

AJR Information

Volume XLVII No. 5
May 1992

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Don't miss . . .

Annual Report p8

**Spotlight on
Social Services**

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**Disquiet at a
Western front**

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Purblind justice

Though a pillar of European civilisation, France has often perpetrated notorious miscarriages of justice. She did so in Voltaire's day, and again at the time of Dreyfus. The Paris Court of Appeal's acquittal of Nazi collaborator Paul Touvier – charged with murdering Jewish hostages – completes a sad record.

One finds it difficult to identify the culprits: morally blind judges, manipulative Catholics, or a shadowy old boys' network inside the French Establishment?

It is to be hoped that the resultant sense of outrage, among government and public alike, will effect a reversal of the court's decision. □

A ballot-proof future?

Reflections on three elections

Until the collapse of Soviet power, Russian Jews found life hard, but predictable. They were discriminated against, but on ideological – anti-religious or anti-Zionist – rather than racist grounds. For them the advent of democracy spelt hazardous uncertainty. With antisemitism bubbling up from the gutter came *The Protocols* at news-vendors' kiosks, arson attacks and threats of pogroms.

Democracy in the West involves no comparable hazards. Even so, the French regional elections and the American primaries sounded danger signals. In France Le Pen's advance may have stalled, but he polled nearly as well as the Liberal Democrats in this country. In the United States Patrick Buchanan garnered comparable support with his explicitly xenophobic and antisemitic American Firstism.

As regards the twin cradles of Nazism, Germany and Austria, the outlook is possibly even more alarming. More and more Austrians respond to Jörg Haider's tub-thumping; in Germany Franz Schönhuber and Gerhard Frey are strutting, jackbooted, on the regional political stage. Although the Federal Republic has known previous surges of neo-Nazism the fact that Schönhuber polled strongly in the booming high-tec Land Baden-Württemberg is an ominous sign.

All this points up our good fortune in being British citizens. Here neither the standing of the community nor relations with Israel figured as issues in the election. We could, if so disposed, watch the political battle as a spectator sport, quite unconcerned – *quae* Jews – about its outcome.

That does not mean, however, that our legislators harbour no anti-Jewish or (antisemitically tinged) anti-Israeli sentiments. The new House of Commons may, happily, no longer include the Tories Alan Clark, Sir John Stokes and Ivan Stanbrook, but George Galloway and Andrew Faulds still (dis)grace the Labour benches. As, incidentally, does Ken Livingstone whose views on the Middle East so impressed the Muslim Party that they did not field a candidate in Brent. To balance the picture senior Conservatives include David Mellor, master of the anti-Israeli photo opportunity.

As for our homegrown National Front they were virtually invisible during the election. This is a tribute both to the British electorate, and the British non-PR electoral system.

But let us guard against complacency. A stagnant economy breeds social tensions. Other likely 'growth points' for antisemitism – financial shenanigans, the image of Israel – also give cause for concern.

One potential point of inter-communal conflict has meanwhile been eliminated by Archbishop Carey's decision not to target Jews in the Church's 'decade of Evangelism'. The Primate's stance, taken in conjunction with Cardinal Lecoutrey's appeal to Catholic voters not to let Le Pen win by default, gives substance to (sometimes platitudinous) expressions of Christian-Jewish friendship.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will be held on

Thursday 11 June 1992, 7.30 p.m.

at

15 CLEVE ROAD, LONDON NW6

AGENDA

Annual Report 1991

Hon. Treasurer's Report

Discussion

Election of Executive Committee

Followed by a talk by **Richard Grunberger**
entitled "In My Own Write"

Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

Action against amnesia II

As reported in our March issue the late Dr Herbert Samuel of Blackburn, an AJR member, donated his father's old house in Rostock to a locally constituted Foundation dedicated to spiritual *Wiedergutmachung*. Thanks to the Foundation's efforts the Max Samuel Haus, Rostock, has become one of the leading centres on the territory of the former DDR for the dissemination of knowledge about the German-Jewish past. It hosts lectures, seminars and commemorative meetings, organises youth exchanges with Israel, runs an advice service for Soviet-Jewish immigrants and sometimes even provides emergency accommodation for the latter. □

Black Streicher relegated

City College, New York, has dismissed Dr Leonard Jeffries, who alleges that Jews had financed the slave trade and used Hollywood films to create a negative image of blacks, as head of its African Studies department. The controversial academic, who complained of a 'media lynching', however, still retains a salaried teaching post.

In a related development a 28-year old New Yorker has been charged with instigating last year's anti-Chasid riots. □



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Profile

Poet of internal exile



Lotte Kramer

Peterborough, with its cluster of industrial suburbs, is hardly a cathedral city from the pages of Trollope. Its environs, nonetheless, still accommodate tranquil villages set among rolling woodlands.

Lotte Kramer lives in one such village – which is perhaps appropriate for a poet whose voice never sounds strident. Almost as appropriately, she comes from Mainz, birthplace of printing, having arrived in England at 15 without her parents. Her angel of mercy was a Jewish teacher at Mainz with contacts to English Quakers.

Fräulein Kohn brought five of her pupils to a house in Hertfordshire where they presently had to earn their keep. Lotte started work in a laundry. There she soon suffered a minor trauma: a fellow worker who had lost her husband at Dunkirk rounded on her as a 'bloody German'.

Happier times followed. Through Fräulein Kohn she again met Fritz Kramer, a somewhat older ex-schoolmate from Mainz. Married in 1943, Lotte continued to work in a laundry. Their son, born after the war, is now a successful barrister. Lotte's husband likewise pursued a successful career in engineering.

In 1968 his job took him to Peterborough. For Lotte the move proved a watershed. She arrived in a community for whom the church provided the focus of social life. With Fritz professionally pre-occupied, their son at Oxford, and neighbours who, though helpful, remained dis-

tant, she felt acutely isolated. Unhappiness became the motive force behind her poetry – writing which seemed an audacious undertaking for someone who had not had a single formal English lesson in her life.

Recollected pain

Writing verse was in the first instance Lotte's attempt to come to terms with the unsayable: the traumas of growing up in Nazi Germany, separation from parents, uprooting and orphaning. Recollected pain is distilled into verse of understated, yet pervasive, melancholy.

*Often, when I leave home/I think of you/
How you'd have shut the door/That last time/
They fetched you out at dawn...
Maybe you covered chairs/The settee from
the glare/Of light and sun/Turned off the
water, gas...*

Lotte is now an established poet with five volumes of verse published in limited editions. Of late she has expanded her range to include responses to the Cambridgeshire landscape, nature in general, art and the minutiae of daily life. She gives readings before Womens Institutes, schools and literary groups. She has also read at Inter-Faith services at Peterborough Cathedral – another drastic departure from Trollope's *Barchester Chronicles*. □ R.G.

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Menachem Begin – a personal view

Lord Jakobovits regards him as 'the greatest of Israel's Prime Ministers – and certainly the most intensely Jewish'. I can understand why the former Chief Rabbi, who is quite willing to criticise the policies of Likud governments, feels this way.

Begin was born on 16 August 1913 in Brest Litovsk and grew up in an antisemitic environment. Like many others he started on the extreme left, but soon discovered that liberal explanations do not persuade antisemites to stop hating Jews. The turning point in his life came in 1929 when he met Jabotinski who convinced him that Jews must defend themselves, if necessary with weapons, if they wanted respect. When, in 1939, the Nazis invaded Poland Begin stayed with members of Betar in Vilna and refused to flee. As a result of the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact this part of Poland came under Soviet rule and he found himself in a labour camp as a subversive. After his release, he joined General Anders' Polish army and succeeded in reaching Palestine, where he left the Polish Army and went underground, forming the Irgun Zwai Leumi in 1943.

The death of his parents and elder brother in the Holocaust intensified his commitment to fight for Jewish rights. The idea that Jews could form a credible army was new at the time. It was a revelation to me when I joined the Jewish Brigade Group in 1944 as a volunteer. For the first time I found Jews who would meet the remark 'dirty Jew' with the cry 'my face is clean, I washed this morning', and a punch on the nose. Begin's fight against the British can be understood in those terms. When he was faced with an adamant and determined Ernest Bevin, who

Canvassing residents



Marlene Rolfe (far right) and Amelia Goldsmith (far left) with some members of the Clara Nehab Art Group.
Photo: Newman.

On a blustery March day over a 100 people visited Clara Nehab House in North Finchley to attend a remarkable exhibition of paintings. Although widely varied in nature – acrylics, watercolours, collages and charcoal drawings – all had one thing in common; they were all produced by residents of Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA) homes. The average age of these budding artists is 78.

The majority of these people have never painted before, others have not put brush to

canvas for over 20 years.

Art groups are now a feature in all OSHA communities. They are organised by Marlene Rolfe, the painter, in conjunction with Amelia Goldsmith, an OSHA occupational therapist.

The Clara Nehab House exhibition was deemed a success by all who attended and enjoyed the hospitality on offer as well as the pictures. Rosemary Scrutton, the Head of Home, assures us that this will not be a 'one-off' excursion into the art world.

□ M.N.

wished to force the survivors of the death camps to live with their murderous neighbours and used military force to keep them out of Palestine, he blew up British key installations. When the British security forces retaliated by torturing and executing members of the Irgun, he hanged two unfortunate British sergeants. The British, like the rest of the world, could not understand such behaviour. They had never met Jews who were willing to fight and die for their rights. When he warned them that bombs had been placed in the King David Hotel, the British HQ in Jerusalem, and told them to evacuate it, they searched the premises, found nothing and treated the warning as a hoax call. The hotel was blown up resulting in many British, Jewish and Arab deaths.

In 1981 he blew up the atomic reactor in Iraq with the comment that he would not allow anyone to prepare to murder Jews. His action was condemned by the whole world, including many Jews. However, it has become clear since then that if the Iraqi reactor had been operational in 1990, the U.N. could not have defeated Saddam

Hussain so easily.

The obituary writers consider the Peace Treaty with Egypt of 1979, which earned him the Nobel Peace Prize, Begin's main achievement. To me, his example is that of an Israeli Jew fighting, and if necessary, dying for Jewish rights. Never again will racists be able to claim that they murdered defenceless Jews. His message is that Jews should and must defend themselves in future. I am not, and never have been a member of Betar or Herut, but thank Israel and Begin for sending this signal to the world (and to diaspora Jews who think otherwise).

□ Henry Toch

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Reviews

The decimated generation

Debórah Dwork *CHILDREN WITH A STAR: JEWISH YOUTH IN NAZI EUROPE*. Yale University Press, 1991. 354 pp. £16.95

One hundred and eighty thousand Jewish children survived the war in Europe; one and a half million died. This is the sombre balance sheet of Nazi crimes against the young who, either actually or metaphorically, wore the yellow star of helplessness in Hitler's Reich and its dependencies. It cannot have been easy for the author of this book to have researched so harrowing a subject, even if it is accepted that, as she makes clear, her object was not to investigate the processes of extermination but the way these children lived – in secret, in ghettos or in camps. And so we have a history of their existence, seen from their own perspective, and collected and collated from primary sources: oral histories, contemporary diaries, journals, archives. And through her pen the tragic tale of innocence defiled unfolds and takes us from a world still recognisable, through one 'without precedent and without parallel' into a world no longer recognisable, that of the final phase of total degradation and of death from starvation, sickness, injury or poison gas.

In the beginning, many Jewish children lived at home, in relatively ordered circumstances. As yet, their doom was but a shadow on the wall; exclusion from the education system, and growing social ostracism were blows, but not unbearable. After

November 1938, gradualism gave place to a more accelerated process. Soon German armies flooded across Europe and Jewish children went into hiding. There were, it is now clear, considerably more efforts made, organised as well as spontaneous, to rescue Jewish children than has so far been assumed. As a result, for a short while at least, until betrayal or deportation put an end to it, some of these children had a relatively normal period of growing up in spite of all the difficulties. Sometimes the safety of a child in hiding was enhanced by glossing over any vestiges of a Jewish identity; and sometimes, too, the children were converted to the Christian faith of those who harboured them.

In a bizarre way, children taken to the ghettos were also able to adapt themselves to the conditions forced upon them. In Theresienstadt, for instance, a semblance of normality was cynically fostered by the perpetrators of this monstrous farce. But in the memory of survivors it is not their open or surreptitious schooling, nor the performance for their 'entertainment' of Mozart's *Bastien et Bastienne* which stand out, but quite simply being kept on the most basic of starvation rations. The recollections of the victims of this 'urban incarceration', most grippingly retold, portray the plight of the children driven to the limits of endurance in Lodz and Radom, Kovno, Debrecen and Warsaw.

Worse still was, of course, to come: the camps of slavery and extermination. 'Children who passed through the portals of Auschwitz and survived the selection became adult slaves in one or another part of the complex' where they 'eked out an existence each day' until they, too, died from starvation or disease or in the ovens.

This book is a courageous study of one aspect of the social history of our time. It is a unique and vital contribution to the documentation of the Holocaust. The author's high standards of research and meticulous quest for objectivity are most commendable. But no such obligation is imposed upon the reader. The picture which remains long after the final page has been reached is not the cover photograph of two wanly smiling children with a star, nor any of the other illustrations, but of a crying bundle in a knapsack and of a bayonet prepared to strike. And so we, too, ask ourselves the question once again: not where was our God at Auschwitz, but where were our fellow-men?

□ David Maier

Beating the tattoo

David Cesarani, *JUSTICE DELAYED*, Heinemann, 1992, £17.50

Remnants of the legions of non-German assistants in Nazi genocide are scattered worldwide, with some undoubtedly resident in the United Kingdom. Their countries of origin have undergone enormous changes from Nazi occupation via Soviet rule to democracy.

Dr Cesarani, former researcher for the All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group, puts before the public the strands that make up the present situation.

Among those who fled before the advancing Red Army in 1944–5 were some who, for good reasons or bad, had served the Germans. The West, fearful of Soviet might, needed all the allies it could get. It also needed labour for its depleted peace-time industries. The pool was there, to be drawn on, with the past of individuals overlooked.

This version of events is only partly correct. The postwar U.S. and British governments positively favoured fugitives from the Baltic, the Ukraine and Byelorussia, many of whom had served in the SS – with tattoos to prove it. The latter were, nonetheless, admitted to these shores under the concept of 'my new enemy's enemy is my new friend'.

The British connection in all this only became public knowledge – through the efforts of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Institute – in the late Eighties. War Crimes Bill investigations likely to lead to court proceedings are now in progress. Justice delayed indeed!

□ John Rossall

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PETER C. RICKENBACK

Reductio ad absurdum

Patrick Seale, *ABU NIDAL: A GUN FOR HIRE*, Hutchinson, 1992, £16.99

At times this book reads like a parody of *Kings and Chronicles* wherein, after Judah and Israel had separated, Zimri slew Elah, and seven days later Omri slew Zimri (in a manner of speaking), all for control of the northern kingdom. In Patrick Seale's account this kind of thing is carried out by Palestinian Arabs. 'The Middle East never changes', a prejudiced reader may say.

All over the Arab world, and particularly in Tunisia, where Yasser Arafat has his H.Q. nowadays, Palestinians try, and often manage, to assassinate each other. And nearly always it is Abu...slew Abu... and then, a few weeks later, Abu One himself gets slain by Abu Three. It is striking how many Abus there are in the killing business. The reason: these are *noms de guerre*. The bloodiest of those killers, the most hostile to Israel and Jewry the world over, is Abu Nidal.

And what is this unquenchable champion of the Palestinians? Why, he is an agent of Israeli Intelligence. That is Patrick Seale's main thesis, and he has worked hard to make it stand up. Let me say that I remain unconvinced by his evidence, much of it based on assertions by Abu Nyad, Arafat's ex-chief of Intelligence, who frequently quotes Syrian sources. One of the key arguments is that Abu Nidal has mostly killed 'moderate' Arabs rather than Jews. This is contradicted by the fact that his 'handwriting' has been discerned in some horrible massacres of air travellers and other innocent victims.

Interestingly enough Mr Seale has a Syrian wife and is the author of a biography of President Assad. Avowing these matters in his preface, Seale claims that he is nonetheless impartial.

Certainly he never shows a trace of what might be construed as antisemitism. For all the illogical twists in the main argument, his style and presentation are of a high order. Alas, this may the more easily deceive the uninformed and confirm the phobia of Israelophobes.

□ John Rossall

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A woman with two identities

Rare indeed is the individual who leads two totally different lives within one lifetime. One who could have claimed that distinction, but - for good reason - kept it secret, was Bertha Pappenheim. It was not for many years after her death that the world became aware of Bertha's earlier incarnation as 'Anna O'. And thereby hangs a tale.

Bertha Pappenheim was born in Vienna in 1859, one of four children of an orthodox grain merchant and a banker's daughter. The moneyed background did not make for happiness. Two of the children died, the parents' arranged marriage was loveless, and Bertha resented the privileges conferred on her brother. While he was allowed to go on from *Gymnasium* to university, her linguistic and literary gifts counted for nothing, and she had to finish school at 16. Hereafter she spent her time in charitable and ladylike pursuits. (The latter, surprisingly - in view of her father's orthodox Judaism - included horse-riding in the Prater.) After a few years Bertha found her arid existence - summed up in the poem *Love did not come to me/Who live like a plant/In a cellar dark and dank* - so unbearable that she suffered a physical and emotional collapse. She became partly paralysed and had hallucinations of her hair turning into snakes.

Dr Josef Breuer, who was called in, discovered the trigger for this collapse: Bertha's stint as night nurse to her pleurisy-afflicted father, i.e. the first-ever physical closeness to the one member of her family she loved. After his death Bertha had outbursts of hate against the mother and brother; meanwhile she focused her affection on Dr Breuer. When the latter, after 18 months of daily visits to the patient, declared the treatment at an end she developed hysterical labour pains and announced she was bearing his child.

It required several more years, spent partly in clinics, for the Bertha Pappenheim that the world was to know as a pioneer of Jewish feminism to emerge from the chrysalis of 'Anna O'.

Jüdische Frauenbund

In 1904 she founded the Jüdische Frauenbund. Three years later she set up a home for the rehabilitation - an advanced idea at the time - of 'fallen' women and single mothers. The finance for this project came partly from her own purse, partly from

wealthy relatives. She travelled extensively in Eastern Europe to investigate and expose the Jewish-organised 'white slave trade' to South America.

Believing that Jewish women needed to draw sustenance from the Judaic tradition she translated a women's bible and the memoirs of her ancestor Glückel von Hameln into German. She was thus an opponent of assimilation, without, however, espousing Zionism. When, after 1933, some German-Jewish parents sent their children to Palestine she accused them of a lack of family feeling.

Bertha Pappenheim's death, in Frankfurt, in 1936, could be described as opportune. Had she lived a little longer she would have endured the trauma of seeing her own words in impassioned condemnation of Jewish 'traders in human flesh' reprinted verbatim by *Der Stürmer*.

This was the pitiful end of Bertha Pappenheim. 'Anna O', however, lives forever - thanks to Dr Josef Breuer and his collaborator Dr Sigmund Freud. If Freudian case studies like that of the 'wolf-man' and the 'rat-man' formed building blocks of the edifice of psychoanalysis, the 'story of Anna' was its very foundation stone. Breuer and Freud, incidentally, took the secret of 'Anna's' identity to the grave with them. It was only in 1953 that Freud's English biographer, Ernest Jones named her as Bertha Pappenheim.

□ R.G.

ANGLO-JEWISH ASSOCIATION PROGRAMME 1992

LECTURES:

'PRESERVING OUR ENVIRONMENT FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY'

Dr MAYER HILLMAN, SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW, POLICY STUDIES INSTITUTE

WEDNESDAY 20th MAY, 6.45 p.m.*

ATHENAEUM CLUB, 107 PALL MALL, LONDON SW1

* To be preceded by an AJA Council Meeting at 5.30 p.m.

'THE MARGINS OF BELONGING - WHAT IS LEFT OF JUDAISM?'

RABBI SIDNEY BRICHTO

WEDNESDAY 11th NOVEMBER, 6.30 p.m.

ATHENAEUM CLUB, 107 PALL MALL, LONDON SW1

SOCIAL EVENTS

SUNDAY 5th APRIL - A.M.; ANTIQUE EXHIBITION, HOLLAND PARK

SUNDAY 5th JULY - P.M.; GARDEN PARTY

Details to follow

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1992 - WEDNESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

WOBURN HOUSE (5TH FLOOR), UPPER WOBURN PLACE, LONDON WC1H 0EP. TELEPHONE: 071 387 5937



Letters to the Editor

DIE WESSELY

Sir – SB's tribute to Paula Wessely in the March issue omits her 'moving' performance in *Heimkehr*, a product of Dr Goebbels, Reichsfilmkammer made in 1941 in order to justify the German invasion of Poland. In it Wessely plays a young teacher, member of a German minority in Poland on the eve of the German invasion. Dr Goebbels was highly satisfied with the film, and no wonder: in it Wessely's fiancée – a Goebbels look-alike – is kicked to death by Poles for refusing to get up when the Polish national anthem is played, a gentle Gretchen is beaten to death for wearing a swastika around her neck and Wessely's father is blinded by vindictive Poles. The atrocities Germans visited on other peoples are in this film suffered by decent Germans at the hands of savage Poles. For light relief, Wessely bestows some bantering admonitions on a cringing, wheedling, filthy Jewish pedlar.

As someone who lived in Nazi Germany, and lost many people close to me in Nazi camps and gas chambers, I cannot forgive Wessely for taking part in this film.

Tanza Road
London NW3
Carla M. Wartenberg

ODE TO JOY

Sir – Satisfactory translations can be found in all scores of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony op. 125, which contain the text of the choral finale in German as well as in English. The masterly translation of the Ode by Natalia Macfarren, published by Novello & Co., London, is printed in the Philharmonia score of the 'Ninth', and is also reproduced in the second volume of D. F. Tovey's monumental work *Essays in Musical Analysis* which is available in most music libraries.

Corryham Road
London NW11
Albert Meyer

GUILT BY DISSOCIATION

Sir – The degree of heroism required to oppose a dictator's objective depends on the degree of fanaticism with which he pursues it. I think Hitler was more fanatical about murdering Jews than he was about murdering the impaired. Hence it needed a greater measure of heroism to oppose it. If the 'German people' had 'broadly approved of what Hitler did', there would have been no

need for Gestapo, SS, SD and SA or concentration camps near most German cities.

People, not only Germans, are closer to their relatives than to their neighbours, or at least feel they ought to be. It may be regrettable, but it is human. Herr Steffen Reiche is wrong. The comparison is not valid either.

Aberdare Gardens
London NW6
Ezra Jurmann

CORRECTION

Sir – The picture on the cover of the March issue is captioned 'Early German Zionist poster circa 1900'.

In fact it is a certificate issued to a family Davidsohn for a donation for tree-planting in memory of Ludwig Davidsohn. This is perhaps not an important point, except it shows that even at that time people contributed towards the re-afforestation of Palestine (as it then was).

Peppard Road
Reading, Berks
L. Klein

RESEARCH PROJECT

Sir – I am writing a book on Jewish women who attended German-speaking universities in Central Europe before the Nazi era. I am interested in learning as much as I can about their lives, including their childhood, education, family and career, as well as their Jewish identity and political activities, both in Europe and in emigration. If you are a woman who attended university in Germany, Austria, Switzerland or Prague before World War II, if you are the child of such a woman or if you have information concerning Jewish university women and are willing to be interviewed and/or complete a written questionnaire, I would very much appreciate hearing from you. All suggestions which will help me find out more about this remarkable generation of Jewish women will be welcomed! Please contact me at my home address: 347 Michael Road, Yardley, PA 19067 U.S.A.

Department of History
Temple University
Professor Harriet Freidenreich

BRICKBAT

Sir – Your article in the March issue comparing the electoral scene in this country with that of France is astonishing. Considering your evident familiarity with history one would have thought you would

acknowledge what pitfalls overly Jewish participation in national power struggles constitute – or do you feel this subject deserves to be treated with levity?

Harcourt Drive
Earley, Reading
Arnold Rosenstrauch

OVERSEAS BOUQUETS

Sirs – How can I thank you enough for looking after my late mother. I know that she appreciated you very much and always spoke very fondly of you. Gratefully yours,
U.S.A. D.D.

Sirs – To begin with allow me to say that you are wonderful!

Having become used to the levels of efficiency in this country (Zimbabwe) I was surprised at your immediate reaction to my request on behalf of my sister. Your findings are such that I can put my mind at rest.

Believe me, it is nice to know that there is help when it is needed.

St Luke's Ave.,
Bulawayo
Mrs G. Hope

40 Years Ago this Month

JEWISH DRAMA ON GERMAN STAGE

Under the auspices of the Society for Christian-Jewish Co-operation, a Week of Brotherhood was observed throughout Western Germany recently. As part of the arrangements for that week there was performed in Munich a most impressive one-act play written by a 20-year-old Emmanuel Meissinger, a pupil at Mme. v. Zerboni's Drama School in Gauting, which also performed the play. It is called 'The Opportunity' ('Die Chance'), and deals with the return of Gelberg, a Jewish refugee, to his native Czechoslovakia in 1945. Gelberg has an influential position on the newly set up People's Committee. His little boy Aaron, who had died in a concentration camp, had been friendly with the small daughter of a man who first failed to shelter Gelberg; who had then, after Gelberg had fled, co-operated with the Nazis; and who was now in trouble with the People's Committee. Gelberg is torn between letting justice take its course and protecting the little girl who had been so attached to his Aaron. After an agonising inner conflict, Gelberg chooses the latter course. One leaves the play with the feeling that the greatest hope for future understanding must be placed in the young.

Emmanuel Meissinger, who is not himself a Jew, plays the part of Gelberg with an insight, observation and delicacy astonishing in so young a man. The play and the performance fully deserved the applause of the packed audience who saw it.

R.K.B.

AJR Information May 1952.

A Righteous Gentile

My mother's family came from Przemysl (pronounced Pshehmysh) a fortress in Galicia, which was Austrian until the end of the First World War. When the Russians defeated the Imperial army on the frontier in 1914 and began to besiege the town, my people fled to Vienna. Grandmother with five daughters, my mother among them and two young sons came on a refugee train, grandfather and their second son walked all the way. Their eldest son was at the front.

My grandfather had owned a small bakery in Przemysl and he and my uncle baked for Jewish communities on the way whenever they could. Crossing the lines of some Austrian troops dug in on top of the Carpathians to stop the Russians from marching to Vienna, they were arrested and threatened with execution as spies. Fortunately, Grandfather who had himself served in the Emperor's army a generation earlier, was able to show his discharge papers. Not only did this earn their freedom, but also a smart salute from their captors. Grandfather had been a corporal, they were privates!

In Vienna they joined the crowds of refugees from the East and depended on charity and handouts to survive. They, two adults and eight children, were cramped into one room. Grandfather had the weary task of queuing for bread. Day after day he trudged to the distribution point which was

at a bakery guarded and strictly controlled by police. The pain and the humiliation of it eventually got the better of him. Being an emotional Jew he wept loud and bitterly.

A kindly Viennese policeman – there were one or two about – asked him why he was crying. Grandfather replied that he was a baker and could be baking bread for these people instead of having to beg for it himself. The policeman knew of a little bakery for sale and my grandfather was interested, but he had no money. The policeman offered to lend him his savings to buy it. He was willing to trust my grandfather and so the deal was struck.

Grandfather made good. He worked all the hours God sent and became one of the biggest Jewish bakers in Vienna. He repaid the policeman every penny with interest and the ill-matched pair, a Viennese policeman and a Galician Jew became friends.

Nazi dragnet

Years later, shortly after the Anschluss when Nazi Germany incorporated an all too willing Austria into the Reich, my grandfather happened to be out for a stroll in the Prater amusement park. Unfortunately, a Nazi dragnet was out on that day to catch all the Jews there and Grandfather was arrested together with many others. They were marched off through the adjoining Jewish district and to prison, shuffling

along pathetically, mocked and goaded all the way.

I was a schoolboy at the time and like most other Jewish children I enjoyed an enforced holiday while a transfer from our Austrian schools to the appropriate *Juden-schulen* was being arranged. I was walking aimlessly through the Jewish district when I saw that sorry sight from a side street and was horrified to find my grandfather leading the procession. He was a tall man and walked proudly erect, carrying a placard they had given him as if it were the Scrolls of the Law.

I rushed back to his place to tell my aunts, who were looking after him since Grandmother had died. They telephoned Grandfather's friend in the police at once. He was a senior inspector by then and not all that far off retirement. However, he immediately went to the prison where these Jews were held, demanded my grandfather's release and simply walked out with him.

Grandfather's policeman friend had to retire prematurely, but he got his pension and was otherwise unmolested.

My Grandfather kept a low profile and eventually left for America. He lived to the ripe old age of 99, surrounded by his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren; it was his friend the Righteous Gentile who helped to bring this about.

□ Manfred Landau

A Breton from near Braunau

Like Napoleon the Corsican, Stalin the Georgian, and even Stilicho the Vandal, who for a while shored up the Roman Empire, Jean-Marie le Pen is a man from the periphery. He is a Breton, descended from the country people who bloodily resisted the benefits, as well as the excesses, of the French Revolution.

Now in his sixties he is trying to draw a veil over a thuggish past. After years of involvement in extreme Right-wing politics he feels that his time has come.

In France there are specific circumstances why this might be so. The parties on the Right cannot command a majority to oust the Socialists who are believed to be on the way out. In the wing stands Le Pen. He can give the Conservatives their majority; the noises their leaders make suggest a common anti-immigration platform. This is alarming the Jews. Le Pen makes soothing noises. He plays down his anti-semitic remarks and dresses them up as just another kind of historical revisionism ('the Holocaust is a

fringe event'). He does not openly preach racialism now, just the traditional xenophobia which has plagued France from the Crusades to the Dreyfus affair.

Le Pen is making his bid in the South of France where he has all but succeeded in uniting Jews and Arabs. The regional Rabbi, Mardoche Bensoussan, has justified taking up political attitudes 'from the pulpit'. A cancer specialist, Professor Leon Schwarzenberg, is trying to unify the disparate anti-Fascist forces and seems to be making progress at the grass-roots. His diffident approach is counterpointed by Bernard Tapie, Marseilles football supremo, a folk hero who does not mince words; he calls le Pen a *salaud* (something like 'bastard').

M. Tapie is young, and youth listens to him; the Jewish professor is more le Pen's contemporary but, judging by his audience, younger people also heed his reasoned arguments. What is required, however, is for the Conservative leaders, Jacques Chirac and Giscard d'Estaing, to curb their ambitions lest they play Papen and Hindenburg to le Pen's Hitler.

□ John Rossall

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Annual Report 1991

During the year 1991 the Association passed the milestone of the 50th Anniversary of its foundation. For the members of a voluntary society such as ours, whose main purposes at the outset differed considerably from its current activities, this was a source of great pride: it demonstrated our ability to retain a substantial membership over many years and to adjust to its constantly changing needs.

The Association presented special certificates to no fewer than forty members whose affiliation dates back to our origin. A special 32 page issue of *AJR Information* in July reviewed our activities over these many years and contained numerous congratulatory messages from public figures.

The main celebration of the event was the Golden Jubilee dinner on 15 October, attended by 150 members and guests. There was a genuine birthday party atmosphere. Sir Claus Moser was the guest of honour. The Austrian Ambassador and diplomatic representatives from the German and Israeli Embassies were also present.

In a witty and enjoyable address Sir Claus Moser proposed the health of the AJR, to which the Chairman responded. Both speakers underlined the contribution made by refugees from Nazi oppression to this country in the most varied spheres and called on members of our community not to hide their origin but rather to proclaim it with pride.

Social Services

During 1991 Mrs Agi Alexander was appointed Head of Social Services. The year was dominated by greatly enhanced activity in line with the growing number of clients needing help.

The drop-in advice sessions held at the Day Centre and Hannah Karminski House continued to prove a great success. A wide range of advice was given on such matters as British and foreign pensions, insurance claims, debt problems – and the filling in of the necessary forms. We helped by taking up leasehold and rent queries with landlords, and even dealt with immigration problems!

We were particularly successful in a number of cases in persuading the DSS to continue paying income support to a client as well as obtaining a large sum in arrears on behalf of another. We also arranged for an ex-gratia payment in an accident insurance claim after the client concerned had been advised that she had no chance of pursuing the matter through the courts.

The attendance of members of our social work team at various training courses keeps them abreast of all areas of interest to our members and ensures that all our services remain up-to-date.

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

The success of all our activities depends largely on the dedication and devotion of both staff and volunteers, led by Mrs Sylvia Matus and Mrs Renee Lee. The Day Centre is an outstanding example of both working happily side by side. Visitors to Cleve Road continue to enjoy a wide and varied programme of activities and entertainment whilst meeting friends old and new and enjoying the excellent food provided by the new caterers. Its popularity has prompted plans for an extension of opening hours.

The Day Centre programme and outings are available to all our members irrespective of their ability to pay, but the increased need for transport and other services can only be met by the substantial financial contribution made by the AJR Charitable Trust.

Volunteers

The need for volunteer helpers is as great as ever. Many of our clients live on their own and look forward to the regular visits of their particular 'friend'. The forthcoming extension of Day Centre hours has resulted in an urgent need for more volunteers to help with a variety of other tasks.

Residential Care

During 1991 the Otto Schiff Housing Association decided to take over responsibility for the recruitment and pre-admission work of the Homes, formerly undertaken by the AJR. For a few months during the summer we were not involved in the admissions procedure, but towards the end of the year a new understanding was reached and Mrs Finestone, as Head of AJR Homes Department, is again working closely with OSHA staff to provide a full admissions service, whilst social welfare services to present and prospective residents are being intensified.

Sheltered Accommodation

The eight flats at 15 Cleve Road have remained occupied during 1991. We continue to handle applications for the flatlets at Eleanor Rathbone House and Mrs Katia Gould is compiling a waiting list for flats now being built as part of the redevelopment of Otto Schiff House, administered by the Otto Schiff Housing Association.

AJR Club

The Club has continued to meet at Cleve Road throughout the year under review and its members have enjoyed the activities arranged by Mrs Baban and Mrs Horwell.

AJR Information

The journal continues to provide stimulating and informative articles under the editorship of Richard Grunberger and generates lively correspondence and debate amongst readers. It also contains regular reports on all aspects of the Association's work, which it is hoped to extend in future issues.

The planning, layout and gathering of information is handled by Maurice Newman as Publications and Publicity Manager. The deliberations of the Editorial Advisory Committee, which meets regularly, have proved helpful to the Editorial Department.

Self Aid

There has been a significant increase in the community of members who have difficulty in making ends meet. Through the generosity of the AJR Charitable Trust and other sources we have been able to meet the many demands made upon us and substantially relieve the suffering of those involved. Our annual charity concert was held on 10 November. As always it was enjoyed by our audience who listened on this occasion to the music of Mozart, Brahms and Smetana.

For more than 40 years these concerts have provided pleasant musical entertainment and a happy social atmosphere, whilst still providing much needed funds for our community. The costs now involved in staging the event have caused us to consider its future. The next concert has already been booked for 8 November 1992 and we look to our members and friends to give their full and enthusiastic support, so that it shall amply fulfil its twin functions of social event and worthwhile charitable contribution.

AJR Residential Care Appeal

The general economic climate prevalent during 1991 inevitably affected our fund-raising efforts. However, sufficient was raised to allow the AJR Charitable Trust to make a very substantial grant to the Otto Schiff Housing Association towards the completion of the first three stages of their five year plan. This included the building of Balint House, opened early in 1991, and the

re-development of Otto Schiff House, now in the course of conversion.

The Otto Schiff Housing Association will continue to raise funds for its own purposes separately.

Membership

We are pleased to report that the wide range of our activities has persuaded many of those who previously stood aside to take up membership in order to benefit from the facilities and services we offer. Thus we achieved a marked increase in membership numbers. We urge all our members old and new to encourage relatives and friends with a direct connection with the community to join our ranks. The accession of new members strengthens our cause and helps us to supply and expand much needed services.

Future Plans

At the 50th anniversary dinner the speakers referred not only to the AJR's work since its inception in 1941, but also to its future. The successes of the past have laid the foundation for the future. Today it is our aim to maintain the Association as a thriving social work organisation. To this end we plan during the coming months to extend the Day Centre hours, revive a meals on wheels service and widen other services.

Staff and Volunteers

It remains to record appreciation of the energy and care our staff, as well as our numerous volunteer helpers, devote to the interests of our members and the Association in general.

Under the inspiring leadership of Lydia Lassman they have shown understanding for, and cheerfully coped with, the problems and emergencies that inevitably accompany any kind of social work, and of which the year brought its share.

The expression of our thanks to them all will, we are sure, be echoed by everyone who has come into contact with them.

Finally, I wish to thank the members of the Executive Committee for their unfailing support throughout the year.

C. T. Marx, Chairman

Treasurer's Report

- Expenditure on Social and Welfare Activities £628,647 – up 20%
- Day Centre attended by 280 visitors per week – up 12%
- 230 needy people received financial support from Self Aid – up 9%

The annual report describes the extensive activities of the AJR and its charitable associated organisations, the AJR Charitable Trust and Self Aid. In addition to the

AJR accounts we again present the summarised income and expenditure accounts of the whole organisation.

The needs of our community are rising fast. In 1992 our charitable expenditure is expected to exceed £700,000 with the biggest grants going to the Otto Schiff Housing Association for our Homes. Our Residential Care Appeal has raised £552,451 of which £500,000 has been spent to complete Balint House, refurbish Heinrich Stahl House and ensure the conversion of Otto Schiff House to provide sheltered flats.

M. M. Kochmann, Hon. Treasurer.

AJR

We now have 4350 members, whose membership subscriptions cover our expenses. Our administration costs are well controlled and ensure our ability to provide an extensive service to our members.

Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31 December 1991

INCOME	1991 £	1990 £
Membership Fees, Donations	102,204	94,124
Grant from AJR Charitable Trust for Welfare Services	175,000	175,000
	277,204	269,124
EXPENDITURE		
Rent, Rates, Postage, Telephone etc.	32,776	33,639
Salaries	180,189	177,268
Pension Contributions/ Pension Fund	18,874	13,105
Administration Expenses	11,035	8,768
AJR Information	28,608	27,425
AJR Club	(4,035)	688
	267,447	260,893
Net Income	9,757	8,231

Summary of Balance Sheet as at 31 December 1991

FIXED ASSETS	1991 £	1990 £
Less depreciation	13,012	15,309
CURRENT ASSETS	62,840	43,068
CURRENT LIABILITIES	20,388	42,452
	42,452	17,010
	55,464	26,058
Reserve for Staff Retirement Fund	29,340	41,367
	26,124	25,000
	26,124	16,367
REPRESENTED BY GENERAL FUND		
Balance at 1/1/91	16,367	8,136
Net income for the year	9,757	8,231
	26,124	16,367

AJR Charitable Trust

Our expenditure has risen to a new record causing us to take £306,929 from our reserves. Receipts from legacies, without

which we could not pay for the present and future needs of our community, were exceptional at £629,515.

The grants to support the running cost of our Homes will this year amount to £150,000, three times as much as was needed in 1990. This is the result of the inadequacy of Social Security payments and the fact that more of our people have not enough income or savings to meet the rising cost of residential care. We ask our members and friends to continue to give us their financial support.

Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31 December 1991

INCOME	1991 £	1990 £
Covenants, Donations	15,752	20,709
Investment income	305,966	303,718
	321,718	324,427
EXPENDITURE		
Grants:		
Paul Balint AJR Day Centre	100,498	102,227
AJR for Social Services	175,000	175,000
Self Aid	18,000	18,000
Otto Schiff Housing Association		
a) Refurbishments	198,982	149,188
b) Grant towards running costs	109,400	53,500
Other Organisations	960	6,842
Administration	25,807	44,727
	628,647	549,484
Taken from Reserve Fund	(306,929)	(225,057)

Self Aid of Refugees

The social success of our annual charity concert is no longer matched by the financial results. Had we not received a legacy last year the AJR Charitable Trust would have had to increase its grant. We thank the B'nai B'rith Leo Baeck (London) Lodge Trust Fund for continuing to help us financially to look after more people in need.

Income and Expenditure Account Year ended 31 December 1991

INCOME	1991 £	1990 £
Concert Receipts	4,746	10,333
Donations, Covenants, Legacies	13,868	17,549
Grant AJR Charitable Trust	18,000	18,000
	36,614	45,882
EXPENDITURE		
Aid Grants	29,433	27,630
Administration Charges	5,516	5,477
	34,949	33,107
Net Income	1,665	12,775

The Executive Committee

For the election of the executive committee please turn to page 11, column 3.

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
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Open 9.30 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday to
Thursday. 2 p.m.-7 p.m. Sundays.

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

Afternoon entertainment -

MAY

Monday 4	CLOSED
Tuesday 5	Songs & Arias - John Freeman (Bass) & Helen Blake (Mezzo & Piano)
Wednesday 6	Jack Donn: Talk - on the miracle of healing
Thursday 7	The Story & Music of Lerner & Loewe - Presented by Audrey Samson
Sunday 10	OPEN from 2.00 p.m.- 7 p.m.

ISRAELI WEEK

Monday 11	Hans Freund: <i>Am Yisroel Chai</i>
Tuesday 12	We Celebrate The Month of Israel's Independence - Ronnie Goldberg (Guitar)
Wednesday 13	Duo Kinnor Entertain for Israeli Week - Madeleine Whitelaw (Piano) & David Richmond (Violin)
Thursday 14	A Musical <i>Tiyul</i> Through Israel - Geoffrey Strum (Tenor) & Johnny Walton (Piano)
Sunday 17	OPEN DAY - Doors Open 2.30 p.m. Entrance £2

Monday 18	<i>Royte Klezmores</i> - Dena Attar (Violin) Julia Bard (Accordion) & Carla Bloom (Clarinet)
Tuesday 19	Solo Piano Recital - Debbie O'Brien
Wednesday 20	'The Art of Breadmaking <i>mit Feeling</i> ' - Talk & Demo by Mr V. Goswell of Goswell Bakeries
Thursday 21	An Hour of Music in May - Karen Antolinez (Soprano) & Ariane Prussner (Mezzo) accompanied by Elizabeth Upchurch (Piano)
Sunday 31	OPEN from 2.00 p.m.- 7.00 p.m.

The AJR at Work

Spotlight on Social Services



A quartet of carers.

Photo: Newman.

The workload placed on the AJR's Social Services increases with each passing year as the average age of members of the refugee community rises and more need help with the problems engendered by ageing. This is a natural progression and it is fitting that refugees who feel themselves to be in need should approach their own Association for help. However, there is another factor contributing to the growing number of applicants: the confidence which other agencies - such as Age Concern, Jewish Care, the CBF, synagogues and local social service departments - have in the AJR's ability to provide practical help and advice to clients who require special knowledge and understanding.

Some of the people referred to the AJR need home visits. These give our staff the opportunity to assess the clients' needs.

Many are unaware of their legal rights and benefit entitlements; the AJR's highly-trained staff can often pick up enough information within a couple of visits genuinely to improve the circumstances of even the most isolated individuals. Those who are mobile are encouraged to form a new social circle, for example by joining the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. For the house-bound, technical aids may be introduced. A useful addition to the carers' armoury are the new electronic monitoring systems which enable frail or elderly people to summon assistance round-the-clock should they have an accident or require medical aid. Where necessary, the AJR has funded the installation of such systems. In some cases our Volunteers Department is called upon to provide suitable regular visitors. As well as doing small jobs, such as a little shopping or filling in official forms, volunteer visitors also provide friendly conversation, and a sympathetic ear.

Timely intervention

In a recent case a very elderly lady tripped on paving stones unevenly replaced by builders working under contract to British Telecom. She received serious injuries to her arm and shoulder. However, as a 'borderline' case - ineligible for Legal Aid, but unable to afford a solicitor - obtaining adequate compensation was proving extremely difficult. By the time the AJR was approached on this matter the claim had been shuffled from one office to another for over a year. A few phone calls soon established that neither British Telecom nor the contractors were treating the claim with due seriousness. Agi Alexander, Head of

JUNE

Monday 1	Summertime Serenade - Elizabeth Fletcher (Soprano) accompanied by Brian Fletcher (Piano)
Tuesday 2	'Little Bits of Music' - Jeremy Henderson (Piano)
Wednesday 3	Light Classical Music - Stuart McIntyre (Baritone) accompanied by Elizabeth Mucha (Piano)
Thursday 4	Flute & Piano Recital - Debbie O'Brien & Gemma Nisbet

AJR Social Services, contacted Sir John Wheeler, M.P. for Westminster – where the accident had happened – and placed the case squarely before him. She was able to provide documentary evidence of the tardy way in which the claim had been dealt with and the extent of her client's injuries. Sir John decided to intervene. After a brief exchange of letters between his office and the offices of British Telecom an acceptable out-of-court payment was made.

Another client approached the AJR when he was summonsed to appear in court because of poll tax arrears. A social worker contacted the council on his behalf and made arrangements for him to pay off the arrears in monthly instalments from his income support. The affair appeared to be resolved. Some weeks later, the same gentleman received notice that the bailiffs would be coming to take his furniture on the council's behalf. On hearing this Mrs Alexander contacted the administrator in charge of poll tax collection and asked for a meeting. She showed him proof of arrangements made to pay off the arrears; she also listed a number of other mistakes for which the department was responsible. The somewhat surprised official was forced to concede defeat and called off the bailiffs.

Such selfless work for the benefit of clients serves to enhance the reputation of the AJR Social Services Department and, in turn, is leading to an increase in the number of people being catered for. Even so, plans are afoot to diversify and widen the services provided by the AJR. They include the provision of a new meals-on-wheels service and an extension of home visiting.

Although the department's offices are constantly busy and the workload grows constantly heavier the staff cope cheerfully. Asked: 'What would make you job easier?' One member replied, smiling, 'More hours in the day!'

□ M.N.

Volunteers urgently required

from early May for extended Day Centre hours.

We need help with a variety of tasks including driving members to and from the centre, serving refreshments, helping on reception etc.

Please ring Laura Howe on 071-483 2536 between 9.30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Thursday or between 9.30 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. on Friday.

Not all coffee and sympathy

It is a view held in some quarters that all Jews, especially Jewish refugees, are well-to-do; so when AJR social workers visit our people, all they need to do is to sip coffee and make comforting noises. This may be true in some cases. However, we often meet great poverty and misery.

There are many clients we regularly visit who may not be eligible for a pension from their country of origin; who no longer notice the dirt and ragged bedclothes, or the smell of incontinence in rooms which are never aired. This may be because someone on a tiny income can no longer cope alone, perhaps because of earlier suffering and increasing infirmity, mental as well as physical. Visiting one man is like walking into a Dickens novel. There is an atmosphere of permanent camping out; an unmade camp-bed, one gas-ring, two not-so-clean chairs. Some people are past the stage of awareness of their conditions; others are ashamed but either cannot afford to improve them or do not know how, and perhaps have not the physical or emotional energy. There are members who want to meet us outside their homes because they

are shy of revealing the state of their rooms.

Often the true situation is hidden until we are asked to clear up the affairs of someone who has died without next-of-kin. Scraps of clothes, plastic bags, grime and a few pitiful possessions may be all that is found. It is not a pleasant job to sort out 'the effects' but there may be no one else to do it. Behind the front door of one woman who died recently was a huge pile of old newspapers. The kitchen had piles of half-eaten meals-on-wheels containers. Another room had an unmade bed, two tattered armchairs, a frayed carpet and more newspapers. The usual visitor reported that the central heating was never turned on.

Of course, we have to distinguish between financial need and a clinging to a particular way of life. Benefits, Self-Aid and other financial help can assist the former. Enlisting the help of doctors, community nurses and other social agencies may support the other group but in the end, people cannot be forced to change a way of life because it is uncomfortable for us, unless they are a danger to themselves or others. But it is certainly not all gentility and tea in china cups. □ L.H.

Making a will?

Remember the AJR

Something that none of us should avoid is making a will and keeping it up to date.

We know we cannot take our worldly possessions with us but we can – at least – see that whatever is left behind goes:

- where it will be appreciated,
- where it will do some good,
- where it is needed.

Many of our former refugees have found their association with the AJR a rewarding one. This is an opportunity to support the AJR Charitable Trust. Your solicitor will be able to help you; alternatively you can consult with our welfare rights advisor, Agi Alexander, on 071-483 2536 (Tues, Weds, Thurs) or the social workers at the Day Centre 071-328 0208.

If you have already made a will, it is quite easy to add a codicil.

Whatever amount you are able to leave to the AJR, it will be well received, carefully applied and remembered with gratitude.

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee continues to be actively engaged in the AJR's work. Its members serve the Association by monitoring activities and meeting regularly during the year.

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following members have served on the Executive since the 1991 Annual General Meeting and will be proposed for re-election at the AGM on Thursday 11 June 1992.

Mr C. T. Marx Chairman
Mr M. M. Kochmann Vice-Chairman & Honorary Treasurer
Mrs K. Gould Honorary Secretary
Mrs E. S. Angel
Mrs M. Brooks
Mr J. H. Dunston
Mr A. C. Kaufman
Mr H. E. Levy
Mr W. D. Rothenberg

Mr M. Durst was co-opted during the year and will be proposed for election to the Executive at the AGM on 11 June 1992.

Mr C. Dunston and Mrs H. Goldsmith have been nominated for election to the Executive at the AGM on 11 June 1992.

FAMILY EVENTS

Birthday

Foulkes Dr Ernest Foulkes CBE will be 90 years old on May 24, 1992. Congratulations from the AJR. (An appreciation of Dr Foulkes will appear in the June edition).

Deaths

Green Michael Green (formerly Greenberg) journalist and economic historian, died 19 April 1992 aged 77. Mourned by his wife Bea (née Siegel) and sons Daniel, Paul and Jeremy.

Israel Else J. Israel (Née Meyer-Rothenberg) passed away peacefully, just before her hundredth birthday, on 13 April at Osmond

House, where she had enjoyed caring love and attention for seven years. Fondly remembered and sadly missed by her children, son and daughter-in-law, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mauthner Elsie Mauthner, formerly of Otto Schiff House, died in Osmond House on December 30, 1991.

Metzger Kate Metzger, formerly of Otto Schiff House, died in Osmond House on September 27, 1991.

Samuel Herbert Samuel died peacefully, aged 84, in his home in Lower Darwen, near Blackburn, deeply mourned by his wife Ilse and

a great number of old and young friends who appreciated his versatility, humour and kindness.

Miscellaneous

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes



Prague Street (1920) by Otto Dix.
Galerie der Stadt, Stuttgart.

Willy Tirr (1915–91) left Germany in 1938 and, after serving in the British army, settled in Leeds. In 1960 he began to teach at the Leeds College of Art, becoming head of its Fine Arts Department, and retiring in 1980. Tirr exhibited widely in England, Canada, Germany and Israel. An exhibition of his water-colours is on display at the Ben Uri Art Gallery (until 31 May).

One of the most important exhibitions in London is **Otto Dix** (1891–1969) at the Tate Gallery (until 17 May). Dix studied painting in Dresden, volunteered in 1914, was wounded and decorated. After the war he resumed his artistic career, participating in the 1925 *Neue Sachlichkeit* exhibition. In 1927 he became a professor in Dresden and in 1931 was elected to the Prussian Academy of Art. The Nazis dismissed him from his position in Dresden and included his work in the notorious *Entartete Kunst* exhibition. After the Second World War he once again received recognition in East Berlin, but not, unfortunately, in the West until much later.

Van Gogh: Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man in England is at the Barbican (until 4 May). Van Gogh came to England in 1873 to work for the art dealer Gompil in Covent Garden. He stayed until 1876, during which time he fell in love with his landlady's daughter, taught in a Ramsgate

school and preached his first sermon at Richmond Methodist Church. The exhibition contains major works by Van Gogh himself, as well as early work never shown before.

Rembrandt paintings, etchings and watercolours can be seen at the National Gallery (until 24 May); his drawings are at the British Museum (until 4 August). The National Gallery has recently acquired Cezanne's *The Stove in the Studio* from the estate of Mrs Helen G. Chester Beatty. Lily Freeman is showing her *Happy Paintings* at Burgh House, New End Square (until 20 May).

The Celebrated City: Treasures from the Collections of the Corporation of London is the title of an exhibition at the Barbican (until 19 July). It is in two parts: the first comprising important historical material, maps and views of the City, starting with the 1067 Charter of William I. The second part is a selection from the Corporation's collection of some 3,500 oils, watercolours, drawings, prints and sculpture, including works by such Old Masters as Hals, van Ruisdael and Hobbema, and the Victorians including Landseer, Tadema, Hunt, Millais, Rossetti and Leighton.

Alexander Calder, the inventor of the mobile and one of America's best-loved artists, is the subject of an exhibition at the Royal Academy (until 7 June), sponsored by Guinness Peat Aviation. It includes mobiles, jewellery, wire sculpture, prints and drawings, with special emphasis on Calder's passion for the circus and his construction of a complete set of circus performers.

Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) was probably the most photographed, painted and sculpted man of his time. The National Portrait Gallery has mounted an exhibition (until 5 July) which includes *Shaw asleep* by Augustus John, a Rodin bronze and a full-scale painting by Felix Topolski, as well as important Shaw memorabilia.

At the Victoria and Albert is **Sovereign: A Celebration of 40 Years of Service** (until 13 September). The exhibition highlights many royal items never before seen in public, including Coronation robes, gold plate, family photographs, cartoons and gifts received during overseas visits.

René Magritte (1898–1967), one of the great Surrealist artists, is being shown at the South Bank Centre (until 2 August). Magritte was born and lived most of his life in Belgium. His early work was influenced by Cubism and Futurism, but he later discovered the art of de Chirico and Max Ernst, and he met the Surrealist circle, including Joan Miro, during his stay in Paris from 1927–30. □

SB's Column

Brecht – the next generation. Bertold Brecht was born in Augsburg, a town that has so far, no doubt for political reasons, done little to commemorate its famous son. (The Augsburg Stadttheater staged its first ever production of a Brecht play in 1980.) Now the playwright's daughter, actress Hanne Hiob, intends to bequeath part of her father's legacy to his birthplace. While the playwright's diaries and letters are finding their way to the Brecht Archive in Berlin, television productions made in the former DDR (amongst them *Furcht und Elend im dritten Reich*) are being offered to Augsburg as a memento. However, Hanne Hiob insists 'only if they are publicly shown'.

Munich. The varied repertoire of this theatre-minded city has recently included Ray Cooney's comedy *Out of order* with Karl Schoenboeck, *Nathan's Tod*, a modern version of the Lessing drama by George Tabori, and at the intimate Theater im Karlshof recitals of Jewish anecdotes and readings from works by Peter Altenberg, Alfred Polgar, Friedrich Torberg and Egon Friedell.

In Brief. The Vienna Philharmonic orchestra celebrated its 150-year jubilee. The long line of its renowned conductors stretches from Otto Nicolai and Gustav Mahler to Karl Boehm, Herbert von Karajan and Claudio Abbado. – The London Tate Gallery is the rather unusual venue for the presentation of the 1931 German film *Kameradschaft*, a much praised work by film director G. W. Pabst. The performance on 16 May is free and begins at 2.30 p.m.

Birthdays. Film director Ernst Lubitsch would have been 100 this year. German television commemorated this pioneer of the screen by recounting the story of his association with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, where one of his first successes was the *Merry Widow*, with Jeanette MacDonald and Maurice Chevalier. – Austrian-born film producer Fred Zinnemann had his 85th birthday in Hollywood. – German Mezzosoprano Martha Moedel, a stalwart of the Düsseldorf and Hamburg opera houses, and a notable Carmen and Klytemnestra at the New York Met, is 80. She sang Leonore when the Vienna State Opera house reopened in 1955 with its festive *Fidelio*. – Martha Eggerth, Hungarian-born singer and film actress, widow of tenor Jan Kiepura, who now lives in the United States, was 80 in April. □

Old wine in new bottles?

The pluralist West exhibits a fundamentally healthy, but sometimes surprisingly wide, gap between the philosophies of those in power and the prevailing public ethos. The U.S. has had a Republican at the White House for the last dozen years; meanwhile Political Correctness, in the form of multiculturalism, has compelled universities to 'decolonialise' their syllabuses by downgrading dead, white middle class males such as Plato, Dante and Shakespeare. Here, half a generation have grown up knowing no other government than the Conservatives, yet a recent TV programme set a new liberal bench mark. *The Secret Language of Cranes*, a gay family drama offered viewers

scenes of explicit sex which one critic hailed as redressing the imbalance between depictions of hetero and homosexual love on the small screen.

Against this background of liberalism run riot I welcomed news of the launch of a journal promisingly entitled *The Oldie*. Closer inspection of the self-styled fogeys involved, however, gives one pause for thought. Richard Ingrams, begetter of *The Oldie*, was also founder-editor of *Private Eye*, that swamp flower in the jungle of British journalism. Some years ago, handing in his green eye-shade he declared himself exhausted by endless litigation. It is indeed a moot point whether he attracted more libel writs than Robert Maxwell issued.

Given that Ingrams tangled in the courts with Maxwell *as well as* Goldsmith one would not expect him to be a philosemite – and one would be right, if for the wrong

reason. *Private Eye* coined the phrase 'the Synagogue interest' as a homegrown variant of the U.S. Jewish lobby long before the above mentioned libel cases. In fact Ingrams was probably a 'cradle anti-semite'. His banker-cum-Intelligence officer father belonged to the Anglo-German Fellowship in the 1930s, he was a Shrewsbury contemporary of the militantly anti-Zionist Paul Foot, and he numbers GK Chesterton (hindlegs of the antisemitic Edwardian pantomime horse *Chesterbelloc*) among his favourite authors.

Ingram's own stablemate at *The Oldie* is going to be his virtual *Doppelgänger* Auberon Waugh, occasionally hyped as the rudest man in Britain. The latter recently took Michael De-la-Noy, the author of a book on the Honours System to task for not telling his readers that the Wilson-appointed Lords Kagan, Delfont, Weidenfeld et al were Jews.

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ALL LEGAL WORK UNDERTAKEN

Laurels tipped in hemlock

Recently there has been a spate of anniversaries of Jews prominent in the arts: centenaries of the painter Mark Gertler and the poet Nelly Sachs, the 50th anniversary of Stefan Zweig's suicide, and the 90th birthday of the potter Lucie Rie.

Gertler and Rie are the subject of current exhibitions, and Zweig of a scholarly symposium – while Nelly Sachs' centenary passed unnoticed. This omission is probably due to the fact that of all the Jewish winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature she led the most restricted life.

Shmuel Agnon moved from Galicia, via Turkish Palestine and Berlin, to Israel, Saul Bellow is an academic and a public figure, Josef Brodsky knows the inside of Soviet prisons and U.S. campuses, Elias Canetti grew up speaking four languages (Ladino, Bulgarian, English and German), Nadine Gordimer commutes between S. Africa and Western Europe, and Bashevis Singer worked as a journalist in Warsaw and New York.

Nelly Sachs only worked at 'literature'. In fact, for a good part of her life she didn't work at all because her father, a Berlin factory owner, thought it unladylike. Overly cosseted, she grew up an alienated and lonely child. When, aged 17, unrequited love made her attempt suicide by starving herself, the family doctor suggested she take up writing as a form of therapy.

She followed the advice and studied the German mystics and Romantic poets in preparation. After a 20-year 'apprentice-

ship' her first volume of poetry achieved publication. Some more followed, but the Nazi takeover traumatically destroyed her self-image as a German poetess. In a search for her Jewish roots the hitherto totally assimilated 40-year old steeped herself in the Old Testament, the *Zohar* and Buber's chassidic tales.

In 1940 she narrowly succeeded in escaping to Sweden with her mother. In Stockholm she lived in poverty compounded by the mother's mental illness. When her nursing duties permitted she did ill-paid translation work; above all she began to write Holocaust poetry in an effort at coming to terms with the tragedy.

In the late 1950s some of her work was published in Germany and she received nominations for literary prizes. It took her several years to overcome inhibitions about setting foot on German soil again, but having done so she felt quite overwhelmed by the friendship with which the postwar writers of *Gruppe 47* received her. Despite growing recognition her emotional state remained unstable. Not even the award of the Nobel Prize in 1966 brought Nellie Sachs inner peace. She resented being bracketed with her co-recipient, the Hebrew writer Shmuel Agnon, whom she – the German-Jewish poet of universal conciliation – derogated as a narrow Israeli nationalist.

When the Nobel citation called both of them 'Israel's messengers to our times' she gave away all her prize money as a gesture of protest. Plagued by paranoia she spent the last years of her life in and out of clinics and sanatoria, dying in 1970. Sufficient unto the day. . . .

□ R.G.

Search Notices

Yvette Harrari (nee David) Radetzky Realschule, Vienna 1930's. Last known address 59 Rue Victor Hugo, Lyon, France. Please contact Gertie Balogh, 28 Greville Road, London NW6 5JA.

Arno Gerson, born June 7, 1915 in Berlin, please contact Anja Schindler, Waiblinger Weg 6, 0-1197 Berlin, who is writing about his parents, Helene and Bruno, as part of a project on the Jews in Treptow and wishes to speak to him about them.

Eva Najman, born Berlin 1923. Arrived UK December 15, 1938. Parents Gertrude and Jonkiel resided in Israel. Please contact Jewish Refugees Committee 071-387 3925.

Emeric Pressburger I am writing the biography of the Hungarian/English film-maker Emeric Pressburger (1902-92). I would like to get in contact with anyone who knew him, especially in the 1930's. Please contact: Kevin Macdonald, 21 Rockley Road, London W14 0BT. Tel: 071-602-7101.

Eugen Sugar. A set of documents belonging to Mr Sugar, who was born in Bánokszentgyörgy, Zala County, Hungary and was a resident of Budapest. It seems likely that Mr Sugar came to Britain in 1939. To claim the documents would Mr Sugar or his descendants please contact Box 1212.

Information is sought about Letty Taylor (nee Summ). Originally from Ireland, she served in the WRACs. Sister of Ida Fisher, Dr Molly Fish and Bill, whose last known address was in Israel. Please contact: Mrs R. Palliser (nee Behrendt), Graumannsweg 19, 2000 Hamburg 76, Germany.

Herr Waldemar Zelezny, M.A., Universität Duisburg, Fachbereich 3/Germanistik, Postfach 10 15 03, D-4100 Duisburg 1, Germany sucht für eine Dissertation zum Leben und Werk des Schriftstellers und Kunstkritikers **Ernst Schur** (1876-1912; seit 1905 verheiratet mit der Malerin und Kunstgewerblerin **Ilse Schütze - Schur**: 1868 - 1923) den Besitzer/Rechtsinhaber und den Aufbewahrungsort des **Nachlasses von Monty Jacobs** (1875-1945). Jacobs gab 1913 das 'Ernst Schur - Gedächtnisbuch' heraus; in dem Nachlaß von Jacobs soll sich u.a. ein unveröffentlichtes Manuskript 'Begegnungen' und ein 'Tagebuch' befinden. - In der Bundesrepublik Deutschland war (bisher) nichts zu ermitteln; ein Nachlaß von Schur ist ebenfalls nicht auffindbar. Schur widmete sein 1912 erschienenes Buch: 'Meunier. Ein Problem der Kunst' **Julius und Marianne Levi** - weiß jemand, wer gemeint sein könnte (eventuell Julius Rodenberg: 26.6.1831-11.7.1914)?

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Disquiet at a Western front

In the recent conflict that fragmented Yugoslavia Croatia enjoyed sponsorship, ranging from the German and Austrian governments via the Holy See to Margaret Thatcher. Berlin and Vienna have traditionally viewed the Croats as their allies in the Balkans; it was thus in 1848 Year of Revolutions, in the Great War, and in Hitler's War. To the Papacy Croatia has always been a frontier march, holding the line against Greek Orthodox and Muslim infidels.

What, though, prompted Mrs Thatcher to voice such strong support for the Croat cause? A campaigner rarely given to using the full palette of colours when Black and White will do, she equated Serbia with the East and Communism, and Croatia with the West and democracy.

However, in our complicated world, the mere fact that one party to a conflict are baddies does not necessarily make the other goodies. Catholic Croatia can be accounted Western only on the assumption that Rome is central to the Western tradition. That may be true in the cultural sphere, but not in politics: in 1914 the Pope backed the Central Powers against Britain, France and Russia – and in the 1930s he blessed Hitler's

vassals General Franco, Monsignor Tiso of Slovakia and Ante Pavelic of Croatia.

Today's independent Croatia places President Franjo Tudjman in an ambiguous relationship to Ante Pavelic. In his heart of hearts Tudjman sees himself as heir to the Ustashe Führer who 'turned the long-cherished dream of Croat statehood into reality', but for foreign consumption he goes through the motions of disowning him.

A similar ambiguity marks his attitude to the Jews. During the civil war the Zagreb Information Ministry was not averse to milking the Shoah for propaganda effect ('Croat PoWs are languishing in a Serbian Auschwitz') at the same time as Foreign Minister Svonimir Separovic made *Stürmer*-type allegations of a 'global Serbo-Jewish conspiracy against Croatia'. (The miniscule grain of fact behind this canard is that the Belgrade-born Israeli Klara Mandic whom Serbs freed from an Italian concentration camp in the war, has been active in twinning Serb and Israeli towns.)

When Tudjman visited New York in 1991 he sought a meeting with Jewish leaders, presumably because he believed his own government-propagated myths about the power of the Jews. (Information Minister Branko Salaj has written of 'Jewish efforts to prescribe what policies the U.S. and other countries should follow'.)

That Tudjman's own antisemitism remains largely unknown in the West owes much to the fact that his book *Bespuca povijesne zbilje* (Tortuous paths of historical truth, Zagreb, 1989) still awaits translation. In it the self-styled historical truth teller ascribes the invention of genocide to the Ancient Hebrews, characterises Jews as covetous and filled with hate and dubs Israel

a 'Judeo-Nazi' state pursuing an extermination policy vis-a-vis the Palestinians. When he comes to dealing with real genocide, as perpetrated by Croats on Serbs, Gypsies and Jews in the 1940s, he blatantly falsifies history. On the site of Jasenovac, the Croat Auschwitz, 360,000 corpses were exhumed in the 1970s – yet Tudjman talks of 40,000 victims 'at most'. (The Jews among them, he alleges, were murdered by Jewish *Lagerälteste* and Kapos.)

The historian-turned-President may be careless with facts and figures, but he is meticulous in his timing. Last November, when the building of the Zagreb Jewish community was blown up, the government issued a statement blaming Serb terrorists for the outrage within ten minutes of the explosion.

Two months later, on 14 January, Tudjman sent a letter expressing 'deep regret that the tragedy of the Holocaust befell Jews on Croat soil' to the President of the World Jewish Congress. On the next day, 15 January, the EC Council of Ministers were scheduled to vote on diplomatic recognition for independent Croatia.

It can be assumed that by now the majority of the 2,500 Jews living in pre-Civil War Croatia have escaped, via Hungary, to Israel. Independent Croatia is close to becoming *judenrein* in more symbolic ways as well. Recently Zagreb street names commemorating Jewish, and other, victims of the Nazis have been changed to honour Croat national heroes. Simon Wiesenthal was so outraged by this that he went to the Croat capital to protest on the spot. His protest went unheeded. We have cause for disquiet over a Western front!

□ R.G.

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□ A.M.M.

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