

# The Liberal Party Supports Israel Unequivocally

Susan Kadis, Liberal Member of Parliament for Thornhill tells 'Shalom Toronto' that the Canadian Israeli community can trust the support of the Liberal party for Israel's existence and security. Her Thornhill office welcomes community members to discuss federal level issues, including issues relating to family reunions

*Jonathan Dahoah Halevi*

The Jewish community of Thornhill has an authentic representative in the Canadian parliament, who supports the state of Israel unreservedly. That was my experience following last week's meeting with member of parliament Susan Kadis in her modest office located on Yonge Street in the heart of Thornhill.

Born in Toronto (January 1953), she earned a Bachelor of Sociology from York University. Kadis first rose to prominence in the late 1980's as the spokesperson for and co-chair of the Parents Advocating Student Support group when she accused the board of being anti-Semitic as there was a disproportionate number of students of the Jewish faith that had failed a grade, including her own son. She succeeded in getting the province to investigate the matter. As a result, the province then retested the students who had originally failed a grade. Kadis received much praise from the community for her efforts and parlayed this support into getting elected in the 1988 municipal election as the area's School Board Trustee, thus starting her political career.

Kadis also established a local newspaper, the Thornhill Times and served as school trustee in Vaughan from 1988 to 1994. Between 1997 and 2004 she was a municipal councillor. In 2003 Kadis ran for the provincial Liberal Party nomination for the riding of Thornhill but lost to fellow municipal councillor Mario Racco.

She was elected to the House of Commons as a Liberal candidate in the 2004 federal election on June 28, 2004, in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) riding of Thornhill. She officially resigned her position as city councillor after being elected. In the 2006 federal election, Kadis was re-elected as the MP in Thornhill with 53% of the vote. Kadis obtained 29,934 votes, winning by about 11,000 over any other candidate.

Kadis endorsed Michael Ignatieff for liberal party leadership, but later withdrew her support over comments made by Ignatieff on Israel's war in Lebanon. She later endorsed Bob Rae and following Rae's loss on the 3rd ballot, she endorsed Stéphane Dion.

A 14-year breast cancer survivor, Kadis has served on the board of directors of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. One of her accomplishments as MP was to successfully introduce a bill that created a national Alzheimer's strategy.

## Close Ties with the Israeli Community

The processes shaping the Canadian Israeli community have not escaped Kadis's attention. During our interview she wished to emphasize the close ties she has developed since the late 80's with Rabbi Landa, the rabbi of the Hebrew speaking community, and her activity as Vaughan city councillor to promote important projects on behalf of the community. At last week's Chabad dinner (Community Spirit) Kadis was honored by Rabbi Landa for promoting the building of the synagogue at the Bathurst-Centre intersection.

Kadis is full of praise for the Canadian-Israeli community which strikes her as being proud of its identity, and which brings with it a new entrepreneurial spirit and vitality to Canada and to the Jewish community as a whole. She would like to see community members becoming more engaged in political activity on behalf of the community. She also wishes to bestow an important message upon the



nization, attempts to broadcast its extremist ideology in Canada.

"We should not remain indifferent", yet it is important in her view, to maintain the right balance between the fight against terrorism and safeguarding individual rights, regardless of origin. She is proud of her initiative to promote dialogue between Jews and Muslims in Thornhill.

## The Liberal Party is a Friend of Israel

Susan Kadis praises Stéphane Dion for his staunch support for Israel, which she claims is long standing Liberal party policy. She tells 'Shalom Toronto' that the Jewish community can trust Dion's deep commitment to the security of Israel, and struggle against

anti-Semitism. Dion, she recalls, has expressed unqualified support for Israel, and she believes that the Canadian government should provide communities facing violence with security measures, as she did at the local level as city councillor.

At the interview's conclusion, Kadis wished to note that her Thornhill office is open to the Israeli community concerning federal issues, including family reunions.

Liberal Party Policy Regarding Israel Policy guidelines of the liberal party as expressed in a speech given by the Hon. Stéphane Dion in Montreal on the 59th Anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel:

The right of Israel to exist in peace and security is a cornerstone of Canada's foreign policy.

A two-state solution of an independent and democratic Palestine alongside an independent and democratic Israel.

Israel, like any other state, has the right to be free from threats or acts of force.

The international community must act against Iranian threats to destroy Israel.

Total condemnation of terrorism from whatever source for whatever purpose in whatever form.

Support for democracy, human rights, good governance and the rule of law throughout the Middle East.

Fairness in the United Nations General Assembly, where one-sided resolutions serve neither peace nor the UN.

*Continued combat of racism, anti-Semitism, hatred and intolerance.*

Israeli emigrants: it is important to maintain community unity and not forget the Israeli homeland whose durability constitutes a warranty for the Jewish people.

## Seeking to Bring Ahmadinijad to Trial

Support for Israel is key in Kadis's orientation and parliamentary activity. "The community knows me and can trust me on this", she tells 'Shalom Toronto', and stresses the need to stand by Israel at this time, as voices from the east recall the darkest periods in human history. She is referring of course to president Ahmadinijad of Iran who has avowed to destroy the state of Israel. "It has to be stated loud and clear that Ahmadinijad is inciting genocide". The conclusions she draws are unequivocal. The leaders of the western world have to lead a determined campaign against anti-Semitism, and incitement to genocide, and must not shy away from action. She criticizes the Harper government for not doing enough to stop Iran. Kadis is a staunch supporter of bringing Ahmadinijad to the international court in the Hague on charges of incitement to genocide.

## "The Holocaust Could Reoccur"

"As a girl growing up after World War II, I was convinced that the Holocaust could never reoccur. Today I am no longer so sure", Kadis says. The possible transmission of Hezbollah broadcasts to Canada via satellite trouble her. She promised 'Shalom Toronto' to check the issue, and act forcefully if indeed Hezbollah, defined by Canada as a terrorist orga-

## International Community and Iran "Heading Toward Confrontation"

Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) warned this week in a press conference that "Iran is expanding its knowledge and capacity. It now has over 1000 centrifuges. I have expressed concern over this because the Agency is unable to conduct a robust and full inspection".

"My current priority is to carry out a comprehensive inspection," ElBaradei said, adding that he estimated Iran was "three to eight years" from being capable of producing nuclear weapons.

Ahmadinejad: Israel will be Uprooted should it Attack Lebanon

'If you repeat the same mistake of the last year, the ocean of nations of the region will get angry and will cut root of the Zionist regime from its stem,' Islamist Republic leader says in live state television broadcast