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MAY THE TRUTH PREVAIL

In the heart of historic Prague stands a monument to Jan Hus inscribed with his dictum 'the truth will prevail'. Espousing the idea of Protestantism before its time had come, Hus was burnt at the stake. Now, nearly six hundred years after his death, the truth has still not prevailed — but nor, thankfully, has the outright lie.

Non-historic Prague served as backdrop for one of the most mendacious constructs of all time: the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. In this poisonous piece of fiction the Sanhedrin met at midnight among the Hebrew-incised tombstones to concert plans for the Jewish takeover of the world. Though a proven forgery the Protocols received widespread credence; in the 1930s millions — even beyond the German borders — believed that the Soviets were Jewish-controlled and that President Roosevelt (alias Rosenfeld) had Jewish origins, as did Bank of England governor Montagu Norman. Goebbels' myth of Jewry exercising global power — through, among others, the *jüdisch versippte* Churchill — went out of fashion with the Nazi defeat and the discovery of the horrors of Auschwitz. However, even the postwar world did not lack mythmakers who discerned a hidden Jewish hand guiding the destinies of nations. Thus Roger Peyrefitte showed in his massively researched *Les Juifs* that the family trees of such important national leaders as General Franco and President de Gaulle sprouted hitherto unsuspected Jewish branches. Of course the significance of Peyrefitte's genealogical revelations is on a par with the discovery that the future Monarch, Prince Charles, is *jüdisch versippt* by virtue of his great uncle Earl Mountbatten's marriage to Edwina, granddaughter of Sir Ernest Cassel.

The mythology about nefarious Jewish power extended beyond fictitious Jewish personalities to bogus numbers. A century ago, Heinrich von Treitschke listed 'thousands of Jewish trouser sellers flooding into the Reich each year' as grounds for his pronouncement *die Juden sind unser Unglück* (the Jews are our misfortune). Judeophobia is so protean a phenomenon that antisemites can as readily revise Jewish demographic statistics downwards as inflate them.

Diminishing the unique magnitude of the Holocaust is, of course, the stock-in-trade of 'revisionists' and neo-Nazis who have for years conducted a nauseating auction-in-reverse in their endeavour to whittle away the awesome figure of six million victims. An only marginally less reprehensible attempt to manipulate the facts of the Final Solution for political ends has been the Soviet refusal to identify the principal victims of Nazi atrocities on Russian soil as Jews. Moscow newspeak for the hecatombs of Jewish dead is 'Soviet citizens who fell victim to Fascism'; as a corollary of this policy of de-Judaizing the dead, officialdom even refused to dignify the most notorious killing field in Occupied Russia, Babi Yar, with a memorial.

Nor, alas, can one discern a change in this area of Soviet policy; although Gorbachev devoted

part of his four-hour address to the special Party conference in June to the national issue, Jews did not even rate a mention.

In a strange conjunction of opposites the Pope seems to share the Soviet leader's reluctance to utter the ominous three letter word *Jew*. During the recent Papal visit to Austria — a source of controversy *ab initio* for breaching the isolation of that country's pariah-President — John Paul II spoke at the site of Mauthausen concentration camp. In that place of horror he found eloquent words of condemnation for the 'Nazi madness', but felt unable, despite the urgent plea of Jewish community leaders for clear words, to make explicit reference to Jewish suffering. It has been argued in extenuation that Rome is currently preoccupied with the fundamentalist breakaway group around Archbishop Lefèbvre who term the

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inter-faith dialogue initiated after Vatican II the work of Anti-Christ. But fear of presenting a broader target for the Le Pen supporter Lefebvre is only one stand in the tangled skein of Papal policy vis-à-vis the Jews; others are considerations of advantage in the Mid-Eastern power play, and the ineradicable residual antisemitism of traditionalist prelates who still view Jewry as Christ-killers. But the most powerful inhibition that prevents the Pope from making a full acknowledgement of Jewish suffering is that the Catholic Church has been unable to admit its own share of responsibility for this suffering. Vatican II was a step in the right direction, but it is only one, however large, stride along the long and stony road that remains to be traversed.

If monolithic institutions like the Kremlin and Rome have problems with the truth it is not to be wondered at overmuch. One did, however, expect rather better from the pluralistic British press, or at least the so-called quality papers. Things really have reached a sorry pass when *The Times* (18 July) makes a perfunctory mention of the Oxford Holocaust Conference alongside an item on the debts Robert Maxwell allegedly incurred at the 1986 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. But this stomach-turning juxtaposition of the sacred and the snidely profane was by no means the worst Fleet Street came up with apropos of the Holocaust Conference. First prize in the tactlessness stakes went to the *Observer* where Richard Ingrams chided Elizabeth Maxwell for risking that her obsession with the Holocaust distracted attention from events in Israel.

Ingrams who has lately raised his gaze from the molehills of the *Private Eye* terrain to the peaks of History cannot resist delivering magisterial judgments in matters Jewish. Several months ago he declared that blaming Jew-hatred on Christianity itself conduced to antisemitism; next he censured the *Daily Mail* for spiking a critical despatch from Israel filed by A. N. Wilson, the biographer of Hilaire Belloc; on the day of the Holocaust survivors' meeting Ingrams published a piece that yoked the cosmic Jewish catastrophe together with the political Palestinian problem and concluded ominously 'The Holocaust will not happen again, but the way things are going, the Diaspora might'.

Printers' ink, warned Karl Kraus, can poison the world's wells of truth. It is a warning we must heed!

NATIONAL THEATRE NEWS

Aristotle considered the role of drama to be the purging of the emotions through terror and pity. That cathartic function of theatre will certainly be fulfilled when Joshua Sobol's *Ghetto* receives its British premiere at the Olivier next year. (The Israeli playwright first attracted attention with *The Soul of a Jew*, his fantasy of the theme of Otto Weininger's suicide out of Jewish self-hate in *fin-de-siecle* Vienna.)

Ghetto, first produced in 1983 at the Haifa Municipal Theatre, Israel, is set in 1942 in the Jewish ghetto of Vilna, Lithuania.

The inspiration for Sobol was the discovery of a diary recording the opening, during the darkest days of the holocaust, of a theatre in Vilna.

IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION

JEWES IN GERMANY AND GERMAN-JEWISH REFUGEES IN BRITAIN

In each of the two situations — as *Jews* in Germany and as *Jewish refugees* in the UK, we were confronted with the twin problems of Diaspora Jews: *identity* or, if you prefer 'Jewishness' and *integration* in Gentile society. In each case, the balance between identity and integration depended — chance and individual experience apart — on the interaction of two main factors: individual (or collective) choice or 'self-determination' and the attitude of surrounding society. It was a matter of individual choice how far and in what form to preserve Jewish solidarity. It depended largely on the attitude of 'the others' — if also to some extent on our own choice — how far we would be integrated into surrounding society.

Outside factors, moreover, affected the attitudes both of Jewish minority and Gentile majority. Among them were the rise of Hitler, the War, the Holocaust, the creation of the state of Israel and the 'Six-Day War.' These were events tending to strengthen the affirmation of Jewish identity. They also tended to create sympathy for the refugees in Great Britain.

Against the background of these general considerations we may compare our German and our British experience. Decisive for the German experience was the nature of German nationalism, especially after 1871. The terms 'Deutsch' or 'national' became both emotive and normative. An argument started whether Jews could be 'gute Deutsche' or, indeed, Germans at all. In self-defence, Jews would constantly assert their 'Germanness' and play down their Jewish solidarity. A special feature of the situation was the substantial 'carrot' offered to Jews for conversion to Christianity in the shape of greatly improved career prospects. Conversion, in the context was NOT a matter of religious belief. It was, rather, the ultimate gesture of social conformity.

With this we may compare the *British* situation. The British with their feeling of innate superiority, their dislike of 'bloody foreigners' and 'lesser breeds without the law' were perhaps, in their own way, no less nationalistic than the Germans. However, in the assurance of their effortless superiority, they were less given than the neurotic Germans to demanding conformity and professions of loyalty.

There was another significant difference. Whilst 'German-ness' was conceived basically in *ethnic* later *racial* terms, 'British-ness' was not. It was possible to be or become British without being English, Scottish or Welsh. There was, on the other hand, no such 'super-ethnic' concept in Germany. It was, as a result, easier in Britain to accommodate ethnic diversity. Moreover, the British approach to such matters was more pragmatic and considerably less ideological (and sentimental) than the German. Also, British social attitudes allowed greater scope than the German for the 'nonconformist,' the 'outsider,' the 'eccentric.'

For these and other reasons, there was less pressure on German-Jewish refugees in Britain to proclaim or demonstrate their 'Britishness.'

'Loyalty' — internment notwithstanding — never became a lasting or major issue, not even when British and Jews clashed in Palestine. Nazi persecution on the other hand, aroused British sympathies both for Jews in Germany and, to some extent for refugees in Great Britain. There existed in Britain a tradition of sympathy for the 'under-dog' which had no counterpart in Germany.

As a result of these differences, 'Jewishness' was less of a problem in Britain. Jews could more easily be Jews and follow their daily avocations without the danger of unpleasantness or discrimination. The problem lay more in German origins.

Differences in the two situations had their effect on Jewish attitudes. Jewish solidarity — as is well known — is to some extent a product or function of hostile outside pressure. Such pressures — if of different kinds — did, in fact, exist in BOTH environments. In Germany, the steadily weakening bond of Jewish observance was progressively replaced by Jewish solidarity in the face of the rising tide of antisemitism. ALL Jews — even those wishing to conceal or shed their Jewishness — found themselves, in the last resort in the same boat. The same, applies, *mutatis mutandis* to the Jewish refugees in Great Britain. A shared difficult experience created or strengthened bonds of solidarity. The founding and work of the AJR are, of course, an expression of these bonds. A further factor promoting the persistence of Jewish solidarity is in both environments the existence of a variety of informal Jewish networks and institutions.

Finally, it may be worthwhile comparing the evolution within their respective societies of the two minority groups. The story of the Jewish community in Germany from Enlightenment and emancipation to Hitler — extending over five generations — is, overall, one of upward social mobility based on effective acculturation and economic advance. It is, notwithstanding setbacks and disappointments a story also of largely successful integration. There is an advance in status, in prosperity, and in opportunities.

As against this, the story of the refugees in Great Britain may be considered one of the success stories of the century. From economically modest beginnings — at times hardship — German Jews made their way in a relatively short time-span to respected, and, on occasion, prominent positions. In economic terms, *Wiedergutmachung* was, of course, a major factor. It would be a mistake to dwell overmuch on the dozen or so knight-hoods — public recognition of marked achievement, the numerous Fellowships of the Royal Society or positions of distinction in a number of professions. The position achieved by the broad middle range of former refugees and their children represents a no less significant achievement. Relatively few got left behind. And both in Germany and later in Britain the social conscience of organized Jewish communities and individuals helped to mitigate any residual hardship.

(Prof.) WERNER E. MOSSE

ON THE ROAD TOWARDS DOOM

Reminiscences of the Weimar Republic

I grew up in the Weimar Republic, but I was not born there. I came into it as the child of a family who had lost their home in what was, until the end of World War I, the Prussian province of Posen. We were, in the modern jargon, expellees, we paid our share in the price of the lost war. We were German patriots and in the short struggle against the Poles for possession of the province, our sympathies were with the German partisans, the *Freikorps* which were to acquire so hideous a reputation.

Having lost the struggle and opted for Germany, we moved to Berlin — for a couple of years' respite before we moved on again. To me of course, then aged ten, it was an exciting experience. Little did I ever dream in the *stiel* in which I grew up that I would ever see, let alone actually live in, the city where the Kaiser dwelt. But in fact it now was the capital of defeat, and, for all its gay baubles and golden tinsel, a sombre city.

The rebellion of 1918, but also the counter-revolutionary Kapp *Putsch* of 1920, had only just been suppressed, and clouds of brooding passions hung over the land, though as yet we could not hear the thunder rumbling in the Munich beer cellars. The earliest thing I can remember — fittingly enough, in retrospect — is murder: the assassination of Walther Rathenau, who happened to be a Jew. I still see the huge posters offering a reward for the capture of the killers, and for quite some time I could hear an echo of Chancellor Wirth's: 'The enemy is on the Right'.

There were of course different shades in that militarist, revanchist, antisemitic crowd. Not all were killers, actual or potential, or aiding and abetting. I met some of them at the school to which I was sent, the *Prinz Heinrich's Gymnasium* which, in its way, could well serve as a mirror of much of the Weimar Republic. It was a 'humanist' school and emphasized education in the classics, teaching Latin and Greek rather than English and French. Apart from this, it was not conspicuous for a 'humanist' spirit. The ideals of Greece were often obscured by the ambitions of a Prussian nationalism smarting under the memories of defeat. The school's war memorial was graced with the inscription INVICTIS VICTI VICTURI: *To those who were never conquered (this memorial is dedicated) by those now conquered who will conquer.*

German literature was taught by a devout Wagnerian. Though we read Goethe's *Faust* we never heard of his disdain for national hatred. Homer was held notable chiefly for his praise of the absolute monarchy; Virgil was presented as a warner against pacifism, and the verse of Horace 'it is a sweet and seemly thing to die for the fatherland' was raised to a national credo. Life here went on as if there never had been a revolution (alas, there hadn't).

About humanism in the sense of the ancients, we were not taught very much. According to the letter, yes: man was the measure of all things, but in spirit that man was German. I wonder how

many of the parents and teachers half agreed when in those days (1927) Dr. Goebbels, recently made *Gauleiter* of Berlin, countered a characteristically necessary Jewish appeal 'Humans, be human!' with the slogan 'Germans, be German!'.

Officially everything was correct. Jewish pupils were treated with consideration; Hebrew scripture lessons were given twice a week by a visiting rabbi, and we had a Jewish form master, Salomon Birnbaum, who through the vigour of his presence, the competence of his teaching and his authority as a mathematician and physicist, commanded respect, though some of his colleagues may have looked upon this *Ostjude* as a parvenu. He never did or said anything that might have suggested he was a Jew. Perhaps he half pretended it could be kept discreetly dark, except possibly when he showed himself particularly strict with his Jewish pupils.

In my time, the bourgeois nationalists were led by the aristocratic Count Westarp who, in 1927, supported the government on the ground that there 'the Christian elements had joined forces against the infidel Jews'. As the country squire did not think much of Berlin, he could find no more fitting word for his disapprobation than 'that New Jerusalem' (which to the faithful Christian might have been rather a cause for rejoicing). I myself heard him at an election meeting near the school abuse his political opponents as 'talmi — and Talmud — Jews'. I believe he ended, like some of the more radical (non-Nazi) *Deutschnationale*, in a concentration camp.

His fate was not much different from that of his spiritual counterpart, Superintendent General (later Bishop) Otto Dibelius, who was chairman of our school's Parents Association. His views were thoroughly representative of the Evangelical Church which might well have been defined as the German National People's Party at prayer.

I knew of only one Protestant minister who was a Social Democrat. I once went to hear him at his Charlottenburg church where he was preaching on the 200th anniversary of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's birth (1929). He spoke of the author of *Nathan the Wise* as the 'lonely man' — himself — who had the courage to defy the Superintendents of the established Church by taking his stand on the Gospel teaching 'Love one another'. Such things happened but Pastor Bleyer (of blessed memory) was a most remarkable odd man out.

I remember another, not a clergyman but in some ways also a nonconformist among his caste, the poet and essayist Börries von Münchhausen, who once wrote a cycle of biblical poetry entitled *Das Buch Juda*, published by the Zionist *Jüdischer Verlag* and illustrated by Ephraim Moses Lilien. This however was little more than a literary exercise, without much bearing on his views of the Jews in his time. I have kept a little known article by him, written in 1926, which characterizes the best of his generation. On the one hand, he agrees that 'the Jews who enjoy complete equality amongst us' have 'a right to

exist' (which seemed to him by no means self-evident), and he 'would not dream of denying anybody the freedom of opinion'; on the other hand, he could think of 'German' Jews only in segregationist quotation marks.

He had been annoyed by a poll which showed that people were buying twice as many books by 'Jews and foreigners' as by Germans (possibly his own included). Nothing much wrong with the Jews on that score, he said, they only use their rights, but 'shame' on his fellow Germans who were so 'lacking in racial instinct', so 'alien-worshipping', as to prefer Jews to Germans, who could not see that Heine's poetry was not really German or that Jakob Wassermann's 'master-hand' was able to portray only 'race associates', never Germans. It was not a question of locking Jews up in their ghetto — 'we have long been locked up in a *Christian* ghetto'. In the best style of his ballads, he saw 'the German soul' on its 'deathbed'; he even accepted the not otherwise acknowledged authority of a Frenchman who had referred to 'that Jewish land between Vistula and Rhine which backward geographers call Germany'.

He was not an antisemite, God forbid. Indeed, he declared he would have 'nothing to do with antisemitism whose father is envy and whose brother is murder'. Truly spoken, particularly about the brother, though *how* truly, Münchhausen could not realize, especially when he called (in 1926) for 'the great *Führer*' who would 'forge the whole people into one unit'. He lived to see him, and having mentioned the father and brother of antisemitism he now came to know the rest of the tribe, the mindlessly abetting fools of whom he happened to be one.

He luckily escaped the consequences of his intellectual self-betrayal, unlike Dibelius who having hailed the advent of Hitler, realized his fatal error too late when he — he of all people — was charged with 'treasonable attacks' on the Nazi Government.

Dibelius' politicizing homilies regularly appeared in the Hugenberg press. When Hugenberg supplanted Westarp in 1928, the Nazis, then on the advance from 12 M.P.s to 107 (in 1930), enjoyed the implicit goodwill of his vast and powerful press and film empire, far surpassing in influence such democratic papers as the *Berliner Tageblatt* and *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which international opinion chose to regard as the authentic mouthpieces of Germany.

But if Hugenberg winked an eye at the Nazis, it was not because the old-fashioned diehard Conservative fancied himself to be one of them. Though more radical than Westarp but free of personal antisemitism, he despised the upstarts who addressed their appeal to a socialism which, however phoney and nationalistic, was anathema to the capitalist. Nor did he have any sympathy for the guttersnipes who revelled in revolting bouts of bestiality. His eyes were on the expediency of a jingoist fanaticism which he reckoned would carry his own cause forward. He fancied he could play with the Nazi fire without burning his fingers — and much more besides. How much, he hardly could know, like those students I later met at Berlin University who greeted with rapturous applause the matter of fact remark by Professor

Ernst Heymann, the jurist, that in medieval German statutes, 'Jews were regarded as aliens and outlaws'.

No doubt here were some of Himmler's budding accomplices in the Final Solution. Yet it was not they whom we then feared. They were, in our eyes, disgustingly absurd freaks deserving none but a psychiatrist's attention. I took little more than a collector's interest when I found my visiting card which reserved my seat in a lecture hall besmeared with the message 'We'll get you yet', plus an inkdrawn gallows — gas chambers were then unknown. At the time of the Nazis' spectacular success in the elections of 1930, we comforted ourselves with the old adage that nothing was eaten as hot as it was cooked. Some of our leaders too assured us that antisemitic movements had a way of coming and going.

The problem seemed to lie elsewhere, and it is here that I find the most poignant and the most lasting of my recollections of the Weimar Republic — the role of what I might call the Prince Heinrich crowd, the people who were to determine the fate of a society which appeared on the face of it so hopeful an experiment. For the issue was not really one between the friends and the foes of democracy. It was settled, strange though it may seem, between the foes. The friends, the democrats of the various hues, were little more than a veneer that could easily be scraped off.

When the chips were down they without ado turned tail. They were the shadows — here was the substance, however different it might appear according to the arithmetic of Parliament. The bourgeois nationalists held the power. They abused their office because, in the last resort, they lacked all sense of moral scruple and of conscience. By agreeing, however guardedly, to make common cause with Hitler — whatever the reservations — they first provided him with a majority. Then, having been cheated of their foolish calculations, covered themselves with shame until at last they perished in unknown graves all over the East — if they had not already suffered the vengeance of the hangman's rope in July 1944.

C. C. Aronsfeld

MAKING AMENDS

Payment of DM 10 million is being made by Daimler (Mercedes) Benz to the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany (Claims Conference) as compensation for employment of Jewish slave labourers during the Nazi period. The amount will not be distributed to individuals, but to Jewish institutions who provide shelter for Jewish Nazi victims, particularly those who were forced to work in factories of Mercedes Benz and other German companies. Details as to how this amount will be distributed have yet to be worked out.

There have been press reports that the amount to be paid by Daimler Benz is DM 20 million. While this is correct, the amount earmarked for the Claims Conference is only half that figure; the other half is likely to go to the German Red Cross for distribution to institutions caring for non-Jewish Nazi victims.

THE LAND OF DEAD SOULS

Soviet history is currently being stripped of half a century's encrustations of lying propaganda with an alacrity and a readiness to say the Red Emperor had no clothes that is astonishing. If the present trend continues the joke which uniquely reflects the Orwellian flavour of Soviet life — wherein a participant at a historians' conference asks the speaker 'What is going to happen yesterday?' — may soon lose its point.

Welcome though such developments are, *glasnost*, not unlike various health-inducing drugs, could have certain dangerous side effects. We have already (AJR Information July 1988) drawn attention to the fact that the recent increase in religious freedom may, because of the Orthodox Church's traditional Great-Russian xenophobia, pose a threat to the Jews which did not exist — at least in that particular form — in more regimented days.

The application of *glasnost* to history writing means, among other things, that certain previous 'non-persons' are being rehabilitated. The beneficiaries of this process of rehabilitation are, of course, all dead since in Stalin's day non-person status involved trial on a trumped-up charge followed by execution — either instantly by firing squad, or, lingeringly, in the Gulag. (Karl Radek, for instance, who, thanks to Lion Feuchtwanger's reputed intervention with Stalin, received only a ten years' prison sentence, died after two years in the camps.)

Other Old Bolsheviks now rehabilitated, alongside Radek, include Grigory Zinovev and Lev Kamenev. Zinovev, in particular, exercised great power after the Revolution as head of the Communist International (*pace* the 'Zinovev letter' that brought down the first Labour government) and, more importantly, as Party boss of Petrograd, which he transformed into Leningrad with scant regard for humanity.

Radek, Zinovev and Kamenev all happened to be Jews — as, of course, was Trotzki who initiated the self-avowed 'Red Terror' to counter the brutalities of the Whites in the post-revolutionary Civil War. As sacrificial victims of Stalin's paranoia men like them were thus both innocent of their alleged offences as well as guilty of other — real — crimes. Their rehabilitation now, if accompanied by an examination of their role in the establishment of Soviet power, could thus be a mixed blessing for Russian Jewry as a whole. Fortunately though — if that is the appropriate term — Stalin's Jewish victims also included the likes of Osip Mandelstam and Isaak Babel, onetime household names as eminent in the arts as the aforementioned Old Bolsheviks in politics.

The more the highly literature-conscious Soviet public find out about them — such as the sadly frustrated Babel's tongue-in-cheek comment on the Stalinisation of culture 'The only freedom denied us is the freedom to write badly' — the greater is the likelihood that the image of *the Jew* in the Russian consciousness will one day reflect the depictions of Chekhov or Gorki rather than the caricatures of Gogol.

RICHARD GRUNBERGER

SHEKELS FROM THE SHOAH

The growing commercialisation of *Eros* has added a self-explanatory new word to the language: *sexploitation*. There may also be the need to coin a new word to describe the commercialisation of *Thanatos*, or death. The thought is prompted by the publication of D. M. Thomas's autobiographical reflections. Some readers may recall how the novel *The White Hotel* brought Thomas fame and fortune several years ago. However, the book also involved him in controversy. Critical voices alleged that in writing *The White Hotel* he had drawn heavily on the work of others — to wit on a case study by Freud, and an account of the massacre at Babi Yar by a Ukrainian writer.

Looking back on his own 'Babi Yar controversy' — there was also a more famous one involving Khrushchev, Shostakovich and Yevtu-shenko — Thomas now writes that on hearing about the sale of his American paperback rights in *The White Hotel* for 200,000 dollars he had an emotional reaction:

I started to sob. I couldn't stop. I sobbed from guilt. People died for that! People died for that! The sentiments do Thomas credit, though one jaundiced critic thought 'he doth protest too much!' A rather harsh judgment, but one wonders if it ever occurred to the author to donate some of his ill-gotten gains to Holocaust survivors or some related cause.

Actually there is an even more heinous offence than extracting profit from millionfold death, and that is turning it into grist for one's propaganda mill. 'Worse than Hitler' was how Danny Cohn-Bendit, himself the son of Jewish refugees, described US President Johnson during the Vietnam War. Tony Benn said of the newspaper proprietors that they hated the labour movement as much as the Nazis hated the Jews (a bit of not untypical hyperbole he apologised for afterwards). But the worse recent instance of that sort of thing occurred in the correspondence columns of *The Guardian*. Reacting to the police dispersal of the so-called peace convoy of hippies near Stonehenge last summer a reader felt moved to quote Pastor Niemöller's words about the Nazi terror: 'At first they came for the Communists and I looked the other way. Then they came for the Liberals and I looked the other way. Then they came for the Jews and I looked the other way. By the time they came for me it was too late'. Such a letter may afford individual therapy to someone suffering from paranoia but the invocation of the Nazi nightmare to score propaganda points against Mrs. Thatcher and her Home Secretary is more objectionable than an author's self-enrichment through descriptions of the Shoah.

CORRECTION

ZAHLUNG EINER LEISTUNG FÜR KINDERERZIEHUNG

In our issue of April 1988, we stated that detailed information on the above could be obtained from the Bundesamt für Finanzen, Bonn. We now understand that this is not so. The correct authority for enquiries in this connection is the Bundesversicherungsanstalt für Angestellte, Dezernat 1077, z.Hd. H. Schad, Postfach, 1000 Berlin 88.

KAFKA'S ENVIED FRIEND, ALMA'S PITIED HUSBAND

Die Werfel sind gefallen! trumpeted the headline, gloating and punning at the same time; the accompanying text in the Nazified Viennese newspaper stated, three days after the Anschluss, that the 'bard of the *verjudete* Schuschnigg state' had emigrated. As Austria's most famous author in 1938 — Stefan Zweig had long shaken the dust of Salzburg off his feet — Franz Werfel certainly merited a headline.

Forty-eight at the time of the Anschluss, Werfel had already been famous close on thirty years. Born into a wealthy Jewish family in Prague he had truanted at school and sabotaged his father's plans for a training in business, indulging instead a precocious taste for theatre and opera (especially Verdi) and writing soulful Expressionist poetry. One volume of youthful verse had, thanks to the intercession of his somewhat older selfless friend and mentor Max Brod, found a publisher, and at 19 Werfel could echo Lord Byron's celebrated remark 'I woke up one morning and found myself famous'. Poems were followed by novels and plays — some of the latter adaptations of Greek drama. In his version of *The Trojan Women* he made Hecuba appear as a female precursor of Christ, thereby showing a Catholicising tendency that became more marked — as well as controversial — as time went on. It strained Werfel's friendship with the Jewish-conscious Max Brod who must also have been chagrined at his protégé's greater success. (Franz Kafka, a mutual friend tied to a dull job in an insurance office, too, envied Werfel's freedom to lead a life entirely given over to literature).

The experience of soldiering during the Great War turned Werfel towards Pacifism and in November 1918 he, influenced by another Jewish fellow writer from Prague, Egon Erwin Kisch, participated in a botched attempt to turn the newly proclaimed Austrian Republic in a Communist direction. The collapse of that plan left Werfel floundering both as far as political orientation and personal life were concerned. For a while he became an out-and-out *bohémien* whiling away his days, and especially nights, in literary cafés, picking up girls and writing little. This period of dissipation ended abruptly when Alma Mahler, the woman who with characteristic selfregard styled herself 'muse to genius' entered Werfel's life.

It is in the depiction of Alma's personality and of her effect on the much younger writer who became her third husband that Peter Jungk's Werfel biography* really catches fire. Jungk leaves the reader in no doubt that the environment, both physical and psychological, she provided for Werfel enhanced his creativity, as exemplified by the play (and subsequent Hollywood film) *Maximilian and Juarez* and novels like *Der Abituriententag*. But as a corollary to Alma's support — even inspiration — he also had to put up with her propensity for quarrelling and almost unbelievable tactlessness. Shortly after the death of their deformed (only) child she called Werfel's seed 'degenerate', and for a while she maintained an adulterous relationship with, of all people, a

Catholic priest. But the worst of her many failings was surely her antisemitism!

This thrice-married woman two of whose husbands were Jews exemplified an Austrian variant of Jew-hatred which might be described as *Österreiches*. Lueger, the founder of Austrian political antisemitism had said 'I decide who is a Jew'; the similarly inclined veteran actor Hugo Thimig accepted Max Reinhardt as a son-in-law; as for Alma's stepfather, the painter Carl Moll, his high regard for his two Jewish sons-in-law Mahler and Werfel did not prevent him from becoming such a Nazi Party loyalist that he took his life on hearing of Hitler's suicide at the end of the Second World War.

Alma fitted into that pattern. She refused to marry Werfel until he formally severed his links with the Jewish community (and it must be said in his defence that, although he continued writing Catholic-oriented novels like *Barbara und die Frömmigkeit* and *The Embezzled Heaven*, he refrained from the ultimate step of having himself baptised). In the 1930s she managed to find good things to say about the newly installed Nazi government in Berlin, to whom Werfel was also at first prepared to address a declaration of loyalty; Peter Jungk rationalises the writer's unprincipled stance at the *Machtergreifung* by suggesting that he wanted German bookshops to be allowed to stock *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, his newly published, near-prophetic, indictment of the Turkish genocide of the Armenians during the Great War.

After 1934 Austria succumbed to clerical Fascism — a regime Alma supported wholeheartedly and which Werfel felt he needed to bolster by his commendation as the country's last defence against a Nazi take-over. (When the Spanish Civil War erupted, however, she sympathised with Franco and he with the Republic).

Last Waltz in Vienna — George Clare's famous phrase — would be an apt description for Werfel's and Alma's existence in the mid-Thirties. Thanks to his excellent sales and her social contacts they enjoyed a leading role in Viennese society, with Habsburg princelings, famous literati and political personalities like Chancellor Schuschnigg attending their lavish *soirées*.

That life collapsed like a house of cards in March 1938, but though the Werfels had to flee to France they did not suffer the hardships of anonymous refugees. They settled at Sanary-sur-mer where they had been preceded by earlier literary exiles like the brothers Mann and although war threatened the climate and intellectual debate provided compensations.

The Fall of France opened the floodgates of hell for the entire refugee community. Some like Walter Hasenclever and Walter Benjamin committed suicide in their despair and others strained every nerve to reach the Spanish border crossing which offered a hope of survival. En route to the border the Werfels passed through Lourdes and the fugitive took an oath to write the story of Bernadette (the peasant girl whose visions had

turned it into a pilgrimage centre) if he was spared.

The rest is history: with help of an intrepid American the Werfels and the Heinrich Manns crossed the Pyrenées and disembarked from Lisbon to New York. The publication of *The Song of Bernadette* in the following year made its author probably the most successful of all emigré writers in the U.S.A. A suburb of Hollywood soon became a transplanted Sanary where Alma could once again play hostess to invited celebrities. However, being Alma, she could not resist the temptation to treat her guests to antisemitic *bon mots* — and worse — which infuriated everyone including her normally complaisant husband.

At the time Werfel had another source of annoyance: the complications that surrounded the adaptation and staging of his Fall-of-France novella *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*. He had never been in good health and now developed a serious heart condition aggravated by addictive smoking. A slave to his literary vocation he nonetheless worked assiduously at a large-scale science fiction novel, *Der Stern der Ungeborenen*, and died, with the work barely completed, in August 1945. Alma who, it is rumoured, had him baptised *in extremis* could not bring herself to attend the funeral.

The tragic irony of this is exceeded by an even larger, more symbolic, one: when, at Alma's posthumous insistence, Werfel's remains were taken to Vienna in 1975 for reburial at the *Döblinger Friedhof* the Austrian government felt unable to meet the expense involved. The man who came close to gaining the Literature Nobel Prize for Austria only found a final resting place in the soil of his adopted hometown thanks to funds raised by a group of Armenians indebted to the chronicler of their national tragedy.

RICHARD GRUNBERGER

* Peter Stephan Jungk: Franz Werfel *Eine Lebensgeschichte* S. Fischer Verlag Frankfurt/Main 1987.

Vienna Revisited

Vienna, City of my Dreams . . .

Is but an old cliché,
It wasn't very beautiful
Before we went away.

The sound of marching rent the air
And people, tense with fear,
Were helpless as their next-of-kin
Began to disappear.

For many Austrians then it seemed
Jew-baiting was the norm,
While Brownshirts strutted in the streets
In boots and uniform.

But fifty years have passed since then,
The city is rebuilt,
Its Hofburg has been freshly cleaned,
Its people feel no guilt.

Vienna is lovely once again
And traps you in its snare,
And really nothing much has changed
As long as Waldheim's there.

MARY HUTTRER

Life with the Alien Pioneers

When W. W. Brown Went to War

As soon as war broke out I tried to join the Forces. Would the likes of me be allowed to enlist in the British Army? Would there be an Austrian Legion? I enquired everywhere; the answers were non-committal; eventually it became clear that only the Pioneer Corps was open to us. (This after I had been through my Tribunal; a lengthy interrogation by an eminent K.C. I was classed an 'Enemy Alien, Category C'.) Eventually I had my Medical and was sworn in.

It was to Bideford I had to report, and when at the railway station I asked for a ticket to BAIDFORD the man behind the counter told me 'There ain't no such place'. When I showed him my warrant he pronounced my destination in the correct way, and all I could do was to shake my head. I had already learned how to pronounce Gloucester and Worcester, but this was something new.

My first days were full of surprises. The majority of my 'comrades' were of a type I had not encountered before; I had not imagined that, especially amongst Jews, such people existed; grumbling about everything, from food to the treatment by officers and NCO's, comparing everything all the time with conditions back home. According to these characters everything had been better and more efficient *bei uns* — and, basing their opinion on a hitherto brief exposure to life in this country, some even doubted Britain's ability to win the war. Consistent with such a negative attitude they did as little work — of whatever work there was to do — as they could get away with. However, I quickly made a few friends; we were a group of four who stuck together during the three years or so I spent in the Pioneer Corps. There was Martin, a medical student in Vienna who after the war became a dentist in London; there was Brian, an Oxford undergraduate who became Professor of Greek Art at a University in the North of England and the author of many books, and there was Serge, a Russian, not a Jew, who had lived in Brussels.

Anyhow in those three years we dug trenches in the sacred greens of Westward Ho! Golf Club, to stop the Germans from landing there, of all places. We felled trees in the forests of South Wales; we cleared up rubble in the East End of London during the Blitz; we guarded ammunition dumps, though this only for a few days; until somebody discovered that we were a Company of Enemy Aliens, then we were quickly moved away. We fire-watched in Avonmouth Docks, we built fortifications on the break-water of Portland Harbour; there was nothing we were not sent to do.

While we were in Weymouth, Arthur Koestler came with a unit from the Ministry of Information and filmed us for a propaganda film. It began with a shot where Martin, Brian, Serge and I marched in the front row of our Company straight into the cinema audience. Going to the pictures was our main occupation in the evenings; for a few weeks

every time we went we saw ourselves marching straight at ourselves.

In 1943 we were given a choice; some, amongst them Martin and Serge, accepted a commission in the Pioneer Corps and became Lieutenants; I chose tanks, the Royal Armoured Corps.

The training camp was in Farnborough. The first thing I was told when I got there was not to worry when I saw planes in the air without propellers. They would not fall down on me, they were something new; in fact they were the first jet-planes, put through their paces at the near-by Royal Aircraft Establishment. But I was not to talk about them when on leave. As I neared the end of my training as a driver/wireless-operator, we had a visit from a mad-looking Major. He was forming a Reconnaissance Regiment for an Airborne Division; light tanks or jeeps would be landed by glider when the invasion started, and then quickly withdrawn, to be ready for the next time. He asked for volunteers and I stepped forward. A short spell of extreme danger seemed preferable to a long drawn-out campaign, though it did in fact turn out differently.

Off to Larkhill for very intensive training. At 34 I was one of the oldest in the Regiment, but I could keep up with the rest. Except when it came to cricket. I was quite good at football, at tennis, at water-polo, but I could not see the cricket ball as it flew at me; I only noticed it when it was well past me.

In May we were visited by the King, the Queen and the two young Princesses. We had a pep-talk by Montgomery who looked tired and talked nonsense. He said at least twice: 'We have defeated them once before, in Tunisia, we pushed them into the sea; we shall push them into the sea again'. Applause and jubilation; it seemed to me that I was the only one present who realised that this time the task was not to push them into the sea but away from it.

D-Day arrived, our glider landed in Normandy. We had been shown photos of the area where we were to land and we were to assemble under a certain tree. And there the tree was and there we were; marvellous. But then confusion for quite a few days. Caen did not fall as anticipated; our three or four days became two months. Lots of things happened, but not much fighting as far as my unit was concerned; we were Reconnaissance and drove forward and back, exploring what was going on. Sleeping in ditches, sometimes dry, sometimes full of rainwater. In any contact with the French farmers, I was the interpreter and arranged all the good things, like plenty of fresh fruit, or women willing to do the washing for us. Then came the break-through, the triumphant advance through Northern France, welcomed as liberators everywhere. Then back to England, to be got ready for when we were needed again. We read about the horrors our parallel division experienced around Arnhem.

We trained, Christmas came near, we were handed leave-passes to go to our homes, but

nothing came of it. Then, without any notice whatsoever, we were off, by boat to the Ardennes. We stayed in Belgium throughout the horrible, cold, wet winter. In spring we crossed the Rhine, not by air but over a Bailey Bridge. And then the glorious advance through Germany. Again there was little fighting, we had very few casualties. One man died, a sergeant whom I liked very much, he was probably the closest to me in my unit. He was killed when a plane 'strafed' our column. By night we stopped in farm-houses; we lived on eggs and stewed fruit which we requisitioned from the farmers' wives. No Army rations for us any more. On again and as we once stopped for the night, we were told that we were near a place where typhoid and cholera were rampant; the place, as I could reconstruct later on was Belsen, freed the day before we arrived.

THE BIRMINGHAM PROJECT

Survivors (Meridian Books) is the product of research into refugee life in England's second city carried out by the Birmingham Jewish History Research Group — project leader: Zoë Josephs — who have published it as the third volume in their series 'Birmingham Jewry'.

After reading the 'case histories' one is struck by the thought of what an awful time even the lucky ones among us had and how hard even the most successful needed to struggle; most of all, how little there is of whining and complaining. It is like the Jewish joke: when told that a new flood threatens the world, the nations despair while the Jews ask, 'under how many feet of water is it possible to exist?'

Displayed in this compendium are attitudes well differentiated from those of more recent immigrants of other origin; no positive discrimination was vouchsafed us, though much kindness was shown by individuals as well as organisations, (and the latter are given due credit here).

The stories, which recur and which are almost archetypal, are of the scientists and lawyers who had to be domestics and often made a poor job of it, but gradually had their worth recognised. There is a splendid cartoon of Einstein look-alikes discussing the Nobel Prize while cleaning lavatories. There are tales of fire watchers and Home Guards who were yet subject to the ten o'clock curfew; the whole farce of 'friendly enemy aliens' repairing submarines or otherwise engaged in the war effort (in simple or crucial ways) while still exposed to the silliest restrictions. Who cared? From child to grandparent we knew we were fighting our enemy.

The stories here collected range from the Vale of Tears to the Land of Smiles. Tales are unfolded of unbelievable survival on death marches; righteous gentiles make their appearance, seeming Nazis among them; and a budding Wilhelm Busch 'celebrates' his internment in Britain in doggerel. In short, an epoch in paperback.

JOHN ROSSALL

ANONYMOUS GIFT

The AJR Charitable Trust has received a munificent donation from an anonymous Swiss donor, which is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

Book Review by John Rossall

OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES

It is difficult to spoil a good story completely by elaboration; readers will instinctively appreciate the narrative and perhaps reject, often unjustly, what the author has built around it. This particularly applies to the historical novel, and quite especially to the Biblical one. The reader, seldom a chance 'consumer' but one who is likely to have chosen the genre for his interest in it, may entertain preconceived notions, namely those instilled by the original. The stories of the Old Testament are so dramatic that the author of any new version has only two real choices: he can either rationalise, endow the heroes and villains with contemporary motivations, or he can subject them to a mythological/religious hypothesis.

In *Bathsheba* (Collins Harvill, £10.95; 249 pages) Torgny Lindgren goes some way down both these paths. Let me say straightaway that this is a good book, and if literary theories have given it direction, that is not noticeable as one once again follows King David's deeds and misdeeds.

As the title proclaims, Bathsheba is the heroine of the novel, but so overpowering is the figure of the King that it might as well have been called *David*. Despite her crucial role, the woman David coveted is relatively a pale shadow in the original version; in the novel the author has fleshed her out, literally. The story starts with an episode of voyeurism, one that everybody knows . . . King David has an eyeful from his roof garden as she, innocently?, displays her charms, and the consequences follow. Murder, mourning, marriage that has the most far-reaching dynastic results, rebellion, civil war, more murder, an epidemic, another rebellion, and Solomon, Lindgren makes Bathsheba responsible for quite a good deal of this, always in the best interest, as she sees it, of her new lord and master and his 'house'.

Voyeurism plays quite a great part in all this — namely the famous 'love' story of David's son Amnon and the latter's half-sister Tamar. He, too, espied her first at her toilette before he raped her by guile and force. That led to the first family murder. Brother Absalom avenged her shame and furthered his own ambition to succeed father David before he was dead. Then *he* was slain against his father's wishes.

The novel deals with the murder of Bathsheba's first husband Uriah, but though the author adheres to the outline of the Biblical narrative one feels tempted to cry from time to time: 'Will the real David please stand up!' For this one is a tyrant and villain, though God-haunted. But the God he and other characters are constantly seeking is Himself problematical; at times there are strong hints that David invents him anew every day . . . in his own image. And the other characters, antagonists as well as protagonists, follow suit. Lindgren applies anthropological doctrines (cleverly, hardly noticeably) of Sir James Frazer of 'The Golden Bough' fame, and of Jung: the characters often are examples, archetypes. Existentialism, too, plays a part: things happen because they happen, one makes sense of them afterwards and sees inevitability and predes-

tinuation to justify the event. It leads to the result one knows . . . Solomon is proclaimed King; Bathsheba has had her way, she rules as Queen Mother for seven years and Israel reaches a pinnacle of glory. Lindgren does not spare David and his mighty men; he accuses them of bloody and nasty massacres. There is a hint, a suspicion often felt when gentile authors attempt the Old Testament, that these misdeeds of 'the Jews' might be meant to serve as an excuse for anti-Semitism; even worse, a kind of justification, perhaps sub-conscious, for 'what happened to the Jews'. But the discerning reader will notice that the massacred enemies of Israel, the Canaanites and Ammonites and Moabites and Edomites and Amalekites all live to fight another day; all this slaying with the edge of the sword is colourful Middle Eastern language for warfare and its immediate consequences, not planned extermination.

A PEN EVENT

The Centre of German-speaking Writers Abroad held its Third Literary Evening on 27 June, 1988 with readings from the writings of Grete Fischer (1893–1977). She was a member of Club 43 for many years and so it was particularly appropriate that the evening held in her name was hosted by the Club.

Grete Fischer was born in Prague and after studying German literature worked in the distinguished publishing house of Ullstein in Berlin as reader. There she met many writers, artists, musicians about whom she spoke warmly and sensitively in *Dienstboten, Brecht und andere* (published 1966).

The actress Hanne Norbert, familiar to generations of BBC radio listeners, who knew Grete Fischer in London, introduced the large audience to this her autobiographical writing. The selected passages spoke of dreams and premonitions, of pain and of the wisdom purified by pain and of coincidences. The passage on Club 43 was a touching record of the ambitions, artistic and intellectual, which were pursued by Club members. The Club, conceived as *eine Vereinigung des Geistigen gegen allen Ungeist* largely achieved this high ideal precisely because of the humdrum life and work experiences of the refugees from Central Europe in war-damaged London.

Jeremy Adler, of Westfield College, University of London, grew up with the friendship of Grete Fischer. He told of her attitude to life, her great talents for bringing people together and making them talk. Out of deep insight into human suffering she wrote that *zwei Einsamkeiten ergeben keine Gemeinsamkeit*, which very loosely translates as the experience of loneliness is not a basis of mutual understanding. More is required: *Liebesfähigkeit*, ability to love which so very often does not match our desire for love. She demonstrated in her life's work that she struck a balance.

DOROTHEA McEWAN

DIE JUDEN IN BOEHMEN UND MAEHREN

This book, published by Wilma Iggers Verlag C. H. Beck, Muenchen, is a collection of documents (letters, poems, excerpts from diaries, books, newspapers, laws) which demonstrate graphically and authentically the living conditions, thoughts and aspirations of Jews — as well as opinions about Jews by their Czech and German fellow citizens. It covers the period from the 1744 expulsion of the Jews to the 1952 Slansky show trial. The book is a treasure trove. The breadth of subject matter has real merit, dealing with Prague, the provincial towns and villages, from Court Jews to pedlars, the pious to the indifferent, 'Germans (or Czechs) of the Mosaic creed' to Zionists.

There is much about Czech antisemitism — a subject normally played down. Of interest is the legendary meeting of Rabbi Loew with the empress Maria Theresia, showing both deep veneration of the Rabbi and trust in the Habsburg dynasty. Both Emperor Joseph II and Franz Joseph I were held in the highest regard by the Jews. The Jews of Bohemia were perhaps the only believers in Austria — with the Czechs wanting a Slavonic state, and the Germans expecting leadership from the Reich.

A merit of the book is that joy and despair, amusement and terror, sophistication and simplicity are illustrated, thus giving a truer picture of Jewish life than one of constant suffering or of intellectual brilliance.

The difficult position of Bohemian/Moravian Jews between German and Czech nationalism is given prominence, although the importance of German liberalism and the sympathy of T. G. Masaryk is not fully illustrated.

No mention is made of the Freemasons, the first to open their doors to Jews, nor of the Schlaraffia, an association for the cultivation of art, friendship and humour, which started in Prague in 1859 and had 34 branches in Bohemia/Moravia and which for German liberal Jews in the provinces was frequently the only association where they were welcomed.

But this is only a minor criticism. The book is a valuable contribution to the story of the Jews in the Bohemian countries.

ROBERT FOX

REPRISE IN BERLIN

In the early Thirties Hannele Meierzack was Berlin's answer to the Hollywood wunderkind Shirley Temple, playing *Pünktchen* both on stage and in the film version of Erich Kästner's box office hit *Pünktchen und Anton*. After the Macht-ergreifung Hannele emigrated with her parents to Palestine where she became Hanna Maron. After training at Habimah she became a co-founder of the Cameri Theatre with which she — now the country's leading actress — is still associated. Recently Hanna Maron returned to Berlin. In the town where she first trod the boards she regaled a highly appreciative audience with readings from the works of such contemporary Israeli writers as Jehuda Amichai and A. B. Jehoschuah.

RECORDING THE REFUGEE EXPERIENCE

Launch of a new Project

The National Life Story Collection is an independent charity whose object is the systematic assembly of tape recorded interviews with ordinary people as well as leading citizens, so as to build up a national 'biography in sound' embracing the population of the United Kingdom across all social, ethnic, religious and cultural delineations, giving future historians and social scientists access to authentic source material in a form unavailable to previous generations.

Jennifer Wingate is one of the group of distinguished persons who make up the Board of Trustees of this organisation. As Associate Director she is particularly concerned with *The Living Memory of the Jewish Community*, a significant element of which is the collective experience of those who came to this country as refugees or survivors of the camps and ghettos. In order to launch this phase of the programme, she arranged a 'workshop' so that the project could be discussed by experienced workers in this field, as well as by others interested in this area of investigation and study. The response was highly gratifying and attendance had to be restricted to some 35 participants, who assembled at Hillel House, WC1, on 16 June. They came from London and the provinces as well as from abroad; and they included Jews and non-Jews, refugees and survivors and representatives of the 'second generation'.

Survivors

The all-day seminar-style conference was led by Bill Williams, director of the Manchester Jewish Museum, and Rosalyn Livshin, a research worker, also from Manchester, who was able to speak with authority on the valuable beginning which has already been made in that city. An interesting selection of extracts from recorded and transcribed interviews illustrated her exposition of the underlying techniques and procedures. Some aspects of related research conducted in the Midlands were described by Zoë Josephs, author of a recently published book on Jewish refugees in Birmingham (*Survivors*. Meridian, Warley, West Midlands, 1988). Ben Helfgott of the 45 Group and Dr. Paul Thompson, the director of the National Life Story Collection and a leading historian and author of several books on oral history, were among those who contributed to a wide-ranging and thoughtful discussion.

Interviewed after the conference, Mrs. Wingate felt encouraged by the many offers of help which she had received and the quality of the human resources which appeared to be available. The workshop had shown that there was a pool of volunteer workers who were either already conversant with the necessary research techniques or willing to take up training. An important number of them had the linguistic attainments and cultural affinities necessary to evaluate with sympathy and understanding the nuances of events recalled either from childhood or from later life, in a social climate rather different from that of future

historians. She hoped that the necessary financial support for the scheme would prove to be no less generous than the human response. 'After all, by recording the recollection of those alive now, we can pay tribute to those who, sadly, are not.'

DAVID MAIER

CLOSURE OF URO LONDON

The following announcement has been received from URO, 235 Finchley Road, London NW3:

1. Our London Office will finally close down on 29 September, 1988. As we must vacate the premises by this date, the Office will cease to be fully operational during the last two weeks of September.
2. We shall be writing to those who have claims pending with us regarding the further pursuance of these claims.
3. Problems which may arise in the future with existing compensation and/or social security pensions should normally be sorted out by writing direct to the authority which has granted, or is paying, your pension. If you have a restitution lawyer you should, of course, refer to him (or her). Otherwise one of the bodies mentioned below may be able to help.
4. **AUSTRIAN CLAIMS.** The Austrian Embassy, 18 Belgrave Mews West, London SW1, may be approached concerning Austrian Social Security pensions and other Austrian matters.
5. **GERMAN SOCIAL SECURITY PENSIONS.**
 - (a) The German Welfare Council (Deutsches Wohlfahrtsamt), 59 Birkenhead Street, London WC1, will assist with new or existing social insurance claims. NOTE: The Council does not deal with restitution pensions.
 - (b) URO Berlin, Paulsbornerstr. 88, 1 Berlin 31, will handle social insurance applications on behalf of U.K. claimants, in particular where an entitlement has already been established by way of a contribution payment (Nachentrichtung).
6. **GERMAN INDEMNIFICATION PENSIONS (Entschädigungsrenten).** If you have a problem or query which you are unable to sort out by direct correspondence with the indemnification authority you may seek the assistance of the German Embassy, 22 Belgrave Square, London SW1, or consult a restitution lawyer.
7. **EAST GERMAN COMPENSATION.** No details are as yet available and are not expected for some time to come. You should therefore await further announcements before taking any action.

MOT JUSTE

When John-Paul II paid his controversial visit to Austria in June (see front page) the anti-Waldheim *Republikanische Club-Neues Österreich* used the formula 'His Holiness meets His Forgetfulness' as a means of satirising the Papal encounter with the Austrian President.

AUSTRO-AUSTRALIANS

The deadline for our June issue permitted only the briefest reference to a book entitled *Strauss to Matilda*, which commemorates half a century of refugee existence in Australia. It tells a fascinating story. The number of Austrian Jews who found refuge 'down under' was around four thousand, of whom only half arrived between the Anschluss and the outbreak of war. The remainder comprised two distinct groups. First, in 1940, came the 'Dunera Boys', internees sent out of Britain (and subjects of a book and a comparatively recent TV film); post-1945 Australia accommodated the 'Shanghai people', who had spent the war years ghettoised in that Japanese-controlled city.

During the 50 years of their presence in the country the Reffos, as they were unflatteringly dubbed, have made quite a contribution to Australian life. In the industrial sphere they pioneered advances in engineering and the furniture and fashion trades; in the culinary sphere they caused a spread of delicatessen and cake shops, and in sport they popularised skiing, as well as setting up their own Hakoah Club.

The individual autobiographies which make up the bulk of *Strauss to Matilda* tell diverse success stories. Former Dunera boy Fred Gruen, for instance, advanced to a professorship in Economics and a consultancy of the Canberra government, while Louis Kahan painted a prizewinning portrait of Patrick White, Australia's preeminent writer.

Of almost greater 'human' interest is the story of Bettina McDuff (née Mendl) who, married to a sheepshearer in the outback, eventually set up her own riding school. As the daughter of *Ankerbrot* proprietor, Fritz Mendl, Bettina had - in a previous incarnation, as it were - received equestrian instruction from the head rider at the *Spanische Reitschule* at Vienna. She, nonetheless, now says 'My life only began in Australia'.

Equally deserving of mention is Hans Habler, oldtime Socialist and Sydney Water Board engineer who married a Polynesian woman; they named their daughter Lilon (a South Sea Island name) Gretl - a new root, indeed, embedded in *terra Australis*.

'SISTER PAPER' MAY FOLD

The only Jewish German-language publication in South America, the Buenos Aires-based *Unabhängige Jüdische Wochenblatt (Semanaio Israelita)*, is facing grave financial difficulties. The paper is a direct successor to the well-respected *Jüdische Wochenschau*, established in 1939, which ceased publication upon the death of its founder-editor Hardi Swarzenski thirty years later. Since then Werner Finkelstein (who left Germany at the age of 14) has maintained the *Unabhängige* with the unpaid assistance of 15 collaborators. Without an organisation to back them they found their advertising revenue insufficient. Two years ago the paper went bi-lingual but the change failed to expand the 4,000-strong readership; nor did the switch from weekly to fortnightly publication significantly reduce expenditure. Sadly, a recent swingeing increase in printing costs is threatening the very survival of this worthwhile publication.

PAUL BALINT — AJR

DAY CENTRE

For your convenience, we are now publishing the programme six weeks in advance

AUGUST

Monday 1st	Talk on 'London Life' — Jack Rose
Tuesday 2nd	Estee Lauder Make-Up Presentation — Sarah Young
Wednesday 3rd	Talk on 'Alternative Medicine' — Maurice Powell
Thursday 4th	'Security in the Home & Personal Safety' — P.C. Hoare of Hampstead Police Station
Monday 8th	Light Classical Music & Songs — Eddy Simmons
Tuesday 9th	Musical Entertainment — Henry Gross & Friends
Wednesday 10th	'130 Years of Moss Bros' — Monty Moss
Thursday 11th	Dorei Duo
Monday 15th	Operatic & Light Classical Songs — Frank Rosner
Tuesday 16th	Demonstration of Japanese Flower Arranging — Lindsay Nunn
Wednesday 17th	Talk on Sothebys & International Art Market — Peter Batkin of Sothebys
Thursday 18th	Extracts from Musical Shows — Helena Guest & Betty
Monday 22nd	Helen & Barbara Entertain You — Barbara Jacobson & Helen Mignano
Tuesday 23rd	Elise Relinagh Entertains
Wednesday 24th	'Memory — A new concept in Services for the Elderly' — Lynette Scott
Thursday 25th	'The Country that stood by its Jews' — Walter Goddard
Monday 29th	CLOSED
Tuesday 30th	Colourful Variety Show — Audrey Bernard
Wednesday 31st	'The British Government & The Refugees' — Mr. R. Stent

SEPTEMBER

Thursday 1st	Light English & Viennese Melodies — Malka Shinar
Monday 5th	'Flora Robson — Her Life' — Eve Borrett
Tuesday 6th*	Musical Entertainment — Justin Joseph
Wednesday 7th	'Jewish Life in Gibraltar' — Regina Lawton
Thursday 8th	Henry Kissin Entertains You
Monday 12th	CLOSED
Tuesday 13th	CLOSED
Wednesday 14th	CLOSED
Thursday 15th	'Clare Graydon-James Plays and Sings for You'

* also theatre visit 'Cats'

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

From time to time, reference has been made in this paper to the changes that have occurred (and keep occurring) in our situation. After the best part of a lifetime spent in this country, we obviously no longer are what we were. Some have ceased to think of themselves as refugees; we are all British citizens; the past is like a ship that sails by in the distance, and perhaps the most telling event in our affairs was the emergence of the Association of *Children of Refugees*. We are involved in the life of this country which also has changed in that it has developed the pattern of a multicultural society in which we all, whatever our origin, play our appointed part.

Nor is this the only way in which the world around us has changed. Another very drastic change is the progress from the Welfare State to greater individual initiative. This development was indicated when the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced a system of lower taxes that was calculated to leave room for the personal enterprise of individual charity. Once upon a time, in the aftermath of the second world war, it was considered appropriate that the State should provide for those who had been left to the philanthropy of the 19th century, and no doubt many there are who owe much to such institutions as the National Health Service. But now the time has come for another move that will strike a new balance between public and private initiative. As people will pay less tax, they are expected to show their appreciation by helping those less well off than themselves, and a strong appeal is directed to the moral sensitivity, especially of those who make money in a big way. There is a new feeling that wealth carries social responsibilities and it must live up to them. We are to judge them by the use they make of their riches.

When the Prime Minister recently opened a new wing of the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children, she said: 'The voluntary spirit of personal giving, personal generosity is part of the British character. When you have finished as a tax payer, you have not finished your duty as a citizen'.

Many have shown themselves aware of their obligation. The top 200 companies increased their donations from £46 million in 1985 to £58 million in 1986, out of pre-tax profits of £26,500 million; Marks & Spencer, for instance, gave £2,964,000. Yet there is reason to believe that many firms can afford to give more. It is not that they are indifferent; they seem to be ignorant of what is expected of them.

And this is perhaps where some of our own people come in. Not that many of them can be assumed to be among the earners of millions, but

a good many have been fortunate enough to win for themselves, thanks to their ability and drive, positions in which they can effectively answer the appeal to generosity made possible by the new Government policy. By providing them with unexpected gains, the Chancellor conferred on them a new freedom — the freedom to come to the aid of charity. Therefore, when we spoke, in our Annual Report, of 'our concern not merely to maintain present activities but to retain the ability to extend them', when we referred to the 'considerable extension of our social welfare services', we felt we could legitimately look to our members for 'loyal and devoted support'.

We are grateful to members for supporting us with their annual subscription. Traditionally, we have not specified a fixed or minimum sum, but we now find that subscriptions paid by a sizeable proportion of members do not even cover the cost of printing and posting their monthly copies of AJR INFORMATION, our journal of which we are so proud and the quality of which is widely recognised. It is AJR INFORMATION which, to a large extent, binds our members together and to which, we know, they look forward from month to month.

Our subscription income must keep pace with the growth of our services, no less than with the inevitable rise of costs. We therefore now appeal to **all members, who benefit from the new tax reductions**, to take stock of their good fortune in what the Prime Minister called 'the voluntary spirit of personal giving, personal generosity'.

If we venture to make this suggestion, it is because our organisation not only serves a social, but also, and eminently so, a charitable purpose as set out in the 1987 annual report published in our May issue. The many needs provided for in this programme do not diminish with the years, on the contrary they increase, and we must keep faith with those, alas too many — struggling, ailing, ageing — who put their trust in us.

We know some members have spontaneously added to their subscriptions, and we gratefully acknowledge their generous spirit. We also wish to thank those who gladly support our annual fund-raising event, the Self Aid Concert. But more, far more remains to be done. Those blessed with wealth, however relative, will do well to remember that they must account for it, in a more than material sense, for wealth is power that must be used (like all power) prudently both to enjoy life and to help others at the very least to endure it. We confidently trust our more fortunate brethren will heed the call of social duty on behalf of those who must struggle to survive.

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IS EVIL UNIVERSAL?

Now that Primo Levi has, sadly, left us Viktor Frankl is probably the most eminent Holocaust survivor. Founder of Logotherapy and author of 28 (!) books, Frankl is an internationally acknowledged authority in the spheres of Neurology and Psychiatry. Remarkable on account both of his physical survival and undiminished intellectual brilliance after the camp experience, Frankl is also fairly unique in that he still regards the place from which his entire immediate family were deported to the gas chambers, namely Austria, as his home.

'I came back' he explained to an Anschluss anniversary meeting in Vienna 'not because the Austrians have shown me so much love, but because I have felt and feel such love for Austria. As we all know love is not always requited'. Then, after paying tribute to two Viennese who had helped Jews at risk to their own lives, he expressed his views on the prevalence and distribution of evil in the world. Postulating the existence of a sort of fault line separating what he termed the decent minority from the rest everywhere he said: 'This separation runs through every nation, and within nations through every political party and every other group. Even in concentration camps we came across more or less decent people who belonged to the SS; in the same way there were also scoundrels among the prisoners'.

It may appear invidious to contradict a man of Frankl's experience — as well as eminence — but the theory about the 'distribution of evil' which he propounded at Vienna takes a lot of swallowing.

Are we to assume the existence of evil-intentioned Quakers, Red Cross workers and Amnesty International supporters — and, conversely, that of well-meaning National Fronters, Klansmen and Hezbollah militants? One would hardly think so. Viktor Frankl concluded his address with an equally debatable proposition. 'In principle' he opined 'any country is capable of perpetrating the Holocaust'.

Really? Can one really imagine Denmark — where the Resistance movement saved the entire Jewish community — installing and operating death camps? Or Italy, which after 20 years of Fascism only yielded up its Jews reluctantly to the Nazi murder machine? Or Bulgaria, which refused to do so altogether?

Even more crucially, can one envisage a British-run Auschwitz? Extrapolating from the past to the future, counsel for the 'prosecution' could presumably cite Cromwell in Ireland, the Amritsar massacre, and the Heysel stadium outrage — but the statement of counsel for the defence would, assuredly, take up the rest of this issue of AJR information.

Just to quote one instance of profound dissimilarity between Britain and Germany: Can anyone imagine Oxford dons attired in their academic gowns presiding over a book-burning ceremony outside the Sheldonian library — as happened at Berlin University in May 1933? The answer to such a question must, beyond peradventure, be NO.

To conclude: For all that Viktor Frankl is the founder of Logotherapy his remarks on the

occasion of the Anschluss anniversary seem devoid of logic — though they may well have provided therapy for his Austrian listeners.

R.G.

RETURN TO HEILBRONN

After fifty-one years I went back to my birth-place for the first time. Heilbronn is scarcely recognisable. It now calls itself a *Grosstadt* having absorbed several surrounding small villages, including Sondheim. It was flattened by Allied bombing during the war, scarcely a house remaining intact. Yet in essence, despite the new buildings it remains the comfortable market and wine-growing centre where I lived in my youth and my family before me for many generations. My great-grandfather was a Burger of Heilbronn over a century ago.

In the town's museum there is a stone dating from about CE 1050 inscribed *Natan Haparnas* in Hebrew, which bears witness to the early settlement of Jews in Heilbronn. Yet, standing in the Jewish cemetery (which is beautifully maintained by the municipality) and looking at the memorial to the Nazi victims, it struck me that this is all that remains of a prosperous and well-integrated community, for there is no longer a synagogue or organised body of Jews in the town. An unused part of the cemetery was sold some years ago and used for housing; the new street so formed bears the name of my cousin Dr. Siegfried Gumbel, a great public figure in Heilbronn and last leader of the *Württemberg Oberrat* before he was murdered by the Nazis in Dachau in 1942.

The records of Heilbronn Jewry are being assembled as a labour of love in his retirement by Herr Palme, one of the town's most prominent citizens. We dined together and during the meal he remarked that it was a great pity that the vacant cemetery land had been sold, because it made the re-establishment of the community all the more difficult. It was an expression of a feeling that I experienced all during my stay: Heilbronn wants its Jews back! This is not new. Soon after the war I met Leo Baeck in the Lake District. He had just arrived in England from concentration camp and told me that immediately after the fighting ceased, the town of Heilbronn sent a coach to Theresienstadt 'to collect its Jews'.

Many of my former class-mates gathered to meet me. Some I was seeing again for the first time after half a century, with others I had been in contact over the years. All these people, mainly women of my age now on their own, had suffered two great cataclysms in their lives — the deportation of many of their Jewish friends and acquaintances, and the mass air-raids on the town in which some lost several members of their immediate families. They have had to learn to live with both these tragedies. Whether any of them actively supported the Nazis I do not know, though some undoubtedly did. Heilbronn itself can lay claim to some fame for having tossed Hitler into the Neckar when he made a visit long before he became Chancellor. But I do know that, with hindsight, all these people regret the sorrows brought upon others and themselves and would perhaps have acted differently if they had known. They do not ask for forgiveness and, when asked by Oberbürgermeister Dr. Weinmann, I said that

in my heart I could not forgive the atrocities inflicted upon my own family and hundreds of others. Yet I feel that they accent their collective guilt and direct or indirect responsibility. They do not speak of it, but neither do they want to sweep it under the carpet. They feel no hatred for the Allies who flattened their town — all they want is to bury the past and carry on with the present and future. But the past is there and will not go away; this is demonstrated not least by the memorial in the cemetery and by the eagerness, even joy, with which Heilbronners talk about their former Jewish fellow-citizens who are certainly not forgotten.

ALICE SCHWAB

SINS OF THE FATHERS

'When history repeats itself it occurs first as tragedy and then as farce'. So said Karl Marx and, every once in a while, what he said is borne out by the facts. This was the case recently when a well publicised and expensive courtroom drama was played out between a rising Labour politician and the newspaper he claimed had libelled him. Eager to present himself as descended from a horny-handed son of toil the politician had described his father as a farm labourer whereas the newspaper had identified him as a gentleman farmer.

Thus when the Nazi Party judged a person's worth by the criterion of Aryan ancestry (*Ariernachweis*) it was a tragedy, and when the Labour Party judges a candidate's eligibility for office according to his working class antecedents (*Proletariernachweis*) it is pure farce.

For — to get back to basics — the grandsires of the Left, *i.e.* the fathers of the Founding Fathers, were by no stretch of the imagination proletarians. Marx's father was a legal dignitary, Engels' a textile manufacturer, Trotzki's a wealthy merchant and Lenin's a Tsarist school inspector with a patent of nobility. (It was his father's rank which made it possible for Lenin to serve out his Siberian jail term in a villa equipped with a library conducive to writing more anti-Tsarist literature, instead of in a squalid prison camp.)

The founders of the British labour movement were admittedly less — or should one say more — well-endowed: having been born out of wedlock neither Keir Hardie nor Ramsay MacDonald had, legally speaking, a father at all. As for Ernest Bevin, doubts about whether he had been born within wedlock had as much to do with his policies in the Middle East as with his personal background.

By contrast the founders of German and Austrian Social Democracy, Ferdinand Lassalle and Viktor Adler, both had a respectable bourgeois background — except for one blemish: Jewish origins. However, in the more civilised climate of the 19th century, when Judaism connoted a religion rather than a race, conversion could go a long way towards removing such a blemish; in consequence both Lassalle and Adler became Christians.

In our own century Jewish Socialists who felt *erblich belastet* (burdened by their heredity) tended to choose another 'escape route': they opted out of any religious affiliation whatever. This tendency was particularly widespread in

interwar Vienna, where Catholic backing for Austro-Fascism made many Socialists give up church membership and, following suit, their Jewish comrades disaffiliated from the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde*.

Bruno Kreisky was therefore, strictly speaking, right when he disclaimed membership of the Jewish community; he actually construed his escape from the Nazis to Sweden as an act of political emigration rather than flight from racial persecution. On the question of Jewish ethnicity he once snapped at an Israeli journalist after a radio confrontation '*Wenn die Juden wirklich ein Volk sein sollen sind sie ein mieses Volk*' (If the Jews really are a people then they're an ugly people).

The revolt of the sons against the fathers — whether of young leftists against bourgeois, or of young atheists against traditional believers is sometimes interpreted, à la Freud, as the working out of Oedipus complex.

In Greek legend Oedipus actually murdered his father, thus committing parricide, the most heinous crime known to man. Interestingly enough in recent times the Oedipal crime has been the subject of two plays in totally different mood. Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* is a comedy whose 'hero', an Irish braggart, invents his parricide to get himself talked about; in Arnolt Bronnen's *Vatermord*, by contrast, the drama is for real.

Given the overheated imagination of German expressionist playwrights there was nothing very surprising about that — except for one factor: Bronnen himself committed parricide, on paper, as it were. Born Arnold Bronner and a half-Jew, he not only changed his name but also his paternity to fit in with Nazi requirements: he did the latter by having his gentile mother declare on oath that he was not the son of his legal father but of an Aryan lover of hers!

RICHARD GRUNBERGER

NOT FOR EXPORT

C. C. Aronsfeld, editor of our journal until recently, a dedicated student of the history of antisemitism, discovered that just about 100 years ago the leading German antisemitic clergyman-politician Adolf Stöcker tried to introduce his creed in England. Aronsfeld has now published a comprehensive essay about the affair in the U.S. journal *Jewish Social Studies* under the title 'A German Antisemite in England — Adolf Stöcker's London Visit in 1883'. How did the Kaiser's Chaplain fare in England, trying to convert its people to the great cause of antisemitism? I quote from Aronsfeld's report:

Stöcker had organised an international antisemitic congress at Dresden in 1882. It was an unmitigated fiasco at which Britain had been 'conspicuously absent'. So he decided to go himself to that obstinate nation and assail those Jew lovers on their home ground. He had friends in London: the German Y.M.C.A., who invited

Stöcker over to speak at a public meeting in the Mansion House under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor. But the scheme failed, due to 'Jewish machinations', according to Stöcker.

He had to put up with Exeter Hall. There, his speeches at two meetings in November, 1883, were interrupted by noisy demonstrations and shouts of 'Kick him out', 'Have nothing to do with him', 'We don't want to hear him', and when he declared that he wanted to attack only the social democrats, the audience — many of them from families who had left Germany after the 1848 revolution — shouted: 'No, you are here to stir up religious persecution!' He denied that he was heading the antisemitic movement in Germany, whereupon his audience stormed the platform, sang the *Marseillaise* in German and drove the speaker out by the back door. He had 'found it impossible to deliver his antisemitic message in public', Aronsfeld sums up.

So the *Hofprediger* used some private occasions. At the Conservative St. Stephen's Club, a group of some 30 'English embryonic Jew-baiters' (as the *Jewish World* called them) heard him lecture on the Jewish question in Germany, where the Liberal press was 'in the hands of the Jews or their friends, bitterly hostile to Christianity'. Shylock, he told his little audience, was not dead but still alive in Germany. *The Times* wrote about Stöcker's antisemitism, disguised as Christian Socialism: 'We cannot help believing that a man of Herr Stöcker's shrewdness will see that in England such a doctrine has no chance of being listened to'; the *Daily News* declared that Stöcker's 'foolish and hostile tirade' was 'detested by all sensible Englishmen', while the *St. James Gazette* made fun of Stöcker's English: '... a variety of the Anglo-Saxon tongue not generally understood on the banks of the Thames'.

The Protestant Stöcker, states Aronsfeld, 'met with little sympathy even among his co-religionists of the Church of England. One Anglican leader . . . declared he himself had not the smallest sympathy with the antisemitic movement'. To the Bishop of Liverpool it appeared 'the greatest blot on the German character', and the Supreme Council of the Protestant Church called on Stöcker 'either to abandon his antisemitic agitation or to resign his position as Court Chaplain'. Of course he didn't, but in 1893 tried

to convert the U.S.A. to his creed. 'He scored no better in America than he had in England', Aronsfeld ends his remarkable story.

EGON LARSEN

AMNESIACS ANONYMOUS

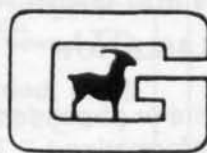
German TV recently transmitted *The Last Visa*, a documentary about the work of the U.S. Emergency Rescue Committee. This organisation helped save the lives of hundreds of refugees whom the collapse of France in mid-1940 left stranded in the Unoccupied Zone. The Committee's European plenipotentiary was Varian Fry who arrived in Marseilles armed with 200 special visas for endangered *Prominente* — but who in fact managed to save between one and two thousand lives. (This figure inflates the success of the rescue effort; among those past saving were, quite apart from a mass of 'nameless' refugees, luminaries like Walter Benjamin and Theodor Wolff, ex-editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*.)

In 1942 the Vichy authorities — who considered saving lives a crime — arrested Varian Fry. They deported him to Spain whence he returned to the U.S.A. The rescue effort was over — not least because America, now at war, pulled up the drawbridge.

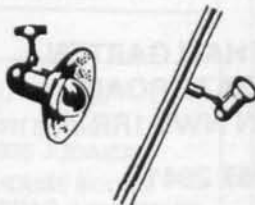
Fry's book *Extradition on Demand, The rescue of German emigrants in Marseilles* (1945) both recorded the events of 1940/41 and expressed chagrin at his inability thereafter to throw a lifeline to the drowning. If the American wartime attitude to the rescue of refugees was reprehensible in the highest degree, German postwar policy vis-à-vis the surviving emigrants constitutes an equally shameful chapter.

When Thomas Mann (whose brother Heinrich and son Golo both owed their survival to Varian Fry) visited Germany again in 1949 he felt so unwelcome that he chose to make Switzerland his home. And, just as 40 years ago the ex-emigré Thomas Mann was pushed to the geographical margin of the German-speaking world, so West German TV marginalised the entire emigration issue by transmitting *The Last Visa* at a late hour when it would attract a minimum number of viewers. One can only conclude that, just as in the past the Germans showed a capacity for dreaming collectively, so now collective forgetfulness is still the order of the day.

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Letters to the Editor

Sir — Betr. Zahlung einer Leistung für Kindererziehung (*AJR Information* April 1988, page 4). Wie ich von der deutschen Botschaft höre, haben diejenigen Mütter, die jetzt im Ausland leben und zum Kreis der Verfolgten gehören Anspruch auf die Leistung, selbst wenn die Kinder im Ausland geboren sind. Es wäre vielleicht angebracht, Ihre Leser darauf aufmerksam zu machen.
21 Haslemere Avenue,
London NW4 2PQ

E. LOWENSTERN

Sir — I want to thank you for your words about that . . . (*expletive deleted*, Ed.) Erich Fried, in *AJR INFORMATION* which, under your editorial guidance, is becoming a very interesting publication.

6-8 The Street,
Dalham, Suffolk

GEORGE CLARE

Author 'Last Waltz in Vienna'

IS MARSEILLES PRONOUNCED MUENCHEN?

Sir — If patriotic French Jews do not wish their country to become a faceless multiethnic and multinational conurbation and feel it is in the interest of France to vote for Le Pen and his anti-immigration programme it ill behoves British German-Jewish Refugees to lecture them. As to the protection of minority groups under 'democracy' the lessons of history are capable of various interpretations. On the whole, Jews were best protected by authoritarian regimes from Franz Joseph to Horthy.

20 Bishop Close,
Old Coulsdon, Surrey

G. SCHMERLING

I think it ill behoves anyone to put the word democracy in mocking inverted commas. As to Horthy, his 'numerus clausus' policy of university admission forced a cousin of mine to study in Germany; excluded once again in 1933 the poor lad committed suicide. Ed.

THE CHALLENGE OF TOLERANCE

Sir — By quoting offensive remarks recently made by Jews against another Jew out of context, you gave readers the impression that it all happened to a peaceful distributor of leaflets. This is far from correct.

The venue was the Royal Albert Hall and the occasion a concert to celebrate Israel's 40th anniversary. The person involved was David Rosenberg of the Jewish Socialists Group who, outside the Hall, had grouped with representatives of the Workers Revolutionary Party, the PLO and others similarly inclined.

A Jew who openly aligns himself with the enemy must be prepared for hostility from all who love Israel.

Mr. Rosenberg's performance on this occasion hardly comes within the category of 'dissent': playing into the hands of those who want to destroy Israel (and therefore the Jewish people) has deprived him of any right to expect tolerance from his co-religionists. To use the incident as the theme of your article can only be called deplorable.

'Engadine' 6 East Hill,
Wembley Park

RUTH WILLERS

SIGNING OF ARTICLES

Sir — The modesty of editors of and contributors to *AJR Information* may be virtuous, but it also unnecessarily diminishes the pleasure of readers.

A conventional impressum would substantially raise the professional appearance of the journal, even if the contents are of a quality that might justify dismissing such superficial considerations as trivial.

But there is a more important human consideration. The journal gives a feeling of belonging to many older refugees, particularly those who, because of their secular and political orientation, are unable to maintain comforting contacts with the Jewish community. There may be nostalgia in relating to one's cultural past; in an alien environment nostalgia has its uses. Named contributions give rise to memories and association; they would

greatly enhance the enjoyment of reading the journal.

18 St. Swithun Street,
Winchester SO23 9JP

GERTRUD WALTON

I tend to concur with the view that we ought to have all contributions signed or at least initialled. On the other hand seeing the editorial impressum over and over again could be tedious; you may take it that all unattributed copy is the handiwork of the editor. R.G.

DEFINITION OF AN ANTISEMITE

Sir — Mr. Henry Toch's letter in your June issue just will not do. To call any Jewish critic of some of Israel's policies a Jewish antisemite is an emotive non-argument. It produces heat but no light.

Let us, as Mr. Toch suggests, apply similar standards of political morality to Jew and non-Jew alike. But the firing of Dresden and the atom-bombing of Hiroshima were vile acts of military barbarism; they are to be condemned, not used as excuses for Israeli lapses. To say this is not more anti-American than antisemitic.

Nor is it good enough to cite Arab hostility to Israel to excuse whatever 'defensive' measures Israel may choose to take in the Lebanon or at home.

One may well feel that the sharp swing to the right which some have detected in Israel in recent years is a break with Jewish tradition. To say this is not to be antisemitic.

'My country right or wrong' is not a good slogan for former refugees from Hitler.

32 Clifton Park Road,
Clifton, Bristol

GEORGE BRANDT

ANTI-DEPRESSANTS WANTED

Sir — Week after week the National Press is frightening us with depressing News. Let us hope that the new Editor of *AJR Information* will cheer us up by presenting inspiring and optimistic ideas of mutual good will, international cooperation and peace instead of introspective self-commiseration. After all the basic purpose of an organisation such as *AJR* is to provide members with not only material but also outward-looking moral support.

52 The Ridgeway,
Watford, Herts

RUDI & BETTY BAER

The very word Information in our masthead obliges us to report shade as well as light in the contemporary scene. However, that scene seems to be brightening right now! Ed.

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ART NOTES

The extra-galactic prices reached for French Impressionist paintings have put them beyond the reach of all but well-funded galleries and a few super-millionaires. Yet this phenomenon has had the desirable effect of stimulating interest in other fields, including the not so well-known but equally interesting works of the Germans. This is not to suggest that we should turn our backs on the French Masters. Indeed, the exhibition of French Paintings from the U.S.S.R. at the National Gallery (until 18 September), of which half are Impressionist and Post-Impressionist, gives us an opportunity to see pictures, such as the two Tahitian Gauguins which are only familiar to us in reproduction (Catalogue £9.95 paperback, £16.95 hardback).

But the Germans have not been neglected. The Prints and Drawings from the Weimar Republic at the Camden Art Centre until 10 July should not be missed. And if you cannot get there, the catalogue at £7.50 is a real bargain. Some works by Otto Dix are included in the Camden Arts Centre exhibition, but a cycle of his etchings 'War' is being shown at the Goethe Institut (until 13 August). Dix was a volunteer in World War I and described it later as 'bestial'. These etchings are a fascinating documentation of his reaction to modern warfare.

Picasso is always a name to conjure with and the exhibition of his late work at the Tate Gallery (until 18 September) shows that this was one of his greatest periods. The exhibition comprises 72 oil paintings, 3 sculptures, 33 drawings and 47 prints, with emphasis on the period 1964-1972. The catalogue which reproduces all the paintings and sculptures and some of the drawings in colour is £14.95 paperback, £19.95 hardback.

A visit to the Marlborough is also worthwhile to see "A Selection of Important Sculpture", includ-

ing works by Naum Gabo, Kurt Schwitters and Wilhelm Lehmbruck.

Jewish Ceremonial Art, A Photographic Exhibition, by Harold Rose will be at the Manor House Sternberg Centre (22 July-17 August). And also at the Manor House (17 July-1 August) there will be an exhibition by the London Museum of Jewish Life entitled Refugees from Nazism. By means of two and three-dimensional displays the exhibition shows the cultural and social changes undergone by refugees from Nazism, tracing their arrival in England, assimilation and acceptance, as well as their pattern of life after 1945.

ALICE SCHWAB

SB's Column

The last Jewish author writing in German? The Kurhaus Bad Aussee in Styria devotes a full documentation to *Friedrich Torberg* (1908-1979), author and critic who gave himself this title. Torberg's first novel *Der Schüler Gerber hat absolviert* drew attention to this most talented Austrian author whose other books, among them *Hier bin ich, mein Vater* and *Die zweite Begegnung*, written in American exile, were followed by the 2 volumes of *Tante Jolesch* (Verlag Langen-Mueller), a collection of Jewish humour of rare quality. His last work *Auch das war Wien* is a semi-autobiographical tragic account of the days of the Austrian Anschluss. With this exhibition Kurhaus Bad Aussee follows its praiseworthy policy of honouring Jewish Austrian authors; earlier exhibitions dealt with the works of Wassermann and Hofmannsthal.

Awards

George Tabori, the Jewish author and producer, manager of Vienna's theatre Der Kreis, whose 1987 (*Salzburg*) production of *Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln* was hotly discussed by audiences

and press, received the Berlin theatre prize which was awarded for the first time.—Jeanne Moreau the world-famous French film star, unanimously considered best French stage actress of the year, received the prix Molière, the French equivalent of a theatre Oscar.

A musical event in Northern Germany

Bernstein's opera *A Quiet Place* is being presented at the Kiel Music Festival until 20th August. Bernstein himself will conduct, and among other participants the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Yehudi Menuhin as well as the New York Philharmonic with Zubin Mehta are expected.

Birthdays

Paris celebrated the 85th birthday of one of the most enduring and endearing members of the Comédie Française, Louis Seigneur, long-serving and venerated by faithful audiences.—Heinz Moog, character actor of the Vienna Burgtheater where he played innumerable rôles until 1975, attained the age of 80.

A SIGNIFICANT CENTENARY

Had she lived Jeanette Wolff would have celebrated her 100th birthday this summer. Having joined the Social Democrats in 1905, at the age of 17, she experienced in turn the prewar electoral advance of the SPD, its promotion to governing party in 1918 and its fatal decline in the 1930s. During the Nazi period she lived through the hell of the Riga ghetto where she lost her entire immediate family except for one daughter.

After 1945 she was one of the few Jews prominent in German public life, first as a deputy to the Berlin Abgeordnetenhaus and then to the Bundestag at Bonn. For the three decades before her death in 1976 Jeanette Wolff also participated actively in the reconstruction of Jewish life in Germany — an endeavour which in her eyes symbolised a final triumph over genocide.

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FAMILY EVENTS

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

Birth

Shipman:—Susan and David Shipman are delighted to announce the birth of their son Jonathan Henry. First grandchild of Ursula Fink, and Susie and Frank Shipman.

Deaths

Lempert:—Mrs. Hedwig Katharina Julie Lempert, born 4 November 1904 in Austria, died 24 June at the Middlesex Hospital, after a heart attack.

Lowenstein:—Mrs. Ruth Lowenstein died 30 May aged 75, and Mr. Heinz Werner Lowenstein died 12 June aged 80. Deeply mourned by all who knew them.

Rath:—Mrs. Mary Rath (née Futterweit) died on 18 June 1988, aged 74. Widow of the late Major Joseph Rath, she is deeply mourned by her sons James and Michael, relatives and friends.

Salinger:—Michael Salinger died 15 June 1988, aged 69, at home in Durham. After an illness courageously borne. Deeply mourned by his wife Irene, his children and grandchildren.

Taylor:—Len Taylor, our dear friend, passed away suddenly in Vienna on 22 June 1988. He was a very special person and we will always remember him for his kindness and sense of humour.

CLASSIFIED

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

Miscellaneous

BRIDGE PARTNER (intermediate) wanted who would enjoy playing in home of elderly lady. NW3 area. Box 1139.

HUMANIST/RATIONALIST Correspondence Group seeks more participants. As the only refugee among British correspondents, Mrs. G. Walton, 18 St. Swithun Stret, Winchester SO23 9JP, feels intellectually isolated. Please write to her.

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BÖHM. Wer kennt Nachfolger einer Familie Böhm aus Trebnitz/Schlesien? Mitteilungen erbeten an das Leo Baeck Institut, PO Box 8298, 91082 Jerusalem.

STERN. We are seeking possible relatives or heirs of Mrs. Felicitas Stern, née Jakobsen, born 24.2.1909 at Lodz (Poland), died 27.5.1987 at Limours (near Paris), her last residence. Any information to La Solidarité, 14 rue Saint-Lazare, 75009 Paris.

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COHESION IN DISPERSAL Conference of Council of Jews from Germany

The Council of Jews from Germany, of which the AJR is the British constituent, recently held a Conference in London, which testified anew to the strong contacts between former German Jews, now scattered all over the world. The Conference was attended by delegates from Israel, U.S.A., Britain and France.

Founded after the war under the presidency of Dr. Leo Baeck to safeguard the interests of the Nazi victims in the fields of restitution and compensation, the Council's affiliated organisations are now mainly concerned with the care for the elderly in their midst, and an exchange of experience on this subject proved most fruitful. Next to the establishment and running of residential homes the organisation of help for those who are living on their own plays an increasingly important role both in this country and abroad. The Conference also dealt with the progress in the research of the history of immigration in the main countries of resettlement. The question of East German compensation payments, mentioned in recent press reports, was discussed as well.

It was particularly gratifying to note that the continuity of the Council and its affiliates has been secured by the enlistment of members of the younger generation. The Conference elected and re-elected respectively the Joint Chairmen, Mr. F. Eastreicher (Israel), Dr. C. C. Silberman (U.S.A.) and Dr. F. E. Falk (Britain).

W.R.

LEO BAECK HOUSE OPEN DAY

It is nice to have friends, and innumerable friends rallied to make the Leo Baeck House Open Day and Bazaar on 15 May a success.

As soon as it became known that the event was scheduled offers of help poured in.

We had most generous donations of excellent goods for the bazaar as well as items produced by the residents themselves.

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

All this, together with the excellent response to the sale of the raffle tickets, helped to replenish the Amenities Fund and will enable our residents to benefit in so many ways.

Matron and staff worked tirelessly to organise the event.

Grateful thanks are, of course, also due to our faithful and hardworking band of helpers.

A E I O U

Though the Habsburg poet laureate's prophecy *Austria Erit In Orbe Ultima* — Austria will be the last (empire) on earth — has not been fulfilled, it did contain one grain of truth. The *Waldheimat* is the last country in the Catholic world where the myth of Jewish ritual murders still receives widespread credence. The Tyrolean Bishop Dr Stecher's official abolition of the Anderl von Rinn cult (see AJR Information May 1988) has prompted a backlash. The re-activation of the cult is being demanded by Diocesan Bishop Krenn with the help of the *Loreto-Bote*, a tri-annual publication available gratis in all places of pilgrimage.

This fits in neatly with the fact revealed by the chairman of the Austrian Psychoanalytical Association, Dr Berner, that of the 33,000 people who annually visit Vienna's Freud Museum native Austrians constitute a mere five per cent (!).

MASADA AND KREFELD

An unlikely link between Masada and Krefeld has been established. The workshops of the German Textile Museum in Krefeld are busy reconditioning textile balls — linen and wool — which were found during excavations in the famous Jewish desert fortress.

FROM ROPE TO RICHES

The sale of United Packaging at the end of last year marked the official retirement of Mr. Ernest Ascher as Chairman of the company he built up. It also marked his retirement from the packaging industry after a lifetime's involvement, which started with his training and apprenticeship in the, once vast, European rope and twine industry.

He arrived in England from Germany in 1936 with very little but his knowledge of the market for fibres. Putting this to use he obtained agencies for the flax growers of Poland and Lithuania and the hemp growers of Yugoslavia, Rumania and Turkey and began to supply raw materials to British rope manufacturers.

From there he moved into handling the finished twine as well and eventually manufacture, when he bought Yorkshire Rope & Twine, a company founded in 1742. Over the years he acquired another 20 companies, all related to packaging, to establish United Packaging. He also diversified into plastic packaging and machinery manufacture as well as founding the largest twine plant in Africa. Almost 50 years after landing in England he was proud to see United Packaging become the first packaging company to join the Unlisted Securities Market (USM).

Mr. Ascher emphasises the important role good team work has played in the success of his company. 'If you work well together with people it is easier to progress', he says, 'I am now enjoying the chance to relax, and I am finding new interests but I still like to see how things are at United Packaging and how my colleagues are getting on'.

WELL SAID

The Tel Aviv studio head of the Second German Television Channel, Helmut Illert, recently offered this useful advice to colleagues in the media 'Whoever covers events in Israel for foreign news organisations would do well to acquaint himself with the history of the Jews from the Beginning up to the Present.'

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Obituaries

ANNA MAHLER

The death of Anna Mahler removes one of the last remaining links with that Viennese Golden Age when the likes of Freud and Mahler helped shape the consciousness and culture of modern Europe. Born in 1904 Anna only knew her father for a few years, when, moreover, his work and failing health made him a rather remote figure. Nor could the fact that after Mahler's death his attractive widow Alma entered into several relationships have been particularly beneficial to the adolescent Anna's development. Points of friction arose between mother and daughter; the latter would play Bach, while the former favoured Wagner; in interwar Vienna Anna's Socialist leanings clashed with her mother's – and her stepfather Franz Werfel's – sympathies for the Austro-Fascist *Heimwehren*.

For all that Anna resembled Alma in several ways, not least in her attractiveness to men. In fact, she contracted even more marriages than her much-wooded mother. One of her forays into matrimony, with the publisher Paul Zsolnay, allegedly came about as a result of Alma pleading 'Geh' heirat doch den Paul damit der Franzl – i.e. Werfel – einen Verleger hat'. (Please marry Paul so that Franz gets a publisher.) Anna also had two husbands who were musicians: Ernst Krenek,

composer of the jazz opera *Johnny spielt auf*, and the conductor Anatole Fistoulari.

Like the mother, the daughter wanted to express herself artistically. Though possessed of sufficient musicianship to transpose her father's symphonies for the piano, she made sculpture her vocation. In this she received little formal training and always acknowledged a debt to Fritz Wotruba.

Anna's best-known work were portrait busts of eminent musicians such as Schoenberg, Berg, Schnabel and Klemperer. Her other *oeuvre* tended to be undervalued by the critics, though lately the art world showed renewed interest in it. Sadly she died while preparing for an exhibition at Salzburg which would have compensated for the neglect she had had to endure in recent years. (Sir Ernst Gombrich's graveside tribute to her will feature in the catalogue for that exhibition.)

BRUNO FREI

Bruno Frei who died, aged 90, near Vienna belonged to a *galère* of gifted Jewish-born journalists – others were Egon Erwin Kisch and Andre Simon (alias Otto Katz) – who served the Communist cause in the interwar years. Born Benedikt Freistadt in Pressburg, and a graduate

of the University of Vienna, Frei wrote in turn for the left-leaning *Der Abend*, the radical-pacifist *Weltbühne* and Willi Münzenberg's Communist tabloid *Berlin am Morgen*. An exile in Prague after the Machtergreifung, he edited the *Gegen-Angriff* and the celebrated *Brown Book*, which enlightened the broad public of democratic Europe about the import of Nazism. Moving to France he suffered internment as an enemy alien – the subject of his novel *Die Männer von Vernet* – and escaped to Mexico where he founded an anti-Nazi publishing house.

In postwar Vienna he again edited *Der Abend*, earning a reputation as a Stalinist for his justification of the Soviet suppression of the 1956 Hungarian Uprising. This did not, however, prevent the hardline East German regime from banning his vaguely dissident autobiography *Der Papiersäbel* in the mid-Sixties. Soon after, Frei's protest at the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia led to his expulsion from the Communist Party.

Thereafter Frei, like his Austrian ex-Party colleague Franz West (alias Weintraub) became increasingly preoccupied with Jewish matters, publishing *Sozialismus und Antisemitismus* in 1978. Another of his works deserving of mention is the biography of *Weltbühne* editor Carl von Ossietzky. Sadly Frei's declining years were overshadowed by the onset of blindness.

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