

Egon Larsen

## TWO RIGHTEOUS GENTILES

### Wallenberg and Schindler Stories Told

Each of the six hundred evergreen carob trees lining Jerusalem's Avenue of the Righteous commemorates a Gentile who risked his or her life to save Jews from the murderous frenzy of the Nazi regime; and each tree has a plaque with the name of the Gentile thus honoured, and a Talmud quotation. "Whoever has saved a single life has saved the whole world."

Two books about men commemorated in the Avenue have recently been published, and both deserve the attribute of Righteous for their extraordinary courage—though one can hardly imagine two more contrasting characters.

One of their names is quite famous: Raoul Gustav Wallenberg, whose story has been told in a conscientiously researched, impressive paperback by the British journalist John Bierman (*Righteous Gentile*, Penguin Books, £1.75). The Swede Wallenberg, whom Bierman describes as "the gifted descendant of a rich and influential dynasty", was at the age of 31 still drifting through life without any purpose, importing goose breasts and pickled cucumbers into Sweden and exporting smoked salmon and cod's roes. The time was the spring of 1944 and his girl friend got a telephone call from him: he was "going to Budapest on a mission for the government". He could say no more, and she never saw him again.

#### SWEDISH PROTECTION

In fact he had been asked to organize a humanitarian department at the Swedish legation in Hungary, Hitler's satellite since 1941. Someone in Stockholm's government circles who believed that young Wallenberg was qualified for better things than the delicatessen trade, had picked him for that diplomatic job just because he was not a professional diplomat, although he would be accorded the status of a legation member. His task was to extend the protection of the Swedish crown to as many Hungarian Jews as possible since they were now in the greatest danger of being rounded up and transported to the death camps.

"That neutral Sweden should feel compelled to act, however belatedly, on behalf of the Jews of Europe," writes Bierman, "was a radical departure; that it should choose such an apparently unlikely agent for that purpose was exceptional. But from the moment Wallenberg was offered the job—though he was to question, argue, and haggle over the conditions under which he would take it on—he was committed to it: the man had met the mission and they were to prove perfectly matched, much more so than the mandarins of the Swedish Foreign Office could have imagined."

#### PROTECTIVE PASSPORTS

In March, 1944, while the Soviet army was advancing through Poland, Adolf Eichmann was organizing the *Endlösung* for Hungary's Jews. In July, Raoul Wallenberg arrived in Budapest, where 230,000 had remained, trapped and terrified, in two ghettos. Wallenberg went to work. Authorised by the Swedish government, he had thousands of "protective passports"—an *ad hoc* invention of his—printed, and issued them to Hungarian Jews in co-operation with their community leaders. This unique passport, called *Schutz-Pass*, contained the usual personal details and a photograph of the bearer and this legend in German and Hungarian:

"Die Kgl. Schwedische Gesandtschaft in Budapest bestätigt, dass der Obengenannte—im Rahmen der von dem Kgl. Schwedischen Aussenministerium autorisierten Repatriierung—nach Schweden reisen wird . . . Bis Abreise steht der Obengenannte und seine Wohnung unter dem Schutz der Kgl. Schwedischen Gesandtschaft in Budapest."

It was, of course, a diplomatic bluff, but it worked. Although few—if any—Budapest Jews were actually able to escape to Sweden, Wallenberg's protective passports saved (according to a colleague of his at the legation) the lives of 100,000 or more people who would otherwise have been massacred by Eich-

mann's henchmen. Wallenberg was the only foreign diplomat to stay behind in Pest, for the sole purpose of protecting "his" Jews.

"For them, the nightmare was over. For Wallenberg, it was just beginning," writes Bierman. Early in 1945 the Russians occupied Budapest, and Wallenberg was taken away by their political police. Why? Nobody knows. All we do know is that in February 1945 he was in a cell at the Lubianka prison in Moscow.

From then on, no reliable traces of his whereabouts have been discovered. Over the years, all official and unofficial enquiries about him have come up against the stone wall of Russian secretiveness. But chances are that he is still alive in some Soviet labour camp. "If the Russians decided, for whatever reason, that Wallenberg was not to be released," says Bierman, "why have they not killed him? The brutal fact may be that they have. The Russians, however, have a tradition—dating back to well before the Revolution—of burying people alive in their penal system . . . So we confront the ultimate question: Is he still alive, somewhere out there in the Gulag Archipelago? On the evidence, maddeningly incomplete though it is, the answer surely has to be: Quite possibly, he is. As long as that possibility exists, it seems unthinkable that free men should abandon him to his fate."

#### SCHINDLER AND HIS JEWS

The other righteous Gentile whose story, previously almost unknown, has now been published (*Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally, Hodder & Stoughton, £7.95), could not have been more dissimilar to the gentle Swede—their characters and social backgrounds, their motives and methods were totally contrasting; yet the reason why their names have been recorded in that Avenue is the same: Schindler, too, saved Jews from extermination in the Holocaust.

When Thomas Keneally, an Australian writer with a number of novels to his credit, received in London the important Booker Prize for the best novel of 1982, there were many critical voices: *Schindler's Ark*, they protested, was not fiction at all but a documentary work, an account of real events and real people, diligently researched and only occasionally decked out with some invented dialogue. But surely Keneally chose the style of the "documentary novel" deliberately as the best way of telling a true story that is very much stranger than fiction.

Keneally himself described how he came across it. During a visit to Los Angeles in 1980 he went into a shop to buy a briefcase. The shopkeeper, a man by the name of Poldek, asked him what he did for a living, and when he heard that Keneally was a writer he

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said: "I have a book you should write. I was saved, together with 1,300 other Polish Jews, by a Sudeten German called Oskar Schindler. He was a tycoon, a wild man, a drinker, a black marketeer, but he rescued us out of camps like Gross-Rosen and Auschwitz. What he did was to found his own concentration camp and keep people safe inside it. I want to see something done about Oskar!" And Poldek fetched from the back of his shop a wad of documents, took Keneally to his bank and had them photocopied there.

"The documents showed me that this was an extraordinary story," says Keneally. "The most obvious aspect of the Oskar Schindler material was that it took you straight into the question of what makes a human being good. Certainly Oskar wasn't good in the conventional sense. His first marriage was a failure. He started his drinking at breakfast. He sweetened public officials with bribes. He was a Gentile from Moravia, and though at the outbreak of the war he was young enough for military service he avoided it by joining the *Abwehr* intelligence organization of Admiral Canaris. In September, 1939, Schindler went to Cracow to avail himself of the commercial opportunities in the German-occupied regions."

It was his experiences there which turned Schindler's business plans into a grand humanitarian rescue operation. Perhaps he did it just for the hell of it, for the thrill of pitching his gambler's skill and chutzpah against the greed and stupidity of the SS officers. "Through the six war years, he gave stubborn aid to desperate people," writes Keneally. "He went to intricate pains to preserve their dignity and paid a fortune to SS officials in Berlin, Cracow and Czechoslovakia to save Jews."

He acquired an enamelware factory near Cracow, securing a number of profitable army contracts for its products—and he recruited all his workers among the Jews who were in danger of being deported to the death camps. He also undertook secret journeys to Budapest to inform the Jewish rescue organization there about what was happening in the ghettos.

Early in 1943, when the extermination of the Jews was approaching its murderous climax, Schindler bribed the SS officials into permitting him to set up his own concentration camp on the grounds of his factory. Here, 1,300 "Schindlerjuden", as they called themselves, survived the terror, reasonably well fed and decently treated. When the Russians approached Cracow, Oskar's workers were taken away to Gross-Rosen and Auschwitz—but he simply bought them back again with handfuls of diamonds and brought them to a factory camp he set up in his home area in Moravia. "From then on," writes Keneally, "by bribery and trickery he was able to avoid manufacturing anything at all. In fact he lived off the black market and supported his 'workers' by it as well, trading in diamonds."

Towards the end of April 1945, the SS ordered the liquidation of Schindler's Jews. Again, by means of chicanery, bribery and forgery, Oskar managed to have the officer who was to carry out the massacre transferred to what was left of the Russian front. His diamonds even bought arms from the SS and the Police Chief of Brno so that, on the last night of the war, his Jews were able to "conquer" their own camp from the German soldiers who ran away.

Peace, when it came, brought an anticlimax for Oskar Schindler. In West Germany he did a bit of black marketeering, but then he emigrated to Argentina with his second wife, a Polish Jewess, and—at his own expense—half a dozen *Schindlerjuden* families. But he lost all his money when his nutria-breeding farm collapsed, and returned to Europe. The charitable "American Joint" supported him. He spent his last years in Frankfurt, failing with one business venture after another. His only friends were Jews who had survived thanks to him.

He died in 1974 of advanced hardening of the arteries. His last wish, to be buried in Jerusalem, was fulfilled: the Catholic Cemetery was his last resting place. But his name lives on, like Raoul Wallenberg's, in the Avenue of the Righteous.

### "SCHINDLER'S ARK" GIFT TO CHARITY

Following the award of the Booker Prize for his novel "Schindler's Ark", Thomas Keneally is to donate two-thirds of the proceeds of the work to the American-based Schindler Organisation. Up to now, the Schindler Organisation has been a struggling Jewish charity devoted to helping Holocaust survivors and other victims of the Nazi regime. It intends to use part of the money to set up a chair in Holocaust Studies at an American university.

Two brothers, Henry and Leo Rosner, both of whom were saved by Oskar Schindler, will be seen playing the violin and the piano-accordion in a Thames TV documentary on "Schindler's Ark" to be shown in May this year. They have not played duets for over 40 years, since the days when the commandant of Plaszov camp told them to play for his amusement.

Steven Spielberg is to direct a film based on the book for Universal Pictures in the near future. (See review on p. 1).

### NEW REPORT ON WALLEMBERG

Asher Chanukaiev, a recent immigrant to Israel from the Soviet Union, has stated that he met Raoul Wallenberg, the man who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews, in Sverdlovsk prison hospital in March 1972. At that time, he told a Beersheba newspaper, Wallenberg was suffering from a stomach complaint.

Brighton Festival, to be held in May, will include a Raoul Wallenberg Exhibition which, it is hoped, will attract the Jewish and non-Jewish visitors, many of them school children, visiting the festival.

## THE OPPERMANNS

The TV performance of "The Oppermanns", based on Lion Feuchtwanger's novel and produced in West Germany, was bound to make a particular impact on Jews from Germany. "That's how it was" — this was their general reaction. More or less all members of the Jewish middle class went through the same experience. They felt integrated into their environment. They certainly realised the political dangers of the early Thirties but, hoping against hope and in common with wide sections of the general population, they considered a victory of the Nazis as more than unlikely.

The Oppermanns only differed from most other middle class Jews in so far as they belonged to the upper, wealthy stratum and had comparatively many family and social links with Gentiles. They owned a chain of furniture stores which were founded by their grandfather. One of the brothers was the manager of the firm, another brother a successful laryngologist and the third a man of letters. We witnessed the scene when the S.A. stormed the hospital in which Professor Oppermann held a position, and when they brutally threw out all Jewish doctors, even if this involved a risk to the lives of patients on whom they had just operated. This scene is shown as realistically as it happened all over Germany on Boycott Day. In fairness it also shows the courageous attempts of some hospital directors to protect their Jewish colleagues.

### ONE BROTHER ESCAPES

The other brother had signed a manifesto of authors against the Nazis. He was warned after the Reichstag fire and fled abroad. Ironically, only he, who had always refused to believe in a Nazi victory, was spared the sufferings. The most tragic fate befell the third brother on whom responsibility for the firm rested. After many preceding upheavals and humiliations he was taken to an S.A. station in the middle of the night. There, the storm troopers were let loose on their victims, torturing them sadistically. Whoever had gone through the hell of such an "arrest" which, by the way, exceeded the power given to the S.A. by the Nazi state organs, was reminded of his own experience when he saw it on the screen. Ultimately, Oppermann was released after having been forced to revoke the reinstatement of four Jewish employees who had been illegally dismissed by the Nazi cell of the firm. He also had to sign a statement that he had been well treated and to pay 2 marks for board ("Verpflegungsgeld"). The performance ends with him stumbling through the streets at dawn until he breaks down in front of one of the houses, and then we see workmen taking down the Oppermann name from the store façade.

### SPECIAL PLACE

The film has a special, if not unique, place among the films which record the persecution of the Jews. In most portrayals of the period the deportations and the Holocaust stand in the foreground. "The Oppermanns" shows the initial period of the Nazis' ascent to power, when the Jews in Germany were the first victims. Thus, apart from its artistic value and the message it carries for everybody, the film fills a gap by presenting the fate of the German Jews during the pre-war years.

Lion Feuchtwanger (1884 Munich — 1958 Pacific Palisades) wrote the novel in 1933, after he had fled to France. It is part of the trilogy "Der Wartesaal", the other two works being "Erfolg" (1930) and "Exil" (1939). Many of his other novels also have a Jewish background, e.g. "Jud Süss" and "Der juedische Krieg".

W.R.

**ADELE REIFENBERG-ROSENBAUM 90**

Mrs. Julius Rosenbaum is more familiar to us as Adele Reifenberg, an accomplished artist in oils, watercolours and most delicate shades of pastel, as well as in graphic works. Included in her most recent exhibition at Margaret Fisher's Gallery, 4 Lambolle Place, NW3, was a striking portrait of her sister-in-law, Gabriele Tergit (Reifenberg), as well as many other portraits and landscapes. Her exceptional talents, and those of her late husband, Julius Rosenbaum, himself a fine artist, will long be remembered.

Adele Reifenberg-Rosenbaum was born in Berlin in 1893 as the first child of Ernst Reifenberg and Rosa, née Ginsberg. She had two brothers: Heinz, the well known architect, and Adolf, a professor of Geology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Adele attended the "Charlottenschule" in Berlin. Under the guidance of Eva Stort, an exceptionally gifted teacher of the arts, Adele's talent developed early. Her only desire was to become a painter herself.

After leaving school, Adele studied under Lovis Corinth for many years. Later, at the "Hochschule für Bildende Künste" in Weimar, she received a prize for landscape painting. Until her emigration to England in 1939 she worked as a free-lance artist in Berlin, exhibiting at various galleries and arranging her own one-man-shows. To obtain greater security, Adele took a degree and taught at schools and teacher-training colleges. In 1930 Adele Reifenberg married the painter Julius Rosenbaum. It was a very happy marriage in every respect. Adele's only worry was the delicate health of her husband. He died in 1956 when they visited Holland to attend a Rembrandt exhibition. Since then, Adele has lived entirely for her work as a painter.

Adele Rosenbaum has been an active member of Club 1943 almost from its inception. She has given many lectures on various subjects.

**NORMAN BENTWICH CENTENARY**

The recent centenary of the birth of Norman Bentwich was an occasion for his many friends and the beneficiaries of his innumerable good works to remember this outstanding academic, high civil servant, Zionist and dedicated helper of his fellow-Jews in distress.

For almost three decades, from 1920, he was Attorney General in mandatory Palestine, taught International Relations at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and was Director of the League of Nations Commission for Refugees. He was involved in innumerable measures and campaigns for aiding the oppressed and persecuted as well as refugees and internees, and helped organise the Richborough Transit Camp. He was closely involved with the Friends of the Hebrew University.

For almost two decades following 1948 he was head of the United Restitution Organisation (URO), and did much to help obtain compensation for refugees from Nazism. His cumulative good deeds seem to stretch on endlessly. He died in 1971. Bentwich was the sort of Jew who embodied a kind of "religion of deeds".

E.G.L.

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**JEWISH BOOK WEEK**

As an innovation, Jewish Book Week will be held this year in three places: in central London at Woburn House, 7-13 March; in Stanmore at the Stanmore and Canons Park Synagogue, 5-9 March; in Manchester at the Yeshurun Hebrew Congregation in Coniston Road, Cheadle, 11-14 March.

At Woburn House, the greatest living Hebrew poet, Yehuda Amichai (originally from Würzburg), will read in both Hebrew and English on 8 March; Harry Blacker will talk about Jewish humour on the 9th; Judge Israel Finestein, QC, will discuss Anglo-Jewry since 1933 on the 7th; and Dr. Steve Zipperstein will talk about Jewish Power and Powerlessness on the 10th, all of these at 8 p.m.

At Stanmore Dan Jacobson, the distinguished novelist, will discuss his recent important examination of the Bible, "The Story of the Stories" on the 7th; Michael Elkins, the BBC Jerusalem correspondent, will review changing attitudes to the Holocaust on the 6th; Chaim Raphael will talk about The Springs of Jewish Life on the 5th; Barnett Litvinoff will speak about Chaim Weizmann and Dual Loyalty on the 9th, and there will be a panel discussion about Israel on the 8th; all of these at 8.15 p.m. At 1.30 p.m. on the 9th there will be An Afternoon with Lynne Reid Banks.

In Manchester the main speakers will be George Clare, author of "Last Waltz in Vienna", on the 13th, and Chaim Raphael on his new book, on the 14th, both at 8 p.m.

**MEMORIAL EXHIBITION**

A Memorial Exhibition is being held at the Ben Uri Gallery, 21 Dean Street, London W1 to commemorate the work of three well-known German-Jewish artists: Lottie Reizenstein, Henry Sanders and Jack Bilbo (Hugo Baruch). All these artists left Germany as a result of Nazi persecution. Lottie Reizenstein and Henry Sanders settled and worked in England, but Jack Bilbo, after serving in the British Army, returned to Berlin where he died in 1967.

The Exhibition will be opened by the distinguished painter Josef Herman.

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Telephone: 904 6671**ACADEMICALLY SPEAKING****Lilian R. Furst**

Professor Lilian R. Furst has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to finish her latest book. Born in Vienna, she came to Britain with her family in 1939 at the age of six. They settled in Manchester, where her father, Dr. D. Furst, a dental surgeon, was for a time the local secretary of the AJR. After obtaining her doctorate at Cambridge, Prof. Furst taught Comparative Literature in Manchester, then accepted invitations to the United States in 1971, where she is now professor in that subject at the University of Texas at Dallas. She is the author of seven books and some fifty articles, and holds a very distinguished position in her field, embracing the major European languages and literatures.

**R. B. Jones**

Another member of the AJR has taken a degree late in life. R. B. Jones studied Law at Berlin University, but was forced to stop in April 1933. He was able to take a degree in political science in Paris in 1935. But at the age of almost 70, he has just been awarded an MA in International History by the London School of Economics.

**DONATION TO WIENER LIBRARY**

To honour the memories of Sarah and Major Ber, a collection of material relating to Polish Jewry has been donated to the Wiener Library in London. Mr. and Mrs. Ber's daughters, Mrs. L. Josse and Mrs. R. Rosenfelder, have accompanied their gift with an endowment to maintain the collection and also to help the library in expanding its existing sections on the Jews of Poland.

**DELAY FOR PLAYWRIGHT**

Playwright Tom Kempinski, a descendant of the well-known restaurateur family, faces delay in his new play "The Beautiful Part of Myself" after a Jewish actor rejected his role. David Swift says that, after changes in rehearsal, the play makes the leading character—his own part—accept the contention that Zionists collaborated with the Nazis in sending Jews to the death camps in exchange for saving people chosen by the Zionists. Mr. Kempinski, author of the highly successful "Duet for One", has had to put off the opening at the Hampstead Theatre until June this year.

The well-known actor Warren Mitchell has now agreed to take over the role vacated by Mr. Swift.

**LEGACIES**

The AJR Charitable Trust has received legacies from the estate of the late Regina Feldman £500; from the estate of the late Miss Hilda Helen Goldsmith £50; interim payments from the estates of the late Mrs. Hilda Deutsch £5,500 and of the late Miss Charlotte Eyck £5,500.

With acknowledgement to the news service  
of the Jewish Chronicle.

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## THE POLGAR REVIVAL

Alfred Polgar is among the writers of Jewish extraction who made valuable contributions to German cultural life, were rejected as alien and destructive in the Nazi era, and now appeal strongly to the post-war generation. Dr. Ulrich Weinzierl, a well-known Austrian literary historian and critic, has become the foremost expert on Polgar. In 1978 he published a competent biography called "Er war Zeuge. Alfred Polgar—ein Leben zwischen Publizistik und Literatur", and a year later "Taschenspiegel"—a selection of texts which had appeared in newspapers and journals. (The book was referred to in the May 1980 issue of AJR Information.) Dr. Weinzierl has again unearthed from Viennese, Berlin and Prague periodicals a collection of Polgar's feuilletons and review articles written between 1904 and 1936. The new collection—"Sperritz" (Loeker Verlag, Vienna, 1980)—confirms the impression of an author who took his job seriously and produced many carefully polished miniature masterpieces.

Polgar loved the theatre and his reviews show his ability to sort out good acting and writing from the trashy or pompous. The collection contains a rather detached review of the famous Hebrew production of the "Dybbuk" by the "Habima" troupe shown in the course of a season in Berlin in 1926. Though an habitu  of the Vienna coffee house circuit and one of its representative figures, Polgar also liked Berlin and felt almost at home there too—so far as he was capable of feeling at home anywhere. He became painfully aware of the problems of homelessness when, as a refugee, he was treated unkindly by authorities, colleagues and editors. It is to the discredit of the Swiss writers' association that it objected to Polgar being granted a work permit in Switzerland. After the war, he returned from the USA to Europe and died in Zurich in 1953 at the age of 82.

### MASTER OF MINIATURE

As Dr. Weinzierl observes in a lucid and informative essay which forms part of "Sperritz", an important feature of Vienna at the turn of the century was the great number of young and promising, mostly Jewish, writers. Most of them have been irretrievably forgotten. Dr. Weinzierl ascribes this phenomenon "to the policy of thorough extermination practised in Austria with regard to everything Jewish". In this respect the situation is somewhat different as far as Alfred Polgar is concerned. His ironical and witty observations on the world and its foibles, which he resumed after returning to Europe, were indeed admired; but his greatness as "the master of the small format" is only now being rediscovered.

The publication of "Alfred Polgar—Lieber Freund!; Lebenszeichen aus der Fremde", edited and introduced by Erich Thanner (Publishers: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, Hamburg/Vienna, 1981), is a by-product of the present Polgar vogue. The addressee of the letters, written by Polgar in 1936-1955, was William S. Schlamm (1904-1978). Both men had their

roots in the Austria of the Habsburg era and were forced to leave Vienna because of their Jewish extraction when their home country was incorporated into Nazi Germany, but they differed in many respects. Polgar remained an apparently detached observer of life, literature and the arts, only superficially adjusted to new surroundings and circumstances, whereas Schlamm became a highly successful journalist and editor in the United States and later, after his return to Europe, in Germany. Polgar stuck to his liberal, mildly leftist convictions; Schlamm, who had originally been an active Communist, turned into a fervent adherent of, and aggressive spokesman of, right-wing conservatism. In spite of their ideological differences, the two writers established close bonds of genuine friendship. The younger Schlamm proved to be devoted and helpful to Polgar, who expressed his gratitude in a shyly ironical manner.

The letters which Polgar dispatched from Vienna, Paris, New York, Zurich, Berlin and other places, indicate his genuine attachment to Schlamm. Although often jocular in style and expression, they reveal his feelings of isolation and his fears about a constantly uncertain future. They also show that the elderly Jewish refugee could not integrate into new cultural and linguistic environments. Polgar is aware of his difficulties in expressing himself adequately in French and English. He always finds something to criticise in his places of exile, although he enjoys more comforts than most other refugees. He suspects, with some justification, that after the war Nazi sentiments have not disappeared in Germany and Austria even when he was treated appreciatively there. The letters, which were not written with a view to publication, constitute a valuable contribution to a still better understanding of a writer of great distinction and impeccable integrity.

### 30 JANUARY IN THE MEDIA

The fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi takeover on 30 January, 1933 was marked by the media with material of varying quality. The British press recalled what had been written at the time, some of it apprehensive, but none really understanding the momentous consequences implicit in the event. One exception was the British ambassador in Berlin, Sir Horace Rumbold, whose despatches reported clearly that the Nazi leaders were gangsters and thugs. Anthony Mann, who had been a correspondent there at the time, recalled the atmosphere in the "Daily Telegraph", as did Norman Moss in the "Sunday Telegraph". Among the press coverage, which ranged from the competent to the mediocre, Arthur Koestler's article in "The Observer", "Hitler and His Godfathers" was head and shoulders above the rest. Not only was Koestler on the spot, he had the knowledge and insight to provide a compressed but truly illuminating article in a newspaper, covering the background and antecedents to Nazism as well as the political details of the takeover. In Berlin, there was a ceremony at the Reichstag building, at which Willy Brandt and Chancellor Kohl spoke.

Of particular interest was a Radio 4 broadcast "The Night of the Miracle"—the title an unfortunate quotation from Goebbels—on which Dr. Hans Feld, Dr. Eva Reichmann, Dr. Werner Rosenstock and Dr. Arnold Paucker vividly recalled the events of that time and made them real for the listeners. (An extract appeared in "The Listener" of 3 February.) Another outstanding presentation was the two-part German television dramatisation of Lion Feuchtwanger's novel, "The Oppermanns" (on BBC 2, in the original German, with subtitles). This was a very impressive performance, not least for the tact, understanding and insight shown by the German television makers, and many AJR members reported how moved they were by the authenticity of this fictional account of the destruction of a German Jewish family prominent in commerce, the arts and science. "The Oppermanns" and George Clare's "Last Waltz" television documentary (noticed on p. 2 of our February issue), were the highlights of the commemorations of that sombre event fifty years ago.

### "MACHTERGREIFUNG" PRIZE OFFERED

Among the many reminders that this year has seen the 50th anniversary of Hitler's accession to power, the German Print and Paper Trades Union has offered a 10,000 DM prize to journalists for articles published on the theme of Fascism in Germany. Previously issued essays are to be submitted before 30 June 1983; subjects should fall under three headings: "Causes and Consequences of 30 January 1933", "Persecution and Resistance in Hitler's Germany" and "Xenophobia and neo-Fascist dangers in the Federal Republic". Entries should be sent to Geschäftsstelle der IG Druck und Papier, Friedrichstr. 15, Postfach 1282, 7000 Stuttgart 1.

### KLAUS BARBIE EXTRADITED

After years of attempts by both France and West Germany to extradite Klaus Barbie, "the butcher of Lyons", from Bolivia, the Nazi Gestapo chief for southern France responsible for at least 4,000 murders and 7,500 deportations of Jews to death camps, was at last turned over to the French by the Bolivians. The French incarcerated Barbie in Fort Montluc, where he had interrogated and killed the resistance leader Jean Moulin. Barbie, 69, had lived in Bolivia for many years involved in shady business deals. He had been sentenced to death *in absentia* by a French court, but will now be tried for "crimes against humanity", which are not subject to the statute of limitations.



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## Forty Years of Club 1943

It was no small achievement celebrated by Club 1943 on the evening of 31 January. How many clubs founded and maintained by a particular generation could boast of a fortieth birthday at all, and celebrate it in such a warm and harmonious atmosphere, entertaining itself through the considerable talents of its own members? But that is how it was at Hannah Karminski House, among the fifty-odd members and guests present.

The Chairman, Dr. Erwin Seligmann, opened with a brief history of the club, telling how 15 German-speaking writers had seceded from the Deutsche Kulturbund when that organisation was infiltrated by militant activists with an unattractive political allegiance and intolerant ways. The seceders set up a club carefully governed by democratic statutes in force to this day, and intended to provide a social and intellectual centre for the refugees gathered in war-time London, many of them writers, scholars and artists. It was the object of the club to restore and renew the humanist values of tolerance and mutual respect, of creativity and honesty, which were then being savagely trampled upon on the war-torn continent. Week in and week out during those four decades they had provided an unbroken series of lectures by visiting speakers on a great variety of subjects, from the lightest to the deepest, and a centre for socialising, mutual support and the exchange of developing ideas. There followed friendly greetings from Mr. Dobbstein, the cultural attaché of the Federal German Embassy, who observed that when terrible darkness had descended on Nazi Germany, the best in the German tradition was kept alive by refugees abroad.

On the anniversary evening there was music from Hans Freund, who sang Schubert's "Du holde Kunst" in his melodious and cultivated bass, as well as Sarastro's "O Isis und Osiris" from "The Magic Flute", and with Ruth Brainin's attractive soprano, the Papageno-Papagena duet "Bei Männern", and the Don Giovanni-Zerlina duet "La ci darem". Mr. Freund later led the members in a jolly sing-song. Lotte Lewin read poems by Else Meidner. There was also the playing of a recording, alas somewhat slurred, of reminiscences by Hans Jaeger, who had so admirably epitomised the spirit of the club over three decades. The proceedings were organised and presided over, with all her usual warmth and efficacy, by Mrs. Berta Sterly. Henry Hellmann proposed the vote of thanks. A memorable evening. M.S.

### BAZAAR AT HANNAH KARMINSKI HOUSE

The Bazaar held at Hannah Karminski House for the benefit of the Jacoby-Orgler Fund on 13 February was a great success because of the tireless efforts of the AJR Club members who arranged and ran it. This should particularly please Mrs. Margaret Jacoby, who, at the time of writing was in hospital recovering from an accident. All AJR members wish her a speedy and complete recovery.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### LENI RIEFENSTAHL

*Sir,—S. B.'s mention of Leni Riefenstahl's 80th birthday in his "Theatre and Culture" column in the December issue should be strongly censured. Leni Riefenstahl was not just drawn into the political sphere. She was an ardent supporter of Hitler, to say the least, and I find it unacceptable to find her mentioned so warmly in your periodical.*

23 Dering Street  
London W1

L. MANDEL

*S. B. replies:* The column has always reported on persons whose activities in the cultural field made the news of the day, including marriages, births and deaths, as well as birthdays. Our readers seem interested in learning about the lives of personalities they know about from the Twenties and Thirties, and space is too compressed to always fill in the background, which is in any case well known.

### "HOW WE ESCAPED"

*Sir,—The purpose of my book "Sie flohen von dem Hakenkreuz—Selbstzeugnisse der Emigranten—Ein Lesebuch für Deutsche" was to acquaint the younger generation in Germany with the events of a period they have not learned about, and which are wilfully omitted from their textbooks. It was not intended for the emigrants themselves. (Your review in the December 1982 issue.)*

*It has been very well received by the press. The city of Berlin took 900 copies for free distribution and the Federal Minister for Education and Science has recommended the book to the Federal Centre for Political Education. More than 10,000 copies were sold in the first year of publication.*

Holon, Israel

WALTER ZADEK

### RELIGIOUS LIFE

*Sir,—In the framework of a study on Religious Life During the Holocaust we are looking for anyone who has either documents or information on the following subjects: special prayers and sermons composed during the Holocaust referring to the situation of Jews in occupied Europe; family life in Europe during the Holocaust including marriage, births, circumcision, divorce, grass-widowhood, burial and mikvaot (ritual baths); Nazi attacks upon orthodox Jews, synagogues and ritual objects; circulars dealing with religious daily life—Kashrut, ritual slaughtering, prayer, holidays, etc.*

*Anyone possessing information or documents on the aforementioned subjects is requested to write to Judith Tydor Baumel, Aminadav st. 16 apt. 27, Yad Eliyahu, Tel Aviv 67066, Israel. All information received will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Thanking you in advance, we remain,*

JUDITH TYDOR BAUMEL  
DR. DAN MICHMAN

### Bibliography of German Jewry

*Sir,—The Leo Baeck Institute, Jerusalem, has commissioned a Bibliography of German Jewry under Nazi rule. Some difficulties have arisen in tracing books, periodicals, brochures and incidental publications written, edited and published by Jews from the latter half of 1938 and in particular after the Kristallnacht, which was followed by the closure of all Jewish newspapers. Publishing by Jews and Jewish publishing houses continued well into 1940 and 1941 and even thereafter, but such items were not listed by extant publications and bibliographies and have, of course, become very hard to find. This is particularly true regarding items published for traditional ritual purposes. Readers of AJR Information and members of the public interested in furthering the above-mentioned project and in possession of such items or knowing of their whereabouts, are invited either to photocopy the title page of the item, adding further bibliographic details (date, place, pages etc.) as well as any other special information and to contact Dr. Henry Wassermann, Sokolow 7, Ra'anana, Israel 3400.*

### LEFT-RIGHT ROCK MUSIC WAR

"Rock against Racism" and "Rock against the Nazis" were in full flood in England a few months ago, followed by the National Front-orientated group "Oi" and Canada's mind-control organisation "Way International", which also put on rock concerts. In Germany, "Initiative Rock gegen Rechts" is a well-established institution and a similar war of rock music appears to have broken out. Praised by the extreme right-wing paper "Nation Europa", the group "Ragnaröck" has issued two records. The first comprises "Der alte Mann", on Rudolf Hess, and "Mauern, Stacheldraht und Minen" and the second is "Die Mauer muss weg" and "Deutsche, ihr wollt doch den Frieden", a satire on Spiessbürger mentality. The group's motto is expressed in the line "Sweep it away, the red muck" and fan-clubs have sprung up in a number of towns, together with "Rock for Germany", "Rock against Communism" and a host of stickers, posters, slides and photos.

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# NEWS FROM GERMANY

## BERLIN MARKS NAZI ANNIVERSARY

At the 50th anniversary of Hitler's seizure of power a vast exhibition has been opened in West Berlin, displaying letters, newspapers, documents, uniforms, concentration camp and prison relics, as well as many other objects illustrating the political slide from Weimar to Hitler and thence to the collapse of 1945. Many schoolchildren and young people stand amazed before this witness of Germany's past, but elderly people, it is reported, tend not to visit the exhibition. One exception was an old man who was seen gazing at copies of an anti-Nazi newspaper with tears running down his face. It was the paper which, as a young man, he had helped to produce.

At the same time a conference called by the Historische Kommission zu Berlin, Munich's Institut für Zeitgeschichte and the Deutsche Vereinigung für Parlamentsfragen was held in Berlin's Reichstag building. Like the exhibition, the conference was entitled "Germany's Road to Dictatorship" and the question was discussed from many aspects: whether the Machtergreifung represented a revolution; whether Nazi power was forced upon the nation; and, perhaps the most important question, what were today's political and historiographical repercussions from that time.

## OLDEST JEWISH HOUSE DESTROYED

A house dating back to the 14th century and situated in Trier's Judengasse was recently destroyed by fire, shortly before restoration work was about to begin. It was thought to be the oldest extant Jewish dwelling in Western Europe and was to have become a museum. Fire officers have not ruled out arson.

## BERLIN SYNAGOGUE PLANS ON SHOW

Among the items on display in the Berlin Museum as examples of new acquisitions during 1982 is a collection of 20 architectural plans of the former Oranienburger Strasse synagogue. The plans had been lost and were seen for the first time in many years in the Museum's January exhibition.

## WITNESS TO SOBIBOR ATROCITIES

A court in Hagen heard an Israeli bank employee, Moshe Bachier, recount conditions in the death camp of Sobibor, where a quarter of a million people were murdered in 1942/43. The accused was one of the former commandants, Karl Frenzel. Bachier spoke of visits by Himmler to the camp, after which the gas chambers were extended and the victims' heads were shaved before they were murdered "to lessen the unpleasant smell of gassed people being burnt". At a "celebration" of the 200,000th gassing, Eichmann visited the camp, as Bachier believed, and the witness saw the officers in the barracks where he worked having a drinking party.

Frenzel declared that the witnesses had dreamed up the whole story in collusion: Bachier at once retorted, "What I am telling you is not even one-half of one per cent of what we had to undergo in actuality".

## BIBLE WOODCUTS ON SHOW

The well-known artist Hans H. Heidenheim has recently shown the complete collection of woodcuts illustrating the Bible which he has been creating since 1965. The exhibition in Düsseldorf comprises over 60 woodcuts on themes taken from the Book of Job, the Song of Songs, Isaiah and the Psalms, as well as paintings and other works. Heidenheim's works were particular favourites of the late Max Brod.

## A COMMEMORATION AND A WARNING

### A Statement from the Council of Jews from Germany on the Fiftieth Anniversary of 30 January, 1933

The fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Nazi reign of terror is of particular significance for Jews from Germany. They were among the very first victims of a storm of persecution that ultimately destroyed almost the whole of European Jewry. On this date the former German Jews now scattered all over the world who are grouped together in the Council of Jews from Germany remember with renewed grief their nearest and dearest who were murdered in the concentration camps. They also remember the non-Jewish Germans who lost their lives by opposing the Nazi regime, as well as those who courageously saved the lives of Jewish fellow-citizens.

The 30th of January is also a warning signal. The chain of events unleashed that day bears witness to the fact that group hatred can lead to group extermination, and that it also led to the destruction of the murderers and their regime. It is a profound obligation of those responsible for shaping the present to take into account the bitter experience of the past and to nip in the bud any possible recurrence.

## MORE CHAGALL DESIGNS FOR MAINZ CHURCH

Marc Chagall, the nonagenarian artist, has recently produced three further designs for stained glass windows to be put up in St. Stephen's Church, Mainz. The windows will be made in Chagall's workshop in Reims, but will not be ready for at least 18 months. St. Stephen's Church is already beautified by a number of Chagall windows.

## KAFKA'S LIBRARY FOR RESEARCH

The private library of Franz Kafka has recently come to light and has been acquired by the University of Wuppertal. The collection contains about 200 volumes, including first editions of Max Brod, Franz Werfel, Oskar Baum and others. About 20 of the books have dedications from the members of the "Prager Kreis", the cultural group formed during the early part of this century.

## QUESTIONS ON BAVARIAN SYNAGOGUE

The future of Kitzinger's synagogue is at present the subject of discussion; although only the outer walls were left standing after the events of November 1938, it is one of the few pre-Hitler synagogues in Bavaria which is capable of restoration. According to some citizens and members of the Jewish community, this work should be undertaken, but the town council would prefer to see most of the remaining shell pulled down and the area dedicated as a place of remembrance.

## WUERZBURG REMEMBERS DEPORTEES

Together with an exhibition "Buchführung des Todes", the city of Würzburg held a public debate in remembrance of the Jews who were deported from the area to their deaths. Taking part among others in the debate were Dr. Mordechai Ansbacher, a former citizen and Auschwitz survivor now living in Jerusalem, prominent Würzburg citizens, senators and schoolchildren.

## STUTTGART'S INVITATION

The city of Stuttgart is extending an invitation to all former Jewish citizens to return for a short holiday in the summer of 1983. At the same time, the city authorities intend to hold a "Week of Reflection" coupled with a commemoration of the November Pogrom of 1938. The organiser is Heinz Bleicher of the Association for Christian-Jewish Co-operation.

## EMANCIPATION EFFORTS BY MARX

Proof of the efforts made towards full citizenship for Jews just before the revolutions of 1848 is contained in a preliminary petition dated 1843 backed by many leading citizens of Rhineland cities and towns. The document, which asked that 200,000 Jews of Prussia should be fully emancipated, has been studied by Professor Helmut Hirsch of the University of Duisburg. He believes that Karl Marx may have been one author of "Acte 373", as it is officially known. The name of Marx occurs twice; once in his home town of Trier and again in Cologne, where he was at the time editor of the "Rheinische Zeitung". Professor Hirsch gathered together the parts of Acte 373 from various towns and wrote about it in his book "Freiheitsliebende Rheinländer", which was published a few years ago. Afterwards some concern was expressed because the document appeared to be lost, but it was established that this was due to a misunderstanding.

## HOW NAZISM PERMEATED LAW

At a conference in Berlin organised by the Internationale Vereinigung für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie, Professor Rütters of Constance University, after describing how the Nazi party programme had been elevated into binding law in the Third Reich, and how law had been permeated by the concepts of "Führerprinzip" and "Rasse, Blut und Boden", called for research into the attitudes held by jurists who had begun their careers in the Nazi State. Even at the current conference, he said, many elderly lawyers had appeared surprised at his description of the Nazi legal system, which had given them new insights. After so many years they seemed to be influenced by their first experience of the law.

## "REVISE CRIMINAL LISTS" CALL

Dr. Robert Kempner has appealed to the Bundestag to remove the names of Hitler's judicial victims from the lists of criminals kept by the Ministry of Justice. Designated as "criminals" are such people as Leo Katzenberger, the last head of the Nuremberg Jewish Community, executed in 1942 for "constructive offences against racial purity", Dietrich Bonhoeffer and others executed after the July Plot of 1944, and Marinus van der Lubbe, beheaded for his alleged part in the Reichstag fire. Dr. Kempner finds it shameful that a statement of their "guilt" should remain on official files.

## "FREE LAST FOUR CRIMINALS"

The remaining four war criminals still in detention are the subject of a plea by West Germany's Federal Parliament, led by Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Holland, Italy and the Soviet Union are asked to extend clemency to Franz Fischer and Ferdinand aus der Fünfen, both in Dutch prisons, Walter Reder, held in Italy, and Rudolf Hess, once Hitler's deputy but for the last 36 years imprisoned in Berlin's Spandau fortress. No mention has been made of Erich Koch, former Gauleiter of East Prussia, still held in a Polish prison.

## GABRIEL TERGIT MEMORIAL MEETING

The writer Gabriele Tergit who died last September aged 88, was one of the last survivors of the great epoch of Jewish writing in the Weimar Republic. She had in fact been referred to by latter-day critics as "the grand old lady of Weimar literature." The high regard in which she was held became evident at a meeting in her memory jointly organised by the PEN Club of German-speaking writers abroad and Club 1943, the two institutions she had actively supported since their inception. She had been hon. secretary of the PEN Club from 1957 until a few years ago when failing health led to her reluctant retirement. At the meeting, friends recalled her life and work.

Prof. Dr. H. G. Adler discussed her most important novel "Die Effingers", a semi-autobiographical history of four generations of a German Jewish family between 1890 and 1942. It was begun in 1931 and she continued to write chapters of it in her various countries of refuge of which Britain was the last and most enduring. It was finally published in 1951 and became an immediate success in several languages. Professor Adler called it a lasting contribution and a Jewish legacy to German literature.

Mr. Egon Larsen, who had followed her career since its early beginnings in the Berlin of the Twenties, read from her autobiographical notes for the records of the Pen Club and remarked that in her early days as a journalist for important Berlin papers she had revolutionised the way in which court proceedings were reported in the press by basing her own reports on the social and psychological background of individual case histories. He praised her devoted work for PEN, the successor organisation to the original German PEN Club which was dissolved by the Nazis.

The artist Adele Rosenbaum, as a member of Gabriele Tergit's family, reminisced about the writer's creative intuition with which she transformed First World War memories of her late husband, the architect Mr. Heinz Reifenberg, into a widely-read collection of short stories.

As secretary of the 1943 Club, Berta Sterly gratefully remembered Gabriele Tergit's contributions—over the years, she gave some thirty lectures and frequently took part in discussions which she broadened and enlivened with her impassioned arguments.

M.P.

## ROSE BERLIN

After a protracted illness, Mrs. Rose Berlin died in Osmond House on 26 January at the age of 83. Her name is inseparably linked with the history of the Homes for our elderly. When Otto Schiff House was founded in 1955 she was among the first members of the House Committee. Those were the days when we still had to gather experience in running Homes of this kind and Rose Berlin did pioneer work in that initial period. She took a leading part in shaping the policy of the Committee, having a modern approach to social work and a very good practical sense.

Like a few others she also stepped in when, due to shortage of staff, help was required, and she did not shirk menial work. In 1967, when the Chairman of the House Committee, the late Mr. H. Blumenau, resigned, she became his successor. She held this office until 1970 yet retained her contacts with the Home during subsequent years. At the same time, she did voluntary work at the Middlesex Hospital as long as her health made it possible.

Mrs. Berlin was the widow of Walter Berlin, a well known and courageous lawyer in Nuernberg who also took a prominent part in communal activities. When the family came to this country, they faced the initial difficulties bravely, adjusting their lives to changed circumstances.

Rose Berlin will be remembered with affection by all who knew her. She was a lovable personality with widespread interests. Her unreserved sincerity stands out among her numerous shining qualities. We feel united in our sense of loss with her son and daughter and their families.

W.R.

## DR. WILLIAM GROSSMANN

Dr. William Grossmann died recently in London after a long illness at the age of 71. He was born and educated in the Sudeten part of Czechoslovakia, graduated MD in Prague in 1936, becoming a lecturer at the Dental School of the German Hospital in Prague. He came to Britain in April 1939 after having helped many colleagues to escape from Prague, which was already occupied by the Nazis. In 1941 he joined the RAMC, served as a medical officer with various units, and from 1943 with the maxillo-facial unit in North Africa, Italy and Belgium. After the war he took an English dental degree at University College Dental School and was then put in charge of the Orthodontic Department at UCH, which developed and expanded under his supervision. He remained there as Consultant Orthodontic Surgeon until his retirement in 1976. He did much to help those less fortunate than himself and was respected and admired by friends and colleagues. He was a cultured man with a wide interest in the arts. He is survived by his wife, Maria, a radiologist, and a son, a dental surgeon.

## BERNARD MARX

Dr. Bernard Marx, an interested member of the AJR, has died at the age of 82. He was born in Cologne and was about to go up to university at the age of 17 when he was called up during the First World War. He ended the war in an English PoW camp, where he acted as interpreter during his year's stay.

He studied dentistry in Bonn upon his return to Germany, joined the Kartell Jüdischer Verbindungen and was very active in Maccabi. He qualified in 1923 and married Irene née Mayer in 1925. There were two children of this happy marriage, a son who is an orthodontic specialist here, and a daughter in Haifa.

He came to Britain, through the Kitchener Camp, in 1939, and his family joined him only two days before the outbreak of war.

He did a variety of jobs before he was allowed to take the examination to practise in this country in 1956. He practised until his 78th year, when he retired.

## AVRAHAM KIDRON

The Israeli Ambassador to Australia, Avraham Kidron, has died in Canberra where he had represented Israel for the past three years. He was aged 63. A senior diplomat, Mr. Kidron was the Ambassador to Britain before being sent to Australia and he had also served in the London Embassy during the '50s. As a boy, Avraham Kidron had been one of the first Youth Aliyah wards to arrive in Palestine from Berlin in 1934. During the War of Independence he was chief of intelligence in the Haifa Hagana.

## AVROHOM NACHUM STENCL

Avrohom Nachum Stencl, poet and champion of the Yiddish language, has died in London at the age of 85. Polish by birth, he broke into the literary world in Berlin, where his poems translated into German were praised by Thomas Mann and Arnold Zweig. The German PEN Club published his "Fisherman's Village". Emigrating to London in 1936, he devoted the rest of his life to the cause of Yiddish.

## FELIX HIRSCH

The Berlin-born historian Felix E. Hirsch has died in Newton, Pa., aged 80. Before 1933, he edited the "Berliner Tageblatt". His best-known book is perhaps "Germany Ten Years After Defeat", published in 1955, and he also wrote a biography of Gustav Stresemann.

## MAX STREAT

Max Streat, formerly Strietzel, whose death was announced recently was a gifted violinist. He gave many recitals at Lodge meetings, at the Homes for the Aged and at the AJR Club.

Max Strietzel arrived in England in 1939 after imprisonment in Buchenwald concentration camp and was sent to Kitchener Camp. He had already made a career in music, having trained in Breslau, and the camp director at once co-opted him into the Kitchener orchestra. Later on he joined ENSA and was an active broadcaster and recording artist.

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## MORE GERMAN NEWS

### AWARD FOR OLD NAZI AUTHOR

The veteran Nazi author Erich Kern (real name Kernmayr) was honoured recently by the right-wing Gesellschaft für Publizistik, which awarded him the 15,000 DM Ulrich von Hutten prize for his work in restoring German identity and rehabilitation of the war generation, according to the citation.

Kern, who rose to prominence as an author in the years 1938-45, has since 1945 produced over 40 books and pamphlets. Some of his novels have reached seven editions and have been translated into several languages. Titles such as "White Man, Dead Man?", "Germany in the Abyss", "SPD Unmasked" are typical of his non-fiction work. "Allied Crimes in Germany", a "documentary work" was published as recently as 1981.

### ANOTHER MASS GRAVE FOUND

In the course of building works at the British Army camp in Bergen-Loheide a mass grave containing at least 66 male skeletons has been uncovered. It is thought likely that more remains will be found. Loheide is only a few miles away from the site of the concentration camp Bergen-Belsen. Buried with the bones were some metal tokens, apparently camp money from Buchenwald. In the closing months of the Second World War, many thousands of inmates from Eastern camps were despatched to Bergen-Belsen and there can be little doubt that the skeletons are those of concentration camp victims.

### DRUNKEN POLICE REPRIMANDED

Traffic police in Münster celebrated a night off by getting drunk and singing Nazi songs. Five of them were later warned about their conduct by the authorities and the most senior officer was fined 500 DM.

### CAMP AFTER-EFFECTS RELIEVED

A charitable organisation in Dillenburg, the Warniarka-Hilfswerk, has just received 10,000 DM from the Christian community in Düsseldorf. The Hilfswerk, run by Charlotte Petersen, provides help to Romanian Jews living in Israel who are still suffering from the effects of their imprisonment at Warniarka, Ukraine. Camp inmates were used as guinea-pigs in nutritional experiments, which included the supply of poisonous food. Over 400 people survived this treatment, but most of them still have severe internal lesions and in many cases they are partly paralysed. Because their case presents legal difficulties, these victims do not receive restitution payments from West Germany, but were given a once-for-all payment of 5,000 DM some years ago.

### ACCUSED OF FELLOW-PRISONERS' KILLING

Arrested on racial grounds—he is of gypsy origin—Hermann Ebender found himself in 1944 in the concentration camp "Dora Mittelbau" near Erfurt. From 1958 onward he received a compensatory pension from the Darmstadt authorities, together with a lump sum of nearly 155,000 DM as back payment of pension. For the past ten years, however, Ebender has been under suspicion of having murdered 17 men by torture, in four cases by his own hand, in the sub-camps of Rottleberode and Stempeda. In May 1980 he was arrested on murder charges. Although he was released on bail, his pension has been withdrawn and he has to repay 155,000 DM. The trial is currently proceeding before a Stuttgart court.

### TURNCOAT LAWYER CONDEMNED

The Association for those persecuted under the Nazi-Regime (VVN) has called for the dismissal of the North-Rhine-Westphalian lawyer Hermann Weissing as head of the Dortmund "Centre for the Prosecution of Nazi Mass Crimes". Their complaint arises from Weissing's admission, while acting for the prosecution in the case of Wilhelm Westerheide and Johanna Zelle, that "despite strong suspicion, there are doubts as to the reliability of the surviving Nazi victims" and that the accused should therefore be allowed to go free. Westerheide and Zelle, his former secretary, were acquitted of implication in the murders of 9,000 Jews at Vladimir-Volynsk, where Westerheide was the Nazi district commissar.

VVN indignation is all the more acute since in a previous trial in 1978/79 before a Bielefeld court, the very same prosecutor demanded life imprisonment for the very same accused. Nevertheless, they were on that occasion acquitted. But again it was Weissing who demanded a new trial and this was granted by a higher court on the grounds that the Bielefeld judges had given insufficient weight to the evidence before them. His ensuing call for an acquittal is stigmatised as a "monstrous derision of those murdered at Vladimir-Volynsk and all victims of Nazi barbarity".

### HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MEETING

The Holocaust Memorial Meeting this year will take place on 10 April at the Savoy Theatre, Strand, at 2.45 p.m. The Chief Rabbi will officiate and there will be readings by Robert Rietty. Reserved tickets are available from Ajex, 5A East Bank, London N16.

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## HOME NEWS

### VOLUNTEERS MEETING

A meeting of voluntary workers was held at Hannah Karminsky House on 18 January at the invitation of Mrs. Anderman. About 20 volunteers took part. Mrs. Patterson and Mrs. Matus were present and dealt with problems and questions which were raised. The meeting turned into a lively, informal discussion on all aspects of voluntary work. Suggestions were made on how to overcome difficulties, mainly dealing with transport. Voluntary workers would undertake more jobs like shopping and visiting if there were a small fund for paying for taxis. It was altogether a most useful and enjoyable meeting, so much so that it was decided to meet again from time to time. The meeting ended with coffee and sandwiches.

### MATRON RETIRES FROM BABY HOME

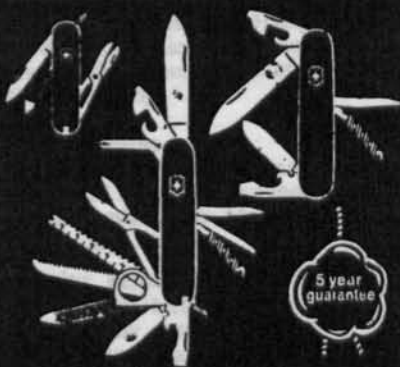
Mrs. Ruth Cooper has just retired as matron of the Highbury House babies' home. Her 31 years of service with Jewish welfare organisations stemmed from her teenage days when she worked in a Jewish orphanage in Germany. She was only 16 in 1938 when she came as a refugee to England and trained here as a children's nurse.

### SINGER'S CAREER BEGAN IN IOM

A teacher at the Royal Academy of Music and head of a singer's workshop at Morley College, soprano Ilse Wolf also gives recitals and adjudicates at music festivals. During her youth in the Rhineland, she received no formal musical training. She would have been unable to leave Germany during the Third Reich, had not a total stranger given her a few marks to enable her to obtain a visa. On her arrival in England, Ilse Wolf was among the many "enemy aliens" taken into Holloway Prison and then sent to the Isle of Man. There, by dint of much persuasion, a well-known singer agreed to give her lessons, the beginning of her musical career.

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### TRIED TO PASS INFLATION MONEY

A banknote from the Weimar period was used recently in an attempt to trick Garrards, the Regent Street jewellers. Although Australian Ronald Hunt had just left prison for a similar offence, he attempted to cover up the date and the syllable "Reichs" on a 20,000 RM note dating from the late twenties. He then tried to pass the note in payment for a £4,000 watch.

### TRAVEL AGENT'S BEST ASSIGNMENT

The head of VIP Travel, Berlin-born Willi Wilder, recently celebrated his 60th birthday. At a reception given in the West End of London, he recalled the most rewarding time of his whole life: when, as a young travel expert, he was sent to occupied Germany by the Jewish Agency. There he had the task of organising trains from Buchenwald and Dachau to take survivors and displaced persons back to Southern France.

### DR. ERNESTO ALEMANN

Dr. Ernesto Alemann has died in Buenos Aires at the age of 90. Of Swiss origin, Dr. Alemann was well-known in the years of the Third Reich for his warnings about and criticism of the National Socialists which the "Argentinisches Tageblatt" published under his editorship. Himself non-Jewish, he was always ready to help German-Jewish emigrants in Argentina and strongly resisted attacks by Nazi sympathisers in the country. Dr. Alemann also provided emigrant writers with a forum for their publications, assisted in the re-birth of the Freie Deutsche Bühne and helped exiled social democrats to form the group "Das Andere Deutschland".

### PICTURES NEEDED

Osmond House would be grateful for any framed pictures to brighten the hall.

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1983

- 7 Mar. HARRY BLACKER: "The Jewish East-End".
- 14 Mar. GEORGE JAEGER, MA.TH.L. "D. H. Lawrence. (1885-1930) His Life and Work".
- 21 Mar. MARTHA TAUSZ: "New experiences in China". (with slides).
- 28 Mar. No Lecture. (Pessach)
- 4 Apr. No Lecture. (Easter)
- 11 Apr. Dr. HERBERT HOCHFELD: "Das Diaspora-Museum in Tel Aviv".
- 18 Apr. Dr. ERWIN SELIGMANN: "Impressions of Israel during the Lebanon War".
- 25 Apr. LUCIE KAY: Bunce Court, (New Herrlingen). "The history of refugee children's integration into this country".
- 2 May. No Lecture. (May Day Holiday).

### MACCABI MUSEUM

The Pierre Gildesgame Maccabi Museum and World Archives in Ramat Gan, Israel, which opened to the public in 1982, is going to computerise the vast quantities of historic material in its possession, some of it going back to the turn of the century. The material will then be readily available for researchers. The Maccabi World Union is discussing with the West German authorities the arrangement of a travelling exhibition devoted to the History of Jewish Sport in Germany 1898-1938. At the International Exhibition of the History of Sport to be held in Essen, there will be particular stress put on the Hakoah Club of Essen. There will also be a permanent corner devoted to Maccabi in the Jewish Museum of Austria, in Eisenstadt.

### HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER GAOLED

Francis C. Morris, the hit-and-run driver whose car caused the death of Maccabi leader Pierre Gildesgame two years ago, has been imprisoned for nine months, banned from driving for 15 years and ordered to pay £4,000 costs. After the accident, the car showed brake lights for a moment before speeding off with its lights turned off. Later police identified Morris as a man seen to take an "unusual interest" in the scene of the accident and found that his car, a brown Rover, had had its bonnet, roof and boot cleaned.

### BRILLE EDITOR STILL WORKING

Twenty-one issues of the Jewish Blind Society's magazine "Listen", published in Braille and on tape, have been steered through all their printing and recording stages by Mrs. Henni Nussbaum. Born in Cologne, Mrs. Nussbaum lost her sight in adult life after receiving her doctorate in education in Germany. Following her marriage to a doctor and the birth of their son (who also became blind in his teens), the family were forced to leave Germany and came to England via Italy.

### AMATEUR YIDDISHIST'S SUCCESS

A German railwayman who, for the past ten years, has devoted all his spare time to research into the Yiddish language and culture spoke at a recent seminar on the historical sociology of Yiddish held by the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies. Hermann Süß, who lives in Fürstfeldbruck, used the opportunity for travel provided by his work to visit libraries holding Yiddish collections, not only in the large towns of Germany, but also in villages and tiny hamlets.

Mr. Süß first spoke at the Centre's seminar in 1979, following a chance meeting with one of the Fellows. In the past three years he has several times been invited to Jerusalem by the Hebrew University's Yiddish Department to confer with Israeli scholars and discuss his finds. A year ago he gave the first ever course in Yiddish bibliography at the Yivo Institute for Jewish Research in New York.

One of Mr. Süß's most spectacular discoveries was the long-lost private library of Johann Christoph Wagenseil. A Christian orientalist, Wagenseil published an important anthology of Old Yiddish literature in Königsberg in 1699, but the whereabouts of his own library were unknown until Hermann Süß, by a series of subtle deductions, unearthed the collection in Erlangen University library.

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## INDIFFERENCE OF THE GERMAN ELITE

"Astonish me!" demanded Diaghilev of Cocteau at their first meeting—and Cocteau spent the rest of his life fulfilling that injunction. The urge to astonish, to overturn accepted notions, is widespread among original minds in all spheres. Historians are as prone to it as artists and literati. A. J. P. Taylor thinks Hitler slithered into war by inadvertence; according to the egregious David Irving Hitler was kept in ignorance of the Final Solution till it was almost over.

Now we have a new theory about the Holocaust which, while not as ludicrous as Irving's, is as problematical as Taylor's hypothesis about the origins of the Second World War\*. Rainer Baum, a German-American sociologist, sees the root cause of the Holocaust not in Nazi commitment to evil, but in the general moral indifference of the Germans. *Pace* Baum Nazism didn't necessarily entail genocide. Not politics, but a non-Nazi "institutional cynicism", a profound non-political indifference about human life per se—rather than hatred of the Jews—put the extermination programme into effect.

Baum traces this moral indifference back to what he calls value dissensus among the various groups constituting German society. Wilhelminian society, he argues, was never properly integrated. There were Junkers, Rhenish industrialists, university "mandarins", *Besitzbürger*, etc.—each a group with separate interests and values which were never subsumed into a universally valid synthesis. Culturally, too, the country was multi-centered. While Berlin accommodated the government, Munich led in art, Leipzig in publishing, Dresden in opera and

Frankfurt in journalism. This geographical diffusion was symbolic of a more profound disjunction—that between *Macht* and *Geist*, power and culture. The German cultural elite represented icons of superior morality having nothing whatever to do with politics.

Most crucially, Baum says, the various groups in society were all strangers to one another. (Such estrangement applied, under certain circumstances, even within groups: Catholic workers thought, felt and acted differently from Social Democrat ones.) Living in a society without shared values means living with ethical strangers. Once one is conditioned to that state of affairs, argues Baum, the removal of some strangers—i.e. the deportation of Jews—amounts to the disappearance of distant people. Hence it was German moral indifference rather than Nazi antisemitism that accounts for the Holocaust.

Baum makes out a persuasive case for his hypothesis and quotes telling examples of German moral indifference. The most telling refers to Hitler's meeting with army chiefs after the Roehm putsch, when no one present murmured a word of protest at the murder of their fellow general, ex-Chancellor von Schleicher, and his wife in cold blood.

Even so one feels less than convinced. The author seems too intent on making the facts fit his hypothesis. Baum writes "There was nothing new in the Nazi gospel of hate the Jews. It was old hat". This is a half-truth. The virulence of Nazi antisemitism was *sui generis*. Christian antisemitism at least ensured the survival of some Jews—as evidence of their accursed state for future generations. By the same token the inspirer of the Tsarist pogroms, Pobodenostsev, had a tripartite solution for Russia's Jewish Question: "One-third will be killed, one-third will emigrate, and one-third will convert". (Under such "old hat" antisemitism the Holocaust would, clearly, have claimed fewer victims).

Elsewhere, Baum states, "A Nazi vote in 1932 was

not a mandate to exclude Jews from German society". I found this assertion astonishing, to say the least. During the 1932 election campaigns—there were a number that year—only a deaf-mute would not have heard the chant "*Deutschland erwache/Juda verrecke*", or the SA song about Jewish blood spurring from the knife. Any Berliner would have had to be a latter-day Robinson Crusoe not to know that Goebbels brought large middle-class audiences to their feet with such genocidal oratory as "*Manche sagen dass der Jude auch ein Mensch ist; ich sage die Laus ist auch ein Tier*".

Elsewhere again Baum is guilty of contradiction. Having himself stated that writing about the Holocaust demands some special language of taboo, he then infringes that taboo by exhibitions of bad taste. Since everybody knows that the extermination of the Jews was a wholly irrational undertaking—even from the German war effort point of view—it is a labour of supererogation to study its profitability. Yet Baum has worked out meticulously that the Holocaust resulted in no more than a 40.70 Reichsmark increase in per-capita income of every German. Worse still, the author says the following about the cost effectiveness of Nazi exploitation of Jewish slave labour: "Slavery required a guard/inmate ratio higher than the pupil/teacher ratio in your neighbourhood grade school. Now, however notorious the expense of education, teachers stay. They make some contribution to the final product, literacy or a Ph.D. Camp guards only guarded, normally".

All in all Baum has produced a curate's egg of a book. He establishes a cogent case for studying the deformation of modern German history from a sociological point of view—but asserts rather more than he can substantiate. As for the tone of his work the above example speaks for itself.

RICHARD GRUNBERGER

\* *The Holocaust and the German Elite* By Rainer Baum. Croom Helm £19.95

### FAMILY EVENTS

Entries in this column are free of charge, but voluntary donations would be appreciated. Texts should reach us by the 15th of the preceding month.

#### Birthday

**Nadel:**—Theo (Toby) Nadel, of Melbourne, will celebrate his 70th birthday on 11 March. Congratulations!

#### Golden Wedding

**Meyerstein:**—Ludwig Meyerstein, formerly lawyer and notary in Halle/Saale and Mrs. Alice (Lice, née Eisner) of Guttentag O/S, recently celebrated their Golden Wedding.

#### Deaths

**Alexander:**—Mrs. Irmgard Alexander passed away on 27 January after a short illness. Deeply missed by Margaret Steiner, family and friends.

**Eisner:**—Heinz Eisner passed away peacefully in Solihull Hospital, 19 January. Deeply mourned by his wife, son, daughter-in-law, grandson, sister, brother and sister-in-law.

**Friedland:**—F. Friedland, husband of Erna, passed away on the 20 January, after a short illness. Deeply missed by his widow, family and friends. Flat 33, "Tarranbrae", Willesden Lane, London NW6 7PN.

**Greenwood:**—Otto Sidney Greenwood, of 6 Sutcliffe Close, NW11, passed away on 23 January. Deeply mourned by his wife Gretel, daughters Connie and Diane, sons-in-law John and Adrian, grandchildren Jane, Jonathan and Simon, and all his relatives and many friends.

**Herz:**—Dr. Kurt Herz, 73, on 29 January. Deeply mourned by his family and friends.

**Marx:**—Dr. Bernard Marx died on 28 January. Deeply mourned by wife Irene, daughter Ruth Kirschbaum-Neuberger, son Richard Marx, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, relatives and friends.

**Schwab:**—Ella Schwab, of Otto Schiff House, aged 89, passed away peacefully on Shabbath 15 January. Deeply mourned by her sister, brother, nieces and nephews.

**Silbermann:**—Pauline Silbermann (née Feust) passed away 1 January aged 93. Will be sadly missed by family and friends.

#### In Memoriam

**Weiss:**—In loving memory of Karl, beloved husband and father, who died 21 March 1982 in his 76th year. Remembered and terribly missed by all his family and very many friends. Also Tommy, who left us suddenly March 1956, not quite eleven years old. Forever in our hearts and thoughts.

### CLASSIFIED

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##### Personal Enquiry

**BARR:**—Peter Barr, from Berlin, born around 1921/22, presumed to have come to this country at the beginning of 1939 and who was in the Pioneer Corps. Box 969.  
**Cohn:**—Paul Moritz Cohn, formerly Hamburg, who came to this country in 1939 with a children's transport. Please write to Box 972.

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**MURILLO AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY**

The Murillo exhibition at the Royal Academy, open until 27 March 1983, which includes over a hundred works of this artist assembled from collections all over the world, demonstrates the versatility and superb ability of this Spanish artist. Bartolomé Estaban Murillo was born in Seville in 1618, lived there most of his life and died in 1678 as a result of a fall from the scaffolding in a church where he was painting the high altarpiece. Like Spain itself, Seville was in a period of decline during Murillo's lifetime, but still a city of magnificence. Nevertheless, the Inquisition which had done so much to destroy Spain's Golden Age, was still in full activity. Auto-da-fés were common occurrences and took place near the house where Murillo was born. As a proud citizen of Seville, Murillo must have been aware of the sorry fate that had befallen his Jewish fellow citizens in the expulsion only a century before. Indeed, one of the churches he helped to decorate was the Santa Maria la Blanca in the Juderia which had formerly been one of the synagogues of the thriving

Jewish community. The four large pictures which he painted for this church, one of Murillo's most important commissions, are on display in the exhibition.

Apart from the splendid religious paintings, the exhibition also contains a number of fine portraits and scenes of the everyday life of peasant children, including those delightful pictures "Children Playing Dice" and "Two Boys Eating a Pie", lent by the Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlungen, Munich.

**GRAPHICS AND DRAWINGS**

This truly magnificent exhibition which shows so much of Murillo's work, was made possible through the generous support of B.A.T. Industries, one of Britain's largest industrial enterprises. A fully illustrated catalogue is available, published in association with Weidenfeld & Nicolson, price £5.95.

At Margaret Fisher's Gallery, 2 Lambolle Road, NW3, there has recently been an interesting exhibition of the graphic work of Hans Meid and water colours and drawings by Katerina Wilczynski.

ALICE SCHWAB

**HEBREW UNIVERSITY EXCHANGE**

The Hebrew University has lately entered into exchange agreements with two German institutes. The Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg is to send three professors and three students to Jerusalem each year and will in its turn welcome six members of the Hebrew University. Four students have already made the exchange and are currently studying at the sister university.

Under a similar agreement, Hebrew University lecturers will teach at the College for Jewish Studies in Heidelberg.

**SILVER AMULET UNEARTHED**

An archaeologist from Tel Aviv University, Gabriel Barkay, has reported finding a hoard of treasure near Mount Zion. The hoard included 100 pieces of silver jewellery—a record for archaeological digs in Jerusalem. But the most important item is an amulet in the form of a scroll and bearing the name of God in Hebrew. The amulet is about 2,750 years old and is believed to be the earliest object so far found in Jerusalem and bearing the Tetragrammaton. The inscription was only recently deciphered with the help of special techniques developed at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

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# THEATRE AND CULTURE

**Unusual Jubilees.** Vienna's cultural achievements were often the result of historical events which expressed themselves in literary or culinary feats. It is 300 years since the famous victory over the Turks who in 1683 had finally to withdraw from the long-coveted areas of Central Europe, leaving behind—so the story goes—the first Viennese coffee houses founded by a man named Kolschitzky, who had the very first crescent-shaped breadrolls baked (the Austrian "Kipferl"), based on the Turkish half-moon crest. Munich reports the 110-year jubilee of the "Weisswurst", and the ubiquitous German card game "Skat" celebrated 170 years of existence.

**The Next Generation.** *Nicole Kunz*, the Viennese actress, seen in various parts on stage and Austrian Television this season, is the daughter of State opera and Lieder singer *Erich Kunz* who, at 72, is still making appearances on the operatic stage. *Lena von Stolze*, the young German actress (whose father was the tenor *Gerhard Stolze*) has had a steeply-rising screen career. She made her name playing leading parts in the anti-Nazi films "Die weisse Rose" and "Fünf letzte Tage". Both films received prizes at the Karlsbad and Venice Festivals.

**Birthdays.** *Rudolf Fernau*, the Berlin actor who became one of the most prominent figures of the German stage, acting under the direction of *Reinhardt*, *Jessner*, *Fehling* and *Kortner*, celebrated

his 85th birthday. *Werner Hinz*, the Berlin character actor who once belonged to the legendary *Gruendgens* ensemble, had his 80th birthday. *Erik Frey*, a long-standing member of the Vienna "Josefstadt" who will shortly play the title role in Ibsen's "John Gabriel Borkman", is also 80. The Viennese actress and diseuse *Else Rambauek*, called the "Indefatigable" and at present playing *Duchess Bozena* in *Kalman's* "Graefin Mariza" at the *Raimundtheater*, is 75 years old.

**Obituary.** The celebrated musician *Hugo Burg-hauser* has died in New York, aged 86. Once the famous bass player of the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra, he had been their chairman since 1932; he emigrated to the United States in 1938, played for the NBC and later became a member of the Metropolitan opera orchestra. He retired in 1965 and wrote his memoirs "Philharmonische Begegnungen", which were published by Atlantis, Zürich, in 1979. *Rolf Wanka*, the Prague-born actor who in the Thirties symbolized the "Elegant Gentleman" in German films, has died in Munich at the age of 81.

S.B.

## VISITORS TO AUSTRIAN CENTRE

The Jewish Cultural Centre in Vienna has attracted over 10,000 tourists, according to a recent report.

## GERMAN-JEWISH RELATIONS DEBATED

A seminar organised by the Goethe Institute and the van Leer Foundation was recently held in Jerusalem on the theme of how Germans and Jews regard each other. Politicians, writers, journalists, teachers, historians and lawyers from both countries assembled to discuss all aspects of the two peoples' reactions since 1952. For young Israelis, Germany is a country almost like any other, so that the audience was chiefly made up of the older generation, among them many former German Jews. Several of the speakers dealt with the question of whether anti-Zionism necessarily equals antisemitism; other subjects included the attitude of German youth, the Palestinian question and why the Holocaust had taken place in Germany, when other countries included quite as many antisemites.

## RECONCILIATION VISIT TO JERUSALEM

Delegates from the German Co-ordinating Council of Associations for Christian-Jewish Co-operation (DKR) recently visited Jerusalem, where they found that their organisation was better known than to many Germans. Israelis welcomed them as representatives of over thirty years' endeavour for German-Jewish reconciliation. The delegation visited many important institutions and individuals, among them *Teddy Kollek*, the Mayor of Jerusalem, who pointed with pride to the opening of the *Sheikh Jarah Health Centre*, built with funds from Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain and the USA. The Centre will eventually serve many thousands of patients each day.

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