in October. Israel's ambassador in Canberra, Naftali Tamir, was recalled to Jerusalem after his racially tinged comments on promoting closer ties between the two countries were published in an Israeli newspaper. Tamir was quoted as saying: "We are in Asia without the characteristics of Asians. We don't have yellow skin and slanted eyes. Asia is basically the yellow race. Australia and Israel are not. We are basically the white race. We are on the western side of Asia and they are on the southeastern side." A new ambassador was appointed in December, career diplomat Yuval Rotem. Formerly an adviser to several foreign ministers and consul general in Los Angeles, Rotem was expected to arrive in Australia in mid-2007.

In November, the government used its majority to block a resolution proposed in the Senate, Parliament's upper house, by the Australian Democrats—a minor party—and backed by the ALP and the Greens. It called for the government to follow the advice of the International Crisis Group to support an international Middle East peace conference. The government declared the resolution flawed because it did not demand that the Palestinians reject violence, recognize Israel, and accept all previous agreements signed by the PA.

Australia was one of only seven countries to oppose a General Assembly resolution in December calling for an inquiry into the IDF's shelling of a residential area in Gaza's Beit Hanoun the previous month.

Official visits between Israel and Australia mostly flowed from the former to the latter. In March, Israel's Ashkenazi chief rabbi, Yonah Metzger, was the keynote speaker at a dinner celebrating the 50th anniversary of Sydney's ultra-Orthodox Yeshiva Centre. A historic tour of Israel in April by an Australian clergy group that included Catholics, Anglicans, and Uniting Church members was led by Rabbi John Levi, a member of the editorial committee of the Australia/Israel and Jewish Council (AIJAC), under its Rambam program.

Ron Prossor, director general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, arrived in

Australia in June, where he met with the foreign minister and addressed Jewish National Fund functions in Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne, and Sydney. He told an AIJAC luncheon that he hoped Ehud Olmert would be the first sitting Israeli prime minister to visit Australia.

Former Mossad chief Ephraim Halevy visited Australia as a guest of the Australian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in October. He declared that Hezbollah had been "seriously mauled" by Israel during the Lebanon war. Another visitor that month had a different perspective. Riah Abu al-Assal, the Palestinian Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, blamed Israel for the lack of Middle East peace.

In business news, an agreement was reached in July between Melbourne Water and Mekorot, Israel's national water carrier, to do joint research on methods of water recycling and treatment. The federal communications minister, Senator Helen Coonan, led an Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce trade delegation to Israel in November. While there she publicly praised the country's entrepreneurial spirit and research-and-development expertise.

The debate over whether Australia should keep its troops in Iraq continued. Prime Minister Howard maintained that his government would not "cut and run," while the opposition ALP proposed varying formulas directed at bringing the troops home. In an ABC TV interview on September 28, Kim Beazley, then the ALP leader, stated that only Australian soldiers guarding the country's diplomats should remain. On December 8, speaking on Australian TV's Channel 7, the party's new leader, Kevin Rudd, asserted that an ALP-led government would withdraw the troops once the current rotation of the Australian detachment ended.

By the end of 2006, 1,450 Australian Defense Force troops were serving in Iraq. This included a 110-person security detachment of infantry and light armored vehicles protecting and escorting government personnel working at the Australian embassy in Baghdad. Approximately 520 soldiers were based in the south, at Tallil Air Base, to provide security for the provinces of Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar. A naval vessel with a crew of 190 was deployed in the Persian Gulf to intercept ships suspected of illegal activity and to protect Iraqi oil platforms.

At a Washington press conference on December 11, Foreign Secretary Downer dismissed the Iraq Study Group recommendation that America should talk to Iran and Syria, saying that such an initiative would not result in major policy changes by those two countries.

Tensions in the Middle East resonated within the Muslim community of Australia. In July, the imam of Sydney's Lakemba Mosque, Sheikh Taj

a-Din al-Hilaly, was sacked from the prime minister's Muslim Community Reference Group following publication of his sermons that referred to the Holocaust as a "Zionist lie" and to Israel as a "cancer." In October, al-Hilaly, in a radio interview, promoted violence as a legitimate tactic. He condemned terror attacks in Madrid, London, and New York, but endorsed them in Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

The Syrian minister for expatriates, Dr. Bouthaina Shaaban, visited Australia in September and met with a number of high-ranking government ministers, including Foreign Secretary Downer and Opposition Leader Beazley.

THE MEDIA

Not much changed in the Australian media's coverage of the Middle East in 2006. The Melbourne-based broadsheet *The Age* and its Sydney sister paper, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, retained Middle East correspondent Ed O'Loughlin, who tended to view matters from a Palestinian perspective. Indeed, his descriptions of people and events could almost have been written by Palestinian propagandists. Opinion pieces in these papers critical of Israel and the U.S. far outnumbered those that were sympathetic.

The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), the two publicly owned television networks, ran many documentaries on Middle Eastern themes, some interesting and informative but most biased against Israel and/or the U.S. The SBS public-affairs program "Dateline" was particularly anti-Israel, to the extent that its stories about Gaza and Lebanon ignored the Israeli side altogether. These stations' coverage of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, however, was excellent. In a significant breakthrough, ABC officials, under consistent grilling by Senator Michael Ronaldson of the Liberal Party, finally admitted that Hezbollah, Hamas, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad were terrorist organizations, but this did not have a major impact on their coverage.

The media gave considerable prominence to Antony Loewenstein, a Jewish critic of Israel, who became a darling of the anti-Israel Left. Similarly, claims advanced by American professors Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer that U.S. policy in the Middle East was controlled by a powerful Jewish lobby were covered sympathetically.

As early as the start of the year, when Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon suffered a debilitating stroke, anti-Israel media voices took the

opportunity to label him a war criminal. The worst instance was a cartoon in *The Age* suggesting that Sharon was still fit enough to work if he had even minimal movement in his right arm, since that was all he needed "to order a missile strike against an old Palestinian man in a wheelchair." When the newspaper received complaints about the cartoon, it gave space for the cartoonist to write a column that heaped more calumnies on Sharon.

The victory of Hamas in the PA elections and its formation of a government were also exploited by media critics of Israel. Some blamed Israeli policies for bringing about the Hamas accession, while others sought to rebuff criticism of Hamas by drawing parallels between its actions and those of Israeli governments.

The biggest stories of the year were the Israeli incursions into Gaza following the capture of Corp. Gilad Shalit and the subsequent war between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon. In both cases the media stressed and even exaggerated the destructive impact of Israeli actions on the local populations, while Israel's motivations were often given short shrift, and sometimes not mentioned at all. The *Canberra Times* maintained its reputation as Australia's most anti-Israel mainstream newspaper. Of the 28 opinion pieces it ran between July 14 and August 24 on the situation, 15 were highly critical of Israel, 8 were neutral, and only 5 were favorable. The analysis in its news reporting was equally skewed.

SBS TV's news coverage of Israeli actions not only lacked context, but also, at times, showed blatant bias. For example, it highlighted UN representative Jan Egeland's harsh criticism of Israel, but ignored his equally strong remarks about Hezbollah the next day. Also, it prominently featured the deaths of four UN observers killed when an Israeli shell hit their post, but made no mention of UNIFIL reports that Hezbollah had been firing at Israel from that location.

As had been the case for years, *The Australian*, a national broadsheet, provided the most objective picture of events. In many editorials, it set out insightfully the true causes of the Middle East conflict, with attention to Israel's reasons for acting as it did, and the opinion pages provided balance. Foreign editor Greg Sheridan presented the fairest and most informative coverage of the Middle East available in the general press.

Iran's nuclear ambitions were a topic of constant media discussion throughout the year. Much of the commentary tended to downplay the threat, arguing that the use of military force against Iran would lead to far greater dangers.

Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism had never been a major part of Australian life. While there were incidents of anti-Semitism in the country's history, the phenomenon did not threaten Jewish security, nor did anyone with aspirations to public credibility admit to holding anti-Semitic views or associating with anti-Semitic organizations.

Even so, traditional right-wing notions of Jewish conspiracies had been supplemented in recent years by similar anti-Jewish rhetoric emanating from far-left publications and organizations. The virulence of some public criticism of Israeli actions as well as continued misrepresentation of them (see above) reinforced such tendencies. Public discussion in 2006 also focused on Islamic sources of anti-Semitism. According to reports, the mufti of Australia promoted Holocaust denial in his Sydney mosque, and anti-Jewish books were available in Australian bookshops that served the Muslim community.

There were 442 instances of "racist violence" against Jews reported to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry during 2006. The incidents were categorized under the headings of physical assault, vandalism—including arson attacks—threatening telephone calls, hate mail, graffiti, leaflets, posters, and abusive and intimidating e-mail. Hundreds of Jews and Jewish organizations were targeted, some repeatedly. The number of 2006 incidents, although lower than the record set in 2002, was 47 percent above the average annual figure over the previous 16 years. The categories of assault, face-to-face harassment, and vandalism grew fastest, reaching 56 percent above the average. Incidents of harassment that did not include assault were recorded at a rate 49 percent above the average.

Australia continued to host a plethora of fringe organizations that promoted anti-Semitism, some of which had been involved in extremist political activity for decades. While all opposed the political and economic establishment, Zionism, and Jews—which, they charged, were engaged in a conspiracy against Australia—these groups had a bewildering multiplicity of orientations: far-right, far-left, antiglobalization, anarchist, white supremacist, and militant Muslim.

The Adelaide Institute was a loose conglomeration of the followers of self-proclaimed "Holocaust revisionist" Frederick Toben, who was considered so extreme that David Irving complained that Toben's Web site was a liability to the cause of revisionism. During 2006 Toben not only reiterated the charge of a Jewish conspiracy to run the world, but he also went so far as to publish extracts from a book, *The Hitler We Loved and*

Why. Toben was also a regular poster on neo-Nazi on-line bulletin boards. And he found a platform in Iran: the country's official Mehr news agency issued a long interview with Toben. Geoffrey Muirden, an extreme right-winger who ran the Adelaide Institute while Toben was incarcerated in a German prison for Holocaust denial, died in 2006.

The Australian League of Rights was described by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission as "undoubtedly the most influential and effective, as well as the best organized and most substantially financed, racist organization in Australia." Its membership was primarily elderly. Under the leadership of its director, Betty Luks, it held meetings, issued anti-Semitic and anti-Israel publications, and maintained a Web site. Its founder, Eric Butler, died in June 2006. The League received unexpected publicity when the media reported that controversial American actor/director Mel Gibson, who had recently uttered anti-Semitic slurs at a police officer in the U.S. who arrested him for drunk driving, had supported a candidate backed by the League of Rights in the 1987 Australian election.

The Citizens Electoral Councils (CEC), based in a well-staffed office in suburban Melbourne, sent out mass mailings reflecting the views of Lyndon LaRouche, including bizarre and offensive anti-Semitic conspiracy theories involving Jewish and antiracist organizations. The organization spent, over the years, hundreds of thousands of dollars on electoral campaigns, their candidates averaging only around 0.06 percent of the vote.

There were allegations in 2006 that the CEC was seeking to infiltrate the conservative National Civic Council's network of local chapters. Also, it publicized a petition in opposition to Australia's antiterrorism laws that garnered support from far-right and Islamic extremists, and even, for a short time, from a number of prominent Australians who were unaware of the nature of the CEC. Members of the Jewish community in several regions of the country complained about the organization's distribution of propaganda, especially on campuses and outside venues hosting Jewish community functions.

The deceptively named Australian Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) continued to advocate Holocaust denial and the protection of the "rights" of deniers. John Bennett, the group's leader, was on the editorial advisory committee of the *Journal of Historical Review*, published by the Holocaust-denying Institute for Historical Review in California. The 2006 edition of the ACLU's *Your Rights* featured an article by the U.S.-

based denier Mark Weber calling for the repeal of all legislation restricting Holocaust denial.

There were many small groups of racist skinheads. The best known was Australian National Action, which staged rallies in Melbourne and Adelaide, and publishing a newsletter. Its agenda was white-supremacist, anti-immigrant, and anti-Semitic. Another such group, calling itself the White Pride Coalition of Australia, gained notoriety in March 2006 when one of its leaders distributed detailed bomb-making instructions, triggering a police investigation. This individual had previously described Jews as "vile, loathsome bloodsuckers" on the WPCA Web site.

The Australian chapter of the World Church of the Creator—which had no more than three identifiable supporters—established a prominent presence on the Internet and in on-line newsgroups, as well as in the Queensland regional media. Its homepage referred to "the parasitic Jews." "Creators" were urged to "retake" Australia from Jews and non-whites.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The latest census, conducted in 2001, showed about 84,000 Jews in Australia, 0.44 percent of the population. This was roughly 4,000 more than in 1996. The actual figure was undoubtedly higher, since religion was an optional question on the census form and was omitted by a quarter of Australians. Jewish community leaders believed that Holocaust survivors were especially likely not to disclose their religion to the government, and that the actual number of Jews in the country was around 120,000.

Melbourne had the largest Jewish population, followed by Sydney. The census showed that most recent Jewish immigrants came from South Africa, and that Hebrew was the preferred language in the homes of 6,000 Australians, presumably former Israelis.

Communal Affairs

There was no change in the leadership of the primary body representing Australia's Jews, as Graeme Leonard continued as president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ). Philip Chester of Mel-

bourne succeeded Sydney's Ron Weiser as president of the Zionist Federation of Australia. Mark Leibler remained national chairman of the Australia/Israel and Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC), and Dr. Colin Rubenstein continued as its executive director. AIJAC maintained its close association with the American Jewish Committee. Stanley Roth was succeeded as federal president of the United Israel Appeal by Jack Smorgon in November, while Ron Ferster of Sydney succeeded Melbourne's Michael Naphtali as head of the Jewish National Fund.

Education

More than half of all Jewish children aged 4–18, including almost 70 percent of those aged 4–12, received full-time Jewish education in the 19 Jewish day schools in Australia. Spanning the religious spectrum, these schools continued to rank at the highest level for academic achievement. This reflected the community's major investment in the schools as a means of preserving Jewish continuity. Day-school enrollments continued to grow despite ongoing concerns over high costs and the challenge to the community to find new sources of funding.

There was an increased emphasis on adult education, largely under the influence of the Melton Program, which had nearly 500 students in Sydney and Melbourne. Short-term courses utilizing guest lecturers also proved popular. Top priorities for the future, according to Australian Jewish educators, were expanded Jewish studies on the university level and teacher education to provide quality faculty for the day schools.

At the university level, the Australasian Union of Jewish Students (AUJS) continued to play an active role on campus, particularly in combating anti-Zionist and racist manifestations and in promoting exchange programs with Israel for Jewish students.

Intergroup Relations

Representative bodies of the different religious communities in Australia continued to speak out for religious harmony. The ECAJ, the National Council of Churches in Australia, and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils repeated their calls for tolerance. A number of Christian groups and leaders of the Baha'i faith condemned anti-Semitic attacks, and Jewish groups joined others in condemning racist vilification of Australian Arabs and Muslims. The Australian Partnership of Religious Organizations (formerly the Australian Partnership of Ethnic and

Religious Organizations) and other multifaith groups, such as the World Conference of Religions for Peace and the Griffith University Multi-Faith Center, provided platforms for contact and cooperation between the Jewish community and other significant religious groups.

There was also direct interfaith activity with the Christian churches. The Uniting Church in Australia in cooperation with the ECAJ convened national dialogues twice each year to discuss joint action to combat prejudice. The Catholic Church had been emphasizing interreligious understanding since the lead-up to its celebration of the year 2000; the Catholic Bishops' Conference and the ECAJ held an "annual conversation" each year. After a number of years of preparation, the Anglican-Jewish Australian Dialogue had its first two formal sessions. These Christian bodies, as a matter of principle, refused to allow racist and anti-Jewish groups to use their premises, and advised their representatives not to share platforms with known extremists.

Australian Jewry's relationships with the local Muslim community were strained not only by the Lebanon war but also by press reports of Muslim religious ideologues blaming Israel and the Jews for the problems of the Islamic world. A potential Arab-Jewish conflict arose in July, when it became known that a Syrian-born Australian citizen, Khalil Eideh, an ALP candidate for the Legislative Council of the state of Victoria, had written to Syrian president Bashar al-Assad in 2002 pledging loyalty to him, describing Israel as a "colonial and Zionist" threat to Syria, and praising Palestinian suicide bombers. Eideh met with the Victoria Jewish Community Council and explained that such rhetoric was simply part of the traditional style of discourse in such letters. He stated that he was not anti-Semitic and that he accepted Israel right to exist. The council accepted Eideh's assurances. He was duly elected in November.

Culture

The Jewish Museum of Australia and the Jewish Holocaust Museum and Research Center, both in Melbourne, and the Sydney Jewish Museum were world-class institutions that maintained extensive permanent collections of Judaica and Holocaust memorabilia. They received visitors in ever increasing numbers, particularly school groups, and hosted numerous cultural events, including literary evenings, book launches, and musical and dramatic presentations. The Adelaide Jewish community maintained a "virtual" museum, the Adelaide Jewish Museum. Another mainstay of Jewish culture was the annual Jewish film festival, which con-

tinued to attract large and enthusiastic audiences both in Sydney and Melbourne.

The Australia Israel Cultural Exchange (AICE), founded in 2002, made a significant contribution to the cultural scene in both countries. The third AICE Israeli Film Festival, held in Melbourne in August, was opened by Katriel Schory, director of the Israeli Film Fund. In Israel, AICE mounted exhibitions of Australian Aboriginal art, and conducted an Australian film festival.

Personalia

In January, the government conferred Australia Day Honors on a number of prominent members of the Jewish community. Jack Smorgon, a philanthropist and veteran leader of the United Israel Appeal, was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO). Among those appointed Members of the Order of Australia (AM) were Belinda Epstein-Frisch; Dr. Alan Finkel; Ian Lacey; Frank Levy; and Carol Schwartz. The Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) was presented to Margaret Beadman; Max Lemberg; and Rabbi Benzion Milecki.

The annual round of Queen's Birthday Honors announced in June bestowed awards on a number of other prominent members of the Jewish community. Professor Raymond Lowenthal was named an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for services to medicine. This award also went to Leon Hertz, an executive vice president of News Corporation.

Dr. Colin Rubenstein, executive director of AIJAC, was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM). The citation noted "his services to the community through executive roles with a range of Jewish organizations as well as his contribution to the advancement of multiculturalism and to the academic discipline of political science." Others receiving honors in this category were Susan Bures, former editor of the *Australian Jewish Times*; Dr. Herbert Freilich; Joe Gersh; Michael Gudinski; Jill Margo; Prof. Leon Piterman; and Prof. David Weisbrot. Those awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia included Joe Aarons; Peter Bancroft; Reuven Herzog; Rachel Kalman; Gerald Moses; Zipporah Oliver; Dr. Max Shavitsky; Roy Tashi; and Zara Young.

In 2006, the Australian Jewish community mourned the passing of Leslie Caplan (AM), a Sydney-based communal leader who had served as president of both the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies and ECAJ; Prof. Rufus Davis, who taught politics at Monash University, Melbourne, and served for many years on AIJAC's editorial board; Lewis

Herman (OAM), the long-time mayor of Ashfield in Sydney; Allan Newell and Arnold Newhouse, both former presidents of the State Zionist Council of New South Wales; Dr. Francis Septimus Owen (OAM), board member and past president of the Newcastle Hebrew Congregation; John Weiner, Holocaust survivor, professional photographer, and educator; and Nathan Zusman, teacher, publisher, and champion of the Yiddish language.

COLIN L. RUBENSTEIN