

AJR Information

Volume XLV No. 2
February 1990

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss . . .

The banality of
good and evil
p. 3

Strauss – ostrich
or genius p. 5

Concern and care
p. 8

Implications of recent momentous events

The Walls come down

We observe events in Europe with one dry and one moist and tearful eye. As the Berlin Wall collapses, we half – but only half – empathise with the joyous crowds, remembering as we do another Wall (the one that shut off the Warsaw Ghetto). We see Germans disarming and humiliating the *Stasi* and cannot recall them doing anything remotely similar, even after VE Day, to the Gestapo. Expressions on ordinary citizens' faces bespeak outrage at the lifestyle of deposed *Bonzen*; in 1945/6 revelations about the 'deathstyle' of the deposed *Führer* met with blank indifference.

So much for our tears – what about their opposite? Joy is the appropriate response to the fall of any tyranny; how much more so in the case of Erich Honecker, refuser of restitution and armourer of the enemies of Israel. Yet, when Soviet satraps held sway from East Berlin to Sofia, at least we

knew where we stood. Now the maelstrom of ongoing developments brings forces to the surface which, through sheer unpredictability, pose all sorts of dangers. Crowds in Leipzig and Dresden chant demands for 'One Germany' – a slogan with intimidating xenophobic and antisemitic undertones. What makes the fluid situation even more fraught is that (for different reasons) neither East nor West Germans underwent genuine, i.e. spiritual, de-Nazification after the war. It seems apposite – but also risky – that two of the key East German personalities attempting to stem the reunification tide are Jews: the new Party leader Gregor Gysi and the renowned author Stefan Heym.

Fevered nationalism is likewise on the march elsewhere in Eastern Europe – from Yugoslavia to the Soviet Union. In Ceausescu's fiefdom, however, where the bloodstained *conducator* sought to buttress his rule by playing off Romanians against minority Hungarians, both made common cause against him. Romania has, of course, been bucking the trend for forty years – by, for instance, permitting Jewish emigration to Israel. (Its Jewish leadership, too, seems *sui generis*, with Chief Rabbi Rosen dismissing democracy on the grounds that 'Weimar led to Hitler'.)

The Russian situation is also fluid to a dangerous degree. The recent murderous violence between Armenians and Azeris indicates how lethally dangerous ethnic tensions can be. The largest ethnic group in the Soviet Union are the so-called Great Russians, and the second largest, the Ukrainians. Among both populations xenophobic as well as reform-minded pressure groups are currently active. One can only hope and pray – though Western governments can take appropriate measures – that the difficulties of *perestroika* do not allow present-day bigots in either Union Republic to enter into the inheritance of the *pogromniks* and Petljuras of yesteryear. Sakharov, thou shouldst be living at this hour – Russia, Jewry, and mankind have need of thee!



The 9th November 1989, day of the Wall's 'collapse', obscuring the memory of Crystal Night fifty-one years earlier.

David Maier

The single-minded pursuit

Simon Wiesenthal. *JUSTICE, NOT VENGEANCE*. Translated from the German by Ewald Osers. 1989. Weidenfeld & Nicolson. London. 372 pp. incl. index and illustrations. Hardback £16.95

It feels vaguely uncomfortable to propose in these columns anything but wholehearted praise for all that Simon Wiesenthal has said and done in the 45 years since he, a frail survivor of the ghettos and the camps, addressed a letter in Polish to U.S. Col. Richard Seibel, in which he named 91 Nazi war criminals whom he wanted to be found and tried in the name of justice.

However, it is difficult not to have some reservations about his latest book. For one thing, it is not, in spite of the claim on the dust cover, an autobiography. Would that it were. There is, admittedly, a brief resumé of his life in an introductory chapter. But this is by another's pen, and the reader is still without an insight into the real Simon Wiesenthal, the person as distinct from the symbol, Cyla's husband, Paulinka's father, the grandfather of her children, the engineering graduate, the Jew, the man. Perhaps one reason for this is that, as this first chapter 'in lieu of a pen portrait' points out, 'he does not process "cases" or "files", but he experiences those life stories as he works on them'. Because, in other words, he has made the suffering of others his own?

'No doubt I myself pursue my activities because of a particular psychological structure', he observes, and the book reflects this particularity. Thus the greater part of the book is given over to a review of his single-minded pursuit as he reopens his files and looks again, at times with harrowing detail, at Nazi bestiality and his own efforts to track down the perpetrators in order to bring them to trial, or at least to prevent 'Austrian and German authorities from allowing the prosecution of Nazi criminals to be shelved'.

These recollections make compulsive reading. Some are particularly fascinating. Among these must be mentioned Wiesenthal's collaboration with the thriller writer Frederick Forsyth in connection with the novel *The Odessa File* to their mutual satisfaction: for Wiesenthal the portrayal of the main character led to the flushing out of his

hiding of a genuinely wanted Nazi, and to the exposure of a clandestine escape organisation; for Forsyth authenticity enhanced the success of the book and its film version.

Justice, not Vengeance also deals with a number of other encounters, Wiesenthal's meetings with other well-known personalities: writers, like Leon Uris; politicians, like Franz-Josef Strauss; heads of government, like Ronald Reagan and Helmut Kohl; distinguished fighters for human rights like Andrei Sakharov. There is a forceful account of his long-term feud with Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, whose repeated attacks upon him went beyond all decency and reason. He also talks of meetings with more humble folk who, as often as not, came forward to help him with remembered facts and information vital to his task.

And then the book turns to a presentation of the author's personal opinion on a variety of issues. In chapters with such titles as 'Jews and Poles', 'Jews and Ukrainians', he examines the peculiar relationship between the ethnic groups concerned, and the phenomenon of the endemic anti-Semitism of Central and Eastern Europe. He looks at 'Jews and Palestinians' and at the prospect for peace in the Middle East. And he discusses 'Jews and Jews' in order to denounce acts of internal betrayal which are unhappily on record.

The last four chapters are arguably the most memorable. In 'The Test Case' we are told how the discovery, in the ranks of the Austrian police, of the S.S. officer who had arrested Anne Frank convinced a doubting schoolboy of the reality of the Holocaust. The two penultimate chapters deal with neo-Nazism – in general, and with reference to the several attempts on Wiesenthal's life. The final chapter is addressed 'To My Young Readers', and it is sensitive and moving and timely in its warning that the combination of hatred and technology represents a serious threat to mankind.

One of the failings of this book is that it ranges far too widely. Some topics could, with advantage, have been omitted. It would, on the other hand, have increased its impact if the author had elected to provide argument and answer to the difficult questions which it inevitably raises, including, surely, that suggested by the title itself. Does Simon Wiesenthal indeed spend his days in the contemplation of justice, with not a hint of vengeance? And if the latter, would that be so terrible, since, after all, full justice has not yet been done, and never will be?

Any book by Simon Wiesenthal must be taken seriously, especially this one if, as he surmises in his Preface, it turns out to be his last. To express regret at some of its shortcomings does not imply criticism of its author, and even less so of his work.



BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 BELSIZE SQUARE, NW3

We offer a traditional style of religious service with Cantor, Choir and Organ

Further details can be obtained from our synagogue secretary

Telephone 794-3949

Minister: Rabbi Rodney J. Mariner
Cantor: Rev Lawrence H. Fine

Regular services: Friday evenings at 6.30 pm,
Saturday mornings at 10 am

Religion school: Sundays at 10 am to 1 pm

Space donated by Pafra Limited

New Year Honours

Professor Eric Ash, rector of Imperial College, London, a former child refugee from Germany, received a Knighthood. Berlin-born Paul Oppenheimer, a Belsen survivor, who is standards manager of Lucas Automotive Limited, received the MBE.

David Maier

The banality of good and evil

The trial in Jerusalem of Adolf Eichmann was not after all, 'the last of the numerous successor trials which followed the Nuremberg Trials'. Twenty years after its sentence was carried out, another Israeli court delivered a similar verdict on a defendant accused of similar crimes which were no less horrendous for having been committed at a lower level of administrative authority. It is, however, unlikely that the Demjanjuk dossier will command quite the same academic interest as the earlier case. For the Eichmann trial was, it will be recalled, covered on behalf of the *New Yorker* magazine by no less a reporter than the distinguished philosopher Hannah Arendt, whose observations and conclusions were later assembled into *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil*. First published in 1963, the work is a closely argued analysis of the process and its jurisprudential and philosophical implications. Both the book and its author were at once plunged into controversy. What incensed many of her readers was Arendt's opinion of the part played by the apparently compliant *Judenräte* in the implementation of the Final Solution and, more generally, her 'tragic view of history', which saw Jews as accomplices in their own destruction. This, together with the thesis that

Eichmann himself was no more than an ordinary career civil servant conditioned to giving unquestioning obedience to superior orders – 'what was done was not my doing', he maintained – earned widespread disapproval, not least among American Jews. Her most articulate opponent in this matter was the highly acclaimed historian Barbara Tuchman, who attacked Arendt in uncompromising terms in her 1966 *New York Times* book review of Gideon Hauser's *Justice in Jerusalem*.

Fundamentals of the Arendt-Tuchman controversy

Hannah Arendt was born in Hanover, Germany, in 1906. She studied philosophy and became interested in politics. In 1933 she took refuge in France and became an ardent Zionist. After the German invasion in 1940 she went to the United States and worked for some years as a journalist. In due course, she was able to resume her academic career. She attended the trial in Jerusalem 'to pay a debt to the past' and she reported it accordingly. She had no doubt that it had to take place when it did, and where; but she considered it flawed in the way it sought to pursue several extraneous objectives rather than the only one proper for a criminal trial, namely the single-minded, undeviating

quest for justice. In this respect she held that it had failed because due process of law had not been observed, not least because the judges had not allowed any witnesses for the defence to be called and heard. Moreover, there was no legally recognised definition of 'crime against the Jewish people' and, most significantly, no convincing proof of relevant criminal intent on the part of the accused who (unlike the major figures convicted at Nuremberg) was only one of many involved in the 'practical' aspects of the Final Solution; indeed, the part he played was relatively mundane and any number of others, equally ordinary, could have taken his place.

Barbara Tuchman was the daughter of an American-Jewish banker. She studied history at Radcliffe College and became a professional historian. She was the gifted author of many books on a variety of historical subjects and a double Pulitzer Prize Winner. She took her stand against Hannah Arendt by accusing her of accepting, at face value, Eichmann's version of himself as just a routine civil servant obeying orders. No historian, she declared, should be taken in by 'concealment, distortion or the outright lie', the camouflage, as the Israeli writer Amos Oz has put it, into which the mass murderer had shrewdly crept. It had, therefore, to be assumed that, in the absence of such a naive approach on the part of 'the formidable Miss Arendt', there was something else. And that could only be a 'conscious desire' to support the pose adopted by Eichmann in the dock.

Shifting the guilt

Furthermore, those who believed that Jews should not have met their horrible fate with so little resistance, were in reality shifting the guilt from the perpetrators to the victims. Arendt's rebuttal is contained in the Postscript to the revised and enlarged edition of her book. She maintains that the question of whether the Jews could or should have defended themselves should be treated with contempt as 'silly and cruel'. She points out the fallacy of mindlessly construing the behaviour of some of the Jewish leadership as that of the people as a whole. She makes it clear that her report was neither a history of the Holocaust, nor one of the Third Reich, and emphatically not a treatise on the nature of evil. Her account was, she asserts, wholly and exclusively concerned with the question of the accused man's guilt or innocence of

continued on page 4

Anything else is just a pocket knife



Swiss Cutlery (Gifts) Ltd.,
Victorinox House, 56/58 Crewys Road,
London NW2 2AD

The Victorinox Swiss Army Knife is THE ORIGINAL – the most versatile pocket knife in the world.

With over 40 models – from under £2 – to choose from we guarantee to please all of the people all of the time.

The "keyring" CLASSIC model with six tools is the perfect inexpensive incentive.

The "toolbox" CHAMPION model with twenty-four tools is ideal for that extra special business gift.

Screen printing, metal inlay and hot foil blocking details available on request.

Brochure Hotline

Phone Clive Hastings on 01-209 0123

VICTORINOX
ORIGINALS FOR YOUR NEXT INCENTIVE

continued from page 3

the crime with which he was charged; and she repeats her opinion that Eichmann lacked any motives beyond his desire for enhanced career prospects. '... when I speak of the banality of evil, I do so on the strictly factual level, pointing to a phenomenon which stared one in the face at the trial'.

These, then, are the 'pleas' in the notional case of 'Tuchman v. Arendt'. Ever since the controversy started, it has been possible to side intellectually with the one and emotionally with the other of the two protagonists. But, if evil is one side of the coin, is goodness the other? What of those who rescued Jews at the risk of their own lives? Does their behaviour follow a motivational pattern, so that a case exists either for or against the idea of a banality of good? The nature of altruism in the context of Holocaust rescues has been the subject of an American research programme, the results of which have recently been published.

Rising above the norm

The project was carried out by the Department of Sociology of Humboldt State University, California, in order to evaluate the 'psychological, political, social and situational factors' which motivated a small number of non-Jews, Germans as well as citizens of countries under Nazi occupation, to rise above the 'norm' and, courting unimaginable dangers, help Jews to escape death. In *The Altruistic Personality*,* Professor Samuel Oliner, himself one of these survivors, and his wife and co-author, set out their findings in scholarly detail. They estimate (as does the Director of the Yad Vashem Department of the Righteous) that only some 50,000 persons, a minute fraction of the total relevant population, could be described as 'rescuers' in terms of the criteria adopted – essentially those applied by Yad Vashem – namely that the act in question was done without remuneration of any kind, at grave personal risk and for purely humanitarian reasons. The survey sample consisted of 682 case studies, of which 406 were 'rescuers' thus defined; the 126 'non-rescuers' were divided into 53 'actives', those who had made a stand of some kind – and 73 'bystanders', an obviously self-explanatory description. 150 survivors made up the balance. The interviews established that over 70 per cent of the rescuers began their action in or before 1942 and more than one-half of them maintained their help over a period of two to five years. They listed as their

objectives the wish to help Jews to sustain life, to avoid imprisonment, to maintain an underground existence within the country or to flee to safety abroad. Help came in various manifestations: counselling, the provision of food, safekeeping of personal property, procuring some sort of livelihood for a person on the run, penetrating ghetto walls or the barbed wire fences of concentration camps to carry food, medicine and messages, providing clothes, papers, money and bribing guards to facilitate escape attempts. Some officials used their influence to delay or abort an execution. 90 per cent of the rescuers in the sample gave shelter in their own homes in spite of the fact that, as often as not, 'the people from the village could be trusted not to inform about the [hidden] Allied soldiers, but they could not be relied on to support a Jew'.

What manner of people were they, who rescued Jews in such circumstances, not in the expectation of a reward, or in the hope of chalking up a conversion to Christianity, or as an act of bravado or showmanship? While no doubt 'hatred of the Nazis, religion and patriotism influenced them, most rescuers explain their actions as responses to a challenge to their fundamental ethical principles derived, as a rule, from parental values absorbed into adult life. Moreover, those who rescued for what can be described as genuinely altruistic reasons did not wait to be asked, but 'actively created, sought or recognised' opportunities to do so. They were not heroes or saints, nor intellectual giants towering above the rest.

Affirmation of humanity

They thought of themselves as ordinary human beings. But, unlike most others, they did not consider themselves as entirely helpless in the face of repression; and they affirmed their own humanity by acknowledging the humanity of those from whom it had been taken by official decree. The 'good' they did was not an automatic reflex action, a Pavlovian response, but a deliberate choice made in the full knowledge and understanding of the possible consequences.

So, where do we stand? In his Foreword to *The Altruistic Personality*, Rabbi Schulweis notes that 'paradoxically, confronting goodness may be more painfully challenging than confronting evil'. If there is indeed, as he believes, 'an *a priori* bias against good acts and good people', this does not reduce the

significance of acts of rescue any more than the notion of banality of evil diminishes the enormity of the crimes here under consideration. The fact remains that approval of, and active participation in, the implementation of the Final Solution, together with acquiescence out of indifference or fear, were widespread, while acts of rescue were relatively rare, and even then seldom selfless. Doing good for neither material benefit nor psychological satisfaction is, it seems, by no means commonplace even among those whose personality predisposes them towards altruistic behaviour. Sadly, pure righteousness becomes banal only in a perfect world. But, in the meantime, let us be thankful that it does exist.

* Samuel P. Oliner and Pearl M. Oliner. *THE ALTRUISTIC PERSONALITY. RESCUERS OF JEWS IN NAZI EUROPE*. London. Collier Macmillan 1989. £19.95 □

Tucholsky centenary

Kurt Tucholsky, born at Berlin in January 1890, is currently being commemorated by newspaper articles, lectures and an exhibition in the Federal Republic. His memory, unlike that of some of his contemporaries, has always been kept green in postwar Germany. Since 1949 a million hardback, and nearly four million paperback, copies of his work have been sold. The *Deutsche Bibliothek* organised an exhibition about him at Frankfurt in 1979; 1985 – the 50th anniversary of the great satirist's suicide – saw the exhibition *Kurt Tucholsky in der Emigration* at Berlin's *Akademie der Künste*.

Jackman
Trisk
associates

Chartered surveyors,
valuers and estate agents

26 Conduit Street
London W1R 9TA

Telephone 01-409 0771 Telex 8814861

We buy sell let value survey and manage
commercial property for Clients

H. W. Freyhan

Strauss – ostrich or genius?

Kurt Wilhelm (transl. Mary Whittall). *RICHARD STRAUSS. AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT*. Thames & Hudson. 1989.

At the beginning of our century, Richard Strauss was generally regarded as the leading composer of his time. The operas, which followed the symphonic poems, increased his fame, but after the first world war, his further output met with a diminished response. Those who regarded him as a spent force were proved wrong by the amazing 'Indian summer' of his old age which culminated in works like *Capriccio*, *Metamorphosen*, the *Obe Concerto* and his farewell, the *Four Last Songs*. Today's avantgardists may still not have time for him, but his place on the concert platforms and in the opera houses of the world has been steadily maintained since his death in 1949.

The book under review benefits from its lavish supply of pictures as much as from the assistance given to the author by the surviving members of the composer's family, especially from Alice, Strauss' Jewish daughter-in-law, whom the politically much maligned master successfully protected throughout the Third Reich, as much as he guarded his half-Jewish grandsons.

Richard's father, Franz Strauss, was an illegitimate child who had to struggle hard in his youth and became the leading horn player in the Munich opera orchestra. Ultra-conservative in his musical outlook, he loathed Wagner and Bülow, but lived to see his talented son become an ardent Wagnerian and departing, in his own works, most radically from his father's ideals. Richard's mother came from the Pschorr family, the wealthy Munich brewers who ensured a life without financial worries for the young musician.

Strauss' wife, Pauline, daughter of General de Ahna, was a gifted soprano, who sang in Bayreuth and also excelled as an interpreter of her husband's songs. As a person she often seemed tactless and domineering. One serious quarrel between the spouses, arising from a harmless misunderstanding, was immortalised in the opera *Intermezzo* for which Richard himself wrote the libretto. In spite of all evidence to the contrary theirs was basically a very happy marriage, as

proved by letters which Kurt Wilhelm has included.

Strauss helped found the *Genossenschaft Deutscher Tonsetzer*, a kind of composers' trade union, which aimed at protecting their interests vis-a-vis publishers and opera directors. This matter was very close to his heart, and here lies the reason why, as he confessed to Stefan Zweig, he did not refuse



Courtesy Thames & Hudson Ltd

Goebbels' appointment of himself as President of the *Reichsmusikkammer*. To ingratiate himself with the new regime he also conducted a concert at Berlin in place of Bruno Walter; he also conducted *Parsifal* at Bayreuth when Toscanini refused to come to Germany.

He evidently failed to realise the true nature of Nazi rule, and naively wrote to Furtwängler that he saw no reason why a Mahler Symphony should not be included in a concert programme. After the death of the non-Aryan Hofmannsthal, who had been his ideal librettist, he began to collaborate with Stefan Zweig in the opera *Die schweigsame Frau* (The Silent Woman). To the fanatics of the party it seemed an outrage. Yet Strauss was able to obtain consent from Hitler and Goebbels, and when he discovered that Zweig's name had been suppressed on the bills and programmes, he had it restored. An angry letter in which he expressed contempt for all racist ideas was opened by the Gestapo and a copy forwarded to

Hitler. As a result, Goebbels forced Strauss to resign from his public office. Strauss requested an audience with Hitler, but was refused. He expressed his disgust in private memoranda which became known after 1945.

Strauss' refusal to accept bombed-out evacuees in his Garmisch home and his unwise remark that he had not wanted the war and that no soldier had to die because of him, provoked the local NS official to hint at the possible consequences of such remarks ('Other heads than yours have already rolled, Herr Dr. Strauss'), and led to the Nazi leaders' boycott of Strauss' 80th birthday, although special performances of his works were permitted. Strauss enjoyed the protection of Baldur von Schirach, whose father was a composer, to whom Strauss had been helpful. One of the photos in the volume shows Strauss and Gerhart Hauptmann at the 1943 Vienna première of the playwright's *Iphigenie in Aulis*. Between the two great German geniuses sits Schirach, in full Nazi uniform . . . a painful sight! Even more ominously Strauss' protectors included Hans Frank, the murderous Governor-General of Poland (later executed at Nuremberg). To find Alice describe him as 'fair, friendly and helpful to Strauss' makes the blood run cold.

In the final stage of the war, Hitler refused Strauss permission to go to Switzerland. Before that a well-meaning local official had put the deportation order for Alice at the bottom of the file.

She relates one episode from that period when several members of her family had been sent to Theresienstadt. 'During the war, Papa travelled from Vienna to Dresden. He stopped in Theresienstadt and wanted to visit grandmother. He went to the camp-gate and said "My name is Richard Strauss, I want to see Frau Neumann. . . ." The SS guards thought he was a lunatic and sent him packing'. Alice lost 26 of her relations.

After the war Strauss and his wife were allowed to move to Switzerland. His financial situation was precarious: he had to pay expensive hotel bills, yet his royalties in the Allied countries were blocked. To ease his predicament, friends in London, who included Sir Thomas Beecham, organised a Strauss festival. So in 1947, the 83 year-old master conducted the Philharmonia Orchestra in the Royal Albert Hall. I was fortunate enough to attend this event and was deeply moved when he started with *Don Juan*, the

continued on page 12

Letters to the Editor



SEEKING THE TRUTH

Sir – May I endorse the letter of Hanna Goldsmith in your November issue.

If any of the present generations of Germans want to find out what their Mums and Dads and Grandparents did, or did not, do – by looking the other way – let them come here. There is plenty of evidence in Yad Vashem for them, much better than any one could explain.

Any German that comes here whom I happen to meet gets my welcome.
Mohl Netanya Ernest J. Sicher
Israel

LE MOT JUSTE

Sir – I enjoyed John Dunston's 'Rembrandt's Friends' immensely. Still, I do have a quibble. Outwardly converted Jews from and in Spain were called *conversos*. *Marranos*, which means pigs, was a term of abuse used by their enemies. I've often wondered why it is still current among Jews.
Aberdare Gardens Ezra Jurman
London NW6

FAR-OFF HAPPY DAYS

Sir – The article on Mahler in your September issue mentions that during the period of the Austrian Empire, a converted Jew, named Kohn, was Archbishop of Olmütz.

The story goes that, when Kaiser Franz Joseph had to approve the nomination, he asked *Ist er wenigstens getauft?* (Is he at least baptised?)
Ramat Gan Mordechai Noy
Israel

CONTROVERSIAL – AND FACTUAL

Sir – H. C. Meyer, whose letter (December 1989) strikes me as unduly genuflecting towards the Establishment, may care to reflect that we British live in a democracy – for better or worse – and are therefore free to express our views.

STAMP COLLECTIONS and ACCUMULATIONS

We require all good philatelic material. Very high prices paid for Third Reich stamps in pristine condition (Immaculate/fully gummed). Worldwide postally used envelopes (pre-1948) also of interest.

ERIC ELIAS, 58 GREENACRES, HENDON LANE
LONDON N3 Tel. 01 349 1610

It must be obvious to every fairminded reader that the editor's CRISIS OF FAITH(S) was intended to highlight a disturbing tendency of certain present-day religionists to exploit their position for political ends. Controversial and thought-provoking, the article also showed a high degree of objectivity by basing its criticism on a balanced choice of facts, referring to Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope.
Lambourne Road F. W. Rosner
Chigwell

REUNIFICATION AND REMIGRATION

Sir – Reunification is now considered by all as a fact of life. Neither Russia nor the U.S. has objections, nor do most people in this country. Saxony is the cradle of the English race; hence the meaning of ANGLO-SAXON.

I myself worked in Germany 28 years ago, and found great understanding and kindness, but always believed that this

country is far more humane than Germany. Germany now is far more democratic and open than ever, and many of us who regained their business interests should have gone back. Here, only Anglo-Saxons belong to the top echelon.
Vincent Court E. J. Freyhan
London NW4

ANTISEMITIC BACH?

Sir – In the Protestant religious Service the Passion music is accepted as equivalent and complementary to the Sermon which, more often than not, deals with general human frailty, even wickedness, with the need for continuous personal struggle against it and with hope – or certainty – of divine sustenance in this struggle.

The Gospel story symbolises and externalises frailty, struggle and sustenance. Chorus and singers have the ancient triple role of dramatic actors, interpreters of feelings, and commentators. Everything is directed at the listener in the stalls or pews, involving him as a human being, admonishing and praising as a preacher or prophet would do, sometimes accentuating horrors of persecution and suffering in order to enlist strong empathy.

When in the Matthew Passion each separate disciple asks anxiously 'am I the one (who will betray)?', the full chorus at once loudly intervenes with 'I am he, I should do penance . . .' leaving no doubt that the 'I' is meant to include the entire community of audience, performers and composer, that each of them, each of us, is always in danger of fallibly betraying where we should love, of looking away where concern should find voice, as is shown in the Evangelist's story.

This reminder is hard to accept and we may refuse it. However, if we decide to listen to a Bach Passion or perform in it – in church or concert hall – it may be as well to accept that it is intended as an act of worship in common humility, and to grant it the same reverence without recrimination that we accord to our own acts of worship.

Alleyn Road M. L. Meyer
London SE21

Israel's
Very finest Wines

SHIPPED BY

HOUSE OF
HALLGARTEN

YARDEN and GAMLA

AVAILABLE NOW

Please write or phone for
full information

DALLOW ROAD
LUTON BEDS
LU1 1UR

0582 22538

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

Profile

A refugee inventor

The name of Dr. Paul Eisler has not, so far, appeared in any Honours List. No knighthood has been bestowed upon him, nor more modest decoration awarded, although he has served this country well: in wartime by his uniquely vital contribution to the Allied victory, and then in peacetime by the further application of his inventive genius to the solution of many technological and scientific problems. He is, it is true, an *Officier de l'Ordre de Mérite* and a published author and acknowledged authority in his field of applied science. But any signs of official British recognition of exceptional performance have up till now remained conspicuously absent.

Even before the *Anschluss*, he found that, in spite of his high academic qualifications in electrical engineering, he had no hope of a job or a career at home. But he had the outline of two inventions, and this brought him to England in 1936 at the age of 29. He had some experience in technical journalism as editor of a radio magazine, and this led him to attempt the replacement of wiring in radio receivers by printed circuits. He was convinced that he was on the threshold of a revolutionary breakthrough with tremendous scope, but found no takers for commercial exploitation. He was, however, lucky enough to get work, and a permit, as 'ideas man' in Oscar Deutsch's Odeon Theatres. Then came the war and internment; and, after release, he found a new employer who was determined to help him resume his study of the printed circuit. At a salary of £8 per week he set to work in an attic flat. He was certain that he had created the means to defeat Hitler's *Luftwaffe* if his printed circuit were to be incorporated in a novel anti-aircraft artillery device. He recalls most vividly his mental stress, his agonising fear that timewasting delays would prejudice the project and hence put into doubt the ultimate defeat of Nazi Germany. 'In 1941 I was an "enemy alien". I knew that my proposals for a secret weapon would be viewed with suspicion. I also knew that time was of the essence. My employer had full confidence in me and agreed that I should concentrate on relatively "neutral" applications of printed circuitry in the hope that this would somehow lead to the

technique being transferred to the military field. So I built a revolutionary radio set – I still have it – and we demonstrated it to members of many Allied missions. The Americans were the ones to take it up. They developed the so-called proximity fuse which, when built into an anti-aircraft shell and in combination with radar, destroyed more than 4,000 V doodle bugs over Southern England.'

After the war, the printed circuit, described by Lord Hailsham as one of the six most important inventions of our time, took off commercially. Eisler's new book* describes the progress of the small company whose Technical Director he had by then become. Its path was not always smooth and relations with 'big business' often troublesome. But it was a clash with 'big government' which led to a boardroom battle and his resignation in 1957.

Considerations of loyalty to his erstwhile employer, colleague and friend caused him to abandon the printed circuit for the moment and, as a freelance inventor, he launched upon another major technological advance, the foil heating film. Here, too, he came up against vested interests and many of the possibilities presented by this development have remained largely unexploited.

In his book, Dr. Eisler does not mince words in his description of the trials and tribulations of an independent inventor. He also makes a well-argued case for the revision of the existing patent system (he himself holds well over 100 patents) and for this reason alone his autobiography is noteworthy. But it also gives almost illuminating insight into the more controversial aspects of some industrial practices as perceived by the inventor. Above all, it is the story of a remarkable man, who can count himself among the great inventors and who, at 82, still works on new ideas. And it is the story of a Jewish refugee who is owed a debt of gratitude.

□ D.L.M.

* *Paul Eisler. MY LIFE WITH THE PRINTED CIRCUIT. Edited with Notes by Mari Williams. Associated University Presses. London. 1989. 170 pp. Hardback £13.95*

Austrian Pensions

In the context of the 48th Amendment of the Austrian Social Security Act further improvements of the social security Benefits Regulations for Emigrants (persecuted on grounds of their political and religious beliefs or their descent) have been enacted, which came into force on 1 January 1990.

This amendment provides the possibility of late payments of premiums for times of emigration from the age of 15 by relevant persons without a previous time of insurance. As of 1 January 1990 all emigrants who completed their 15th year of life between 12 March 1938 and 9 May 1945 (age group 1930 and older) can make such late payments – provided they had their place of residence in Austria on 12 March 1938.

The late premium amounts to AS 214, – (value 1990) for each month of emigration. For purposes of calculating the pension these premiums are multiplied by the revaluation factor on the qualifying date.

The regulation provides, for example, that if a person was forced to leave in 1938, and if premiums are paid for 180 months and no previous times of insurance exist, the pension due as of 1 January 1990 would be AS 3,099, – monthly (14 times a year).

On the basis of the transitional regulations of the 48th Amendment of said act, the new regulation also applies to benefits already in effect on 31 December 1989.

For further information and/or application the

Pensionsversicherungsanstalt der Angestellten
Friedrich Hillegeist – Strasse 1
1021 Wien
AUSTRIA

should be contacted directly, stating all relevant details regarding the circumstances of emigration as well as the personal data of the applicant.

The above information was supplied by the Austrian Embassy.

Have you any experience of proof reading?

Can you spare a few hours per month for AJR INFORMATION? If so, please phone Mrs. L. Lassman, 483 2536

The first of two articles on the work of the CBF Residential Care and Housing Association.

Concern and care

Close to Osmond House and Leo Baeck House, and not far from Heinrich Stahl House (the third of the residential homes for elderly refugees in North London's Bishops Avenue), stand the offices of the CBF Residential Care and Housing Association. Financial support of the Housing Association and provision of appropriate services for those who look to it for help to complete life's journey in safety and comfort are a primary concern of the AJR.

As a legal entity, the Residential Care and Housing Association is 'a company limited by guarantee and having no share capital'. It is a registered charity and its primary function is the management of the homes and sheltered accommodation originally established with monies allocated for the purpose by the Central British Fund for World Jewish Relief. The Association devotes itself to this task as the body in which ownership of the Bishops Avenue properties and of Otto Schiff Residential Home and the Eleanor Rathbone flatlets is vested. Since 1985 it has been a fully independent organisation.

As Graham Phillips, the Director, observes, there is, of course, a very close working relationship between the Housing Association and the AJR, which goes well beyond the formal arrangement by which the admissions procedure is handled by the latter. 'As I see it', he says, 'we are here to give realistic expression to the concern of the AJR for those of its members who require residential care, either now or at some time in the future'. And Mary Copsey, who as Head of Care bears the responsibility for the detailed implementation of this programme, draws attention to recent fundamental changes in this area of social work. 'People, as you know, live longer. They are, nowadays, physically and mentally able to look after themselves into a rather greater age than

used to be the case. When some additional care is required, sheltered accommodation is often the answer, at least to start off with. The average age of intake into our homes is 82 and that of our 200 or so residents is 87. About one-third of the residents are in their nineties, and there is one lady at Osmond House who is over a hundred. This means, of course, that we have to be prepared to offer the special skills necessary to deal with greater degrees of frailty, both physical and mental, than in the past. During the past three years we have increased our specialist therapy team from two full-time members of staff to three full-time and four part-time helpers'.

Altogether, the Housing Association now has a payroll of 180, of whom 140 are engaged in carrying out the wide variety of 'caring' duties; this is, incidentally, a staffing level in excess of the statutory minimum. With qualifications in nursing as well as social work, Mary Copsey's career took her from a hospital, via a Catholic community home, on to the headquarters staff of the Leonard Cheshire Foundation. She finds her present job stimulating, she says, because it gives her an insight into people, who, for all their painful memories, can, in the dignified ambience of the Homes, recall more agreeable times of childhood and youth. Most are happy to chat about their old home towns with German volunteer workers who have lately been recruited. There is usually a good response to newspaper advertisements in the Federal Republic, and the residents welcome the young people who, having learned about the Holocaust at school, are eager to meet and talk to some of those who have escaped or survived.

In this context it is fair to observe that staff selection, training and retention are of paramount importance. Graham

Phillips, an accountant with years of experience of management in industry, is well aware of the need to secure the best possible people. Staff are the Association's most valuable asset. The fact that 80 per cent of the organisation's income has to be devoted to payroll costs confirms this view.

The caring function, is in the main exercised along two lines – physical care and mental care. Osmond House was established to look after the more seriously affected. When, before long, Heinrich Stahl House partly becomes a registered nursing home, a complete range of specialised nursing will be available to the Homes on a self-contained basis.

Not the least important aspect of the services offered is that which caters for the residents' special interests: music making, card and other games, discussion groups, day trips to the seaside, shopping excursions, theatre visits – all these are available and well supported, and two minibuses stand by to provide transport, if and when required.

When we asked about language difficulties, we were told that English is readily spoken and understood. Only when a person's mental faculties have become impaired, or where someone has suffered a severe shock, perhaps through serious illness, is there a tendency to revert to the mother tongue. It has now been decided to run German language courses for any members of staff who wish to participate: the tutor is Irene White, who has added this task to her other voluntary AJR activities.

An interview with Mary Copsey and Graham Phillips is a rewarding experience. Both speak of their duties with confidence and enthusiasm and clearly approach them with great skill and understanding. This is of vital importance; for through their work the AJR is able to honour the moral commitment into which it has entered in the name of its members and for their benefit.

□ D.L.M.

A follow-up article will deal with the various Homes.

Residential Care Appeal

'First Fruits' – The initial reaction from readers to our fundraising appeal is most encouraging. Please send your donations, if you have not already done so.

We will give regular updates in future issues.

Day Centre Open Day

Open Day at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre on 10 December 1989 – its first ever – was a resounding success. Purchasers crowded the various stalls and well-displayed exhibits conveyed a vivid impression of the manifold activities

carried out at the centre. Thanks are due to all staff and volunteers involved – and especially to the many members who, together with their friends, made this a cheerful 'standing room only' occasion. We look forward to a repeat performance in 1990. (And in 1991, 1992, 1993 etc., ad infinitum.)

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road London NW3 3RL Tel. 01 328 0208

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

Afternoon entertainment -

FEBRUARY

- Monday 12 Light Musical Recital - Trinity College of Music - Linda Sherratt (Soprano) accompanied by Leon Conrad (Piano)
- Tuesday 13 An Afternoon of Magic from Godfrey & Joyce van Leer
- Wednesday 14 Homage to St. Valentine - Ian Bradford (Flute) & Carol Kohn (Piano)
- Thursday 15 A Talk by The London Fire Brigade
- Monday 19 The AJR Choir - Conducted by Edie Klempner
- Tuesday 20 Traditional Jewish Songs & Piano Solos from the Musical Sabras
- Wednesday 21 The Beaufort Ensemble
- Thursday 22 Musical Entertainment by Harry Collins and Friends
- Monday 26 The Dulcet Tones - A Variety Show by Betty Thrower & Anna Partridge
- Tuesday 27 Classical Music by Joanna Brockbank (Flute) and Iain George (Guitar)
- Wednesday 28 Almeda Wind Trio of Trinity College of Music - James Higgs (Oboe), Frances Reardon (Clarinet), Caroline Longhurst (Bassoon)

MARCH

- Thursday 1 Stroll Down Memory Lane - Ronnie Bell on Keyboard
- Monday 5 Jack Harris accompanied by Gerald Benson (Piano)
- Tuesday 6 Collection of Songs & Arias - James Pocha with piano accompaniment
- Wednesday 7 Purim Piano Entertainment - Justin Joseph
- Thursday 8 Shelly Weldon entertains with a Purim Programme
- Monday 12 Purim - A Musical Entertainment with Susi & Arnold Horwell
- Tuesday 13 A Joyful Purim Musical Programme - The London Ladies Choir
- Wednesday 14 Concert of Vocal Music - Gillian Brandon accompanied by William Hancox
- Thursday 15 Popular Violin Pieces - Marianne Olyver accompanied by Jonathan Honeyball

Falafels and the future

The falafel stall owner in Akko market had short-changed two of the girls by two and a half shekels. 'No, no, goodbye', was the less than helpful response, though he did grudgingly offer them the half shekel. We went over the sums again, and suddenly he saw the light. 'OK, OK, here goodbye', and, turning away at once, he pulled a one-shekel note from under the bagels. One last effort, prolonged. All at once his face was a knowing grin, as he handed over the last shekel. 'Yes, yes, you for you, me for me, goodbye!' (But honours were even, and he gave us each a cup of thick Turkish coffee in his little room before we left.)

It was only the second day of our school tour to Israel, yet not surprisingly it seemed much longer since Dan Air had deposited us at an eerily quiet Ben Gurion Airport at four in the morning. We were a group of thirty, pupils and staff, most in Israel for the first time, and all beginning to sense, or re-experience, the unique time-machine effect that makes the past merge with the present wherever you go. Our visits in the first week took in the oldest known town in the world - Jericho - and some of the newest, on the West Bank; often our inexhaustible guide would refer to the events of 2000 or 1000 BCE, and 70 or 1967 CE, in almost the same breath, so that gradually it was possible for the pupils to glimpse something of the long sweep of history that has left Israel time and time again at the centre of the world's news.

Of course, some of the pupils were there more for the heat than the history, and they got that, too. We had a few days in the lush, green Galilee, and one up in the Golan, as far as Kuneitra and the foot-hills of Mount Hermon on the Syrian border, before moving south via Beersheba and Masada, and passing Colombian soldiers on border patrol in the Negev, to Eilat. There, at last, the sunworshippers were in paradise. Indeed we all were, until the wind dropped after a day, and we discovered painfully just how strong the sun had been. . . .

Our final five days in Jerusalem proved a fascinating and frustrating climax to the tour. We stayed in the Old City Youth Hostel, with its daily aubergine fritters, inside the Jewish Quarter, only a hundred yards away from the Western Wall, the

Dome of the Rock and the Holy Sepulchre.

It was fascinating because the contrasts and experience of Jerusalem over 3,000 years are probably unequalled anywhere, and because there is a real sense that the story is far from over, either for the Jews or for Jerusalem. *Yad Vashem* and the *Knesset* have seen to that. The frustration came from trying to sift through the layers of history, the generations of residents who have all left their mark on the city; trying to sort out water tunnels and walls, and which bit came first, and why, and finding the task almost impossible. But piece by piece, the picture took shape, and anyway, there was always a glass of fresh orange juice around the corner.

The party was mixed, about a third were Jewish, and each learned a lot from the others. We even had a continental touch one morning, when a friend of my father's, who had settled in Israel forty years ago or more, kindly showed us round his *moshav* at Regba (just north of Akko). It was one of the delights of the tour, and left second thoughts about life in the Smoke.

By the end of the two weeks, we realised that on almost every day we had seen or stood at an international border: Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt are all on our photos. The party had discovered to its amazement how tiny Israel really is, but also how many problems it faces, which are likely to grow in years to come. For all that, the country is a miracle. Perhaps we can look forward to a time when peace in the area will enable Israel's astonishing achievements so far to be developed even further, and to benefit a wider world.

It seems that until some settlement is reached over the West Bank, to the lasting satisfaction of all, Israel may feel itself obliged to say to the world, like the falafel stall owner in Akko, 'You for you, me for me'.

□ John Dunston

John Dunston is a Committee Member of the Association of Children of Jewish Refugees. Anyone who is a child of refugees from Nazi Europe and who would like to know more about the ACJR, should contact Anne on 01-579 9906 or Colin on 01-863 4947.

David Maier reports on Aspects of Religious Judaism in Britain

1. The assembly of Rabbis

An Interview with Rabbi Simon Franses

On April 15, 1840 the first formal steps were taken towards the establishment of the West London Synagogue of British Jews and so to launch a movement in this country devoted to a form of religious Judaism which today, 150 years on, has an adult membership of 26,000. Its 40 congregations are constituents of a co-ordinating body, the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB), which has, during the close on five decades of its own existence, consolidated its position as a major component of contemporary Anglo-Jewry.

Since they are not associated with the 'United Hebrew Congregations', Reform synagogues do not subscribe to the jurisdiction of the Chief Rabbi. Their spiritual leadership is vested in the Assembly of Rabbis whose members are all those currently holding rabbinical posts within the movement. A number of former Reform rabbis who are now active in other congregations may attend meetings as 'observers'.

The Assembly's present chairman is Rabbi Simon Franses, since 1987 of the Middlesex New Synagogue. His term of office as chairman is in its second and final year, and by custom and practice he will be invited to deliver the keynote lecture at the RSGB's 49th Conference when it meets at Harrogate in June.

He will be heard by some 450 delegates and his exposition will set the theme for many of their deliberations. He is always happy to share his ideas on issues which he regards as important, not only to his congregation and his movement, but to religious Judaism as a whole. Looking at the history of Reform in this country he points out that its ideology absorbed not only German-Jewish religious 'radicalism' but also a good measure of Anglo-Sephardi tradition. His own Sephardi roots and his rabbinical training and experience – he was born in 1943 in Larissa, Greece, and came to London in 1961 to study, first at the Sephardi Judith Lady Montefiore College and then at Leo Baeck College from where he graduated in

1971 – allow him to describe British Reform Judaism as a cloth woven from two strands of religious modernity. One stems from that section of Anglo-Jewry which constitutes its oldest element since the Readmission – the Dutch Sephardim who had not remained wholly immune to the influence of Spinozist philosophy. Then came the German-speaking immigrants of the mid-nineteenth century who were willing carriers of post-Mendelssohnian enlightenment. Academic lustre was added by the contributions to Reform theology made by distinguished survivors of the Nazi era.

Rabbi Franses interprets the Reform attitude to religious observance in terms of the 'lenient approach to *halacha*', the authoritative interpretation of Jewish laws, such that all Jews can understand its purpose and fulfil its intentions meaningfully. For him, *halacha* is a tree to be tended, not for ourselves, but for those who come after us, so that they may enjoy its fruits. And he sees religious pluralism as a guarantee of our survival as a people in the Diaspora and is convinced that our history since the destruction of the First Temple is proof for this proposition.

But, in his opinion, that alone is not enough. Concern for the totality of Judaism implies, he argues, a continuing love for the Land of Israel, and he asserts that the Reform movement's commitment to the welfare of the Jewish State must be complete. Above all, he is concerned to dispel any fears that Reform theology might one day result in a weakening of the continuity of the Jewish religion: such a calamity could and would be averted if

all sides in the plurality of our faith addressed themselves to the maintenance of *halachic* principles, not as a monolithic structure, but as secure guidelines to law and ethics applicable to the modern world no less than to that of our ancestors.

This, too, is the brief followed by the RSGB Rabbinical Court in the decisions it hands down in cases involving Jewish status in connection with marriage, divorce and conversion. The Court does not have a titular head: all Reform rabbis may be called upon to serve on it in a religious-judicial capacity on equal terms and any special knowledge or experience may be brought to bear upon questions of particular complexity which may arise in individual cases. Here again, confirms Rabbi Franses, the 'lenient approach' is practised, the climbing, as it were, of the mountain in stages rather than by frontal assault, lest the climber decides to turn back if the ascent to the peak proves too hard. In his view there is no need to break with the tradition of our law. '*Halacha* touches all our actions and it is possible to validate them without infringing it. And this is my hope for the future: that we shall always be aware of the eternal connection between the law and the land, those two concepts which go through the fabric of Jewish life, from the birth of our people and its faith right up to the present time'. □

What art can do

Richard Grunberger

'All my poems' Auden maintained
'Didn't save a single Jew',
Thinking he had thereby proved
The inefficacy of art.
Auden was wrong; the pen can sprout
Like Joseph's rod and conjure life.
I heard my uncle tell a joke
When I was twelve, and still recall.
I wrote it down the other week
Prompting a friend to telephone
'I understood your uncle's joke!'.
His words like sparks that arked across
The fifty years when 'uncle' slipped
Into the realm of hieroglyphs
Describing lost Atlantis' shore
Before the Flood closed over it.
I understood your uncle's joke!
It made me rush into the street
And press my nose against the glass
Of the café: he might be there. □

For

RESEARCH ON JEWISH LIFE

In the former German colonies of Togo, Cameroon, German East and Southwest Africa as well as the South Sea Territories (1884–1918), correspondence, photos, diaries, documents, etc. are needed.

Please contact: Dr. Joachim Warmbold, Division of Foreign Languages, Sharett Bldg., Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv 69 978, Israel. All originals will be returned.

Alice Schwab

Art Notes

The Italian exhibition *Art in the Making: Italian Art before 1400* at the National Gallery (until 28 February) is something very special. There are eight major works in the exhibition, almost all by artists from Florence and Siena, wealthy cities that could afford to employ the first artists of their day: Duccio, Uglione di Nerio, Giotto, Jacopo di Cione, etc. In addition, a number of panels have been reconstructed to illustrate the method of producing paintings of this kind in the artist's workshop. Not least among the benefits of this exhibition is the formidable catalogue (price £12.95 and worth every penny).

Inigo Jones was the man who revolutionized English architecture in the seventeenth century, for it was he who introduced High Renaissance Classicism which is still influential as a style today. Little of his architecture has survived, except the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, the Queen's House, Greenwich, and the Church of St. Paul in the Piazza, Covent Garden. But the full range of his work – 113 drawings – has now been gathered together for the first time since the 1670's, and is on show at the Royal Academy until 28 February. A fully illustrated catalogue (price £14.90) has been published by Zwemmers.

The National Portrait Gallery is celebrating the centenary of that eminent Victorian, Cardinal Newman (2 March – 20 May). Exhibition material includes the portrait of Newman by Sir John Edward Millais from Arundel Castle, and a 64-page catalogue is being published.

Monica Bohm Duchon has both arranged an exhibition, and prepared the catalogue, of the works of Thomas Esmond Lowinsky (1892–1947) at the Tate Gallery (until 16 April). Of wealthy Hungarian-Jewish origin, Lowinsky studied at the Slade. He was a versatile artist, with work ranging from early imaginative compositions to modernistic geometric simplification. He also produced theatrical costumes, textile designs and book jackets.

The Goethe Institute programme includes *The Graphic Artist Max Klinger* (1857–1920) until 3 March. Klinger played an important role in the Symbolist

movement, being a pupil of Arnold Böcklin (1827–1901) and teacher of Otto Greiner (1896–1916) and Alfred Kubin (1877–1959). This exhibition will be followed by *Bauhaus Photography* (15 March–21 April) and then by *The Art of German Drawing VII: Free Abstraction 1949–1989* (4 May–16 June).

The Barbican Centre has two interesting exhibitions: *Landscapes from a High Altitude: Icelandic Art 1909–1989* (until 8 April) and *Scottish Art Since 1900* (until 16 April). Iceland has only 300,000 inhabitants, but its artistic tradition can stand comparison with many much larger countries. The new exhibition at the Barbican is the most impressive survey of Twentieth Century Scottish art seen in London since the 1960's. (Fully illustrated catalogue, price £12.95).

Photography is the theme of the exhibition *In Our Time: The World as seen by Magnum Photographers* at the Hayward Gallery (until 6 May). Magnum is a photographic agency founded as a collective in 1947 by Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson, George Rodger and David (Chim) Seymour, and now includes in its membership some of the top photo-journalists of the day. Nearly 400 photographs are on display, chronicling great events of the last fifty years.

Finally, a reminder: The Ben Uri Picture Fair will be held on Sunday, 18 February, tickets £45, which guarantee a picture. Works by Josef Hermann, Kossoff, Walter Trier, Joe Rose, Peter Baer, Helen Keats and many other artists will be on offer.

SB's Column

'Die Josefstadt.' Tempora mutantur; visitors to Vienna will be surprised by the thorough change the theatrical scene has recently undergone. American musicals dominate, 'happenings' are being arranged, more than 30 fringe theatres have sprung up ranging from the outer districts of Brigittenau to Hernalds (where the rather grandly named 'Metropol' has a

varied repertoire). Whilst the state theatres, the 'Burg' in particular, have succumbed to the trendy productions by mainly modern authors, and the classical works given are often described by the critics as staged in an outrageous way, the *Theater in the Josefstadt*, together with its second house, the *Kammerspiele*, has retained its red-golden charm which symbolizes its principles and satisfies its traditionally-minded subscribers. The theatre, now over 200 years old and firmly anchored in its roots since the days of Josef Jarno and Max Reinhardt, is supported by a renowned ensemble led by Otto Schenk, producer and actor, whose members include veteran names like Vilma Degischer (widow of Hermann Thimig), Elfriede Ott and Hans Jaray, whilst educating a new generation of young actors in the Viennese theatrical style. During this season, works by Eugene O'Neill, Schnitzler, Nestroy and Molnar are once more in the foreground, and a special evening of sentimental fun will be devoted to the unique master of cabaret, the late Karl Farkas, 'Professor of humour'.

60 Years ago some of the best UFA films had their premieres: *Melodie der Welt* which initiated the genre of German musical Talkies and starred Dita Parlo and Willy Fritsch, followed by the gripping story of the Titanic's disastrous end – *Atlantic* – with Fritz Kortner and the very young Willy Forst; UFA continued with *Liebeswalzer* (Lilian Harvey-Willy Fritsch), *Dreyfus* with Kortner, Basserman and Grete Mosheim, and the still popular *Blaue Engel*, in which Marlene Dietrich began her world career.

Birthdays. Nathan Milstein, the great American violinist of Russian origin, celebrated his 85th birthday; actress Agnes Fink, wife of Bernhard Wicki, at home at nearly every German-speaking theatre from Hamburg, Berlin and Leipzig to Zürich, Salzburg and Vienna, has attained the age of 70. Also 70 is Austria's Fritz Muliar, the comic actor whose name has become associated with the 'Jiddische Hit parade', long-playing records containing Jewish jokes, anecdotes and stories from Galicia perpetuating this special type of humour. Muliar has acted in Germany and Austria, notably at Vienna's *Burgtheater* and in the 'Simpl' cabaret. Officially retired, he returns to the stage again and again, lately starring in a Nestroy play at Vienna's *Volkstheater*.

Annely Juda Fine Art

11 Tottenham Mews, London W1P 9PJ
01-637 5517/8

CONTEMPORARY PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Mon–Fri: 10 am–6 pm Sat: 10 am–1 pm

continued from page 5

masterpiece he had written some 60 years earlier; I was so much aware that the old man, down there at the rostrum, had once created this music, now a classic. It was a great experience!

In the same year he composed his *Last Four Songs*, settings of Hesse and Eichendorff (premiered in London in 1954, under Furtwängler). They were his farewell, non-religious but deeply felt, a most beautiful musical anachronism, a last blossoming of German romanticism in the middle of the 20th century.

Strauss passed away in 1949, having brought blissful happiness to untold thousands with his music.

Grim record

The recent murder of Professor Joseph Wybran, the leader of the Jewish Community in Belgium, is the latest in a series of atrocities perpetrated in that tolerant country. The early 1980s saw a lethal grenade attack on a Jewish school bus and the car bombing of a synagogue – both at Antwerp. Since the Brussels' Great Synagogue had been firebombed and raked with machine-gun fire. □

Danger signals

The current upheaval in East Germany is bringing neo-Nazi tendencies to the surface whose existence the Honecker regime had tried to mask by a conspiracy of silence. At the same time the liberal opposition are accusing Modrow and Gysi – Honecker's reformist successors – of exaggerating the neo-Nazi threat to justify the retention of the secret police and to boost the Communists' anti-Fascist credentials. Confusion is further compounded by the nebulous dividing line between neo-Nazism and advocacy of 'one German fatherland'. We shall focus on this topic in our next issue.

Could not happen here

'From the moment I stepped into the J.C.'s portals, I found myself confronted with a mystery. I always heard the same refrain 'Why do you have intellectuals writing for you?' (Clive Sinclair, ex-literary editor Jewish Chronicle, 3.11.1989.) □

Rothschild's return

Rothschilds, the merchant bank, are opening an office in Frankfurt – birthplace of the founder of the dynasty – in readiness for the coming of the Single European Market.

The *Sunday Telegraph* reported this news under the punning headline 'Rothschilds' Main chance'. □

War Criminals

The last of the 'prisoners of Breda' – executants of the Final Solution in Holland – 88-year old Franz Fischer whom the Dutch had released in January, has died.

A court in the DDR has sentenced 79-year old Jakob Holz to life imprisonment for the wartime murder of 28 Jewish forced labourers in Poland. □

Fickle Skorzeny

An Israeli military publication has reported the former Waffen SS Colonel Otto Skorzeny, the quondam 'most dangerous man in Europe', was recruited into the Mossad (Israeli Intelligence Service) in the early 1960s. According to the report he helped dissuade ex-Nazi scientists from producing rockets in Egypt for use against the Jewish State. □

'Schnitzler and Kraus'

Told about a lecture with this title an English friend of the editors's asked 'Is it a continental dish?'

WHO IS WHO IN THE AJR OFFICE

Administrator	Lydia Lassman
Editor, AJR	Richard
Information	Grunberger
Assistant to	
Administrator	Carol Rossen
Sheltered	
Accommodation	Katia Gould
Head of Homes	
Department	Ruth Finestone
Head of Social Services	Samuel Wolf
Welfare Rights Advisor	Agnes
	Alexander
Day Centre Organiser	Sylvia Matus
Volunteers Co-ordinator	Laura Howe
Membership/Reception	Nora Gittins/ Wendi Wilson

AJR CLUB

15 Cleve Road
London, N.W.6

Sunday, 11th February, 3 pm
WHEN I WAS A CHILD REFUGEE
A talk by OTTO DEUTSCH

Sunday, 11th March, 3 pm
HELENA GUEST – SHOWTIME
presented by MICHAEL GRAY

Admission: 50p incl. tea

SOCIALS

on
SUNDAYS,
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS
afternoon between 2 & 6

Tea and light suppers served at nominal charges (no suppers on Sundays).

Live entertainment or video films most Sundays. Day Centre entertainment shared on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2 pm.

Guests welcome
Membership fee £4 p.a.

Romanian Jewry

There are no indications so far of Jews being adversely affected by the recent bloody upheaval in Romania. Several Jews or half-Jews were prominent in the revolution.

BELSIZE SQUARE GUEST HOUSE

24 BELSIZE SQUARE, N.W.3
Tel: 01-794 4307 or 01-435 2557

MODERN SELF-CATERING HOLIDAY
ROOMS, RESIDENT HOUSEKEEPER
MODERATE TERMS.
NEAR SWISS COTTAGE STATION

DAWSON HOUSE HOTEL

- Free Street Parking in front of the Hotel
- Full Central Heating • Free Laundry
- Free Dutch-Style Continental Breakfast

72 CANFIELD GARDENS

Near Underground Sta. Finchley Rd,

LONDON, N.W.6
Tel: 01-624 0079

GERMAN BOOKS BOUGHT

Metropolis Antiquarian Books
Specialist Dealers in
German Books

Always Buying
Books, Autographs, Ephemera

Eric Brueck
155 Cholmley Gardens
London NW6
Tek 01-435 2753

ROOM AVAILABLE IN OSMOND HOUSE FOR SHORT TERM RESPITE CARE.

For further information
please contact:-

Mrs Ruth Finestone
483 2536

John Rossall

Chutzpah and coincidence

Arno Reinfrank *SOLLY UND DIE 99 ENGEL*
Persona Verlag 1988 201 pp.

For those who have kept up their love of reading German literature, here is a morsel to enjoy – a book whose author loves to digress, to follow highways and byways of thought in colourful profusion, often with language so hyperbolic that it borders on nonsense. But all the digressions point to the conclusion that Solly is under the protection of angels.

Solly and the narrator are themselves proof of the miraculous: children at the time of the Holocaust, they survived. They are *Luftmenschen* now, creatures without firm hold on any society, forty-plus of age; one with no identity papers, the other with a multitude of passports ... some expired, some forged, some in order but bought from somebody else. They are *Finanzauslaender*, a species of tax refugees. Solly is an 'inventor', the narrator has some piffling job and, occasionally, some income which the ever-impecunious Solly regularly borrows, for he is up to his ears in financial trouble.

For the most part their lives could be described as diabolical rather than angelic. The narrator points this out, but Solly won't have it. By and by he convinces his companion how things could always have been worse, but for the intervention of the ninety-nine angels.

Solly's latest stroke of genius is the invention of 'industrial honey', but nobody wants to put money into this loss leader. While he and the narrator sit on a park bench arguing, with Solly affirming his unshaken faith in the divine messengers, a policeman creeps up on them and demands their identity cards. They prevaricate, and the policeman agrees to go to Solly's broom cupboard flat later in the day to check up on his papers (and to collect the expected bribe). The narrator meanwhile has to entertain Solly's daughter who drags him to an exclusive restaurant and orders according to her millionaire taste. The poor man can see himself in prison, but then a triumphant Solly appears loaded with money. Instead of bribing the policeman he has made him his partner in the industrial honey venture, and the gull was

so keen on a piece of the action that he parted with his life's savings.

Who but one of Solly's ninety-nine angels could have brought this to pass? Or, if the angels don't convince the reader, inasmuch as he takes it seriously at all – and the book has a serious core – he may think that desperate *chutzpah* and coincidence masquerade here as metaphysical powers. For all that the story can be enjoyed as a sort of *Drei Schilling* opera.

A tenuous argument

It is gratifying to know, even if only in retrospect, that the BBC ran into a lot of flak over inviting Lady Diana Mosley to appear on Desert Island Discs. (In the weeks following the transmission of the programme, presenter Sue Lawley made interviews with journalists conditional on their avoiding *the subject*.)

For all that, a few false notes sounded among the reverberations from the brouhaha. Thus the *Telegraph's* Peregrine Worsthorne congratulated the British Broadcasting Corporation on having stood firm in the face of Jewish demands for boycotting Lady Mosley. Had Mr. Worsthorne taken his stance on the libertarian grounds that anybody – paedophiles, decriminalisers of drugs, deniers of the Holocaust – should have access to the air waves, a tenuous case might have been made out for his argument. But he chose to argue along significantly different lines. If Nazi sympathisers, he wrote, are denied airtime, then Communist sympathisers – of whom there were many in public life – should suffer the same fate.

Mr. Worsthorne's argument is based on the notion that Nazism and Communism were equally evil. This is a fallacy! Despite the fact that, in numerical terms, the victims of Stalin, Mao *et al* outnumber those of Hitler, Nazism cannot be indiscriminately lumped together with Communism.

There were (are) three essential differences between these two chief forms of totalitarianism. Firstly, Communism was the perversion of a liberating ideology, whereas Nazism was perverted from its inception. The entire communist songbook does not contain as naked an appeal to sadism as the *SA Lied* 'When Jewish blood spurts from the knife'.

Secondly, Communism made class the determining factor in human existence, and Nazism race: individuals can shed their class membership (hence the term *declassé*) but not their ethnic identity.

Thirdly, Communist regimes occasionally threw up leaders – a Bukharin or a Dubcek – who tried (and admittedly failed) to give that system a 'human face'. Can anyone visualise a Nazi *Reichsleiter* with equivalent humanising tendencies?

For all these – and other – reasons, the bracketing of Nazism with Communism is facile. What is more, the theory of these two equally repellent 'isms' amounts to a rehash of the Nolte doctrine. Ernst Nolte, it will be remembered, relativised Nazi evil and denied the uniqueness of the *Shoah* by bracketing Auschwitz with the Gulag as typical features of 20th century totalitarianism. Jacob Burckhart had a premonition of the likes of Nolte (and possibly Worsthorne) when, a century ago, he warned of the coming of *les terribles simplificateurs*. □

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:—

TUESDAYS 10 am–12 noon at 15, Cleve Road, London NW6

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.

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 Rosslyn Hill, London NW3
PETER C. RICKENBACK

FAMILY EVENTS**Golden Wedding**

Kingsley Congratulations to Andrew and Hazel Kingsley of Flat B, 148 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6, who have celebrated their 50th anniversary on 27 January.

Deaths

Frankfurter Nina Frankfurter died peacefully on 23 December, aged 90. Sadly missed by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and her many friends.

Hamburger Betty Hamburger (née Goldschmidt) in Welwyn Garden City on 1 September 1989 aged 88. Widow of Leonhard and mother of William Humber and of the late Berthold Hamburger and the late Ilse Sondhelm.

Holzer Elsa Holzer (Schwester Else), widow of the late Rabbi Paul Holzer, passed away peacefully on 1 January, 4 Tevet, after a short illness. Mourned and never to be forgotten by all who knew her.

Schaal Martin C. Schaal passed away on 24 December. Greatly missed by his wife Ruth and relatives. He was loved by all who were fortunate to know him and will be remembered by us always.

Schaal Dr. Martin C. Schaal, much loved brother, passed away peacefully on 24 December. A very special person who will remain in my heart forever. He will be sadly missed. Shalom. His sister Edith.

Stern Herta Stern, widow of Robert, died 12 December 1989, after a short illness. A kind and generous lady who will be sadly missed by her stepson Eric, her cousins and many good friends.

Stern Herta Stern, our very dear friend, passed away peacefully on 12 December. A lady in every sense of the word. Much loved and sadly missed by Lola, Therese and Ron.

Wohlmuth Our Rosl died 3 January after a short illness. Sadly missed by family and friends.

CLASSIFIED**Situations Vacant**

Elderly lady desires live-in companion/housekeeper. Little responsibility. Generous payment. No cleaning. Willesden area. 01-204 8912.

Elderly lady, disabled, but wishing to stay in own home in North London, needs friendly live-in carer-housekeeper to enable her to do so. Phone evenings after 6 pm 01-997 5503.

Situations Wanted

Shorthand/Typist English/German part-time. 452 8687.

Miscellaneous

Electrician City and Guilds qualified. All domestic work undertaken. Y. Steinreich. Tel: 455 5262.

Manicurist visits your home 445 2915.

Collector of old Jewish and Palestine picture postcards. Single cards purchased. David Pearlman, 36 Asmunds Hill, London NW11. 455 2149.

ADVERTISEMENT RATES**FAMILY EVENTS**

First 15 words free of charge, £2.00 per 5 words thereafter.

CLASSIFIED

£2.00 per five words.

BOX NUMBERS

£3.00 extra.

DISPLAY

per single column inch
16 ems (3 columns per page) £8.00
12 ems (4 columns per page) £7.00

Looking for a kalookie partner once or twice a week. Box 1170.

Personal

Widower approaching the upper sixties seeks lady for lasting relationship. Interests music, art, travel. Non-smoker, non-orthodox. Box 1171.

Information Required

Hartmann Would anyone knowing the whereabouts of Erna Hartmann, born 1896 in Berlin, last known address London NW9 8YE please contact Angelika Tramitz, Fidicinstrase 18, D-1000 Berlin 61.

SATELLITE INSTALLATION SALES & REPAIRS

Television - Videos - Aerials - Radios - Stereos - Electrical Appliances

NEW & SECONDHAND TV'S/VIDEOS FOR SALE

Tel: 01-909 3169 Answerphone

AVI'S TV SERVICE

A. EISENBERG

RELIABLE & CAPABLE PLUMBER

offers a complete 24-hour plumbing service. Small jobs welcome. Please ring

JOHN ROSENFELD

on 837 4569

C. H. WILSON

Carpenter
Painter and Decorator
French Polisher
Antique Furniture Repaired
Tel: 452 8324

'SHIREHALL'

Licensed by the Borough of Barnet Home for the elderly, convalescent and incapacitated

- * Single rooms comfortably appointed
- * 24-hour care attendance
- * Excellent cuisine
- * Long and short-term stay

Telephone
Matron 01-202 7411 or
Administrator 078 42 52056

93 Shirehall Park,
Hendon NW4
(near Brent Cross)

HEATING
Repairs & Servicing
Qualified Gas Service Engineer
Vokera Specialist
Peter Lennard
44 Arlingford Road
London SW2
01-674 1166 (24 hours)

ALTERATIONS
OF ANY KIND TO
LADIES' FASHIONS
I also design and make
children's clothes
West Hampstead area
328 6571

FOR FAST EFFICIENT FRIDGE & FREEZER REPAIRS

7-day service
All parts guaranteed

J. B. Services
Tel. 202-4248
until 9 pm

MAPESBURY LODGE

(Licensed by the Borough of Brent)

for the elderly, convalescent and partly incapacitated.

Lift to all floors.
Luxurious double and single rooms. Colour TV, h/c, central heating, private telephones, etc., in all rooms. Excellent kosher cuisine. Colour TV lounge. Open visiting. Cultivated Gardens.

Full 24-hour nursing care

Please telephone
sister-in-charge, 450 4972
17 Mapesbury Road, N.W.2

IRENE FASHIONS

formerly of Swiss Cottage

Sizes 10 to 50 hips

Spring is just around the corner!

Every day we are receiving new spring and summer clothes, e.g. Coats, Suits, Two-Pieces, Trousers, Shirts and Co-ordinates.
'For that special occasion something unusual as always.'

For an early appointment kindly ring before 11 am or after 7 pm 346 9057.

ANTHONY J. NEWTON & CO

SOLICITORS

22 Fitzjohns Avenue, Hampstead, NW3 5NB

INTERNATIONAL LAW AGENTS
with Offices in: Europe/Jersey/USA

All Legal Work undertaken, including:
Conveyancing/Wills/Probate/Trusts/Company
Litigation

Telephone: 01 435 5351/01 794 9696

TORRINGTON HOMES

MRS. PRINGSHEIM, S.R.N.,
MATRON
For Elderly, Retired and Convalescent

(Licensed by Borough of Barnet)

- * Single and Double Rooms.
- * H/C Basins and CH in all rooms.
- * Gardens, TV and reading rooms.
- * Nurse on duty 24 hours.
- * Long and short term, including trial period if required.

From £180 per week
01-445 1244 Office hours
01-455 1335 other times
39 Torrington Park, N.12

AUDLEY REST HOME (Hendon)

for Elderly Retired Gentlefolk

Single and Double Rooms with wash basins and central heating. TV lounge and dining-room overlooking lovely garden.

24-hour care—long and short term.

Licensed by the Borough of Barnet
Enquiries 202 2773/8967

Walter Manfred

Sephardim in Ashkenaz

Barnett and Schwab, editors: *THE WESTERN SEPHARDIM, Vol. II of 'Sephardi Heritage'* (Gibraltar Books Grendon Northants 1989 £20)

The destruction of Iberian Jewry, the Sephardim of Spain and Portugal in 1492 and 1497 respectively, has many similarities to the fate suffered by German Jewry. They formed proud and well-integrated communities, yet all suffered complete annihilation. The great difference was that the German community was deliberately destroyed by a system of unprecedented mass-murder from which relatively few escaped, whereas the Iberian Jews, although many were killed, were faced either with immediate expulsion or forced conversion. Not that the *conversos* had an easy time for they continued to be hounded and persecuted by the Inquisition for centuries.

The history and achievements of the Sephardi in their original homeland have been fully described in the essays comprising *Sephardi Heritage*, Volume I, which was published in 1971.

The unwilling emigrants from Spain and Portugal established a wide network of new communities in Europe, the United States, the Caribbean and in the Spanish New World. The history and achievements of the newly-formed

communities are described in separate essays by distinguished specialist scholars in this latest volume. Amsterdam was one of the main centres of this dispersal and must take pride of place, not only because of the size of the community, but because of the importance it achieved in the broad pattern of World Jewry. But no less important was Salonika and its teeming, predominantly Jewish, population with its far-flung commercial interests and high level of intellectual activity. Its famous Talmud Torah, founded in 1520, survived until the community itself was destroyed in 1943. Incidentally, when the port of Tel Aviv was established in the Thirties, Jewish stevedores from Salonika were brought in to handle the cargoes.

In the Spanish New World crypto-communities were established early on, 'New Christians' forming a large proportion of the original white settlers. Professor Liebman gives a fascinating account of the religious practices of these secret Jews in an essay in this volume. Back in Europe, Tito Benady, himself a member of a famous Gibraltar family,

gives a lively account of the varying fortunes of the wholly Sephardi community in this outpost of the British Empire.

Germany is, of course, usually associated with the Ashkenazim; indeed, the word *Askenaz* in Hebrew came to mean Germany. Yet Germany was host to a small, but not unimportant, Sephardi community, mainly along the banks of the Lower Elbe, with congregations in Hamburg, Altona and Glückstadt. The Hamburg congregation persisted for over three centuries, but gradually numbers dwindled and the synagogue was eventually taken over by the Ashkenazim in 1930. Professor Hermann Kellenbenz gives a full account of the Sephardim in Germany in this volume, and has also contributed a short note on the meagre history of the Sephardim in Scandinavia, who themselves had close associations with their German counterparts.

It is 500 years since the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal, yet their traditions and cultural achievements are still with us and have not been dimmed by the passage of time. It is but half a century since German Jewry was annihilated, but the impact of their absorption into Israel and the Jewish diaspora has been great. Will it persist like the Sephardi tradition, and what will history tell our descendants half a millennium from now?

FOR THOSE YOU CARE MOST ABOUT



Springdene

A modern nursing home with 26 yrs of excellence in health care to the community. Licensed by Barnet area health authority and recognised by BUPA & PPP.

cares . . .

HYDROTHERAPY & PHYSIOTHERAPY provided by full time chartered physiotherapists for inpatients and outpatients.

SPRINGDENE 55 Oakleigh Park North, Whetstone, London N.20
01-446 2117

SPRINGVIEW 6-10 Crescent Road, Enfield. Our completely new purpose built hotel style retirement home. All rooms with bathroom en-suite from £305 per week. 01-446 2117.

Buecher in deutscher Sprache, Bilder und Autographen

sucht
A. W. MYTZE
1 The Riding, London NW11.

Tel: 01-586-7546

Ich bitte um detaillierte Angebote

ANTIQUÉ
FURNITURE
AND OBJECTS
BOUGHT

Good prices given

PETER BENTLEY
ANTIQUES

22 Connaught Street, London, W2
Tel: 01-723 9394

WALM LANE NURSING HOME

Walm Lane is an established Registered Nursing Home providing the highest standards of nursing care for all categories of long and short-term medical and post-operative surgical patients. Lifts to all floors. All rooms have nurse call systems, telephone and colour television. Choice of menu, kosher meals available. Licensed by Brent Health Authority and as such recognised for payment by private medical insurance schemes.

For a true and more detailed picture of what we offer, please ask one of your fellow members who has been, or is at present here, or contact Matron directly at

141 Walm Lane, London NW2

Telephone 450 8832

**WHY NOT
ADVERTISE IN AJR
INFORMATION?**

Please telephone
the Advertisement Dept.

01-483 2536

**'ARTISTES' NEEDED
FOR
DAY CENTRE!**

Please contact Hanna Goldsmith
on Wednesdays
between 9.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.
328 0208
or evenings 958 5080.

A LIFE AMONG STRANGERS (continued)

Teeth on the floor

A few years earlier someone in America had started a scare, in consequence of which dentists crying 'local infection' went into the attack to save mankind from its teeth. English patients seemed to be mesmerised by the idea. One almost concluded that the English did not consider themselves safe until they were rid of their teeth. I gave this some little thought. When English patients were under doctor's orders they seemed to become like skippers who had taken a pilot on board. Their brand of self-perception seemed to enable them to regard their substance with some detachment. Where others winced they performed a sovereign act of making do without teeth. For a German to have to lose his teeth was the beginning of the end, a fearful and over-premature hint of disintegration – a tragedy. There could be no mistaking it. If only to save himself a

(primarily) at a Dental School in Scotland, but from comments I have heard since, their experience was common throughout the country. They told me of the rigours of the gas-room where students queued for a turn to do their extractions or give anaesthetics under the guidance of a hard-to-please taskmaster. The patients were taken from an ever full supply in the waiting room. It was not exceptional for 150 extractions to be performed in a session of little more than two hours. The student allocated to a case had to hold himself ready for action like a sprinter under starter's orders. Between the moment the anaesthetist mask was withdrawn from the patient's face and the return of consciousness the teeth had to come out. A student who hesitated and didn't jump forward to rip them out like weeds prompted an outburst from the instructor that might have done justice to a sergeant major. What broke off mostly had to be left behind. Neither the public



scene, the German dentist fought for every tooth. He knew about local infection too, but used the term to inflate his status vis-à-vis the medical world. Otherwise he left it almost unconsidered. In Germany when it came to extractions, it was usually a matter of removing one offending tooth. For that purpose local anaesthesia was the standard procedure. All eyes were on advances in its technique. General anaesthesia, while lectured on, was hardly taught in practice.

When I came to England in 1935 I made friends with other refugee dentists, most of them earlier arrivals who had started by taking postgraduate courses

nor the dentist were willing to admit that some teeth were bound to defeat the simple approach and had to be tackled more delicately. Procedure had to be learned at speed. Teeth dropped on the floor like wood-shavings.

After the upheaval the patient was allowed to sag forward and dribble into a kidney bowl. Then suddenly, as if the lights were turned on, the patient's eyes saw again, he smiled and was ready to stagger out, thanking all concerned for their kindness. The students became used to the happy endings, took them for granted and lost some of their concern.

□ Arnold Rosenstrauch

The second of Sobol's three Vilna plays

According to the theatre critic of the West German Jewish weekly *Allgemeine* the première in Bad Godesberg of Joshua Sobol's new play *Adam* was open to some adverse comment: the scenery was thought to be uninspiring, the leading actor could be faulted for being unconvincing in the part. But the review left no doubt as to the importance of this work and of the message which it seeks to convey, nor, indeed, of the author's skill as an accomplished dramatist.

Survivor's memory forms framework

The central theme is once again a sequence of events in the Vilna ghetto and a number of the characters are familiar from Sobol's earlier play with that title: Jacob Gens is there, the head of the *Judenrat*, and Kittel, the S.S. officer. And again, the framework for the main action is the memory of one of the survivors. This time it is that of an old woman, long settled in Tel-Aviv with her husband, but unable to forget, and driven to tell the 'true' story of how her lover chose to commit suicide rather than die at the hands of the Gestapo to whom his fellow-Jews had betrayed him when faced with the impossible alternative: it was he, the leader of the plot to cause an uprising in the ghetto, who was sacrificed so that they, the others, the whole of the ghetto population, could live a little longer.

Although the play is not intended to be taken as a strictly documented record of events at Vilna, the mere suggestion that such an incident could indeed have taken place caused emotions to run high when the play was staged in Israel. It remains to be seen if it will engender a similar reaction if, and when, it has its First Night on the London stage and what, if any, the effect will be upon the audience, and the critics, of topical allusions to the Middle East political situation if, unlike the German version, the English performance is uncut and thus does not exclude these passages.

At all events, Joshua Sobol is now established as a highly respected, if not totally uncontroversial, Israeli playwright with a world-wide reputation. It is to be hoped that the British première of *Adam* will not be long delayed.

□ D.L.M.