

### **Universal values and the political culture divide: new forum**

A new polarization is emerging in both Australian and American political culture (and indeed across the "West"). One side, in the name of change and progress, seeks to service by legislative facilitation actual social trends, including abortion and homosexual unions. There is another side, however, which takes up a reflection on moral anchor points and parameters, often with express reference to religious traditions. Media, bureaucratic elites, party hierarchies and academia have given the stamp of political correctness to the first group. It has also been perceived as the more profitable by business, and has been driven by it. But there has also been a groundswell from grassroots religious cultures, from the backbenches in Parliament, and from other groups against what is perceived as a problematic challenge to fundamental social values and institutions.

The Institute for Judaism and Civilization is organizing a forum with Mr Murray Thompson, Member of the Legislative Assembly in the Parliament of Victoria, to explore the theme of the ethical re-anchoring of society. Mr Thompson, the son of a former Premier of Victoria, Lindsay Thompson will be joined in this forum by Rabbi Dr Shimon Cowen, who will present this issue in the light of the universal ethics expressed in the Noahide laws. The forum will take place on Thursday 13 November at 8 pm at "The Shul", 1 Wilks St (off Alma Rd) North Caulfield, Melbourne. Entry by donation. Information 9527 5902. For the flyer see:

[www.ijc.com.au/newsletter/2008/2008-11-13.html](http://www.ijc.com.au/newsletter/2008/2008-11-13.html)



Mr Murray Thompson MLA, to speak at forum on "Re-anchoring society: sourcing values" in the present political climate

### **New edition of text for course in universal ethics**

The text written by Rabbi Shimon Cowen, *Perspectives on the Noahide laws*, for the course shortly to commence on the world view of the Noahide laws has been issued in a new edition. The first edition was strongly endorsed by Professor Robert George, Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University and a subsequent edition recently praised by Mr Robert Clark, Shadow Attorney General in the Victorian Parliament in a forum as "very cogent". The work can be obtained from the Institute. Last minute registration for the first on-line course, which is due to begin in one week, is still possible. See, for details of this and other courses;

[www.ijc.com.au/courses.html](http://www.ijc.com.au/courses.html)

and the registration form

[www.ijc.com.au/flyers/2008/registration-form.pdf](http://www.ijc.com.au/flyers/2008/registration-form.pdf)

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