

AJR *Information*

Volume XLV No. 9
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Don't miss . . .

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Reflections on the eve

Repentance, Prayer, Beneficence

In last year's editorial for the High Holy Days we recalled the Comte de Mirabeau's words on the eve of the French Revolution 'History has too often recounted the actions of nothing more than wild animals . . . now we are given hope that we are beginning the history of man'.

That editorial itself appeared on the eve of a revolution – in Eastern Europe – which rekindled expectations that Mirabeau's hope might at last be fulfilled.

Whether this will, indeed, be the case is very much in the balance. In the meantime we still live out the last phase of history shaped by the actions of wild animals. We, who have come together in the Association of Jewish Refugees, were fortunate enough to have survived the most ferocious predator without permanent injury to body or mind. This imposes certain obligations on us – the chief being to provide succour for our fellows who,

due to impaired health or advanced age, are incapable of taking care of themselves.

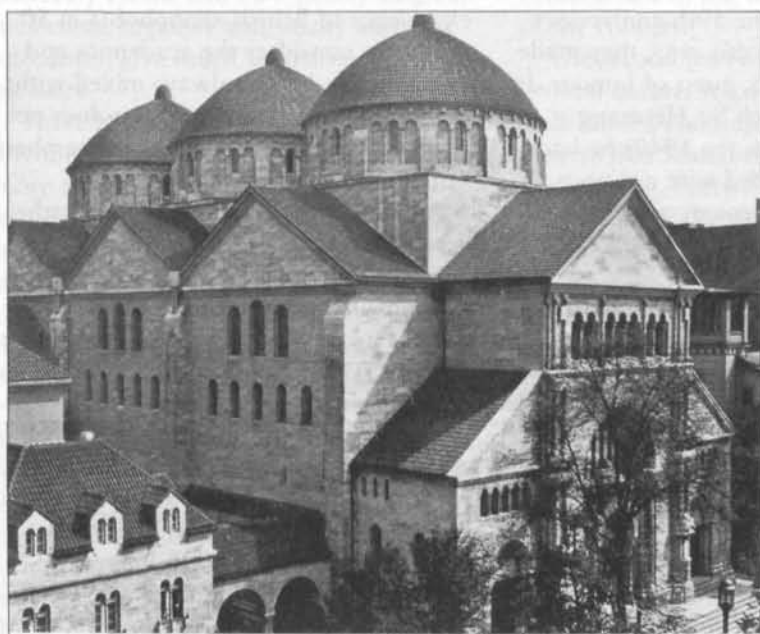
It was for that purpose that the AJR originally initiated the setting up of the Homes and the provision of social service support programmes. Now, several decades later, we are engaged in a major fundraising effort to upgrade these institutions and services to a level commensurate with contemporary needs.

The £4 million AJR Residential Care Appeal has now been running for over half a year. We have made a good start, which is gratifying, but the response has not been uniform throughout all sections of our membership. We attribute this not so much to a lack of generosity as to misconceptions based on false impressions. Just as there is a notion that all Jews are rich prevalent in society at large, so many in our community appear persuaded that there is no such creature as a poor refugee in need.

Would that it were so! In the real world, alas, the situation of many elderly refugees is not far short of pitiful – even in material terms (!) – and it behoves the rest of us who have been spared such a fate to dip our hands deep into our pockets. Quite candidly, if our appeal falls on deaf ears the essential improvements adumbrated in connection with our fundraising drive will remain ciphers on a drawing board, and the neediest members of the refugee community will not have their needs met!

Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish Calendar, approaches. The prayer for that day states that 'in confessing our transgressions we are reminded that Repentance, Prayer and Beneficence will avert the evil decree'. The commentary thereto in the Soncino Chumash runs thus 'Fasting in itself is not the fulfilment of the Divine command and purpose of the Day of Atonement. *Teshuvo*, *tefilla* and *tsedoko* – these can change the whole current of a man's life and destiny and lead to perfect atonement.'

Let us therefore, over the forthcoming Days of Awe, recall the commandment and be beneficent!



The Synagogue in Berlin's Fasanenstrasse. Architect: Ehrenfried Hessel

Contrasting tycoons

Hermann Abs, a leading West German banker is on the 'watch list' denying him entry to the United States because, as head of the Deutsche Bank during the Third Reich, he played a central role in the aryanisation of Jewish businesses.

Berthold Beitz, chairman of the Krupp Foundation, has been honoured as a 'righteous gentile' by Yad Vashem. As head of the Beskides oil company in Nazi-occupied Poland he saved 1,500 Jews from certain death at Belzec by claiming they were indispensable for his enterprise. □

Anti-racist vigil

The daughters of two martyred heroes of the 1956 Uprising, Imre Nagy and Pál Maléter, joined leading politicians of the new Hungary, including Prime Minister József Antall, in mounting guard at the statue of Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest. The demonstration was called by the Raoul Wallenberg Society in protest at desecration of Jewish graves and a rash of antisemitic graffiti. □

Reading matters

Marga Minco, a Dutch-Jewish writer, distilled her experiences as the solitary survivor of her family in *An Empty House*. The novel, which sold an astonishing half million copies in Holland, has now been published in English by Peter Owen. □

Expressis verbis

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), meeting in Copenhagen, has unequivocally condemned antisemitism, and called for measures to combat it. In previous legal documents antisemitism was habitually covered by such general terms as 'racism' or 'persecution on religious grounds'. □

For accidental tourists

The New York office of the *Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus* has issued a brochure entitled 'Germany for the Jewish Traveler'. The 40 page brochure contains a summary of German-Jewish history, addresses of Jewish institutions in the BRD and a list of places of Jewish interest, from the site of Belsen to the former residence of the Kissinger family at Fürth. □

Profile

Expanding universe



Hermann Bondi F.R.S.

Of the recurring waves of immigration into Britain, the Central European one of the 1930s was, it is widely agreed, the most 'valuable'. What is not agreed is who among Hitler's refugees deserves credit for having made the singly greatest contribution to this country. The Trustees of the Imperial War Museum had no doubt on that score. At the Museum-sponsored reunion of prominent ex-enemy aliens on the 50th anniversary of internment earlier this year, they made Hermann Bondi, FRS, guest of honour. In his 'acceptance' speech Sir Hermann observed wryly that in the 1940s he had been put behind barbed wire not once, but twice: first as an enemy alien, and then, shortly afterwards because he was doing top secret war work.

Vienna-born, Hermann Bondi had grown up in a Jewish middle-class family, the son of a scientifically inclined physician and a mother with strong anti-religious convictions. He showed amazing aptitude for Maths early on, 'swallowing' an introduction to Calculus at 12, and answering questions designed for a two-hour exam in a fraction of the time. At 17, convinced that a course at Vienna University would offer him insufficient scope, he applied for a place in Cambridge. He entered Trinity College as a fee-paying 'commoner', but within a year was a scholarship-assisted 'scholar'.

That happened to be the year of the Anschluss – signifying that Hermann Bondi's coming to Britain resulted from 'pull' rather than 'push'.

Even so – and despite a near-vertical take-off into the world of mathematical scholarship – he did not avoid the common fate of refugees, i.e. internment.

He was taken to Canada, where in a camp on the Plains of Abraham he taught Maths to fellow internees, and waited 15 months to be released. Soon afterwards he commenced research at the Admiralty Signals Establishment. From work on naval radar he eventually switched to aerial radar – the latter in a barbed wire entanglement on the summit of Snowdon. One of his wartime colleagues was Fred Hoyle, who subsequently achieved a worldwide, if controversial, reputation with his Steady State theory of the expanding universe. Bondi worked with him in the area of astrophysics for a while, but abandoned cosmology in the mid-1950s.

Since then he has pursued an academic career and occupied key posts in such important agencies as the European Space Research Organisation and the Natural Environment Research Council. He has also worked as Chief Scientific Officer, Ministry of Defence. The MoD appointment prompted a question in Parliament as to why no British-born scientist had been given the job; this, Sir Hermann told me when I interviewed him in the Master's Lodge of Churchill College, Cambridge, was his only personal experience of British xenophobia in 50 years! He considers the academics and civil servants he has always mixed with quite devoid of prejudice – but does not hold the same sanguine view of members of the legal profession.

As regards Jewish matters he is rather detached. Though keen on genealogical research – the family name derives from the Sephardi translation of *Yomtov* – he lacks a strong sense of Jewish identity. In fact, his commitment to Humanism (he is President of the British Humanist Association) predisposes him to a view of all religions as divisive. At the same time he esteems the Jewish tradition because of the high value it places on education.

Education is, in fact, the centre of Sir Hermann's universe. Having just seen his autobiography – *Science, Churchill & Me*, Pergamon Press, £17.50 – through the press, and on the threshold of retirement, he is full of plans for the future, many of them pedagogical. □ R.G.

Reviews

Monument to a famous father

Carl F. Flesch '... UND SPIELST DU AUCH GEIGE?' *Der Sohn eines berühmten Musikers erzählt und blickt hinter die Kulissen. Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag, Zürich, 1990. (English language version to follow.)*

Carl F. Flesch, himself not a musician, came to England as a refugee from Nazi Germany and has made a name for himself in the world of insurance, with particular reference to problems concerning musicians.

His father was Carl Flesch, the well-known violinist and teacher, who lived from 1873 to 1944, mainly in Germany and at the end of his life in Switzerland. Although this book is neither an autobiography nor a biography of Carl Flesch, it does tell us much both about the father and the son, for which reason it should appeal to a wide readership. The more fortunate older reader may be reminded of concerts given by Flesch, whereas others may associate the name only with the dreaded book of scales and arpeggios which they consult – or should consult – at the beginning of their daily practice of the violin. Quotations from letters by Flesch and by a galaxy of great musicians, together with many amusing anecdotes, give much information and pleasure.

There is, however, much of interest for any music-lover who would like to know more about the background of musicianship. Who could be better qualified than a son to give an insight into the life of a concert artist and his relationship with pupils and to describe the effects of this demanding profession on the whole family. Much is taken for

granted by the children of famous people, not least the equally famous friends who visit the house, but also, as the title '... and do you also play the violin?' indicates, the assumption by well-meaning acquaintances that children 'ought' to follow in their parents' footsteps.

Many pertinent questions are asked by the author: Why is it taken for granted that a soloist plays from memory? Why is the same not expected of chamber music players? Can one overcome stage fright? What is the value of applause and visits to the artists' room after a concert to say a few well chosen words? He not only asked these questions to make us think, but gives answers from his own observations and from his father's diaries.

As the author is in possession of material not necessarily available to biographers, we get interesting glimpses of some of Flesch's pupils, who in their turn have become outstanding violinists – Max Rostal, Ida Haendel, Henryk Szeryng, Ginette Neveu, Alma Moodie and others. There are chapters on debatable subjects such as infant prodigies and music competitions, and we are told of the attitudes of Flesch and his colleagues towards modern music and its place in the concert repertoire of the time.

My only quarrel with the author is his chapter on the wives of artists. Surely the partner of a successful performing artist must play a more important role than keeping the children quiet and seeing to it that there is a clean shirt and a well-brushed suit in the wardrobe on the day of the concert!

The second part of the book is of a less general nature. It gives information about well-known conductors, composers and players like Schnabel, Kreisler, Maler, Mengelberg, Furtwängler, to mention but a few. The tricky situations arising from pupils wanting to change teachers, and of chamber music players wanting to replace members of the ensemble, were as problematic then as now. The unfortunate break-up of the outstanding

Schnabel-Flesch-Piatigorsky Piano Trio is discussed, but inevitably left unexplained. All this is well documented with carefully selected letters, but the author's sense of humour, which gave much pleasure earlier in the book, finds little room here.

□ Marianne Ehrenberg

Warsaw Walpurgisnacht

Andrzej Szczypiorski THE BEAUTIFUL MRS SEIDENMAN (transl. Klara Glowczewska) Weidenfeld, £13.

Historical yet *dernier cri*, metaphysical and yet almost a thriller, imbued with insightful forgiveness and yet sternly judgemental, easy to read yet requiring contemplation to absorb its nuances... all these epithets apply to Andrzej Szczypiorski's novel.

As the title suggests, Mrs Irma Seidenman, the young widow of a distinguished Polish-Jewish doctor, who is busy with her late husband's scientific testament, is central to the novel. She, too, is Jewish, but looks and acts 'Aryan'. And so, when Poland is occupied by the Germans she becomes, with ease, Maria Magdalena Gostomska, the widow of a Polish officer.

With that we follow the author into that terrible time. The book is not about the Holocaust as we understand it, though the hellish fires flicker in the background. The stage for this drama is Warsaw, and the scenes are set by a Gentile Pole, who bravely balances the Jewish, Polish and German experiences.

Mrs Seidenman-Gostomska is spotted by a Jew-hunter, himself a Jew, retained by *Sturmführer* Stuckler because 'he is never wrong'. But at the sight of Irma, Stuckler wavers despite her possession of

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a cigarette case with Ignacy Seidenman's initials. However, she has friends – the doctor had saved many lives – and her chain of helpers range from a youthful admirer to a German settler in Poland who hides his decency behind a swastika badge. He does not know her from Eve, but swears that she is who she says she is, and Stuckler chooses to believe him, releases Irma and slaps his Jewish informer about, giving him one more chance 'because of his past good work'. Rightly does the author, through one of his protagonists, pose the question 'Would anybody have done the same for some poor Rivka from the stews'?

Szczypiorski shuns no aspect of his subject. Polish antisemitism finds expression, from the trivial to the positively Nazi, but so does the life-saving mercy of a nun who was once a peasant girl with visions of Christ; an otherworldly academician who helps to save Irma; a partly crippled railwayman; a once-thoughtless student who tries in vain to help his Jewish childhood friend and does save the friend's little sister with the nun's help. The Jew dies fighting in the Ghetto; the Pole fights in the uprising and survives. A Polish tailor and a Polish judge both risk their lives, overcoming what prejudices they have. The tailor perishes, the judge survives to remonstrate with the nun for her proselytising zeal . . . she has made good Catholics of 'her' children, causing them severe identity crises. One case, a bright boy who turns into an ultra-nationalist antisemite, frightens even her. But only thus, she holds, could she save them (in both sense of the word). Some young Jews make it to Israel/Palestine, where a few of them act as thoughtlessly and brutally as the Poles who had been their oppressors.

Neither of those goes as far as the *Sturmführer* who, in a concise apologia, proves to himself that in war cruelty is mercy, and that all civilisations have been built on the enslavement of vanquished *Untermenschen* by superior victors.

The Communist masters of Poland do not escape either. There is a gem of a meeting in a government office between another former Jew-hunter, and a roughian who saved Jews for pay. Having fought nearly to the death by the Ghetto walls before the Nazis vanished, they now strike more sparks off each other in the name of Marxist Socialism. It's all in a book not to be missed. □ *John Rossall*

Andrzej Szczypiorski is a deputy in the Polish parliament and recipient of the Peace Prize of the German book trade.

The roots of memory



Saul Bellow: by T. Victor.

Saul Bellow: THE BELLAROSA CONNECTION. Penguin. 1989. £3.50

Any book by Saul Bellow is a literary feast. His 'new work of fiction' is no exception. It is a short book, a novella, which can, and should, be read at one sitting, and then again, and then once more. For this slim volume from the pen of one of America's most celebrated Jewish writers is many things: fiction, of course; but also something of a puzzle, challenging the reader's powers of detection; and, not least, a dissertation on the psychology of immigration.

The narrative unfolds the life story of a Polish-Jewish refugee as told by a distant relative. He, the anonymous narrator, the son of Russian Jews who settled in New Jersey, has made a good deal of money by running a very successful 'memory tank' for which his prodigious 'capacity for retaining after-effects of experience or stimulation' (as the Concise Oxford Dictionary puts it) qualifies him perfectly and which he now, in his retirement, deploys to tell the tale of Harry Fonstein, refugee from Nazi oppression.

Club-footed from birth and hence a certainty for extermination just as soon as the German occupiers of his native Lemberg could get round to it, Fonstein escaped and managed to reach war-time Italy armed only with false papers and a head for languages and improvisation. In due course his cover was blown and he was arrested and earmarked for deportation. But a miracle occurred: he was allowed to get away, to make his way to Genoa, to sail to Lisbon and then on a refugee ship to New York. He was detained at Ellis Island and sent to Havana, Cuba, where he found work as assistant to a sort of matchmaker for American ladies, whose object was matrimony, and Jewish refugees, whose object was entry to the USA. Five years

later he married his employer's niece and moved with her to New Jersey. She, a formidable lady, helped him to set himself up in business and to become successful and wealthy and American. He knows that the man to whom he owes his survival and good fortune is the famous Billy Rose (the 'Bellarosa' of the title), a Jewish multimillionaire showbiz tycoon of questionable morals and with shady connections who, on a whim, had organised an underground rescue operation in Nazi Europe. Although normally craving publicity and ballyhoo, Rose had kept his altruistic activities a closely guarded secret. Fonstein, on the other hand, had grown to be obsessed with a desire to thank his benefactor. The conflict comes to a head when Fonstein's wife confronts Rose in Jerusalem.

Years later, the narrator is called on to renew contact with the Fonsteins but fails. Instead, he writes their story as possibly the last exercise of his special talents.

What of the puzzle? Questions remain tantalisingly unanswered. Why did Rose, the self-advertising organiser of Madison Square holocaust remembrance spectacles, refuse to contemplate being thanked by a survivor? Why did this refusal offend the survivor and cause his wife to act on his behalf? Why is the narrator so fascinated by the chain of events?

And here the book turns into a lecture on 'memory': memory as a way to make a living, honestly or dishonestly, or as a heavy burden or a cathartic experience. The protagonists in the story become demonstration models, figures drawn in chalk upon the lecturer's blackboard. The immigrant wishes to remember, but his descendant wishes to forget and moves from Jewish New Jersey to WASPish Philadelphia into 'a diaspora within a diaspora', yet stays in the immigrant ambience of shows and promotions and ostentation and Mafia connections. He hates reminiscences even if 'the God of his fathers still matters' to him. He may sell his memory skills in a respectable profession or pervert them in habitual gambling. In the final analysis, none of us can 'forget about remembering'.

Bellow is one of the rare masters of short story writing. He can stand with the 'greats', the likes of Maupassant and Zweig. He is their equal in the skilful use of prose (no less elegant for the occasional carefully controlled appearance of a four-letter word) and he may even surpass them in the wisdom of his slick one-liners. This is a memorable book!

□ *David Maier*

Footlights in the blackout

Gunter Berghaus (Ed) THEATRE AND FILM IN EXILE, GERMAN ARTISTS IN BRITAIN, 1933-1945, Berg Publishers, Oxford £22.50

It is nearly sixty years since the first German-speaking artists tried to gain a professional foothold on these shores after having fled Nazism. They were 400 in all – out of a refugee population of 75,000 – and this is their confused story. A very few of these refugee artists (Elisabeth Bergner, Anton Walbrook, et al.) had been stars on the Continent and are outside the considerations that apply to less well-known artists.

Two main theatrical centres in London were the *Laterndl* and the *Freie Deutscher Kulturbund* (FDKB). Though Hugh Rorrison writes very knowledgeably about both he does not, alas, convey the flavour, the excitement, the obstinacy of those desperate days. No 'outsider' could do that. To detail the contents of each of the twenty scenes which made up the greatest success of the FDKB – *Gulliver Goes to Town* – does not make for very stimulating reading. One would be hard put to understand at the end of it why the revue should have run for nine months (at weekends) and have attracted 5,000 people in a theatre with a capacity of a maximum of a hundred seats. However,

let us give thanks that its co-author, Egon Larsen, has recently celebrated his 86th birthday.

It's good to know that of the 1,200 members (by May 1940), a hundred were British (including J. B. Priestley).

The *Kulturbund* with its library café and restaurant, was indeed a social centre where one ran into Oscar Kokoschka, or the montage artist John Heartfield, or Norbert Brainin, just about to found his Amadeus Quartet, or into the piano duo Rawicz and Landauer.

It may also be worth mentioning that the *Kulturbund* was shunned by many on account of the alleged communist bias of its leading members.

Needless to say, the enterprise was run on a shoestring. It received no subsidies but, as a club theatre, there were no taxes to pay and the building in Hampstead had been provided by the Church of England through the good offices of the then Bishop of Chichester. The stage was tiny, décor and costumes were just indicated. Yet literary ambition drove us to stage Goethe's *Iphigenie* (with Hanne Norbert) and Kleist's *Amphitryon* (with Josef Sosias). I was 'Merkur'. One performance was attended by Dame Sybil Thorndike who appeared with Anton Walbrook, and who made a most enthusiastic 'thank you' speech from the stage, shook hands with us and made me feel like another Olivier.

The *Laterndl* was the 'home' of the Austrians. I felt much more at home there. A commitment to anti-Fascism was understood without being continually spouted forth. It was genuinely more *gemütlich*. Hugo Knepler, a prominent concert agent from Vienna, was our 'Finanzdirektor' and, apart from the joys of acting, I was often amazed how much we earned over the weekend – a very welcome complement to my income as a tailor-cutter trainee.

The 'stars' at the *Laterndl* were Marianne Walla (non-Jewish and a refugee for reasons of pure humanity), and Martin Miller, a wonderful *Schwejk*.

Everybody took part in some German language anti-Nazi BBC programmes, the great names involved included Hugh Carleton Green, Marius Goring, Julius Gellner, Bertold Viertel, Lucie Mannheim, Friedrich Valk and Herbert Lom. Particularly prominent were Annemarie Hase as 'Frau Wernicke' a Berlin housewife who under the guise of support for the Nazis spread vitriolic anti-Nazi propaganda (written by Egon Larsen) and

her Austrian counterpart 'Gefreiter Hirmschal' (Fritz Schrecker).

The chapter on Britain and the Emigre Film Maker reminds that the 'cinema of Empire' (*Sanders of the River, Rhodes of Africa, King Solomon's Mines*), came from the stable of the Hungarian Alexander Korda and his continental collaborators.

Being a 'Dunera Boy', i.e. one that was shipped to Australian internment, I was particularly interested in 'Theatre behind Barbed Wire'. The quality of those camp performances is, of course, difficult to gauge, but it is incredible how much enthusiasm went into the dozens and dozens of productions in English, Australian and Canadian internment.

Other contributions discuss the playwright Ernst Toller and the dancers Rudolf Laban and Kurt Jooss.

One of the most attractive aspects of the book are the numerous illustrations, contributed by internees and their families. The work will be of interest to social and theatre historians and, of course, to all surviving internees.

□ Hugh Rank

Truth versus lies

The house at Izieu near Lyons, from which 44 Jewish children were taken on the orders of Klaus Barbie, is to be turned into a museum.

The French National Assembly put a law on the statute book providing up to two years' jail for 'revisionist' historians who deny the existence of Nazi gas chambers. □

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Letters to the Editor



MASS INTERNMENT REMEMBERED

Sir – So far I have not seen any reference to the Special Advisory Committees. Although I was Category 'C' I was referred to the local Committee by the Chief Constable: it appears I had aroused suspicion on account of strong criticism of the Chamberlain Government (berating their appeasement policy and subsequent inadequate defence effort) and was duly re-categorised 'A', and promptly interned. Marlborough Mansions
Werner Levy
Cannon Hill NW6

Sir – I was sent to Prees Heath in Shropshire together only with single men, including widowers. We were under canvas in old, round army Bell Tents, where you sleep with your feet towards the central post and your head near the circumference. There was very little room for one suitcase.

Shortly after opening the camp we were told to choose a camp leader. A few people put their names forward, but in one tent was a Herr Eisen, perhaps the only non-Jew in the camp. He had the personality of a natural leader and the half dozen young men who shared the tent with him helped him to get nearly all the votes with this famous ditty:

*Willst Du besseres Essen speisen,
Willst Du bald nach London reisen,
Willst Du hinter Türen schei . . .
Wähle Eisen, wähle Eisen!*

Birmingham
Adrian Croft

Sir – The article by DLM (June issue) is, unfortunately, far from complete.

My father and I were late internees and sent from Kempton Park to Sutton Coldfield. This was a camp entirely under canvas on the heath and subject to nightly air raids from German planes. The mainly elderly inmates were not allowed out of the tents during the night to go to the toilets, as the guards were worried about us giving signals to the planes overhead.

This particular camp was mentioned in the parliamentary debate on the day we were moved to York racecourse. It is generally believed that revelations about the treatment of the internees there swung the scales in favour of the refugees.

I think these facts should be mentioned to indicate the brutality used in dealing with Jewish refugees.

Barnet Lane
Elstree, Herts
Robert Landau

SYNCHRONICITY

Sir – Your *Message in a bottle* is paralleled by my own story.

A little while ago a friend gave me a copy of the Leo Baeck Bulletin. This particular issue, published about 2 years earlier, was given to me because it contained an article about Shanghai, which I had visited just then. On leafing through the journal my eyes fell upon an acknowledgement that papers relating to my family had been sent to the Leo Baeck Institute. It turned out that my uncle had given these papers (consisting of documents, photographs and letters written to and by members of my family) to a half-Jewish friend on the eve of his (my uncle's) deportation, with the request that they be given to me after the war.

However, this friend, who also had some horrific experiences during the war, presumably forgot all about these documents, which were stored in his cellar. When he died in the early 1980s, his widow found them and sent them to the LBI in New York.
Randall Avenue
London, NW2
Gerald A. Goodwin

WORLD RALLY OF CZECH JEWS

Sir – Next to us at the festive opening in Jerusalem sat a woman, silently crying, tears running down her face. My wife, who wanted to comfort her, spoke to her first in English, then in German, but both times she shook her head. But when Judith talked to her in Czech, then she said, still crying, that she was glad that she could talk with somebody from another country. She told us that this was her first trip outside Czechoslovakia. Now many Jews dare, for the first time, to declare their Jewishness. Most of the first and second postwar generation have intermarried. Now many families want to

join a Jewish congregation with the hope that their non-Jewish partner could and would convert. Quite a number of couples, often with children, have applied, wishing to be accepted into the Jewish fold.

Regal Way
Harrow, Middx
Sam Smith

JEWS IN WARTIME

Sir – I have completed six years research and have commenced writing my first two of six volumes.

I have some gaps to fill and seek help from those with knowledge of those who served: Commandos, Intelligence, Arnhem, Navy, scientists, industry and others who gave distinguished service.

I will also be publishing in 1992 a Remembrance Book which will include all those who made the supreme sacrifice whilst serving with the British and Allied Forces, including partisans who fell. USA and USSR losses will be summarised. (Forms for registration available.)
Salisbury Hall
Park Road, Hull
HU3 1TD
Jack Lennard

READING THE SMALL PRINT

Sir – May I add 3 comments to your July issue?

1. The Litfassäule on page 1 had an advertisement for the film *Menschen im Hotel*. The book of the film was written by Vicki Baum (1888–1960), a Vienna-born Jewish novelist.

2. On page 12, about Australia, it is stated that 'they were exposed . . . to molestation from their Nazi shipmates . . .' I was a passenger on the *Dunera* and during the eight week long journey I neither experienced nor heard about any such molestations. We were all in the same boat, literally, and behaved accordingly. Some of the 'real' Germans formed the 'Latrine Police', very important when there were only about 10 for over 2,000 people. 'Drei Mann rechts ran zum pinkeln' is a call I vividly remember.

3. Unfortunately, the behaviour of the Jewish Archbishop Lustiger is not without precedent (see page 16). According to Mayer's Encyclopaedia, the Spanish Inquisitor General, Tomas de Torquemada, was of Jewish extraction.
Woodhurst Lane
Oxted, Surrey
A. W. Freud

In Memoriam Rudolf Olden

Just 50 years ago, on 12 September 1940, the ship 'City of Benares' left Liverpool for America. When a German torpedo sank the ship in mid-Atlantic, Goebbels claimed it had been because of Rudolf Olden's presence on board.

Rudolf Olden, and his young wife Ika who drowned with him, had had absolutely no desire to leave England, their home since 1933. Olden had wanted to contribute to the British war effort and had been highly recommended for propaganda work at the BBC, but his application had been turned down. Instead he had been interned, an experience which had left his health seriously impaired. Meanwhile anxious friends in America had managed to arrange a post for him at the New School for Social Research in New York. Reluctantly Olden applied for an American visa, still hoping that useful work would be found for him in Britain. Instead of this, the clause on his Travelling Paper permitting his return was struck out before his very eyes. In 1936 Olden had been expatriated by the Nazis; now he was being expatriated by the British, this time with fatal consequences.

Rudolf Olden was born in Stettin in 1885, the third child of the Jewish actor-writer Hans Olden and his actress wife Rosa.

Olden studied law, served as a cavalry officer during the 1914-18 war, and was in Vienna when hostilities ceased. Here he was encouraged to enter journalism, writing initially for radical Viennese newspapers. Theodor Wolff, editor-in-chief of the influential *Berliner Tageblatt*, engaged him as political editor, later making him his deputy.

Simultaneously Olden, working as a defence counsel in the Berlin Supreme Court, became known as one of the few lawyers of the time prepared to defend victims of political oppression and capable of winning such cases; he was also legal advisor to the increasingly beleaguered *Deutsche Liga für Menschenrechte*.

Olden fled Berlin shortly after the Reichstag fire, reaching London in November 1933. His years in England were productive ones: he published biographies of Hindenburg and Hitler, wrote two further books on the subject of Germany and democracy, and contributed regularly to the *Pariser Tageblatt* and other exile papers. Moreover, 1938 saw the birth of his only daughter of whom he was extremely proud. (The little girl

crossed the Atlantic separately from her parents and thus survived.)

During his years in exile, Olden campaigned unremittingly for victims of Nazi Germany. Moreover, in his position of first 'provisional' secretary of the newly-formed German P.E.N.-Club in Exile, he succeeded in securing freedom for a number of his fellow-writers stranded in Nazi-occupied territory. Years later men such as Felix Langer and Kurt Hiller were still testifying to Olden's extraordinary persistence on their behalf.

After Olden was interned in June 1940, a number of Englishmen and women campaigned vigorously for his release as a longstanding opponent of Nazism. More than 30 years later, another friend, Prince Hubertus zu Löwenstein, was still lamenting Olden's untimely death: '*Sein Tod war ein Verlust, der niemals ganz überwunden werden konnte. Wie sehr hätte ganz Deutschland ihn nach dem Kriege gebraucht!*'.

□ Charmian Brinson/Marian Malet

Learning for pleasure

Five years ago I contributed an article to *AJR Information* on the University of the Third Age which brought our organisation a number of new members. Since then it has grown considerably, widening its activities and attracting many more students of our particular origins, although of course our enrolment comprises people of diverse social, religious and ethnic backgrounds. For some it has become the main focus of outside life and a major stimulus to prevent those grey cells from atrophying. What is the U3A and what do they offer?

As *Université du Troisième Age* it started its life in Toulouse more than a decade ago; it spread to this country in 1983 since when it has shown continuous growth. We are not a university in the usual sense of the word; we are rather more like an academy as the ancient Greeks saw it. There are no compulsory essays to be written, no examinations, no awarding of degrees. U3A was created for the retired of all ages who want to refresh knowledge, study new subjects just for the pleasure of widening their horizons (or proving to themselves - and others - that they are not yet ready to be put out to grass), break the isolation and loneliness which ageing so often brings about and to socialise with like-minded people. Here in London we meet during

daylight hours all through the week, studying and discussing a wide variety of subjects with the help of coordinators. We do not call them tutors or lecturers; they are just ordinary members with special knowledge or skills, which they usually, but not necessarily, taught or practised before retirement. In this academic year we offer 60 separate study groups, covering 37 disciplines from Classical Greek to Tai-Chi via history, languages and bridge. Once a year we meet for a weekend school at Easter (this year's overall subject is *Aspects of the Romantic Movement*). Every Monday we invite an outside expert to talk to us, the only non-member to participate in our activities. We go on study tours at home and abroad, and regularly visit a number of residential homes to talk to their guests. We have a unique telephone link-up connecting house-bound members to a coordinator for group readings or discussions. We are building up our own library. We go on countryside rambles; in short there is not much that we don't do to keep mentally and physically active. None of us gets paid for anything, not the toilers in the office nor the coordinators; they pay their membership fees just like everybody else. Our only expenses are rents, postage, printing and the usual administrative costs. For that reason we have so far always been able to keep our subscription low. Fees for participating in any or all of our study groups and other activities, are below those currently charged for attending a single Adult Education, or WEA, class.

Anyone wanting to know more about our activities in London should write to or phone: U3A In London, 44/46 Crowndale Road, NW1 1TR. Outside London and its immediate surroundings, please, contact U3A National, 1 Stockwell Green, London SW9 9JF; telephone 071-737 2541. □ Ronald Stent

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PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road
London NW6 3RL
Tel. 071 328 0208

Morning Activities – Bridge, kalookie, scrabble, chess, etc., keep fit, discussion group, choir (Mondays), art class (Tuesdays and Thursdays).

Afternoon entertainment –

SEPTEMBER

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Monday 3 | Interlude of English & Continental Songs – Marguerite Rapp (Mezzo) and Irene Wallis (Piano) |
| Tuesday 4 | A Song For Everyone Brought To You by Jack Harris |
| Wednesday 5 | Hans Freund: Come & Join |
| Thursday 6 | Queen Victoria At Home – A Talk with Slides, Music & Dancing – Carolyn James |
| Monday 10 | Songs For Your Delight – Lilian Green & Group |
| Tuesday 11 | (a) Outing to Ham House (b) Light Musical Entertainment – Shirley Gurevitz (Soprano) and Sylvia Cohen (Piano) |
| Wednesday 12 | An Hour Of Your Favourite Songs – Barbara Lincoln; Irene Sara, Rex Sara (Piano) |
| Thursday 13 | September Songs – A Delightful Pot Pourri – Daphne Lewis (Piano) & Sarah Duthie (Soprano) |
| Monday 17 | Shelly Weldon Entertains With A Pre-Rosh Hashanah Programme |
| Tuesday 18 | Piano Recital – Jeanette Lin |
| Wednesday 19 | CLOSED AFTER LUNCH |
| Thursday 20 | CLOSED |
| Monday 24 | Four Strings Each – Light Musical Entertainment – Lucy White (Violin) & Juliet Davey (Piano) |
| Tuesday 25 | Music from the music centre – Gerard Tichauer and Fred Dunston |
| Wednesday 26 | The Blake Piano Trio |
| Thursday 27 | Hans Freund: 'Esso Enai' |
| OCTOBER | |
| Monday 1 | Recital – Bernard Wilcox and Leslie Barnes |
| Tuesday 2 | One Refugee Soldier's War – Talk by Ronald Stent |
| Wednesday 3 | Jack Takes A Stroll Down Memory Lane – Musical Entertainment by Jack Harris |
| Thursday 4 | CLOSED |

The AJR at Work

Social Services Department: Another success

A very lonely lady, suffering from anxiety neurosis, has recently taken up residence in Osmond House. This is a fairly routine occurrence and would not normally warrant special attention. However, the circumstances in which she eventually came to the attention of the AJR are slightly unusual.

This lady had been a resident in the Friern Barnet psychiatric hospital for some years. Her only visitor (she has only one surviving relative, in the USA) was an elderly gentleman who had been a friend for many years. Unfortunately he passed away. It was his son, an Israeli resident, who alerted the AJR to the lady's plight. As he would be unable to continue the visits he asked the social services department here in the AJR office to 'keep an eye' on his father's friend.

This was done. For the next three years Samuel Wolf (Head of the department) visited the hospital on a regular basis.

This situation continued until recently when ward closures meant that the lady

would have to be transferred to a new hospital in Northampton. This would, of course, have meant a drastic reduction in the number of her visits, and the shock of entering a totally new environment without full back-up from people with whom she was familiar. This, in the opinion of our social service personnel, would have resulted in a rapid deterioration in her condition.

It was at this stage that Samuel, aided by Mary Copey (Head of Care of the CBF Residential Care and Housing Association), initiated a 'Case Conference' on the lady's behalf. They argued that placing her in the Continental Jewish atmosphere of Osmond House would prove to be of great therapeutic value.

After a number of meetings at which proof of the ability of the Homes to cope with a patient of this type had to be proved, it was agreed to allow the woman to reside at Osmond House on a 'trial basis'.

The lady is now a permanent resident at Osmond House. She still gets her visits and is sharing an environment with many others who have shared similar experiences and come from similar backgrounds. □

43rd ANNUAL CHARITY CONCERT

October 14th

Our guest artists will be:

Raphael and Peter Wallfisch

Have you ordered your tickets?

Avoid queues in the interval by buying your coffee vouchers before the concert from the desk in the foyer. Our programme sellers will direct you.

Souvenir brochure

The forty-third edition of the Annual Charity Concert Souvenir Brochure will be going to print at the end of August.

Wellwishers are welcome to book space in the brochure by contacting Maurice Newman at the AJR's offices at 9, Adamson Road NW3 3HX. Advertising space can also be booked by telephone on 071-483 2536.

AJR

'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE

Twice weekly advice sessions offering help with filling in forms, checking benefits received, checking entitlements, claiming benefits, fuel problems, money matters, etc., etc., are being held as follows:—

**TUESDAYS 10 am–12 noon at
15 Cleve Road, London NW6**

**THURSDAYS 10 am–12 noon at
Hannah Karminski House, 9 Adamson
Road, London NW3**

No appointment necessary but please bring along all relevant documents, such as Benefit Books, letters, bills, etc.

WE STILL NEED

Drivers to transport people to and from our Day Centre in Cleve Road.

If you can help, please contact **Laura Howe, Volunteers Co-ordinator, 071-483 2536.**

Volunteers' Meetings, Summer 1990

In June and July there were two volunteers' meetings held in Hannah Karminski House. Miss Gwen James, former Haringey social worker and founder of the organisation Voice for the Child in Care, spoke about her volunteers who work as Independent Representatives (IRs). IRs visit children or young persons who have been placed in secure accommodation because they are considered to be a danger to themselves or to others. Such young people need help from adults who are outside the system, are really independent and will listen to their point of view while, at the same time, keeping their confidences.

In the course of the discussion parallels with the work done by AJR volunteers emerged. Whilst it is extremely important to maintain confidentiality, sometimes dilemmas do arise. For instance, what should volunteers do if they know that someone is suicidal?

Depression and aggression are very difficult to deal with. One visitor spoke of the fear of abandonment shown by the lady he visits and wondered how he could help to assuage these fears. Miss James made the point that one should not offer more than one can give. This is highlighted by the question, which arises very often, as to whether home phone numbers should be given to persons being visited. It is generally felt that, if some distance is not kept, the involvement can become too demanding. However, everyone agreed that in all voluntary work regularity and commitment are vital.

Both AJR visitors and Independent Representatives try to reach out to other human beings who are in need. Volunteers offer a service which augments and complements the work done by Social Service Departments. It is the emotional rewards that make doing this work so worthwhile.

□ L.H.

ROOM AVAILABLE IN ONE OF OUR HOMES FOR SHORT TERM RESPIRE CARE.

For further information
please contact:-

Mrs Ruth Finestone
071-483 2536

The AJR Songsters



Edie and the choir performing during the Day Centre's 'French Week'.

The only qualification required to join the AJR Choir is a love of singing – auditions are out! Voices tend to improve as confidence grows and members become more involved in the company.

Edie Klempner was doing volunteer work at the AJR Paul Balint Day Centre when she was asked to form the choir. Although unable to read music, she has done a lot of singing and jumped at the chance. With the help of a volunteer pianist, and sticking to the familiar melodies, the choir organised a Chanukah

programme. This proved to be an unqualified success.

Since then the choir has gone from strength to strength, making regular appearances at the Day Centre, performing always with great enthusiasm.

Edie gets as much pleasure from the choir as any of the members – as she puts it: 'I am constantly moved and amazed by my singers and grateful too for the privilege of conducting them'. We too are grateful, to Edie for giving of herself so unstintingly. □

**The Executive and Staff of the AJR
wish all members and friends
A
Happy and Healthy New Year.**

You can contact the AJR by

**Phone 071-483 2536
Fax 071-722 4652**

The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

NEEDS

- (1) A temporary (3/4 months) helper on Thursdays from mid-day to help serve at tables in the dining room, clear up etc.
- (2) Drivers still needed to take people to and from the Centre.
- (3) Volunteer with First Aid training.

Please contact Mrs Sylvia Mathus:

071 328 0208
15 Cleve Road, NW6

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre NO HOLIDAY PLANS???

Join us and make new friends.
Monday to Thursday 10am-3pm
15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead.
Tel: 071-328 0208

AJR CLUB

15 Cleve Road, London NW6

SUNDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER at 3 p.m.
Richard Grunberger will give a talk on Bernard Malamud, Jewish American author
Admission 50p, incl. tea

We welcome you and your friends on
TUESDAYS – THURSDAYS – SUNDAYS
2 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Day Centre Entertainment free on Club days.
You will enjoy the friendly atmosphere
you can talk – play cards – play games.
One Sunday a month – live entertainment.

Refreshments are available at nominal charges.
Our Annual Membership fee is only £4.

Tax aid for gifts

Of significant relevance to this month's lead article is the following information about new tax concessions:

Proposed in the Chancellor's 1990 budget were a range of measures designed to encourage individual and corporate charitable donations. The proposals include the raising of the annual limit on charitable gifts qualifying for income tax relief under the payroll giving scheme from £480 to £600.

Also proposed was 'Gift Aid', an entirely new income tax relief for individual gifts to charities which equal or exceed the new £600 ceiling for payroll giving. There will be a £5 million limit on gifts from any one donor. Such gifts will be made net of basic rate tax, on which charities will be able to claim repayment. If the donor is a higher rate taxpayer he will also be able to claim higher rate tax relief. Companies will also be able to claim relief from corporation tax for single gifts to charities. For those organisations which are not 'close companies' the present relief of up to 3 per cent of dividends will still be available where it is more favourable. In the case of groups of companies, the £5 million limit

is spread equally amongst them, including also associated companies.

The necessary legislation will be introduced at the Committee Stage of the Finance Bill. The new relief will apply to gifts made on or after 1 October 1990.

Inland Revenue guidance for individuals or companies making charitable covenants or donations is available from local tax offices, or the Inland Revenue Public Enquiry Room on 071-438 6420. □

East German Compensation

The following was inadvertently omitted from Dr. Falk's article in our August issue:

'Compensation for heirless property is sought by the Claims Conference, an agreement to make global payments on the lines of the Hague agreement of 1952 made with the Federal Republic is hoped for, under which a fair proportion is claimed for the social and cultural needs of Jews from Germany.

Under the 'Equalisation of Burdens Law' (Lastenausgleichsgesetz) of the Federal Republic some compensation was paid by the FR to Nazi victims from East Germany and this would have to be considered in the determination of any individual claims.' □

KOOK'S TOUR

DENMARK

The Danes substantial kudos earn
From Rosenkrantz and Gildenstern,
But greater would their fame be far
Had Hamlet's pal been Kierkegaard.

FINLAND

Sibelius sung at Nurmi's speed
(Who sometimes sprinted, sometimes
skied)

Can teach the Balts a lesson rare:
How to escape the Russian bear.

FRANCE

Belle France, renowned for clarity
Of thought, proclaims that charity
Commence chez nous;
Poor Machiavel, he had no clue!

GERMANY

As warriors for mighty Thor
They finished sprawling on the floor,
So on VE-Day they rebelled
And swore henceforth to worship *Geld*.

GREAT BRITAIN

Though great no longer in the sense
Of pink on maps, or Pounds and Pence,
Remembering Nineteen Forty
She has reason to be haughty.

AJR INFORMATION is now available on tape

Please contact Mrs Irene White 081-203 2733
before 9 am or after 6 pm

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ALL LEGAL WORK UNDERTAKEN

Alice Schwab

Art Notes

Great Britain is celebrating the ninetieth birthday of that much-loved lady, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, and a display of fine photographs, one for each decade of her life, is at the National Portrait gallery, including portraits by Sir Cecil Beaton and Norman Parkinson.

The opening of *Innocence and Persecution: the art of Jewish Children: Germany 1936-41* at the Ben Uri coincided with the resignation from the government of Nicholas Ridley. The exhibition was organised by Dr Wieland Koenig, director of the Stadtmuseum in Düsseldorf. Illustrated catalogues (German and English) are still available at the gallery. Under Dr Koenig's direction the Stadtmuseum specialises in art of the Holocaust and he has recently arranged with the Groningen museum to show works by the Dutch painter Hendrik Nicolaas Werkman (1882-1945), a non-Jew murdered by the Nazis who, amongst other things, illustrated Martin Buber's *Die Legende des Baalschem*. In September the Ben Uri has its annual Open Exhibition where many old friends will be showing.

Sharon Chazan, a gifted documentary photographer, was engaged on producing a body of pictures of the Jewish East End of London when she met a tragic death. The project was not completed, but many of her photographs were recently shown at the *Jewish Culture in Britain* exhibition at the John Hansard Gallery, University of Southampton, to coincide with the *Preserving the Jewish Heritage* conference organised by the Parkes Library/History Department of the University.

The Camden Arts Centre is organising an exhibition (November-December) to mark the centenary of the birth of Mark Gertler (1891-1939), prominent in a generation of Jewish artists in Britain, including Bomberg and Epstein, in the early 1900's. Harry Weinberger's exhibition at Duncan Campbell, mentioned in our last issue, is in fact in two parts: Part I: 4-22 September, Part II: 25 September-12 October.

The Edwardian Hotels are appropriate sponsors of an exhibition at the Royal

Academy, *The Edwardians and After: Paintings and Sculptures from the Royal Academy's Collection 1900-1950* (until 21 October). The exhibition includes pieces by Sargent, John, Sickert, Spencer, Lavery, Clausen, Orpen, Kelly, John Nash and many others.

From 7 September to 9 December the Royal Academy is showing *Monet in the 90's, The Series Paintings*. This exhibition opened in Boston in February. All tickets were pre-sold and the exhibition was attended by half-a-million visitors. In Great Britain this exhibition marks an innovation, in that entry will be by advance booking only. Tickets are available at Keith Prowse and the Royal Academy. Some tickets will be available each day for those prepared to queue.

The Museum of London has recently opened its new Second World War Gallery illustrating life in wartime London, and will be showing photographs to mark the Fiftieth anniversary of the London Blitz (until 6 May 1991).

Heinz Bergruen was born in Berlin in 1914 and has made a long-term loan from his outstanding collection to the National Gallery, including pictures by Van Gogh, Braque, Miro, Cezanne, Seurat and 40 by Picasso. The National Gallery has also benefited by the bequest of Helena and Kenneth Levy of paintings by Monet, Corot, Jongkind, Boudin and Renoir.

Marlborough Fine Art and Marlborough Graphics are simultaneously showing paintings, drawings and acrylics, and the complete etchings of Frank Auerbach (until 20 October). The exhibitions coincide with the publication of the first monograph on the artist by Robert Hughes.

There may still be time to see the Naum Gabo Centenary exhibition (until 29 September) at Annelie Juda Fine Art in their new premises at 23 Dering Street.

Finally, for your diary. *Modern Art and Jewish Identity* at the Barbican (10 October-6 January 1991), as well as *Israel: State of the Art* - a season of Israeli events (8 October-27 November). More to follow! □

SB's Column

Full circle?

In *Else*, Motti Lerner's play about Else Lasker-Schüler's lonely wartime exile in Jerusalem the poet's lament 'I want to go home' elicits the reply 'You have no home!' Now Else Lasker-Schüler has had a homecoming of sorts: *Habimah* performed the play at the *Deutsche Theater*, Berlin, a stage which once boasted an array of Jewish talent (Reinhardt, Moissi, Kortner, Granach and Elisabeth Bergner).

An unusual combination. Eutin near Lübeck has held its annual summer festival for 30 years in honour of Carl Maria von Weber, the city's most famous son. The 1990 programme included performances of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Verdi's *Force of Destiny* and . . . the musical *Anatevka*, also known as the ever popular *Fiddler on the Roof*.

The Bodenwieser Centenary. Celebrating the centenary of her birth, Vienna gave due recognition to Gertrud Bodenwieser, a prominent figure in the development and performing of dramatic and lyric expression dancing, an art that reached its peak during the Twenties when Gertrud Bodenwieser and Grete Wiesenthal created Vienna's modern dance style. Featuring the ideas of the famous dance and choreographer, Vienna State Opera devoted two matinées to the event. A Bodenwieser centenary exhibition took place at London's Royal Festival Hall in July this year.

Obituary. The death is announced of soprano Erna Berger. She was 89. Dresden-born and an accomplished Mozart singer, her long career extended well over 30 years; she visited London's Royal Opera House frequently during the Thirties and even after the war. After her retirement in 1955 she devoted herself to teaching; her most successful pupil was the late Rita Streich. - It is belatedly learnt that Dr Rudolf Spitz died earlier this year. Born in Vienna in 1906, he showed literary talents at an early age writing sketches and short stories. He was founder, author and compère at Vienna's *Stachelbeere* in pre-war days. After having made his home in Britain, his qualifications as a lawyer involved him in work as a translator at the Nuremberg trials. At the BBC World Service he made valuable contributions to the Austrian, and later to the German, department until his retirement several years ago. □

CLUB 1943

Anglo-German cultural forum Meetings on Mondays at 8 p.m. at the Communal Hall, Belsize Square Synagogue, 51 Belsize Square, London NW3.

Chairman: Berta Sterly, 4 Grey Close, NW11 6QG. Tel: 081-455 1535.

Aspects of Religious Judaism in Britain

2. LIBERAL JUDAISM

An interview with Rabbi Sidney Brichto

When, in 1902, a group of religiously committed English Jews formed the Jewish Religious Union, their avowed purpose was to halt the seemingly inevitable drift towards assimilation. By holding shorter services, at more convenient times, in a more intelligible manner they sought to attract the habitual non-attender. Their aim was to complement the existing structure of British Judaism rather than to supplant it, and nothing was further from their thoughts than the creation of a break-away movement.

Indeed, the idea of 'breaking away' was then (and still is) anathema to Liberal Judaism. What inspired those founders – Montefiore, Montagu, Abrahams and later, Israel Mattuck – was a passionate desire to perpetuate the Jewish religion as a faith which does not have to rely on what they saw as external trappings but comes from the inner spirit of those who profess it. During the early years, services were conducted by orthodox rabbis, as well as lay preachers, until, in 1908, the then Chief Rabbi asked the former to abandon their support of the renamed 'Jewish Religious Union for the Advancement of Liberal Judaism'.

Unity Commitment

Today, the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues (U.L.P.S.) has around 12,000 adult members and 25 constituent congregations. Rabbi Dr Sidney Brichto, the Union's Executive Vice-President, is anxious to affirm the movement's continued commitment to the unity of the Jewish people. 'That which guided our leaders at the beginning is even more important now. We must make every effort to ensure that Judaism does not, by default, drive away those who remain after the Holocaust'.

It was not least this perceived danger which prompted him to address himself to the question of bringing into concert, between the various strands of Judaism, decisions concerning Jewish status, marriage and divorce. In a controversial article published a few years ago, he courageously offered to Jewish Orthodoxy '... responsibility of finding the means to

enable all religious sections to achieve a standard practice in those important areas...' ('Halakha with Humility'. *The Jewish Law Annual*, Vol. VIII, page 249). This, too, is presumably his concern in his proposal to the new Chief Rabbi that we should 'love each other as Jews and respect each other's sincerity in working to maintain the continuity of Jewish life in the face of those influences which threaten its existence' (*U.L.P.S. NEWS*, April 1990).

Anglo-Jewish Liberalism has, Rabbi Brichto maintains, never been dogmatic, not least, perhaps, because it came about as a spontaneous response to the needs of the times. Its ultimate loyalty is to the truth and to an enlightened and educated Jewish conscience. He is certain that, unless it is allowed to remain a dynamic, constantly developing religion, Judaism will wither away. In this view, revelation, far from being a single unrepeatable event in the historic past, is with us now and always, and we must not fail to exercise an honest judgment upon it.

Halacha essential

The straightforward assertion that 'ossification does not amount to authenticity', this free-thinking search for meaningful interpretations of religious values, must, he pleads, be accommodated within Judaism alongside the unquestioning acceptance of all *halachic* principles. Both views, says Rabbi Brichto, are essential for our present and our future: that which believes that only unswerving adherence to established forms can keep Judaism together and that which holds that modern needs can only be disregarded at the risk of eventual disintegration.

But, insists Rabbi Brichto, this does not mean that Judaism's basic written law, and its traditional interpretations, can be abandoned as no longer of any real significance. 'Torah and Talmud constitute the greatest code of law which has ever been bestowed upon mankind. They are the basis of our civilisation. The role of Judaism, as a life idealistic faith, is to proclaim the ultimate purpose of existence, namely that all must share in

life on equal terms'. For this reason, ritual worship of God should be so arranged that it can serve the purpose of imbuing those who participate in it with the determination to act in kindness to all God's creatures – as Hillel's famous dictum, about not doing to others that which is hateful to oneself, indicates. Thus, as all human beings are entitled to benefit from the common good, any division between 'secular' moral values and 'religious' ones must be regarded as artificial barriers best removed if Judaism's universal message is to be understood correctly.

No dogmatism

An absence of dogmatism also underlies the organisational structure of U.L.P.S. All its ordained rabbis are members of the Rabbinic Conference; all serve on the 110-strong administrative Council alongside lay representatives of the constituent synagogues. Three rabbis constitute the Rabbinic Board (the term *Beth Din* is deliberately avoided) which meets to determine questions of religious significance, such as those concerned with status and with marital matters. It is noteworthy that, as a matter of principle and in order to serve the interests of the Jewish people as a whole, re-marriage of divorced persons is not authorised without a generally recognised religious dissolution of the marriage, if this is desired by either of the partners. In cases of genuine hardship, this condition will not be imposed; but it is always recommended in order to avoid any problems of status which might one day confront any of the children of the marriage. There is equality of the sexes in all matters, including that of parental Jewishness.

Young people have their barmitzvah or batmitzvah at the age of 13, and celebrate *kabbalat torah* at 15 or 16 upon completion of their course of religious education.

Rabbi Brichto values his own American-Jewish Orthodox family background. Thus, while advocating change, in tune with the changing times, he is concerned, as were his predecessors in the leadership of British Liberal Judaism, with the preservation of the eternal roots of the Jewish faith. He is determined that the Jewish people shall survive, not only for its own sake, but for the good of all mankind.

□ David Maier

Freedom Party's diabolical liberties

Austrian politics resemble those of Britain in that two large parties have exercised long-term dominance and a third, smaller one, is trying to 'break the mould'. The uniquely Austrian twist is that the would-be mould-breaking Freedom Party (FPÖ) accommodates Liberals and thinly disguised Neo-Nazis – with the latter in the ascendant since Jörg Haider's appointment as Party leader. In the leader's fiefdom, Carinthia, an FPÖ council candidate quipped recently that Simon Wiesenthal would fit comfortably into Haider's pipe. This stomach-turning reference to the Nazi crematoria attracted some adverse press comment, but the FPÖ dismissed it officially as a 'humorous lapse'.

The Party is, however, affiliated to the Liberal International whose executive includes respected European politicians like Count Otto Lambsdorff, president of the German FDP. Under pressure from the Liberal International the FPÖ eventually dropped the perpetrator of the Wiesenthal 'joke' from its list of candidates.

Meanwhile another scandal has erupted. The Viennese Burgomaster Zilk's suggestion that Austria grant asylum to fifty thousand Soviet Jews prompted an antisemitic outburst by Raimund Wimmer, leader of the Linz FPÖ. 'To settle 50,000

Jews here is impossible. I got to know the Galician Jews in the war. It would give the Viennese the shock of their lives to have those *Peikelesjuden* (Jews with sidelocks) running around among them.' Challenged about this outburst Wimmer expatiated: 'Ostjuden are totally different. They are incomprehensible to us Mid-Europeans. Dreadful – the way they slaughter animals, without first stunning them!'

To date the Austrian Freedom Party has taken no action against its top functionary in Linz – the town in which Hitler, Eichmann and Kaltenbrunner spent their formative years. □

A Czech that bounces back

Jews in Slovakia used to practise a form of orthodoxy that verged on the occult. Thus when scarlet fever threatened to carry off three-year old Jizchak Goldstücker the *minyán* praying for his life called him Schalom – by which ruse they claimed to have duped the angel of death. This happened in 1916.

When the lad, now called Eduard, grew up he studied literature and became a Communist. In the late 1930s he escaped to England. Back in postwar (and newly Stalinised) Czechoslovakia he turned down Slansky's offer of a high Party post, becoming a diplomat instead. He served as ambassador in Israel when Prague – at

Moscow's behest – supplied the fledgling Jewish state with arms.

By 1952 Eduard Goldstücker was in jail, one of the many Jewish defendants in the Slansky show trial. Unlike some of his fellow accused, he escaped the hangman's noose, presumably because he had never held a high Party position.

Released, he returned to academe. As Professor of Literature at the Charles University he convened the 1963 symposium of Kafka – hitherto a non-person – which Party hard-liners subsequently denounced as having led directly to the Prague Spring. After the Soviet invasion of 1968 he – yet again – escaped to England.

Now, after the Czech 'velvet revolution', Goldstücker, who gave his autobiography the kafkaesque title *Prozesse* (Trials), has been invited back to Prague once more. The invitation came to him from that other great survivor, Alexander Dubček. □

PARADOXYMORON

Dark it was
The moon was bright'ning,
When a car
As quick as lightning,
Slowly round the corner drove;
Inside sitting in deep silence,
People stood in fierce debate,
Whilst a stone dead little rabbit,
On a sandbank had a skate.
Translated by W. E. Abraham

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FAMILY EVENTS

Birth

Anya Polly Nelki-Göpfert, born 5 January, daughter of Michael Göpfert and Julia Nelki of 12 Egremont Promenade, Wallasey, Wirral L44 BGJ. Granddaughter of Erna and Wolfgang Nelki.

Birthday

Clay Walter (Kleeberg) from Boffzen. Congratulations and many happy returns to you on your 85th birthday - 18th August. From your family and many friends.

Deaths

Neustein Susi Neustein died peacefully on 2 August, aged 88. She will be remembered with love and affection by her large family and many friends.

Boas Florence Boas passed away peacefully at home on 13 August, aged 93. Deeply mourned by Edda and all her many friends.

Tischler Ilse Tischler died suddenly on 11 July. She was our loyal helper for many years. A very special lady, she was loved by all who knew her. We will miss her greatly

and remember her always. The AJR Club.

Wolfgang Erna Wolfgang my darling mother passed away peacefully on 12 August, 1990 at the age of 95. She radiated love, kindness and compassion, her inspiration remains. May her dear soul rest in everlasting peace—her loving son Walter.

CLASSIFIED
Miscellaneous

Nadja Wintrop A classmate from the Lichtwarkschule, Hamburg is looking for her. She emigrated to England in 1933. Fred Lauer, Panoramaweg 15, D-7263, Bad Liebenzell, W-Germany.

Visiting solicitor for general legal advice wanted. Box No. 1178.

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Collector of old Jewish and Palestine picture postcards. Single cards purchased. David Pearlman, 36 Asmunds Hill, London NW11. 081-455 2149.

Seeking a reliable business contact in Mexico. Tel. 0727 65588 (Werner Mortimer).

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Obituary

Bruno Kreisky

Bruno Kreisky was the greatest Austrian statesman of the postwar period; some would say the greatest since Metternich. Born in 1911 into a wealthy Jewish family, he studied law and became active in the Socialist movement. Underground activity landed him in jail in the mid-Thirties, and the Anschluss drove him to Sweden.

Postwar he rose through the Austrian diplomatic service, playing a key part in negotiations for the 1955 State Treaty that restored Austrian independence on condition of permanent neutrality. He then became in turn Foreign Minister, Socialist Party leader and Chancellor – which post he held for a record thirteen years. During his 'reign' Austria enjoyed unprecedented prosperity internally and growing influence abroad; Kreisky transformed Vienna from a diplomatic backwater into a vital link between East and West, and even North and South.

But in achieving this success postwar, Austria committed several grievous sins of omission – from the reluctance to invite fugitive Jews back (Kreisky only returned four years after the war), to evading the confrontation with the Nazi past; long before the Waldheim scandal Austrian war crimes trials foundered on the jurors' sympathy for the accused.

Bruno Kreisky was both Austria's alibi for sweeping the past under the carpet, and a promoter of that development. He took former Nazi activists into his cabinet and, when reprimanded by Simon Wiesenthal, engaged in acrimonious debate with the Nazi hunter. He demonstrated his severance of all ties with the Jewish community (which he had formally left as a young Socialist) by cultivating cordial relations with Yasser Arafat and Colonel Gadaffi.

Bruno Kreisky was not only a worthy successor to the Jewish-born Austrian Socialist leaders Viktor Adler and Otto Bauer; he also exemplified the tradition of Austrian-Jewish self-hate pioneered by Otto Weninger and continued by Karl Kraus and Egon Friedell. □

40 Years Ago this Month

Old Acquaintances

Interlude: – Here are two quotations from German newspapers: a man was punished for hiding a copy of the ill-famed 'Jud Suess' picture. He has to pay 100 Marks as a fine. On the other hand, Veit Harlan, who directed this picture, starts working on a new film with his wife Kristina Soederbaum in the leading part.

Kortner's Answer: – People in Munich have the habit to show every visitor from abroad their ill-famed Moehlstrasse, the street populated by D.P.s dealing in the black market. They don't say it, but they do it in order to give a reason for the new Antisemitism. When they led Fritz Kortner through Moehlstrasse, he commented 'Let us keep our black-marketeers, and you keep your murderers, please. . . .'

AJR Information September, 1950.

Search Notices

Channah (Hannerl) Zahler. Born 1/9/1940 in Vienna. Information sought by Cornelia Mamber, 511 Lafayette Blvd, Long Beach, NY 11561, who nursed her until she was sent to Theresienstadt in 1941.

Information is sought about Robert Heyman (a.k.a. Heymann-Dvorak). Born 28/2/1879. A journalist, his last known piece was published in the 'Freie Deutsche Jugend' in 1940. Any information to: Otto R. Braun, Verein der Freunde der Volksliteratur, Leneisgasse 11-13/5/5, A-1140 Wien.

Ruth Spyer-Holstein. Born 1920, Koln-Mulheim. Doctor's daughter, sister Suzannah, school Genovefa Street. Sought by school friend. Contact: 35 Blenheim Gardens, Wallington, Surrey SM6 9PJ.

Gerhard Max Israel Rosenthal. Born approx. 1928 in Mannheim, Germany. Came to UK 1938/9 and lived with a family in Vicarage Road, Coalpit Heath near Bristol. Later moved to South West England and worked in the printing trade.

Any information to Heather Salmon, Administrator, CBF World Jewish Relief, Drayton House, 30 Gordon Street, London WC1H 0AN.

Mala Laaser, married to Moyes. Last known address: 9 Canfield Gardens, London NW6. Any information to: Angela Genger, Mahn-und Gedenkstätte Düsseldorf, Mühlenstrasse 29, 4000 Düsseldorf 1, West Germany.

Did you know Ernst Altmann? Arrived Harwich 2 September 1939 aged 27, accompanying Kindertransporte, Berlin. Originally from Dantzig. Box No. 1179.

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September at the Prisoners Memorial,
Gladstone Park, Dollis Hill, NW2 at 3 p.m.

All are Welcome

Haven near Papa Doc Land

In mid-1938, with the position of German Jews deteriorating daily, an international conference to ease their plight convened at Evian. The Evian Conference proved, alas, long on words and short on deeds. None of the governments involved – with one bizarre exception – showed itself ready genuinely to facilitate the entry of refugees into its own country.

The exception was the Dominican Republic (which shares a border – as well as a history of bloody misrule – with Haiti). The Dominican dictator, Generalissimo Rafael Trujillo, offered to take in thousands of refugees. He did this partly as an image-building exercise *vis-à-vis* the United States, but mainly because he wanted to 'whiten' his black subjects through intermarriage with German and Austrian Jews.

Trujillo originally talked about six-figure immigration. In the event a mere five thousand visas were issued, of which, with war supervening, a derisory 740 got taken up. The fortunate few who reached the Caribbean island encountered virtual jungle ameliorated by a balmy climate. They knuckled down, cleared the jungle, set up dairy farming and established a small town along the coast.

The township of Sosua exists to this day, when a nearby airport makes it a potential growth point of the Dominican tourist industry. There is little to indicate

Sosua's origins other than some 'exotic' street names – *calle Dr Robitschek*, *calle David Stern* – and an inconspicuous little synagogue. Though the latter lacks a rabbi it is still in use, some of the original settlers having stayed on postwar when the great majority proceeded elsewhere.

This residue comprises about twenty-five families. They continue to run dairy farms as well as the thriving cheese and sausage factories set up in the 1940s on co-operative lines. This summer they plan to play hosts to ex-Sosuanos and their families who will be returning to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the town. The centre-piece of their celebrations will be the opening of a museum chronicling the early days of a unique community – unique also in the sense that it owed its existence to the race mania not merely of one, but of *two* dictators. □ R.G.

Monumental argument

The Vienna Monument to the Victims of Fascism, sculpted by Alfred Hrdlicka, generated controversy from the moment of its inception. After its unveiling in 1988 the bronze figure of a Jew kneeling to scrub the pavement had not only had paint thrown at it, but was urinated upon by countless dogs while their owners stood by. Now the sculpture has been embedded in bronze barbed wire. □

Plaque – but no claque – for Werfel

The centenary of Franz Werfel's birth was marked by two events in Vienna, where the Prague-born author had spent his most productive years. A memorial plaque was unveiled in the presence of a personal representative of the Prime Minister of the Armenian Soviet Republic. (Werfel's *Forty Days of Musa Dagh* dealt with Turkish genocide of the Armenians during the Great War.)

There was also an international symposium on the writer's work at which, however, criticism outweighed acclaim. Participants cited adverse comments by some of Werfel's contemporaries, such as Robert Musil's 'I have nothing to say to a world in which Werfel finds interpreters', and Ernst Bloch's 'After the War Werfel swapped his abstract pacifism for a toy trumpet'; Martin Esslin, former Head of BBC drama, described Werfel's plays as 'kitschig Burgtheater ham on the level of school broadcasts'.

Poison, literal and metaphorical

I. G. Farben, who manufactured the Zyklon B gas used in the gas chambers, and ran their own slave labour operation on the Auschwitz complex, were broken up after the war on Allied orders. A holding company with assets for compensating Jewish slave workers continued a shadowy existence, however. The shadow looks like acquiring a substance now that West German firms can reclaim property nationalised in the DDR. This prospect has boosted Farben shares, and attracted speculative interest on the part of the City of London. By a macabre irony the leading City firm involved is linked to S. G. Warburg, the merchant bank established by German-Jewish refugees. □

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