

# AJR *Information*

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Don't miss . . .  
Long live the King  
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*Flawed democracy*

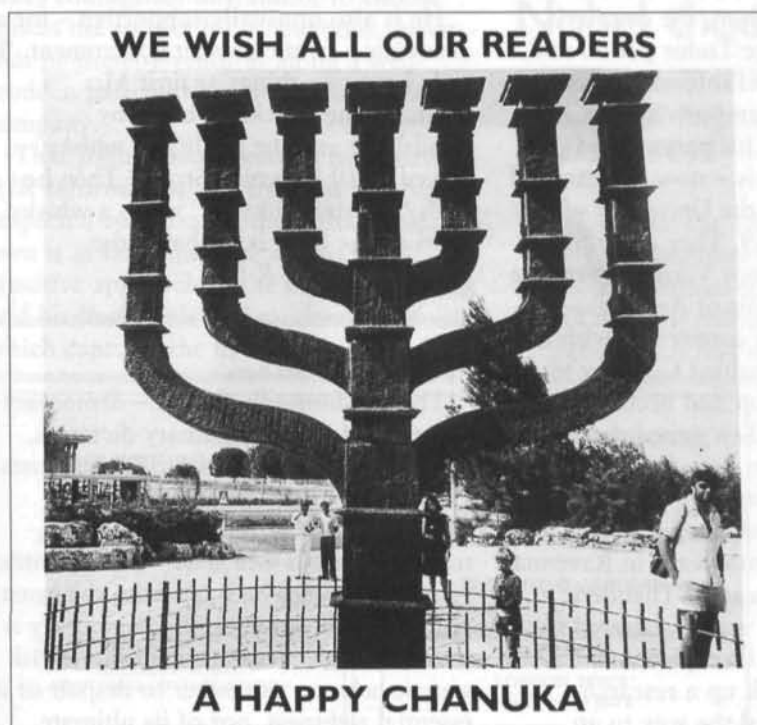
## In the shadow of Temple Mount

Over the last few months we have, as Jews, taken quite a pounding. In this country the Guinness Trial and the IG Farben shares brouhaha have given new currency to slumbering notions of Jewish rapaciousness. In the U.S.A. isolationist voices charge the Jewish lobby with manipulating American policy in the Israeli interest. In France officialdom obstructs the prosecution of Vichy collaborators in Nazi genocide. Finally, with the massacre on Temple Mount, and the Jewish State yet again in the dock of world opinion, all of us were somehow tarnished by the Israeli 'crime'.

We put the word in quotes because, for an action to be deemed criminal, nefarious intent has to be proved. Emphasis on this important distinction

should not be seen as approval of Israeli government policy. The Shamir administration has done, and is doing, many things we find difficult to condone. On the other hand Israel is still – after more than four decades of war or armed truce – a democracy; this means that in the Jewish state, in contradistinction to all its neighbours, government and country are not one and the same. It may be argued that for a Palestinian exposed to police firing live ammunition the existence of a Knesset opposition is of no more than academic interest.

But that is to take a short-term, not to say short-sighted, view of a complex problem. In the final stages of the Boer War the British military rounded up Boer farmers' families and detained them in insanitary camps. At the same time in Britain Lloyd George had to run the gauntlet of patriotic mobs for opposing the war. Within a few years of the end of that war Lloyd George's party was in office and made restitution to the Boers; shortly afterwards Boer-dominated South Africa became a self-governing dominion. (A not dissimilar development occurred in relation to British India: a few years after the Amritsar Massacre the leader of HM Opposition George Lansbury hosted a visit by Mahatma Gandhi to this country.) All this happened because Britain is a democracy. We must always remember – and so should world public opinion – that Israel, too, is a democracy. The independence of the Israeli judiciary, attested by the report of the Kahane Commission on the Sabra and Chatilla massacres, should have made the setting up of a UN Commission to investigate the Temple Mount killings quite redundant. Irrespective of whether the dispatch of such a commission would have been justified, the readiness of Teddy Kollek, Mayor of Jerusalem, to testify before it in defiance of the official government line demonstrates Israel's healthy political pluralism.



*continued on page 2*

## Over-represented by a factor of 5

Sixteen Jews – among them Albert Einstein, Robert Oppenheimer, Jonas Salk, Louis B. Mayer, Milton Friedman and Bob Dylan – figure on a list of the hundred most important Americans in the Twentieth Century published by *Life* magazine. Jews form three per cent of the population of the United States. □

## Righteous village

The title bestowed by Yad Vashem on individuals who risked their lives to save Jews from the Holocaust was for the first time, conferred on an entire village – Le Chambon-sur-Lignon (South-West of Lyon). All told, one Jew was saved for every inhabitant of the village and the surrounding region, including over 1,500 children. □

## 'Commemorative site'

In their merger declaration of 3 October 1990 the Mayors of West and East Berlin, Walter Momper and Tino Schwierzina pledged that the City would 'safeguard the sites commemorating the failure of German politics'.

One Berlin site in urgent need of rehabilitation is Weissensee Jewish cemetery (in the former Eastern sector), with 115,000 graves the largest in Europe. Public Works Senator Wolfgang Nagel assured the Jewish community leader Heinz Galinski of the municipality's determination to return the cemetery to its former dignified appearance. □

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## Profile History man



Sir Geoffrey Elton – Fellow of the British Academy.

It is not unknown for members of the same family to achieve fame in different spheres. America had Henry and William James; Britain has the Huxleys, Attenboroughs and Greenes. The phenomenon also exists among 'our people', as evidenced by the brothers Michael Hamburger and Paul Hamlyn, and the cousins Lucien and Clement Freud. Challenging both the Hamburger-Hamlyns and the Freuds for the title of first refugee family, however, are the Ehrenberg-Eltons, currently given a high profile by the alternative comedian Ben Elton.

The most substantially famous is Ben's uncle, Sir Geoffrey Elton, the country's leading scholar on the Tudor period and, until recently, Regius Professor of History at Cambridge. German-born Sir Geoffrey came to Britain with his parents and younger brother Lewis – now Professor of Higher Education at the University of Surrey – in early 1939. They came from Prague, where Professor Viktor Ehrenberg had occupied the Chair of Ancient History. A fortuitous connection with the Methodist Church enabled Geoffrey to complete his education and become a student-teacher. He then joined the army and arrived in Italy in time for the last battle fought on Italian soil. (His father subsequently criticised him for having spent his brief pre-battle leave in Ravenna visiting a cinema instead of Theoderic's tomb.) After Italy he was transferred to Intelligence duties in Occupied Austria.

Demobbed, he took up a research scholarship that paved the way to an academic career, and married a fellow

historian who later headed the Beaverbrook archive. 1955 saw the publication of *England under the Tudors*, a standard work which, periodically revised, has sold a staggering two hundred thousand copies to date. Sir Geoffrey has also produced a definitive study of the Tudor constitution, and a (more popular) history of the European Reformation.

Unlike other academics he has, however, not been too pre-occupied with his own researches to spare time for teaching and postgraduate supervision; the esteem in which he is held by former students and colleagues alike is attested by the number of *Festschriften* brought out since his 60th birthday.

Ensnared in a functional room atop the all-glass History building at Cambridge, Sir Geoffrey quickly puts his interlocutor at ease. He talks affably, but lets it be known at the same time that he holds very definite views. He feels totally detached from Judaism. 'Our father would take us to synagogue on the High Holy Days – to no avail. I married out, and having no children to transmit anything to, let the whole matter lapse'.

Although already aged 17 on arrival in this country, he acclimatised, he says 'within seconds. England was my predestined home'.

He has never, either in the army or academe, personally experienced antisemitism, and views the problems of the Middle East through English rather than Jewish eyes. 'I have not forgotten the two sergeants'.

He is also unusually supportive – for an academic – of the present government. 'I only have two things against Mrs Thatcher' he chuckles, 'her fishy handshake and the quality of whisky served at 10 Downing Street'. Then he adds 'But since, like me, she is a whisky drinker, the fault is probably the Treasury's'. □ R.G.

*continued from front page*

This – admittedly flawed – democracy is surrounded by sanguinary dictators, stone age bigots and homicidal terrorists. Even Israel's most benign neighbour, Mubarak's Egypt, has many of the trappings of a police state. In this context *vive la difference* is a cry from the heart, not a catchphrase. Because democracy is woven into the very fabric of the Jewish state it behoves us neither to despair of its essential rightness, nor of its ultimate destiny. □

## Reviews

## 'Long live the king!'

John Rossall KING AMONG THE PROPHETS Excalibur Press London £6.95



John Rossall

Photo: Neuman

The Saul-David story, the biblical feud between the old king and the young pretender, has been a recurring literary and artistic theme. Painters have produced pictures, poets have written verses, dramatists plays, novelists fiction and faction about life at the court of King Saul, and at that of King David, his successor. It, therefore, takes courage for any author to choose this as the subject for a new book, given that he thereby ventures along a well-trodden path and into very distinguished company.

That John Rossall (known to readers of *AJR Information* as a frequent and highly respected contributor) more than holds his own is in large measure due to his sensitive approach to the historical setting and his lively style and modern prose which captures the flavour of classical

antiquity in an engaging and appealing manner.

The plot, too, is one which 'fits' the parameters established by the nature of the subject. We are invited to share the adventures of an Egyptian spy, a mole, the agent, not (to start off with at least) of the ruling monarch but of an aspiring claimant to the pharaonic throne, his own brother-in-law, to be precise. The spy reports regularly (by Bedouin post), feeding his master, as such men do, facts and fantasies about the local situation. He observes the 'Davidite' conspiracy and the internecine struggle for political supremacy in Israel; and his secret dispatches serve as a neat framework for a skilful retelling of the well-known story – naturally embellished with the author's own inventions.

It always was exciting stuff, even in religion school. Rossall misses none of the twists and turns and keeps up the suspense at a cracking pace right up to the last page. And one begins to wonder if there is not another side to it, too. Is there not a touch of the *roman à clef* here, with more than a hint of tongue-in-cheek commentary on politics nearer our own day and age?

The thought is intriguing, and so is the book. The announcement (by the publisher) that Mr Rossall has returned to creative writing is good news.

□ David Maier

## Nobel though nasty

Elias Canetti THE PLAY OF THE EYES transl. Ralph Mannheim, Andre Deutsch, £14.95

When the 1981 Nobel Prize for Literature was awarded to the German-speaking Sephardi Elias Canetti it redounded to the glory of England which had not gained such a

prize since the days of T. S. Eliot. This was assuredly the best way in which an ex-refugee could repay his debt to the country that had granted him asylum.

Such a *resumé*, alas, paints too rosy a picture of Canetti's relationship with his adopted homeland. He felt that he had been undervalued as a writer during his forty years' stay here and made haste to move to Switzerland.

This estrangement has not impeded the English publication of his three volume autobiography. As *The Torch in My Ear* (Torch being *Die Fackel*, Karl Kraus's satirical journal) – the title of the previous volume – intimated, Canetti's reminiscences centre on interwar Vienna. The Austrian capital had witnessed a political massacre in the late 1920s that prompted Canetti to embark on his massive socio-cultural study *Crowds and Power*; its proximity to Nazi Germany also gave him the 'feel for catastrophe' evident in *Auto-da-Fé* which ends with the incineration of a library.

In other words, the Vienna Canetti lived in was, for all its cultural vibrancy, a very nasty place.

Nastiness is also an attribute of most of the characters – writers, musicians and painters in the main – encountered in the pages of *The Play of the Eyes*. We meet Robert Musil, who thinks he is bestowing a privilege on the members of the Robert Musil Society by letting them pay his bills while he occupies himself with the writing of *The Man without Qualities*. The conductor Hermann Scherchen displays the self-centred caprice characteristic of a profession that encourages dictatorial propensities. Franz Werfel, uttering other people's ideas in a verbal torrent, considers himself a fount of infinite wisdom.

Canetti's portrayal of females is etched in even sharper acid. Two of the women who loom very large in this volume – his mother and Alma Mahler-Werfel – are described as veritable ogresses. Frau

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Canetti, a devotee of Strindberg's, emerges as an archetypal devouring Jewish mother raised to the nth power. 'Without me' she tells her son 'you wouldn't have written your book. You'd never have gone beyond your wretched poems. You'd never have amounted to anything. Strindberg is your father. You're my son by Strindberg. I've made you into his son.' Alma Mahler-Werfel appears as even more of a monster. We see her holding court at her villa surrounded by trophies, the score of Mahler's unfinished Tenth Symphony open on the page where the dying composer had scribbled 'Almshi, beloved Almshi' in the margin. The two daughters Anna and Manon enter the room. Their mother says apropos of the latter 'Beautiful, isn't she? This is my daughter by Gropius. In a class by herself. You don't mind me saying so, do you, Annerl? What's wrong with having a beautiful sister? Like father, like daughter. Did you ever see Gropius? A big handsome man. The true Aryan type. The only man who is racially suited to me. All the others who fell in love with me were little Jews. Like Mahler. The fact is, I go for both kinds.'

At Manon's funeral Canetti describes Alma Mahler-Werfel as shedding 'swollen tears which went on gushing until at length they festooned her fat cheeks like clusters of grapes. That was how she wanted to be seen, and that was how she was seen. And all those present were at pains to be seen by her.'

The last sentence is vintage Canetti. Here he is more than the cataloguer of nasty men and women. Likening Manon Gropius's funeral to a society function shows the Nobel prize winner to be possessed of his own nonpareil brand of nastiness. This makes him a fit companion to all the *monstres sacrés* of mid-European culture who gambol through his autobiography. *The Play of the Eyes* is a good read provided one doesn't run out of Alka-Seltzer. □ Richard Grunberger

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## Israel – secret and wide open

Ronald Payne **MOSSAD ISRAEL'S MOST SECRET SERVICE.** Bantam Press £14.99. Stephen Brook **WINNER TAKES ALL – A season in Israel.** Hamish Hamilton £16.99

Ronald Payne's new book on the Mossad simply illustrates the point that in the world of investigative journalists delving into the twilight zone of espionage, he who possesses an abundance of newspaper cuttings is king.

This attempted exposé of the goings-on in one of the world's most secretive organisations offers the reader little more than a regurgitation of Mossad's past triumphs and scandals; events that without exception are all part of the public domain.

The reader is reminded of those daredevil moments in Mossad's history like the capture of Eichmann, the raid on Entebbe, and the unilateral disarmament of Iraq's nuclear reactor. Lesser known successes are similarly recorded, such as Mossad's singular achievement in purloining the text of Khrushchev's famous speech to the 20th Congress, which, when handed over to a very grateful CIA, sealed the close ties that these two organisations were to enjoy in future years. Relations between the David and Goliath of the espionage world did not, however, always prove to be so cordial, reaching a low ebb around the time of Watergate, when Mossad refused to supply the CIA with information. Mossad's laconic director Meir Amit tersely explained 'If we had passed information to the CIA in 1976, we might just as well have held a press conference'. Payne also chronicles the many misdemeanours of Israel's security services, the role of Mossad in crippling the CIA's spy ship *USS Liberty* during the Six-Day war, its negligence during the Sabra and Chatilla massacres, Shin Beth's illegal murder of two terrorists during the Bus 300 hijack, and the scandalous Pollard spying case (controlled from the Israeli Cabinet Office).

The essence of good intelligence work is being able to interpret one's data. Like the KGB, Payne amasses a veritable deluge of data, but unlike Mossad (on its better

days), he fails to interpret it. Mossad emerges blemished but unscathed, its clandestine mystique intact. Espionage is by definition a very secretive business – one that does not readily lend itself to outside probing. This book is sad testimony to how effective Mossad is in ensuring that its darker secrets remain hidden from the public gaze.

By comparison Stephen Brook in *Winner Takes All* carefully sifts through the information he gleaned during several months' sojourn in the country, and delivers a thought-provoking account of present-day Israel.

A travel writer of some repute, Brook delves deep below the gloss of the Holy Land. In bright crisp strokes he paints a vast canvas that shows in detail some of the myriad facets of Israeli society. Displaying the skill of an experienced interlocutor, he deftly coaxes the gruff Sabra, the shunning Chasid, the reticent Arab and taciturn Bedouin into confessing their fears and hopes. Ethnic and religious divisions, discrimination against Israel's Arab minority, Kibbutz, education, culture, domestic politics, and, of course, the Intifada all receive his sensitive and intelligent treatment. On the latter subject, Brook does not mince words. 'While the penalties for Arabs who take the law into their own hands are understandably draconian . . . violence perpetrated by settlers, including many shootings of Arabs since the Intifada began, is largely ignored by the authorities'.

Brook offers the reader unusual snippets of information, like the fact that half the Israeli population read at least one book each month, and 4,500 new titles are published each year. On a more depressing note, the reader learns that although Israeli Arabs constitute 17 per cent of the population they only receive 2.3 per cent of the municipal budget allocation, and that out of a national total of 5,000 university lecturers only 10 are Arab.

In bringing to light the multifarious ethnic and religious undercurrents that strain the fabric of Israeli society, Brook himself gets caught up in the whirling eddies. Sucked in he can offer no clear way out of the present stalemate and concludes 'The establishment of the State of Israel was potentially disastrous, since it left two peoples in dispute over the identical territory. To such a situation there is no solution; there is only submission'.

□ Peter Grunberger

## A Judenrat vindicated

Avraham Tory SURVIVING THE HOLOCAUST – THE KOVNO GHETTO DIARY. Ed. Martin Gilbert, Harvard University Press, \$34.95

This is the story of the Lithuanian Jews as focused through the prism of the Kovno Ghetto. On reading it one becomes immediately aware of how it differs from all the histories that emerged at trials of Nazi war criminals, their deeds being recounted from memories of survivors at increasingly longer distance from the events. This is a diary that was hidden in a lined crate and buried under a workshop cellar. A Lithuanian Catholic priest promised that posterity would see it. In the event Avraham Tory escaped from the Ghetto just before liquidation and returned to it after liberation. An octogenarian, he still practises as a lawyer in Israel.

This diary is source material, from which histories are constructed. At the same time it is a simply wonderful story of the struggle for survival, between the middle of 1941 and the beginning of 1944, of a community of over 30,000 souls.

As secretary to the Jewish Council, the self-government of the Ghetto, doing daily battle with the German masters, Mr Tory was at the heart of matters. He was privy to all decisions, negotiations and subterfuges, and he reflected daily on events. There is practically no intelligent hindsight, except in succinct footnotes. One lives with the almost hourly hopes and fears, the evaluation of rumours and the playing-off of the German civilian and military administration against the Gestapo.

Without embellishment the reader is shown the *modus operandi* of a Jewish Council of the time. Their slogan was survival, and that meant doing the will of the Nazis, working for them, making the Ghetto indispensable to both the war effort and the greed of individual German exploiters. At the same time they had to organise a defence themselves against marauding Lithuanian antisemites as well as 'ordinary' looters. For nearly three years they succeeded, until the Nazis, in a panic, destroyed the Ghetto. The president of this beleaguered comity was Dr Elchanan Elkes, a much-respected medical man; bizarrely, the feared Gestapo chief broke all the Nuremberg

Laws by becoming his patient when he fell ill. Much has been said about *Judenräte*, but it is quite clear that this one was dedicated to saving Jewish lives. On balance, Tory finds that they succeeded, though painful decisions had to be taken.

The Germans proved bribable; occasionally some even displayed mercy and humanity. The Council members partly won their trust. There was some mutual accommodation during the periods of relative equilibrium. Lives could be bargained for and many of the Council's functionaries took great risks to persuade their unstable antagonists to stay their hands. Tory himself was often the emissary on such rescue missions. The picture emerges of a town cut off from real life, in which friend and foe briefly combine to share a grotesque existence.

And then, in early 1944, a company of Waffen SS appear who, though it is hard to believe, are much more horrible than the local Gestapo, let alone the 'ordinary' predators feeding off the misery of the ghetto dwellers. They finally put an end to the years of muted hope.

□ John Rossall

## Kinder Commons launch



Hugh Dykes, M.P.

Photo: Newman

More than a hundred people attended the House of Commons launch of the book 'I came alone – the stories of the Kindertransports', compiled by Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowenson (Reviewed in the October edition of *AJR Information*). Hosting the launch party were The Hon. Greville Janner, Q.C., M.P. and Hugh Dykes, M.P.

The happy atmosphere was tinged with a little nostalgia-induced sadness, with many old photographs on view and old friends meeting.

After the speeches the hosts and the book's compilers stayed to sign copies and chat with individual members of the assembled crowd.

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### VENGEANCE IS THEIRS

Sir – R. H. Hellmann (*AJR Information*, Oct 90), made a valid point, but failed to see the flaw in his own argument. True, a court has the duty to judge according to the law, not to send signals, but political bodies, such as the Commons and the Lords do send signals on what is considered right or wrong. In that sense Lord Beloff was absolutely correct: the wrong signal has been sent and taken up gleefully.

Invective does not make an argument, Mr Hellmann writes. True, but it does not invalidate it either. When a noble lord and learned judge refers to an honest, hard working and respectable member of the British political establishment as a 'German Jew who is trying to tell us what to do with our English law' one wonders what depths of prejudice and evil may lurk below the surface. Our people may be forgiven if they use strong language.  
Mallwyd M. Landau  
Machynlleth  
Powys

### INTERMENT ON MAURITIUS

Sir – I am collecting information about the detainment of Jewish refugees in Mauritius during the war.

I feel much too little is known in Mauritius about those refugees, the circumstances which brought them there, the conditions under which they were living in the camp, etc. I am Mauritian, and the excuse for the almost complete ignorance in which I stood in that respect until a couple of years ago is that I was only a little girl at the time. Moreover, I believe that the colonial government was not all that keen on letting information seep out.

My aim is to remedy this to the best of my ability, and to have a small book published in Mauritius, so that the story of the refugees does not fall into complete oblivion among the island population, and that the younger generation at least hears about it.

Hessenring 79 Geneviève Pitot  
D-6380 Bad Homburg, Germany

### SELECT COMPANY

Sir – Members of 87th Company, The Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps (A) met in October. Old Soldiers' meetings may be 13 a dozen, but one held after half a century still has something singular about it. The reunion of just one company, formed at the beginning of 1940, which was so small a part of that remarkably large contribution Jewish refugees made to the Armed Forces of the Crown and to the country that gave us refuge. Forty-three Old Fogies gathered, quite a few with their wives and exchanged reminiscences. Freddy Katz, all the way from Rotterdam, made a serious and at times touching speech. We thought of those who had fallen in the cause of freedom, and the many who went in the normal course of life over all these years. We stood for a moment in their memory, and perhaps marvelled at the fact that those present were still, by and large, in reasonable working order.  
New Cavendish St. R. H. Hellmann  
London, W1

### WRONG TARGET

Sir – Your reference to the *Miesbacher Anzeiger's* 'Juden unerwünscht' campaign in Weimar days was a timely reminder.

Mr Ridley would have spent his time and energy more usefully if, instead of criticising present-day Germany (where the law deals very severely with anti-Semitic offences) he had joined the campaign for amending existing British race relations laws, thus enabling the Director of Public Prosecutions to take action against disseminators of anti-Semitic literature in this country.  
East Hill Ruth Willers  
Wembley Park, Middx.

### BRICKBAT

Sir – The so-called KOOK'S TOUR in *AJR Information* seems childish and unnecessary. I agree with K. Stein.  
Linsfields K. L. Orpen  
Little Chalfont, Bucks

### A TALE OF TWO ARTISTS

Sir – Felix Nussbaum's artistry in composition, choice of colours, texture, contents, arrangement of symbols is convincing. It repudiates any feelings of empathy with his personal fate, and challenges the onlooker to devote attention entirely to the objective artistic aspect, and to the thought and intention inspiring it. It lifts the contents of his paintings to a higher level of reality, confronting the onlooker beyond pity or terror with the general truth of endangered and yet proud human existence expressed in permanently valid artistic terms.

I have no hesitation in placing his paintings alongside those of Jewish painters such as Israels and Meidner, or in comparing his objectivity to that of Primo Levi and Franz Kafka. In a non-Jewish context his work can be compared to that of German Expressionists or Bechmann's pitiless paintings. The Osnabrück Museum has purchased a number of Nussbaum's pictures for its permanent collection in order to honour him as a significant former citizen of the town which thereby honours itself.  
Alleyn Road M. L. Meyer  
London, SE21

### INTERMENT REMEMBERED

With a large number of academics in Douglas camp it was inevitable that discussion groups were formed, and endless – occasionally heated – arguments arose. This was amusingly summarised in a song, part of a Camp Revue:

*Hier im Lager komme ich  
Nicht recht zur Erbauung;  
Wo ich hinseh' stoss' ich mich  
An 'ner Weltanschauung . . .  
Soll ich mit Karl Marx marschiern?  
Oder mit den Banken?  
Mich nach Zion orientiern?  
Demokratisch schwanken?  
Bin ich friedlich? Mach' ich Krach?  
Oder spiel ich Schach?*

Sheen Park, Richmond C. P. Carter  
Surrey

### DISCLAIMER

Sir – The letter headed Brief Brickbat in the August issue appeared over a forgery of my signature.

To safeguard myself now and in future,

I must ask you to publish a disclaimer to the effect that I did not write the lines nor sign them.

St. John's Court K. Stein  
Finchley Road, NW3

#### STRIKING A NEW NOTE

Sir – During a recent visit to Vienna my wife and I attended a concert of the Vienna Philharmonic. The programme began with the Adagio of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony – in tribute to Leonard Bernstein who had just died. The audience stood in silence, and it was moving to see a Jew being honoured in this way.

Perhaps this indicates in a small way that not all Austrians are antisemites.  
The Paddocks, Sam Hacker  
Wembley Park

#### FAN MAIL

Sir – May I take this opportunity to thank you for all the many excellent articles in *AJR Information*. I am one of its most devoted readers.

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## Table manners and long knives

### A tribute to Norbert Elias

Norbert Elias, who died in Amsterdam aged 93, may well go down as one of the greats of European social science. Flowing through his academic work was an abiding theme: the way in which human emotions and consciousness change over time and how such changes interact with the development of social and political processes.

His most important work, *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*, published in Switzerland in 1939, analysed the development of manners amongst the upper classes in Europe from the Middle Ages onwards. The first volume of the book contains accounts of changing personal relationships, particularly between husband and wife, and describes in remarkable detail the development of manners (for example the growing use of the knife and fork at table, and of how people stopped spitting so openly and began to use handkerchieves). An explanation of such apparently isolated changes in behaviour is developed in the second volume, which deals with the process of state formation. It shows how changes in manners leading to new definitions of correct behaviour were related to essentially political developments through which the nation states of Europe gradually came to be formed. One important way in which the rulers of the new and emerging states were able to acquire power was by setting new standards of propriety, etiquette and ceremony. A key feature in this development was the growth of the 'courtly society' a subject taken up again in his book *Die Höfische Gesellschaft* (1969).

*Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* did not attract much attention when it first appeared; some who did note its publication thought that for a Jew to write a book about a civilising process at the very time when Hitler's armies were marching through Europe was, to say the very least, inappropriate. The book was re-published in German in 1969, and only translated into English in 1978 and 1982.

Elias was born in Breslau in 1897. After war service he first studied medicine. He

moved to sociology later. By 1933 he was working with Karl Mannheim at Frankfurt University. Following Hitler's seizure of power, he went first to Paris and from there to England. After internment on the Isle of Man he moved to London where he lived, surrounded by a vast collection of books, in Swiss Cottage.

In 1954, after many years on the outer fringes of academic life, he joined Ilya Neustadt in the newly formed Department of Sociology at Leicester University. Together they built up perhaps the foremost Department of Sociology in Britain. Thereafter he went as Professor of Sociology to the University of Ghana. Still not particularly prominent in English academia, he moved back to Germany and later to Amsterdam. These years saw the publication of a remarkable collection of academic works ranging from analyses of the development of sport, especially football, to the *Loneliness of the Dying*. No less remarkable than the books themselves, is the fact that so many were written when he was in his seventies and eighties. These years saw his belated – and, on the Continent, widespread – recognition as a highly original thinker. Perhaps appropriately, his last book, *Studien Über die Deutschen*, was published only in 1989.

Norbert was immensely widely read and few aspects of human behaviour failed to fascinate him. I remember well, for instance, his interest in the dancing when I took him to a London jazz club in the 1950s. He was also a patient and thought-provoking teacher. I was never in his company without learning something new and always interesting. At the famous Picasso exhibition in London in 1948 he showed me a wholly new way of looking at paintings. The intellectual world of Europe will be poorer without him. □ *Peter Seglow*

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## PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

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### Afternoon entertainment –

#### DECEMBER

Monday 3	Musical Entertainment by The Ex-Directory Group
Tuesday 4	Music from the light classics – Geoffrey Whitworth and Niklaus Ettinger
Wednesday 5	Joyce & Godfrey van Leer Entertain You with Magic and Illusion
Thursday 6	Musical Extravaganza – Valerie Hewlitt
Monday 10	An Hour of Variety – Songs & Tap Dancing – Joe Chisholm
Tuesday 11	Harry Collins (Violin) & Sheree Oxenham (Soprano) Entertain with Light Classical Music with Piano Accompaniment
Wednesday 12	Light Up Chanukah – Shelley Weldon
Thursday 13	Lights & Laughter – A Musical Entertainment for Chanukah by Susi & Arnold Horwell
Monday 17	A Chanukah Musical Programme – Rev. Stephen Robins
Tuesday 18	Chanukah ist wieder da – Hans Freund
Wednesday 19	My Chanukah – Malka Shinar
Thursday 20	Piano Entertainment of Light Classical Music – Paul Audwin-Naser
Monday 24	CLOSED
Tuesday 25	CLOSED
Wednesday 26	CLOSED
Thursday 27	CLOSED
Monday 31	CLOSED

#### JANUARY

Tuesday 1	CLOSED
Wednesday 2	Is There Life After A Bus Pass? – Humorous Talk by Thelma Keisner
Thursday 3	Songs & Arias with Piano Interlude – John Freeman and Geoffrey Whitworth
Monday 7	AJR Choir – Conducted by Edie Klempner
Tuesday 8	Singing for Fun – The Longford Singers with Margaret Eaves at the Piano
Wednesday 9	Music for You – Maria Arakie & Glenn Wilson accompanied by Carol Wells
Thursday 10	Songs – New & Old – Hans Freund

## The AJR at Work

### Social Services Department: Welfare Rights successes



Aggie Alexander.

Photo Newman

In the past few months the AJR Social Service Department's Welfare Rights Officer, Aggie Alexander, has had great success in dealing with the problems of members who, without the AJR, would have had nowhere else to turn. The list of people in need of assistance seems never ending and it is encouraging to report the following instances where justice has triumphed.

An AJR member approached the Social Services Department after reading an article in *AJR Information* about the way Anglo-German pensions were calculated. He believed that he might be entitled to more than he was actually receiving. Aggie was surprised to learn that the gentleman had not been claiming his full entitlement since regulations governing joint pensions were changed in 1973. She contacted the Department of Social Security (DSS) Head Office in Newcastle. It took her six months, making phone calls, writing letters and generally 'badgering' the DSS offices, before they admitted their mistake and recalculated the man's pension under the new regulations. Recently he received notification of a rise in his allowance, accompanied by 16 years' worth of back-pay and compensation payments. Such was his gratitude for Aggie's efforts on his behalf that he made a generous donation to the AJR.

Another member of the AJR came to see Aggie in a state of some distress. The lady, who lived with her disabled husband, had received a court summons

over an unpaid rates bill. Other charitable organisations which she had approached were unable to offer any support. Aggie took the case on and saw that, even though she was entitled to claim housing benefit, no payments had ever been made. She contacted the Housing Benefit Department and demanded action. During the next few months she pestered the department until she got a satisfactory explanation for her client's predicament. Eventually it came to light that, although all the necessary paperwork had been done, the lady's file had been 'lost' due to a clerical error. Within days a substantial cheque arrived which more than covered the outstanding rates demand.

Yet another beneficiary of Aggie's determined efforts was an AJR member who was having difficulty in getting payment for a car which she had sold to the son of a friend on the understanding that he would pay the full amount at a later date. When the time came he refused to pay. Aggie gathered the relevant information, had the car valued and contacted the gentleman in question. He tried to fob her off with a mixture of legal jargon and double talk. Aggie responded with some legal jargon of her own, backed up with a genuine knowledge of her client's rights under the law, and, very soon afterwards, full payment was made.

There are many other examples of the work done by Aggie and the rest of the Social Services Department on a day to day basis. Some of them may seem mundane to the casual observer, but they are all of vital importance to our clients.

Aggie herself has great empathy with her clients, but do not be deceived – her gentle manner conceals an iron will.

□ MN

*Any members who need our help can contact us at: Hannah Karminski House, 9 Adamson Road, London NW3 3HX. Telephone: 071-483 2536.*

### CZECH RESTITUTION LAW

The Czech Embassy has published an information leaflet on the new Law providing for restitution of nationalised property. Copies (in Czech or English) may be obtained from the Editor. Please send s.a.e.

## A passionate performance

This year's AJR Charity concert was given by the distinguished pianist Peter Wallfisch and his son Raphael, the renowned cellist. Right from the beginning it was obvious that there was a special and particular rapport between the performers, and this remained manifest throughout their recital.

They had chosen a programme of classical masterpieces, consisting in part of difficult music which a sophisticated and knowledgeable audience was entitled to expect. They made no concessions to 'popular taste'. But the enthusiastic applause at the end of the concert proved that the music they had chosen to play was appreciated and enjoyed by the audience. After all, the programme included what are perhaps the two greatest sonatas for cello and piano ever written, Beethoven's op. 69 and Brahms' op. 99.

The recital began with a performance of a sonata by J. S. Bach originally written for viola da gamba and harpsichord. This was austere music, and nowadays many listeners might have preferred to hear this music played on the instruments for which it was written. However, the interplay of the cello and piano provided a satisfactory performance.

## Capturing different moods

There followed Beethoven's great and much loved sonata op. 69. The artists captured the different moods which found expression in the four movements. The short Adagio in particular was played with deep feeling which could not have left any listener unmoved.

After the interval there followed a piece by Schumann, op. 70, originally written for horn. This was Schumann at his romantic best, and it was clear that the performers had great affection for the composer's particular idiom.

The climax of the recital was the performance of Brahms' great sonata op. 99. This reflects the composer at the height of his powers and at his most mature. The recitalists played the work with passion and deep feeling.

An enthusiastic audience demanded an encore and the artists sent us away in an atmosphere of calm and serenity by playing one of Mendelssohn's incomparable Songs without Words. □ O.E.F.

## A harmonious occasion: The 1990 AJR Charity Concert



Photos: Newman

Three generations were represented at this year's concert. Above – The first. Right – the third, busily engaged in selling souvenir concert programmes.

The dull grey ferro-concrete and vast inner spaces of the Queen Elizabeth Hall cannot be considered particularly conducive to the creation of a warm, happy atmosphere. Yet, every year at the AJR Charity Concert the huge spaces are filled with human warmth.

At this year's concert three generations of the refugee community were present, the voices of the very young mingling with those of the elderly, enhancing the family feel of the affair.

All concerned look forward to future get-togethers with pleasurable anticipation. □

*We have received favourable comments from many concert-goers, some accompanied by generous donations to the AJR Residential Care Appeal. Would other readers, please, copy!*

## A bouquet

Sir – My colleague, Miranda Jackson, and I very much enjoyed Sunday's concert: superb performances of course, but such a friendly, warm atmosphere which made the Queen Elizabeth Hall a human place for once.

Whitehall Park  
London N19

Nicholas Curry  
(Artists' agent)



## AJR

### 'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE

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

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

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

## Quota protest

A group of leading German theatre directors – Heiner Müller, Peter Stein, Claus Peymann, Peter Zadek and others – have protested to Bonn against the proposed reduction of the annual quota of Soviet Jewish immigrants to a mere six hundred. They point out that some of the country's leading theatrical and musical personalities of the past, such as Elisabeth Bergner, Max Reinhart and Gustav Mahler had come from Eastern Europe. □

## Quotes of the month

'The Jews never took revenge on the Germans, who ought to be glad of the existence of the Arabs. The entire pent-up aggression of the victims was turned against the Arabs'.

Edgar Hilsenrath, writer.

'The nub of every joke is a tragedy. It is nothing new – Chaplin made *The Great Dictator*, after all. And Hitler was ridiculous – not what he did, but there was something disarmingly *petit bourgeois* about him as a person. That moustache is typical Austrian lower-middle class. It set a tone. You can't imagine Richard the Third with a moustache like that, can you?'

George Tabori, playwright.

'Richard Wagner's music was definitely *not* antisemitic in its intent. You only have to look at what he wrote at the end of *Parsifal*. He wrote *Everyone of the human race should be accepted* . . . I realise that this is a total contradiction of what he wrote in his literary output. But he was an unbalanced human being. He overreacted'.

Gottfried Wagner, great-grandson. □

## Belated move

Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland, has sent a letter to Sir Sigmund Sternberg to the effect that work has begun on building a convent to replace the controversial Carmelite convent established on the site of Auschwitz extermination camp. □

## Demographic data

On 1.1.1990 the number of people registered with the West German Jewish community was 27,711. Of those 8891 were over sixty and 3868 under sixteen. The largest *Gemeinde* was Berlin (6199) followed by Frankfurt (4894), Munich (4100), Hamburg (1340) and Cologne (1331). During 1989 1344 had left the community (through emigration or death) and 1503 had joined (through immigration or birth) – representing a net gain of 159. □

## KOOK'S TOUR

### RUSSIA

She gave the world the *Ballets Russes*  
And diverse promises of bliss;  
The world's return gift is, alack,  
The installation of Big Mac.

### SPAIN

'Arena' flashed the screen 'y sangre'  
The bulls were fed, the kids went hungry,  
And passion coursed through veins like lava –  
All backdrop to the Costa Brava.

### SWEDEN

War finds her sitting on the fence,  
Peacetime pursuing excellence:  
The Bofors gun, the Volvo car  
And Garbo, peerless movie star.

### SWITZERLAND

Wilhelm Tell was often told  
That to be free one must be bold,  
That's why in the recent war  
His descendants closed the door.

### TURKEY

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Alice Schwab

## Art Notes

The Archaeology of the Bible exhibition at the British Museum (until 24 March 1991) is not really an art show, but a cultural event of great importance which allows us to add substantially to an understanding of our heritage. The objects on display, including a Dead Sea scroll, are largely drawn from the Museum's extensive collection and by skilful narration follow the path of our remotest ancestors, the Patriarchs, the Israelite kingdoms, the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. The pioneering work of British archaeology, especially the pioneering work of the Palestine Exploration Fund, is given prominence. A book *Archaeology and the Bible*, by Jonathan Tubb and Rupert Chapman, is available at the Museum's bookshops at the specially reduced price of £6.95.

From the British Museum to the Tate to see the retrospective exhibition of works by William Coldstream (1908–1987) (until 6 January). Coldstream was not only a very good painter but also a teacher, both in the Euston Road School which he founded in 1937 with Claude Rogers and Victor Passmore and as Slade Professor from 1949 to 1975. The exhibition comprising some 80 nudes, portraits, urban and rural scenes has been sponsored by British Steel, as part of their contribution to improving the quality of life in Britain. Still at the Tate, there is an exhibition (until 10 February) of drawings by Indian-born Anish Kapoor, who won a prize at this year's Venice Biennial.

Marika Eversfield RAS, the Holland Park-based artist, has won the Kensington and Chelsea Arts Council Prize in their 8th annual exhibition with an oil painting entitled *Masterpiece*. Marika was born in Hungary and studied in Budapest, Vienna, London and Perugia. Another Hungarian born artist is Agatha Sorel who trained in Budapest. She was awarded the Gulbenkian Scholarship in 1958–60 and the Churchill Fellowship in 1966/7. She has recently shown her prints and sculpture at the Intaglio Printmaker Gallery in London, but the same exhibition can be seen later on at Gantz & Co in Cambridge (4–30 March).

Agnew's are showing (until 4 January)

three closely-linked German artists who worked in Berlin during the first half of the century. Erich Wolfsfeld (1885–1956) was Professor of Painting and Etching at the Berlin Academy. Dismissed in 1936, he settled in London. He had enormous technical ability covering a wide range of subjects. Lotte Laserstein (b. 1898) was Wolfsfeld's star pupil in Berlin. She moved to Sweden in 1937, and still lives there. Gottfried Meyer (b. 1911) was another of Wolfsfeld's star pupils, but also studied under Lotte Laserstein. Awarded the Prix de Rome in 1935, he was professor in Karlsruhe from 1956 to 1977, and now lives in the south of France. All these three artists painted in the North European figurative tradition and were much influenced by the 19th century German artists Menzel and Wilhelm Leibl.

German expressionism also comes to the fore in *Out of the Wood*, woodcuts and wood carvings from *Die Brücke* 1905–1924, at the Tate Gallery, Liverpool (until 27 January). There are about 50 woodcuts in the exhibition by such masters as Kirchner, Heckel, Schmidt-Rotluff and Pechstein.

The first comprehensive retrospective exhibition of the work of the master photographer Andre Kertesz, *Diary of Light*, is on show at the Barbican (until 23 January). Kertesz (d. 1985) worked in his native Hungary, Paris and then New York. He has been described as having had 'an insatiable curiosity about the world, about people and about life, and a precise sense of form'.

Your children or grandchildren will love *The Raj: India and the British 1600–1947* at the National Portrait Gallery (until 17 March). The exhibition includes a great range of paintings, photographs, prints, textiles, furniture and documents.

Finally, the Ben Uri will be showing a selection from its permanent collection (4–24 December), including a number of new and important acquisitions. □

*A review of the Archaeology of the Bible exhibition at the British Museum will appear in the January edition*

## Showcase of Jewish art

Anyone who has not yet seen the exhibition 'Chagall to Kitaj, Jewish experience in 20th century art' at the Barbican should make every effort to do so.

This enormous display, covering a very wide area, has been excellently conceived and executed by Professor Avram Kampf, who curated a similar exhibition fifteen years ago in the Jewish Museum, New York. As the exhibition's title implies, this was not an easy task as Professor Kampf was not merely seeking Jewish art, that is to say pictures of Jewish scenes and/or reflecting Jewish life, but pictures by Jewish artists – and he had the whole world and a wealth of great talent to choose from. Because of this, it is easy to be critical of his choices; for instance, I was disappointed to see only one painting by Liebermann, the great German Impressionist.

Nonetheless, the works of more than 130 artists are on display. Chagall takes pride of place with 34 splendid pictures, but most of the famous Jewish artists are represented. Even with some surprising omissions, such as Arthur Segall, this is a proud assembly and is very intelligently displayed in separate categories. This exhibition demonstrates well the wealth of talent amongst Jewish artists in the USA and Israel and illustrates the important role played by Jewish artists living and working in Britain.

Altogether this is a fine show with many hidden surprises to delight the visitor. If it does not convince us that there is such a thing as Jewish art – and it does not attempt to do so – the exhibition does, amply, demonstrate the enormous contribution that Jewish artists have made to the cultural life of the twentieth century.

□ Alice Schwab

## SB's Column

SB is on holiday; his column will appear again in the January 1991 issue. □

### 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.

For details:—

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

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

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## Remembering a star

Elisabeth Bergner, screen legend

While preparing an edition of Wedekind's *Frühlings Erwachen* (Spring Awakening) I came across a reference to the effect that Elisabeth Bergner had played in *Schloss Wetterstein* opposite Wedekind, in Zurich, in 1917 (!). I wrote to Miss Bergner in 1977 asking for her reminiscences of that occasion. She phoned inviting me to her apartment at Eaton Square. Entering, I was left speechless in the face of such elegance. There was a very large rosewood Steinway in one corner, walls hung with old masters, flowers everywhere, and the room strewn with books. Naturally, I was shy in the face of this 'legend' whom I had seen innumerable times from boyhood onwards; I would have been happy to snatch her autograph at some stage door as was my wont. Yet here she was: petite, in black slacks and a black pullover; very serious, very formal, very distant, her eyes unchanged over the decades: large, dark and deeply human. She pointed to a little table, we sat down, a maid brought some coffee and Miss Bergner invited my questions. Wedekind? She had seen him unwittingly in a gallery before the first rehearsal where he stood before a Renoir and kept on saying to a lady friend 'That's what I call flesh!' Rehearsals? 'Not worth mentioning. You stand here, you go there, you stand there. He was no actor at all. He just positioned himself near the prompt box and orated.' She still loved *Frühlings Erwachen* and thought it was the only Wedekind play that would survive. Understandably, she could not tell me all that much about Wedekind, for 60 years had passed and he died a year after she met him, in 1918.

### Cordon bleu pizza

I thought the audience was over, but she began asking me questions about myself and my family. On taking leave she said to my surprise 'When you come again you must bring your wife with you'. We became very good friends in no time. She apologized for not being able to invite us for full meals but she didn't cook and didn't want to inflict too much work on her maid. After we had had a great many teas there (always with delicious biscuits and cake from Harrods) we asked her out for a meal. She was delighted. Yes, she

knew an excellent place nearby. To our amazement she guided us to a pizza bar in the Kings Road and gave a memorable performance of 'the best meal in my life', worthy of one of her great film scenes.

Naturally, she loved going to the theatre and, as she didn't have a car, we often took her. Yet we never saw an entire play. Each one was *schrecklich*, and she wanted to leave in the first interval.

What did we talk about? Not about Elisabeth. To broach that subject was anathema. She was, in Sir John Gielgud's words – who loved her dearly – an 'immensely private person'.

After a chance reading of Mary Eddy Baker's *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* Elisabeth became a convinced Christian Scientist (without ever denying her Jewish roots). When I once dared to allude to this she said sternly 'I don't discuss religion with you'.

Perhaps the nearest she came to making personal remarks concerned the two 'mistakes' that she had made in this country: when she had finished the run of James Barrie's *The Boy David*, a play that he had written for her, in 1936 she received an invitation to appear at a Command Performance. However, in the meantime, she and her film producer husband Paul Czinner, had gone for a holiday to Scotland and she did not wish to return to London. 'If I had been in that Command Performance I would probably be Lady Elisabeth now', she said with some sadness. Her second 'mistake' was to spend a large part of the war in Canada and America. The English forgave Benjamin Britten and W. H. Auden for going 'absent without leave', but not the foreigner. It would be difficult not to conclude that she was well and truly in 'disgrace'. She would have loved a season of her films on BBC TV. I wrote to the BBC as a member of the public expressing my own wish to that effect. In a reply from some secretary they declined as 'this artist (was) not under contract'.

A season of most of her films at the Goethe Institute was sold out, though in

the main attended by us old continentals. She attended the opening, took a bow but, faithful to her own tradition, did not stay. (She claimed never to have seen any of her films.) I reported on the season in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, which pleased her. This brings me to a trait of hers that I had not suspected to such a degree: vanity. One would have thought that after a lifetime of virtually worldwide adulation, the novelty would have worn off. It had not. The *Deutsche Bühne* asked me for an interview with her. After a long 'siege' it was granted on condition that I submitted it to her first. I was not allowed to forget to mention *how* difficult it had been to obtain. She rang me twice at midnight because, having pondered the matter, she thought this or that word or half a sentence should be changed. However, what troubled her most was whether she should leave in a paragraph about the extensive coaching she had given Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. She changed her mind repeatedly; in the end the paragraph was left out.

### Compulsion to drop friends

According to her autobiography (the non-publication in English hurt her deeply), I have reason to believe that she really liked me. There she also reveals her inner compulsion to drop those people that she liked best. That's what happened in my case. Suddenly, soon after the *Deutsche Bühne* interview she just 'dropped' me for no discernible reason at all. It was the end of a very beautiful and sunny episode in my life.

Her own end was tragic, indeed. When she fell ill with a serious liver disease, she was somehow persuaded to be hospitalised in breach of her Christian Science principles. For that reason the Christian Scientists withheld permission for her to be buried according to their rite as she had wished. Elisabeth Bergner was cremated at Golders Green neither as a Jewess, nor Christian or Christian Scientist, but in some secular 'makeshift' religion. There were large wreaths from the German and Austrian embassies, also one from Maximilian Schell. Yet only about 25 people attended the funeral of this world star; the only prominent person present being Sir John Gielgud (who also wrote an obituary in *The Times*, halved in length as he bitterly complained).

Elisabeth Bergner was one of the greatest actresses of the century, a lovely, lovable human being – *ein Mensch in seinem Widerspruch*. □ Hugh Rank

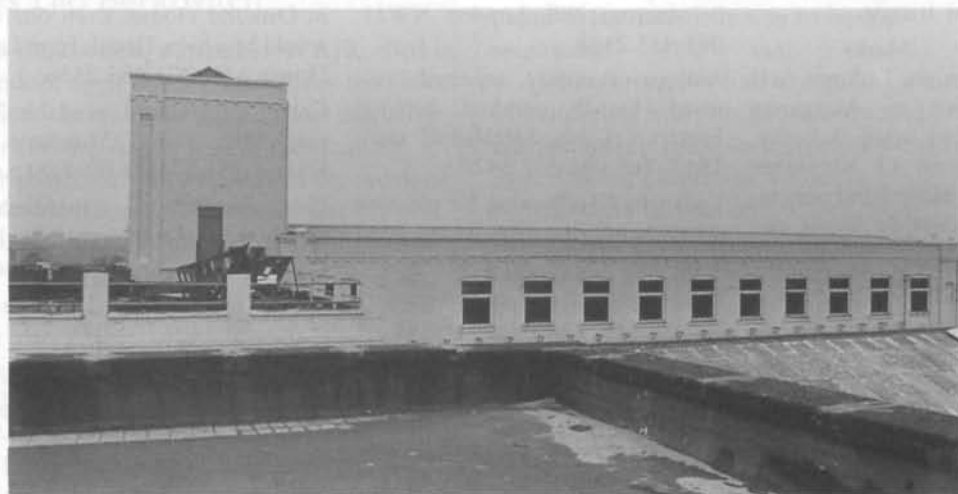
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## Internment diary



Warth Mill today, the sleeping quarters and watchtower have been renovated.

Photo: S. Newman

**W**e are 1,003 men in Warth Mills and the open space between the derelict factory and the barbed wire fence is so narrow, that many of us had torn their only pair of trousers walking up and down the narrow path. Lines are extended across the trail, on which grey underwear and shirts are drying in the wind. These lines are dividing the path into small sections. Strewn with rubbish and broken glass. This is our recreation area during the day. If one is tired of it, there are still the overturned lavatory buckets on the small

side of the compound, on which one can sit and meditate. Otherwise one must go back to the burning heat and stinking inferno of the glass-covered former weaving sheds.

But in the evening the barbed wire opens up. Like a flock of sheep, eagerly waiting, a compact mass of dreary figures is assembling in the desolate factory yard in front of the former gatekeeper's lodge. There have been others before us, who, between these very same walls, were eagerly waiting for the evening after an endless day, behind the looms, in the

dusty and suffocating atmosphere of the sheds. If their toil had not sapped their last energy from their veins, they must have felt just like we did, before the gates opened.

Slowly, one behind the other, we drop onto the lawn, which spreads in front of the factory. Our first glance goes back from where we just emerged. How strange a sight, how unreal those who stayed behind the barbed wire, as only a limited number are allowed out at one time.

But our eyes turn back only for a moment. Then, hesitating and not quite believing, we are looking in front, beyond the meadow, over the trees which stand on the edge of the distant hills. There are only a few guards posted around the green. Slowly I walk on, almost as far as the path where the local inhabitants assemble to watch us silently. The camp is behind me, the guards are behind me, everything round me sinks into oblivion, only the hills are still there. Then a guard, who came up from behind me, touches my sleeve, almost apologetically, and brings me back to the present.

A girl passes and hundreds of eyes follow her, until the whistle sounds and we turn round hesitatingly, slouching towards the gate, where others are already waiting for our return, so that they can have a few moments of illusion – as it must have been many years ago when day and night shift met. □ A. T. Lane

### Making a will? Remember the AJR

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

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

- (a) where it will be appreciated,
- (b) where it will do some good,
- (c) where it is needed.

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

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

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

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**FAMILY EVENTS****Anniversary**

Adrian and Ilse Shindel, 18 Forty Park Close, 80 years old and married for forty years. Congratulations.

**Birthday**

Lester Harry. Wishing you a very happy birthday. Love Ruth, René, Louise & Natalie.

**Deaths**

Brod. Irene Brod died peacefully on 30 October. She will be remembered with love and affection by her large family and many friends.

Goldschmidt. Gertrude Goldschmidt passed away peacefully on 7 November 1990, aged 91 years. Remembered with much love by her son Anthony, family and many friends. May her soul rest in peace.

Heymann. Lutz Heymann died October 12 1990. Deeply mourned by Ursel, Marian, Susan and Vivien, son in laws Martin & Richard and grandchildren.

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Hans Lesser formerly from Berlin, passed away after a short illness on November 8. Sadly missed by his family and many friends.

Marks. Grete Marks (nee Heymann) born in Cologne and formerly known as Margarete Leobenstein when living in Berlin, died peacefully on 11 November 1990, aged 91. Missed and remembered with affection by family and friends.

**CLASSIFIED****Miscellaneous**

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AJR member in private res Home in Enfield seeks volunteer to drive him occasionally to visit his cousin in Osmond House. Even one way would be a help. Details from Laura Howe, AJR, 071-483 2536.

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**Live in** reliable middle-aged person wanted by elderly lady. N.S. Light duties and some company. Box No. 1196.

**Personal**

**Traute Abraham** wishes to thank everybody who sent her good wishes during her illness, for the New Year and her birthday. They were most appreciated but too numerous to be answered personally.

**Widower** car driver, interested in art, music, theatre and travelling would like to meet lady between 55 and 65 with similar interests. Box 1191.

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## Obituaries

### Mrs Lilo Berkovitch

Lilo Berkovitch, a member of AJR, died in London, aged 86. She had come to this country from Vienna, and soon made her mark in the Anglo-Jewish community. Her particular interest was in the work of *Na'amat* (Pioneer Women of Great Britain). She was elected its Chairperson for many years, and on retiring became Honorary Life President. By her pleasant, but also strong-willed, personality she attracted many new members to *Na'amat* and inspired its work here and in Israel.

Mrs Berkovitch was also a member of the Zionist Federation Council; she will be remembered with affection and gratitude by all who came in contact with her. □

### Egon Larsen

The death of Egon Larsen (Lehrburger) at the age of 86 further diminishes the generation of creative immigrants, who were old enough to absorb the cultural values of their country of birth and young enough to adapt to a new environment.

Born in Munich, Egon Larsen worked as a free-lance journalist and correspondent for leading newspapers in Berlin. He left Germany in 1935 and, after three years in Prague, came to this country at the end of 1938. Here he soon established a reputation for himself as a versatile and knowledgeable journalist. His activities included wartime German language broadcasts for the BBC, the best-known being his contributions to the *Soldatensender Calais*. He was also associated with the *Freie Deutsche Kulturbund*, for whom he wrote, among other things, lyrics for cabaret performances. A member of the PEN Centre of German speaking writers abroad, he was elected to its Board in 1950.

Postwar he broadcast regularly for the *Bayerische Rundfunk*, and contributed to the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* and other German and Swiss papers. Notwithstanding these time-consuming day-to-day duties, he wrote more than 40 books, the subjects of which testify to his diligence and imagination. (*Inventors' Scrapbook*, *Anthology of British Humour*, *The Story of Amnesty* and the autobiographical *Weimar Experiences*).

His identification with the immigrant community is also reflected in his book

dedicated to the memory of Gabriele Tergit—'a labour of love and understanding' as it was called in these pages (May 1988). It was to be his swansong.

*AJR Information* had the good fortune of benefiting from his proficiency and craftsmanship since its inception 44 years ago. Among numerous devoted contributors he was one whose copy could go to press without the slightest correction. His articles and reviews enhanced the standard of our columns.

It was only natural that longstanding co-operation also created personal bonds. A sincere and understanding friend, endowed with a sense of humour, he will be missed by his writer colleagues and many others who got to know him. All feel united in their sense of loss with his wife, Ursula, his companion in good and difficult times. □ *Werner Rosenstock*

### Dora Samuel

Dora Samuel, nee Schiller, was born in Prague in 1905, and came to Germany in 1926 when she married the dentist Dr A. W. Samuel.

After her arrival in London in 1938 she held open house and assisted countless fellow refugees. Through her optimism and cheerfulness she gave courage to all around her in difficult days.

Ever popular and loved by family and countless friends, she lived a busy and full life right up to her last days, when she died quite unexpectedly. She was still actively involved with the Children's Country Holiday Fund and Paddington Care Committee, where she had been a leading light for forty years, and was also a daily visitor to her many friends at the Ridgeway where she is greatly missed.

### Clive Schmitthoff

With the recent death of Professor Clive M. Schmitthoff, another chapter in the history of outstanding refugee contributions to the intellectual life of Britain has come to a close. His was in the field of legal education in which he worked for many years as an authority on commercial and international law.

Clive Schmitthoff was born in Berlin in 1903. He studied law and built up a practice, but left to pursue his legal career in this country. He achieved considerable prominence as a barrister, lecturer and author. Among his many publications are such standard works as *The Export Trade*

and *The Sale of Goods*, which were written 'for lawyers and laymen alike', a task in which he succeeded brilliantly.

His reputation reached international proportions. Thus he was an advisor to the United Nations on the law of international trade. After retiring he held honorary positions, such as Vice-President of the Association of Law Teachers.

Professor Schmitthoff was a member of Belsize Square Synagogue. □

### Katja Strauss

Katja Strauss, who died aged 77, was a member of Belsize Square Synagogue and a pillar of its Women's Society. She attended the founding meeting of the society under its first rebbetzin, Charlotte Salzberger, became treasurer and bridging chairman for a three-year term between the next two rebbetzins (Vally Kokotek and Cheryl Mariner). After a serious heart operation several years ago, she continued working for the Women's Society to the end.

She came to England from Frankfurt in June 1939, having completed the last of some 12 trips accompanying groups of children on the Kindertransporte. This important aspect of her job with Frankfurt's Jewish Welfare Department entitled her to a rare document, a Gestapo permit to return to Germany each time to collect her next transport. Her group of children would join up with other groups to form a convoy of about 150.

Because she was able to come and go, she was able to pass messages between parents and children and other relatives, so that for a short time they could still keep in touch. One of the relatives she was asked to contact in London was the man she was to marry some months later, Walter Strauss. She is survived by him, her daughter and two grand-daughters. □ RR

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## The hole truth

The *bagel* – recte *beigel* – is as integral a part of the American diet as blueberry pie or pizza. It is also, I am happy to note, beginning to find devotees in this country.

Now everyone knows that *beigels* are round, but there is considerable disagreement about the provenance of the hole in the middle. A controversy on this very theme has, in fact, recently been raging in the 'Notes and Queries' section of *The Guardian*.

One of the schools of thought contending in *The Guardian's* columns put forward the following theory: 'Although the people living in the small Jewish villages in Russia had grown used to the constant persecutions of the Tsars, there was one time when a particularly cruel Tsar arose. Not only did he demand a tenth of all the bread they baked, but he demanded that the royal portion should come from the middle of each loaf, so ruining it.

The wise men of Chelm got together to discuss how to overcome this terrible burden. Eventually, they had a brilliant idea. They baked small round loaves of bread, with a hole in the middle. The whole was exactly one tenth the size of the rest of the loaf. When the Tsar's soldiers came to collect the royal tithe, the wise men of Chelm presented them with the holes, pointing out that this was the middle portion of the loaf, just as the Tsar

had instructed. The soldiers couldn't argue with this and went away empty-handed'.

The opposing school of thought call *beigels* mishaped Jewish croissants, and trace them to a Turkish 'source': 'They were originally cooked in Vienna to celebrate the relief of the Turkish siege of that city in 1529. The symbol of the Muslim Turks was a crescent, and the *beigel* was cooked in that shape. Indeed, in any well-crafted *beigel* one can see where the two crescent ends have been joined together'. I personally tend towards the Turkish hypothesis – but with this important qualification:

What the *beigel* commemorates is the raising, not of the first (1529), but of the second (1683) siege of Vienna. The liberator of Vienna was Jan Sobieski, King of Poland. When he rode into the city on horseback the grateful Viennese mobbed him, some of them kissing his stirrups in their enthusiasm. An enterprising baker then recreated the royal stirrups – (*steig*)*bügel* in German – out of dough and called them *beigel*.

Here endeth my lesson. □ RG

## 40 Years Ago this Month

We all know by now that this is not the country of 'the biggest' this and 'the world's best' that, but rather of 'quite a fair' so-and-so, and a 'considerable' something-else. In other words, exaggeration is taboo, and understatement is the fashion. Occasionally the Englishman's modesty goes to an extreme where it takes on comic form. Bertrand Russell's interesting lecture, which is published in this issue, reminded me of a passage I once read in one of his books, where he described at length the enormous distances in which the astronomer deals. We are treated there to an account of distances in miles from earth to moon, nearest planet, and sun, then to an explanation of the distance known as a light year, and to the thousands of light years to some far-off stellar system. Finally, after almost a page of this, one little sentence to sum up his point: 'The universe is thus of a considerable size.'

AJR Information December, 1950

## Search Notices

**Frau Hilde Henlein** geboren am 22.2.1907 in Schotten/Hessen. Am 28.2.1939 konnte Frau Henlein aus Gevelsberg nach Cambridge auswandern. Von Beruf war Frau Henlein Hausangestellte. Antwort bitte an Rolf Kappel, 5820 Gevelsberg/BRD, Bredderbruchstr.91.

**Information** is sought about Jewish schools under the Nazi regime for a dissertation at the Berliner 'Free University'. Information about daily life within the school system from those who attended would be of great interest. Those with experience, or materials from, this period should contact: Wilhelm Scharf, Knesebeckstr. 17, D-1000, Berlin 12. Tel: Berlin 316589.

**Charles Fliess**, who did his war service in the 69th Company of the Pioneer Corps is sought by Dr J. W. Rotenberg. Box No. 1192

**Emmy Brandt**. Married to Toby Brandt, last heard of living in London. Probably have children. Mrs Brandt is a cousin of Nelly Sachs, the Jewish-German poet. Information about Mrs Sachs is being sought for a biography. Personal recollections, photographs or letters would be very helpful. Please contact: Dr Gabriele Fritsch, Bergweg 8, 5804 Herdecke, GDR.

**The city of Seligenstadt**, near Frankfurt, is searching for its former Jewish inhabitants. Mr Hans Jaffe and the descendants of Mr August Bender are thought to be living in England. Could they, or any other ex-Seligenstadters, or their descendants please contact: Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit, Seligenstadt e.V., Postfach 1347, 6453 Seligenstadt, GDR.

*Janine Ehrnreich*  
(AIPIT)



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