

# AJR INFORMATION

Volume XLII No. 5, May 1987

£2 (to non-members)

Few events can have been more embarrassing and irritating in recent Jewish experience than the affair of the American Jewish naval intelligence officer who was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of spying for Israel. Here was a man, Jonathan Pollard, who, placed in a sensitive position of trust, found himself torn between two loyalties. He wanted (he said) to 'help both the United States and Israel', and so, in making his decision, he, on his own admission, 'broke the law'. As he himself confessed, 'I should have gone on *aliyah* when my ability to discharge my functions as a member of

can Jewish community. He wanted them to appreciate that what he had done was 'not to hurt the U.S. but to help both the U.S. and Israel'. In these hopes, however, he was disappointed. The American Jews, like Israel's non-Jewish friends in America, were profoundly disturbed, especially when it became clear that Pollard had been used as a spy by Israel Government quarters. The President of the American Jewish Congress, Theodore Mann, could recall 'no previous incident in the history of Israeli-Diaspora relations that had caused so much anger among American Jews'; a 'serious breach' had been

law, and it can be no defence, as some overzealous propagandists have argued, that he passed secrets to an ally of the U.S., not to a potential enemy. This, whatever its morality, is a specious excuse, making nonsense of the whole idea of secrets to which every State is, in principle, entitled to lay claim and which every citizen is of course bound in honour to respect.

American Jews were not slow to rebut Avineri's strictures. If they abhorred the 'morally indefensible crime', one of their leaders said, it was not because of a *galut* mentality or fear of antisemitism; the Jewish experience in America (he thought) was 'too secure to be undone by a single event,' as had been proved by the 'far more ominous episode' of the Rosenbergs 30-odd years ago. U.S. Jews would never admit that 'support for Israel could legitimize criminal action against the United States: Our patriotism as Americans need not be at the expense of our identification as proud Jews'.

Another American Jewish Congress leader, Rabbi Henry Siegman, emphatically stated that 'Jews feel very much at home and secure in America . . . the freest and most open society they have known'. Of course, he said, 'there is no guarantee that this sense of Jewish well-being and freedom may never change. But then neither is there any guarantee that the State of Israel will for ever be a safe place for its citizens. If ever the day should come when the American experiment in religious pluralism fails and six million American Jews get to feel as insecure as some Israelis believe they already do, that would offer scant comfort to Zionist ideologies'.

## TORN BETWEEN LOYALTIES

### The Tragedy of the American Jewish Spy

the American intelligence community became incompatible with my emotional need to do something for Israel'.

That 'emotional need' was strong. His 'fairly standard Jewish upbringing' inculcated in him the idea of 'the centrality of Israel'. He had grown up (he explained) on stories of individuals who had 'performed what I call their racial obligation' — for example, during the Israeli war of independence in 1948 when arms were secretly shipped to the fighting Israelis. This was not considered breaking the law, and so he had never doubted that there was 'no difference between being a good American and a good Zionist'. He never contemplated emigrating to Israel, his parents never encouraged him — 'my future was here'.

Yet he was 'obsessed with Israel,' and that is where 'the seeds of his discontent' lay, that 'inner dilemma', because 'my heart was in the East'. He felt strongly about it particularly after he had visited Dachau which 'scared the hell out of him'. He came to realise that if Israel were to go down, 'we could as a people not really live past the experience of another Holocaust', also that 'a strengthened Israel would in the long run serve U.S. interests,' though he was not unaware of the fact that 'Israel perhaps has interests that diverge from those of the U.S.'

Having made these confessions, Pollard hoped to receive some encouragement from the Ameri-

created not only between Israel and the U.S. but also between the two Jewries. The chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations, Morris Abram, expressly defended the life sentence on Pollard. Other U.S. Jewish leaders severely denounced the 'despicable crime' and complained bitterly of the way the matter had been handled by Israel.

The London *Jewish Chronicle* warned Israel that she 'can hardly be surprised if her opponents and critics in the U.S.A., of which there are some in influential positions, do their utmost to limit future cooperation to that which they conceive to be strictly in America's own interests'. Fears were felt that a deep shadow might fall on all those loyal American Jews in sensitive posts who ever had any affection for the Jewish State.

In Israel, the criticism was badly received. In a widely noted Open Letter, the well-known political scientist and writer Shlomo Avineri told the American Jews their reactions had shown that they felt as vulnerable as French, German, Soviet and Egyptian Jews; they had always boasted that America was 'not another Exile', but in fact, however 'comfortable' it might be, 'padded with success and renown', it was exile nonetheless.

Avineri compared the Jewish reactions in America to those in France during the Dreyfus affair. But, in fairness, this was no Dreyfus affair. Dreyfus was innocent, Pollard had broken the

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## WHO CARED?

### U.S. Indifference to Christian Refugees

You did not have to be Jewish to be a refugee from Nazi oppression. Indeed nearly one-third of those who fled from Germany in the pre-war years were Christians. Relatively little has been written about them; and it was to close this gap that an Israeli historian undertook a piece of painstaking research into this neglected field of academic study. The results are published in the form of a well-documented, scholarly book which places on record the reception accorded to Christians seeking safety on the shores of the 'nation of immigrants': *American Apathy: The Plight of Christian Refugees from Nazism*, by Haim Genizi (Bar-Ilan University Press, Ramat-Gan. 411 pp., with tables, bibliography and index). Though writing from a Jewish point of view, the author nowhere departs from scrupulous objectivity and scientific detachment. Only in his preface does he allow his emotions to come to the surface.

Dr. Genizi notes the weak response of the League of Nations and the American government's reluctance to relax its restrictionist policies towards potential immigrants. But an investigation of the attitude adopted by representative bodies of the major Christian denominations shows that, at least initially, they also displayed an unfortunate ecumenism in their common lack of concern for their European co-religionists.

Except for some 'cries in the wilderness', the Protestant establishment remained aloof at first. Alleged 'Jewish pressure' to react positively at least to the anti-Christian manifestations of Hitlerism were resented or ignored as mere propaganda, although the facts were not unknown. Some sections of the Church cherished the hope that by adopting a conciliatory stance towards the 'new' Germany they would ensure that that country's Protestant citizens would be treated more favourably than Catholics, not to mention Jews.

#### "Anti-Communism"

Anti-Communism, from whatever quarter, was not unwelcome, since it helped to 'save Christianity' from atheistic Bolshevism. And if the growth of American antisemitism was deplored, it was because it was feared that it might jeopardise missionary activities among Jews, rather than for more altruistic reasons. Paradoxically, it was only with the assistance of Jewish resources that the main Christian relief agency was able to undertake, first, educational tasks and then the all-important work of alleviating economic hardship; and even then it had only limited success in 'opening Christian hearts and purses' for the purpose of settling needy Christian refugees. On occasion, the antisemitism of the rank and file impeded the leadership's efforts on behalf of Protestant immigrants.

Their Catholic fellow-sufferers had similar experiences. Under the influence of the hierarchy's blind spot as regards the ugly face of what to them appeared as the righteous fight against

Bolshevik godlessness, no less than of the grassroots support for the notorious Father Coughlin's fanatical antisemitism, Catholics, too, remained indifferent to the fate of refugees, including those of their own faith, until 1936, when the German bishops made a direct appeal to the American Church's 'charity'. The response, when it came, tended to be inspired by theological considerations as much as fellow-feeling and its effectiveness reduced by irrational hostility towards other relief organisations. Although the efforts of the Catholic community did gather momentum in its later stages, Catholic refugees fared rather less well at the hands of their American brothers and sisters than did their contemporaries of other faiths.

The helping hand which Quakerism extended on a genuinely non-sectarian basis stood in sharp contrast to the reaction of other Christian establishments – although in the United States itself this was delayed until November 1938. The Society of Friends was particularly active in connection with resettlement and absorption projects and in the field of relief for refugee children and young war victims. By and large, too, it cooperated well with Jewish agencies.

Arguably the most interesting chapter is that which deals with other so-called non-sectarian organisations. Established in part to secure wider public support for the cause of the refugees, they tended to duplicate, rather than bolster, existing schemes. Of the dozen or so 'non-sectarian' agencies set up in the 1930s most were financed by the Jewish community and staffed by Jewish personnel, while assistance was given to pure 'Aryan' as well as non-'Aryan' Christians. They mostly concentrated upon help for displaced professional people and children. If they did not score many overwhelming successes, their existence and the Christian support they attracted at least mitigated the severity of the refugees' plight and facilitated eventual cooperation between the denominations and the ultimate flowering of American generosity.

This is an important book which contains a wealth of information and source material for the specialist. For the general reader it has the fascinating story of an established society treating with equal indifference newcomers in need, irrespective of their race or creed, allowing its selfish preoccupations to override, at least for a time, its instincts of common humanity; so that what Christian Americans achieved on behalf of refugees of their own faith as well as others is to the credit of the few who stood out against the insensibility of the many and thus became 'the conscience of America'.

D.L.M.

## THE VATICAN AND JEWISH REFUGEES in war-time Italy

'The Vatican and the Jewish refugees in Italy during the war' was the title of a long article in the Roman Jesuit journal *La Civiltà Cattolica*. The English writer, Fr Robert Graham, is known for his scholarly studies of the subject, and the occasion for his research paper now was the 50th anniversary of the famous encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* (14 March 1937). Graham joins issue with what he regards as the legend created by Rolf Hochhuth's play *Der Stellvertreter*, that the Pope (Pius XII) had failed to protest against the extermination of the Jews because he was concerned only for the survival of the Church. If he had made a public protest and, in so doing, exposed himself to martyrdom, everything would have been different, according to the legend which then also assumes that after the Pope's assassination, the Holocaust would have been stopped, the Germans would have turned against Hitler and made peace.

Graham believes that a public protest by the Pope would, on the contrary, have provoked further massacres. He had tried to do what seemed to him right and practicable by giving active, secret aid. Certainly the Vatican's view of Nazism was eloquently expressed in the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* which had strongly denounced the 'myths of blood and soil' and condemned the 'idol worship' of 'race' and 'nation'. The encyclical then said: 'We were neither allowing

untimely silence to make us join in the responsibility for the lack of enlightenment nor were we letting unnecessary rigour harden the hearts of those who were walking along the paths of error and alienation from truth'.

Graham also touches upon the policy of Mussolini who he says, while a free agent, tried to foil the German demands for the surrender of Italian Jews to the Gestapo.

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#### WARSAW GHETTO HEAD'S DIARY

The diary of Adam Czerniakov, the head of the Warsaw Ghetto until his suicide in July 1942, was recently published in German (*Im Warschauer Ghetto. Tagebuch 1939-1942*. Translated from the Polish by Silke Lent. Munich. C. H. Beck. 1986. 328pp. DM 39.80). It reveals the truly tragic situation of one condemned to act between the upper and nether millstones, the Jews and the Germans. His last entry, a message to his wife, runs: 'They demand that I, with my own hands, murder the children of my people. There is nothing left for me but to die'. A reviewer in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* describes the diary as 'a unique document' and 'like the Diary of Anne Frank one of the inextinguishable testimonials by people who have written German history by recording their own'.



Evelyn Adunka

## TEACHING OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

### in Austrian Schools

Only since the 1970s can it be said that a consistent attempt has been made to come to grips with the story of National Socialism in Austrian schools, Universities and in the mass media. In the light of current events, it is a process well worth watching. It was primarily due to the new generation of teachers that the situation could show some signs of improvement. Previously, too frequently, there was a tendency to gloss over contemporary history in silence. The syllabus was vague enough for history lessons to end, because of 'lack of time', with World War I at the latest.

Not until 1966 was it possible to found at Vienna University the Austrian Institute for Contemporary History. Directed today by Erika Weirzierl, this is invaluable in teacher training and is now over-subscribed. At the same time, Hermann Langbein, the well known authority on the holocaust, began to visit Austrian schools with 'Witnesses of the Age'. Since 1976 this has been officially sponsored by the Ministry of Education. It appears that the immediacy, the depths of sensitivity, humanity and sincerity of the 'witnesses', who are always ready to meet the

children, no matter how painful it might be for themselves, is the best and most effective way of presenting the terror and cruelty of National Socialism. This operation is, for biological reasons, restricted in time, and it is geographically confined to Vienna. With these facts in mind, a seven-part video was produced under the title *I was in a Concentration Camp*; it is available to schools.

Also distributed to all secondary schools in Austria and to all primary schools in Vienna were the contemporary history project boxes, consisting of books, films, cassettes and reprints of posters. Further action was taken in 1985, 'The Year of Contemporary History'; brochures such as 'Documents of Freedom: national and international law and the foundation of the Second Republic' were distributed to all schools and a project, 'Pupils and Contemporary History' on the theme, 'The Homecoming, 1945-55', was initiated. This consisted of transcripts of debates, exhibitions and documentation, but the danger existed that the war would be seen in relative terms by those who had not suffered its horrors.

### Exhibitions – but no follow-up

It was further recommended that all schools should visit the Austrian Jewish Museum in Eisenstadt. This is educationally well-arranged and, together with Professor Kurt Schubert's specialist guided tours, is often visited. The catalogues to the exhibitions, '1000 Years of Austrian Jewry' and 'The Yellow Star in Austria', are available on request. Mauthausen Concentration Camp is visited by 80,000 schoolchildren annually, though this cannot altogether be viewed positively. Often there is no follow-up of the visit with political and educational discussions and explanations concerning Auschwitz, the Holocaust, anti-Communism or present-day xenopho-

bia and right-wing extremism. In Vienna in 1986, the well-produced Anne Frank exhibition attracted 20,000 visitors, over half of whom were schoolchildren, who often had to hold discussions there and fill in questionnaires. The exhibition could be seen until the end of 1986 in Salzburg, St. Pölten and Bregenz and may return in 1988.

The project boxes are proving in practice to be of primary value in the further education of teachers. There is no central organisation in Austria, much as it may be needed, for the continuing and specific further education of teachers. There is a wider availability of correspondence courses and an Anti-Fascist Seminar at the Institute of Contemporary History which may, though only with the consent of the Head Teacher, be attended on a voluntary basis and which over five years has trained about 40 teachers annually. The institutes for political education of the three main political parties, (SPÖ, ÖVP and FPÖ) also hold annual seminars for the further education of teachers.

From a 1984 investigation, 'Contemporary History and the School' undertaken by a public opinion research institute on behalf of the Federal Government, it appeared that 36 per cent of the population of Austria showed a great to very great interest in contemporary history; however, 63 per cent evinced little or no interest. It is a hopeful sign that only 28 per cent of the young people questioned think that there is sufficient teaching of contemporary history, while 77 per cent plead for further time to be given to it.

This is exactly what the Ministry of Education intends for the future in Austrian schools. From 1985, in the eight years of compulsory primary education and in the eighth and final years in the secondary schools, a full year of contemporary history teaching is planned. The authors of the existing, greatly inferior text-books, in which, for example, Auschwitz is mentioned in one ridiculous paragraph, are at present engaged in rewriting them. Further measures are being taken in the schools. A new multi-media programme on freedom has just begun and it is proposed to follow it by one on prejudice towards minorities. The very popular ÖRF documentary film series by Hugo Portisch and Sepp Riff, accompanied by three thick volumes, is available to schools.

In view of the hardening political climate, the question arises as to how far future programmes and initiatives in the teaching of political and contemporary history in Austrian schools can maintain, unimpaired, the standards already achieved. Opinions differ, but it is certain that there is still only a minority of teachers and, therefore, of pupils, which is progressive, open-minded, sufficiently knowledgeable, informed and receptive—even if this minority is continually growing and there is a great deal of good will. For the remainder, it is difficult, primarily for administrative reasons, to establish contact. Today there exists neither reason for undue alarm nor for fulsome praise, but for the future there still remains much to be done.

\* The author is a non-Jewish journalist, studying philosophy and history, especially Jewish, at Vienna University.

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## Among Ghosts and Ruins

### Remnants of Jewish Life in Rural Germany

In rural Southern Germany today, one can still see numerous Jewish cemeteries, synagogues and *mikvaot*. No Jews live here, and these remnants of Jewish life are often difficult to identify. The cemeteries are almost always beyond the outskirts of the villages, hidden in small woods, clinging to steep hillsides or beyond ploughed fields. Most of them are only now being rediscovered after decades of oblivion, since the few extant Jewish communities in the cities take care of their own cemeteries but have scant interest in these lost rural ones.

It is left to various individual committed Germans to preserve the remnant of that Jewish life which had flourished for over a thousand years in Germany (cf. my report on the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Jüdischer Sammlungen* in AJR INFORMATION, January 1987).

In recent years, I have made several trips to the area south of Würzburg, accompanied by a photographer, in order to see the villages for myself and to write about them. Much preliminary research has already been published (some of it not easy to locate), but the situation changes constantly. I have visited a village synagogue and photographed it, only to pass by a few days later

and find the roof being removed. A surprising number of synagogues are still standing, though they have usually been rebuilt or converted to other uses such as churches, schools, youth hostels, warehouses or private homes. Other synagogues have been left empty and unused. With a little perseverance, access can be won and intriguing discoveries made.

It must be stressed at this point that these buildings are not of great architectural merit – their scale is small, in keeping with the domestic architecture about them; and the exteriors lack ostentation. Yet old photographs give evidence that the interiors were usually possessed of great charm, with harmonic proportions and elaborate decorations. Some, like the baroque synagogue being restored in Veitshöchheim near Würzburg must have been exquisite gems. We know that the interiors of almost every synagogue in Germany were destroyed on *Kristallnacht*, together with all their contents. It is less well known that quite a number of them escaped demolition, especially in the villages, because their proximity to other, 'Aryan' buildings which could have been damaged in the process. As a result, there are almost always remnants of Jewish life in rural areas.

### Looking for Mezzuzah Traces

I set about locating these remnants by going to these areas and asking questions. On arriving in a village, I stop the first likely-looking person and inquire where I can find the former synagogue. This often results in a torrent of information, mostly self-exonerating, and always including the mandatory sentence: 'I was never in the Party!' But they are usually helpful and will take me to the synagogue, pointing out any other buildings of Jewish interest on the way, such as a slaughterhouse, *mazzah* bakery or former Jewish home (*Judenhaus*) or school (*Judenschule*). The German language itself gives a special dimension to such a statement. I look for *mezzuzah* traces – small indentations in the door-posts which *must* have been purposely left by subsequent owners; inscriptions (often in Hebrew) over doorways, and at cellars that may once have been *mikvaot*. Then, I try and see the mayor of the village to ask what plans there are to preserve the synagogue, if commemorative plaques are to be affixed, and whether the local archives might yield material of interest to me. Finally, I pay a visit to the cemetery.

What can one do in a cemetery? How can one deal with the fallen memorials, the ivy and lichen-covered stones? The community does not know. Should one prop up the stones which are about to fall, or raise up those already sinking into the ground? Tradition may say one thing, sentiment might dictate the opposite. There is nothing

one can do about the natural erosion of time – a process now being hastened by acid rain! The German community does not want to appear neglectful, and does discreet cleaning of the graves. But sometimes one sees appalling lapses: 18th century gravestones dug up and set in straight lines not directly related to the graves; stones cleaned with powerful waterjets which have hastened the disintegration; high walls concealing total neglect – a German community with few Jews to give advice is often helpless confronting these shadows of the past.

Recently, the walls of the early Gothic church of the St. Mark Cloister in Würzburg had to be demolished. As they broke apart, they revealed early Jewish tombstones from the 13th century: the daughter of the rabbi Yaakov Halevi, the young man Ephraim son of Isaac – remnants of the community before the pogrom of 1298. Christian stone masons had used these stones for building, had cut them apart so that they are incomplete; but they have re-emerged as a memorial to individuals and a community. Rabbi Akiva Eger (in his commentary to *Yore Dea* 376.4) reminded the Jewish community of his time that grave stones are set up 'so that the memory of the dead will not depart out of hearts.' The synagogues and homes and overgrown cemeteries of the rural communities in Germany say the same to us today.

### 'JEWISH THEATRE IN GERMANY' NOW

A 'Jewish Theatre in Germany' was founded in Bensheim, Hesse, a few weeks ago. The ambitious venture is due to the initiative of a group of German actors who wish to make their contribution to the national effort of 'coming to terms with the past'. Drawing their inspiration from the Jewish theatre that existed under Nazi rule, the *Kulturbund*, they intend to stage exclusively plays of Jewish and Israeli authors. They receive financial support from the Hesse Ministry of Education, also from the Bensheim town council which has put a small building at their disposal. According to the producer, William Lampert, it is hoped to 'revive in this way the once fertile German-Jewish cultural symbiosis'.

The first play so far staged has been *Der Puppenspieler von Lodz*, by Gilles Segal. It is the story of a Jewish puppeteer who lives in an attic, isolated from the world, speaking only to a life-size doll about his concentration camp memories, until a friend and fellow-prisoner introduces him to a new perspective of life.

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The medical quarters of the West German army aerodrome at Hildensheim were named after a Jewish World War I officer, Dr. Julius Schoeps, who was murdered at Theresienstadt. The life and achievement of this 'Jew and Prussian' were appreciated in a speech delivered by a representative of the Bonn Ministry of Defence. His grandson, Professor Julius H. Schoeps, the philosopher, also spoke, referring to the general situation of the Jews in pre-Nazi Germany. They had never been accepted (he said); they always remained outsiders, not just on the fringes but in the very centre of society. They were regarded as aliens, as irritating intruders whose presence was causing 'diffuse feelings of fear.'

### 'WHITE ROSE' FOUNDATION IN U.S.A.

A 'White Rose' Foundation was established at Washington in memory of the German anti-Nazi resistance group. The ceremony at the White House was attended by German and US parliamentarians, the German Ambassador and representatives of the American Jewish Congress which was largely instrumental in launching the project designed to foster good relations between West Germany and US Jewry.

In a speech, the Democratic Senator Pell said Americans were not entirely without blame for Hitler's crimes as they had failed to act in time. The former U.S. Ambassador in Bonn, Burns, thought that today 'loving mercy' was needed to help maintain peace.

The chairman of the 'White Rose' Foundation is Rabbi Henry Siegmán who said he had lost all his family in Germany; it was only the sacrifice of the 'White Rose' leaders, the Scholl brother and sister, that made it possible for him to set foot on German soil again and promote German-Jewish dialogue.



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Ruth Rothenberg

## SCROLLS WITH A PAST

### Researching into Czech Jewry's Legacy

The bizarre nature of the Nazis' congenital but deformed bureaucratic habits has led to some strange twists of fate. In Czechoslovakia, for instance, the Gestapo's director of Jewish matters, the notorious Adolf Eichmann, ordered the collection and safekeeping of the *sifrei Torah* (the Torah scrolls) from the synagogues of the communities which were being destroyed. These were intended to form the nucleus of a future Jewish museum – designed to show the world the 'degenerate' nature of the people annihilated by the Nazis.

As a result of Eichmann's grandiose ambitions, 1,564 scrolls were collected from Bohemia and Moravia, the western provinces of Czechoslovakia. The scrolls were meticulously recorded and carefully stored away in Prague.

Ironically, the other Jewish artefacts collected by the Nazis, mostly silver ornaments and textiles, can be seen now at the State Jewish Museum in Prague – but very few scrolls. These lay untouched and mouldering for over 20 years until

in 1964 they were finally brought to England by Mr. Eric Estorick, an American art dealer of Russian-Jewish parentage.

From their new resting place in Westminster Synagogue, many of the scrolls (those in good condition) were distributed to Jewish communities worldwide. One synagogue which applied for scrolls was the Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue, then in its early days. The synagogue received two *sifrei Torah* which were used without further comment or curiosity for the next 13 years.

Then, following the interest expressed by a teacher in *cheder*, the minister of the synagogue, Rabbi Andrew Goldstein, made the scrolls the subject of his Yom Kippur sermon. (We are now in 1978.) En passant, Rabbi Goldstein suggested that, if a member of the congregation happened to be visiting Czechoslovakia, it would be a nice idea to go to one of the towns from which the scrolls originated.

### A Voyage of Discovery

At which point a synagogue member, Breslau-born Mr. Michael Heppner, got drawn in. Mr. Heppner, who came to Britain as a toddler with his parents in 1939, now visits Czechoslovakia two or three times a year for his engineering import business and thought that following up the rabbi's throwaway remark would occupy the otherwise 'boring weekends'. What began as a harmless diversion is now an all-absorbing mission.

On his next visit the following spring, Mr. Heppner took the train from Prague to the small town of Kolin in East Bohemia, armed only with a piece of paper on which was written in Czech the message: 'Take me to the Jewish cemetery'. Not surprisingly on a raw Sunday in March, the streets were dead and the few people out and about looked askance at him – especially as Mr. Heppner does not speak Czech although he is competent in the next most useful language there, German.

Yet despite this inauspicious beginning and a host of other misadventures, he eventually discovered some local people who were prepared to help him trace the Jewish background to the town. As he made further visits to Kolin and Trebon, the two towns which had housed and used his synagogue's scrolls, museum curators showed him documents stored away in the backs of cupboards; officials found keys to open up deserted synagogues and cemeteries; private citizens reminisced with him over names from the past.

He learned of a non-Jewish restaurateur who had prevailed on the Nazi authorities to allow the

Jews of Kolin, confined to their homes under a welter of all-pervasive restrictions, to play cards in his restaurant for something like an hour a week, surely a practically unheard-of relaxation of the rules. He took the last Jewish survivor of Kolin to meet her old friend in the next town, and witnessed a joyful reunion between these two women in their eighties.

He also found that the last Jew left in Trebon was an elderly veterinary surgeon (whose mother but not father was Jewish), who had been assigned to dispose of the Jewish community's assets after their deportation to Theresienstadt in 1942. The vet himself had finally been sent to the camps but the war was then nearing its end and he was saved by the Allied Liberation. Unlike the Kolin folk, he refused to open up this part of his life or have anything to do with Mr. Heppner's research beyond pushing yet another bundle of papers into his hands.

Michael Heppner feels that having one of these *sifrei Torah* is like 'finding a bottle on the beach with a message. The message reads: I am the last surviving Jewish remnant of a 500-year-old community – Revive me!'

The synagogue is now also linked with old Czech Jewry by a handsome carved wooden arch, transferred in 1981 from the prayer hall of the Kolin Jewish cemetery to the synagogue ark at Northwood. To Michael Heppner, that arch symbolises the continuity of an old congregation that died and which, phoenix-like, has been reborn in a young English community.

## Kafka Lived around the Corner

Those of us who had picked Prague as the first stage of our journey into exile, expecting to find no more than a provincial backwater, were surprised to discover a unique atmosphere, a curious interlacing of Czechs, Germans and Jews. It is this phenomenon of 'old Prague' which has at last found its chronicler who himself belonged to it, Bedrich (Frederick) Rohan, a Jewish journalist, now living in London.

His paperback, entitled *Kafka wohnte um die Ecke* (Herder, Freiburg, DM 7.90), is a splendid guide through a place that no longer exists – it ended when the Nazi jackboots tramped up the *Wenzelplatz* in March 1939. Rohan calls his old Prague a conglomerate of social and linguistic groups that lived and worked together though often disliking and despising, yet still enriching and fertilizing each other, and thereby creating a cultural entity embracing Egon Erwin Kisch and Franz Werfel, Rabbi Löw's legendary Golem and the immortal Schwejk, the *Prager Tagblatt* and President T. G. Masaryk. Social life centred largely on the coffee-houses, each the habitual haunt of a circle of friends according to their professions and politics – and each with a corner where the students were swotting, consuming no more than one cup of coffee per head during the whole afternoon. Only one circle of companions met at a private home each Friday evening: in Karel Capek's house, usually with President Masaryk as a modest guest.

Yes, Kafka lived around the corner from Rohan's family home, and around another was the *Prager Tagblatt* with Max Brod, Kafka's friend, as its theatre critic. Kafka asked Brod to destroy all his writings after his death – they should never be published. Fortunately, Brod disobeyed and arranged the publication of his dead friend's momentous works. Brod's colleague at the *Tagblatt* was one of the Feigl brothers, Ernst, who created the 'humanised', entertaining law report; Fritz Feigl was a painter, who emigrated to London, where he had much success.

Perhaps the most typical example of Prague's Jewish-Czech symbiosis was the 'Liberated Theatre', founded in the 1920s by two students, the Jew Jiri Voskovec and the Czech Jan Werich. Their saucy, witty musical revues were immensely popular – until Voskovec had to emigrate. In the U.S.A. he became a sought-after character actor (he was one of the 'Twelve Angry Men'), and in the Anne Frank drama, which was also staged in London, he played Anne's father. Even today, the 'V + W' revues are still regarded as an important chapter of Prague's theatrical history – no less than that little old villa, the Bertramka, where Mozart lodged in 1787 when his *Don Giovanni* was premiered. We can still see the table on the garden veranda at which he was said to have completed the overture only one day before the first night.

EGON LARSEN



## GERMAN JEWS IN SOUTH AMERICA

### Argentina

Nazi persecution brought about 40,000 German-speaking Jews to Argentina. From the arrival of the first wave onwards they tried to create a framework for organised Jewish life, inspired by the task of building new synagogues and communities to replace those that were being destroyed in Europe. The fruit of their resolve was the *Nueva Comunidad Israelita* (N.C.I.) – so called, in the words of their present leader, Rabbi Hanns Harf, because 'we were all newcomers to the country, we wanted to be a community and we were Jews'. Its orientation was that of a German-Jewish *Einheitsgemeinde* comprising the entire spectrum from Orthodoxy to Reform, and could best be described as Conservative Judaism in the American sense of the term.

Having started in a private house, they now have a beautiful synagogue of their own. This is part of a community centre with facilities for religious instruction, youth club, women's group, adult education, Third Age and social work. *Nueva Comunidad* is represented on all special agencies of Argentinian Jewry and maintains friendly relations with other communities.

The membership – about 700 families – has remained fairly steady over the last years, with natural decrease offset by a slight excess of births over deaths and the intake of new members. The composition of the membership has changed over the years. Though sons and grandsons of the founders are still on the committee, the congregation now includes East European- and Sephardi-descended Jews. This is part of the evolution of Argentinian Jewry within which the German-Jewish element will steadily diminish. Meanwhile the life of the community goes on inspired by the twin goals of tradition and renewal.

### Uruguay

Another N.C.I., *Nueva Congregación Israelita*, exists in Montevideo, Uruguay. It recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. It came into being in the wake of the November 1938 pogrom, after 330 refugees arrived on the German liner *Conte*

*Grande* in January 1939. They had to overcome the uncertainty as to whether they would be allowed to land or perhaps be refused entry, like the passengers of the *St Louis* off Cuba a few months later. About 300 had settled in Uruguay between 1934 and 1937; their number grew to about 6,000 between 1938 and 1942.

The early story of German Jewish refugee life in South America is told in the AJR publication *Dispersion and Resettlement*, 1955, pp. 37–56.

\*

### In and out of South Africa

Many South African Jews are now leaving their country and the destination of most of them appears to be Australia where their number has been estimated to be between 10 and 12,000, in a total Jewish population of 85–90,000.

According to official statistics given in the S.A. Parliament, a total of 2,164 professional people emigrated last year, as against 1,025 who immigrated. In Australia, the destination of many of the emigrants, the Government is under pressure from anti-Apartheid groups to bar S.A. professionals on the ground that 'they will be needed desperately when the country gets black majority rule'.

In a recent letter from South Africa, a former Jewish refugee writes: 'With all the restrictions for S. Africans, life is becoming quite complicated, especially for parents having children in Australia and Canada. I know hardly a family without children overseas, and here – as we know the story from Germany in our young days – parents are waiting for mail'.

## Black man's search for identity

Caryl Phillips, author of *The European Tribe*, (Faber & Faber, 1987, £7.95) writes as a twice transplanted man. When he was a baby his parents brought him from the West Indies to London; later his talents took him from a council estate, via grammar school, to Oxford. Becoming a writer thereafter he earned critical acclaim but failed to gain a sense of contentment. He was a black man in a white environment which, for all the advantages it held, still seemed to be deeply unwelcoming.

To probe the roots of his rootlessness he undertook a tour of Europe, matrix of the white civilisation that had transformed the world and with it the lives of his forebears. His year-long travels – from Spain to Russia, and from Italy to Norway – resulted in *The European Tribe*. Alas, long stretches of the book read like snippets of travelogue with race-conscious overtones. Like many Jews sensing antisemitism in the most unlikely places, Phillips contrives to detect evidence of anti-black prejudice wherever he goes – even inside the Arctic Circle. Such prejudice undoubtedly exists, but one wishes the author had flavoured his account with the sort of humour a Jew can muster in confronting antisemitism (as when he detects the SS guard's glass eye by the kindly gleam in it).

### Othello and Shylock

The book does however improve in the section on Venice. Here the author reflects on Othello and Shylock as archetypes of the Negro and the Jew in European literature. He quotes Karen Blixen's account of how she told the Shylock story to her African houseboy who, to her 'Christian' amazement, fully endorsed the Jew's insistence on receiving his pound of flesh. Phillips focuses on Othello and Shylock as part of an underlying perception of Jews as the black men of Europe. While this smacks of oversimplification – he himself differentiates between the economic rationale of slavery and the irrationality of the Holocaust – it gives a strong emotional charge to his writing. Descriptions of visits to the Anne Frank house in Amsterdam and to refuseniks in Moscow are very moving.

RICHARD GRUNBERGER



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## The Art of Erna Pinner

### Book Illustration, Puppets and the Study of Animals

The artist and writer Erna Pinner died on 5 March in London aged 97. She was born in Frankfurt, the daughter of a well known surgeon. Lovis Corinth, a friend of *Geheimrat* Pinner, invited Erna, then 18, to study with him in Berlin. Between 1911 and 1914 she completed her studies at the *Académie Ransson* in Paris under Maurice Denis. At the outbreak of war she returned and began her systematic study of animals and animal behaviour at the Frankfurt Zoo.

In 1917 her life-long friendship with the expressionist writer Kasimir Edschmid began. Erna Pinner entered the circle of young expressionists of the *Darmstädter Sezession*. Her studio became the meeting place of the group, including the poets Theodor Däubler and Else Lasker-Schüler, the writers Carlo Mierendorf and René Schickele, also the philosopher Theodor Adorno.

In 1920 she contracted polio, the after effects of which handicapped her for the rest of her life. Determination and self-discipline became the source of her courage and great energy. She survived the turmoil of the inflation years through the creation of near life-size puppets, often portraits of her friends. Some of these famous creations are illustrated in *Das Puppenbuch* (The Book of Puppets) published in 1921.

For the publisher Erich Reiss in Berlin she illustrated *Das Blumenschiff* (The Flower Boat) by Klabund in 1921 and her own picture book *Das Schweinebuch* (The Book of Pigs) in 1922. Particularly fruitful became her collaboration

with the printer and typographer Pepy Würth of Darmstadt with whom she produced from 1923 onwards ten books in limited editions.

During the 1920s and early '30s Erna Pinner travelled with Edschmid around the world, to Africa and South America, Arabia, and several times to Greece, Spain and Italy. These years of travel and adventure are reflected in the books Edschmid and Pinner made together, richly illustrated with lithographs and etchings. *Eine Dame in Griechenland* (A Lady in Greece) 1927, and *Ich reise um die Welt* (I Travel Around the World) 1931, combine her lively texts with a wealth of illustrations. Here she developed a strong graphic style achieving the balance between naturalistic observation and linear abstraction which gave her work precision and atmosphere. Annual exhibitions of her work were held at the Flechtheim Gallery in Berlin and her articles and illustrations appeared in the magazines *Die Dame* and *Der Querschnitt*.

This stream of creativity was interrupted by the Nazi persecution of the Jews. In 1935, Erna Pinner was able to settle in London. Her entire *oeuvre* which she had to leave behind was destroyed.

At 45 she started her second career. The Director of the London Zoo, Julian Huxley, who knew and admired her German work, helped her to get commissions to write and illustrate books on natural history. Meeting Henry Moore in 1936 gave her much needed artistic encouragement. Her drawings changed towards a more naturalistic style, the animal figures acquired more volume, detail and texture. Her wood cuts and lithographs of that period show the high degree of her artistic and technical abilities.

Her collaboration with the zoologist G. M. Vevers and the ornithologist Ludwig Koch led her towards more scientific work based on her own observations of animals in the wild and in captivity. Two books summarising that research were published by Jonathan Cape, London – in 1951, *Curious Creatures* and, in 1955, *Born Alive*. These works were again beautifully illustrated by Erna Pinner and translated into many languages.

Together with her friends in exile, among others Richard Friedenthal, Gabriele Tergit and Elias Canetti, she joined the PEN Club of German authors in exile. With them she was one of the first to reach across to Germany after 1945. Her correspondence with Gottfried Benn at this time bears witness of her great humanity and understanding.

Erna Pinner lived long enough to see the achievements of her generation reinstated and given a place of honour in German culture. In 1960 she received the *Bundesverdienstkreuz*. She still continued working and writing until she was 90. Only her last seven years she called her 'retirement'. Her great age was a gift not only for herself but to her friends as well.

## TWO PAINTERS

### Joe Rose

His eyes sparkle with a keen and piercing look, but you never know precisely what lies behind them. Is he looking behind you into a cruel and disturbing world? Behind the relative calm of city life does he always recall the horrors of man's inhumanity to man? An exhibition of Joe Rose's recent work will be at the Ben Uri Art Society's Gallery (7–23 May). It will be opened by the Hon. Greville Janner QC, MP at the Private View (6 May 6.30–8.30 pm).

Joe Rose was born at Waldenberg (Germany) in 1915 and incarcerated in Sonnenburg Concentration Camp in 1933 for anti-Nazi activities and again in 1938 in Buchenwald. In 1939 he escaped with his wife to England and served in the British Army throughout the war. After the war he obtained a diploma in art and, after a period as a display artist, took up a full-time artistic career and worked in Australia where he was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to art. He now shares his time between London and Australia. Joe Rose has received many awards for his work, has held 24 one-man exhibitions (including Jerusalem in 1986) and has participated in innumerable group shows. Despite his many successes, Joe Rose is never satisfied and is always seeking new ways to express his ideas about humanity and human experience. The exhibition comprises 40 paintings in mixed media, both surrealist and portraits, as well as some Jewish scenes.

### Walter Nessler

Born in Leipzig, Nessler lived in Dresden and was involved with a group of anti-fascist artists before coming to London as a refugee in 1937. Shortly before the war he married a daughter of C. R. Ashbee, the artist, architect and craftsman who was involved in the Arts and Crafts Movement with William Morris and Roger Fry. Interned at the outbreak of war, Nessler served in the Pioneer Corps, both at home and overseas, from 1940–46, but this did not stop his painting. After the war he studied for a time in Paris where he became acquainted with Picasso, Giacometti, Cocteau and Sartre. He now lives in Hampstead.

As a man Walter Nessler is filled with the horrors of war and the accompanying degradation of mankind. His large canvas *Premonition 1937*, painted in 1937, envisaged the destruction of London with the dome of St. Paul's, as in the event it turned out, rising above the ruins. In 1981 the artist presented the picture to the nation and it now hangs in the RAF Battle of Britain Museum. In 1982, following the same theme, he held an exhibition in London called 'Man's Favourite Pastime', showing the degradation of life and the futility of war.

Nessler is a powerful artist. He has produced many beautiful and striking pictures which not only stimulate but also convey an awesome message. On his 75th birthday we congratulate him, may he long continue with his work.

ALICE SCHWAB

### ALFRED FLECHTHEIM

#### JAHREZEIT

The 50th anniversary of the death of Alfred Flechtheim, the art dealer, was commemorated in the weekly *Die Zeit* where Stefan von Wiese retraced the achievement of one who had turned art dealing into an art itself. Flechtheim, a native of Münster (1878–1937), may be said to have discovered Klee, Barlach, Picasso, Hofer and especially French modern artists in whom he took a particular interest, such as Braque, Gris, Derain, Léger, Laurencin. With his involvement in art not just as a trader but rather as a promoter and generous patron, he launched a new type of journal – *Der Querschnitt* (1921) – which presented art combined with literature, theatre, sport and society life in a manner not always free from snobbery but sufficiently stimulating to attract men like Joyce and Hemingway. The Nazis of course had no time for the 'Jewish art Bolshevik'; they exhibited him in their 'Degenerate Art' show (1937). By then Flechtheim was already in England where he made desperate efforts to carry on his work. He did not succeed and died, aged 59, in a London hospital, lonely and in a wretched condition.



S.B.'s Column

## A PRIMADONNA'S STORY

*Galina*, life story of the Ex-Primadonna Galina Wischnevskaja of the Moscow Bolshoi theatre, (published by Gustav Luebbe Verlag, Bergisch-Gladbach) is less a biography than an accusation. She is outraged by the 'Feasts of art' to which the Bolshoi members were summoned like slaves.

The much admired soprano tells how, badly led by one of her teachers, she lost the high pitch of her voice and at the peak of her career had to re-train as a Mezzo. Despite that change, she was hailed as the Russian Callas during the Fifties, the time when she married Rostropovitch, the cellist and conductor, with whom she was permitted to carry Soviet art to Paris and Milan, also to the United States. Whilst abroad, the couple were branded as pursuing anti-Soviet activities and deprived of their citizenship. This Russian book, brilliantly translated, will please all those who are interested in contemporary music as well as experiencing a glance behind the Iron Curtain.

### Birthdays

Heinz Ruumann, the German comedy actor, now 85, can look back on a long career which was often quite adventurous as when he piloted his own plane to location scenes. Originally a stage actor, engaged by Max Reinhardt, at various times member of provincial theatres, he is best known by his numerous films in which he represented the charming, often helpless or slightly timid type of tragi-comic characters. From *Drei von der Tankstelle* to the TV sketches of the Sixties and Seventies, he has remained a firm

favourite of his faithful audiences. - Gustav Fröhlich, also 85, started in Fritz Lang's classic *Metropolis* and became film hero in the Thirties during the time of his marriage to Hungarian soprano Gitta Alpar. - Carl Raddatz, honorary member of the Berlin Schillertheater, was 75. Like Willy Birgel (his teacher) he was given his chance at UFA film productions where he became a top star. Now a mature character actor, he still delights Berlin fans with his versatility and rich stage experience.

### Obituary

The death of Anny Ondra at 84 brings back memories of a period when cinema-going was pure entertainment, jolly and light-hearted. When, in the early Thirties, Anny Ondra starred in *Anny macht alles*, *Kiki* or *Mamselle Nitouche*, partnered by Georg Alexander, Oskar Karlweis or Hermann Thimig, she was loved by a wide audience. She came from a Czech background (then a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), started out as a dancer, made her first film in 1926 and retired after a relatively short career. She abandoned films when she married boxing champion Max Schmeling in 1933.

### Nathan der Weise had its French Premiere!

Odd though it may seem, *Nathan le Sage* has never been staged in France. Lessing's play, translated into French in 1783, had its premiere in Paris last March. Delayed performance, incidentally, has also been the fate of *Emilia Galotti* and *Minna von Barnhelm*. Lessing is actually being discovered by the French - 'incredible', was the comment of the Paris daily *Le Monde*. This shows how effective the *Kulturaustausch* is, remarked the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, which also appeared intrigued by the thought that such plays can, or perhaps must, be discovered by the French today.

## PETER HERZ

Peter Herz who has died in Vienna, aged 92, was virtually the last of the Austrian 'Silver Era' libretto writers having collaborated with Lehar, Eysler and Nico Dostal. He was instrumental in inventing the Austrian *Schlager* song; after his first success *Verzeih'n Sie, ich stottere* in 1926, he continued to write lyrics for nearly 60 years, with music frequently supplied by Hans Lang and Hermann Leopoldi. Whether it was the sentimental *Wenn zwei aus einem Glaserl trinken*, or the March song *Zwanzig, dreissig Jahre jünger müsst' man sein*, whether *Schön ist so ein Ringelspiel* or the more modern *Pizzeria* song, Peter Herz seemed to hit the mood of the moment. Every German-speaking radio station regularly includes some of his songs in its programmes.

During his years in London, Herz entertained us all at the 'Blue Danube Club' in Finchley Road. In 1954 he returned to Vienna where having been made an honorary professor, he resumed writing songs and operetta libretti. His autobiography, published on his 90th birthday, *Gestern war ein schöner Tag*, is a journey into sentimentality, clinging to a world of yesterday in which the Austrian past is glorified. One chapter is dedicated to his experiences in London as cabaret author and actor. In 1961 and 1963 Herz returned to London, appearing last in a little revue called *Do you remember?* Full of humorous scenes recalling the first years of emigration. His life, active until shortly before his death, was based on Vienna but a secret nostalgia for Swiss Cottage remained. It is here that many of his old friends will remember his highly individual personality, his unquestionable talent and his unique sense of humour. STEFAN BUKOWITZ

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John Rossall

## HEINRICH BÖLL – Dissident

The late Heinrich Böll illuminated the post-Second World War scene of Germany as no other writer of fiction native to that country, and at the same time he also broke through the curtain of Anglo-Saxon reluctance – by means of the excellent translations of Leila Vennewitz – to appreciate the ruthless critic of the new Germany and its political and cultural *métier*. His two greatest novels, 'The Safety Net' and 'The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum' paint a gloomy picture of the uses and abuses of the newly won freedoms in the Federal State. Both deal with terrorism, and that subject gained the author the attention of the world. But he is a very idiosyncratic writer. He sees only the absurdity of the threat this phenomenon poses. His terrorists are half-baked plotters or inadequate fugitives from justice; his sardonic strictures are reserved for the new State and its kow-towing to overreacting security agencies and a conscienceless popular press.

In 'The Safety Net' the tycoon, ironically a newspaper proprietor, whom 'security' is 'protecting' has so many restrictions on his own life that it is no longer worth living. In 'Katharina', the terror phobia destroys two people captured in a ridiculous siege in a love nest . . . an Army deserter and a doting housekeeper whose connection with terrorism was precisely nil.

Now two relatively recent examples have become available in English. 'What's to Become of The Boy?' (Secker & Warburg, 82 pp. £7.95) may have been, one assumes, the hurriedly published first instalment of a projected autobiography. It is described as a Memoir.

Young Heinrich was fifteen years and six weeks old on 30 January, 1933. And looking back on this some 50 years later, he can remember all the savour, or stench, of the Hitler era, but he confesses that he cannot always, from memory, co-ordinate the exact historical date to the 'feel' of the events. So what the reader gets in the Memoir are feelings, not history, although the awful history shines through only too luridly. For once one gets here a German who was not just anti-Nazi, or a repentant half-Nazi, but no Nazi at all. He loathed them from the word go, and so did his family. His mother called Hitler 'turnip head' when it was no longer safe. It emerges that Böll was a rebel then as he remained to the end of his days. The power of the State revolted him, and the Nazis' bloodstained absolutism revolted him absolutely. He never joined any Nazi organisation, Hitler Youth or otherwise. In his isolated loyalty to his own brand of Catholicism he sometimes resembles Jewish juveniles of the early Nazi years. War overwhelmed Europe and the world, and Hitler's Army gathered Heinrich in. But before that, in this Memoir, as in several of his other works, he consummates a love affair with the city of Cologne. He was a child of the *Altstadt*, and the Rhine flows through his allegorical abstractions.

### The Scene is Babi Yar

And that brings us to 'The Casualty' (Chatto & Windus, 189 pp. £9.95). Here we have Böll the author again, no longer the real Heinrich, but, to paraphrase Stendhal, the artist who holds up the mirror to time, place and personality. There is a further point; this collection of short stories is posthumous, and it is said that, like Kafka, he had not wanted them to be published. As in Kafka's case, the author's wish was not honoured, fortunately for the reader, for many of the tales are Böllishly good. Until one of his characters, a lieutenant in the German army, a kind of Böll figure, comes up against an 'action' which is almost certainly modelled on the Babi Yar mass killing of Jews. The lieutenant is billeted on a Russian family, not three miles from the diabolical event – but, of course, he knows nothing about it. It has nothing to do with 'real' lieutenants.

So, the lieutenant remains ignorant and innocent – until his Russian 'host' is grabbed and dragged into the murderous maelstrom by minions so disgusted with their beastly task that they are drunk on the job. The lieutenant, urged by his despairing landlady, descends into hell to save his 'Aryan' protégé. He is too late, but for auld lang syne the drunken executioners let him have the corpse. He takes him, with a flicker of hope, to a German field hospital, but all the medical bureaucrats can state is: 'Cause of Death: Hooked Nose.' At that point, of course, Böll's irony emerges; but it was touch and go.

His literary greatness was recognised; his life was crowned with the reception of the Nobel Prize.

## AJR DAY CENTRE

### Entertainment for May

As usual the morning activities include Keep Fit: Various Card Games; Chess; Scrabble; Bingo; Discussion Group; Art Class.

#### The afternoon entertainment is:

Wednesday 6th	Musical Entertainment with Melanie Lobel.
Thursday 7th	Gerard Tichauer's 'Request Concert'.
Wednesday 13th	'Off the Record': A musical entertainment with Susi and Arnold Horwell.
Thursday 14th	Jack & Rita: The Singing Duo.
Wednesday 20th	Happy Branston & Guest
Thursday 21st	Marguerite Tury: Pianist.
Wednesday 27th	Tea Dance with music by Les Brown & his Music.
Thursday 28th	Russell Scott entertains for dancing.

### VERSATILE TRIO

Geoffrey Strum, a member of the A.C.J.R. and a highly versatile tenor, entertained members of the AJR Day Centre last February. He chose songs ranging from Gershwin to Opera, from Lennon and McCartney to popular modern standards. He too compered the show. Johnnie Walton played classical pieces, and several people in the audience commented on his polished performance. He also accompanied Strum. The third performer, Ron Gray, was an instrumentalist, showing his virtuosity on the tenor saxophone and the clarinet. The trio will play again for the AJR Day Centre on 11 June. This will be a 'Tea Dance and Cabaret'.

\*

### PALESTINE 1935-41 in pictures

A kind of photo history of Palestine 1935-1941 was published by a German-born Jewish photographer, Walter Zadek, who in 1933 managed to emigrate to Palestine via Holland (*Kein Utopia . . . Araber, Juden, Engländer in Palästina*. Ed. Hanno Loewy. Berlin. 1986. 156 pp. DM 24). It shows, as well as the violence in 1936-39, the good neighbourly relations between often poor Jews and Arabs which encouraged 'dreams of a just form of society,' though the illegal arrivals already cast dark shadows. One striking photo shows a former Stuttgart judge of appeal plying his trade as a cobbler in the Jaffa Road, Jerusalem, 1937.

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- 4 May. Bank Holiday. No Lecture.
- 11 May. Dr. E. Seligmann: Vom Erfolg der Juden im Geschäftsleben. Part 1 Unsere Klicke in America.
- 18 May. Dr. E. Seligmann: Part 2 Die Gevatterschaft in England.
- 25 May. Bank Holiday. No Lecture.
- 1 June. Dr. E. Seligmann: Part 3 Einzegaenger, wo immer.
- 8 June. Dr. A. Hobart: Gods and Goddesses in sacred Indian Dance (with slides).
- 15 June. Walter Lewis: Confrontation or Compromise, an Israeli Experiment.
- 22 June. H. Witwell: From Pekin to Pakistan (with slides).
- 29 June. V. Stern, MA.: The Island of Grenada and its History (with slides).



## TALENTED YOUNG ARTISTS

at Heinrich Stahl

On 19 January I found myself sitting in a minibus with three other members of my school. We all happen to go to the same synagogue, and the person leading this talented group was the minibus driver and our school teacher, John Dunston. The reason for our journey was to entertain the residents at the Heinrich Stahl House in Bishop's Avenue, an event which is organised about every six weeks.

Our small group consisted of Alan Dorn (clarinet), Marianne Freedman (violin), Heather Loebel (flute) and Jane Dalton (mouth). Our first item was Handel's Sonata in D played by Marianne, which was followed by some excellent flute playing by Heather. Later on the audience were to delight in Heather's playing again when she performed *Le petit Nègre* by Debussy. I followed Heather with an extract from Dickens' novel *Our Mutual Friend*, and then Alan took the floor playing two pieces on the clarinet, I know he impressed the audience because I could hear them humming the tunes after the performance! Then it was me again with four poems, and finally we were lucky to hear Marianne again, playing *Mazurka* by Wieniawski. The residents appeared to enjoy this, and were very impressed at the high standard Marianne had reached at such a young age.

After we had all performed our various pieces

of music and readings, we spent a good hour talking to the residents and listening to the stories they had to tell of their own musical talents.

Finally, once Mr. Dunston had eaten up every cake in sight, we departed, leaving behind us happy people, who, we hope, would remember our visit throughout the following weeks.

JANE DALTON

### Wagner at Osmond House?

When the residents of Osmond House recently sang *Hört ihr Herrn und lasst euch sagen, uns're Glock' hat zwölf geschlagen*, they were not singing Richard Wagner (*Meistersinger*), but joined Hans Freund in a potpourri of old folk-songs, which included this 400-year old ditty sung by the Cologne night watchmen as they walked the streets with their lanterns.

Several guests at this afternoon concert remarked how the residents, not so young any

### Reports from

### The Bishops Avenue

more, came to life as they once again joined in melodies which most of them had not heard for many, many years.

To give the audience a rest from singing, and satisfy the opera lovers among them, the Soprano Giselle Ansell sang the Witches Aria (*El Trovatore*), Vissi D'Arte (*Tosca*) and a few other songs. Rosa Butwick at the piano gave full support to the soloists and the community singing. Altogether an unusual musical afternoon, and thanks are due to the artists, also to Hans Freund for organising and leading it.

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Some members of staff at Osmond House would like to learn conversational German in order to facilitate communication with some of our Residents. Is there anyone who would like to volunteer for this most worthwhile service? Please ring or write to Matron at Osmond House, The Bishops Avenue, London, N.2 (tel. 01 458 1186).

LORE STEIN

Chairman of House Committee

\*

### TAPES OF THE LONELY AND HOUSE-BOUND

Irene White who, in the November 1986 issue, described her collection of tapes for the lonely and house-bound, has prepared a classified catalogue of the topics she covers. They include Light Music and Entertainment; Opera, Operetta and serious Music and Choirs; Religious Subjects; Poems and Talks; Extracts from AJR INFORMATION; Lectures, especially on Cities of Exile, also over 100 Cassette Tapes from the Leo Baeck College Library.

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## MARGARET JACOBY IS 105

### Congratulations from the AJR Club

**C**ongratulations to you, dearest Mrs. Jacoby, on your 105th Birthday on the 22nd May! Keep well! You have a great many well-wishers. You are praised by all — all. For what you are, for what you have done, and for what you are still doing.

You are the lady of the radiant smile of warmth and kindness. It is your spirit of caring that brought this Club into existence and has left its mark on it. That spirit is what you stand for.

To all of us who have taken root at the Club, it is a place to care and be cared for and where we can feel we belong. It is you to whom we owe the support we can give to each other. As well as many other pleasures the Club provides. We are deeply grateful.

There are few chairmen still active at 105, and few who have been beloved chairmen for 31 years. Happy Birthday, dear Chairman! Keep it up!

### A Reminiscing Letter from Arnold Horwell

#### Dear Tante Gretchen

Your achievements over so many decades have been praised elsewhere, and additions to your biography would fill many more columns. May I, as your nephew-by-choice, add only a few footnotes?

Our family relationship goes back some 60 years. It is rooted in your and your late husband Martin's friendship with my parents. For many years you were the chairman of District Group West of the *Jüdischer Frauenbund*, Berlin, and for as many years my mother, Jenny Horwitz, was its *Schriftführerin* — ah, well, Secretary — and I only remember the happy peals of laughter which accentuated your 'business' sessions. What the subject of your laughter was (or should I have said its objects?) will forever be a secret for me. These sessions took place in the flat of my parents or in your cultured home in the *Derfflinger Strasse*; amongst its art treasures and trinkets there was your portrait, that of a beautiful young woman, which seemed to me the apotheosis of female beauty and dignity.

However, now I can confess what impressed me most in your flat. It was the smallest room of the house (forgive this euphemism) which con-

tained a newspaper holder, divided according to the days of the week, where one could catch up with the past week's events, just as Anton Kippenberg's immortal *Schüttelreim* described it:

*Am besten sich die Zeitung liest  
am Ort wo du die Leitung ziehst.*

There were two annual events where the Horwitz family and the Jacobys were specially close to each other. One was the termination of *Yom Kippur*, when the men — your husband, my father and I — had to walk back from the synagogue *Lützowstrasse* to our flat, whilst you and my mother were allowed to use tram no. 76: which was to a good purpose, though, for a steaming cup of coffee was ready by the time the men reached our base at *Lützowplatz*.

The other annual occasion was the Seder, so beautifully conducted by my father. Both these traditional reunions were continued in this country — for years you were your niece-by-choice Susi's and my guest for *Anbeissen* here in London, and I have the privilege to conduct the Seder in your presence at your own AJR Club which, since its foundation, you have chaired with an ivory hand in a velvet glove — a Seder which recalls all the tunes and customs so familiar to us.

Then, there were happy birthdays, celebrated jointly, and adorned by your poetic tributes — my 25th in your own home, a celebration which you prepared for me *in loco parentis*, and subsequent ones in this country where happily we both found refuge.

Not only friendship united us — it was above all our common endeavour to contribute to the welfare of our Community. It began in the thirties, and the invitation to a meeting of the Jewish Women's League, which appears on this page, bears witness of unity in purpose to alleviate the fate of German Jewry during its darkest hours. In this country we found a common cause in devotion to the work of the AJR the aims of which are directed to the care of the same people whose fate was our concern before leaving Germany.

My wife, Susi, our Son, David, his wife and our three admiring grandchildren join me in the heartfelt wish that this relationship may continue *ad meah we'essrim shanah*.

## OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

'Within the framework of the AJR, the AJR Club holds pride of place. It provides a "home from home" for many in our midst. Therefore the Executive of the AJR has special reason to convey its congratulations to Margaret Jacoby and to thank her for her unflinching services to our community. May she go on with the undiminished miraculous vigour for a long time to come'.

These words were written by Werner Rosenstock five years ago on Margaret Jacoby's 100th Birthday. They are still true to-day, as we celebrate her miraculous 105th. The Club still holds — with the newly founded Day Centre — pride of place in the framework of the AJR. Margaret Jacoby, though hampered in walking by the effects of a fall suffered several years ago, is still the Chairman and takes as great an interest as ever in the daily life of the Club and in each of its individual members, assisted by the able Vice-Chairman, Lotte Saenger.

A few words on the early history of the Club would not seem inappropriate here. The Club was first accommodated in one room at the N.W. London Zion House in Eton Avenue which soon became too small for the ever-growing membership. It was at Margaret Jacoby's intense urging that the AJR Charitable Trust decided to acquire the house at 9 Adamson Road and to convert it principally for the use of the Club. And it was Margaret Jacoby, working for some years in harmonious tandem with the late Gertrud Schachne, who created the happy and peaceful atmosphere for our elderly or lonely. They are all deeply grateful to Margaret Jacoby and so are all the members of the AJR who convey to her their warmest congratulations and sincere thanks for the outstanding services given to our Community.

F. E. F.

### A Wonderful Friendship

Dear Margaretchen,

It is exactly 50 years that we first met at the offices of the *Jüdischer Frauenbund*. You, 'Frau Professor Jacoby,' were then the deputy chairman of its Berlin branch, and I was delegated by the *Reichsvertretung* to help Hannah Karminski with the ever growing task of the emigration of women.

It was due to your initiative that a much greater number of Jewish girls and women were able to find refuge in England than would otherwise have been the case. It was also thanks to you that by introducing household examinations and issuing certificates to those who passed, they arrived in England much better prepared for the duties expected of them. I remember how untiringly and selflessly you worked. You have saved many lives.

When in 1956 the AJR Club was founded, it was my good fortune to work with you again right from the beginning. Our working relationship has always been a most harmonious and happy one. Out of it has grown a wonderful friendship and on this, your 105th birthday, my heart is filled with happiness and gratitude for this precious gift.

DORA SEGALL

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**TO THE AID OF SOVIET JEWRY**

Sir – I am grateful to you for the comment you made in reply to Professor Wohlfarth and would like to add that not only have I been connected with the work of the National Council since its foundation but I have also acted for a number of years as Chairman of that organisation. Other former German and Austrian Jewish refugees have and are still acting in leading positions of the National Council and they have for many years been the backbone of the campaign. Obviously, we would like to see many more members of the whole community participating in this important work for our brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union.

ARIEH L. HANDLER  
Chairman

National Council for Soviet Jewry  
4a New College Parade,  
Finchley Road, London N.W.3

**JEWISH WOMEN REFUGEES**

Sir – We are preparing an exhibition about Jewish women refugees from Nazism who came to this country before and after the holocaust. This will form a continuation of our exhibition *Daughters of the Pale* which some of your readers may have seen when it was shown at Swiss Cottage Library.

We are particularly interested in obtaining photographs which refugees may have brought with them, both of Jewish life in Germany, Austria and the other countries affected, and of refugee life during and after the war. We are *not* asking for donations of precious personal photographs – merely the opportunity to make copies of them for possible use in our exhibition, at our expense.

If any of your readers would care to share their photos with us, we would be most grateful if they could contact us.

KAREN ADLER  
Researcher

Jewish Women in London Group,  
Southbank House,  
Black Prince Road, S.E.1 7SJ

**THE REIMANN BÄLLE**

Sir – I read with interest and appreciation the article on 'Albert Reimann's School' in your March issue. Those of us, like myself, who knew Albert Reimann personally, are aware that he was a man of many talents. I am puzzled however to learn of a new one, namely that of ballet dancing (or perhaps having been a choreographer for that matter). Could there be a confusion between 'Reimann Ballets' and *Reimann Bälle* (Reimann Balls)? These were indeed, besides the *Presse Ball* and *Opfern Ball*, the major social events of the season in Berlin at the time. Tickets for the yearly *Reimann Ball* were always hard to come by. It might also be of interest to readers that part of the receipts were used to provide scholarships for gifted but poorer applicants to the school. The highly artistic and colourful decor in the halls and many of the unusually original costumes were designed and made by the students themselves, many months ahead.

19 Ormesby Way  
Harrow, Middx.

EGON E. BRENT

\* Mr. Brent is of course quite right in pointing out an error for which we apologize.

**'THOUGHTS ON THE HOLOCAUST'**

Sir – For the sake of a constructive dialogue, 82 years of life time taught me to listen to any controversial point of view. However, please allow me to state that I find Mr. B. V. Slater's article 'Teacher's Thoughts on the Holocaust' absolutely pointless. I cannot see anything constructive in it from the point of view of preventing another holocaust or showing the way to a better and peaceful world. Mr. Slater would have done better with an article in the *Telegraph*, the *Express* or the *Sun* devoting some analysing thoughts to the situation in Northern Ireland.

What gives his schoolmaster-mentality away are his claims that 'idealism necessarily involves an object of hatred' and that 'class-hatred predominates with the Left'. As a matter of fact, in my own experience as a refugee in 1933, contrary to his thoughts, what has saved my soul, mind and physical welfare and made it possible for me to settle down secure in this country and restored my faith in my fellow-men – whether Gentile or Jew –

## Letters

to the Editor

was most certainly thanks to those helpful 'idealists' and 'leftists' I was lucky to meet over here and to work with them on the shopfloor. From them I learned not what Mr. Slater calls 'class-hatred' but – the exact opposite to any form of hatred – working-class consciousness and self-respect and most importantly, linked with it, the solidarity and love of mutual good will towards my fellowmen whatever their nationality or religion.

R. BAER

52 The Ridgeway,  
Watford, Herts.

Mr. Slater writes: *I'm deeply sorry that I have upset R. Baer. Racial discrimination is, of course, worse than class discrimination, since one can change one's class but not one's race. However, it seems to me that revolutions tend to consume their best and most idealistic supporters – I think mainly of the Russian revolution – and I cannot think it right to condemn whole groups of people to deportation or death merely on the grounds of their class, as happened in, say, 1917 and in the early Thirties, particularly in the Ukraine, and also in the Baltic area in 1941. I know members of families that suffered in this way.*

*Nor can I idealise the 'working-class', though I come from humble origins myself. Heroism and cowardice, goodness and evil – such qualities are not distributed along class lines.*

*The unspeakable Pol Pot is perhaps the clearest example of a man obsessed with the dream of ushering in a golden age of happiness through the torture and death of 'class enemies'.*

**'THANK YOU, BRITAIN' LECTURE**

Sir – As one of the founder members and contributors to the 'Thank you Britain' fund, I feel deeply disappointed that our sincere original intention – that of expressing our gratitude to the British people for the generosity, help and friendship they showed towards us refugees – seems to have been completely forgotten. When it was decided to hand the large sum of money we had collected to the British Academy, this was apparently done without attaching any guidelines about the causes for which we would have liked to see it spent. As a result, some thousands of pounds went to the author writing a biography of Britain's fascist leader, Sir Oswald Mosley; and now we have been treated to a lecture on 'Strategy in the 20th Century' by Field Marshal Lord Carver. I think that those of us who have experienced 20th century strategy in action at least in one or even two world wars, this is about the last thing we want to be lectured on for our money.

EGON LARSEN

34 Dartmouth Road  
NW2 4EX

Editorial comment: *The 'Thank you, Britain' lecture given by Field Marshal Lord Carver on 11 March, can be said to fall well within the terms of reference under which the fund was handed to the British Academy in November 1965, namely, that the subject should relate to human studies, widely interpreted, in their bearing upon the well being of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom. While the subjects of some earlier lectures may be held not easily reconcilable with the spirit of the donation of the fund, such criticism cannot be maintained in relation to the lecture delivered by Lord Carver.*

*The analysis of the strategies of the major powers during the present century and their effect on the outcome of two world wars is a worthy, if for many of us a sensitive, subject for human study. Lord Carver illustrated the successes and failures of the strategies pursued by different nations, and we refugees have every cause to be grateful for the ultimate success of the strategy of the allied powers.*

**BAD SEGEBERG RESEARCH**

Sir – I am engaged in research on the erstwhile Jewish community of Bad Segeberg. I would be grateful for any information that any of your readers can give me about the history of individual families and/or reminiscences of those who stayed at the local Jewish Children's Home.

Lindenstrasse 22  
2360 Bad Segeberg

FRIEDRICH GLEISS

**GERMAN AS SHE IS NOT SPOKE**

Sir – The front page of the *Hampstead & Highgate Express* (Ham & High) of 13 March 1987 carried an estate agent's advertisement in several languages one of which pretended to be German. It read: *Wie können finden Sie ein Haus/Wohnung zu mieten.*

27 Clarence Terrace,  
London, N.W.1

RUTH CEMACH

Ilse Joseph's life (1899-1986) contained elements of classical tragedy. Bourgeois, personable and musically gifted, she spent a privileged childhood in Berlin. In the unstable 1920s she married and had two daughters; later she divorced her husband. The slump forced her into various occupations far removed from her beloved music. After the advent of Nazism she contrived, at the cost of heartrending separation, to place her daughters in the supposedly safe haven of the Amsterdam Jewish orphanage. She married again, only to have her husband carried off to a concentration camp after the *Kristallnacht*. An Englishman helped to get him released and they came to the U.K. shortly before the outbreak of war.

Ilse's husband did work of national importance

## Mission of Peace

in the chemical industry, while she contributed to the war effort by playing at concerts before audiences of munition workers and soldiers. Having spent the war years in agonised uncertainty over the fate of her daughters, she drew renewed hope from a 1945 press photograph of liberated camp inmates showing two girls with similar features. All subsequent enquiries, however, proved unavailing, and in the 1960s she discovered incontrovertible evidence - the daughters had been gassed at Auschwitz. With her husband's death shortly after it seemed as if total nemesis had overtaken her.

But Ilse Joseph burst through the pattern of Greek tragedy which a malign fate had imposed on her life. She did so by making music! She, who had once entertained war workers, now became a worker for peace by playing at concerts to promote reconciliation between German and Jews, Israelis and Arabs, between Ulster Protestants and Catholics. Her ceaseless work earned recognition in Britain, Germany, Israel (where she endowed a Youth Aliyah music scholarship) and at the Vatican.

When she grew too infirm to appear on the concert platform she distilled her memories into a book - *Playing for Peace. A Survivor's Mission*. (Temple House Books, 1986, £3.95). Sadly, she died before publication.

R.G.

### FAMILY EVENTS

Entries in this column are free of charge, but voluntary donations would be appreciated. Texts should reach us by the 10th of the preceding month.

#### Birthdays

**Blumenfeld:**—Lotte Blumenfeld, who recently celebrated her 80th birthday, was the longest serving staff member of URO, which she joined shortly after its inception in

1948 and with which she remained associated for 35 years. Her friends, including her fellow members of the AJR Club, extend their cordial congratulations to her.

**Reimann:**—Mrs. Elly Reimann, widow of Professor Albert Reimann, of 11 Hillcrest Avenue, London NW11, will celebrate her 95th birthday on 8 May. All her family and friends wish her many more happy years in continued good health.

**Stern:**—Erna Stern, of 'Rosemount', 17 Parsifal Road, NW6, celebrated her 95th birthday on 17 March.

#### Deaths

**Hagler:**—Bertha Hagler, beloved sister of Gisella and aunt of Margaret and Andrew, died on 30 March. Deeply mourned by her family and many friends. She was a founder member of the AJR.

**Kahane:**—Bruno Kahane passed away suddenly on 9 March. Deeply mourned and missed by his wife, his son and family in Paris, and his sister-in-law in New York.

**Nelki:**—Ruth Nelki, widow of Dr. Fritz Nelki, died peacefully on 11 March mourned by her son and daughter, grandchildren and sisters and brother-in-law.

**Strimpel:**—Paul Strimpel, of Via Moretto 11, Sorengo, Lugano, Switzerland, died on 22 March, aged 72. Deeply mourned by his wife and family.

### CLASSIFIED

The charge in these columns is 50p for five words plus £1.00 for advertisements under a Box No. To save administrative costs, please enclose payment with the text of your advertisement.

#### Miscellaneous

**BLIND BUT FIT** lady, visiting Switzerland for a Music Festival in August, seeks congenial lady, 40-60 to accompany her. Fares and accommodation paid. Separate hotel room. Box 1118.

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I AM LOOKING for a gentleman companion with a lifestyle compatible with mine. I am an attractive redhead, early 50s who loves the arts, music, theatre, bridge and travelling. Box 1117.

### Personal

**WIDOWER**, 70 years old, from the Continent, would like to find a pleasant-looking lady between 5' and 5'3", aged 50-65, warm-hearted, who is interested in all kinds of entertainment, theatre, music, art and travelling. I am able to look after her and give her security. I am a car driver. Box 1119.

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**SCHINDLER.** Hanne Mueller and Lilly (née Schindler) born in Podmokly, last heard of in Wood Green. Please contact Nelly Smart (Srcka) née Schindler, 111A Courtlands Drive, Watford, WD1 3HZ.

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## THE ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN OF JEWISH REFUGEES

The ACJR (formerly the DJR Club - Descendants of Jewish Refugees) was formed in August 1985. It was the idea of Lilly Allen, a member of the AJR, who wanted to bring together people of the next generation, those born here, but whose parents had fled from Nazi persecution. It proved the right idea at the right time, and numbers grew at each successive meeting. Although the activities now organised by the ACJR are many and varied, one regular focal point was immediately established: the third Saturday of each month was reserved for a buffet supper and social, an informal occasion which for many has been their first glimpse of the ACJR. On the whole, what they have seen has encouraged them to return. Everyone has sensed the real warmth of the occasions, and the genuinely relaxed friendliness which comes directly from our shared background as children of refugees.

Since the early days of the ACJR, nearly 60 functions have taken place. We have had distinguished speakers to address us, and seen many plays and films (not only on Jewish themes), as

well as being shown round the Bevis Marks Synagogue and the Wiener Library. Recently our first musical soirée was held. A large group attended the AJR Self Aid Concert in November, and a number of members entertain from time to time at the AJR homes in the Bishop's Avenue or at the Day Centre. In February some of our members heard a talk by Claude Lanzmann on his film *Shoah*, having seen it a few weeks before.

One of the most valuable activities has been the series of discussions enabling members to talk about their background, how their families came to this country, how they had been brought up, what they felt as children of Jewish refugees. These have been unforgettable occasions for those who took part, and were keenly described in Ian Rosmarin's article 'Intimacy with a Stranger' in the February AJR INFORMATION.

It is in fact through this journal that the great majority of our members have first heard of the ACJR, and we hope to continue to foster the link with what, in more than one way, could be termed

our 'parent' organisation. Anyone in their twenties or thirties, single and a child of Jewish refugee parents, who would like to hear more about the ACJR, should please contact the Administrative Secretary, Anne Salinger, on 01-579 9906. Any parents of ACJR members wishing to receive a regular copy of the Newsletter as Associate Members of the ACJR are also invited to contact the Secretary.

JOHN DUNSTON  
ACJR Chairman

A belated Birthday Message

### TO THE HON. TREASURER

Dear Ludwig  
Everything important has been said,

I therefore just want to add:  
*DUM SPIRO SPERO\**  
(A quote from *Julius Caesar* or was it Pharaoh?)

Lore Stein

\* For non-classical scholars a rough translation might be 'Have no fear while Spiro's here'!

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## ENGLISH-BORN DAUGHTERS

### Bernice Rubens

Bernice Rubens who has just published her novel *Our Father* (Hamish Hamilton £9.95), is the English-born daughter of a Jewish refugee from Tsarist persecution who would have gone to New York, if a dishonest ticket tout in Hamburg had not shoved him on to a boat going to Cardiff where he remained. She married a man who had been a child refugee from Germany. 'Thus (she writes in a *Sunday Telegraph Magazine* article) my children are accidental Britons. I stress this accidental aspect because it does affect one's attitude to one's accidental home. My father, during his long English lifetime, always considered himself a guest here, and his influence on me in my growing-up years was overlaid by his guest syndrome. And that feeling of being a guest in someone else's home stayed with me until the

*Rita Streich who has died aged 66, was one of the best-loved sopranos. Of Russo-German parentage she studied in Augsburg and Berlin; her engagements took her all over the Continent, also to Glyndebourne and San Francisco. She sang in London with the Vienna State Opera in 1954 and gave many recitals and talks about her life which was totally dedicated to music.*

day he died. He was buried in English soil - a Rupert Brooke reversal - in a corner of an English field that for me would be forever England. On that day, I ceased to be a guest. With my father's grave, I could claim entitlement to roots. That grave - and all that is symbolises - keeps me in England'.

### Rabbi Julia Neuberger

In the same magazine, another daughter of a refugee, Rabbi Julia Neuberger, wrote about her experience of listening to the voices of various German-Jewish great aunts, with their strong accents - 'Lovely vezzer vee are having in our country'. Their 'gratitude to the adopted country meant appalling English, with German never spoken at all. It leaves me all too often with the sense that we have not been nearly so generous, or so open-hearted, to those immigrants and refugees who have come here since'. Others might also have been left with a little more sympathy for the 'strong accents' which were bound to add to the pains of refugee life. May Rabbi Neuberger be spared the experience of 'the stranger in a strange land', condemned to an 'appalling' accent and made fun of by the native.

### The LEO BAECK COLLEGE

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## Hairdressing and the Study of Antisemitism

### The Interests of Vidal Sassoon

Hairdressing need not necessarily be associated with antisemitism, and even the accomplished ladies' and gents' hairstylist who calls himself *Headmaster*, does not have to know what goes on inside our heads. But there are exceptions, and Vidal Sassoon who is probably President and Prime Minister among hairdressers may claim to be different in this respect. It is of course well-known that he created great changes in the hair industry until eventually he was worth \$100 million. This much every schoolboy, and especially schoolgirl, knows. What they don't know is that Vidal, a Jewish East Ender, born in 1928, was aroused by the horrors of Auschwitz and the (albeit shortlived) Mosley revival to the point of joining the Israeli army in 1948 and thinking hard about that main curse of his generation - antisemitism.

'Quite honestly (he said), until that time I had felt very much a foreigner in Britain, even though I'd been born here. People forget how much

prejudice there was around at that time, especially in the poor districts where things were pretty desperate'.

So in 1981 he was hit by the idea of developing, at the Hebrew University, the International Centre for the Study of Antisemitism and Related Bigotries, which now bears his name. He wants its relevance to go 'way beyond Judaism . . . and extend to anyone who is concerned with prejudice, or wants to understand how it has shaped the world. Or deranged it'. He does not claim to have acted from any religious experience: 'It was simply that I was part of history and belonged to the human race'.

The Centre's 30-odd research projects deal with the situation in Argentina, Belgium, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Soviet Russia and U.S.A., also with antisemitism in relation to the Catholic Church, the Arab world and the reaction of Jews.

### COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

What a life! We sit and sigh,  
Wring our hands and wonder why  
Others laze while we alone  
Work our fingers to the bone.

And for what? It makes no sense,  
Just to gain a few odd pence  
Which depart on nimble feet  
And can never make ends meet.

After all, we don't ask much,  
As our simple tastes are such  
That we would be satisfied  
With a sapphire mink and ride  
In a Rolls to save the fares  
And champagne to drown our cares.

We're not greedy, surely not,  
If we want a little yacht  
And a paltry million for  
Bare necessities — no more.

But alas, we reach too high:  
Fortune seems to pass us by.  
As a comfort we are told:  
Count your blessings, not your gold,  
For the greatest blessings lie  
In the things we cannot buy. F.H.

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