

# AJR Information

Volume XLIX No. 9  
October 1994

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Don't miss...

**Hitler and the Holocaust** p.3

**10th Jewish Film Festival** p.4

**Four Summer Seasons** p.16

## Denying history

Last month, the Church of England's Commission for Racial Justice likened the British government's treatment of illegal immigrants to Nazi persecution of the Jews. This sort of publicity-seeking shock-horror hyperbole, however well intentioned, does not merely trivialise the Holocaust it undermines the credibility of the Church.

A similar and probably ill-intentioned offence against historical truth was committed by the German journalist Reginald Rudolf who said in the course of a recent TV discussion on *Schindler's List* "Now the film has been shown we must refocus our attention on the red Holocaust" □

## The difference between Communism and Fascism

# Red-brown overlap – and contrast

On the 50th anniversary of the Officers' Plot against Hitler, Klaus von Stauffenberg's son protested at the inclusion of Communists in the pantheon of German Resistance Heroes. He damned the KPD on two counts: as catspaws of a dictatorship as wicked as Hitler's, and as traitors who worked for the defeat of their country at Russia's behest.

What, in contrast, motivated his father was pure German patriotism; the colonel with the bomb in the briefcase wanted to eliminate Hitler before he dragged Germany down to total ruin.

Stauffenberg junior's representation of his father's motives is far from controversial – even among historians who do not subscribe to the harsh thesis that 20 July (subsequently hyped as "conscience in revolt") merely resulted from some Wehrmacht brass-hats' minute-before-midnight panic. The final defeat the bomb plotters wanted to avoid actually created the preconditions – uncondi-

tional surrender and Allied occupation – for the root and branch transformation of the country, the most positive development in its entire history.

Such a reading – of course – leaves out of account the many lives that could have been saved if the war had ended earlier. It also glosses over the fact that one of the Allied Occupying Powers was Communist Russia, whose governmental system bore more than superficial resemblance to Nazism.

Even so, the two -isms were not identical. The difference is exemplified by the (part-conjectural) handling of the succession in the two systems. Stalin's successor, Krushchev, in his speech before the XX Congress exploded the myth about the benign and omniscient "man of steel"; in a victorious Germany can anyone really imagine Goering or Goebbels similarly denouncing Hitler after the latter's demise?

A victorious Nazi Germany could only have got worse – while Stalin's inheritance began to break up, albeit agonisingly slowly, shortly after his death.

There is one further criterion by which to measure the distinction between Communism and Nazism. At the risk of sounding elitist, I would invoke Shelley's definition of poets as "the acknowledged legislators of mankind". The back of a postcard would accommodate a list of poets (in the widest sense of the word) who sympathised with Facism: D'Annunzio, Pirandello, Henry Williamson, Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound and, possibly, T S Eliot.

In contrast, a list of writers drawn to Communism, at least temporarily, could take up the rest of this page: Gorki, Ehrenburg, Mayakowski, Babel, Sholokov, Brecht, Feuchtwanger, Arnold Zweig, Anna Seghers, Stefan Heym, O'Casey, Auden, Edward Bond, Gide, Barbusse, Romain Rolland, Louis Aragon, Paul Elouard, Gyula Hay, Anderson Nexö, Pablo Neruda, Jorge Amado, Dreiser, Dashiell Hammett, Lillian Hellman, Clifford Odets, Arthur Miller, Silone Pavese, not to mention two great chroniclers of disillusionment: Koestler and Orwell.

Orwell's 1984 did not actually assume corporeal reality – and five years after his doom-laden date the Red Nightmare dissolved with minimal loss of life. Would that the Nazi nightmare had contained similar seeds of its own destruction! □



The Synagogue entrance, Strasbourg.

## RESTITUTION UPDATE

Restitution of and compensation for property in former East Germany, East Berlin and other former Iron Curtain countries.

**T**he United Kingdom Inland Revenue are still considering their position on how the receipt of compensation for property lost in these territories, or the recovery of such property, should be treated for the purposes of taxation.

Any individual who has either received such compensation or recovered property is recommended to advise his or her Inspector of Taxes of the fact. It is understood that the Inspectors are aware of the position and that general guidance has been given to them as to how they should deal with such information. If any inspector does raise an assessment it is understood that a formal appeal against the assessment, together with a request for postponement of all tax associated with such restitution/compensation, will be looked at sympathetically.

It is understood that the Inland Revenue hope to be in a position to make a more formal statement on the subject later in 1994. □

## Royal visit

The Duke of Edinburgh will visit Israel in October to receive an order from Yad Vashem honouring his mother, Princess Alice of Greece, for her efforts in saving Jews during the Nazi Occupation. The visit will be the first by a member of the Royal family to Israel. It was agreed in principle some time ago, but the bombing of the Israeli Embassy concentrated minds in Whitehall and Buckingham Palace.

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## Profile

### Blue chip off the old block



John Dunston.

Photo: Newman.

**T**his profile represents a notable first in the annals of AJR Information: its subject is the son of a previous profilee. (Readers are referred to "Model member", our profile of Fred Dunston in August 1992.)

John Dunston was born in the early 1950s to a refugee couple who had met at The Hyphen. He attended an independent school at Harrow where modern languages were his strongest suit and choral singing his chief hobby. At Cambridge he read French and German with a view to teaching. His study year abroad took him to Hamburg, where circumstances combined to raise his Jewish consciousness. For one, *Yom Kippur* found him in the police-guarded Hamburg synagogue when news of the outbreak of war in Israel came through. For another, the school to which he was sent enjoyed close connections with the Hamburg Staatsoper; this enabled him to sing in the chorus of Schoenberg's *Moses and Aron* and to appear with them at the Israel Festival in Caesarea.

Back in England he did postgraduate teacher training at York, whose dramatic Jewish history under the Plantagenets roused his interest. Later, while teaching Modern Languages at Bancroft School, Epping Forest, he became involved in the work of a nearby Reform synagogue, conducting its youth choir and taking *cheder* classes. At Bancroft's he was eventually promoted to Head of Modern Languages; maintaining his involvement with music he took the school choir to China just before the "drama" of Tiananmen Square.

Changes in his own life during the 1980s

had not lacked an element of drama. Attending an early meeting of the Association of the Children of Jewish Refugees he soon found himself chairing the fledgling organisation – and, in a virtual replay of his parents' story, met his future wife at an ACJR function.

The 1990s brought another positive change. Against stiff competition John was appointed to the headmastership of Sibford School, a Quaker institution with 350 pupils. The post involves a taxing work schedule which includes being on call six days a week.

For all that, John still, additionally, manages to be a paterfamilias and a fully involved member both of the Oxford Jewish community and of the AJR Executive. His case proves that the qualities of a "model member" can, like hair colour, be passed on through the genes. □ R.G.

## Red Cross update

The Red Cross offers a free Holocaust tracing service. Last year previously unreleased information about half a million people was transferred from the USA National Archives to the Red Cross International Tracing Service. To the records already on file at ITS was added documentation about over 400,000 people held by the former Soviet Union. Now that numerous Communist regimes have fallen, additional information has become available from these sources resulting in not only the additional files, but additional inquiries.

The American Red Cross Holocaust Tracing Service is available to people wishing to know the fate of relatives or who need certificates of incarceration, forced labour or the death of a family member. For more information or assistance contact the Nassau County Chapter of the Red Cross, 264 Old Country Road, Mineola, NY 11501, USA. □

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## Hitler and the Holocaust

Holocaust denial – and its variant, David Irving's absolution of Hitler from culpability for the Holocaust – are hugely important issues half a century after the event. We are therefore pleased to present Lord Bullock's authoritative contribution to the debate, a lecture he gave one year ago under the auspices of the Yad Vashem Committee of the Board of Deputies.

Lord Bullock, author of *Hitler, A Study in Tyranny* (1952) and *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lines* (Fontana 1993), was Founding Master of St Catherine's College, Oxford and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

I have volunteered to give this lecture because there are still people who claim that the Holocaust, the deliberate attempt to destroy the Jewish population of Europe during the Second World War, never took place.

I am not concerned with their motives in making such a claim, but I believe that historians who have worked on the history of Nazi Germany, especially those who are not Jewish, have a duty to make clear why they reject it.

Let me begin by asking the simple question, how do we know anything, not just about the Holocaust, but about the history of Germany and German-occupied Europe in the Nazi period?

At the end of World War II the Allies seized the records of the former German state for use as material for the trial at Nuremberg of those political and military leaders who remained alive. The Allies' action in mounting such trials remains controversial. What cannot be denied is that the capture and publication of the German archives, immediately after the events they recorded, was a unique windfall for historians.

Of course there are gaps, partly due to the destruction of records by the Germans and partly to the Russians' refusal until 1990 to allow independent access to the material they had captured.

The Nuremberg trials, however, opened the way to a series of further investigations and trials extending to scores of cases in every occupied country as well as Germany and Israel, the scope and importance of which in building up the massive documentation of war crimes and crimes against humanity have never been appreciated.

I shall give two examples, both the result of recent contributions. The first is based on research by the American Professor Christopher Browning in the Central Agency for the State Administration of Justice (*Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen*) in Germany. There, Professor Browning came across the records of an investigation and prosecution carried out by the Hamburg State Prosecutor (*Staatsanwalt*) in the 1960s into the activities in Poland of German Reserve Police Battalion 101. The *Ordnungspolizei* was concerned with the ordinary police duties of preserving law and order, but during the war was drawn on for service in the German-occupied territories – in the case of Battalion 101 in Poland.

At full strength the Battalion numbered 500 officers and men. Its rank and file were middle-aged family men, mostly of working and lower middle class background, from Hamburg, one of the least Nazified cities in Germany. The majority of them were too old for military service, had never fired a shot in anger or ever been fired on. They were the most unlikely material out of which to form a murder squad, yet between July 1942 and November 1943 they rounded up from their homes and shot 38,000 Jews in 13 different districts of Poland and deported by force another 45,200 Jews to the extermination camps.

Their first operation began when they were roused from their bunks in the Polish town of Bilgoraj in the early hours of 13 July 1942. They were ordered to proceed to the village of Jozefow, where the Jewish population of 1,800 was said to be in touch with the partisans. They were to take the Jews from their homes, separate male Jews of working age for deportation, and shoot the remainder, women and children, the elderly and the

sick, on the spot. The nightmarish scenes which followed in the next 24 hours left an indelible impression on those who were involved in carrying out these orders. When the men returned to their barracks, blood-stained and exhausted, they were told not to talk about what had taken place. They had no wish to. All the accounts agree that they were depressed, angered, embittered and shaken, ate little and drank a lot.

Professor Browning's study follows the process by which over the next year and a half, the majority of these 'ordinary men' became so inured and brutalised that similar scenes (each of which he dates and locates on the map) ceased to make any impression on them and were treated as matters of routine. What matters for my purpose this evening is to underline that the massacres he describes were commonplace occurrences throughout Poland, the Baltic States, Byelo-Russia and the Ukraine in the years 1941-1943, and accounted for the deaths of roughly 2 million Jewish men, women and children.

\*\*\*\*\*

My second example is another outstanding piece of historical research by Dr Gerald Fleming, of the University of Surrey.

No other name has caught the world's imagination and so immediately summons up the terrible images and associations of the Final Solution as Auschwitz. Perhaps it is because of the resonance of the name that there has been a persistent attempt to deny that Auschwitz was anything more than an ordinary concentration camp or that any gas chambers were built there.

The SS at least were well aware of what took place at Auschwitz. On 26 November 1944, SS headquarters in Berlin ordered the camp commandant to destroy all evidence before the advancing Russian forces reached the scene. Dynamite was used to blow up the operational buildings, together with their installations, and all records were burned.

But, as so often happened, something was overlooked. At Auschwitz it was the 7,000 files of the camp's Central Building Administration which were discovered intact by the Red Army at the end of January 1945. When examined, the files were found to document in detail work carried out at Auschwitz by the firm of Topf and Sons, an Erfurt business which had started building crematoria in 1912. Amongst the 50 crematoria they completed in the Nazi period, no less than five were in Auschwitz.

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The original plant was first used in November 1940; its morgue was converted into a gas-chamber in December 1941. On 30 June 1942, the camp command, on Himmler's orders, launched a building programme to add four improved crematoria capable together of dealing with a much larger 'through-put'. Each of the four had its own undressing room, gas chamber (disguised as a 'morgue' on the plans) and a total of 46 additional furnace chambers. All four were designed, built and tested on the spot with human corpses by Topf and Sons, before being brought into operation by the SS between March and July 1943.

What the Russians found in the ruins of Auschwitz and what happened to the four senior engineers of Topf & Son they arrested remained unknown in the West until February 1990, when brief details were published in an article in *Izvestia*.

This report caught the attention of Dr Fleming who succeeded in persuading the Soviet authorities to allow him access to their hitherto closed archives. As a result he has been able to reconstruct in detail, with dates, financial accounts and constantly revised drawings, the history of

how Auschwitz was planned, built and extended from the initial orders in 1940 to its destruction at the end of 1944.

At the same time Dr Fleming has recovered the interrogations by the Russians of the four arrested German engineers. From their answers emerge the difficulties encountered in meeting the demands from Berlin for speeding up the process of stripping, gassing and burning the bodies of several thousand human beings a day to reach the Auschwitz quota. The engineers spelled out the trouble they had with the strain this placed on the installations, causing over-heating of the furnaces, cracks in the walls and breakdown of the ventilation system by which the gas was introduced into the gas chambers.

Together these building records and interrogations provide irrefutable proof of the use to which Auschwitz was put as an extermination camp during the war years. These are only two, however, of the hundreds of pieces of evidence which establish the reality of a systematic attempt by the Nazis to exterminate the Jewish population of Europe.

*To be continued.....*

## 10th Jewish Film Festival

The annual Jewish Film Festival will be celebrating its 10th anniversary at the National Film Theatre from 3-10 October. It will feature dramatic and documentary films from around the world. This month *AJR Information* is presenting a special preview of the event.

The festival will be launched, on 3 October, with Matine Dugowsin's funny and moving *Mina Tannenbaum*. Starring Romaine Bohringer, the film explores the relationship between two women over twenty-five years as they laugh, cry and struggle with love and life.

A highlight of the festival will be the British Premiere of Claude Lanzmann's five-hour epic *Tsahal*. This is the third film in his trilogy following *Pourquoi Israel?* and *Shoah*. It looks at Israel in the years after the war through the eyes of the Israeli Defence Force. After the screening, which is being sponsored by the *Jewish Chronicle*, the director will attend to discuss the film.

One section of the Festival is entitled "Panorama" and contains a selection of new works celebrating Jewish courage and culture. Yael Strom's *The Last Klezmer* portrays the life and music of the last performing Polish klezmer musician, Leopold Kozlowski, while Netty van Hoorn's *International Singing Star Leo Fuld* provides an affectionate salute to this almost legendary 81 year-old. Andres Veiel's documentary *Balagan* is about three actors - an Israeli, an orthodox Iraqi Jew and a Palestinian who have created a provocative play about the Holocaust and modern Israel. Jolanta Sylewska's *Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising According to Marek Edelman* is a testament to the Jewish spirit, while Ariel Zeitoun's *I, Bajou* is a sweeping epic tracing the fortunes of one Sephardic family through 20th century Tunisia's colonialism, German occupation and rising nationalism.

The British film *A Gulf Between Us* is a tense love story about the relationship between Arab Hassan and Jewish Ruth, set in London during the Gulf War. Starring and directed by Khaled El Hagar, the film provides a backdrop for a timely panel discussion about Arab/Jewish relations in London.

*Continued next page*



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Familial legacy is examined in Judy Menczel's *Angst*, a portrait of three Jewish comedians – all children of concentration camp survivors – and their particular brands of humour and performance styles. After the screening the connection between Jewish humour and suffering will be discussed by, amongst others, comedians Dave Schneider and Judy Menczel.

From the Israeli Film Archive comes the satirical comedy *Sallah Shabbati*, directed by Ephraim Kishon. Starring Topol, this is a hilarious tale about a North African family's efforts to adjust to life in Israel. It was nominated for an Academy Award in 1964.

Yiddish Cinema provides another special section of the Festival. It features the films *Yiddle with his Fiddle* (1936), *Tevye* (1939), *The Dybbuk* (1937) and the 1939 documentary *Five Cities*.

The Festival closes on 16 October with Jan Schutte's charming and moving *Bye Bye America*, about the tragi-comic odyssey of a *zaftig* Polish cleaning lady who returns to her native village after thirty years in America. □

Bookings and information about the Jewish Film Festival can be obtained from the Box Office at the National Film Theatre or by phone on: 071-928 3232.

## Ordinary nightmares

*CHOICE AND DESTINY*, Dir. Tsipi Reibenbach, Israel, 1993. (Showing on 6 October)

An elderly couple – Yitshak and Fruma Grinberg – originating from Poland, both Holocaust survivors, are the subjects of this documentary film. First sight leads the viewer to conclude that they are a typical Israeli married couple; their past experiences, however, differentiate them.

Categorising *Choice and Destiny* is an arduous task as it is both a documentary and a "movie". Avoiding the "traditional" Holocaust documentary approach – a verbal account of events from witnesses and survivors – the film follows the daily lives of the couple as recorded by their daughter. It may well be their familiarity with the "director" that allows them to be so relaxed, seemingly unaware of the fact that they are under the camera's scrutiny.

As the film unfolds, we are introduced to, and become part of, the domestic life of this elderly couple. Initially, it is Yitshak who does most of the talking,

while his wife is seen in the background, cooking and cleaning. With startling ordinariness he recounts, in Yiddish, tales of his experiences in the Warsaw Ghetto, Auschwitz and Mauthausen. However, by the time the film is over Fruma is the centre of attention.

Unable to contain her emotions any longer, Fruma's store of experience is unleashed. There is a certain sad irony, whether intentional or not, in the way she continues cleaning energetically while describing the filth which permeated the camps – as she tells of the starvation and degradation she and others experienced, she cooks huge pots of food.

This is a moving film, made in the couple's own language. Although it appears, at the outset, to be a simple look at people who appear outwardly "normal" it is about much much more and doesn't leave the viewer's mind for a long time afterwards.

□ Rupert Wilson

## Yaev-Regalo farrago

*THE HERITAGE*, Dir. Amnon Rubinstein, Israel, 1993. (Showing on 5 October)

Asked why he preferred researching English to Jewish history, Louis Namier famously replied "We Jews don't have a history, only a martyrology".

For the same reason I have never tried to construct a family tree. This aversion has, however, not stopped me from making informed guesses about my ancestors. The surname *Grünberger* strongly suggests that we hailed from Grünberg in Silesia (currently Zielona Gora in Poland). Over 200 years ago Frederick the Great snatched the town from the Habsburgs, after which my forebears

probably migrated to Hungary.

I often wonder what these ancestors might have been like, and dream up scenarios for their lives, forever lost in the mists of time. Other people, it seems, do the same; some even manage to put flesh and blood – or at least tinsel and grease-paint – on their mental constructs.

One such is the Israeli actor Avi Toledano. He has put together a film script linking a Toledo Jew of the Expulsion with a present-day Israeli computer programmer, Yaev. *Heritage* starts with Yaev being handed the miraculously preserved title deeds to his family's house in Toledo. Finding himself in El Greco's city for a computer fair, Yaev is soon drawn into a genealogical search of considerable complexity. He intuits the existence of a 15th century precursor who, orphaned in a pogrom, was brought up by Christians and named Regalo. Regalo became a soldier and mounted guard on the Jewish ghetto. Observing the rituals of his prisoners rekindled his sense of Jewish identity. Simultaneously – and this will come as no surprise to seasoned filmgoers – he fell in love with an incarcerated rabbi's daughter. He engineered their escape, but a fellow guard killed the girl.

*Nil desperandum*: At the 1992 Toledo computer fair Yaev meets the airhostess *doppelgänger* of the rabbi's daughter. Their meeting, and joint search for Yaev's ancestral home, provides a gratuitous happy ending to the film.

This bald plot summary will probably have alerted readers to the fact that as a movie-maker Avi Toledano is not in the same league as Menachem Golan, the erstwhile king of Israeli schlock (or even our own Michael Winner). To say that *Heritage* is as far below the level of average cinematic fare in this country as Jericho is below sea level would be an exercise in English understatement. The story is clichéd, the acting comatose, the dialogue stilted and the lighting suggestive of a permanent powercut. In addition, with a good bit of dialogue in French, overlapping English and Hebrew subtitles at the bottom of the screen often leave one clueless about the plot.

Not to put too fine a point on it, *Heritage* is deficient in depth, nuance, character development, subtlety – and humour. Sorry, I had better rephrase the last statement. The film does possess a modicum of humour: in the credits the makers declare themselves indebted to the Fund for the Promotion of Quality (sic) Israeli Films. □ R.G.

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# Letters to the Editor

## D-DAY COMMEMORATION

Sir - I was with the Royal British Legion on S.S. Canberra for the Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Normandy Landings. Being at Bayeux for the National Service of Remembrance the very first graves I saw were those of the Royal Pioneer Corps. The headstones and graves were all in excellent order: I was able to say Kaddish and recited the Prayer for the Fallen on their behalf.

I also attended the Parade of Veterans on the wet beaches of Arromanches, and must admit that I felt a certain sense of pride to have been able to take part.

Linden Lea  
London N2

F H Edwards  
(Formerly F L Meyer)

## BIGOTED OLYMPIAN

Sir - You quote Lord Rothschild (page 3 August issue) as saying that the great Goethe "was not prejudiced" when describing the Ghetto in Frankfurt.

May I draw your attention to the entry for 23 September 1823 in F.V. Müller's diary: *Ich war kaum in Goethes Zimmer getreten, als der alte Herr seinen leidenschaftlichen Zorn über unser neues Judengesetz, welches die Heirat zwischen beiden Glaubensverwandten gestattet, ausgoss. Er ahnte die schlimmsten und grellsten Folgen davon, behauptete, wenn der Generalsuperintendent Charakter habe, müsse er lieber seine Stelle niederlegen als eine Jüdin in der Kirche im Namen der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit trauen. Alle sittlichen Gefühle in den Familien, die doch durchaus auf den religiösen ruhten, würden durch ein solch skandalöses Gesetz untergraben.*

Cricket Road  
Oxford

Hans Hammerschmidt

## ZIONISM NOT OK

Sir - How disappointing to encounter Stefan George's outpourings (August issue) among AJR readers' normally meaningful contributions. He conveniently overlooks the attacks, by numerically vastly superior Arab armies, which the State of Israel had to sustain from its very inception. By cultivating the desert territory of Theodor Herzl's *Alt-Neuland* into the westernized oasis of

today, Zionism has performed a miracle of truly biblical proportions, thus continuing where Shimon Bar Giora and Hillel had left off some 1900 years ago. "Colonising Palestine" indeed!

One wonders why Stefan George's definition of Zionism is confined to the "Ashkenazi movement", thereby excluding the equally important Sephardim. Is it, perhaps, because Ashkenazi movement may sound more sinister to ignorant members of the public than a mere Nazi movement?

Chigwell,  
Essex

Fred W Rosner

Sir - I am outraged by Mr Stefan George's letter, in which he described Zionism as not being honorable. He is, however, right in saying that Zionism is a nationalist movement.

I wonder if the writer is aware that the Jews were invaded by the then super power - the Romans, that the Jews lost that war, and that they were removed by force from their land, in which they had lived for around 1,400 years.

If this would happen today, there would



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be UN resolutions condemning the actions of the Romans, calling on the Romans to withdraw, and sanctions and embargoes would be imposed until the aggressors complied.

The Jews never accepted the loss of their land and nationhood, and they never renounced their claim on Jerusalem, as witnessed in their literature and prayerbooks.

But only in this century were we able to repair the wrong done to us.

Bridge Lane,  
London NW11

M. Friedman

Sir - You have proved your democratic principles by publishing Mr Stefan George's anti-Zionist letter, knowing full well that it will outrage a lot of your readers.

His letter does not deserve to be dignified by a reply.

Deancourt Road,  
Leicester

Bill Oakfield

## JEWISH MOTHERS

Sir - While I have no wish to enter into Mr Kenneth's argument about nature versus nurture (Letters, August issue) I would like to question his opinion on another point.

None of the Jewish mothers I know either demand or expect "obedience" from their children-in-law. In fact, if they venture to offer any advice at all it is done with the greatest circumspection. Perhaps things are different in Grimsby.

Rodney Court,  
Maida Vale, London W9

Mrs Edith Argy

## FRIENDLY FIRE CASUALTY

Sir - Is my old sparring partner H Needham really counselling me to soil my integrity, and to join a religion I don't believe in, in order to get onto the Jewish network in case I will one day need it to escape another pogrom, and gain access to the safe haven of Israel? Jewish, as a sort of Life Insurance policy? Come off it, Mr Needham! Stop threatening! And I wonder what would have happened if all Jews had assimilated: loss of tradition, but gain in lives.

Romilly Street  
London

Peter Zander

## BUDDHISM

Sir - Mr Kenneth (letters, August issue) refers to Buddhism as one of the monotheistic religions. He really ought to do his homework! Buddhism is a system which has no place for the idea of a God



(or gods). As it is based on the tenet that human suffering is the result of human actions, it requires its adherents to examine the well-springs of their own mental processes. Christmas Humphreys used to call it "a sort of D.I.Y. system of psycho-analysis".

To the inevitable question of "How did the world come into being?" the Buddhist reply is two-fold: a) What does it matter? and b) this is not a question for religion but for science." Hardly the response of a monotheistic creed.

White Ledges, Dan Gold  
London W13

### GALLING "GALLIMAUFRY"

Sir - I would not hazard a guess at the percentage of your readers who know what a curate's egg is. With a bit of luck it will be a majority.

I am, however, quite sure that not one in a hundred could, without the help of a dictionary, interpret "gallimaufry". The Concise Oxford Dictionary offers heterogeneous mixture, jumble, medley. All of these - and particularly the last two - would have been readily understood by virtually all your readers.

So why not try and publish *AJR Information* in plain English?

Clarence Terrace, Ruth Cemach  
London NW1

Sir - Gallimaufry? Gallimaufry indeed. I wonder how many AJR readers recognized the word?

It seems to me that you derive a great deal of pleasure - or is it a feeling of superiority - from blinding your readers with complicated phraseology.

I, for one, find it increasingly irritating to be inundated with such words.

Wembley Hill Road, H. Kaufmann  
London

### NO NAME CHANGE

Sir - If no useful purpose would be served by changing the name, why did you ask for suggestions in the first place?

Question: Of your some 4,000 members, how many have British nationality by now? The majority, I would guess. Some - a few hundred - may have dual nationality.

The title should therefore read *AEJR, Information for Association of Ex-Jewish Refugees or Jewish Ex-Refugees*.

Or are we to remain refugees for ever?  
Linfields, Mr K L Orpen  
St Chalfont, Bucks

### WAS THE SHOAH SINGULAR?

Sir - Angela Arratoon (August issue) must bear in mind that there has been genocide since humanity started. Homo sapiens is the only species of animals which have always killed each other. These are not the crimes of any one nation. Cruelty, a taste for violence, religion of force, ferocious nationalism are not the prerogative of a period or of a people. They are of all ages and of all countries. They have biological and psychological bases which suggest that it is by no means certain that we shall escape again.

24 Farm Avenue, L David  
London NW2

*I disagree both with the negative prognosis and the preceding generalisations. The English and Germans alike fought part-religious civil wars in the first half of the 17th century, but nothing in England compared in ferocity with the Sack of Magdeburg. By the same token the victims of "bloody" Mary Tudor were far fewer than those of the Spanish Inquisition. Ed.*

Sir - In her memoir of the infamous Armenian genocide (August issue) Angela Arratoon rightly deplores the continued efforts of the Turkish authorities to hush up these massacres. She also points out that little, if anything, has been done to remind the world of them.

It is with particular satisfaction that one

can cite the eminent Jewish-Austrian writer Franz Werfel, who's *Forty Days of Musa Dagh* has set the Armenian tragedy a monument for all times.

Ilford, Eva Liebermann  
Essex

Sir - Nothing can ever compare with the actions of a so-called modern, civilised country such as Nazi Germany hunting out Jews in every country they invaded in the last war.

Lake Road, Vivian J Gross  
London SW19

Sir - A question to Angela Arratoon: what Jewish survivor has ever denied Armenians, or others, the right to publicise their gruesome experiences? By coincidence, an answer to her observations is on page 5 (August issue) in a hierarchy of victims.

Aberdare Gardens, Ezra Jurmann  
London NW6

### RIGA MEMORIAL

Sir - Kibernieky Forest, in which fifty-seven mass graves have so far been unearthed, contains the remains of 60-70,000 deported German and Austrian Jews. The forest is currently used as a recreation area - also for dogs - with nothing indicating that it is a giant cemetery.

A group of victims' descendants, aided by the Austrian Foreign Ministry, are trying to remedy this situation and erect a fitting memorial. Anyone with relatives buried there should contact Riga Memorial c/o Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, Seitenstettengasse 4, 1010 Vienna, Austria.

Vienna Erich Herzl

### CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Sir - Leafing through the August issue I came across various inaccuracies. For instance, I saw Nuremberg spelt "Nuremburg", the sort of mistake one wouldn't expect of *AJR Information*.

However, what made me really shudder, was the garbled version of the Italian saying right at the end of the article entitled "A name to conjure with" on the last page. *Se non e vero, e ben trovato* it should have been.

Hoping you can accept some constructive criticism.

63 Northways, Mrs M Stern  
College Crescent



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# The AJR at Work

## 1994 Charity Concert



Just three of the nearly four hundred audience at the Purcell Room for our concert.

Photo: Newman.

The AJR and Self Aid 46th Annual Charity Concert took place on Sunday 4 September. The Purcell Room at the South Bank Centre was filled to capacity with members and friends who had come to enjoy the music of Chopin, Schubert, Kreisler and Beethoven performed by Erich Gruenberg and Anthony Goldstone. The performance was of the highest quality, and one could

sense the exhilaration engendered by the passionate playing of the artists.

However, it is part of the AJR concert "tradition" that, in the final analysis, the music is not as important as the event itself. This is a social event of a very special kind. There are always many familiar faces in the audience, people who attend every year in order to keep in touch with acquaintances whom they do not see in any other setting. It is the knowledge that the "regulars" will be there which encourages members from further afield to make the effort to come along and renew their acquaintance – with individual friends, with the Association and with the refugee community as a whole.

The 1994 concert was a thorough success, not only in terms of the performance – which lived up to the musical standards established in the previous 46 years – but also as an annual get-together.

□M.N.

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at

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on

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Paul Balint AJR Day Centre  
15 Cleve Road, London NW6

between 10 a.m. and 12 noon on the following dates:

Tuesday 4 October  
Wednesday 12 October  
Thursday 20 October  
Monday 24 October  
Tuesday 1 November

and every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at:  
AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, la Frognal,  
London NW3

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

## AJR MEALS ON WHEELS

A wide variety of high quality kosher frozen food is available, ready made and delivered to your door via the AJR meals on wheels service. The food is cooked in our own kitchens in Cleve Road, NW6, by our experienced staff.

This service is available to those members with mobility problems or other difficulties.

The cost for a kosher 3 course meal is £3.50. Delivery charge 50p. Payment for meals to be made to the Driver.

If you live in North or North West London and wish to take advantage of this service phone Joanne Botsman on 071-328 0208 for details and an assessment interview.

Meals can still be collected from 15 Cleve Road on weekdays (Mondays-Thursdays) for £3.50 per meal.

## Message from Ernest David

The other day a member of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre said to me "Do you realise what a fine team you have at the Day Centre?" It occurred to me that, although I realise it, I should also let all of you know that I realise what an excellent team of staff and volunteers we have, not only at the Day Centre, but in all spheres of AJR activity.

Efficiency is important, and I undertook to ensure that our Association is run as efficiently as possible in order to make the most of the money available.

This month's issue of *AJR Information* is a major example of this striving for efficiency, as it is the first issue to be printed by our new printers. We have always been satisfied with the quality of our previous printers, but we have now managed to negotiate a deal with Freedman's of Golders Green which will show us good savings, while maintaining the quality of the product.

But efficiency alone is not enough. What distinguishes the AJR is the warmth, care and devotion displayed by staff and volunteers alike towards our members. I have not been in my position very long, but long enough to be proud of the team that I lead in your service. □

## Volunteer opportunities

1. Home visitors (befrienders) are needed for people in the Kilburn, Temple Fortune and Fulham SW6 areas.

2. A wheel-chair pusher is needed for a lady in the Maida Vale area.

Offers for these two "posts" to Laura Howe, AJR Volunteers Co-ordinator: 071-431 6161 Tuesday-Friday.

3. A general helper is needed for Thursdays at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, 3.30pm-6.30pm. Must be prepared to work as a member of a team. A helper is also needed for Sunday afternoons 2-6pm. Alternate Sundays would be possible.

4. Drivers are always needed to take people to/from the Day Centre, Cleve Road, NW6. By transporting an elderly person to or from the Centre, you enable that person to have an enjoyable day out.

Volunteers for the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre should ring Sylvia Matus or Renée Lee: 071-328 0208 Monday – Thursday. A few hours of your time each week would help us all. □



## Day Centre Open Day



Renée Lee.

The Annual Open Day at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre attracted almost two hundred guests and made over £1100 as a contribution towards the Day Centre's funds.

The afternoon, once again organised by Sylvia Matus and Renée Lee, with the help of AJR staff and many volunteers,



Sylvia Matus.

was judged by all to be a great success. The atmosphere, generated by the excellent turn-out and fine weather, was wonderful.

Bargain-hunters were able to take advantage of the stalls set up in the Centre's garden, whilst the more sedate took tea and refreshments inside.



Mrs. H. Angelus.

Photos: Newman.

The AJR's new Chairman, Max Kochmann, took time out to welcome all the guests and thank all those whose hard work had made the day so pleasant for everyone else. He also presented a plaque to Mrs H Angelus in appreciation of her generous donation for improving facilities at the Day Centre. □

# PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

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

Open Tuesday and Thursday 9.30 a.m.-6.30 p.m., Monday and Wednesday 9.30 a.m.-3.30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m.-6.30 p.m.

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

Afternoon entertainment -

## OCTOBER

- Sunday 2** DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 3** ENTERTAINMENT ON THE PIANO
- Tuesday 4** PIANO - PIANO - Deremy Henderson
- Wednesday 5** a) OUTING TO THEATRE  
b) MUSICAL DELIGHTS - Angi Boothroyd and Ruth Leber (Piano)
- Thursday 6** VIENNESE MUSIC - Claude May (Baritone) with Self Accompaniment
- Sunday 9** DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 10** FLUTE & PIANO ENTERTAINMENT BY Stella Ivaz & Margaret McNillan
- Tuesday 11** THE MUSICAL DUO - Jack Harris & Happy Branston

- Wednesday 12** THE JACK DAVIDOFF QUARTET With Nostalgic Music
- Thursday 13** A DUO FROM THE TRINITY COLLEGE OF MUSIC - Michaela Davies (Soprano) accompanied by Jean Paul Gandy (Piano)
- Sunday 16** DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 17** A MUSICAL AFTERNOON WITH THE "DUO VIVO" - Armen Eoldy (Tenor) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski-Pernas (Piano)
- Tuesday 18** OPERA & OPERETTA - Geoffrey Strum accompanied by Johnny Walton
- Wednesday 19** MUSIC HALL & CABARET ENTERTAINMENT - Anita Elias
- Thursday 20** DELECTABLE DUETS - Simon Rowe (Baritone) Karin Anderson (Soprano) and Alice Smith (Piano)
- Sunday 23** DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 24** THE ORCHARD TRIO - (Piano - Flute & Oboe)
- Tuesday 25** JERRY WRAY - MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE BAND - Will Entertain on Clarinet & Keyboard

- Wednesday 26** A JOURNEY TO AUSTRIA - Talk by Otto Deutsch
- Thursday 27** MEMORIES IN MUSIC - Sergio Biseo (Double Bass & Guitar) Edward Lee (Banjo & Piano) - Jan North (Soprano)
- Sunday 30** THE MELODIANS - Susan Reed, Alun Davies & Ron Mitchell (Piano)
- Monday 31** CELLO & DOUBLE BASS ENTERTAINMENT WITH PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT, Christine Hurley & Martin Myers

## NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 1** OPERETTA FAVOURITES - Kirsty Young (Soprano) accompanied by Stuart Wild (Piano)
- Wednesday 2** AN AFTERNOON OF MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT - Lara Jane Moyler (Soprano) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski Pernas
- Thursday 3** SANG u. KLANG - Angela & Nicholas Arratoon - Diana & Elizabeth Legroux accompanied by Maurice Hermele
- Sunday 6** DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT

**FAMILY EVENTS****Deaths**

Liebmann Erich Julius Liebmann passed away on 4 August, 1994, aged 86, after prolonged suffering. Sadly missed by his wife Resi (née Schloss), sons Peter and Stephen and five grandchildren.

White Heinz White (Weisz) on 1 September, aged 75. Deeply missed by his wife, sons, daughter, son-in-law, daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

**Birthday**

Gee Ruth Gee, forever active and creative, was 80 years young on 20 September. Congratulations!

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**NEW HUNGARIAN  
DATES**

The dates for the meeting - organised by the KUT (Well) Foundation, the European Israel Forum and the Bar Kochba Foundation - for Hungarian-speaking Holocaust survivors and their families in Budapest have been changed.

The meeting will now take place on  
**November 18 - 20, 1994**

The enrolment fee has been reduced from \$500 to \$300, including accommodation with full board. There will be opportunities to visit Jewish memorial sites around Budapest.

Application forms can now  
be obtained from: Dr Virag,  
Budapest XIII, Karpát  
Utca 60, Hungary.

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Alice Schwab

# Art Notes



Portrait of Max Liebermann, wood cut, 1926 by Conrad Felixmüller. Photo: Courtauld Institute.

From 15 September to 30 October the Courtauld will be showing works on paper by Conrad Felixmüller (1897 – 1977). Felixmüller trained in Dresden and turned to graphics to earn a living. He joined the Communist Party in 1919 and pursued industrial subjects in the Ruhr, as well as producing an important series of portraits of patrons and colleagues. A comprehensive catalogue by Dr Shulamith Behr accompanies the exhibition.

The National Gallery has produced a number of important art books. The latest in the series is *The National Gallery Companion Guide* by Erika Langmuir (paperback £7.50). Commenting on 200 of the Gallery's finest works, Erika Langmuir enables the visitor or reader to trace the history of European painting from the Renaissance to modern times.

*Making and Meaning: The Young Michelangelo* is the title of a new exhibi-

tion at the National Gallery (19 October – 15 January 1995). The gallery owns two works by Michelangelo, both of them unfinished, and the exhibition explores how and why the works were painted and how they might have been intended to appear. It also includes relevant works by Domenico and David Ghirlandaio, Francesco Granacci and early drawings by Michelangelo himself.

Spinks will be showing *Landscapes and Still Lives by Edward Seago* (2 – 25 November). The subjects range from his native East Anglia to the canals of Venice, Morocco, Istanbul and Africa.

*Japanese Imperial Craftsmen and the West: Art of the Meiji Period* (1868 – 1912) from the Nasser d. Khalili Collection is at the British Museum (21 September – 18 January 1995). This is an exhibition of superb metalwork, enamelware and lacquer which will probably never be surpassed.

*The Sitwells and the Arts of the 1920s and 30s* is at the National Portrait Gallery (14 October – 22 January 1995). It is a visual celebration of the lives and art of Edith, Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell, including a magnificent family portrait by Sargent, portraits of Edith by Alvaro Guevara, and of Iris Tree by Vanessa Bell.

## SB's Column

**A rare visit.** The Romanian National Opera Company is to visit London with a semi-staged performance of Verdi's *Nabucco* at the Royal Albert Hall on 17 October. The RNO, founded in 1885, is most famous in Eastern Europe, producing traditional works on a lavish scale with a touring company of some 200 members.

**60 years ago.** The Willy Forst film *Maskerade*, a pioneering work of *avant-garde* ideas created quite a sensation in the thirties. Still often shown on German Television, it featured Adolf Wohlbrück (Anton Walbrook) and Hans Moser. The cast was headed by Paula Wessely who introduced the simplicity and naturalness into a hitherto rather artificial atmosphere. She is the only survivor of the ensemble and lives, aged 87, in the Vienna suburb of Grinzing.

**Austrian tit-bits.** Because of major repairs to the building, the Vienna state Opera will remain closed until December; Marianne Hoppe played Jedermann's

There is a magnificent Omega Workshop screen from Osbert's collection, paintings by Roberts and Nevinson, and drawings by Picasso and Modigliani.

**Signals** is a celebration of the vitality and diversity of women's photography and comprises over 300 exhibitions throughout the country. Part of the exhibition at the Photographers Gallery (30 September – 12 November) is *Can I say Shalom?*, new colour documentary photographs tracing the passage of Jewish life by Miriam Reik.

At the Imperial War Museum (15 September – 13 November) and also at Flowers East (until 30 October) they will be showing *Peter Hovison: Bosni*. Hovison, a Scottish painter, was commissioned by the Museum and *The Times* to record his impressions of the war in Bosnia.

**The London Group** is an association of English artists, whose original members included such names as Wyndham Lewis, Lucien Pissarro, Sickert, Bomberg, Gaudier-Brzeska, John and Paul Nash, William Roberts and Stanley Spencer. Recent work by members of the group is being exhibited at the Morley Gallery (6 – 27 October) and all work on display will be for sale. □

mother at this year's Salzburg Festival; rumours persist that Hoffmannsthal's drama will be totally revised for future presentations, although no director has so far been found willing to revolutionise the original production which opened the Festival in 1920.

**Birthdays.** Austrian actor Franz Stoss, a former director of Vienna's "Josefstadt" is 85; Marcello Mastroianni, the Italian heartthrob had his 70th birthday; Swiss-born Liselotte Pulver, popular actress of the German stage and screen, whose versatility was attested by appearances in Goethe's *Clavigo* alongside numerous comedies, has turned 65.

**Obituary.** Gottfried Reinhardt, younger son of the illustrious Max, who died, aged 80, was a Hollywood producer and director with a varied and rather stormy career. Having directed Greta Garbo in her last film, *Betrayed*, he worked alternatively in Germany and the USA during the Fifties and Sixties. Although he had many films to his name, he always stood in the shadow of his illustrious father whose unique reputation he could never match. □

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## Before the anticlimax

AW Freud with the Special Operations Executive in Austria

Eventually the red control light came on inside the plane, warning us that we were approaching the dropping zone. We all got ready and crowded around the door (or the aperture, according to Warner & Kelley). We were to drop in two sticks; first my lot of two, then the pilot would make another round and drop the other four, so that we should land relatively closely together. Fred Warner recently told me that we jumped in 2 sticks of 3 people each; I do not know who's memory is better! I was number one of the first stick. I had a torch and it was arranged that I would morse the plane "OK" with it after landing, but only if that was successful, i.e. if I had landed at or near the right spot. We were supposed to be dropped from a thousand feet above ground, which allows enough time for the 'chute to open, but is low enough to avoid drifting for a long distance due to the wind. Such a drop should last not much longer than one minute, as one drops at about fifteen feet per second.

The green light appeared inside the plane; I could feel the dispatcher touching my shoulder and quickly stepped out through the open door into the darkness. We were lucky that we could jump at our first attempt. Quite a few parties had flown out but could not jump due to adverse weather or other conditions, and had to fly home again. I knew of one Special Force party who had made four

unsuccessful attempts to drop; the nervous strain on them must have been terrific. For us, on the other hand, the jumping conditions were acceptable at the first go. It was the pilot of the plane who had to make this decision.

Once my parachute had opened, which it did within a few seconds, I seemed to be hanging in the air for hours. I gently lowered my heavy rucksack on its 25ft line, so that it dangled below me. Unfortunately, its pendular movement was very strong, much more pronounced than during training, and it pulled the bottom strap of the chute away from underneath my behind. As a result, I was uncomfortably supported by my leg straps on my testicles. A most peculiar sensation took hold of me while I was gently floating down. My mind seemed to separate itself from my body; it seemed to float above it. I, i.e. my mind, was looking down at my body and said "Who is that peculiar madman hanging at the end of a parachute over Austria?" I did not feel in any way connected with my body, but rather looked at it like a detached observer. This sensation did not last long, but was very definite and unique in my life.

At long last, I guess after ten minutes, I landed gently. Although it was almost completely dark, there was a bit of a moon and it was obvious to me that I was not at my mountain meadow, but in a wide open valley. I could not hear our plane, I couldn't see it, but even if I had done so, I would not have flashed the "OK" signal. I had no idea where I was, but it was obvious to me that I was somewhere where I should not be. I believe that I was dropped not from a thousand feet above ground, but more likely from seven or eight thousand feet. The reason was not hard to see. The highest mountains in that area are about 8,000 ft above sea level and a pilot would be very foolhardy, not to say suicidal, to fly below that level on a dark night. The Mur Valley is only about 1,200 ft above sea level, so I was probably dropped from seven or eight times the prescribed height, taking eight minutes at least. During this time, I must have drifted for miles.

After landing, I untied myself from my uncomfortable parachute harness and scouted around for the others. I didn't know if they had been dropped or not; I had not flashed the "OK" signal and did not dare to shout or to use my torch too obviously, as I had no idea who might be in the neighbourhood. I could neither see nor hear anything, except for some bark-

ing dogs in the far distance and didn't even bother to look for the container with the heavy luggage; how can one, on a pitch dark night in a completely strange place?

When planning the operation, we had arranged a rendezvous for meeting after the drop. It was to be at the south-west corner of the mountain meadow, our selected dropping area, across a little stream. I had had a jocular argument with Schweiger about that location telling him: "Look, if we have to cross that stream, we shall get wet feet". I was no great friend of wet feet in winter. But Schweiger was adamant that this was the best location for our meeting place, for reasons now forgotten. So now I looked around for that place. Hearing some water running in the distance, I quickly hid my parachute in some undergrowth and went off to find the source; it was not far away. In accordance with Schweiger's orders I went in deeper and deeper into the ice-cold water; it was running so fast that it almost knocked me over. When it reached my belt, I realised at long last that this couldn't be Schweiger's little mountain stream and returned to the bank. Now it was not just my boots which were wet and cold, but all my body up to my belt.

It was reasonable to assume that I could do no more that night and hence I went a little way towards and into the wooded slopes of the mountain, unrolled my sleeping bag and crawled inside. I did not even dare to take off my wet boots, in case I needed to make a quick getaway.

☐ To be continued...

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## Crossing point

Everything was new:  
her coat heavy as winter;  
the boys' short trousers;  
their shoes shining like ice.

Everything was new. The train  
had wrenched her from Vienna-  
Reindorfasse that still held  
the sheen of her childhood;  
from loved faces with hope  
bandaged tightly over worry,  
from the thin waving of hands.

The station at Emmerich was new too:  
concrete pillars straddling arches;  
platforms speckless as German Maidens;  
the strut of uniformed legs.

The red J Stamped  
in the corner of her passport  
branded her cheeks long before  
the compartment door was opened.

'You and your two children step down.'  
Fear riddled the air and as the train  
moved on, the few miles  
to Holland became infinity.

Her knees threatened to unhinge  
when the boys were prised  
out of her sight to be searched.  
The control she'd built for months,  
queuing to beg permits from clerks  
ungiving as grilles, collapsed.

'Don't take them' she sobbed.  
Didn't see the unmalicious,  
bovine eyes, the boots hoofing  
in embarrassment. In her bag  
one set of papers was out of date.  
In her head the Führer's words  
fired and fired.

A woman checked the body  
inside her coat, unlaced  
her shoes. She was suspended  
in a cold swing of terror.

The children returned intact.

It was dark when the train  
pulled out, passed rows  
of windows dimmed for war.  
She knew they'd crossed  
the border when light splashed  
from every farm. Relief swept  
like sun over greening fields  
fenceless to the sky.

□ Myra Schneider

## Cooking with Gretel Beer



### Turbot with fresh walnut butter

There are only a few weeks in the  
year when walnuts are fresh enough  
to be peeled – and now's the time.  
The recipe for this dish was given to me  
by Eckart Witzigmann of the *Aubergine*  
in Munich (3 stars in Michelin and the  
highest marks in Gault-Millau) many  
years ago. It is well worth waiting for  
through the rest of the year and definitely  
worth the trouble of peeling the walnuts,  
though I admit that it is a fiddly job.

#### Ingredients (Serves two)

2 thick turbot fillets  
2oz (50g) shelled and skinned walnuts  
2oz (50g) butter  
1 – 2 anchovy fillets  
a little pepper  
2 tablespoons unsweetened grape juice (or  
dry white wine)  
butter for the aluminium foil

The walnuts have to be fresh enough for  
the thin brown skins to be peeled off eas-  
ily (putting them in cold water first makes  
this easier if they are a little past their  
prime). Grind just over half the peeled  
walnuts very finely and chop the remain-  
der. Cream the butter, beat in the finely  
chopped anchovy fillet(s), then beat in  
both the ground and chopped walnuts.  
Season lightly with the pepper – no salt.

Butter two pieces of kitchen foil meas-  
uring about 10" x 12", each large enough  
to enclose a fillet with room to spare. Cut  
through the thickness of the fillets to  
within 1/4" of the edge. Spread the inside  
of each fillet with the butter mixture and  
close the fillets over the filling. Close the  
foil over the fillets, leaving plenty of  
room. Set the parcels on a baking sheet  
and bake in a pre-heated oven at gas  
mark 4 (350F, 170C) for about 20 min-  
utes. Serve the parcels – unopened – on  
heated plates. □

## Lapidary Truth

Enoch, whose patronymic Powell  
Fortuitously rhymes with disembowel,  
As Tory Minister of Health  
Brought to Britannia's shore by stealth  
Many a nurse of dark aspect  
Who gained her patients' deep respect  
But having scoured the Carribean  
He suddenly produced a paean  
Of hatred, backed up by quotation,  
That cried Beware miscegenation!  
Had nightmares like an old imbibor  
Of absinthe turning Thames to Tiber  
And saw, like quondam Tacitus,  
That river foam with blood and pus.

Next to Hibernia he went,  
A Christian land since centuries rent  
By conflict with its Christian neighbour,  
And – second *volte-face* – voted Labour  
To keep Great Britain sovereign  
But cut his links with Ulstermen  
Slid out beneath the greasy pole  
And now resumed his prentice role  
Of knowledge-seeking cloistered scholar  
Devoid of judgement-clouding choler  
And from immersion in the Gospel  
Concluded it just wasn't poss'ble  
That Jesus had been crucified  
-*Au contraire*, the way he died  
Had been through stoning by the Jews...  
That's why the Gospel's called Good  
News. □ R.G.

## MS Aid

The Rishon Multiple Sclerosis Aid Group,  
which has been working with and for  
Jewish MS sufferers for nearly 28 years, is  
responding to the call to form a special  
section for younger people who have been  
diagnosed as having MS.

The Group are anxious to hear from  
anyone under the age of 35 years who is  
in this category, or anyone in this age  
range who would like to help in setting up  
a new group.

The co-ordinator of this initiative is:  
**Mr Alex Stockdale, 37 Richfield Road,  
Bushey Heath, Herts., WD2 3JY.  
Phone: 0181-950 3032. □**

Simon P. Rhodes M.Ch.S.

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## Obituaries

## Elias Canetti

The writer Elias Canetti was an emblematic figure of our confused century, a large part of which overlapped his own life. He wrote in German, which he only learned after several languages including English – into which latter tongue his work had to be translated; yet when he won the Nobel Prize for Literature it was as an “English” author.

He was born in 1905 at Rustchuk, Bulgaria, into a Sephardi family. His grandfather, a wholesale grocer, subscribed to a Constantinople-based newspaper, written in Ladino with Hebrew script. At 6-years-old Canetti came to Manchester, whence some years later his newly-widowed mother took him to Central Europe. His formative years were spent in Zurich, Frankfurt and Vienna; in the latter city he attended university and, under the spell of Karl Kraus, embarked on a literary career.

In 1931 he wrote *Die Blendung* (published 1935) the story of an unworldly academic whose marriage to his obtusely hostile housekeeper so unhinges him that he turns his library into his own roaring funeral pyre. With a demonically sadistic janitor as its third protagonist, the novel uncannily prefigured the Nazi immolation of European culture, and received critical acclaim from, among others, Thomas Mann.

A “fiery” event personally witnessed by Canetti – the burning of the Vienna Palace of Justice by a mob in 1927 – prompted him to study and ponder crowd psychology; the postwar publication of the resultant study *Masse und Macht* (Crowds and Power) greatly enhanced the author’s reputation.

Canetti had spent the war in London, and continued living there subsequently, detached from its literary *coteries*. Even so, he enjoyed the friendship of several British cultural luminaries. Iris Murdoch dedicated a novel to him and Veronica Wedgwood translated *Die Blendung* into English. However, when *Auto-da-Fé* appeared it proved too gloomily cerebral for English readers.

Canetti’s three-volume autobiography, on the other hand, turned out to be far more accessible. Written in a mordant style, it showed the author to have known almost everybody who was anybody in interwar artistic Europe – from Brecht to

Alma Mahler. (Typically, Canetti entitled one volume, in tribute to Karl Kraus, *Die Fackel im Ohr* – The Torch in the Ear.)

Canetti received the Nobel Prize in 1981 and spent part of his remaining years in Switzerland. Although his involvement in Jewish causes was practically nil, the themes that engaged his imagination – irrationality, mob psychosis, terror – were the archetypal Jewish preoccupations of our century. □

## Dr Ernst G Lowenthal (E.G.L.)

“EGL” died, aged 89, on 8 August. His career as communal worker and publicist began in Berlin in 1929, when he became an official of the *Central-Verein* (CV). From 1933 onwards he was one of the most respected spokesmen of the community by virtue of his great personal courage and his deep understanding of the true situation.

In addition to his duties with the CV, he was production manager of the *Monatsschrift für die Geschichte der Deutschen Juden* and the *Posener Heimatblätter*. He also contributed to the *Philo-Lexikon* and edited the *Philo-Atlas* (which conveyed basic information about possible countries of emigration).

The CV was dissolved in the wake of the November pogrom. Otto Hirsch, the Director of the *Reichsvertretung*, managed to obtain British entry visas for some communal officials. EGL and his first wife, now Ilse Wolff, were amongst them.

Shortly after his arrival in England, EGL was appointed a case worker for the Jewish Refugee Committee, based in Bloomsbury House. His job, which involved a thorough investigation of the financial and social plight of claimants, required great reserves of humanity and a strong sense of justice.

As well as this job, EGL took on many other tasks, amongst them being membership of the founding executive of the AJR. He was the last surviving member of that committee. The survival of our organisation through these first few difficult years was largely due to EGL’s expert assistance and administration. When war-time paper restrictions were lifted it was he, and Herbert Freeden, together with this writer, who took responsibility for the production of *AJR Information*.

Post-war, EGL returned to Germany and, unlike many other relief workers, stayed on permanently. Among the many

tasks he accomplished there, was the reclamation of Jewish communal properties and their division between the numerically shrunken Jewish communities and the organisations represented at the Claims Conference. He also served as secretary to the advisory committee on claims of Jewish community workers. As an expert administrator, he had a decisive share in the achievements of this committee and of the Leo Baeck Institute Committee, of which he was an elected member.

A lasting contribution to the memory of Jewish communal workers is EGL’s anthology *Bewährung im Untergang* which carries short biographies of those people who stayed in Germany to help their fellow Jews and shared their fate. Had it not been for the dedication of EGL, much of the material in this book would have been lost in the aftermath of war; the descendants of German Jewry owe a deep debt of gratitude to the author.

His articles, reports and reviews which appeared in the *Allgemeine Wochen Zeitung*, *Aufbau* and *AJR Information* were legion. Their quality and erudition have been recognised in two awards bestowed on him after his 85th birthday: the Leopold Lucas Prize of the University of Tübingen and an honorary professorship awarded by the City of Berlin in recognition of his outstanding contribution to German-Jewish understanding. A full life of recognised, constructive work has come to an end. The circle of friends who can bear witness to it is dwindling. They feel united in their sense of loss with his wife Cecile Lowenthal-Hensel who, when EGL’s health began to fail in the last year of his life, did everything possible to ease his plight. □ W. R.

## Joachim Rotter

Berlin-born Joachim Rotter has died, aged 81. Forced by his father’s early death to leave school at fifteen, he was apprenticed in the leather trade. He came to England in 1935 and after brief internment in 1940 did war work.

Postwar he carried on working as a broker in hides and skins until his retirement at the age of 76.

J Rotter was a keen, versatile and knowledgeable amateur musician; he also enjoyed penning invariably controversial pieces on music and other topics for publication in *AJR Information*. □



## Destination Mauritius

After the Patria sank (with the loss of about 200 lives) 1,580 refugees were sent from Haifa to Mauritius, a seventeen day journey on a poor boat. Many were already suffering from cholera and typhoid.

They arrived in Port Louis on 26 December 1940 and were taken in rickety old coaches to be interned in the old prison at Beau Bassin. The temperature was above ninety degrees and it was the cyclone season.

Once in the prison compound, families were separated, the men being sent to cells and the women to tin huts on the waste ground outside. In no time at all, malaria broke out amongst the many debilitated refugees and, within six weeks some 128 had died, my mother among them.

For the first year conditions for the survivors were harsh, with hardly any water for washing and little cloth for clothing. However, by 1943, things got a little easier and the inmates were allowed out to listen to music and to see the glorious Indian Ocean paradise that is Mauritius.

The 1,500 people interned comprised a good cross-section of professions and trades, among them a rabbi and university lecturers, which meant that synagogue services and educational programmes were soon organised. When, sadly, deaths occurred, they had their own monumental masons to prepare the tombstones. Some younger people managed to enlist in the army. Later, married couples

were allowed back together again and some sixty children were born.

During the war, thanks to the efforts of the Red cross, we managed to correspond with father, the letters taking anything from six weeks to three months to make the crossing in either direction. My sister sent father paraffin fuel tablets for primus stoves and these he used as barter for comforts such as cigarettes, sweets and cloth for trousers.

The notice of mother's death arrived in England by telegram on 16 May, 1941 (she had died on 29 January). It was exactly 50 years later, on 16 May 1991, that my husband, Harry, and I set out to visit Mauritius which, half a century before, had seemed to my young mind as far away as the moon – and as inaccessible.

All is peaceful there now. A hinterland of beautiful mountains and flowering shrubs. The cemetery is turfed over, with a white picket gate – over which is the inscription "Blessed be the true Judge". The gravestones are beautifully maintained. They have not aged or tilted, there are no streaks of green or cracks of frost. Time has stood still. It is as the war cemeteries which can be seen in Ypres or the Far East. Over the years, money has been donated by benefactors, mainly from South Africa, and the maintenance of the grounds which stand, not in isolation, but in close proximity to the Anglican and Moslem cemeteries, is overseen by the Anglican community and its Archbishop.

Then, of all the hotels we could have chosen, a photographer contact, who had helped prepare my itinerary, told me we were 500 yards from where an ex-member of the Palestine police who had guarded my parents then lived. We walked over to him. He lent us a book on the times we were researching, and told us that he took some 1,380 survivors back to Palestine on 12 August 1945 (my father among them).

□ Margaret Olmer

## Prospective merger

Germany's two largest extreme-Right parties, Schonhuber's Republikaners and Gerhard Frey's Deutsche Volks Union (DVU), are contemplating fusion. A merger would obviate the rivalry that, for instance, kept the Far Right out of the Hamburg Parliament at the recent Land elections. The authorities at Bonn are concerned, but calculate that more conservative-minded Schonhuber supporters might balk at voting for blatantly extremist DVU candidates. □

## Birthday

### Pamina Liebert-Mahrenholz



The daughter of a Mozart-loving lawyer, hence her first name, was born in Berlin just over 90 years ago.

After attending the Hohenzollern Lyceum, Pamina Liebert was apprenticed to a firm of fashionable milliners, but her artistic abilities were soon recognised; in 1928 she was admitted to the sculpture class of Fritz Klimsch, the well-known sculptor, at the Berlin Academy of Art. In 1931 she won a bronze medal, and in 1932 the Prix de Rome as Professor Klimsch's "master student". In 1934 she was accepted by the *Staatliche Akademie der Kunst*, then under the presidency of Max Liebermann. In the meantime she had married the photographer Rolf Mahrenholz who left for England in 1938; she followed in 1939, and was interned in Holloway Prison and then on the Isle of Man for two years.

After the war Pamina had various jobs, including bundling kindling wood (3 pence for 60 bundles), but fortuitously learnt china restoring, which she adopted successfully as a new profession. In 1964 she was able to return to her original love, sculpture, and immediately exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer show. She also started to paint and acquired her own studio where she both worked and taught. Over the years she has had six one-person shows and has participated in many collective, prestigious exhibitions including the major *Art in Exile* exhibition of 1986 which showed both in London and Berlin. Pamina Liebert-Mahrenholz is still working. Long may she continue!

Mazal Tov – bis 120.

□ Alice Schwab

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Sunday 2 October, 1994, 3.00 p.m.  
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המרכז ליהדות  
במאנור האוסט

## Four summer seasons

### Summer 1932: Arrest with velvet gloves

An anonymous letter arrived at the Berlin-Moabit Criminal Court claiming that an alleged criminal intended to leave the country before his trial, due a few days later. According to the law, defendants suspected of planning to abscond had to be arrested before the trial. The very humane Public Prosecutor had no choice but to make out an arrest warrant.

Sending his junior to the local police station with the warrant, the prosecutor insisted that he accompany a constable to the accused's tenement – to reduce the shock of arrest. The junior was later sent ahead by the police to warn the accused of the imminent arrival of the warrant in order to provide time to sort out his affairs.

Everything was done to prevent excitement. Subsequently, escorted by the junior, both the defendant and the arresting officer made their way to the Moabit prison on foot.

### Summer 1933: Arrest with rubber truncheons

April 1, Boycott Day, leading department stores dismissed their Jewish employees without notice. The basic Labour Law, under which employers were obliged to make severance payments, was nullified under Nazi legislation. A team of junior solicitors, dismissed from state service, took up these cases and claimed payments for sacked employees. Every case was dis-

missed by judges who dared not act against the system.

One junior, leaving court after another case had been dismissed, was manhandled by a posse of SA men who declared him "under arrest". The young man's cry "I obey only the police!", remained unheeded. He was forced into a taxi and taken to the SA headquarters next to the Lehrter Bahnhof.

When the *Central-Verein* heard of the arrest of the young man, who worked under their auspices, they took steps to secure his release. Two SA men were induced (bribed) to arrange the prisoner's discharge. It took three months, during which he was held firstly in the Police Presidium and then, ironically, the Moabit Prison, to which place, only a year earlier, he had escorted another prisoner. Eventually, however, he walked free.

### Summer 1939: Passports to Richborough

An elegant room of the *Reichsvertretung* in the Kantstrasse was now being used as the office of the department in charge of selection of applicants for the Richborough Transit Camp, near Sandwich.

The Head of the Department was Richard Joachim, a courageous man and an outstanding jurist. The Selection Committee met twice a week, mostly under the Chairmanship of *Landgerichtsdirektor* Dr Walter Sprinz, also an outstanding jurist, whose main position was the administration of "Altneu" funds, providing very limited transfers to would-be emigrants. Both Joachim and Sprinz perished during the war. The "junior" was now the Administrative Secretary of the Department.

The applications, headed with photos of former concentration camp prisoners, who now looked more like criminals than businessmen, professionals and civil servants, were submitted to the Committee by officers of the *Hilfsverein* and the *Palaestina-Amt*. They set out the applicant's chances of re-emigrating from England to other countries, especially the USA and Palestine.

The deliberations of the Committee were very thorough – its decisions were matters of life and death. The day after each meeting the particulars of successful applicants would be collated and posted from the 24-hour post office at the Bahnhof Zoo to the Central British Fund, London, for the attention of Professor Norman Bentwich – for submission to the Home Office. With immaculate precision, the vouchers of approval arrived in

Berlin and were taken to the British Consulate together with passports into which visas could be entered.

On one transport it transpired that one of the men included had been a *Kapo* (a prisoner given authority over other prisoners) in Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp; he had been selected by a non-denominational committee with a small quota. He had been the best-hated man of the Camp and the other members of the transport declared that they would not guarantee his life once the Dutch-German frontier had been crossed. It was arranged that he should travel alone. When he arrived under British police protection, Richborough camp inmates assembled at the entrance. He was withdrawn by the police and, according to rumour, returned to the Continent. His fate is unknown.

### Summer 1940: Passports in the stable

The processing centre for interned "enemy aliens" allowed to go to the USA was Lingfield Race Course. The "office" had been established in one of the stables. Again, like the summer before, in *Kantstrasse*, though not in quite such elegant surroundings, passports lay on the table.

Like the room's regular occupants, officials obtained light and air through the upper part of the stable door. There was great excitement because the arrangements of clients had to be synchronised with those of their families, whom they would meet at the American Consulate in Epsom. They marched in columns, four abreast, to their buses, beginning their second emigration in one year.

□ From the *Memoirs of Werner Rosenstock*

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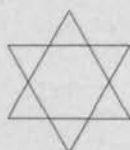
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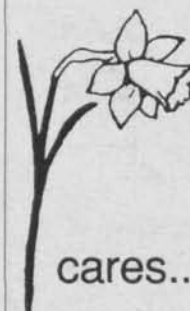
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