

AJR INFORMATION

Volume XLIV No. 1

January 1989

£2 (to non-members)

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JOACHIM PRINZ

Rabbi Prinz who died in Brookside, U.S.A. aged 86, had been born in Burkhardtsdorf (Upper Silesia) and studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau and the University of Gießen. During his student days he was active in the Zionist fraternity K.J.V.

In 1926, when only 24, he became the youngest Rabbi of the Berlin Jewish community. His colourful personality and unconventional approach to his vocation attracted a wide public, especially members of the younger generation.

When the Nazis came to power, he became a pillar of strength to his fellow Jews, through sermons in the overcrowded *Friedenstempel* which helped keep up their morale amidst persecution and humiliation. Speaking in the presence of Gestapo officials, he did not shrink from criticising measures of the regime. This resulted in repeated arrests, until he was forced to emigrate in 1937.

Notwithstanding his appeal to Jewish youth to build their lives anew in Palestine, he emigrated to the U.S., following a call from Rabbi Stephen Wise, then President of the American Jewish Congress. He quickly became familiar with the way of life and language of his country of resettlement. Two years after his arrival he was appointed Rabbi of the B'nai Abraham Temple in Newark (N.J.), a position he held until he retired at the age of 75.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

AJR Information welcomes well written contributions from readers wishing to communicate interesting reminiscences or views on topics of common concern. We are also on the lookout for general contributors with a literary flair.

THE EDITOR

A leading figure in American Jewry at large, he was elected president of the American Jewish Congress, member of the Presidium of the World Jewish Congress, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish organisations and Board member of the Claims Conference. A friend of Martin Luther King, he marched as one of the ten leaders of the 1963 Washington human rights demonstration and spoke to the thousands assembled there on behalf of American Jewry.

Joachim Prinz was also a prolific writer. His book *Wir Juden*, written in 1933 under the impact of events in Germany, had a wide echo; works published in America included *Foxes from the Ghetto* and *The Dilemma of the Modern Jew*.

Though, unlike some other former communal leaders, he was not actively associated with organisations for German-Jewish immigrants to the States, he would take up their interests whenever need arose.

W.R.

THE SEWERS OF LVOV

During the time of the Nazi occupation of Lvov in eastern Poland, a small group of Jews — out of a ghetto population of 150,000 — attempted to save themselves from extinction by hiding in the sewers beneath the city. Having escaped the final liquidation of the ghetto, they established a small underground community with the help of some sympathetic Catholic sewer workers.

They imagined they might have to hold out for about six weeks. In the event, they survived for fourteen months. In July 1944, after Lvov had been liberated by the Red Army, eleven of the original group emerged from the sewers; of those only four are still alive today. Their story of survival amidst unimaginable suffering is the subject of a Timewatch documentary (made with the assistance of the Soviet authorities) which BBC 2 will transmit on 11 January 1989.

ROAD TO DAMASCUS

During his state visit to Syria the Austrian President Waldheim asked for the extradition of war criminal Alois Brunner. Austrian-born Brunner, an Eichmann aide responsible for 120,000 Jewish deaths, has been the subject of extradition demands by several European governments for years.

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A RABBI RETURNS

Frankfurt on the Oder (now in the DDR) had a Jewish congregation since the 13th century; its university was the first in Germany to admit Jews. Among its rabbis were Joseph Te'omin, the *Peri Megadim* (whose grave was a place of pilgrimage), Samuel Holdheim, founder-rabbi of the Berlin *Reformgemeinde*, Judah Bergman, Martin Salomonsky and Ignaz Maybaum.

Earlier this year, I suddenly got a letter from the *Pfarrer* of the Catholic church, who had learnt by chance that I was the last rabbi of the town. He informed me that the Christian clergy intended, in conjunction with the municipality, to erect a monument on the spot where my synagogue once stood and asked if I would be willing to participate in the dedication of such a monument. I had no hesitation about accepting this invitation and travelled to Frankfurt on 8 November as guest of the municipality. The emotional impact of my return was lessened due to the fact that under Hitler's scorched earth policy the town had been razed to the ground by the Nazis and rebuilt after the war.

On Thursday, 10 November, the local paper reported: 'Yesterday, at a Memorial Meeting in the inner city of Frankfurt on the 50th anniversary of the fascist pogrom, the victims, the erstwhile Jewish population of the town, were remembered. *Oberbürgermeister* Fritz Krause presented a monument which was unveiled by members of the Free German Youth.'

The idea of such a monument originated from a joint proposal of the City Representative Council and the ecumenical circle of the city's churches. Also present was Herr Curt Cassell, who was the local rabbi from 1936 to 1939, and now lives in Great Britain. The granite stone bears the inscription: 'Here stood Frankfurt's Synagogue which was destroyed by the Fascists in 1938. Happy is the man that findeth Wisdom.'

Fritz Krause alluded to the pogroms and underlined that in the DDR everything was being done so that race hatred, national enmity and warmongering could never again originate from our soil.

After addresses by the representative of the churches and myself, wreaths were laid.

In the evening, a most moving ecumenical service took place in the Catholic church at which it was my privilege to preach the sermon. Towards the end of the service, the Catholic priest, *Pfarrer* Richter stood up and, facing me, said: 'Rabbi, I ask you to accept, in the name of your people, our sincere confession of shame and guilt.' Never before did I have such difficulty in finding the appropriate words.

C. E. CASSELL

A VISIT TO WROCLAW

Returning to Breslau after an absence of fifty years we located the offices of the Jewish Community, which are very close to the old Synagogue. The building itself is still standing, but in a state of total disrepair and beyond restoration. We met Rabbi Altmark, who only speaks Yiddish, but we managed to communicate. All the original burial records are still in existence and we did find the plot numbers of the graves in the Cosel cemetery. We went there the following day

with the Rabbi. How well I remembered the gateway and the iron railings, but, oh, how different did it look once we passed the gates! The cemetery is still used, but the further you go the more obvious are signs of vandalism and decay. The vandals were not only the Nazis, quite a lot of marble plaques and stones were stolen for rebuilding, and as vandalism is still going on the gates are closed and locked most of the time. Access is at certain hours, or by arrangement.

The Breslau community is very small and consists mostly of elderly people, who have come from other parts of Poland, Rumania etc. Rabbi Altmark, who is 71 years old and not in the best of health, finds it very difficult to cope with any correspondence. He showed me a pile of letters from all over the world including photos of graves. My advice to anyone who wishes to restore any graves is to go there personally. I must also emphasise that anyone contemplating such a visit should try to find out if the cemetery is still in existence.

KARL KIRSCHNER

VANISHED SMALL TOWN IDYLL

I came to Gardelegen (DDR) as a 35 year-old pastor's wife in 1955. Years later we learnt that the town had been the site of a major Nazi atrocity, when over a thousand inmates of concentration camps Dora and Neuengamme were herded into a barn and burnt alive in April 1945. In the meantime a memorial to them had been erected, and I set myself the task of collecting material about the former Jewish inhabitants of Gardelegen.

Thanks to the plentiful information volunteered by older inhabitants I gradually pieced together a picture that bore the traces of a small-town idyll.

The first Jews had come to Gardelegen before the middle of the 19th century—the most prominent being Friedmann Salomon, a dealer in hops. He contributed to the town's economic development and converted part of his estate for use as the Jewish cemetery. His nephew and heir had a son, Dr. Ornstein, who emigrated to Sweden, whence he maintained contact with Gardelegen till his death several years ago.

At the end of the war Wilhelm Werny, who had stayed married to his Jewish wife Emmi (née Behrens) throughout, took charge of the part-devastated Jewish cemetery and relocated the remaining 24 intact tombstones in a dignified setting. When the Wernys emigrated to South Africa the local Jewish community made Wilhelm an honorary member in recognition of his courageous conduct.

Other old-established Jewish families at Gardelegen were those of a textile merchant Louis Marcus, the music teacher Richard Hess and Dr. Sonnenfeld. (The Sonnenfelds emigrated to the U.S.A.; one son became a member of the legal team at the Nuremberg Trial and the other, Helmut, a top official in the State Department.) The Sonnenfelds were only one of two local families who managed to emigrate as a unit; four Jewish partners of mixed marriages were saved by their spouses; just over half the Jews of Gardelegen perished in the holocaust.

GISELA BUNGE

YELLOW STAR ON WHITE-BLUE BACKGROUND

An exhibition entitled 'The History and Culture of Jews in Bavaria' opened on 25 October at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg, and will run until 22 January.

The exhibition poster shows a Jewish tombstone from medieval Nuremberg which was used after the expulsion of the Jews from the town in 1349 as a step in a spiral staircase in St. Lorenz church. To-day it is a memorial in the cemetery's chapel of the Jewish community in Nuremberg.

The exhibition aims to present the richness of Jewish history and culture without, however, neglecting the persecution and destruction. Running through the exhibition are the themes of religion, of the preservation of identity amidst continual threat, and of assimilation and separateness.

These themes are treated against the background of general developments and illustrated with a wide variety of historical material, mostly of Bavarian provenance.

From the 10th century Jews had been allowed to settle as merchants in Regensburg, and during the 12th and 13th centuries in other Bavarian towns, mostly as money-lenders. Very few were allowed to work in agriculture or in the crafts controlled by the guilds.

In 1553 the Jews were expelled from the Duchy of Bavaria. They moved to Franconia and Swabia, after gaining the protection of the Imperial Knights in return for considerable amounts of money.

The exhibition investigates the everyday life of the Jews in Bavaria and the conflict between assimilation and the maintenance of socio-cultural identity. It seeks to do this by looking at the issues from different points of view, and by raising a variety of questions. Jewish emancipation progressed more haltingly in Bavaria than in other central European States. With social and legal emancipation came a loss of identity frequently culminating in conversion to Christianity. (The Seligmann-Eichthal family provide an outstanding example of this.) The history of the Jews in Bavaria in the 19th century is characterised by the gradual progress of emancipation. Nominal equality with other denominations was at last attained in the second half of the 19th century, and lasted until the advent of National Socialist Germany.

Bavarian Jewry did not survive the Third Reich. Most of those Jews who had both been born in Bavaria and escaped the Shoah remained abroad.

Postwar several thousand East European displaced persons stayed on in Bavaria and reconstructed communities in 12 towns. These attempts to uphold the Jewish element of life in Bavaria are overshadowed by the past, but can be seen as an expression of the Jewish tradition of hope and faith in the future.

Irremediable Loss

The directors of Vienna's Museum of Applied Arts and Museum of Modern Art told the *Financial Times* that the losses Austrian Culture incurred through the expulsion of the Jews have never been made good.

SALVAGED FROM OBLIVION



Inscription over Synagogue Entrance "This is the gate of the Lord, The righteous shall enter into it".
(Psalm 118.20)

In a sleepy little S. W. German village, Odenbach near Kaiserslautern, one of the last remaining synagogues to survive the November 1938 pogrom is to be restored, not as a house of prayer for this village (since no Jews are left), but as a monument of art history. It dates back to 1752 when Salomon Mayer, a village elder, dedicated part of his large house to religious worship. Not until 1802 was there a Jewish community sufficiently established to acquire the building and convert it into a synagogue which still bears the inscription 'This is the gate of the Lord: The righteous shall enter into it' (Psalm 118.20). It owes its survival in 1938 to the fact that it had by then been sold to 'Aryans' who used the premises as a commercial depot; it was situated in the centre of the village where a fire might have affected adjoining buildings.

Its artistic attraction is in the colourful, long hidden baroque murals discovered in 1985 by a resident, Bernhard Kukatzki, who arranged for renovation to be undertaken with financial aid from the district council. The synagogue is now to be recognised as a protected building. The cost involved will be considerable though, in view of the historical significance of the work, it is hoped that the money will be found. Synagogue murals of a similar kind can be seen only at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and at the Kekkenburg Museum in Schwäbisch-Hall.

A small Jewish community in Landau, near Odenbach, has indicated that its members might be interested to worship at the restored synagogue on Jewish festivals. Interest has also been shown by the 74-year old daughter of the former rabbi of Odenbach (Einstein), as well as by a group of 17 descendents of former Odenbach Jews (about 100) now living in Argentina who

were recent guests of the district council of Kusel.

At the moment a thorough structural survey of roof and building is assessing the prospect of repairs. During this investigation remains of old prayer books and documents believed to be marriage contracts (*ketubot*) were found under the roof. These documents are thought to be written in Yiddish and help is being sought with the translation.

Anyone interested in the restoration project should write to Frau Hilde Dittrich (in German or English), Förderverein zur Erhaltung der Synagoge in Odenbach, Untere Glanstrasse 2, D-6759 Odenbach, West Germany. (Tel. 01-049-6753-2745)

LORE STEIN

KADDISH

Thirty years on:
The wall unbricks itself
And look by look a childhood's
Rawness stands and turns:
'Confront me now!'

Forty years on:
The named, the nameless queue
And walk their histories,
Demand a chronicle:
'Remember us!'

Fifty years on:
Not late, not loud, the trumpet
Weeps this jubilee,
The skeletons return:
Sad hieroglyphs.

LOTTE KRAMER

A SMALL TOWN IN GERMANY

My father-in-law Alex Falk was murdered during Kristallnacht in his own house at Beckum, Westphalia.

A non-Jewish neighbour of the Falks, Hugo Krick, took it upon himself, ever since his return from a Siberian prisoner-of-war camp in 1947, to work for German-Jewish reconciliation. He wrote *Geschichte und Schicksal der Juden zu Beckum*, a work into which he put a quarter of a century's research. He was also responsible for erecting a *Mahnmal* in the local park (three uncut stones depicting father, mother and child), for naming a street *Alex Falk Weg*, and for putting a plaque on the house which was formerly the synagogue.

The last event took place on 10 November in the presence of the Landesrabbiner of Westfalen, Dov Levy Barsilay.

The Kristallnacht commemorations lasted one month with lectures, exhibitions, performances of *Andorra* (by Max Frisch), visits to the Jewish cemetery, and a group visit to Bergen-Belsen by members of the Beckumer Heimatverein.

On 10 November there was an ecumenical church service followed by a discussion about *Wie soll es weiter gehen?*

EVA FALK

'THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF ALZEY' EXHIBITION

The first evidence for the existence of Jews in Alzey (Rhineland-Palatinate) occurs in 1305, but they were banished in 1390, and did not return till after the 30-Years War. The first *Juden Register* of 1721 listed nine families dispersed in different parts. The *Memorbuch* — now kept in Jerusalem — gives details of some of the personalities. Services must have been held in private houses until 1791, when the first synagogue was built, only to be replaced by a larger building in 1854, when the community was led by a wellknown liberal-thinking rabbi, Samuel Adler.

The exhibition tells how by the mid-19th century emancipation sometimes led to emigration. Meanwhile some Alzey Jews were founding substantial businesses in the town and entering fully into corporate activities. In the 1st World War nine Jews fell for their country. The story concludes with a haunting display of the persecution that ensued from 1933.

Much of the early history is shown in extracts from original archives such as the *Memorbuch*, *Schutzjuden* certificates, business and personal letters, account books and so forth. Artifacts are illuminating. For example, surviving from the first synagogue is the very fragile brocade torah cover and from the second, a torah scroll remarkable rescued from the ruins. Memorabilia such as headed account paper, sale notices, and photographs help to give a vivid impression of the last 100 years of Jewish life in Alzey (significantly from the Liebmann collection in Cincinnati).

The exhibition was opened on 6 November when 19 refugees, mostly former residents, attended as guests of the Mayor. The latter has exciting plans to build up a replica of the synagogue to be used as a public facility in memory of, and in part atonement for, the *Shoah*.

ELIZABETH HALL

EAST BERLIN 'KRISTALLNACHT' COMMEMORATION

As Honorary President of the Foundation 'Neue Synagoge Berlin — Centrum Judaica', Sir Sigmund Sternberg attended events commemorating the night of the pogroms, November 1938.

The commemoration began with a reception given by the Chairman of the DDR Council of State — Herr Erich Honecker — for the Presidium of the Association of Jewish Congregations in the DDR and foreign Jewish representatives, among them Mr. I. Arad, Director of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

A special session of the People's Chamber was held on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the pogrom, followed in the evening by a Gala concert. On 10 November there took place the symbolic laying of the foundation stone for the reconstruction of the Neue Synagoge Berlin — Centrum Judaicum, on the site of the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue which was gutted on the night of 9 November 1938. This was followed by the inaugural session of the new Committee which is largely made up of members of the Jewish Community.

Plans for a Jewish Cultural Centre which include a library and museum, were conceived last year during meetings Sir Sigmund had with the DDR State Secretary for Religious Affairs — Dr. Gysi — whilst attending the International Conference of Christians and Jews in Buckow.

HEIDELBERG COMMEMORATION

On 9 November, the University of Heidelberg solemnly commemorated the 50th anniversary of the *Reichspogromnacht*. To an audience which filled the largest lecture hall to overflowing, Professor Raymond Klibansky, Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, spoke about his experiences as *Privatdozent* at the University during the first years of the Hitler régime and his subsequent emigration to England.

The University also published a volume documenting the lives of those members of the teaching staff who were driven from their position as a consequence of the Racial Laws: Dorothee Mussnug, *Die vertriebenen Heidelberger Dozenten*. Universitätsverlag, Heidelberg 1988. On p. 41, Klibansky's reply to the questionnaire concerning racial origin is quoted: 'I do not consider it compatible with the requirements of scientific thought which as a University teacher I am obliged to uphold, to resolve questions of racial origin on the basis of the confessional affiliation of only two preceding generations. I must therefore lay stress on the declaration that *all* my ancestors, as far as they can be traced back, professed the Jewish religion.'

LOTTE LABOWSKY

CAMPS INTERNMENT—P.O.W.—FORCED LABOUR—KZ

I wish to buy cards, envelopes and folded post-marked letters from all camps of both world wars. Please send, registered mail, stating price, to:
14 Rossllyn Hill, London NW3
PETER C. RICKENBACK

BEARING CHRISTIAN WITNESS

While most German churchmen kept silent at the time of the Kristallnacht, a few did speak out.

The Nazis strongly objected to Jews converting to Christianity. Apart from the fact that the Nürnberg race laws referred to the Jewish 'race', and not 'religion', the Nazis disliked the idea that a converted Jew could be considered as equal to a Christian. They succeeded in preventing conversion of Jews by Protestant pastors, but the Catholic Church refused to bow to Nazi pressures.

So the Nazis retaliated by abusing priests who were known to baptise Jews, ridiculing them and printing scurrilous articles on their private lives. Some priests succumbed to these campaigns, but others did not: notably *Domprobst* Lichtenberg of the St. Hedwigskirche, Unter den Linden. Every Friday afternoon Lichtenberg conducted a class of Jews who were preparing for baptism, after which they would attend a public service at his church. It was always packed to capacity. The services regularly ended with the following prayer: 'Let us pray for the priests in concentration camps, for the persecuted non-aryan Christians, and for the Jews.' Then he turned to a prayer for the government: 'And they also will have to sit at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and those who don't like it will have to remain outside.' Sometimes the black uniforms of the SS mingled in the crowd: on other occasions the seats nearest the pulpit were occupied by the Gestapo, who though in plain clothes, could easily be recognized because they were so different from the rest of the congregation. Lichtenberg would start his sermon with a special welcome for the members of the SS and the Gestapo, and say he hoped they came to the House of God to repent. After the 9 November the church was so crowded that people were standing in the aisles. They waited for an uplifting sermon and were not disappointed. 'What was yesterday we know, what will be to-morrow we don't know, but what has happened today we have witnessed ourselves. Outside, the temple burns, the temple which is also a House of God.' He continued that those who destroy Houses of God are evil men. They should be treated the same way as if they had set a Catholic church alight.

How long could Lichtenberg remain a free man? The Nazis were wary of attacking the Catholic church because of its international power. In 1941 they started their Euthanasia programme, in which hundreds of thousands of disabled people were killed without their own or their relatives' consent. The programme was directed by Dr. Conti, the *Reichsgesundheitsführer*. On 28 August 1941 Lichtenberg wrote to Dr. Conti pointing out that euthanasia was murder under German law. This was too much for the Nazis, and they awaited an opportunity to arrest him.

In October, 1941, when the deportation of Jews to Auschwitz began, Goebbels distributed a leaflet countrywide dubbing any German who showed sympathy towards Jews a traitor to his country. Lichtenberg wrote a sermon to be read the following Sunday at his church, wherein he called Goebbels' pamphlet un-Christian and

reminded his congregation of Jesus' command 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' However, he was not to deliver the sermon. A BDM girl who strayed into his church to admire the architecture overheard one of his anti-Nazi sermons and went to the police to denounce him. He was immediately arrested. The Nazis could not try him for his letter to Dr. Conti, for euthanasia was indeed against German law. So he was tried under the Nazi law against 'malicious gossip' (*Heimtücke-gesetz*). The prosecution offered as evidence his various prayers for the Jews and also his unpublished sermon attacking Goebbels' leaflet. He was given two years imprisonment. Towards the end of his prison term he expressed the wish that upon his release he should be sent for pastoral duties among the Jews in the ghetto of Lodz. On the day of his release from Tegel prison he was re-arrested and sent to Dachau. He died on the way. Permission was given for his body to be taken to Berlin for burial there. A crowd of thousands followed his coffin, a silent anti-Nazi demonstration, the only one possible in those days.

I can think of no better epitaph for this good man than the following quotation from Shakespeare:

*His life was gentle, and the elements
so mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
and say to all the world 'This was a man!'*

PETER PRAGER

CLUB 1943

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

Hon President: Dr. Erwin Seligmann, 11 Templars Ave.,
NW11 455-5273
Secretary: Berta Sterly, 4 Grey Close, NW11 6QG 455-1535
Vice Secretary: Hans Seelig, 27 Wood End Lane, Hemel
Hempstead (0442)-54360
Treasurer: Heddy Friedmann, 4 Grey Close, NW11 6QG
455-1535
Vice Treasurer: Ing. Otto Egert, 12 Wycombe Gardens, NW11
455-9610
Public Relations: C. Kryslar, 97 Hodford Road, NW11 8EH
455-8321

1989

- 2 Jan. Bank Holiday: No Lecture
- 9 Jan. Walter Huges: Vienna under Nazi Rule 1938/1939. A Personal Memoir
- 16 Jan. A. T. Mellinghoff M.A.: Visiting Country-houses during the Enlightenment
- 23 Jan. Muriel Hammond F.L.A. The Other Brother Grimm Emil Ludwig, the Painter
- 30 Jan. PEN-Lesebühne: Sonderveranstaltung über den Autor Werner Lansburgh, Uppsala/Schweden u. Hamburg
- 6 Feb. Dr. Rolf Ahmann: Neue historische Ergebnisse zum Hitler-Stalin-Pakt
- 13 Feb. Dr. R. von Schulze-Gävernitz: Hippokrates, der Gründer der Medizin im klassischen Griechenland. Der hippokratische Eid. Ärztliche Ethik einst und heute
- 20 Feb. Dr. Manfred Rudolph: Cultural Aspects of the German Democratic Republic
- 27 Feb. PEN-Lesebühne: Sonderveranstaltung über die Autorin Mascha Kaléko (1907-1975)
- 6 Mar. Barry Schenker Ph.D.: The Role of Zionism in Israel and the Diaspora
- 13 Mar. Dr. Gerhard Hirschfeld: England als Emigrationsland für Deutsche im 19. u. 20. Jahrhundert
- 20 Mar. PEN-Lesebühne: Sonderveranstaltung mit dem Autor Fritz Beer, London
- 17 Mar. Bank Holiday: No Lecture
- 3 Apr. Collin Berry B.Sc., Ph.D.: What Makes a Nobel Prize Winner?

Lectures are given in the language indicated by the title

The annual membership fee of £8.00 for 1989 is now due.
Guests 50 pence

David Maier reports on Anglo-Jewish Institutions

THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES

Writing in the October 1988 issue of *On Board*, the newsletter of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, its President, Dr. Lionel Kopelowitz, wrote: 'The British Jewish community indeed has a heavy agenda in the year ahead.' As priority items on this agenda he listed unity in the continued Jewish support for Israel after the November elections both there and in the United States; Jewish education for the young; and attention to the needs of an ageing community, now that retirement encompasses not one, but two generations. Such a wide-angled approach to the current concerns of Jews in all parts of the country well illustrates the unique position which the Board occupies in Anglo-Jewry. Strictly speaking, the Board's authority is derived from the principle of voluntarism and it thus can, in theory at least, only claim to represent those who have chosen to be members of one or other of its constituent organisations.

When it was founded in 1760, the Board had, according to Professor Aubrey Newman, 'been the creation of various synagogues and these had been prepared to write into the Constitution of the Board references to the religious authorities of those bodies. The Ashkenazi congregations had had the position of the Chief Rabbi safeguarded, while the Sephardim had done the same for the Haham.*' But the Board is not a synod; indeed, representation is no longer strictly confined to religious congregations, but reflects the whole of Jewish communal life in this country.

There are at present 422 Deputies who elect the Honorary Officers — a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary General, a Treasurer; and these, together with ten elected members and the two immediate Past Presidents, form the Executive Committee. The workload is further divided among nine specialist Committees dealing with such matters as information, education and youth, finance, foreign affairs, Israel, legal and parliamentary questions, public relations, shechita and defence. The Officers and the Committees are backed by a small professional 'civil service' and administrative infrastructure based at Woburn House. In the context of regional, rather than national issues, the Board works in association with fourteen Provincial Representative Councils which function in the major centres of Jewish life in England, Scotland and Wales. Typical of these bodies is the Council for Birmingham and the West Midlands which has been in existence for over fifty years. It is made up of some 30 members who represent the four Birmingham synagogues and the smaller congregations of Solihull and Wolverhampton. Among its current projects is a feasibility study into the possibility of establishing a communal charity fund to avoid the proliferation of appeals and the consequent dissipation of effort. Although the Ministers of the various synagogues are entitled, as a matter of principle, to attend meetings, *halachic* questions are always referred to the appropriate religious authorities.

Internationally, the Board of Deputies is a constituent member of the World Jewish Con-

gress, taking part in that organisation's deliberations at its meetings in New York and Jerusalem; and it plays a prominent part in the work of the European Jewish Council. The Board's Senior Vice-President, Eric Moonman, is Chairman of the EJC Commission on anti-Semitism which concerns itself with the manifestations of it on both sides of the European political divide. Mr. Moonman regards the increasing participation of Jewish organisations from East Bloc countries as an important development. He has been confirmed in this view by the valuable meetings he was able to hold with leading Jewish (as well as non-Jewish) personalities when he recently visited Austria and Hungary in his official capacity.

Defence

One of the Board's least publicised 'portfolios' is its leading role in the fight against defamation. Eric Moonman describes these activities as 'highly pragmatic and relevant in the growing turbulence of society,' and he points to the Board's record of success in this area, which has led to the Defence Committee's professional advisers being called upon to share their expertise with Britain's newer immigrant communities and with study groups from abroad. The Committee is also responsible for the training of some 400-500 unarmed security guards, young Jews of both sexes, whose voluntary service to the community takes the form of protecting by their vigilance the undisturbed conduct of synagogue services and communal functions.

The defence task is complex and costly. For obvious reasons, a low profile is a rule adopted in its performance. But when the occasion demands a different course, the Board is able to rise to its full stature and use its not inconsiderable influence in order to counter hostile propaganda, to challenge offensive media advertisements, to unmask untruths and denounce provocative attempts to re-write history. In appropriate circumstances the Executive will arrange to send delegations to government ministers, set up meetings with politicians, call on foreign diplomats in London, taking care not to duplicate any similar steps taken by, for example, the Embassy of Israel. Factual information is also disseminated to the public at large through the Board's Central Enquiry Desk and Communal Diary which deals with incoming telephone calls on a daily basis.

The Board's role is not without its critics. Quite recently Eric Moonman himself was challenged to defend its performance. In point of fact, he does not object to reasonable criticism if it is prompted by a genuine concern for, and commitment to, the common cause. 'After all, passionate impatience is better than silent indifference. It reminds us that we must continue to offer imaginative as well as emotional leadership.'

* *The Board of Deputies of British Jews 1760-1985. A Brief Survey* by Aubrey Newman. (Valentine, Mitchell & Co, 1987.)

KINDERTRANSPORT REUNION

Another reunion committee is arranging a two-day event in June at the Harrow Leisure Centre.

For further information contact:
Mrs Bertha Leverton, 50 London Road,
Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 4NW.

A THANKS OFFERING TO BRITAIN

The 17th 'Thank-You-Britain' lecture was delivered on 22 November in the Lecture Hall of the British Academy. The Lecture, now a biennial event, was presented to the Academy in 1965 as one of the purposes of the 'Thank-you-Britain' Appeal with which the AJR was so prominently associated.

The subject of the 1988 Lecture was *The Growth of British Art History and Its Debts to Europe* and it was given by a leading authority in the field, Professor Francis Haskell of Oxford. After paying generous tribute for his personal indebtedness to, among others, Sir Nicholas Pevsner and the Warburg Institute of the University of London, the lecturer traced the development in this country of art history as an academic discipline from the 17th century onwards. He described in masterly detail how the great private collections brought professional historians and connoisseurs to this country where they were able to complement their knowledge and extend their studies. Many of them had fled from the repressions and persecutions of revolutionary and reactionary Europe and during their stay here they influenced their contemporaries and were in turn influenced by them.

The presentation, which was illustrated by a skilfully selected series of screen projections, was warmly applauded by an attentive audience.

DLM

Midnight in Moscow

Yuzef's, the Star of David-flaunting Jewish cooperative cafe in the vicinity of Paveletsky railway station has had its windows broken and delivery van repeatedly vandalised. Streetwise Muscovites think these attacks need not necessarily be antisemitic in inspiration; they could just as easily be the work of gangs operating protection rackets.



**John Denham
Gallery**

50 Mill Lane, West Hampstead
London NW6 1NJ 01-794 2635

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

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

Images of German Jews in recent English fiction

Quite frequently, in the universities, students of history are recommended to turn to fiction for a sense of the past. How well is the experience of German Jewry, the refugees, mirrored in the modern English novel? Two books published this year, *Baumgartner's Bombay** and *Latecomers*** are well worth the reading, though for an idea of the vitality, adaptability and tenacity shown by the German Jew in a new country one would better turn to the novels of Anthony Trollope which depict the immigrants of 140 years ago moving confidently, in the face of prejudice, in Victorian society.

Anita Desai is a writer on Indian life whose mother is German. She can be delightfully funny (as in her novel *In Custody* with its idealistic teacher in pursuit of a preposterous Urdu poet) but humour has little place in *Baumgartner's Bombay* which imaginatively reconstructs the life of an actual recluse who died in that city.

From flashbacks and an impressionistic flow of memories peppered with German phrases one picks out the story of Hugo, only child of a Berlin Jewish retailer of ornate, expensive furniture, with a tender, artistic mother. There is a vagueness as to dates and incidents, a nebulous survey of Jewish experience under Nazi rule. The maid leaves; the boy is sent to a 'vulgar' Jewish school (there are playground jokes about his nose which he 'fingers thereafter' — a supposedly archetypal Jewish gesture). His father's business fades away as Jews emigrate. After 'Kristallnacht' the father is taken to Dachau from which he, the strong man, returns, broken, and commits suicide. A coarse gentile colleague takes over shop and apartment; the mother moves to Grenadierstrasse and a bewildered Hugo is sent to India with a letter of introduction to an Indian timber merchant who befriends him. There he becomes a commission agent. The central chapters of the book deal with the confusion of the Indian internment camp where Baumgartner spends the whole war. (At one point Nazi Germans pretty well take over the camp and run it while the British commandant melts away in the heat, ignoring the harassment of the Jewish inmates.)

After a period of relative affluence Baumgartner, as an old man, lives in squalor with the stray cats he collects. His end is brutal: murdered by a blond German drug-crazed hippy backpacker for what little he has. One feels uneasily that a Jew is being shown here as a born victim; weak, ugly and ineffectual; supported by the careless generosity of his Indian employers, bullied in the camp and, in the contrived ending, destined to be the prey of the vicious Aryan.

The novelist evokes the misery, poverty and underlying violence of Indian life, questions the motives and behaviour of the feckless Western hippies who are despised by the Indians, and lingers on the miseries of age and ageing flesh. It is a blowsy decrepit German ex-nightclub dancer, Lola, Baumgartner's only friend, who opens and closes the book. After the murder she tries to decipher the pitiful cache of letters and cards preserved by Baumgartner; stamped J 673/1,

signed Mama, Mutti, Mu: the last dated February, 1941. . .

A feeling of heaviness and unease pervades this densely-textured, carefully wrought novel.

Ageing is a theme of Anita Brookner's *Latecomers*, too. There have been glimpses of refugees, foreigners — their Jewishness implied but not openly stated — in some of her previous novels; names such as Beck, Dorn, Weiss, Leventhal. At the end of *Family and Friends* one notes the Jewish mourning rituals for the dead matriarch, Sofka. In *A Start in Life* there is a grandmother with her 'sad European background' who has brought her hideous furniture with her from Berlin, which looks as though 'it had drunk the blood of horses'. (Anita Brookner has become the poet of gloomy, stifling flats in Maida Vale or Compayne Gardens, filled with ugly and oppressive furnishings which often have more strength of personality than the characters themselves and dictate their moods.) *Latecomers* tells the story of the lifelong friendship of the two men who had come to England as refugee children from Germany.

They are shown as having familiar Jewish virtues; they are luxurious husbands, devoted parents, kind to employees. There is a hint of Tucholsky's Herr Wendriner in the character of the more outgoing Hartmann, determinedly blinkered as to the past, enjoying the cosy pleasures of bourgeois affluence. The withdrawn melancholy Fibich spends his spare time with his psychiatrist, seeking his lost childhood in Germany.

As for their own children, and each has one, whatever problems they face in life they are not shown as having been in any way warped by being born to refugee fathers.

A lament for the lost generation which perished in Germany underlies the optimistic cries of: 'Look, we have come through.' Fibich nerves himself to visit Berlin, only to break down on his return to London (in the restaurant of Durrants Hotel where the more pragmatic Hartmann, who believes in the curative qualities of food, is a Stammgast). The touching ending has Fibich, in the tradition of many European Jewish fathers, attempting to compose a family memoir for his son from what little he can recall of his own parents.

Reading these novels, a student would have a very lop-sided picture of German Jews in the British world; exploited, unhappy, timid, isolated, playing little or no part in local life and institutions. For a broader picture we need a modern Balzac or a Trollope.

*Heinemann 1988

PAULINE PAUCKER

**Jonathan Cape 1988

BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE 51 Belsize Square, London, N.W.3

Our communal hall is available for cultural and social functions. For details apply to:
Secretary, Synagogue Office.

Tel: 01-794 3949

PRIMARY COLOURS

(*A Jewish Childhood*, edited by A. Kamm and A. N. Jeffares, Boxtree, £15.)

'He had large beautiful and strong hands, and he was superbly muscled, lean and hard to the day of his death, and always from the beginning of memory, I remember those hands. They were the hands of a working man; they were his rock and his foundation, and all he ever had in the world were those two hands.'

Here Howard Fast affectionately recalls his father. Born to poverty, widowed young, he raised his family of three small boys alone. Necessity compelled them all to work at an early age; they had no childhood, no youth and no education, save what life and experience afforded.

The scene shifts. We are now in a large well-furnished house in Krakow. Helena Rubinstein remembers her youth; it is a warm, secure intensely feminine world, aeons away from the Fasts' New York slum.

'We would gather in the living room' she writes, 'near the glowing stove. My mother would surround herself with her eight daughters: Helena, Paulina, Rosa, Regina, Stella, Ceska, Manka and Erna. Then in turn she would brush each head of hair, a hundred strokes, while we counted in chorus. We all had the same black, glossy, luxuriant locks of which Mama was very proud.'

Thus this book, *A Jewish Childhood*, moves back and forth among the many worlds of the diaspora experience. We are offered an anthology of nearly 100 excerpts from autobiographies and imaginative literature bringing before the reader an experience rich and varied, yet discernibly familiar, diverse and complex, yet Jewish, not a motley collection, but pages from a common tradition.

The diversity is bewildering. Roy Welensky tells of his early years in Rhodesia; Leonard Woolf recounts life in a London suburb; Emanuel Shinwell recalls his youth in the slums of Glasgow; the Whitechapel ghetto is evoked by Selig Brodetsky. Chaim Weizman writes touchingly of Motol deep within Tsarist Russia and of his father's unremittingly hard life as a timber merchant responsible for cutting and transporting wood down river to Danzig—an arduous, seasonal occupation involving long periods away from home.

By a sharp contrast Bernard Baruch recalls South Carolina in the 1880s and his father's membership of the early K.K.K.; Evelyn Cowan writes of the remoteness of the Scottish island of Bute; Kristallnacht in Berlin is remembered by John D. Rayner; Stefan Zweig evokes his intellectual awakening in Vienna, and André Maurois school-days at the Rouen Lycée at the time of the Dreyfus affair. Isaak Babel's tiny masterpiece *Karl Yankel* is quintessential persecution, spite, official stupidity, self-hatred, resilience and humour.

These are childhoods immensely different but recognisable, and more often than not touched by shadows of the larger world, hostile and suspicious. It is the Jewish experience. The editors deserve thanks for putting together an absorbing and entertaining collection.

HAROLD FREEDMAN

PAUL BALINT — AJR
DAY CENTRE

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

JANUARY

Monday 2nd	CLOSED
Tuesday 3rd	'Matinée Musicale' — David & John Juritz
Wednesday 4th	Kol Rinah Choir
Thursday 5th	'Popular Classics' — Joe Vilensky & Doris Mainzer accompanied by Rosa Butwick
Monday 9th	'Soirée Musicale' — Alfred Rowel (Violin), Mania Jurman (Songs), Happy Branston (Piano)
Tuesday 10th	'Songs from around the World' — Francoise Geller
Wednesday 11th	(a) Outing to 'Can-Can' (b) Ronnie Bell on Keyboard at the Day Centre
Thursday 12th	Dorei Duo
Monday 16th	'Memory — A new concept in services for the Elderly' — Lynette Scott
Tuesday 17th	'Security in the Home & Personal Safety' — P.C. Hoare, Hampstead Police Station
Wednesday 18th	'Touch of Vienna' — Angela Hull & Sally Popperwell
Thursday 19th	The Blake Piano Trio
Monday 23rd	'Musical Posy of Spring' — Victoria Carlisle & Sarah Colyers
Tuesday 24th	General Quiz — Senta Friedlander
Wednesday 25th	'Mr. Marks & Mr. Spencer' — An early history of Marks & Spencer' — Paul Bookbinder
Thursday 26th	Estelle & Pamela Entertain
Monday 30th	'Facets of Romance for Voice & Piano' — Francoise Andre & Tessa Newman
Tuesday 31st	'Popular Violin Pieces' — Marianne Olyver & Jonathan Honeyball

FEBRUARY

Wednesday 1st	'History of Magic' — Bert Meredith
Thursday 2nd	'Music — High, Middle & Low Brow' — Hans Freund
Monday 6th	'Show-Time' — Helena Guest
Tuesday 7th	'Memory — A new concept in services for the Elderly' — Lynette Scott
Wednesday 8th	'Security in the Home & Personal Safety' — P.C. Hoare, Hampstead Police Station
Thursday 9th	Sunshine Singers
Monday 13th	Elisse Reinah Entertains
Tuesday 14th	Cello Duos — Caroline Salinger & Danny Kingshill
Wednesday 15th	'Musical Interlude' — Myra Waller & Marguerite Rapp
Thursday 16th	'Pot-Pourri of Music' — Valerie Hewitt & Anne Berryman

WE NEED YOU TO VISIT:

1. A member in the Warwick Avenue W9 area
2. Members in the NW3 & W2 Areas

WOULD YOU TAKE OUT:

3. Residents from the Homes in The Bishops Avenue N2

WOULD YOU DRIVE:

4. People to and from the Day Centre

Please get in touch with
Laura Howe 483 2536

MORE HEARTFELT THANKS

I want to express my gratitude to the Day Centre staff for the wonderful work they're doing, creating a happy, relaxed atmosphere and even providing individual care for the frailer members.

The food is delicious — just as mother cooked it — and the entertainment delightful. The physiotherapy and the discussion group are also much appreciated.

Usually I find Bingo moronic and boring, but Bernie conducts it with great humour and it is FUN.

The members come from different backgrounds and I have already made friends with one or two of them. What we all have in common is possessing few relatives — and these are scattered all over the world. I missed the Day Centre during the High Holidays, which nearly all seemed to fall on Mondays.

Colmer Road, (Mrs.) RUTH LEGGETT
Streatham SW16

AJR CLUB NEWS

Sunday, 15 January, 3.30 p.m.:
ARMCHAIR TRAVELS WITH MUSIC
Colour slides by Gunter and Eva Wittenberg

Sunday, 12 February, 3 p.m.:
Mr. Bookbinder of Messrs. Marks & Spencer's on MR. MARKS AND MR. SPENCER

Entrance fee: 50p incl. tea

The AJR Club at 15 Cleve Road is open on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 6 p.m. for members to meet and talk to their friends or play cards, scrabble or chess. Tea and light suppers are served by volunteers (tea only on Sundays). Guests are welcome. The membership fee is £4 p.a.

There is live entertainment on one Sunday a month, followed by tea, and video films can be watched in the lounge on most other Sundays at 2.30 (programme on the Cleve Road notice board). On Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2, Club members may attend the Day Centre entertainment.

On Thursday, 12th January, at 4 p.m., Irene White will talk to the Club about NURSING AND CARING.

DAY CENTRE OUTING TO YORK

York was the destination of an unusual 3-day coach outing in November organised by Irene White, one of the Centre's best-known volunteers. It was unusual for several reasons. For a start, we, 44 of us, arrived on the very day the Queen came to York to unveil a plaque marking the restoration of the Minster's South transept which was destroyed by fire in 1984. And then York is altogether a most interesting city. Its history goes back to Roman times, and the Minster, its most famous building, was founded in the 7th century. The most picturesque place is probably the medieval street called The Shambles; together with the Minster it is easy to remember—M and S—of which you find the modern version—Marks & Spencer—at the end of the Shambles.

Among the city's most striking mementoes are those of the Vikings who came over when the Romans left, and their story has provided York with quite an exceptional attraction: an exhibition conveying an impression of Viking life some 1,200 years ago. Another reconstruction of the past is offered at the Castle Museum where one can move along a whole street as it was 150 years ago.

The weekend was rounded off with a very unorthodox production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Theatre Royal—but so long as playgoers can see and hear *Romeo and Juliet* it doesn't perhaps much matter what the production is like, except of course that it is a sad story.

The saddest story, however, for the Jewish visitor, is that connected with Clifford Tower: in the year 1190, 150 Jews sought refuge there from a Crusader mob incited by one Richard Malebisse (*bad beast*) and committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of their persecutors. The story is told on a memorial tablet unveiled by the Chief Rabbi and the Archbishop of York ten years ago at the foot of the tower.

We are greatly indebted to Irene White for having arranged this fine outing. She was uniquely qualified as she had lived in York. No comment was heard more often from her than 'Don't worry'. We didn't have to: all the worrying had been done by her in good time. What we had to do was to enjoy it all—which we did, most heartily and most gratefully too. Irene was ably assisted by Hanna Goldsmith, Mia Ross and many of the members. They seemed to care for each other, giving it all the feeling of a family outing.

We hope to see many more outings in the coming year and are looking forward to the next trip.

(One of the party)

PLEASE

can you spare some time to entertain our members attending the Day Centre? If so, please contact Hanna Goldsmith on Wednesdays between 9.30 a.m. and 3 p.m. 328 0208 or evenings 958 5080.

ART NOTES

Jacob Pins was recently in London on his way to Hamm (Westphalia) after retiring from his professorship at the Bezalel Academy of Art in Jerusalem.

Pins, born at Hoexter in 1917, emigrated to Palestine in 1936. The reason for his visit to Hamm was to be present at the opening of an exhibition of the works of four Israeli artists of Westphalian origin: Pins himself, Naphtali Bezem, a painter of great repute, Mordecai Gumpel, distinguished in the applied arts, and Judith Pins, a surrealist painter. Judith, hidden in Vienna during the war, only met her husband-to-be, a cousin of Jacob Pins, after the Allied victories. Two other Israeli painters, Josef Hirsch and Kurt Dublon, are also included in the Hamm exhibition.

A major retrospective exhibition of the work of Jacob Pins is to be held next summer in Hoexter as part of the local commemoration of *Kristallnacht*. During his stay in London, Pins took the opportunity to acquire a number of very rare Japanese prints, of which he has an outstanding collection which he is presenting to the Israel Museum.

One of the most important recent events in the art world was the sale in November by Christie's, New York, of modern prints from the Neuerberg collection. The prize item in the sale was the *Brücke* portfolio (1906-1912) which fetched the outstanding price of 528,000 dollars.

On the subject of auctions, I have just received the catalogue of 19th and 20th centuries art being sold by Villa Grisenbach in Berlin. This is one of the newer auction houses and they are selling an amazing collection of good pictures, including some magnificent works by Max Liebermann, Emil Orlik and Lesser Ury.

The *Panoramania* exhibition at the Barbican (until 15 January) has already been mentioned in these columns, but not to be missed are the David Roberts' diorama of the Israelites Leaving Jerusalem, the transparency of a View on the Rhine near Bingen, a view of the Neue Markt in Hamburg with Sattler's Rotunda, a panorama of Krupp's steelworks in Essen, and a copy of Joseph Sattler's panorama of Salzburg.

Photography Now at the Victoria and Albert Museum (15 February-30 April) celebrates the 150th anniversary of the birth of photography. The exhibition, created by Mark Haworth-Booth, the Museum's Curator of Photography, is intended to reflect the best examples of international photography from the last ten years. The Barbican Centre will be showing 'The Romantic Tradition in British Art' (9 February-9 April). This is an exhibition of some 350 works by a group of over a hundred artists, ranging from Edward Burne-Jones to Stanley Spencer.

The British Museum is showing Henry Moore's *Shelter Drawings* (until 12 February). These are moving and realistic reminders of the scenes of those poignant war-time days. The Hayward Gallery is holding a large-scale exhibition of Leonardo da Vinci (26 January-16 April). At the heart of the exhibition will be the largest range of Leonardo drawings ever assembled, including 88 works from the Royal Library, Windsor Castle.

For the festive season there is *Circus, Circus* at the Theatre Museum, Tavistock Street (15 December-2 April). The exhibition is mounted in a gallery lined with canvas to capture the excitement of the circus tent and in the arena there will be demonstrations by circus performers. A model circus, puppets, figures of performers and posters will complete the scene. During the school-holidays there will be a series of events, such as face-painting and clowning sessions.

Those who did not have an opportunity to see *The Fallen* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford (until 15 January) will undoubtedly be interested in the illustrated exhibition catalogue. Apart from a detailed description of the pictures, it includes highly informative and well written essays about the individual artists.

Finally, a reminder of the Ben Uri Art Society Picture Fair on 29 January, 1989. A large and varied collection of pictures will be on display and every ticket purchased (price £40) will entitle the holder to a picture of his/her choice. A little gamble with the prospect of a worthwhile prize!

ALICE SCHWAB

Nobel Laureate

Jack Steinberger, co-winner of the 1988 Nobel Prize for Physics, was born at Bad Kissingen in 1921, studied at Chicago, taught at Columbia University and worked at CERN (European Centre for Nuclear Research) at Geneva.

Felicitations

The Executive and staff of AJR wish Arnold Horwell many happy returns on the occasion of his 75th birthday on 19 January.

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SB's Column

Opera on the Continent. Opening of the Bastille Opera in Paris has now been fixed for 14 July 1989, Bastille day (exactly 200 years after the revolutionary event). The city of Kassel is arranging a Mahler Festival in June; this is a first time event. The opera house in Stuttgart is to reopen shortly after thorough renovation with a fairy-tale opera by Offenbach (*Der Karottenkönig*), to be followed by the new opera *Einstein on the Beach* by Robert Wilson and Philip Glass, the latter known to London audiences by his original works premiered by the English National Opera company.

Award. Hans Weigel, 80, the Austrian writer and translator who returned to Austria from this country after the war, has been honoured with the 'Great Order of the Tyrolean Eagle'. In the 50's and 60's Weigel was a very stern reviewer of the Vienna theatrical scene; his wife, comedienne Elfriede Ott, remains a great favourite with Austrian audiences.

Birthdays. Dutch-born singer and actor Johannes Heesters, *charmeur par excellence* on the German stage, who has had a faithful following for many decades, from his first Prince Danilo (*Merry Widow*) to the Chevalier roles (as in *Gigi*) is very active at the age of 85. Martin Held, for many years called the 'King' at the Schiller- and Schlossparktheater in Berlin, now retired, attained the age of 80; although not many German films reached this country after the second world war, he attracted attention in *Rosen fuer den Staatsanwalt* in which Camilla Spira, Werner Finck and Paul Hartmann co-starred. Marikka Röck, the indestructible diva, stage and film actress, is 75 years old.

Obituary. German audiences mourn the death at eighty-six, of Erika von Thelmann, who had her debut with Max Reinhardt in 1922 and whose elegant stage presence was a shining example to generations of budding actresses. She achieved much fame in films and on Television until very recently and earned special praise in *The Good Soldier Schwejk* in 1963. Hungarian-born Antal Dorati who has died at the age of 82, belonged to the top class of international conductors of this century. He left Germany in 1933 continuing his work in all parts of the globe, finally settling in Switzerland. Among his great merits was the promotion of works by fellow-Hungarian Béla Bartok. His name became particularly well known in Britain through his collaboration with Yehudi Menuhin and the late lamented Jacqueline du Pre.

With the death of Irmgard Seefried at 69, three of the top operatic performers (the others being Rita Streich and Hilde Gueden) of the Fifties and Sixties are no longer with us. Seefried made her debut in Aachen during the last war, came to Vienna in 1943 and became one of the favourite sopranos, much loved by her public because of her beautiful and charmingly even voice. With the Vienna State Opera she appeared in Covent Garden only once (in 1947); however, she sang at the Edinburgh Festival in 1966, and was always welcome at her highly appreciated recital evenings. Irmgard Seefried was married to Wolfgang Schneiderhahn, for many years first violinist with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A SURVIVOR SPEAKS

Sir — Further to your October article on the Red Cross:

I was at Bergen-Belsen where we received occasional parcels with sugar or sardines from Sweden or Portugal — but nothing from the Swiss Red Cross (though the guards may be to blame for that). Also when Swiss Red Cross delegates visited the Hungarian camp at Bergen-Belsen in 1944 they could not possibly have failed to see the emaciated near-skeletons all round them.

Nor can the British Red Cross be absolved from criticism. After the outbreak of war my late husband — who had reached England while I was trapped in Holland — asked them repeatedly for help or advice, but received neither.

The Drive, GERTRUD ROSENDAHL
Hove, Sussex

VOICE FROM THE PAST

You may be interested to hear that the 'Information Required' notice in the September issue referred to me. It was inserted by a schoolfriend from Essen with whom I have now re-established contact. It was really quite a shock to hear a voice from the past.

Blenheim Gardens, INGE LOEWENSTEIN
Wallingford

ANOTHER BRICKBAT

Sir — I note with regret and concern that you continue to print defamatory letters like the outburst of F. W. Rosner. How does Erich Fried 'serve his own interests' by supporting Jew-baiters?

The full title of the book, to which Mr. Rosner only alludes, and from which every reader could form his own opinion is *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen* (Hamburg 1960).

WOLFGANG NELKI

See obituary on page 11

A BOUQUET

I enjoy your excellent magazine immensely. With best wishes.

Eleanor Rathbone House, RUTH MONK
London N6

CRI DE COEUR

The liveliness of *AJR Information* is to be praised, but why do people quarrel such a lot and are nasty to each other in print? Life is far too short for such things to occur.

Cutcombe nr Minehead, ANNE FIELDS
Somerset

BATON CHARGE

Sir — Pardon my ignorance, but who is Mr. H. G. Holm and what are his qualifications for stating who is the 'greatest living conductor'.

At best this judgment is bound to be subjective. A number of names come to mind. I resist the temptation to list them.

Alyth Gardens, ALBERT ADLER
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ANONYMOUS BOSH

Sir — I cannot understand why you did not give the name of the Bad Gastein Hotel which refused hospitality to an Israeli would-be guest. Assuming that your story is true, what was the reason for you withholding the name? Are you frightened of Austrian Nazi hoteliers? This is not 1938, remember!

Woodhurst Lane, A. W. FREUD
Oxted, Surrey (formerly Major, S.O.E.)

The hotelier in question is Herr Weghofer, proprietor of Pension Charlotte. Ed.

ALIENATED PIONEERS

Sir — I cannot speak about 74th Coy having spent half my army service with 87th. Still, I must reject Mr. Goldenberg's picture of the Alien Pioneers with some contempt. We, too, had our newcomers, and they were ribbed and teased in good humour and comradeship. We, too, had our 'characters' and 'barrack-room lawyers', and they added spice. There were chaps one liked and chaps one did not like quite irrespective of whether they were new- or old-comers. When given a new job, we did sit down together first and talked it out. The result was our performance was

usually twice that of the non-Alien Pioneers. (Once they even complained that we did not observe the trade union rule book.) We did our damndest for the cause, in however humble a situation. I am glad to note that Mr. Goldenberg was later raised to greater heights.

New Cavendish St., RUDOLF HELLMANN
London W1M 7LE

1948 MACHAL VETERANS

Sir — May I, through the courtesy of your columns, bring to the attention of your readers that I am co-ordinating a BRITISH AND EUROPEAN list of 1948 Israel War of Independence veterans.

Would anyone who served with the Israel Defence Forces in that war please contact me and also pass the word around to fellow former members of Machal.

This is with the view to holding a reunion in London in 1989, near Yom Ha'atzmaut.

6 Broadlands Close, STANLEY MEDICKS
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GUILELESS IN GAZA?

Sir — A. Rosenstrauch maintains that history teaches no lesson. Perhaps the Jewish condition repeats itself, but why? The Jews are a landless minority and have been in Germany since the Middle Ages. Every minority is being hounded, now not only the few Jews, but the Turks even more.

Did Mr. Rosenstrauch mean Israel when he said 'Judaism is a bristling self-centred fortress'? Here history cannot repeat itself as the situation is new. Yet it is insoluble as long as the Jewish hawks deny the Palestinians their land. Once peace has been achieved perhaps the German Jews will leave their 'unwilling' motherland, which cannot ever be absolved of its guilt, and come to Israel.

5 Avenue Road, EVA R. EISENSCHITZ
London N6 5DT

DATA ERRATA

Sir — My attention has been drawn to the article on the Leo Baeck Seminar organised last September at this College, on p. 3 of your November issue. Just because it is in the main so accurate, I think two errors concerning myself should be corrected. I was born not in Vienna, but in Tübingen, and I most definitely am not Master of Clare College. The Regius Chair in Modern History was quite enough.

Clare College, SIR GEOFFREY ELTON
Cambridge

The article referred to was, unfortunately, also inaccurate in listing the physicists Peierls and Frisch among refugee Nobel prize winners. Ed.

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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.

Deaths

Heineberg-Koch:—Anita Heineberg-Koch, née Seligmann, died 22 November, aged 89, after a short illness. Greatly missed by all her family and friends.

Hirsch:—Konrad Friedrich Hirsch M.D., beloved husband of Marie-Berthe, died at home after a long illness on 17 November.

Nathan:—Margot Nathan, widow of Fritz and much loved mother of Anthony and Stephen, died peacefully at home in Hampstead on 22 November.

Sachs:—Ludwig Sachs passed away on 30 November 1988, on his 92nd birthday. Mourned by his wife Lottie, relations and friends.

In Memoriam

Preece:—Alix Preece, so sadly missed. My dear wife Alix who departed this world on 19 January 1987. The joys we shared together ever will remain.

CLASSIFIED

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outside London, contacts, correspondence, penclub. Write to Mrs. G. Walton, 18 St. Swithun Street, Winchester SO23 9JP.

WILL FORMER Austrian or German refugees residing in Brighton, Hove, & Eastbourne interested in joining existing small group contact Mrs. T. Deutsch, 8 Merling Close, Upper Drive, Hove, East Sussex. Tel. 0273 564416.

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Information Required

GROSSMANN/MESSINGER. Information is sought about Herrmann Grossmann, born in Mlava, Poland/Ukraine, married in 1930 Charlotte Messinger, born in Wischnicz, near Cracow, Poland. Both perished in Auschwitz. Please contact their daughter, Mrs. Rebekka Schwarz, Rechov Barak 3, Netanyahm, Israel.

NEUFELD Banking Family ex Berlin. Assistance required with family history. **FREEMAN** (Friedland). Box 1150.

SARAH (EPHRAIM) BAER

I am looking for the descendants of SARA (EPHRAIM) BAER. SARA BAER née Ephraim, was born in Berlin December 27, 1837 and died there on June 3, 1884. She was married to HERRMANN BAER and her last address was: Niederwallstr. 26/27. SARA belonged to the well-known Berlin Veitel Ephraim (Mintmaster) family.

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OBITUARIES

ERICH FRIED

Erich Fried, recipient of the Büchner Prize and many other awards, died last November at Baden-Baden while on a speaking and reading tour of Germany; such tours were a regular feature of his life which he would not even permit the onset of terminal cancer to interrupt.

Fried had arrived in Britain in 1938 as a 17 year-old refugee from Nazi-occupied Austria with his two outstanding characteristics — a sense of poetic vocation and commitment to the left — already firmly formed. Wartime membership of *Young Austria* deepened his political convictions and provided a sounding board for his pre-war anti-Nazi poems. Postwar he branched out into translating such challenging specimens of contemporary English literature as T. S. Eliot's *Quartets* and Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood*. Meanwhile, employed in the German section of the BBC, he continued to write verse of partly tenderly erotic, partly agit-prop character. In the Sixties the German manifestations of the *Zeitgeist* in the form of the youth revolt against 'the fathers', bourgeois structures and US tutelage catapulted Fried to national prominence in the Bundesrepublik.

Ever since he spent part of each year touring the German-speaking countries — including latterly the DDR — while maintaining a steady output of poems which sold in huge editions. Besides poetry he wrote the controversial novel *Ein Soldat und ein Mädchen*, the opera libretto *Arden muss sterben* and the autobiography *Mitunter sogar lachen*; in addition he produced new translations of many Shakespeare plays.

Although domiciled in Britain for half a century, Fried had only one volume of verse, *100 Poems Without A Country*, translated into English. Even so the obituaries he received in the British press were of almost the same impressive length as those in the German papers. (A choice example of the latter was Marcel Reich-Ranek's half-page necrologue for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* in which Germany's leading critic modulated from 'this militant poet was *edel, hilfreich und gut*' to 'despite high talent he not infrequently composed texts that made his friends blush').

The English obituaries were more uniformly laudatory — although they made occasional reference to Fried's penchant for espousing extremist causes like that of Ulrike Meinhof ('the greatest German woman since Rosa Luxemburg') and of the militant Palestinians.

CHARLOTTE SALZBERGER

Mrs. Charlotte Salzberger who died in November, aged 96, was the widow of Rabbi Dr. Georg Salzberger, and had, as *rebbetzen*, shared in her husband's many years of ministry at Belsize Square Synagogue. Having supported his labours as founding rabbi of that refugee congregation by her work with its women's society and children's choir, she accompanied him, after retirement, on his travels to Germany to lecture and preach. In addition she assisted in preparing an anthology of his German radio talks, entitled *Leben und Lehre* (Frankfurt, 1982), for publication.

Charlotte Salzberger had also been a member of the Board of the AJR for many years.

META WORMS

Mrs. Meta Worms, who died aged 94, had an outstanding record of service both to her family and the community. In the 1930s, helped by the British Consul at Frankfurt and relatives already in London, she sent forty-five children to Britain — and proceeded to provide for them throughout the war by collecting funds from private sources.

In addition she was founder, and long-term chairman, of the Children's Care Committee, and a co-founder (and sometime president) of the Leo Baeck Womens' Lodge. Meta Worms is survived by her children Fred Worms and Vera Gradon, six grandchildren and seventeen great-grandchildren.

AMBASSADOR ACROSS THE ABYSS

Botschafter a.D. Ehrenfried von Holleben, who died in Germany at the age of 79, was one of the first representatives of post-war Germany in this

country. When he took office as Consul in Glasgow, the Jewish refugees, stunned by the reports about Nazi crimes, at first strenuously declined to have any contacts with him. With untiring patience and deep human understanding he gradually succeeded in obtaining their confidence. Yet his great opportunity for making amends, as far as this was humanly possible, arose with his appointment as head of the *Rechtsabteilung* of the German Embassy in London in the days when the first Restitution and Compensation laws were under discussion. Brought up as a staunch Christian in a distinguished Potsdam family with a firm anti-Nazi record, he became an ever-helpful conduit for the claims lodged, and legislation suggested, by AJR (and other) spokesmen on behalf of the refugee community. He also cooperated with the AJR in the preparation of public meetings in the overcrowded Hall of Friends House, when speakers from Germany gave progress reports on the legislation which was of such vital importance for the impoverished and ageing refugees.

The relationship with Herr von Holleben resulted in lasting personal bonds with many in our midst. Whenever he visited London, he would contact them. In his letters he often commented on 'AJR Information', of which he was an avid and interested reader. He will be sadly missed by his friends, who feel united in their sense of loss with his widow and the other members of his family.

WERNER ROSENSTOCK

GRADATIONS OF FAITH

In a recent Israeli survey 75 per cent of 600 people interviewed considered it important to fast on Yom Kippur, and an even higher percentage favoured the celebration of a *barmitzvah*.

10 per cent of the poll sample said they observed every commandment; 18 per cent were 'generally observant'; 40 per cent considered themselves traditional and 30 per cent said they were not in the least religious.

STATISTICAL BREAKDOWN

It is estimated that in Central Europe 50% of all Jews have a non-Jewish marriage partner. 40% of female—and 3% of male—spouses are converts to Judaism.

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