

AJR INFORMATION

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THE END OF A DECADE Taking stock of our own and world affairs

This issue, the last to appear in the 1980s, marks a turning point on more than purely chronological grounds: it coincides with the end of a decade that has seen more changes than any other in the postwar era. Change has manifested itself on a global scale as well as (in not necessarily descending order of importance) within Europe, Britain and — last but not least — the organised refugee community. In our own affairs the Eighties started with the preparations for establishing the Paul Balint Day Centre, the accomplishment of which has been nothing short of a triumph. The move of the AJR office to Hannah Karminski House has enabled us to expand our services significantly. *AJR Information*, too, underwent several changes as subscribers who file-back issues over a period of years will corroborate.

Turning from AJR affairs to those of the wider world we also note a fair amount to cheer about. East-West confrontation, that forty years' blight on the post-war world, is fast receding into history. The frozen contours of Eastern Europe are thawing out, and the severed halves of our continent are drawing closer to each other.

Looked at through the Jewish lens this cracking of the ice occurs, alas, too late. By now the diminished postwar communities have all but vanished from Stalinised Czechoslovakia, Romania and Poland. Only Russia and, to a lesser extent, Hungary, contain significant Jewish minorities — and in both countries removing the gag from people's mouths has made audible cries for freedom as well as incitement to pogroms. Austria, too, evinces a deeply problematical attitude towards Jews. Another sort of danger can be perceived (by Jews and non-Jews alike) in the erosion of the legitimacy of the DDR, and the spectre of a reunited Germany thus conjured up. In this context what the editor of the *Sunday Telegraph* recently told several hundred German opinion formers at Königswinter is significant. He spoke in favour of speedy reunification, argu-

ing that if Britain and her Allies are seen to drag their feet on the issue, the Germans might refocus their patriotic resentment, which had hitherto been directed eastwards, on the West.

The best safeguard against such a development, as has been argued in these columns before, is the strengthening of European ties — but continental integration, alas, elicits less support from HM Government than from leaders on the other side of the Channel.

Parliament's awesome responsibility

Another crucial issue currently facing British politicians is that of amending the law on war crimes. (See p. 7.) Should the House of Commons prove reluctant to enact such legislation it would demonstrate an insensitivity to the scale and uniqueness of Jewish suffering that could demoralise the community. A vote to 'let sleeping dogs lie' would, moreover, convince Jews susceptible

to the Likud ideology — in the Diaspora as well as Israel — that we have forfeited the world's sympathy and can only look to armed strength for salvation.

Danger of Massada mindset

A Massada mentality, though understandable, must be combatted. We must take encouragement from countervailing positive trends across the globe, such as the increased attention paid to Amnesty International. (Amnesty's latest world report on human rights, bleak though it is, also retails improvements in Russia and Poland, where nearly half the population of Europe live.)

The last month of the last year of the Nineteen Eighties thus sees us in a state of twofold suspense. *AJR Information* is poised to meet new challenges looming ahead, and the wider world we report and comment on hovers between apprehension and hope. But this month is also the time for lighting candles — and they are annually renewed symbols of hope.

We wish all our readers



a Happy Chanukah

WITH JEWS LIKE THESE WHO NEEDS ANTISEMITES?

'Austrian politics is a can of worms. Bruno Kreisky, a great charmer of Jewish origin, was long-term Chancellor. However, for a majority his socialist party needed the help of a small liberal party. That party took in ex-Nazis; the price for their support was that Kreisky should cover for them. In fact he had more Nazis in his cabinet than Hitler's stooge, Seyss-Inquart, had had. One of them, Friedrich Peter, was notorious as a member of an SS murder squad that had roamed round Western Russia in 1941. Kreisky himself patronised Libyans and Palestinians, and gave Israel a hard time; the Jews he said were not "a people, and if they were a people they would be repulsive".'

Norman Stone, *The Guardian*, 19.10.89

REMBRANDT'S FRIENDS

There is in Amsterdam a magnificent new Dance and Opera House, opened in 1986. At one corner of the forecourt stands a shining, lonely monolith, tall and black, with Hebrew inscriptions in memory of the thousands of Dutch Jews deported and murdered between 1942 and 1945.

In Amsterdam, too, there is the Rijksmuseum, a grand, Neo-Gothic construction, housing an extensive and valuable art collection, including Rembrandt's famous 'Nightwatch'. Just a few hundred yards away along the avenue which leads to it, set back among the trees, stand a number of aluminium rectangles on an ashlar pedestal: this is the monument to the Women of Ravensbrück 1940-1945, with its inscription — 'For her who until the bitter end refused to accept fascism'.

And, also in Amsterdam, there is Rembrandt's house, now a museum, where the great painter lived between 1639 and 1660. Among the sketches one can see there are many of the portraits of his Jewish acquaintances, as well as the dignified yet rather touching glimpse of 'Jews in the Synagogue'. For the house, at number 4, Jodenbreestraat, was situated right in the Jewish quarter of the city, and the influence of the Jewish environment can be found on numerous occasions in Rembrandt's work. It is even thought that his famous painting, 'The Jewish Bride', is a portrait of the daughter of Ephraim Bueno, a well-known physician, and money-lender to Menasseh ben Israel, the printer and publisher, who had close contacts with Rembrandt, and whose own portrait painted by him also hangs in the house of Jodenbreestraat.

In fact, wherever one goes in this cheerfully littered yet welcoming and cosmopolitan city, its Jewish past seems to tap one on the shoulder, as if to say: 'Baedeker's fine, but just listen to what else happened here . . .'

Over the last four centuries, quite a lot has happened to the Jews of Amsterdam. The city was coming towards a period of immense prosperity at the end of the sixteenth century, when the Protestants first took over, and the Jews first arrived. (Actually, some Jews had lived in southern and eastern Holland 250 years earlier, but had been driven out by persecution.) Unlike Jewish communities in most of the rest of Europe, the Jews of Amsterdam had to wear no distinguishing symbol, such as the infamous yellow badge or ridiculous hat; there was also no Inquisition, and, perhaps most significantly, they were not forced to live in ghettos. Notwithstanding this, for economic reasons, since the majority were far from wealthy, they did establish themselves in one particular area of the city, a damp, square island raised from the waters of the River Amstel in 1593, during the expansion of the city borders. This new island was called Vlooyenburg, from the Dutch verb 'vlooyen' (to flow), since the waters simply flowed over it from time to time.

The first Jews to arrive were belated refugees from the Spanish Inquisition, forced out from there or driven into conversion in 1492. Many, however, had only converted outwardly, in order to stay alive, and continued to practise their Judaism in secret. These were the so-called

'marranos', some of whose descendants set up the first Sephardi community in Amsterdam in the early seventeenth century. Although they were surely glad to be there, the welcome was perhaps less than wholehearted, for in 1616 the city decreed that Jews were forbidden 'to have any physical communion with Christian wives or daughters in or outside the state of marriage, even though these women themselves might be of bad reputation'. (A precursor of at least one Nuremberg Law?)

By 1632 they were accepted as citizens, though denied the right to practise any sort of citizen's trades — these were, after all, firmly in the hands of the guilds. Some areas of employment did remain open to Jews, such as banking, surgery and the newly expanding diamond trade, and here the new immigrants quickly made their mark.

Ashkenazi influx

Following persecution in Central Europe during the eighteenth century, many thousands of Ashkenazi Jews fled to Amsterdam, causing a six-fold increase in the population of the Jewish area. There followed many years, decades, of ever-growing poverty, during which, as so often before and since, Jewish self-help was the only way the community could survive at all. As the economic situation in Amsterdam itself deteriorated, so the percentage receiving poor relief increased: in 1795, it was 36.7% of the city's population, but 54% of the Sephardi Jews, and 87% of the Ashkenazi.

1796 was the watershed year, when, in the wake of the French Revolution and the spread of its ideas of equality and liberty, assimilation and integration of the Jews of Amsterdam began on a large scale. The size, though not the wealth, of the community still continued to increase, so that by the turn of the twentieth century there were approximately sixty thousand Jews living in the city.

The story of this century is only too familiar. The feeling has grown up that in the Dutch, the Jews had found allies, a people of tolerance who would do anything to protect them. Undoubtedly there were many instances of just such courage. On the other hand, as one Israeli guide in the Sephardi synagogue is only too ready to point out, it was not a German who gave away the hiding place of Anne Frank and her family, but a Dutchman. No doubt such individual cases could be traded ad infinitum, and not only with regard to Holland. What is certain is that even before 1933, and Hitler's rise to power, certain elements in society were already efficiently anti-Jewish: in 1924, Dutch bishops had explicitly forbidden Catholic girls from working for Jewish families.

As the stream of refugees to Holland from Nazi Germany (including, of course, the Frank family) increased, the Jewish community itself, once again, had to cope with looking after the new arrivals, despite severe economic strictures, and, after 1942, brutal measures introduced by the Nazis in occupied Holland — the yellow star,

travel restrictions, telephone ban, total isolation from the non-Jewish population, and eventual deportation. Ninety percent of the Jews living in Amsterdam at the time never returned; only five thousand survived.

Somehow — it is one of the recurring Jewish miracles — the shattered fragments of life were picked up after the War. There are now twelve Synagogues functioning in Amsterdam, for a community of over fifteen thousand. The magnificent Sephardi Synagogue, which could — and once did — seat 2,000 worshippers, is now only used by that community in the spring and summer months: it is too expensive to heat. Across the road, in a complex of no less than four former Ashkenazi Synagogues, is what must surely be one of the finest Jewish Historical Museums anywhere in the Diaspora, opened in 1987, and reflecting the unique synthesis of Dutch and Jewish culture that came to an abrupt abyss fifty years ago, after four centuries of achievement.

One comes across a splendid canal house-front, complete with elaborate gables, only to discover that behind those front doors worked the Jewish Council during the War, the *Judenrat* set up by the Nazis to facilitate the deportations. In a 1930's residential district, a school, built in the typical, heavy, block-ish style of the period, turns out to have been the Gestapo headquarters. Even the world-famous Concertgebouw holds its surprises in store. Not only did poor Jews often gather at the fence around the gardens to listen to the open-air concerts; but before the War, despite opposition from the orthodox community, many Jews regularly enjoyed the St Matthew Passion. When this work was performed, normally on Saturday evenings, many devout Jews who were interested in the music would end the Sabbath at the nearest Synagogue to the Concertgebouw, then process in to the hall after the opening chorus, which they would have missed. As one observer wrote: 'this procession of devout Jews at the Matthew Passion was most interesting . . . unique in the world, and typical of Amsterdam Jewry'.

But what now of Vlooyenburg, that cramped rectangle of land enclosed by four canals, which saw Jewish markets pulsating with life for so many years? Well, two of the canals were filled in a long time ago. For almost four decades, the area itself, known now as Waterlooplein, was a wasteland following the destruction of the War, the former heart of the Jewish neighbourhood of Amsterdam. 'A heart', wrote the city's Mayor, 'that has been torn out'. But on that land, in one corner, there now stands a shining, lonely monolith, tall and black — the Hebrew inscriptions remaining as the closest reminder that beneath the magnificent new Dance and Opera House were once the foundations of countless little Jewish homes, belonging to pedlars and traders, rabbis and students, Rembrandt's friends, the Jews of Amsterdam.

JOHN DUNSTON

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PETER C. RICKENBACK

MEMORIES OF THE KULTURBUND

The central theme of Joshua Sobol's play *Ghetto* — Jews making music, singing songs, reciting poetry, debating literature and politics under the threat of impending genocide — must have made a deep impression on all who saw the National Theatre production. To many it must have appeared a strange perversity. For some it was a painful reminder of the bizarre policy which the Nazis pursued in regard to what they chose to call 'Jewish culture'.

Soon after Hitler's accession to power all Jews were banned from stage and screen and concert platform, and 8000 performing artists became unemployed. On the other hand, the new rulers were prepared, indeed eager, to permit the establishment of a Jewish cultural organisation, the *Kulturbund der deutschen Juden* which, by 1935 (and by then renamed *Jüdischer Kulturbund*, since Jews were 'Jews', not 'German Jews') had spread to over one hundred Jewish communities throughout Germany. It was founded by Kurt Singer, a Berlin physician and musicologist. He sincerely believed that its activities would turn the Nazis from their anti-Jewish ways, while they themselves had coldly calculated that a Jewish cultural ghetto, strictly controlled by them, would be a stepping stone along the road to the Final Solution. And in 1941 the *Kulturbund* was dissolved, its assets seized and its employees arrested.



The Orchestra of the Kulturbund

But in the eight years of its existence, from the opening in the autumn of 1933 with a production of *Nathan der Weise* up to the last curtain, some 2500 performers had reached an audience of 70,000. For them, the harassed Jews of Germany, it had been a sheet anchor, their last remaining contact with the language, the music, the literature of their beloved German culture. Although increasingly circumscribed by bureaucratic interference on the part of the *Reichskulturwarter* in respect of their repertoire, the actors and

actresses, the singers, musicians and dancers who appeared under its auspices before exclusively Jewish audiences (except, of course, for the obligatory Gestapo agents provocateurs) created a temporary shelter from the turbulence of the times. For an hour or two they conjured up an illusion of normality, a state of mind almost at peace before the daily anxieties about an uncertain future took over once again.

The story of this 'positively last appearance' of Jews in the performing arts of the Third Reich is the subject of a made-for-television German-language documentary entitled *Es waren wirklich Sternstunden* (which, approximately, means 'We Touched the Stars'). The film is based on interviews with surviving *Kulturbund* artists carried out by Henryk M. Broder and Eike Geisel, both born in post-war Central Europe, the latter in Stuttgart, the former in Kattowice. Broder is a somewhat controversial freelance writer who spent his adolescence in Cologne and who now lives and works in Jerusalem. He has written a number of books, the latest being *Der ewige Antisemit* ('The Eternal Antisemite'). Geisel lives in Berlin; he, too, is a journalist and writer. Their research in East and West Germany, Berlin, Israel, Holland and the USA brought them into contact with the ageing remnant of a generation of German-Jewish dramatists, producers and performers whose

talents were spurned by the Nazi dictatorship but applauded by their fellow Jews (often by no more than a silent rising from seats if the performance had taken place in a synagogue, all other places of public access being forbidden). This appreciation was not diminished by the realisation, albeit gradual at first, that for their oppressors these occasions were no more than a cynical means to a predetermined evil end. Nothing illustrates this better than the hasty release from concentration camps of some of the Jewish actors arrested

during the pogroms of November 1938 so that their *Kulturbund* appearances could be paraded before the eyes of alarmed foreign observers as examples of a flourishing Jewish cultural life.

These facts are skilfully illustrated in the 90-minute programme, a co-production of *Bayerischer Rundfunk* and *Sender Freies Berlin*, which was shown on West German television in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht*. It was greeted by approving reviews in a number of German papers and periodicals, including the prestigious *Spiegel* and *Die Zeit*.

Given the success of this venture, the news that it is only an interim result of the two authors' continuing study of the history of the *Kulturbund* is to be welcomed. Henryk Broder has issued an appeal for memories or memorabilia which may be relevant to his work in this field, and it is to be hoped that members of the AJR who can help in this context will make contact with him so that this chapter of German-Jewish history will be duly documented and recorded.

DAVID MAIER

RILKE REVISITED

Rilke. DUINO ELEGIES. Translated by Stephen Cohn. Illustrated by Elisabeth Frink. Prefaced by Peter Porter. With introduction to, and notes on, the translation. 1989. Carcanet Press, Manchester. (£6.95 paper/£15 cased)

Virginia Woolf once declared that much of her literary criticism was addressed to the 'common reader'. As one such, the present reviewer ventures to refer to her proposition that 'the impact of poetry is so hard and direct that for the moment there is no other sensation except that of the poem itself'. If nothing else, Rainer Maria Rilke's *Duineser Elegien* confirm the accuracy of that observation, and their translation into another language must be judged by the same criterion. Those who are at home both in German as their mother tongue and English by adoption are in a unique position to exercise this kind of judgment upon Stephen Cohn's new translation of these poems, not least since he himself is one of their number.

Stephen Cohn was two years old when his parents left Frankfurt-am-Main, in 1933, quite early refugees from Nazi Germany, to settle in North West London. He did not follow his father into the medical profession but, after service in the Royal Artillery, studied at Hammersmith and the Royal College of Art. He became an artist and teacher of note, whose work is in a number of private collections. He now lives in a picturesque village in the Cotswolds where he continues his creative work, and where much of the English text of the present volume was completed after more than three years of concentrated writing and re-writing.

The layout of the book is such that the translation is printed alongside the original text, so that each line can be followed and compared. The poems can, and should, of course, be read as a whole in both versions and the mastery of each appreciated to the fullest extent. In a recent television interview that eminent man of letters George Steiner suggested that the true translator

Continued on p. 12

ART IN THE THIRD REICH The Omnibus series on BBC 1

Nazi art has been invisible in this country for 40 years now. The voluminous 1985 Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogue of 20thC German art made no mention of the prolific art production in the Third Reich. Coffee-table, as well as scholarly, books on 20thC art gloss over this period. The BBC's Peter Adam explained the silence in his introductory remarks 'The art of the Nazi period cannot be considered in the same way as the art of other periods. It must be seen as the expression of a barbaric ideology and can only be looked at through the lens of Auschwitz'.

The programmes, however, did not entirely substantiate this view. The first part showed filmclips of Hitler extolling the importance of German culture and laying the foundation stone of the new temple of art, *Das Haus Deutscher Kunst* (in which the annual mammoth art exhibitions were held). Other clips showed German youth folkdancing, marching and doing gymnastics, thus illustrating the fetish made of the healthy Aryan body. Interspersed with the film extracts were the paintings, sculpture and architecture the regime approved of. There seems to me no valid reason why Nazi artefacts cannot be evaluated like those of any other period of art, why one should suspend aesthetic judgment on political grounds. This is not to deny that much Nazi art was mediocre, but it simply continued a strand of German 19th century art from the Biedermeier paintings of Waldmueller to the realist genre pictures of Leibl. In architecture the Nazis resurrected the neoclassicism of the early 19th century, of Klenze in Munich and Schinkel in Berlin.

During the Weimar years traditionalist painting had been marginalized by the *avant-garde*; it was only when Hitler branded modernism as a Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy and had driven out most artists of international repute that this traditional style came to the fore once more and filled the vacuum. Of course, the subjects suited the image Hitler wanted to convey so that landscape became German soil hymned as *Heimat* (or *die Scholle*). Mother and child paintings, and curiously angular nudes lacking any sensuality, confirmed the role Hitler had defined for woman. Peasants ploughing the field, or sitting round the table for a meal, conveyed the romantic view of the countryside that appealed to Hitler's followers. Portraits of the *Führer*, whether in silverclad armour or in uniform, showed him aloof as hero and in command. These too, follow a time honoured formula for the portrayal of power. It seems to me that the propaganda value of this art lies not so much in the art itself, as in the context in which it was shown — 900 works or more every year in the *Haus Deutscher Kunst* — and the publicity that attended it. Hitler himself bought on a large scale and the label 'bought by the Fuehrer' which guaranteed financial success must have seduced artists to stick closely to approved formulae.

Troost, Hitler's first favourite architect, had built neoclassical buildings since the beginning of the century, but in the climate of the Bauhaus in

the 1920s had few commissions. The Nazis did not invent the style, but appropriate it for their purposes as the most suitable expression for their megalomaniac visions of grandeur. There were some excellent shots of the sculptor Thorak at work, which showed a vast studio in which the colossal statues of horses and heroes could be produced. Thorak, who in his youth had produced sensitive Rodinesque portraits, later changed his style to fit in with the requirements of the Nazi art canon.

The first programme showed little direct propaganda (except in the speeches), but I expected the full flood of antisemitic and anti-Communist incitement to be depicted in the second part entitled *The Propaganda Machine*. Not so, apart from two filmclips. An excerpt from *Hitlerjunge Quex*, showed a young boy being won over to the Hitler Youth by their songs, campfires and comradely spirit (and his father as a brutal communist who beats his son into singing the International). Another, from *The Rothchilds* portrayed the bankers as scheming Jews planning a powerbase through their international establishments, shown on a map in the form of the Star of David.

The main part of the second programme featured the menacing, but impressively staged, mass rallies in the vast Nuremberg complex designed by Albert Speer, who had succeeded Troost as Hitler's court architect. But even more space was devoted to the positive and popular achievements of the regime: local housing that blended into the environment, as against the concrete structures favoured by the Bauhaus, but not loved by the public; the engineering achievements of motorway construction; technical innovations in the manufacture of motorcars, television sets and cheap radios. *Stürmer* illustrations, or posters that served to stir up hatred of the Jews and other persecuted minorities, were conspicuous by their absence.

Peter Adam has, for the first time, given us an insight into Nazi art within its context. A programme that shows the perversion of art by the propaganda machine, particularly in the graphic media and films, still remains to be made.

ERIKA MILMAN

'WEAR IT WITH PRIDE'

'*Tragt ihn mit Stolz, den gelben Fleck*' (wear it with pride, the yellow star) — these are Robert Weltsch's well-remembered words which helped the Jews of pre-war Germany to bear the burden of their humiliation. But what if the time is now, and the wearer is a German non-Jew?

A West German university lecturer, who found himself in this situation, has been moved to relate his experiences in a recent article in the weekly *Allgemeine*. A Jewish friend had given him a silver *magen david* as a keepsake, and for many years he had worn it under his shirt. About two years ago it accidentally slipped out and he decided not to put it back. Soon it was noticed — by his students, by passers-by in the street, fellow passengers on public transport, ticket collectors, street vendors, shopkeepers. Their reactions, by and large, ranged from mild surprise to verbal abuse and open gestures of hatred and contempt.

During a medical examination his doctor asked him if he had any connection with the Russians, or perhaps the Israelis, and gave him a lecture in which he deplored the fact that the 'Babylonians had not drowned the lot of them in the River Jordan'. A friend suggested that there was no point in wearing the object, since it was not noted for its efficacy as a protective talisman. Someone asked if he were a rabbi, then added that, if he were, he would not be kept very busy, would he?

Few indeed were those who pronounced themselves sympathetic to him, the 'quasi-jew', or to his purpose — trying, as a German, to come to terms with a painful chapter in his nation's history rather than to dismiss it as irrelevant. But having started his 'experiment', he decided to go in for a rather larger, more immediately recognisable piece; and he bought one (not without difficulty) at a local jeweller's. Nobody could now mistake the symbol openly displayed for all the world to see. And what a time he had of it. In a restaurant, waiters refused to serve him. A Catholic priest advised him to leave well alone. A teacher found excuses for the errors of the past. A bus driver ran after him in the street to tell him off for his 'provocative behaviour'. He was called names like 'Jew pig'. And when he politely held a door open for another, he was spat at for his trouble.

There were, as it happens, a few friendly exchanges, such as a group of young people at Frankfurt airport greeting him with a well-meant 'shalom'. But such instances were far outweighed by the hostility encountered.

The author of the article does not feel heroic for braving the scorn of his compatriots by his deliberate identification with Jews. What troubles him is that he does not find it easy to cope with the impact of his experiences. He concludes that too much of the past had been conveniently glossed over. He, at least, will try to learn and understand and so take upon himself responsibility for the wrong which his fellow-Germans did to Jewish men and women. At a time when anti-Semitism, with anti-Zionism thrown in for good measure, is once again alive and kicking in Europe and elsewhere, we cannot but salute this brave young man.

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DR. MAX GRUENEWALD 90

In October 1985 the former Rabbi of Mannheim addressed an audience at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin on what was a momentous occasion. The Leo Baeck Institute was holding its first international historical conference in Germany — almost half a century after Nazism had deprived the German Jews of their rights, driven them from their homeland or deported them to their death. The Institute's International President, Dr. Max Gruenewald, stood beside the Chancellor of a democratic Germany to welcome the participants. It was, for many of those present at the conference on 'Self-Assertion in Adversity. The Jews in National Socialist Germany, 1933-1939', a singularly moving moment and Max Gruenewald's simple, confident oration reflected this mood. Max Gruenewald was then in his 86th year and now we celebrate his 90th birthday.

Max Gruenewald has often been honoured in these pages, and there is no need to recapitulate all the many offices he has held in his long and active life. Born in Königshütte on 4th December 1899, he was ordained at the Breslau Jewish Theological Seminary in 1925. For twelve years he served as Rabbi of the Mannheim Jewish Community and in 1933 he joined the inner circle of the Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden. In this unified body chosen to represent the community viv-à-vis the Nazi authorities he played a significant role until its disbandment in 1938, when he left Germany. A year later he came to the U.S.A. at the invitation of the Jewish

Theological Seminary in New York; and from 1944, for over a quarter of a century, he served as Rabbi of the Conservative Congregation 'Bnai Israel' in Millburn, N.J. For a decade he was President of the American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, and for many years he acted as Vice-President of the Council of Jews from Germany. As President of the Gustav Wurzeiler Foundation he succeeded in raising substantial support for worthwhile causes.

THE LONDON LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

salutes with affection

its International President

MAX GRUENEWALD

on his

90TH BIRTHDAY

Honorary doctorates from the Jewish Theological Seminary (1960) and Bar Ilan University (1970) signal the recognition his devoted service to Judaism and Jewry has earned. He was amongst the founders of the Leo Baeck Institute in 1955 and elected as President of the New York Leo Baeck Institute, a post which he only relinquished a few years ago. Under his presidency, the New York Institute became firmly anchored in American academic and Jewish life. He became

President of the International Leo Baeck Institute in 1974 on the death of Siegfried Moses.

If we have neglected to mention some of his other important functions, Max Gruenewald, with his generous disposition, will be the first to overlook it; retaining as he does, the formal grace of manner of an older generation. He has always been an impressive speaker, preserving his striking appearance, remarked on by many of his congregants, into old age.

Max Gruenewald has often been referred to as a scholar-rabbi. In this he personifies of course a marked feature of the German-Jewish tradition. He has numerous learned studies to his credit. It is only natural to single out his contributions to the annual of the Leo Baeck Institute, such as his essays on the typology of the modern rabbi or the remarkable communal newspaper of the Bavarian Jewish congregation. Moreover, it is his account of the initial phase of the Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden, which he wrote for the first issue of the Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute, that remains perhaps his most quoted article. A new generation of scholars has not only returned again and again to this revealing essay by a shrewd participant observer; he has also been interviewed many times in order to draw further on his recollections.

Max Gruenewald will continue to hold the office of International President of the three Leo Baeck Institutes. What better representative could the Institute have than this last dignified survivor of the *Reichsvertretung*, that distinguished group who led their besieged community in the perilous times of the Nazi dictatorship.

ARNOLD PAUCKER

A PEN THAT UNLOCKED PRISON GATES

The mass internment of aliens during the panicky summer months of 1940 is today largely forgotten — except by those directly affected. To the limited extent that internment entered the consciousness of the British public the trigger word for their awareness probably is Dunera. The SS *Dunera*, the ship that took 2000 internees to Australia in July 1940, has variously been the subject of a court-martial, a book and a television film. The memory of what one MP called 'a bespattered page in British history' is, moreover, kept alive by the Dunera Association grouping together several hundred ex-internees who now live in Australia, America and Britain.

The UK section of the Association had their annual reunion in October. What elevated the event above the usual level of nostalgia-fuelled gatherings was their choice of François Lafitte as guest of honour.

By fortuitous coincidence just days before the reunion the Court of Appeal had reversed a grave miscarriage of justice by releasing the Guildford Four, and the media had focused on public figures, such as Cardinal Hume, behind the release campaign.

The internment of thousands of refugees had constituted a not dissimilar miscarriage of justice. The Cardinal Humes — so to speak — of the internment scandal were Eleanor Rathbone and

Col. Josiah Wedgwood (both, alas, now dead). Their Parliamentary Committee on Refugees worked closely with François Lafitte whom Allen Lane, the head of Penguin Books, had commissioned to write a counterblast to HM Government's internment policy. (At the time Mr. Lafitte worked for PEP — Political and Economic Planning — the earliest government 'think tank'.)

Lafitte's *The Internment of Aliens*, crammed with irrefutable facts, and written in record time (despite air raids) appeared in November 1940. A Penguin Special which sold fifty thousand copies, it contributed significantly to the public perception of internment as wrongheaded and unjust — as well as to the change in government policy.

After a distinguished career in journalism and academe, Professor Lafitte now lives in retirement at Birmingham. Your reporter felt privileged to shake his hand — the same hand that helped unlock prison gates almost half a century ago.

R.G.

DR. SELMA MAYER

Two German medical historians are anxious to garner biographical data on Dr. Selma Mayer, Professor of Pediatrics at the Düsseldorf Medical Academy in Weimar days, after her emigration to the U.K. in May 1939. Relevant information is to be sent to Dr. Karin Radermacher, 51 Aachen, Mühlental 31, Germany.

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ART NOTES

Many happy returns to Annelly Juda on her seventy-fifth birthday! Her keen eye still enables her to select the very best in *avant-garde* art and it is always a great pleasure to see the delights on display at her gallery. From 9 November to 16 December she is holding a memorial exhibition *Michael Werner 1912-1989*. Werner (Baron Werner von Alvensleben) was the son of an Austrian baron and had an English Jewish mother (his grandfather was Lord Pirbright). Mainly known as a sculptor he had nearly twenty one-man shows between 1949 and 1989, but he also painted, drew and made collages. At the same time Annelly Juda is showing new work by Michael Kenny. Kenny studied at the Liverpool College of Art and at the Slade where he subsequently taught. He has had many one-man exhibitions and is represented in numerous public collections. The new work in the exhibition comprises reliefs and drawings on paper with bright colours and unreal, audacious images.

The Goethe Institute is showing drawings by Daniel Chodowiecki from the Veste Coburg Collection (until 9 December). Chodowiecki (1726-1801) was one of the best-known German illustrators of his century. He illustrated works by Lessing, Schiller, Shakespeare and Laurence Sterne. In 1797 he was appointed Director of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. The exhibition includes 64 drawings covering the whole of his talents. An illustrated catalogue by Dr Susanne Netzer is available at the exhibition at the special price of £6.00.

Gillian Jason is showing the work of contemporary painters from Leningrad (until 20 December): Afonichev Gromov, Gurevich Lukka, Mokina Pakhomkin and Vik. The rich colouring and style (almost ikonesque in quality) of Gurevich's Samson and Delila is alone worth a visit.

There is a wealth of artistic talent in Scotland and this was displayed in the Ten Contemporary Scottish Painters exhibition at the Thackeray Gallery. However most of the same artists will be showing again in the Gallery's Christmas exhibition (28.11-22.12). Further work by Scottish artists can be seen in the Scottish Gallery's Christmas Show (29 Nov.-23 Dec). Celtic metalwork is the theme of the Work of Angles exhibition at the British Museum (1 Dec.-29 April 1990). These large brooches, chalices, reliquaries and other fine metalwork were made during the 'Dark Ages' following the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west.

The Searight Collection is a unique pictorial record of the Eastern world as seen through Western eyes before the widespread use of photography. It was acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1985 and has now been fully catalogued. A selection from the collection is on display in *The Orient Observed* at the Victoria and Albert Museum (until 25 Feb. 1990). Artists represented include David Roberts, Edward Lear, Sir David Wilkie, as well as works by artists from other countries, including Russia and America. A book containing 100 colour reproductions from the collection will be published in connection with the exhibition (price £14.95).

Ya'akov Boussidan is a good artist. Born in Egypt he later emigrated to Israel with his family. In 1949 he won the first prize in the Youth Aliyah Graduate Artist competition and studied under Professor Schwartzmann and at Goldsmith's College, London. He now works in London where he has his own school-studio. He has produced magnificent editions of the *Song of Songs*, the *Haggadah* and the *Ketubah*, and has collaborated with poet Amos Naor in producing a book of 12 poems with his own original etchings. Boussidan has recently been exhibiting his work in his studio home (172 Lewisham Way, SE4, 691 7768) and welcomes visitors. The Manor House Society has recently commissioned a limited edition of a glass Elijah's Cup, hand-blown by Neil Wilkins and engraved by Peter Dreiser. These cups are a very attractive item of Judaica and are available for the Manor House Society (price £195.00).

The Ben Uri has recently been showing a selection from its collection of prints and drawings (until 8 November). The exhibition includes works by Auerbach, Bakst, Herman, Israels, Orlik, Meidner, Rogers etc. Of special interest among recent acquisitions by the Ben Uri are a drawing by Erich Wolfsfeld (donated by the Belgrave Gallery) several works by Margarete Marks (donated by her husband) and a silk-screen *Family Photograph: In Memoriam 1942* by Klaus Meyer donated by the artist. On 14 December at 6.30pm there will be a reception in the gallery to mark the publication of Harry Blacker's new book *East Endings* at which Sir Hugh Casson will speak.

An extensive exhibition of 150 works by Burne-Jones and the pre-Raphaelites is being shown by Peter Nahum at G.A.L.L.E.R.Y, 28 Bruton St, W1 (until 15 December).

Manchester City Art Galleries are mounting an exhibition *Body and Soul* comprising drawings, prints and sculptures by Eric Gill, an extraordinary character who mixed religion with work and every day life in communal form. He was a superb craftsman and his work is attractive, if only for the cleanness and precision of his line. The twentieth anniversary of the Angela Flowers Gallery is being marked by a birthday exhibition in the Barbican's Concourse Gallery, (16 December-18 February 1990). The exhibition contains new work by all 27 of the gallery artists and associate artists, including among others Tony Bevan, Terry Frost, Josef Herman, Patrick Hughes, Tom Phillips and Michael Rothenstein.

Those who have not already done so, should visit the Royal Academy to see the *Art of Photography* exhibition (until 23 December), the first Royal Academy display to present photography as an art form in its own right.

Finally, a note about the *British Art Show*. This is the third in the series being organised by the South Bank Centre. It will open in Glasgow next

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January, and will be shown at the Hayward Gallery in the summer of 1990 - something to look forward to!

ALICE SCHWAB

SB's Column

Die hellen und die finsternen Zeiten, a most readable book by Hilde Spiel, presents a picture only too familiar to all who left the Continent in 1938/39 and attempted to integrate fully into British life. The author, who successfully established herself as a writer both in German and English, and who reluctantly returned to her native Vienna decades after the war, lives in a turmoil of conflicts: love of Britain and that country's democratic institutions, her own seemingly complete assimilation within British society and clubs, and, on the other hand, the unbreakable ties with her old home town, its inspiring climate, beautiful mountain landscape and unique musical traditions. She has met everybody and everyone: British politicians, philosophers, actors, writers and heads of aristocratic families; looking back she realizes in which benevolent way most of these well-known personalities with whom she shared the horrors of war, quite genuinely hoped she would be 'happy to return home'. Hilde Spiel was married to the late Peter de Mendelssohn with whom she shared many ideals. Her books are testimony to a staunch character and show thorough knowledge of the political and cultural cross-currents of this century.

Hamburg. Among many candidates proposed to succeed the late Ida Ehre as director/manager of the Kammerspiele, actress Ursula Lingen emerged successfully. She is the daughter of the unforgotten author and comedian Theo Lingen. The new Hamburg Ballet centre will open this month with a programme exclusively dedicated to Gustav Mahler. The Thalia theatre plans are extremely varied and present an array of plays and musicals from *Hedda Gabler* to Molnar's *Liliom* and *Vie Parisienne* by Offenbach.

Birthdays. Louis Trenker, 'king of the mountains', remembered by many as *Der Rebell* in the UFA film of 1931, is 98. He now lives in Meran and has no intention of giving up climbing. Famous actress of the silent film, Lilian Gish, had her 90th birthday. The Vienna Burgtheater arranged celebrations for the 85th birthday of oldest active member, Hilde Wagener, who joined the 'Burg' in 1924 and kept faith with it ever since.

Obituary. The death, at 101, of composer Irving Berlin has been reported worldwide. Of his many hundreds of popular tunes *White Christmas* has beaten all records. Of his musicals *Annie get your Gun* and *Call me Madam* are the best known, and the song-hit *There's no business like showbusiness* is to-day's battle hymn of the entire profession. Stella Kadmon, a legendary figure of the Vienna theatre scene, has died there at the age of 87. She founded the cabaret *Der liebe Augustin* in 1931, and, having returned from Israel shortly after the war, re-opened her little theatre under the name *Theater der Courage*. Active to the very last, she became consultant and expert adviser to several stage enterprises as well as to the Vienna Volkstheater.

A QUESTION OF JUSTICE The War Crimes Debate

By the time you read this, Parliament will have debated the Report of the War Crimes Inquiry (the 'Hetherington Report') and its recommendation that 'some action' be taken, where justified by sufficient evidence, in respect of alleged war criminals living in this country as residents or naturalised British citizens. On a free vote, the House of Commons will have decided whether or not to bring in the necessary new legislation so that such persons could be indicted and by now the country knows of prosecutions of this kind are indeed in prospect.

Arguably, the most important aspect of this matter is not so much the result of the vote but the fact that it took place at all. A great deal of the credit for this must, of course, go to the All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group and its members. Of these, Greville Janner Q.C., M.P., has been the most tireless champion of a move in favour of the relevant change in the law; and he has personally faced a chorus of critical disapproval of the kind voiced in a *Sunday Telegraph* article published on July 30, 1989, and entitled, with questionable taste, *The Quality of Mercy*.

In the run-up to the debate, the Group issued a brief information booklet called *Questions of Justice*. In its pages, nineteen such questions were put and answered. They ranged from a basic definition of war crime to an explanation of the existing legal position and the changes needed to allow suspects to be brought to trial. It also dealt with a number of objections: a reluctance to support the enactment of retrospective criminal legislation; the possible shortage of reliable evidence; the relatively advanced age of the potential defendants. And it listed the recent positive action taken by Australia and Canada and recalled that the U.S.A. changed its laws in 1979 to facilitate deportations.

Bnai Brith Lodges distributed the booklet to their members, urging them to support the Group's efforts by actively lobbying their MPs. The same appeal was also made from some synagogue pulpits. The Chief Rabbi was interviewed on television. But this was not just a campaign waged by Jews with understandable but, if the *Sunday Telegraph* was to be believed, misguided zeal. The case for a change in the law was, for instance, taken up by Scottish Television who, as long ago as 1987, produced a documentary (*Crimes of War*, Channel 4, July 22) with the intention of revealing 'the graphic and harrowing evidence against alleged Nazi war criminals living in this country'. Concentrating on the Baltic, Bielorussian and Ukrainian Republics of the Soviet Union, the programme assembled a considerable amount of just such evidence and proceeded to recount a 'tale of abomination committed by the agencies of the Third Reich'. And it stated clearly the case for action: those who had taken 'medals for murder' should not be safe from justice.

In the course of a long conversation with the present writer, the reporter responsible for this and a previous programme talked about his motives for making these documentaries. Not a

Jew, not a communist, not even a Scottish Nationalist, Bob Tomlinson had no axe to grind except that of an honest investigative journalist who believed that his fellow-citizens had a right to know that living among them there were individuals who had taken part in the most repulsive crimes against humanity. During his six weeks of field work in the USSR he had interviewed eyewitnesses, inspected documents, visited sites. And he had discovered that there were indeed non-Germans whose enthusiasm for the ghastly acts of genocide appalled even members of the SS. He was determined to bring to light any fact which has so far been hidden so that the British people could decide what course to take.

And that, at least, has been achieved.

D.M.

STOP COUNTING GRAVES!

There were, of course, other, and no less frightful concentration camps: but the Auschwitz-Birkenau-Monowitz complex was by far the largest. The word 'Auschwitz' has become synonymous with the Final Solution itself, and phrases like 'after Auschwitz' are generally understood to refer to the whole of the Holocaust and not just one part of it. That is why the presence on its site of a Carmelite convent became an affront to Jewish sensibilities and a headline-making *cause célèbre*.

To have to face any kind of controversy about this tragic chapter in our history is painful enough. But there is more: the argument relies to some extent upon a theory of the numerical composition of the victims; and, as a consequence, another symbol of our grief has been submitted to insensitive scrutiny. The total number of Jews murdered by the Nazis is generally taken as six million, and 'Six Millions' is the measure of our loss and the object of our remembrance. It is, of course, an approximation, since it is impossible to establish a precise scientifically authenticated figure — above all because of the enormity of the crime itself, to which must be added the deliberate destruction of incriminating evidence by those who had cause to fear eventual retribution. Some academic researchers have put the number at more, some at less than six million. According to a non-Jewish German author 'it is fairly certain that between 5 and 6 million European Jews fell victim to the German racist madness'. Of these, so 'claimed' a former commandant, the faithful mouthpiece of his superior, Eichmann, almost one-half, say, 2½ million, were killed at Auschwitz. Since it is indeed a fact that not all the Auschwitz dead were Jews, and many of the non-Jews were ethnic Poles, it is not too difficult to 'massage' the figures for a purpose and, by taking all the 2½ million Jews, arrive at a total death roll of 4 million and a Polish proportion of almost 40 percent. On that basis it can be 'proved' that Auschwitz was as much an extermination camp for Poles, themselves a martyred people, as for Jews, and that the presence of the nuns was therefore more than justified.

In a recent article in the *Jerusalem Post* Professor Yehuda Bauer, an eminent authority on the Holocaust, warned Jews who might be tempted to resort to the exaggerated figures, in order, perhaps, to refute spurious claims of revisionist historians against falling into a trap. He suggested that a conservative estimate would put the total number of Auschwitz victims at around 1,600,000: 1,350,000 Jews, 83,000 Poles, the remainder a mixture of other nationalities. This, together with the fact that, after 1942, Auschwitz ceased to be a camp for Poles and only a handful remained there until the liberation, was, he thought, proof enough of the overwhelming 'Jewishness' of the Auschwitz massacres.

It must be hoped that this indeed clinches the distasteful argument and puts an end to the unseemly altercations. As the above-quoted German author remarks: 'The guilt of the perpetrators is surely not affected by whether a death squad murdered one hundred or one thousand innocent human beings.' One thing is certain, too. The dignity of our *shoah* symbols will never be diminished by the playing of numbers games: six candles burn for our dead, and here and now is 'after Auschwitz'.

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PRIZE

The Walter Meckauer Medal for 1989 has been awarded to the London-based PEN Centre of German-speaking authors abroad. The ceremony took place at Düsseldorf at the end of November.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRO

Sir — I have been meaning to write to you for some time to compliment you on the very high standard of your magazine. I only read 'serious' papers and yours deserves a place among them. I must congratulate you on the literacy and erudition of so many of your articles.
Hannah Court,
London SW19

ANDREW MERKLER

AND CONTRA

Sir — I was astounded to read in the October issue that Terry Waite, in blithe disregard of all advice, blundered into a minefield hoping to smooth his path with anti-Israeli pronouncements. Whatever the reasoning may have been, it is surely insensitive and in bad taste to level such an accusation against the most prominent British hostage in the Middle East whose fate, after over 1,000 days in captivity, remains unknown.

By implication, you also seem to equate criticism of certain Israeli policies with antisemitism: does this not rest on questionable grounds when half the Israeli cabinet opposes their Prime Minister's handling of the Palestinian problem and the current peace process?

Unfortunately, the statement about Terry Waite, like some derogatory remarks about the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope, are yet further examples of the increasingly political and polemic course which the journal is following. It makes one remember with appreciation how Dr. Rosenstock, as editor for several decades, succeeded in combining high standards of journalism and scholarship with objectivity and a never failing sense of propriety. Observance of certain basic principles need not be impeded because times may have changed. This applies particularly to an organisation such as the AJR whose members share one common denominator i.e. having come to this country as Jewish refugees from the continent, but in all other respects representing a broad spectrum of differing opinions, attitudes and beliefs.

With our own background and experience it is, of course, imperative to be ever vigilant on matters of antisemitism. However, as far as this country is concerned let it not be forgotten that former refugees could not have established themselves here with a high degree of success in their respective walks of life (business, professions, academic, etc.) without the acceptance, support and, indeed, friendship by people from a wide cross-section of British society.

In 1965 the Thank-You Britain Fund was set up under the auspices of the AJR. The thoughts and sentiments which inspired this imaginative act are as valid and relevant to our conduct today as they were a quarter of a century ago.

Milton Avenue
Gerrards Cross

H. C. MAYER

CRISIS OF FAITH(S)

Sir — I agree with much of Mr. Grunberger's article. However, regarding the issue of the convent at Auschwitz I believe that rather than using our energy negatively towards its removal we would do better to focus constructively on

establishing a Jewish religious centre at Auschwitz. In this Jews might be able to express their grief and rage about the Holocaust in order to live more at peace with themselves afterwards — and to accept that Christians need to do whatever they need to do in this regard, alongside us.

Cranbourne Gdns,
London NW11

LIESL SILVERSTONE

MORE ON S. J. BACH

Sir — Heartsearching about performing the St. John and St. Matthew Passion are out of place. What Bach wrote comes from texts existant before his time, expressing attitudes that were then prevalent. The texts are not antisemitic because the descent of Christ from the house of David is very clearly stressed.

The whole story of Christ's suffering on the cross is fully placed in the surrounding world of Jewish life at that time, as his disciples were all Jews, though this is not specially mentioned in the text; antisemitism in our present conception did not exist at Bach's time.

There is too much stress on Jewish sensitivity nowadays for my liking. We should not only be more tolerant, but also more understanding. The Old Testament, after all, contains advice to the Jews how to eliminate surrounding nations, which reminds one of the rather unhappy recent past. But that, too, has to be understood within the spirit of that time.

* HERBERT BRAUNSBURG

Sir — Bach's Passions contain the exact words of the New Testament which except for Luke were all by Jewish writers.

I would on no account call the New Testament antisemitic. At the time Palestine was ruled by the Romans and the whole Jewish nation dreamt of a Messiah who would lead his people to victory over the latest oppressor. The priestly sect, the Sadducees, were frightened of trouble with the Roman overlords.

The people who yelled for Jesus' crucifixion were not the common Jewish people but the priest-ridden fanatics who feared trouble.

On the cross Jesus said 'Father forgive them because they know not what they do'. There is no antisemitism in the Bible; no true Christian is an antisemite.

For this reason I have no hesitation whatever about singing in either of the two Bach Passions.
Brookdale Road,
London SE6

A. SAVILLE

Sir — In the Protestant religious Service the Passion music is accepted as equivalent and complementary to the Sermon which, more often than not, deals with general human frailty, even wickedness, with the need for continuous personal struggle against it and with hope — or certainty — of divine sustenance in this struggle.

The Gospel story symbolises and externalises frailty, struggle and sustenance. Chorus and singers have the ancient triple role of dramatic actors, interpreters of feelings, and commentators. Everything is directed at the listener in the stalls or pews, involving him as a human being,

admonishing and praising as a preacher or prophet would do, sometimes accentuating horrors of persecution and suffering in order to enlist strong empathy.

When in the Matthew Passion each separate disciple asks anxiously 'am I the one (who will betray)?', the full chorus at once loudly intervenes with 'I am he, I should do penance . . .', leaving no doubt that the 'I' is meant to include the entire community of audience, performers and composer, that each of them, each of us is always in danger of fallibly betraying where we should love, of looking away where concern should find voice, as is shown in the Evangelist's story.

This reminder is hard to accept and we may refuse it, blaming action, actors (and descendants), or the composer — or preacher and prophet. However, if we decide to listen to a Bach Passion or perform in it in church or concert hall, it may be as well to accept that it is intended as an act of worship in common humility and to grant it the same reverence without recrimination that we accord to our own acts of worship.

Alleyn Road,
London SE21

M. L. MEYER

LEST WE FORGET

Sir — The late Ken Frazer transferred from 248 Coy Pioneer Corps to the Airborne Division. He was badly wounded at Arnhem. The hospital was overflowing with British and German wounded and German doctors took over. Realising that he might give himself away while being operated on he explained his situation to the British padre, who had stayed behind with the wounded. The padre spoke to the German doctors who did not betray their patient. Despite further surgery in the U.K. Ken Frazer remained paralysed for the rest of his short — but full and active — life.

69 Coy Pioneer Corps had, I believe, 19 men killed in London during the 'blitz'.

*

W. J. FROLIC
13053437

Sir — Henry Mortimer's letter in your October issue puzzled me.

He volunteered for the British Army at the time of Munich, but apparently did not do so after the outbreak of war in 1939. Had he done so, he would have been in the Pioneer Corps before the end of the year and not interned after Dunkirk.

I joined the Pioneer Corps in January 1940 and transferred to the Royal Engineers in May 1943.

My new army number started with the figures 19.

Putney Hill,
London SW15

G. F. MANLEY

Sir — What a lucky escape I must have had from that anti-Semite military intelligence who prefixed all the personal numbers of friendly enemy aliens with '13'.

Dorchester Road,
Frampton,
Dorset

H. W. GRENVILLE
(formerly Heinz Greilsamer)
ex-14454356 Corporal,

Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry

* Address withheld at writer's request.

More letters on p. 10

A GREAT OCCASION

The 1989 AJR Charity Concert

It is 2 o'clock, an hour before the scheduled start of the concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Outside, the South Bank's concrete hills — and echoing caverns — are alive with the sound of skate-boards. Inside, the spacious foyer is already filling up with frail, but spirited ladies, and some men, of a more mature age than usually encountered hereabouts. Acquaintances hail each other, friends arrange themselves in clusters round tables to catch up on the intervening year's news. Expressions of merriment or astonishment rise above the soft susurrations of talk. Outside a coach and a minibus have meanwhile pulled up — amid the converging throng — to disgorge the residents of the homes and their carers.

The hall fills up cumulatively. Shortly after 3 p.m., every seat in the steeply raked auditorium appears to be taken. An expectant hush descends over the serried ranks, followed by applause as the musicians ascend the stage. Confident of the audience's expertise, they perform the items in different order to that set out in the programme. During the interval some of the concertgoers exchange chitchat over coffee, while others compare Tamas Vasary's *tempi* with Alfred Brendel. Cognoscenti debate whether a thousand-seat auditorium is ideally suited to the intimacy of chamber works. Someone suggests that the next issue of *AJR Information* carry an announcement to the effect that the person who clapped between movements is not an AJR member.

The intermission ends all too soon for a few friends who have not seen each other since last year's event. Reentering the hall, one notes — with regret — that few of the audience have brought along their children or grandchildren.

Then, all too soon, the concert itself is over and the musicians depart the stage without an encore. Were we too polite to demand one? Outside night has fallen prematurely. The dark sky is lit by exploding fireworks. A metaphor for music amid quotidian routine? Roll on — the AJR Charity Concert 1990!

O. E. F. writes:

An Exhilarating Performance

Tamas Vasary and the Gabrieli String Quartet earned the gratitude of the packed audience which attended the AJR Concert on 5 November by choosing for performance three supreme masterpieces of the classical music repertoire. The Gabrieli String Quartet opened the concert with Mozart's string quartet K. 458 known as 'The Hunt' which is a model of perfection, perhaps one of the finest examples of the composer's genius. It is a perfect mixture of sunlight and cloud. The Gabrieli String Quartet gave the work a finely balanced performance which reflected their great experience and sense of style. The playing of the slow movement which contains some of Mozart's most magical music, was particularly memorable.

There followed a fine and moving performance by Tamas Vasary of Beethoven's Sonata op. 13 ('*Pathétique*') which may perhaps not be the greatest, but is probably the best loved and most widely known of the composer's works for the piano. It is a product of unbridled *Sturm und Drang*. The sublime slow movement exploits uniquely the singing quality of the piano. Tamas Vasary gave a performance of this Sonata which reflected his deep feelings for the work and its grandeur as well as its tenderness.

Dvorak's Piano Quintet demonstrates some of the most lovable characteristics of the composer. The mood is cheerfulness tempered with mild sentiment. All technical problems involved in combining the piano with string instruments (which have baffled so many composers including Schubert) have been solved. The performers clearly revelled in the abundance of superb melodies and fascinating rhythms. But their supreme achievement was to find the perfect balance between the piano and the string ensemble. Despite the richness of the piano part Tamas Vasary's playing was distinguished by extreme sensitivity. The performance can only be described as exhilarating and its effect was clearly reflected in the enthusiastic applause with which the appreciative audience rewarded the artists.

WHO IS WHO IN THE AJR OFFICE

Administrator	Lydia Lassman
Editor AJR	Richard
Information	Grunberger
Assistant to	
Administrator	Carol Rossen
Sheltered	
Accommodation	Katia Gould
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Day Centre Organiser	Sylvia Matus
Volunteers Co-ordinator	Laura Howe
Membership/Reception	Nora Gittins/ Wendi Wilson

The AJR office will be closed from Friday 22 December to Tuesday 2 January. Messages can be left on the answering machine.

IMPORTANT VISITOR

Sir Sigmund Sternberg visited the Day Centre on 31 October. A report and photograph will appear in the January issue.

The photograph of Dr. W. Rosenstock on page 9 of the October issue was taken by Fred Dunston. We apologise for omitting the acknowledgement.

ERRATA

In the penultimate paragraph of John Dunston's *Congenial Genealogy* (p. 2, November), the bank advertisement should have read 'Our roots are our branches'.

We regret that one line of *Ode to AJR* (p. 9, November) was omitted. Apologies to all concerned!

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BIRTHDAY SALUTES TO TWO 'FOUNDING FATHERS'

E. G. Lowenthal 85

This month's birthdays evoke memories of the beginning of the AJR 48 years ago. Ernst Lowenthal is the only surviving member of the first AJR Executive Committee. Long experienced in German-Jewish communal work and refugee care (at Bloomsbury House) he helped to get the AJR launched. When, after the removal of the wartime paper restrictions, the monthly *AJR Information* commenced publication in 1946, he and Herbert Freeden (now in Israel) became the journal's first editors, with the present writer serving his apprenticeship. The first issue carried the Home Office announcement that refugees, most of whom had been admitted as transmigrants, could apply for permanent residence and eventual naturalisation. At first sight, it seemed that the AJR had thus reached the end of the road; little did we expect that one day the masthead would read *Volume XLIV* indicating the journal's undiminished vigour and topicality. EGL returned to Germany in late 1946 as member of the 'Jewish Relief Unit' and later held leading positions in several communal organisations. Since 1969 he has been living in Berlin, where his home serves as a venue for old and new friends on their visits. With an energy which belies his age he regularly contributes essays and articles to the Jewish press. EGL's position as a publicist is unique: his unsurpassed knowledge of modern German-Jewish history makes him the guardian of our heritage. In recent years the Mayor of Berlin bestowed an honorary professorship on EGL and the University of Tuebingen awarded him the 'Dr. Leopold Lucas Prize' (endowed in memory of the last Rabbi of Glogau, who perished in Theresienstadt).

Hans W. Freyhan 80

Whilst in the initial period of the AJR Ernst Lowenthal focused on policy making, Hans Freyhan took an important part in building up the membership of the organisation. This was no easy task. Lacking funds our activities were bound to be limited, and in view of unavoidably limited achievements it was difficult to attract new members. Hans Freyhan helped to overcome the predicament. Every Sunday morning, he would come to London from Bedford and make his rounds among the refugee population of Hampstead and adjoining districts. In the evening he would deliver the completed enrolment forms, plus three shillings' quarterly subscription, to our drab office at 279A Finchley Road. (Annual subscriptions and cheques were rarities in those days.)

After university Freyhan had taught at the Adass Yisroel Secondary School at Siegmundshof, where his pupils included Immanuel (now Lord) Jakobovits. Together with his musician wife Käte, he came to this country shortly before the outbreak of war. They settled in Bedford, where Hans was a teacher until his retirement. Their house became a focal point of

the town's musical life. In a place with a very small Jewish population, they had more contacts with their non-Jewish fellow citizens than usually happens in London. Hans is still active, writing programme notes and critiques in papers; a recent essay on Beethoven and Fidelio, published in the Kent Opera Programme Book, bears witness to his sound historical and musicological grounding. He contributes to *AJR Information* and, as previously, has written the programme notes for this year's Charity Concert. W.R.

PUTTING THE MAGYARS ON THE MAP

Newspaper comment on the current Barbican Festival devoted to Hungary has extolled the wealth of talent originating in what is one of the smallest countries in Europe. Hungarians prominent in the film industry, for instance, include Alexander Korda, George Cukor, Emeric Pressburger, Peter Lorre, Michael Curtiz, Bela Lugosi, Tony Curtis and Istvan Szabo.

What is not generally appreciated is the high incidence of Jews among the many Hungarians prominent in the arts and sciences. (Not untypically of the above-listed eight movie makers, or stars, only Bela Lugosi and Istvan Szabo are non-Jews.)

It comes as little surprise, therefore, that the 'sole begetter' of the *Magyarok* festival is one Hans Landesmann. What does surprise, though, are Landesmann's Viennese origins. Unlike Herzl and Koestler, who had moved from Budapest to Vienna, the impresario took the opposite route — as a six-year old in 1938.

These days Landesmann earns praise not solely for conceiving the *Magyarok* celebration or for reforming the Salzburg festival after years of Karajan-decreed stagnation. He is, in Humphrey Burton's words 'one of those people you can't say anything bad about'.



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I wish to purchase paintings and drawings by German, Austrian or British Artists, pre-war or earlier, also paintings of Jewish interest.

MORE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OMISSION

Sir — All of us at the AJR Club feel distressed that, in your series *The AJR at Work*, David Maier's article entitled 'Cleve Road' makes no mention of the AJR Club. The Club has almost 300 members and is meeting three afternoons a week at Cleve Road, which include Sundays. It was founded in 1956, under the auspices of the AJR, has remained a popular social centre, and plays an important role in the life of our refugee community.

Chatsworth Road SUSANNE HORWELL
London, NW2 (Co-Chairman)

PICKING WALL-FLOWERS

Sir — I, too, feel that to describe people leaving the GDR as 'refugees' is an insult; they are emigrants who have chosen to leave of their own free will.

To demonstrate how one can live in the GDR: my nephew brought his family from Karl Marxstadt (Chemnitz) for a fortnight's visit three years ago. He is not a Party member. He and his wife are professionals and their two daughters receive a first-class education. This year they visited West Germany to see relatives and friends; afterwards they spent a month motoring through Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and the CSSR. All very enjoyable!

Kings Drive, Wembley RUTH YOUNG
Middx

DOWN UNDER

Sir — The article on Esther Abrahams — 'From Newgate to the Governor's Mansion' — repeats the account of her life in *Jewish Convicts and Settlers in Australia*, London 1974, by Rabbi John Levi and Dr. George Bergman (a lawyer who left Germany in 1933 and eventually became a public servant in Australia). Some transportees are known to have originated in Germany before settling in England. Levi & Bergman discuss the social, political and economic reasons that gave rise to this criminal element in the Anglo-Jewish population, a development that became a matter of grave concern to the communal leaders at the time.

Incidentally, the transportees included Ikey Solomon, born in Houndsditch in 1789, who was the model for Charles Dickens' Fagin. Solomon was only apprehended after a long and dishonest career and landed up as a convict in Sydney, where his wife and family had preceded him. Unlike Esther Abrahams he did not subsequently make good.

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THE ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN OF JEWISH REFUGEEES

Fourth Annual General Meeting

It may of course have something to do with the excellence of the buffet supper, but something clearly was enough to bring a large percentage of the total ACJR membership to Cleve Road on 16 September for our fourth AGM.

On that evening, the ACJR was 1,477 days old, having held its first meeting at the end of August 1985. The Agenda had all the items usually associated with such meetings: Previous Minutes, Apologies, Elections, Any Other Business — all riveting stuff. But the light touch of Helena Lieber in the Chair ensured that it all passed peacefully, and not without humour.

Helena referred to her review of the year in the September ACJR newsletter, but reminded all those present of the reasons why ACJR members had come together at all. These were not only social, but also symbolised the re-forming of a community destroyed elsewhere in Europe during the previous generation. The ACJR was now making more contact with the First Generation, and actively helping such invaluable projects as the new Survivors' Centre.

The Treasurer's Report showed a healthy set of accounts. This would enable us to help causes chosen by the members themselves, or to put funds aside for special projects. As we became more widely known, we were also being approached for help by other organisations. We had not until now, however, been specifically a fund-raising group, and there were no immediate plans for this to change.

Then came the Elections. To everyone's relief, Helena had allowed herself to be nominated for a second term as Chairperson. Her election, and that of the new Committee, were greeted with general acclamation:

Chairperson	Helena Lieber
Vice-Chairperson	Anne Salinger
Administrative Secretary	Colin Dunston
Membership Secretary	Malcolm Wald
Treasurer	Ian Rosmarin
Committee — Peter Aron, Rachel Birnbaum, David Breskin, John Suston, Susan Fischer, Jackie Sheridan.	

In a way, the most interesting bits of meetings like this are the ideas that come from outside the committee. Following the trend of last year's AGM (which had abolished singlehood as a qualification for ACJR membership, to the evident relief of the outgoing Chairman and his ACJR wife), Steven Derby proposed that age, too, should no longer be a criterion.

When the ACJR began, there was an informal age range of 20-32. For possibly pragmatic reasons, this later became 'twenties or thirties'. It seemed now, however, that the ACJR's identity made an age limit irrelevant: what was important was that our members are all children of Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe. The motion was carried with no votes recorded against, and it is hoped that all children of Jewish refugees who might be under the — now false — impression that age prevented their becoming ACJR members would now join. It must be said that a

number of current members, with one eye on the calendar, were secretly glad of the change, too...

And just as everyone's thoughts were turning towards food, came Any Other Business, that final hurdle on the home straight. No less than 18 items. Every time poor Helena tried to close the meeting, another hand would go up, and then another. The AOB ranged from adverts for forthcoming concerts, requests for voluntary social workers and for help in the AJR, the War Crimes debates in Parliament and the new Jewish Support for the Homeless group, to the various spontaneous votes of thanks. No-one seemed impatient; on the contrary, it did show what an interested, positive membership the ACJR has, and this was an optimistic way to round off the formal proceedings.

The buffet supper reached new heights of splendour in both the savoury and sweet departments, and was greatly appreciated.

Finally, thanks were recorded to the AJR: we were very grateful for the opportunity to hold our AGM once again in the very pleasant and most suitable surroundings of the AJR/Paul Balint Day Centre.

Anyone who is a child of Jewish refugees from Nazi persecution in Europe, and who would like to know more about the ACJR, its monthly socials, or other events, should contact Colin on 01-863 4947 or Anne on 01-579 9906.

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OBITUARY

DR. ERNST KATZENSTEIN

Dr. Ernst Katzenstein, who died at the age of 92, was one of the most effective spokesmen of the victims of Nazi persecution. As representative of the Claims Conference since 1956 he fought for just legislative measures and their implementation in the fields of restitution and compensation. By the integrity of his personality and his outstanding grasp of legal subtleties he had gained the respect of the Federal German authorities. He performed his duties until 1988, when he had to resign for reasons of health. His death is a sad loss not only for his family but also for his fellow workers at the Claims Conference and URO, to whom he had been a trusted and greatly loved personal friend. W.R.

WOLF MATSDORF

Wolf Matsdorf has died, aged 82, in Israel. Originating from the German-Jewish youth movement, he made Jewish communal work his profession, after being dismissed as *Referendar* in 1933. He proved his mettle on Boycott Day, when he acted as adviser to several well-known Jewish firms in Berlin, carrying on his work throughout the hectic summer of 1933. Later he was appointed organiser of the Hesse district of the *Central-Verein*, in which capacity he showed both courage and prudence. In 1938 he emigrated to Australia where he was active both professionally and in Jewish and general social work. One of his research interests was the story of Goss-Bresen training camp, written as manuscript under the title *No Time to Grow*.

In 1970, he re-emigrated to Israel. Here, though nominally retired, he led a life full of activity up to the end, chairing the Council of English-speaking Bnai B'rith Lodges and indefatigably contributing to Jewish papers all over the world. He loved Jerusalem and never tired of making visitors from abroad aware of the beauty of the City. Those with whom he had shared his life in pre-war Germany feel united with his wife and his son's family in Toronto in their sense of loss. W.R.

IRA HIRSCHMANN

The death has been announced at the age of 88 of Ira Hirschmann, the American diplomat, who was responsible for the survival of large numbers of Jews from German-occupied South-Eastern Europe. In 1943 President Roosevelt appointed him to be his special representative on the War Refugee Board. He was posted to Turkey on secondment to the U.S. Embassy there and given secret authority to spend 5 million dollars in gold coins if this would secure the release of some 50,000 Jews held in various camps in Rumania. He succeeded in his highly sensitive negotiations with the Rumanian authorities and, indirectly, Eichmann's agents. With full backing from the President he was able to smuggle 5,000 children into Palestine before bringing the remaining prisoners to freedom and a safe haven.

Apart from diplomacy, Mr. Hirschmann's career included banking and writing. Among his published works is *Lifeline to a Promised Land* in which he recorded the story of his war-time rescue mission.

does not deal with two languages but with one. Cohn has done just that, and herein lies his success (and, incidentally, justification for his frequently 'free' rendering of words and phrases). But he has done rather more: he has, with sensitivity and understanding, approached his task with a sculptor's mind and fashioned what might be described as poetry in three dimensions, an impression underlined by the drawings by Elisabeth Frink which decorate the volume.

The poems themselves appear to show a constant thread which runs through the whole of the collection; there seems to be a sustained sense of excitement, a feeling of breathlessness, which characterises these verses, from the quasi-biblical opening of the First Elegy ('Who, if I cried, might hear me among the ranked Angels?') through each succeeding poem to the final stanza of the Tenth. These are not silent lamentations, arising out of unquestioning acceptance of divine decrees. Indeed, the poet argues with 'the Angels' and mourns the impermanence of Life and Love and 'Being'.

The book will delight established friends of Rilke's poetry and gain new admirers for his brand of modernistic romanticism. No doubt the few regrettable printing errors will be corrected in a later edition. At all events, this publication has established Cohn as a gifted and innovative translator whose future work on Rilke is awaited with great interest.

DAVID MAIER

4 grüne Blechdosen

Aus dem Roten-Kreuz-Lastwagen
Steigt der Fahrer, streift zurück
Ganz exakt die Leinenplanen
Und nimmt 4 der Dosen, sacht

Diese in den Händen wiegend,
Geht er langsam, Schritt für Schritt,
Auf den Rasen hin zum Sockel
Aus Beton, dort bleibt er stehn.

Aus der Gürteltasche reißt er
Seine Maske üben Kopf
Und stemmt hoch den Sockeldeckel
Blickt hinab, und er erbricht

Die Verschlüsse der 4 Dosen.
Violetten Bröckelstoff
Schüttet er mit deutscher Sorgfalt,
Daß kein Brocken geht verlornt,

In das Loch, und tief von unten
Dringt ein Röcheln wie nach Luft.
Er läßt falln den Eisendeckel,
Zerrt die Maske vom Gesicht.

Aus der Zigarettenschachtel
Zieht er eine, steckt sie an,
Und der Rauch steigt in den
größten Rauch.

Out of the Red Cross lorry
Climbs the driver, accurately
Folds back the tarpaulin
And takes four of the containers

Cradling them in his hands
He walks slowly, step by step
On the greensward to the plinth
Of concrete, there he stops.

Out of the belt-pouch he pulls
A mask over his head
Levers up the iron cover
Looks below, then he breaks open

The seals of the four containers
Pours a violet grainy substance
With German exactitude,
Lest a single grain be lost,

Down the hole, and from below
Floats a groan as if for air
He lets drop the iron cover
Drags the mask from off his face.

Taps a single cigarette
From a packet, strikes a match,
And the smoke ascends into the
Larger smoke.

Translated by Richard Grunberger

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EAST GERMAN ANTISEMITISM

Paul Gross, head of the Vienna Community, recently suggested that Austria should accept the Soviet Jews who can neither get into the USA nor want to go to Israel. He produced a breathtaking argument to back this suggestion: 'So far Austria has had antisemitism without Jews; now, at least, it will have antisemitism with Jews'.

Now if Austria — with 10,000 Jews out of 8 million inhabitants — is, to all intents and purposes, a country without Jews, East Germany — which has a fifth of Austria's number of Jews and twice her population — is 'Jew-free to the power of ten'.

Even so antisemitism persist there almost half a century after Hitler's demise — a demise followed, moreover, by a thorough process of counter-indoctrination. What can be the reason, or reasons, for this seemingly inexplicable phenomenon?

Since the opinion polls which provide data on the sources of Jew-hatred in Western countries like Austria and the Federal Republic are simply non-existent beyond the Wall, anyone who attempts to answer that question is reduced to making educated guesses. Religious antisemitism can be ruled out; the Christian Churches of East Germany are hardly likely to have perpetuated notions of Jewish deicide or ritual murder. Nor can the antisemitism be economically motivated. Where there are no Jews there can't, by definition, be any rich ones; just as crucially, the Ulbricht-Honecker regime simply shrugged off its restitution obligations (although Jewish survivors were granted the — marginally privileged — Victim of Fascism status).

Cultural antisemitism can likewise be dismissed since the Teutomanic tradition of Fichte, Wagner and Lagarde collapsed in the ruins of the Reich Chancellery, and has been denied postwar resurrection.

All of which only leaves one species of antisemitism — the politically inspired variety — as a tenable explanation of the phenomenon. Political Jew-hatred could have three conceivable sources in the East German context: neo-Nazi, anti-regime and, paradoxical though this may sound, pro-regime. Neo-Nazism has a nostalgic those-were-the-glory-days ingredient, to which two contemporary strands have attached themselves: the skinhead punks, and extreme opponents of the regime who resort to chanting Nazi slogans like *Deutschland erwache!* (as some did recently in Dresden) as the most outrageous form of dissidence.

Anti-Communist antisemitism can be traced back to the Nazi stereotype of Judeo-Bolshevism, brainchild of 'Rabbi Mordecai Marx'. In the DDR the association of (individual) Jews with the Communist regime has, however, outlasted the Stürmer-inspired myth: for good, as well as less good, reasons a number of famous Jewish former emigrés took positions in the cultural and the political *apparat* of East Berlin. Arnold Zweig became President of the Academy of Arts (with Wieland Herzfelde as Vice-president); Hanns Eisler and Helene Weigel worked at the Berliner Ensemble, the country's showpiece theatre; Alfred Kantorowicz had the chair of Literature, and Jürgen Kuczynski that of Economics, at the Humboldt University; Ernst Bloch taught Philosophy at Leipzig and Stefan Heym became probably the country's best-known writer.

Another writer, Friedrich Wolf (of *Professor Mamlock* fame) served as Ambassador in Warsaw, but in general Jewish *Prominente* had less of a role in politics than in the arts and academe. Gerhart Eisler was chief government propagandist, Rudolf Herrnstadt edited the Party paper *Neues Deutschland*, and Markus Wolf (son of Friedrich) headed the Intelligence Service. However, none of these generated as much aversion among the population as Hilde Benjamin, Minister of Justice

in the Stalinist 1950s. Though a non-Jew herself, she was the widow of a Jewish Communist whom the Nazis had murdered, and used her inviolable position to wreak generalised vengeance for that particular crime; in the process many DDR citizens endured miscarriages of justice — and, what is more germane to our inquiry, Jews became synonymous in the public mind with vindictive Communist oppression. (The *vox populi*, characteristically, made no fine distinction between Hilde's antecedents and those of the husband whose name she took.)

The DDR was, of course, the German 'offspring' of Stalinism, but it must also be remembered that its gestation period coincided with the Cold War, when the Western Powers (and the Bonn government) showed unpalatable lenience towards Nazi criminals; while Ulbricht's ministers had all seen the inside of Gestapo cells, Adenauer took the likes of Oberländer and Globke into his cabinet. One needs, therefore, to take a bi-focal view of the aforementioned Jews who threw in their lot with the unloved, and unlovely, East German regime. Moreover, quite a few of them actually saw the error of their way quite early on. Kantorowicz and Bloch defected to the West by 1960 and Stefan Heym, though continuing to reside in East Berlin, had to have his last five titles published in the Bundesrepublik. Jürgen Kuczynski called for reform in measured tones, and (the prematurely retired) Markus Wolf did so with less circumspection. Such examples of Jewish 'deviationism' may well have prompted Party hardliners to resort to subliminal Jew baiting as a means of containing dissidence. Thus, just as in Hitler's book Jews were — interchangeably — capitalists and Communists so under the Ulbricht-Honecker dispensation they can be simultaneously seen as henchmen of Moscow or agents of the West. *Les extrêmes se touchent*, as they say.

RICHARD GRUNBERGER

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FAMILY EVENTS

Birth

Marx:—Caroline (née Eversfield) and Geoffrey are delighted with the arrival of Sophie Illiclaire, on 11 November 1989. A grand-daughter for Marika Rotter and Werner Eversfield, and Anne and Theo Marx.

Birthdays

Bennett:—J. Bennett (Berger, Leipzig and Nürnberg) celebrated his 85th birthday together with his wife Lotti (née Teicher) on 24 November.

Fox:—Hilde Fox will be 98 on 18 December. Fond love and good wishes from Litzy, Mark, Ernst, Marion, and her many friends.

Phillips:—Henry Phillips, of 27 Glengall Road, Edgware HA8 8SZ, will celebrate his 80th birthday on 11 December.

Steiner:—Steffi Steiner celebrates her 65th birthday on 18 December. With love from her husband, Henny and the girls.

Deaths

Ansbacher:—Edith Ansbacher, widow of Dr. Fritz Ansbacher, died 16 October 1989. Sadly mourned by her daughter and sons and their families, as well as by the families' many friends.

Cahn:—Derek Cahn died 25 July peacefully after a long illness. Sadly missed by family and friends.

Fialla:—Walter Fialla died suddenly on 4 September, aged 76. Sadly missed by his wife Fay, daughter Ruth and family, and friends in many lands.

Liebmann:—Dodo Liebmann, of Temple Fortune, London NW11, died peacefully on 5 November at the age of 83. She will be missed greatly by family and friends.

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POLLUTING THE AIR WAVES

The BBC's decision to have Lady Diana Mosley appear on *Desert Island Discs* at around the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War was, indeed, as Greville Janner MP put it, a 'tasteless and offensive error'. However, in a macabre sort of way, the title of the programme is also quite apt for the *grande dame* of British Fascism. Her German friends at one time mooted a plan to send all Jews to the 'desert' island of Madagascar; besides, had her husband ever seized power in Britain, he would have turned this island into a desert as far as civilised values and human rights are concerned.

Pity, though, about the BBC, with its motto 'Nation shall speak peace unto nation'. Orwell, thou should'st be living at this hour!

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CENSURE

The Catholic University Nijmegen (Holland) has notified Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland, that because of his role in the Auschwitz convent controversy they do not now want him to give a scheduled lecture on the situation of the Polish Church.

GRIM RECORD

The recent murder of Professor Joseph Wybran, the leader of the Jewish Community in Belgium, is the latest in a series of atrocities perpetrated in that tolerant country. The early 1980s saw a lethal grenade attack on a Jewish school bus and the car bombing of a synagogue — both at Antwerp. Since then Brussels' Great Synagogue has been firebombed and raked with machine-gun fire.

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Tuesday 12	Musical Entertainment by Phyllis Boxer and Friends
Wednesday 13	Chanukah Preview – A Musical Entertainment With Susi & Arnold Horwell
Thursday 14	'The Sugarianos' – Jane Marciano & Roberta Sugarman – Accompanied by Daphne Lewis
Monday 18	A Chanukah Concert by Hans Freund
Tuesday 19	The WIZO Ladies Choir
Wednesday 20	A Pre-Chanukah Party – Rev. Stephen Robins Accompanied by Stephen Glass
Thursday 21	Chanukah Entertainment At The Piano – Gerald Benson
Monday 25	CLOSED
Tuesday 26	CLOSED
Wednesday 27	CLOSED
Thursday 28	CLOSED

JANUARY

Monday 1	CLOSED
Tuesday 2	Songs & Arias With Piano Interlude – John Freeman (Bass) Accompanied by Graham Wheeler
Wednesday 3	Police Helicopter Operations – Talk by Chief Inspector Street
Thursday 4	Music Appreciation – Yacov Paul
Monday 8	Alfred Gabriel Presents Magic-Made-To-Measure
Tuesday 9	A Talk By The London Fire Brigade
Wednesday 10	Sing-A-Long With Us With Hans Freund
Thursday 11	Piano Recital – Classical Music By Stephen Baron
Monday 15	Musical Entertainment By Manya Jurman and Ruth Kollner
Tuesday 16	'Two Voices & A Piano' – Helen Mignano Accompanied by Barbara Jacobson
Wednesday 17	Band Of The Metropolitan Police
Thursday 18	'A Song For Everyone' – Sung To You By Jack Harris and Lily Goldstein – Accompanied By Happy Branston

Card tables are available all day Mondays to Thursdays

AJR CLUB

SOCIALS
at
15 Cleve Road
on
SUNDAYS,
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS
from 2 to 6 p.m.

Tea and light suppers served at nominal charges (no suppers on Sundays).

Live entertainment or video films most Sundays. Day Centre entertainment shared on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2 p.m.

Guests welcome
Membership fee: £4 p.a.

**Thursday, 21st December,
at 4 p.m.**

**HANS FREUND
will
CELEBRATE CHANUKAH**

with the Club, a day early as the Club will be closed from Friday, 22nd December, when Chanukah starts. It will re-open on Tuesday, 2nd January.

THE DAY CENTRE

NEEDS A

VOLUNTEER KEEP FIT TEACHER

Tuesdays 11–11.30 a.m. Please
phone **Sylvia Matus 01-328 0208.**

'ARTISTES' NEEDED FOR DAY CENTRE!

Please contact Hanna Goldsmith on Wednesdays
between 9.30 a.m. and 3 p.m. 328 0208
or evenings 958 5080.

INVITATION

TO ALL MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND FRIENDS

The Day Centre would like you to join us at
15 Cleve Road, NW6

FOR OUR FIRST OPEN DAY ON
SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER 1989 2.30–5.00 pm

Day Centre Members will entertain you with: Music and Songs – a Keep Fit
Display – an Exhibition of their Art Work and Handicrafts

Our Advice Centre Counsellor will be in attendance
Refreshments will be served

Come and get to know us and be our guest on this occasion!

For further information please contact Mrs. S. Matus 328 0208

A LIFE AMONG STRANGERS

Dining in Soho, 1935

I was slowly becoming a little more familiar with London's West End, epitomized for me by the 'mixed' area around Covent Garden. I had never thought to find wealth and fashion in such close proximity to shabby housing and low street life; in that respect it reminded me a little of Venice which, though soaking in its waste products, has remained ever appetising.

One of my newly-found refugee friends took me to lunch at a Jewish restaurant in Soho one day. Like most of the smaller London eating places it was fitted haphazardly into the ground-floor of what must once have been a most uncomfortable private house in town. All taste is acquired. An old friend of mine used to reject cheese as a product of decomposition. I do not approach matters pertaining to the palate in such analytical fashion. Let him who prepares the table know what ingredients to use and how to use them, let him make your mouth water with savoury fragrances, let him guide you with discretion to wonder at his art, but let him keep his secrets. The place we visited in Soho was a frank abnegation of such policy. First I was misled into thinking that, the restaurant was frequented by most important people and that, odd as it seemed, I had been mistaken for one of them. I had heard the word Governor used only in connection with the political world. To be addressed as such filled me with embarrassed surprise. My companion seemed to know little more than I did about such things. We decided that in his rough and ready manner the waiter was trying to express his special esteem for us. One learned by trial and error. What we ate was like a premeditated attack on one's gastric juices. The 'savoury smell' resulted from massive onions and garlic with white beans, the size of pebbles, adding their weight to the dish.

Tea at Lyons' Corner House

One afternoon that friend of mine offered to show me a tea place. He was prepared to bet that I would have a surprise. We walked in rain and wintry gloom past the building sites of London University and along crowded Tottenham Court Road to where, in a welter of traffic and milling humanity, it met Oxford Street. There, set off against a jumble of nondescript buildings, stood Lyons Corner House unadvertised by lights or illuminated windows. I had passed it before and had taken it to be something like a super-bank. But once inside I held my breath. We were in a beautifully-lit entrance hall where space was treated with lavish generosity. An attractive display of flowers specially illuminated, and discreetly advertising an exclusive florist, delighted the eye. On one large circular counter was mounted a multitude of dishes containing salads of all kinds, mayonnaise and the like as well as the finest cuts of meat and delicatessen. On an equally large round stand one could see most tempting arrangements of loose chocolates and sweets, cakes, gateaux and biscuits: uniformed attendants were ready to serve discerning clients.

At the far end two great double-doors swung on their hinges intermittently allowing the distant sound of orchestras to swell and fade away. From

this hall one marble staircase led to an illustrious basement and another, equally imposing, took one to a first and second floor.

My friend knew what he wanted. Value for money was his motto. For the price of a cup of tea, he said, one could have something really tasty and nourishing. If I took his advice I would order a Rainbow Ice. I complimented him on his choice, whereupon he developed a whole philosophy of how to get value for money. He told me about Brunch and the Chef's own dish, and the intricacies of organisation at Cadby Hall, the head office of Lyons & Co, which guaranteed its continuing success. According to him the waiter who stood there, impassively ignoring our slow advance through the small slabs of icecream, was subject to detailed calculations right down to the number of steps it would take him to the kitchen and back. Spaciousness, soft carpeting, elegant pewter tea sets, music, generous service — all were answering to the last penny. My calculations were of a different order. I liked Lyon's teashops, where it was clearly stated 'no gratuities'. The Corner



House appeared to need more thought. When a cup of tea cost 3-pence, how much was it proper to give as tip. I knew someone who decided that, since the customary 10% would be below the reach of British monetary values, he was going to be generous. He had but walked a few paces from his table when the waiter overtook him with the remark 'Sir, you forgot your farthing'.

Table Manners

One of the most striking things I met at Lyons, or for that matter wherever I saw food consumed by English people was the code of table manners and the consistency with which they were displayed. Styling seemed to start when the waitress had finished. She would place cutlery on the table holding it shamelessly by prong or blade. I

objected, but the English diner did not condescend to look. The salesgirl eating her sausage and mash held her own with any lady, the worker with any gentleman. They held and handled knife and fork in clearly determined fashion. They increased the travelling time from plate to mouth by delaying the take-off with cutting and dressing manoeuvres of a dance-like grace and precision. This exercise could take so long that it could easily have been thought to proceed for its own sake. Eventually, almost absent-mindedly, the fork with its noble titbit was led to the mouth, a mouth which showing a minimum of movement accepted the little offering with well-trained satisfaction. Even cabbage gained status through such treatment. The only intemperate action throughout the whole ritual took place at the very beginning. Having assumed the posture of elegant restraint, the diners would without hesitation start by thoroughly dusting the food on their plate with salt, regardless of what excess this could lead to. They seemed to assume enough modesty on the part of the chef not to interfere with their liberty to season the meal themselves whatever the consequences. Today I am embarrassed when I see Germans feed. The care which goes into the

preparation of their food is matched only by the utter *laissez-faire* which they extend to spoon, knife, fork, tongue and lips. Theirs is an all-in-style with one taboo: you mustn't cut potatoes with a knife. Perhaps I should add in fairness that neither do they usually lead the knife to the mouth. In these matters as in many others I find myself in no-man's-land. Today I cut potatoes with a knife without blushing, and prefer to eat asparagus with a fork when nobody is looking. Above all — I eat at home.

ARNOLD ROSENSTRAUCH

The author of these vignettes is a retired dentist. We shall be publishing further reminiscences of his, mainly dealing with professional life, in the January issue.