**Yehudit Kol Inbar:** He was eating grapefruit and he was crying, because for him it represented, ‘wow, we are in Israel and we have a grapefruit that we ourself grew it.’ He was very proud and happy with the feeling that they're building a place for the Jewish people.

**Mishy Harman (narration):** That’s Yehudit Kol Inbar, the daughter of Moshe Kolodny, who - for nineteen years - headed the Jewish Agency’s Youth Immigration Division, and was responsible for bringing more than 100,000 unaccompanied minors to Israel from eighty-five different countries. Despite being among the founders of at least seven *kibbutzim* and five youth villages, and later on holding senior cabinet posts, he considered that immigration effort to be his greatest public achievement. It was, he once said, a project that had no equivalent in the annals of human history.

Hey, I’m Mishy Harman and this is Israel Story. Israel Story is brought to you by the Jerusalem Foundation and *The Times of Israel*.

So Israel is 75, and we feel this is a moment for us to step back and take stock. To ask where we came from, where we are, and where - for G-d’ sake - we’re going. And in order to answer those questions, we decided to go back to the basics. Our series - **Signed, Sealed, Delivered?** - looks at our founding moral compass - *Megillat Ha’Atzmaut*, or the Declaration of Independence.

Thirty-seven people signed *Megillat Ha’Atzmaut*. And over the course of the past several months, our team has diligently tracked down and interviewed the closest living relative of *each one* of these signatories. We talked about their ancestors and families, about the promise of the Declaration, the places in which we delivered on that promise, the places in which we exceeded our wildest dreams, and also about the places where we fell short.

And it is through these descendants of the men and women who - with the strike of a pen - gave birth to this country of ours, that we wish to learn something about ourselves.

Today we’ll meet Moshe Kolodny, and his daughter, Yehudit Kol Inbar. She’ll present one of the *many* political perspectives we’ll be featuring throughout the series.

We’ll be right back.

\*\*\*\*\*\*

**Mishy Harman (narration):** OK, we’re back. Here’s our producer Ross Bordow with Yehudit Kol Inbar, the Former Director of the Museums Division at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Center, and - of course - Moshe Kol’s daughter.

**Ross Bordow (narration):** Moshe Kolodny, who’d later in life change his surname to Kol, was born in 1911, in the heart of the Pale of Settlement. His father, Mordechai, was trained as a dentist, but worked - instead - as a successful wine merchant. And *his* father, Moshe’s *grandfather*, Rabbi Pinchas Eliyahu HaLevi Kolodny, was not only a leading religious authority figure in Pinsk, but also an avid gardener and the author of *She’ar Yerakot: Von Mein Kleine Beitale* - a 70-page book in Yiddish on backyard horticulture.

Having given him both a rigorous religious, *and* a broad secular, education, young Moshe’s parents wanted him to study medicine. But he much preferred the Zionist movement’s conference rooms to the university’s anatomy labs. They ultimately compromised on Moshe making *aliyah* and enrolling in the Hebrew University, which he did - only to drop out once his Zionist activism entirely took over his life.

He was a labor organizer, an educator, a publicist and - starting in 1947 - a member of the executive of the Jewish Agency. During those early post-war years, he also became a professional colleague and close personal friend of former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

At 37, he was the second-youngest signatory of the Declaration of Independence. He later went on to serve as Minister of Development and Minister of Tourism, a post which he held for more than eleven consecutive years. He was, at heart, a liberal centrist, and as such advocated for a constitution, for freedom of religion, for military training for *yeshiva* boys, and for the normalization of ties with Israel's various different Arab minority groups.

In 1977, the year he left the government, Kol was named an honorary citizen of the town of Dalyat al-Karmel in recognition of his lifelong support of the Druze community. He also championed the cause of the Melkite and Maronite residents of Iqrit and Bir’im, two Chrisitan villages near the Lebanese border, in which the locals willingly evacuated their homes in October 1948, with a promise that they would be allowed to return within “two weeks.” Seventy-five years later, those two weeks have yet to expire, a decision that Likud Minister Misha Arens once called, quote, “a march of folly, or, a guide for how to make friends into enemies!”

Devoting most of his post-political life to writing, Kol passed away in 1989, and was buried on the Mount of Olives, in Jerusalem.

Here he is, in a recording from 1961, discussing the way he believed Israel should treat its minority groups.

**Moshe Kol:** The State of Israel must set an example in terms of its daily Jewish life, but also in terms of our humanistic approach to the Arab minority. If we want to make peace with the Arabs - and I’m certain that we must seek such a peace - we have to be exemplary in our relationship to the Arab minority in Israel. Because the truth is that *we* are a minority within the Arab world, and the Arabs in Israel are a minority only here, within our State.

**Yehudit Kol-Inbar:** My name is Yehudit Kol-Inbar. I'm 74-years-old. I was born during the Independence War to my parents, Moshe Kol (Kolodny) and Keta Kol Muscat. Moshe immigrated to Israel at ‘32, 1932, from Pinsk. He was 21. He was the leader of the youth movement *Ha’Noar Ha’Zioni* and also he was in a kibbutz – Kibbutz Nitzanim. His brother came also immigrated to Israel. They had a sister Paula, in Pinsk, and they got a certificate for her as a student in the Hebrew University. And then his mother, Yehudit – which I’m named after her – she said, “I sent two boys to the desert. She stays with me.” She was murdered with the mother in Pinsk. She was pregnant. He never talked about it. Never, never. I asked myself if he really called my name once. I'm not sure. Maybe it was too hard for him, I don't know. I can't remember that he said “Yehudit.” It's his mother's name. There was a very popular program in the radio, *Chipus Krovim* - ‘Looking for Relatives.’ They named names of people who were looking for other people, that were separated during the Holocaust. Ten minutes past one, the whole Israel was quiet. Everybody listened to this *Chipus Krovim*. My father used to eat lunch at home and then he slept, but before he went, he closed the radio. So I asked him once, “why are you closing the radio? I mean, everybody is listen.” So he said to me, and I think this is the one of the only times that I remember that he was strict like that, he said “nobody was left.” I remember this. My mother, actually, she was the strongest in the family. She became pregnant with my sister Aliza. And Aliza was actually the first daughter of Kibbutz Nitzanim. They put her in the center of the Kibbutz and everybody took care of her because there were no other children. My father, he was leader of a youth movement. This youth movement became a party in Israel. They call it the *Progressivim*. They were more to the center. I remember one time that he was in the meeting with Ben-Gurion and we were waiting for him outside. And it was already late a little. So my mother said, “you enter and ask where he is.” So I entered through the kitchen. His wife Paula met me and said, “what do you want?” *[laughs].* I said, “I want my father.” “Who’s your father?” I said “Moshe Kol.” “OK, wait outside!” *[Laughs].* They were in Jerusalem during the Independence War. We lived in Rehavia. And to sign the Declaration he had to go to Tel Aviv by piper. And in Jerusalem, there was no food! There was no food! Nothing! The water were divided to people by bottles, small bottles. I mean, it was… there was nothing. My mother was pregnant with me. So she said “ah, you are going to Tel Aviv, so bring two eggs with you!” So my father, he listened to her. He brought two eggs to Jerusalem back with him from the signing. And she said, “this is the best thing that came out of the Declaration” *[laughs].* He was younger than the group of the leaders. When he was 38, he was nominated as the head of *Youth Aliyah*. And this is the time of the children who came from the Holocaust. And the time of the children who came from North Africa and there were 100,000 children that came through *Youth Aliyah*. The whole family, we were *Youth Aliyah*. I just wanted to be in one of the places where the children lived, because I thought this is the best place. The children of *Youth Aliyah*, he felt like they were his children in a way. Sometimes I was even envy. I was jealous a little, yeah. We never spoke politics or ideological things at home. They didn't lecture us. They never involved in what was in school. I was a catastrophe in school. Nobody said anything. He used to go once a week to Tel Aviv by bus. And my mother would give him like ten shekels, ten liras – you know, he didn’t know anything about using money etc., she dealed with the money – and at home, she always cooked for him you know more like a diet. But then he used to go to Tel Aviv, and he was so happy because in *tachana merkazit* there was a falafel. You know, so he bought a falafel. And you can get free all kinds of things that you can put in the falafel. And this was wow! This was his best moments in Tel Aviv. Listen, my mother she said “after Auschwitz, no God.” For example, she ate in Yom Kippur but she didn’t make a ceremony out of her eating. My father was fasting. And at the end of the day she used to take a glass of cognac and a cake and they went both of them to the Kotel. And then, when he could eat, she gave him the food and the cognac so he can come back to the house – it was almost an hour walking. He saw her way, she saw his way. This is how should people behave, you know? Have your own opinion, but respect the other. See the other. Not long time ago, we found an interview in the sixties, interview him about signing the Independence Declaration. And I took one sentence from this, and I'm telling you, this is what I believe, this is what my family believes. It's what my children believe. And the sentence goes like this:

**Moshe Kol:** *[In Hebrew]* I’m absolutely certain that we will live in peace with the Arabs, because if I didn’t believe in peace with the Arabs, I would not believe in the realization of Zionism.

**Yehudit Kol Inbar:** If I wouldn’t believe in peace with the Arabs, I wouldn’t believe in the implementation of Zionism. It's black and white. He was fighting for Iqrit and Bir’im. People who were taken from their villages, and they were promised that they could come back. They never came back because Golda and others refused, so until today they never came back to their villages. You know, when he died, there was like an open area there, a big area, and they put him in a coffin and people came, Arabic, Druze. They were standing next to it. There was 1,000 people in the funeral. We didn't understand, you know, buses came with people. And they came down and came down and we really didn’t understand. Sorry *[cries].* There is somebody now that is writing a book and he called me and we were talking and he said, “your father was the only one – the only one – that was against the *kibbush*, the occupation. He believed that we should give back the area and make peace with the Arabs, with the Palestinians. He never thought that we'll be in a situation like this. We shouldn’t occupy other people. We should live our life and make peace with the others. The main belief of his life was we are all equal, and we deserve all the human rights. He never changed his opinion. We cannot be in a situation that there will be people without basic human rights and people who has all the rights. It's unbelievable. It's unbelievable.

**Mishy Harman (narration):** Mitch Ginsburg and Lev Cohen are the senior producers of **Signed, Sealed, Delivered?**

Our staff also includes Yochai Maital, Zev Levi, Adina Karpuj, Jamal Risheq, Hadas Kidron, Shoshana Sarah, Shira Shankhalil, Ross Bordow, Yael Ben Horin and Rotem Zin. Sela Waisblum is our sound engineer. Zev Levi scored and sound designed the episode with music from Blue Dot Sessions. Our music consultants are Tomer Kariv and DJ Yoni Turner, and our dubber is Yoav Yefet. The episode was recorded in our very own Nomi Studios.

You can catch up on all our regular Israel Story episodes, as well as all the other **Signed, Sealed, Delivered?** mini-sodes on our site – israelstory.org – or by searching for Israel Story wherever you get your podcasts. You can, and should, also check out our home at timesofisrael.com/podcasts. And of course, follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, all under Israel Story. If you're interested in sponsoring episodes of Israel Story, email us at sponsor@israelstory.org.

This series is dedicated to the memory of my beloved father, David Harman, who was a true believer in the values of the Declaration of Independence, in Zionism, in democracy and - most of all - in equality.

I’m Mishy Harman and we’ll be back next time with another installment of **Signed, Sealed, Delivered?** and a completely different perspective on Israel’s Declaration of Independence. Till then, *shalom shalom* and *yalla bye.*

\*\*\*\*\*\*