

# AJR Information

Volume XLVII No. 12  
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Don't miss . . .

Questions of  
Justice p3

Name calling p7

1992 Concert  
report p8

Senile  
rogues?

Jeff Rooker, MP, is continuing to urge the arraignment of ex-SS general Mohnke for murdering 90 British PoWs after Dunkirk. The Hamburg prosecutor has let the case go by default, arguing Mohnke was 'over age'.

Simultaneously Honecker and other Communist contemporaries of Mohnke face trial in Berlin. The fact that judicial proceedings are sometimes held up by the defendants' ill-health has been eagerly seized on by opponents of the British War Crimes Bill.

Age is a flexible concept, however; 'dotards' like Deng, Mitterand and Nelson Mandela currently guide the destinies of millions of people. Whether someone is fit to stand trial surely depends on their 'physiological' rather than numerical age. □

When to – and when not to – genuflect

## Reconciliation: a stony path

**A**mong the various protests over the Queen's visit to Dresden one stood out for sheer stomach-turning impudence: the demand that she copy Willie Brandt's Warsaw ghetto gesture and drop to her knees to ask the Dresdeners' forgiveness. The protesters, with their vaunted disregard for the truth, ignored the debt all Germans owe Britain for her solitary courage in 1940 which alone made the overthrow of Nazi tyranny possible.

East Germans, in fact, owe Britain a twofold debt, because without Churchill's refusal to condone Soviet aggrandisement, *vide* his Iron Curtain speech of 1946, and subsequent U.K. actions the Berlin Wall might well still be standing to this day.

In pursuing the justified end of victory over Hitler Bomber Harris may have employed less-than-justifiable means, but even to mention this in the same breath as Nazi genocide – the trigger for Brandt's genuflection at Warsaw – is a mindnumbing effrontery characteristic of the German ultra Right. In total contrast to the Dresden raid the Nazi killing of Jews was not a means to an end, but an end in itself; even at

the prosaic level of statistics the 35,000 firestorm victims pale into insignificance beside the hecatombs of Warsaw's *Shoah* dead!

Dresden had, of course, not been the only German town in the R.A.F's bomb sights. Hamburg and Cologne, which shared a similar fate, would have given Her Majesty a different reception. The Dresdeners acted the way they did because for 45 years D.D.R. Cold Warriors incited them to brood on the memory of the raid by the potent device of leaving a central part of their bomb-damaged city a heap of rubble.

To this deliberate re-infection of old wounds is now added the incision of new wounds on old scar tissue, to wit the burning down of the Jewish barracks at Sachsenhausen. At the time when Sachsenhausen and Dachau were 'operational' Bruno Heilig wrote a personal account of incarceration in that hell entitled *Men Crucified*. Heilig's choice of title was both right and subtly wrong. It was wrong because the metaphor of Jews nailed to the cross used an image from the founding myth of Christianity, the – Jewish-instigated – crucifixion of Jesus, and stood it on its head as it were.

Recent research (by Haim Landau, A. N. Wilson and others) has torn gaping holes in the Gospel writers' account of the historical Jesus, and the Catholic Church has officially repented of its previous demonisation of the Jews. Though scholarship and 'political correctness' can effect shifts in public consciousness – as seen by the debunking of Columbus during the Quincentenary – when it comes to cleansing Christianity of its antisemitic accretions one step forward is usually followed by one step back.

A case in point is the Pope's visit to Arezzo to re-consecrate the newly restored church with the famous frescoes by Piero della Francesca. The painter illustrated episodes from the medieval Golden Legend purporting to tell of the vicissitudes of the 'true cross' used in the Crucifixion. One fresco in the cycle is called *The Torture of the Jew*; it shows St Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, half-drowning a Jerusalemite Jew to make him reveal the hiding place of the true cross.

Was it too much to expect the Pope to combine

*continued on page 2 column 3*

WE WISH ALL OUR READERS



A HAPPY CHANUKAH

## New Vienna Synagogue

In October the Austrian Head of State opened a new Sephardi synagogue in the Tempelgasse, Leopoldstadt. Bundespräsident Klesstil said the house of prayer would serve that sizable part of the 5,000 Soviet Jewish immigrants to Vienna who originate from Asiatic Russia. □

## Ambiguous Dietrich commemoration

Berlin is currently compensating for the rather shabby funeral it accorded its most famous daughter. It is staging a commemorative exhibition, and a nostalgic 'Ufa Revue' entitled *Bombenstimmung*. The latter, a slickly produced and hugely popular show, alas, smacks of a glorification of Nazi culture. □

## Quote of the year

The recipient of this year's prestigious Büchner Prize is Georg Tabori, the Hungarian-born, former U.S.-domiciled British passport holder currently enjoying a vogue as playwright and director in Germany and Austria. Wolf Biermann ended his laudatio at the award ceremony in Darmstadt by crediting Tabori with authorship of the slogan 'When I hear the word revolver I reach for my culture'. □



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## Profile

## Valuable asset



Andrew Kaufman.

Photo: Newman.

Unusually for the profile section of *AJR Information*, this month's subject was born after the war and is not himself a refugee. Andrew Kaufman, however, is from a refugee background and does a great deal of work on behalf of the refugee community both as a Trustee of the AJR Charitable Trust and a member of the Executive Committee of the AJR. In his professional life he is a lawyer specialising in Anglo-German issues, including pension and restitution claims.

Also unusual is the fact that Mr Kaufman's father, who sought refuge in Britain in 1933, was also born here. The family first came to the U.K. in 1907, the year Andrew's father was born. During the first World War his father was interned for three years on the Isle of Man. Upon being released in 1918 he took his family back to Germany. When the Nazis came to power he was eligible for a British passport which enabled him to return to his birthplace. In 1942 he married and in 1946 Andrew was born.

On paper Mr Kaufman's achievements look fairly conventional. He graduated from Oxford in 1968 and took articles with the legal firm of Pritchard Englefield Leader Henderson. Twenty-one years later he is a managing partner with Pannone and Partners, a firm of solicitors familiar to *AJR Information* readers as Pritchard Englefield and Tobin. He is also a member of the British-German Jurists' Association, Vice-President of the Association of German Speaking Lawyers, a Special Member of the *Deutscher Anwaltsverein* (German Lawyers' Association) and a member of the Garrick Club. (It takes seven years on average from being named as a potential member to becoming fully accepted. The

only known queue-jumper is Prince Charles. He had only to wait one year.)

Where Andrew Kaufman breaks with convention is in the depth of his feelings about the refugee community, especially those who have faced difficulties, psychological and financial, in their lives. He feels that innovations such as the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, the meals-on-wheels service and the very existence of the AJR are extremely important. He also believes that the question of identity is paramount; 'Our children and our children's children should know where they have come from'.

Mrs Kaufman, Susie, is well known to AJR members. She does great work at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre where she is one of the two regular social workers and is also responsible for overseeing the centre's catering facilities.

As a person Mr Kaufman is energetic and affable. His cheerful exterior does not hide, nor should it, the depth of his personality. Without his easygoing charm he would be a formidable figure – with it he is very human.

Andrew and his wife Susan live, with their two children, in Stanmore, Middlesex. He is a keen sportsman and a staunch supporter of Watford FC. Again the facts, on paper, paint a conventional picture. It is, however, in meeting the man that one comes to realise his true worth.

□ M.N.

*continued from front page*

reflection with genuflection before a piece of religious art that perpetuates the age-old stereotyping of Jews as inveterate enemies of Christianity? Could he not have followed the example of the Church of England who through the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln Cathedral disavowed the ritual murder accusations brought against the local Jewish community in the case of little Hugh of Lincoln 800 years ago? □

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## Questions of justice

In July 1989, the Home Secretary's independent War Crimes Inquiry, headed by Sir Thomas Hetherington and Mr William Chalmers, reported on its findings. On 10 May 1991, the War Crimes Act received the Royal Assent, making it possible for the first time ever for a British subject to be tried by a British court for certain serious offences allegedly committed at a time when he or she owed national allegiance elsewhere. Thus far, no such prosecutions have been brought.

But although, admittedly, no one has yet been charged under the Act, is it in fact true that no British court has ever given its opinion on a crime of war? Not so. There are at least two cases which leave no doubt as to the court's opinion of the kind of crime against humanity which the Act is designed to outlaw retrospectively. No criminal record has resulted from these proceedings, since both were heard by civil courts as claims of defamation. Each of the plaintiffs challenged statements made in public whose truth they vigorously disputed: hence their recourse to the law of libel.

### Rewarding career

The first concerned a gynaecologist who came to this country at the end of the war as a member of the Polish Forces under the command of General Anders. He practised first at a hospital in London, then joined the Colonial Service as a medical officer. He spent some time in Africa and was awarded the O.B.E. Upon his return to England he established himself as a general practitioner in Ealing. He might well have looked towards comfortable retirement as a respected British citizen, able to look back with satisfaction on a rewarding professional career, not overly disturbed by certain aspects of a former life – such as the fact that he had been a prisoner at Auschwitz, where he had succumbed to pressure and participated in the brutal sterilisation surgery to which numbers of inmates were subjected. His membership of the Polish army-in-exile notwithstanding, Dr Wladislaw Dering had been a wanted man in post-war Poland on charges of war crimes. However, requests for his extradition from this country had been shelved and then refused. All seemed to go well for him until, in 1959, a book was published in which Dr Dering was described as a collaborator with the Nazis in the horrendous medical experiments carried out at Auschwitz. He sued the author and the publisher of 'Exodus' for libel and *Dering v Uris* was heard in 1964 in

the Queens Bench Division of the High Court.

The trial lasted for five weeks. Witnesses came from many countries to testify. On the grounds that Leon Uris had overstated the number of surgical operations in which Dr Dering had been involved – fewer than 200 rather than over 1000 – the verdict was in the plaintiff's favour. But the jury expressed its strong disapproval of those of his war-time activities which figured in this case by awarding him contemptuous damages of one half-penny, the lowest coin of legal tender at that time; and he was ordered to pay the legal costs of the defendant.

### Crimes of war

In 1987, Scottish Television screened a documentary entitled 'Crimes of War' in order 'to reveal the graphic and harrowing evidence against alleged Nazi war criminals living in this country'. Much of the programme was filmed in the Baltic and Western regions of the then Soviet Union, where the 'campaigning journalist' responsible for it carried out extensive research over a period of six weeks. He discovered that the extermination policy was carried out by some non-Germans with such enthusiasm that even senior SS-officers were scandalised; and he decided that if any of the people who had perpetrated these horrors actually lived in Great Britain they should be exposed.

It was alleged that one such person lived in Edinburgh. By birth a Lithuanian, he, too, had come to Britain after serving briefly with the Free Poles under Anders. But before that, so the argument ran, he had commanded a Lithuanian auxiliary police unit and as such had taken part in the mass murder of civilians, mostly Jews. In 1992, Anton Gecas, now aged 76, sued Scottish Television for libel. The case was heard by the Edinburgh Court of Session. Gecas appeared before it in order to deny knowledge of any atrocities in 1941 and 1942. But the decision went against him and he lost the case, condemned in terms by the presiding judge for crimes against 'innocent Soviet citizens, including Jews'.

And there the matter rests for the time being. Gecas may appeal. Or he may face indictment under the War Crimes Act. Or neither of these eventualities may happen. But British courts have heard and judged on two occasions crimes of war and spoken out against the culpability of those who perpetrated them. In each case, the reverse had been the intention of the plaintiff. But then, the sword of justice is indeed a two-edged weapon.

□ David Maier

## Criminals brought to Booker

At the time of the Lords' rejection of the War Crimes Bill the 'antis' stressed two points. Bewigged legal luminaries challenged the feasibility of presenting clear-cut evidence of crimes committed nearly half a century ago. Others were averse to having details of the Holocaust rehashed in the courts and the press. They argued likewise that too much time had elapsed; since reopening war crimes cases might stoke the fires of xenophobia it was more politic to let sleeping dogs lie.

As a matter of interest the present generation of English writers do not accept their elders' and betters' – the average age in the House of Lords is 75 – prescription. Year in, year out, the Holocaust resurfaces as a major theme in books on the shortlist for the Booker Prize (the most prestigious literary award in the country). 1991 yielded *Time's Arrow*, Martin Amis' dubious experiment in playing fashionably 'post-modernist' tricks with horror by telling the story of a death camp doctor back to front.

### Sins of the fathers

Last year also saw Booker judge Nicholas Mosley resign from the jury when his colleagues spurned Allan Massie's more sensitive – if still somewhat manipulative – Holocaust novel *The Sins of the Fathers*.

This year's shortlist included two more books with a Holocaust background. One was Ian McEwan's *Black Dogs* whose key episode features two dogs trained to savage Gestapo prisoners. The other was *Serenity House*, named after a luxury retirement home where an ex-death camp doctor hides out; its author, Christopher Hope, is a South African long revolted by the iniquity of apartheid. A third book on the 1992 Booker shortlist, Michele Roberts' *Daughters of the House*, harks back to the Nazi occupation in France.

On this evidence issues which the noble Lords consider rather *passé* still haunt the imagination of some of the most talented representatives of the Republic of Letters. The pen, as they say, is mightier than the wig.

□ R.G.

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## Reviews

## Asking the wrong question

Yoel Cohen, *NUCLEAR AMBIGUITY – THE VANUNU AFFAIR*, Sinclair-Stevenson, 1992, £10.99

Israel's worst kept secret – her nuclear capability – was well known to every student of Middle Eastern affairs long before October 1986, when Mordechai Vanunu gave Andrew Neil's *Sunday Times* its first major scoop. Whilst Vanunu's claim that Israel possessed between 100–200 nuclear warheads greatly exceeded previous estimates, what really agitated experts most was whether his story was a monumental security lapse or a Mossad set-up.

Six years on the answer to this question remains one of the few missing pieces of the Vanunu jigsaw. Alas, Yoel Cohen's book fails to shed any new light on the point; it does not even attempt to wrestle with the question, choosing instead simply to accept the 'official' view.

Rather than scrutinise this juicy aspect of the Vanunu affair, the author tediously, if faithfully, reconstructs the entire Vanunu episode down to its very minutiae.

## Blew the whistle

Thus the reader is given a blow-by-blow account of how Vanunu lost faith in the Israeli system, travelled abroad to find himself and discovered Christianity, reached the decision to blow the whistle on Israel's nuclear 'secret', made contact with the *Sunday Times*, was debriefed, and so forth.

Though one might overlook simple errors of citation – such as attributing a Parliamentary question to the South African refugee Donald Woods instead of the Labour MP Donald Anderson – the reader balks at having to wade through a potted history of the *Sunday Times* and the circulation war in the British tabloid press. (We are even treated to a short biography of Robert Maxwell replete with epitaph 'If suicide was the cause of death, the collapse of his empire was the trigger'.)

However, a reader patient enough to sift through the mass of proffered material, will stumble across several nuggets of information. For instance, Cohen gives a spirited and convincing rebuttal to Seymour Hersh's allegations, in *The Samson Option*, that *Mirror* proprietor Robert Maxwell and his

foreign news editor, Nick Davies, were Mossad agents.

Then there is the illumination thrown on Israel's nuclear programme, begun in the 1950's, though the Knesset was only informed of the existence of the Dimona reactor in 1960. Cohen concludes: 'Vanunu's claim that crucial decisions about this programme were taken outside the parliamentary process and even without the full consent of the Cabinet, are well-founded'. He adds that the Israeli public are happy to collude in this conspiracy of silence; over half of them considered the authorities justified in suppressing news of Vanunu's arrest.

## Solitary confinement

Whilst it may be natural for most Israelis to regard him as a traitor, it is difficult to understand why Israeli officialdom have kept Vanunu in solitary confinement since 1986. Countering the Government's claim that if he were to mix with other prisoners he might give away secrets, Amnesty International have argued that the prison authorities could easily assign a prison warden as minder. Calling his imprisonment 'cruel, inhuman and degrading', Amnesty have categorised the ill-treatment as one level below torture.

□ Peter Grunberger

## Exhibitions

The Burgkloster Museum in Lübeck is presently showing the exhibition *Aspects of Jewish Life* which deals with the history of Lübeck's former Jewish, mainly Ashkenasi, community and traces its origin in the general re-immigration of Jews from Poland into Northern Germany.

From 13 December 1992 to 31 January 1993, this will be supplemented by an exhibition on the influence of Sephardic Jews on North German intellectual life. In a previous brief show in Rendsburg, Schleswig-Holstein, this exhibition of documents and pictures on loan from many German individuals and institutions was well attended and aroused wide interest.

## Historical significance

Additional commentaries explain the circumstances, relationships and historical significance of the persons presented, who include Uriel da Costa, Spinoza and Heine as well as others deserving to be better known than they are. An illustrated catalogue with the title *Mein Vater war portugiesischer Jude*, printed by the Steidl Verlag, Göttingen, can be obtained at the Museum or from Sabine Kruse, Musterbahn 5b, D-2400 Lübeck, price 26 Mark plus postage.

The Jewish Museum in Frankfurt/Main is showing a special exhibition *Mikwe – history and architecture of Jewish ritual baths in Germany* until 15 November 1992. More than 400 of these, from early medieval to the most modern times have been preserved or re-built or newly built in Germany. A catalogue, price 38 Mark, is obtainable at the Museum. (See ZEIT-Magazin, No. 38, 11 September 1992.) □

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## Gallows humour

Christopher Hope, *SERENITY HOUSE*,  
Macmillan, 1992, £14.99

A health warning: this book is desperate, but not serious. At its centre is a bizarre old man who goes under the name of Max Montfalcon. Calling himself 'English, like the Royal family', he triggers the discerning observer's first doubts; after all, the Royal family are only so-so British. Max is in the early stages of Alzheimer's – or should one say Waldheimer's (?) – disease.

Anyway, his own family do a King Lear on him. Once he has made his considerable wealth over to his daughter and her MP husband, they shuffle him off to London's premier eventide refuge. Max believes he knows what it is: a new-age 'camp' from which no one escapes alive. Mind you, he has similar delusions about theme parks and any establishment where obedient groups of people are shifted about by ever-ruder attendants.

His worries about the old age home are not totally unjustified, for, situated in the midst of fairest Highgate, it is run by the oddest collection of carers: The director is negotiating with similar German eventide places to establish Continent-wide facilities; the resident doctor is an enthusiast for 'assisted death' to help sufferers and prevent over-population, and the night matron bears the nickname Rudolpha Hess.

When war crimes investigations get under way the MP, warned that his in-law is a prime suspect, tries to ferret out old Max's secrets, as does police superintendent Slack. But then grand-daughter Innocenta, a charmer who is 'into' every fringe idiocy, takes a hand. Loving her grandpa, she helps him escape to the U.S.A. Despite all one's misgivings one cannot help siding with the old crackpot.

Author Hope sometimes loses himself in the very complexity of his plot and fails to clarify which of his many targets he is really aiming at; even so the breathless reader will not be aware of this, or be in the least disappointed.

□ John Rossall

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## Herstory

Anna Lambert, *DU KANNST VOR NICHTS DAVONLAUFEN*, Picus Verlag, Wien, 1992

There is a school of modern literary criticism which says that authors don't write books, but books write authors. Anna Lambert is such an author-as-medium.

Her book is autobiographical without being a proper 'life'. There are large gaps in it. As a child in pre-1914 Krems on the Danube, Anna didn't know how her father earned a living, and she still – and with her the reader – does not. She knew, though, that he was an aberrant Jewish type: a wife-beater, child abuser and womaniser.

The mother died young. Anna married a non-Jew and moved to Baden near Vienna. She had two sons, the second born soon after the Anschluss. A year later she left for England, with the boys – but without the husband who balked at smuggling himself over the frontier.

In England the boys were fostered and she became a nurse/midwife. Halfway through the war she secured a position enabling her to have her sons with her. Peace brought the news that the husband had another woman and wanted nothing to do with them. She had a breakdown. The narrative practically ends with Anna's decision to stay in England.

It resumes briefly with her later marriage to an elderly widower. We finally encounter her as an arthritic octogenarian, living in sheltered housing.

The gaps in Anna's narrative are sketchily filled in, as a postscript, by an Austrian postwar historian who came across her in the course of a large-scale study of the Jews of Krems.

*Du kannst von nichts davonlaufen* tells an absorbing story, despite all its gaps and omissions. Anna Lambert is obviously a resilient character. She may not be an accomplished writer, but the very artlessness of her style makes this an engrossing document of the life of marginal Jews in provincial Austria.

□ R.G.

## The German Frontier at Basel: 1942–1991

Just four miles to go and the frontier ahead,  
A few miles ahead and the weather good.  
A soft hanging haze over wooded landscape,  
Trees on the turn yet the air warm and dry.  
Peacefully at mid-day golden stretches  
Of flat new-mown fields lie open, benign.  
A grateful breeze sweeps the grassy slopes.  
Early autumn: Tabernacles, Harvest Festival.

Disaster could not strike on a day  
Such as this. One's papers, after all,  
Were in perfect order. One's directions  
Clear. One's plan foolproof. Some food  
Stowed away, sufficient cash, no impedimenta  
Or dependents. Just oneself with a small,  
A really modest sized suitcase. Stop worrying,  
You tell yourself, You're one of the lucky ones.

Only the tell-tale burn in the stomach,  
The deliberate effort to relax tense muscles.  
Short of breath. No energy. Much thirst.  
At the border at last, one did, one didn't  
Expect the difficulties. One was, one wasn't  
Prepared for the arrest. One did, one didn't  
Anticipate the arrangements: the crowded trains,  
The stench, the sweat, the gas, the horror.  
Today as then, only reversing the direction,  
The harvest is in, the fields are silent.  
Just four miles to go and the frontier ahead,  
An invisible line, an unguarded signpost.  
Yet fear grips my gut, and anguish and anger:  
The black-clad figures, the brutal voices,  
The crowded cattle-trucks, the sickening stench,  
The sweat, the mire, the gas, the horror.

□ Hilda Schiff

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# Letters to the Editor

## BROUGHT TO BOOK

Sir - I find many articles in your journal very absorbing. However, having joined AJR only three years ago, I must have missed out on a lot of interesting material printed earlier.

The same may apply to other new members. I would, therefore, suggest that you consider publishing a selection of 'gems' that have appeared in the journal over the years. Produced in paperback this would make a reasonably priced 'good read' and a permanent record for many, including perhaps older members, who would like to re-read the items they enjoyed the first time round.

Beconsfield Road  
High Wycomb

Max Denver

*Other members who feel that this would be a worthwhile undertaking could send their views on the matter to 'Letters to the Editor.'*

## BACK(S) TO THE WALL

Sir - Economists are agreed that the Sterling crisis and the subsequent devaluation are largely the result of high interest rates in Germany. These are due to the far higher costs of German unification than originally estimated.

I suppose that anybody can make calculating errors. What matters is that mistakes, when they occur, should be remedied as quickly as possible. I have a serious and entirely constructive suggestion to make:

We'll have to re-build that WALL - fast!

I am convinced that there must be whole armies of women and men of goodwill, like myself, who are only too ready and eager to lend a hand to restore that important edifice, preferably overnight.

The current 40% unemployment will simply evaporate within days. To keep the re-born East Germans and their neo-Nazis proud and happy, the United Nations will immediately fly in plane-loads of anabolic steroids, thereby ensuring that muscle-bound East German participants will once again walk away with all future Olympic medals.

Titchfield Road,  
St. Johns Wood  
London NW8

Henry Stanhope

## BITTERSWEET RETURN

Sir - The visit to Aachen this spring was experienced by most people as a kind of communal healing. Pain and danger are always there, only buried deep down.

It distresses me that one Jew accuses another of not appreciating the terrible fate of our people. If I did not would I have kept away from Aachen for 54 years, save for a visit to the cemetery?

It cannot be wrong that I treasure the memories of a happy childhood and youth spent in a large circle of family and friends as part of that ancient city.

I have no such sentimental attachment to another city, Nürnberg, where part of my school years were spent. Antisemitism was endemic there, and school classes segregated by religious adherence. Already in the twenties, on my daily walk to school, I had the gruelling experience of seeing *Der Stürmer* in its special showcase.

So much for being blind to our history.  
Meadowcroft Lane  
Rochdale

Irmgard Treuherz

## 1492 AND ALL THAT

Sir - Speculations about Columbus's putative Jewish descent may refer to the existence in his native Italy of a Jewish family named Colon, some of whose members were highly regarded literary, medical and rabbinical experts.

No proof exists of any direct relationship between Columbus and them, but his reported acquaintance with contemporary Jewish learning and traditions may well have arisen from social contacts.

Jewish learning in the contemporary sciences and literature may have had an - as yet insufficiently explored - influence on the development of humanism in Europe as a counterweight to growing Catholic (and later also Protestant) fundamentalism. For instance King Henry VIII consulted, through his Italian agent, a member of the Colon family about the permissibility of his divorce from Catherine of Aragon according to Jewish tradition.

Alley Road  
London SE21

L. Meyer

## APPORTIONING GUILT

Sir - In October the Institution of Civil Engineers carried an article headed 'Kill

Joys' which put the V2 on a par with bombing raids on Germany. Being a survivor the article annoyed me and I started to compose a reply, but I couldn't think of a good ending. I then re-read your leader and plagiarized the last paragraph (I remembered seeing Flying Fortresses over the ghetto of Theresienstadt in late '43. What a boost it had been to morale after the depressing earlier military events which had made an Allied victory, on which our survival depended, a remote possibility!)

My/your letter was published in full. I thought you might like to know, and apologise for not asking you first.

Warren Lane,  
Martlesham Heath  
Ipswich

Frank Bright, née Brichta

Sir - Mr Fred Dunston appears to suggest that the majority of Austrians were not Nazis and antisemitic, saying there is no evidence for it.

I submit that strong evidence is available, and that, sadly, attitudes have not changed to this day - as proved by the election of Kurt Waldheim as President after his Nazi connections were publicised.

The Neo-Nazis in Germany also indicate continuing popular support, with the government unwilling to do much about it.  
Canons Drive  
Edware

E. H. Ring

## THE BALKANS QUAGMIRE

Sir - Calling Nietzsche maligned, rather than malign would have been more correct. Dr Oscar Levy, Editor of the authorized Complete Edition of Nietzsche's Works (18 volumes, Edinburgh and London, 1913) pointed out the sheer absurdity of throwing him and Treitschke into the same pot. Your leading article does so on the shaky ground of the similarity of *tzsch* and *tschk*, ignorant of the fact that the philosopher had no Polish ancestry, although he wished he had in his hatred of things German. In contrast to Treitschke, Nietzsche's anti-nationalism, anti-teutonism and ANTI-antisemitism, is evident to all who have read his works (and are familiar with the exposure of forgeries).

Belsize Park Gardens  
London NW3

Albi Rosenthal, M.A.

Sir - I always understood that Schiller's 'Ode to Joy' was originally an Ode to Freedom, and that *Freiheit* was replaced by *Freude* for political reasons, Metternich not being partial to such sentiments.

As the work is currently performed, it

says, in effect, that everyone will be happy when everyone is happy. I cannot believe that the author of *Die Räuber* and *Don Carlos* would have written that, nor that the composer of *The Eroica* and *Fidelio* would have taken it at face value and set it to great music.

I am not a German scholar and may be wrong about it all. Perhaps one of your learned readers, of whom there are clearly many, could put me right on the matter.

White Ledges  
London W13

Dan Gold

### LEEDS THANKYOU

Sir – As a former resident of Stainbeck Lane Hostel for Refugee Boys in Leeds, I recently returned there for a 'nostalgia trip'.

Among the friends from the past I was able to visit, was a former teacher, three of the 'Boys' and one of the 'Girls' from the Harrogate Hostel for Refugee Girls. They were both operated by the same committee under the chairmanship of Mark Labovitch.

I would like to contact the former residents of these hostels, who are now scattered all over the world, in order to produce a publication to give thanks to the Leeds area community for saving us from the fate of the 6 million.

Any of your readers who have knowledge of former residents, committee members or their families, should contact me.

4 Kingswood Drive  
Orangeburg, New York 10962 USA  
(formerly Bernhard Keller)

Kelly Bernard

### YESTERDAY'S PRAGUE

Sir – In June a group from the Northwood and Pinner Synagogue and friends visited the Pinkas Synagogue.

### OLD AGE PENSIONS GERMANY

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Fax: 071-624 5002

We found that, unfortunately, the walls had been stripped, and the names of Holocaust victims expunged.

A small fragment shows what they used to look like. It is planned to replace them in due course.

Emmer Green  
Reading, Berks

Mrs L. Klein

### WEISSENSEE FUND

Sir – After 4 years' work for the Weissensee Cemetery in Berlin, begun well before *die Wende*, monies collected originally for cleaning now not needed because other agencies have done it, have been used to erect new indicator signs in one eighth of the Cemetery. Further funds are needed to finance more for the other parts; then to modernise (computerise?) the records where the original ones going back to the 1870's are still being used. Donations can be sent to me at Box 315, Bradford BD9 5QF. There has been a turn-over of about £20,000 so far.

Rudi Leavor

### HOLE IN THE HEART

Sir – You rightly call the exchange of the West and East German currencies a 'huge vote-catching blunder'. However, the exchange rate was not one-to-one, because in actual fact two East Mark had to be paid for one West Mark. The real value at that time was nearer to five Mark for every West Mark.

For East Germans the value of their savings thereby increased by 150 per cent.

On the other hand, the price of all DDR products was also immediately increased by 150 percent, making them impossible to sell. This caused the collapse of the economy and enormous unemployment; other reasons, like obsolete machinery, contributed to the debacle.

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

## Name calling

The U.S. elections were enlivened by some insouciant punning on candidates' names. 'Dan quails at TV encounter with Gore' read one headline, and dark-horse candidate Perot was described as 'the yellow Ross of Texas'.

'Twas ever thus in politics. One recalls Goering being pronounced *gering* (scanty) and Goebbels *gebell* (barking); Cardinal Innitzer, pro-Anschluss head of the Austrian Catholic Church, was known as *ünser Innitzer* (our useless one) in Jewish circles.

Some politicians' names speak for themselves. Hitler's trade union boss was Doktor Ley. Stalin's police chief was Lavrenti Beria. ('We'll bury you' was Khrushchev's constant refrain to the West. Ironically he almost got it right: Bundesbank-decreed high interest rates which scuppered several Western currencies stem from the mess the Soviets made of the DDR.) Dr Schlesinger's more acceptable predecessor at the Bundesbank was Herr Pohl (St Pohl?). The man who created the postwar Bundesbank was Nazi Reichsbank veteran Karl Blessing – a blessing in disguise, if ever there was one! Had Blessing stood trial at Nuremberg he would have faced Labour Attorney General Sir Hartley Shawcross, dubbed Sir Shortly Floorcross on account of his rightwing leanings.

The head of the Catholic Church in the Philippines is Cardinal Sin. In Rhodesia the (subsequently marginalised) Black contender for power was Joshua Nkomo – *nekamah* means vengeance in Hebrew. The victor, Robert Mugabe, made the Rev Canaan Banana head of state of Zimbabwe. All very appropriate.

Looking at South Africa, though, we find that the leading Black politician bears a less than apposite name. Given the extra-marital shenanigans of his wife Winnie, the ANC's grand old man should be called Hamilton rather than Nelson Mandela.

□ Richard Grunberger

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### CARING AND PERSONAL SERVICE

# The AJR at Work

## The 45th Annual Charity Concert



Golden girls at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Photo: Newman.

In the 45 years since the first Annual Charity Concert this yearly get-together has become the single biggest event on the refugee calendar. It has consistently offered an opportunity to catch up with the gossip in what was, once, a less-than-secure community.

### Well assimilated

As the years have passed most of the refugee community has become well assimilated. Its members have made new lives but never forgotten their beginnings. Consequently, the atmosphere at the concerts is bitter-sweet: this happy reunion of people who

share sad memories generates a warm feeling; you don't have to keep constantly in touch to be close.

This year, as in every other year, the sense of a whole community coming together was almost tangible. But, sadly, the absence of many familiar faces cast a slight pall over the event. But everyone present appeared to be enjoying themselves.

□ M.N.

### John and Kathryn Lenehan – Piano Duo

Beginning together on one piano the Lenehan duo demonstrated their technical mastery with a vivid performance of Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*. The

second piece, Mendelssohn's *Allegro*, was also rendered with vigour. It was the Debussy *Petite Suite*, however, which revealed the full range of both players and earned them great praise from the audience.

Schubert's *Fantasie in F minor, op. 103*, was played with inspiring quality and timing and was projected with a clarity that heavily emphasised the capacity of the piano as a solo instrument. This rendering demonstrated the wide range of Schubert's musical inspiration.

The duo, using two pianos, side by side, opened the second half of the recital with Rachmaninov's *Suite No. 2, op. 17*, whose final Tarantella is a highly demanding virtuoso movement.

### World Premiere

At this stage Barrington Pheloung prefaced the World Premiere of his short composition *Mir-ah – Chashafti – Lechachsir* with a few remarks on the need for a return to 'Tonality' (which Longman's Dictionary defines as 'The organisation of all the notes and chords of a piece of music in relation to a key note'). His composition clearly reflected the influence of writing for radio and television and needs re-hearing for full appreciation.

The recital was concluded with Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole – Prelude à la Nuit*. Who does not know Ravel, whose *Bolero* has travelled the world? The piece was performed with style and zest, bringing the recital to a rousing completion for an enthusiastic audience which, sadly, was not sufficient to fill all the seats in the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

□ Arthur Cain

## COUNCIL TAX

From 1 April 1993 the present Poll Tax will be replaced by a Council Tax and each dwelling will get one bill based on its value.

Any time now you may receive a Council Tax Enquiry Form from your local authority which you are required to complete and return to them within a given period. This will probably be a very simple form and you should have no problem in filling it in. However, be sure that you answer the question about the number of adults aged 18 or over who are living in your property as this may result in you receiving a discount on your Council Tax bill. If you have any queries please telephone the AJR Social Services for advice. □

### HELP!

1. Hungarian speaker needed to visit member in Nightingale House, Nightingale Road SW12.
2. A car owner is needed to assist tenants of Otto Schiff House, 14 Netherhall Gardens NW3 with shopping.

Further information from  
Laura Howe, AJR Volunteers  
Co-ordinator, 071 483 2536,  
Tuesday-Thursday 9.30 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
Friday 9.30 a.m.-1.00 p.m.

### TEA DANCE

Sunday 20 December 3-6 p.m.

at the Paul Balint AJR Day  
Centre, 15 Cleve Road NW6

Entrance £4 – by ticket only

Contact Bobbi Spencer on  
Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays  
between 2.30 and 7.00 p.m. on  
071-328 0208

## Bournemouth outing

**O**n a fine Friday morning in October over 50 members of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre assembled to begin a weekend trip to Bournemouth. We were all looking forward to a lovely time, and, as it turned out, we weren't disappointed. Throughout the two and a half hour coach trip Sylvia Matus and Renée Lee spoiled us all with sandwiches, sweets and drinks (non-alcoholic, I hasten to add). By the time we arrived at the Cumberland Hotel everyone was in great spirits.

### Superb service

The food and service at the hotel remained superb throughout the weekend. In the evenings entertainment and dancing ensured that our leisure time was amicably and enjoyably spent. One of the highlights of the tour came with an outing to Buckler's Hard in the New Forest, where we visited the maritime museum. On the day of our departure for London we also visited a picturesque garden centre. The only fly in the ointment was provided by the weather, which didn't, however, dampen our spirits.

Sylvia and Renée's untiring efforts ensured that the journey home was just as smooth as our outward trip. Their energetic

caring over the whole weekend went a long way towards making it a great success, even for 'first timers'. Our thanks go to them, and here's looking forward to the next time.

□ With thanks to Stephanie Steiner

## Combating xenophobia

**I**n October a group of 25 teachers of English from Potsdam and Brandenburg, over here on a short study tour, visited Hannah Karminski House. They heard the Editor of *AJR Information* talk on diverse aspects of integration of German-Jewish refugees into British society.

An important point made in the course of the subsequent discussion was the deleterious effect of the exclusion of religion from the DDR school curriculum on the minds of pupils: ignorance of the Jewish roots of Christianity made young East Germans who had never encountered a Jewish person in the flesh more susceptible to the appeal of the antisemitic xenophobia.

Thanking Mr Grunberger at the end of the discourse the spokesman for the teachers revealed that they had, as a group, helped organise the 6,000-strong protest demonstration after the Neo-Nazi act of arson at the Jewish barracks on the site of Sachsenhausen concentration camp. □

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The cost for a kosher 3 course meal is £2.00. Delivery charge 50p. Payment for meals to be made to the Driver.

**Meals can still be collected from 15 Cleve Road on weekdays (Mondays - Thursdays) for £2.00 per meal.**

**Members who feel they may qualify for delivery because of mobility problems, or other reasons, should contact Mrs Ruth Finestone for further details and an assessment interview on: 071 328 0208**

## PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL  
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### Afternoon entertainment -

#### DECEMBER

**Tuesday 1** DUO KINNOR - a pot pourri of music. Madeleine Whitelaw and David Richmond  
**Wednesday 2** Take a quick-step back in time with Geoffrey Strum and Johnny Walton  
**Thursday 3** Concert by students of Trinity College of Music  
**Sunday 6** ROYTE KLEZMORES - Dena Attar (violin), Julia Bard (accordion) and Carla Bloom (clarinet)

**Monday 7** A journey around Europe - Stephen Norbert (piano) and Eugen Kurti (violin)  
**Tuesday 8** Viennese Cocktail - Emmanuel Emeric (violin) and Jason Brooks (piano)  
**Wednesday 9** Continental Cocktails - Helen Mignano (soprano) and Sylvia Cohen (piano)  
**Thursday 10** Me - my music - and you. Linda Roth with piano accompaniment  
**Sunday 13** LONDON SUZUKI - directed by Elizabeth Waterhouse  
**Monday 14** The Great Lorenzo presents The Magnificent Seven  
**Tuesday 15** An afternoon of happy music. Pauline Palmer (piano)  
**Wednesday 16** Music that you love. Sylvia Dorf (soprano) and Mabel Witztum (piano)  
**Thursday 17** Pre-Chanukah Concert - operetta followed by Chanukah songs - Cantor Marshall Stone  
**Sunday 20** TEA DANCE - with live music by Jack Davidov (violin) and Jules Rubin (piano)

**Monday 21** WIZO Ladies Choir at Chanukah conducted by Lotte Frazer  
**Tuesday 22** Chanukah Concert - Hans Freund  
**Wednesday 23** Connaught Opera - music for you - Maria Arakie (soprano), Glenn Wilson (baritone) and Carol Wells (piano)  
**Thursday 24** CLOSED AFTER LUNCH  
**Monday 28** CLOSED  
**Tuesday 29** Songs from my album - Cantor Michael Rothstein and Sheila Games (piano)  
**Wednesday 30** End of year concert - Doris Samuels and Marion Hartman  
**Thursday 31** CLOSED AFTER LUNCH

#### JANUARY

**Sunday 3** STAJEX PLAYERS  
**Monday 4** A taste of Ireland - Barbara O'Neill (mezzo), Gerarda McCann (dancer), Grahame Dinnage (piano) and Sjiobhan Fox (violin)  
**Tuesday 5** A New Year has begun - piano duo and solos - Sheila Games and Daphne Lewis

## FAMILY EVENTS

### Birthday

**Black Trudi** - Tuta Black, formerly of Glasgow, Munich and Düsseldorf, will celebrate her 80th birthday on 13 December, together with her family and friends. 48 Shepherds Hill, Highgate, London N6 5RR.

### Deaths

**Behrendt Magarete** Behrendt, retired schoolteacher of Leeds, born in Pasewalk, Pomerania, died peacefully on November 11, 1992, aged 88 years. The funeral has taken place.

**Hammerschlag Suzanne** Hammerschlag died on 16 November at home, peacefully. Widow of Kurt Hammerschlag and sister of Charlotte Lewin.

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**Meinrath Utti** Meinrath, our dearest mother, passed away on 1 November after a short illness. Sadly missed by all who loved her.  
**Reis Gretl** Reis, nee Kronheimer, born in Fürth, Bavaria in 1903, died 25 September, 1992, in Haifa. She will be greatly missed and remembered with affection by her family and friends.

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Only two flats remaining.  
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Alice Schwab

# Art Notes



Allan Ramsay the younger: self portrait.  
Circa 1737-9.

Collection: National Portrait Gallery.

**A**llan Ramsay (1713-84) was in his day the leading English portrait painter, renowned for his design, colour and refinement. As court painter to George III, he produced a series of magnificent yet intimate portraits. The present

exhibition of his work at the National Portrait Gallery runs until 17 January 1993.

The first major British exhibition for many years of the great Norwegian artist *Edvard Munch* (1863-1944), will be in the National Gallery until 7 February 1993. It will include the series 'The Frieze of Life' conceived in 1893, as well as 'The Scream', which he considered his greatest achievement.

*Peter Lanyon* (1918-64) was a Cornish artist, born in St Ives where he spent most of his life in the flourishing local art community. His *Air, Land and Sea* is a New Touring Exhibition showing at the Camden Arts Centre (until 3 January 1993).

*Patrick Caulfield* (born 1936) studied at the Chelsea School of Art and the Royal College of Art alongside Hockney, Kitaj and Allen Jones. An exhibition of his paintings 1963-1982 is at the Serpentine Gallery (until 17 January 1993).

*Dora Holzhandler* who has travelled extensively and had many exhibitions, is showing *Glimpses from a Jewish Life* at the Manor House Society (until 16 December).

To celebrate the centenary of the birth of *Jacob Kramer* the Boundary Gallery is joining the Leeds City Art Gallery and University to mount an exhibition of his works mostly on paper. The exhibition in Leeds continues until 18 December.

And finally, just a reminder that the delightful *The Swagger Portrait* exhibition at the Tate Gallery continues until 10 January 1993 and should not be missed. □

## A breath of history



Dr Werner Rosenstock.

Photo: Newman.

**S**ince baritone Hans Freund's monthly visit to Heinrich Stahl House in October fell between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, he chose a programme of Synagogue Music, in particular melodies for the High Holydays.

Asher Clayton gave a beautiful rendering of the Kol Nidrei Prayer after which Werner Rosenstock, for many years AJR General Secretary and editor of this journal, now a resident of the House, spoke about the meaning and significance of the Kol Nidrei.

He recalled that the last time he had heard the prayer in Germany was in October 1938, at the imposing Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue in Berlin. Oberkantor Leo Gollanin had intoned it in the presence of Heinrich Stahl, President of the Berlin Jewish Community. Dr Rosenstock had left Germany soon afterwards, while Mr Stahl stayed behind, to meet a tragic end in Theresienstadt.

The audience were moved to have such a direct link to the past, and to learn that a fellow resident personally knew the man after whom their Home is named. □

## SB's Column

**D**resden. Is there a nationalist revival in Saxony? Not if the Dresden Schauspielhaus repertoire is anything to go by: this season's plays include Gardner's *I am not Rappaport*, George Tabori's Goldberg variations and works by Brecht, Canetti and Neil Simon.

**Three generations (or four?)** Burgtheater stalwart Rosa Albach-Retty, reached the great age of 105, dying in 1980. While she was known in Austria only, her son Wolf Albach-Retty and his wife Magda Schneider, a romantic screen couple in the Thirties and Forties, were popular with film goers in all German-speaking countries. Their daughter Romy Schneider was an international star whose early somewhat mysterious death saddened audiences everywhere. Now, it appears that Romy's daughter Sarah, 15, and reputedly an image

of her beautiful mother, is taking tentative steps towards a film career.

**Heinz Rühmann**, 92, was awarded honorary citizenship of the German town of Koepenick which he put on the map by his unique scurrilous portrayal of the title part in the Zuckmayer play *Hauptmann von Koepenick*. Rühmann brought an inimitable combination of wit, satire and school-boyish slyness to a role castigating Prussian red tape and excessive discipline.

**Birthday.** Eszther Réthy, Hungarian-born operetta soprano, widow of the conductor Anton Paulik, is 80. For many years she sang all the main Kalman and Lehar rôles at Vienna's Volksoper.

**Obituary.** Alexander Trojan, member of the Vienna Burgtheater for over 50 years, has died at 78. After a rather unusual start (he played child parts under the name of Rosal Takacs) he joined the ensemble as a young man and played more than 200 rôles at the same theatre until early this year. □

## 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

Dec. 7th. No Lecture.

Dec. 14th. P. E. N. Lesebühne Tamara Wyss.

Shows a Video film made recently in Berlin: 'Searching for Mr Moses' (Moses Mendelssohn).

## A HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING LANDS

## Part 6: The Age of Mercantilism

Throughout history rulers have been interested in increasing the wealth of their states. The mercantile classes were strongly represented in the government of the Italian city states during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and trade had therefore always been taken very seriously in Italy. But in Northern and Western Europe, where the ruling classes did not themselves engage in trade, mercantile considerations did not rank high: whilst the aristocrats loved spending money, they often looked down on the sordid business of making it. Prestige attached to the possession of, and income from, land; commercial wealth, though of course useful, enjoyed much lower status. The pursuit of military glory or of religious orthodoxy stood much higher in the value system of the ruling classes.

In the second half of the 17th century, however, this began to change and the perception developed that the generation of national wealth through trade ought to be one of the primary concerns of statecraft. This will eventually have a bearing on the history of the Jews in Germany; but to see how this came about, we need first to look at its effect on the Jews in Holland and in England.

**Mercantilism in Holland and England**

Holland and England were the first countries to wholeheartedly embrace the doctrine of Mercantilism. The Dutch had just broken free from the aristocratic government of Spain. In England the mercantile classes had played a vital part on the winning side of the English Civil War and became firmly established in the power structure after the Revolution of 1688.

Mercantilism demanded an open recognition, unhampered by theological constraints, of money being a commodity like any other, and that making money multiply was not morally inferior to making cattle multiply. It required an open acceptance of the credit system, and therefore of the moral legitimacy of interest as the price of credit. It stimulated the development of banking, of the raising of capital, and therefore of mechanisms for investment like stock exchanges.

Official Roman Catholicism was still hostile to these developments, but Calvinism legitimised the honest use of such techniques and so it is not surprising that

the religions of the mercantile classes of Holland and England were strongly tinged with Calvinism. It is also significant that Calvinism had a very high regard for the Old Testament, which lays such stress on the Jews being God's Chosen People. And although Calvinism could be extremely intolerant (in Geneva and New England, for example), in the Netherlands and in England it tended (with exceptions) to stand for religious toleration.

In England and Holland, therefore, the Jews came to be accepted into the commercial community as a people whose past and whose talents had linked them strongly with trade; and in Holland especially they quickly made a contribution, vastly out of proportion to their numbers, to the wealth which, for a while, made that little country a formidable power in Europe. Initially the Jewish community in Holland was largely Sephardic, consisting of Jews who, for fear of expulsion from the Spanish Empire, had converted to Christianity (the 'New Christians') but who, in this now tolerant climate, could revert openly to the Judaism they had cherished secretly in their hearts. Soon Holland became a magnet for the still oppressed Jews of Germany. By 1700, Amsterdam, with some 10,000 Jews, had the biggest Jewish community in Western Europe, and two thirds of them were Ashkenazi. England, too, though to a lesser extent, attracted Jews from the German-speaking lands, especially after the accession of the Hanoverian George I strengthened the connection with Germany.

**The Jews of Alsace**

France also acquired a large Ashkenazi population in the 17th century, though in a very different manner. In 1680/1 Louis XIV gained the sovereignty of Alsace (hitherto part of the Holy Roman Empire), and with it the first openly Jewish population since the last expulsion of the Jews from France in 1394. The 1394 decree was not repealed, but it was not enforced either – possibly because Louis XIV's minister Colbert was a mercantilist deeply impressed by Dutch success in trade, who perhaps thought that this very large community of Jews could make a contribution to French commercial activity. But this did not happen. Colbert died in 1684; he had often despaired at the lack of interest his master had shown in mercantilism. In 1685 Louis XIV, ignoring all commercial considerations, stepped up

his persecution of the Huguenots by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and many thousands of these economically useful citizens sought refuge in other countries. The Jews of Alsace could look to no relief from their oppressed status under the former German rulers, or from the bigotry of their Christian neighbours. They were to remain ghettoized, unassimilated, and Yiddish-speaking until the time of the French Revolution.

**The Jews of Hamburg**

If the French did not learn from the experience of the Dutch and the English that there might be a connection between commercial success and toleration for the Jews, several of the German-speaking states, more consistently committed to mercantilism, did. In 1612 the Senate of the free city of Hamburg allowed the New Christian community there, against an annual contribution of 1,000 marks, to avow their Judaism and yet to remain in the city. It, too, soon attracted Jews from elsewhere and became for a while one of the most important centres of Judaism in Germany – until in 1697 the burghers of Hamburg pressured the Senate to force up the annual contribution to astronomical heights. As a result, many of the community thereupon emigrated to Amsterdam. The damage to Hamburg was such that in 1710 the annual contribution of the remaining community was cancelled altogether.

□ *Ralph Blumenau*

*To be continued in the January issue.*

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## Some of my best enemies...

Any U.K. resident who cares about theatre knows of London's Barbican, Edinburgh's Traverse and Dublin's Abbey theatres – but who has heard of Cardiff's Sherman? The obscurity of this fine and well-equipped building is due to Wales's lack of a rich theatrical tradition.

In view of the Principality's dearth of great playwrights pride of place is being accorded to the controversial figure of Saunders Lewis, Welsh secessionist and language revivalist. Lewis, who died in 1985, is a controversial choice not only because of the reputed mediocrity of his writing but because he was a Nazi sympathiser. ('My enemy's enemy is my friend.') He was also an antisemite parroting Goebbels' slogans about a Jewish-capitalist world conspiracy.

One wonders what Lewis would have made of the fact that his play *Bloduwedd* is being staged at the Sherman Theatre, product of the munificence of the Jewish capitalists Abraham and Harry Sherman? Probably not much more than the French antisemitic writer, sponger off women and wartime Nazi collaborator Drieu le Rochelle made of his marriage to the comfortably-off Jewess Colette Jeramec.

But let us look at the feeding-the-hand-that-bites-you syndrome from the opposite angle. What induced that fine teller of Prague Ghetto tales Leo Perutz, who had found refuge in Palestine, to travel to the Austrian Salzkammergut every postwar summer to seek the company of the Nazi *Blut-und-Boden* scribbler Bruno Brehm? What made the French-Jewish philosopher Jaques Derrida enter a contentious defence of the Belgian antisemite Paul de Man, who died in the odour of Harvard respectability shortly before the news of his wartime collaboration broke? What possessed Noam Chomsky to defend the Holocaust denial of Professor Faurisson on the spurious grounds of freedom of speech?

Is this a species of Jewish perversity? One is reminded of the Wagner worship to which many of our co-religionists were – and still are – prone. Hermann Levi in a much-quoted letter absolved Wagner of all petty antisemitism (*kleinliches Risches*). Joseph Rubinstein committed suicide after his sadistic sometime 'employer's' death. From the 1870 premiere of *Die Meistersinger* in Vienna onwards Jewish Hofoper habitués were Wagnerites almost to a man. Angelo Neumann spent his life promoting

Wagner's work on the German-speaking stage. Otto Weininger's father annually attended the Bayreuth Festival en famille.

Even today the Jewish Wagner cult has an influential high priest – Bernard Levin – and many adherents. If truth be told, I half-belong to the latter myself. □ R.G.

## Genuine 'Jews for Jesus'

The recent death in Vienna, in his 80th year, of Monsignore Leopold Ungar, president of the Austrian 'Caritas' and one of the three most important men in postwar Catholicism in that country has almost brought to an end a line of distinguished Christian clergy of Jewish descent in Central Europe. Almost, but not quite; a Polish immigrant into France, who became a Catholic at 14, has become Archbishop of Paris, (Cardinal Lustiger), and two refugees from Hitler's Austria are still working as Catholic priests in England and America respectively.

But if we are unlikely to see many more from that source, this may not be true of the Church of England. Jews tend to assimilate into the culture of the local majority; so it is not surprising that the Anglican church boasts entrants from Anglo-Jewry, such as the ex-Bishop of Birmingham, Dr Hugh Montefiore, and from among former German Jewish refugees, Canon Paul Oestreicher (from Berlin) who very nearly became Bishop in New Zealand recently, springs to mind, and so does the Reverend Werner Langford who died early in October. Born Werner Lampel, son of a Leipzig Cantor, he served as a naval rating during the war and later had a distinguished parochial and academic career in Westminster and Durham.

However, given the amount of assimilation in Habsburg lands over 150 years, it is not surprising that most of these conversions took place into the Catholic church and in the old Imperial territories. It is not quite true that Archbishop Kohn of Olmütz (Olomouc) started the trend. Charming stories about the Emperor asking diffidently whether the appointee had at least been baptised, are, alas, myths. Kohn was the son of gentile peasants, adopted by a Jewish family whose name he took. But in any case he was not the first. My great-great uncle, Dr Philipp Steiner, ordained Priest in 1857, was bishop of the ancient coronation city of Stuhlweissenburg (Székesfehérvár) from 1890 to 1990. The 1930's saw the conversion of Johannes Oesterreicher, who fled

Austria shortly after being ordained priest. For well over 50 years he has lived in America and not only keeps up links with his native country but, at 86, is still active in ecumenical matters. He also runs an academic institute devoted to Christian-Jewish cooperation and reconciliation. And the one 'cradle catholic' Kindertransportee to become a priest, is also unusual for another reason. Father Francis Wahle's father survived the war in Vienna and after 1945 rose to the position of Federal Chief Justice. His sister went back to postwar Austria while he stayed to work in England.

The most outstanding of all these men was Prälst Ungar. He had qualified as a lawyer while simultaneously studying literature under Karl Kraus and drama at the Reinhardt Seminar. Embarking on theology, he fled Nazi Austria for France where he was ordained, and then managed to escape to England. Among his jobs here was to act as chaplain to German prisoners of war.

Recalled to Vienna in 1947 to help with relief, Ungar built up Caritas from a virtual soup kitchen to a respected international relief body. At the same time he was one of the reformers who rebuilt the 'new' Catholic church in the new republic, weaned it from its prewar political partisanship and healed the old feud with the social democrat half of the country. His secular work involved broadcasting and TV debating, his social work brought him the highest civilian award from the 'red' Vienna municipality. Withal he never forgot that he was primarily a man of prayer with a mystic bent. His learning and his wide ranging activities would have made him an unusual priest anyway; that he was a convert made him even more so. Perhaps the very breadth of his learning and activities recalled an earlier intellectual climate, that of the pre-1914 Austria into which he had been born.

□ Francis Steiner

### STERNBERG CENTRE FOR JUDAISM

#### December highlights

**Sunday 6th.** 8.00 p.m. – 'From Longjohns to Lace' Janet Reger talks about her life and career. (Manor House Society)

**Thursday 17th.** 7.45 p.m. – Plus U Network's 'Speaker of the Month': Pamela Wagman, Producer of 'Watchdog'.

#### Details from:

The Sternberg Centre for Judaism,  
The Manor House,  
80 East End Road, London N3 2SY.  
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## THIS ISRAEL

As readers will be aware we are serialising Ralph Blumenau's 'History of German-speaking Jews' in response to replies to the April Questionnaire. Since we also had requests for more news about Israel we are initiating an occasional series entitled 'This Israel'.

### Riches which don't provoke riches

Jerusalem Report has produced a league table of the richest Israelis from which we extract the first five:

1. German-born Shaul Eisenberg, global entrepreneur,
2. Greek-born Raphael Recanati, founder, Israel Discount Bank,
3. German-born Yekutiel Federmann, owner of the Dan Hotel chain,
4. Family Moses, owner of the mass circulation *Yehediot Achronot*,
5. Belgian-born Reuven Hecht, grain merchant and patron of the arts.

### Righting an ancient wrong

American and Israeli archeologists excavating near Ashkelon have unearthed evidence – pottery, masonry, loom weights – which suggests that the Philistines had achieved a significantly higher level of civilisation than they are popularly credited with.

### Matters of Faith

The good news: Cardinal Canestri of Genoa, heading a group of 450 pilgrims, called the encouragement of Catholic pilgrimage part of a new policy of closer relations between the Vatican and Israel.

The bad news: Education Minister Shulamit Aloni, who aims to curb religious teachings in schools in favour of a more rounded curriculum, has been put under armed guard for her own protection. □

## VERSE AND WORSE

### MAJOR v MINER

Says foppish, woppish Heseltine  
'Is a not yours, it is a mine',  
And shouts of 'Scargill is the pits'  
Draw echoes: Wear the cap that fits

### KNESSET '92

The country woke as from a trance  
And caged its purblind hawks  
(Their only tune *guerre à outrance*,  
Played with bloodcurdling squawks)

Fly clerics with a fraudulent lease  
On God for evermore  
May, hopefully, now have to cease  
Attrition's endless war

Jews hovering round Muscovy,  
Apprehensive of the dole  
In Israel, might now feel free  
To feed both mouth and soul

But what of these, without whose yeah  
No peace accord can stand,  
The cannon fodder of the fray  
That split the holy land?

### ARABY

Inchoate, from colonial night  
New states reared up in red-hued light  
Whose liberators with scant art  
Had stones implanted in their heart . . .  
Today in mosques and the bazaar  
Fellahin yearn for Islam's star  
To rise again and set them free –  
Their morrows portend misery  
For one truth holds from first to last:  
No path leads forward through the past!

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## Cookery Corner

### No. 9 HADDOCK AND CHEESE PIE

A toothsome fishy dish which, as usual for this column, is almost too easy to make.

INGREDIENTS (Gauge amounts to fit the number you wish to serve):

Potatoes  
Haddock fillets  
Cheddar cheese (matured preferably, but it's not important)  
Butter  
Breadcrumbs  
Parmesan cheese  
Milk  
Cornflower

### METHOD

Boil and then cream the potatoes (mashing with a little milk and butter is fine). Line a dish with the mash, moulding it into a pretty shape hollowed out in the middle. (Those with time can pipe the potatoes around the edges.)

Simmer the haddock in a little milk, with a knob of butter in it, for up to five minutes. When lightly cooked through remove the fish from the milk and place it in the potatoes.

Keep the milk on the heat, as it comes near to the boil add a couple of teaspoons of cornflower mixed with a tablespoon of water. Stir until the sauce thickens. When sufficiently thickened add as much cheese as you like (the more the merrier). As the cheese melts add a generous dollop of French grain mustard. When the sauce is creamy throughout pour it over the fish.

Sprinkle breadcrumbs generously over the whole thing. Sprinkle grated parmesan generously over the breadcrumbs. Put the dish in the oven until it looks a bit brown on top (about 20–25 min).

Serve with your preferred salad selection. (Try adding some mixed nuts to your salad for extra texture.)

Alternative recipe: If you feel this may be a little too rich, simply dispense with the sauce. Mash a little cheese in with the potatoes instead.

□ M.N.

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

## Obituary

### Alfred Joachim Fischer

The death of Alfred Joachim Fischer, at 83 in Berlin, further weakens the chain linking surviving German Jews to their past. Born in Wilhelminian Posen (now Poznan) he had early experience of xenophobia, being attacked as a German by Poles, and as a Jew by Germans.

Domiciled in 1920s Berlin, he became a journalist on the *Vossische Zeitung*. In 1933 he fled to Prague, and thence, via Poland, to London. Postwar he resumed work for German papers, returning permanently to Berlin in 1959.

His contacts and command of German and English enabled him to conduct interviews with an array of world leaders: Adenauer, Willy Brandt, Ben-Gurion, Nehru, the Shah. Fischer's autobiography *In der Nähe der Ereignisse* gives an account of a life filled with journalistic work and travel. Despite the globetrotting, and the return to postwar Berlin, he remained a conscious Jew and supporter of Israel to the end.

A. J. Fischer is survived by Eva, his wife and helpmeet for 50 years. □

## Academic questions

As attacks on asylum-seekers go on with sickening regularity in Germany, democrats both inside and outside the country grow increasingly despondent. Those of a morbid disposition even detect a whiff of Weimar in the air.

Such Cassandra-style pronouncements do not – as yet – carry much conviction. There is, after all, a crucial difference between today's disaffected young Germans and their predecessors of 60 years ago. The Rostock firebombers are skinhead thugs or unemployed, while the gravediggers of Weimar were often students. (Circa 1930 Nazi support at the universities was twice as great as in the country as a whole.)

For all the current rents in its fabric democratic Germany will survive for as long as the products of its Higher Education system uphold the postwar academic ethos; however, should they – the Bundesrepublik's opinion moulders – fail to face down the street thugs and scapegoat seekers, the Cassandras may well be proved right. There is a strain of thinking deeply embedded in

the German psyche that makes a right-wing challenge to democracy infinitely more potent than a left-wing (either of the Rudi Dutschke or Baader-Meinhof variety) one.

In the Third World, by contrast, the overlap of universities with political crime is a virtual left-wing monopoly. The Khmer Rouge drew its inspiration from a PhD thesis Pol Pot's deputy Khieu Samphan submitted at the Sorbonne. The dissertation envisaging a money-free economy (which was duly approved) became Cambodia's gory nightmare when the Khmer Rouge depopulated the cities and pushed the entire economy back into subsistence farming and barter. An even closer personal link between academe and the charnel house was provided by Abimael Guzman, philosophy professor at Peru's Ayacucho university. He turned hundreds of students into *Shining Path* guerrillas who, true to his dictum 'A million deaths are needed to liberate Peru' inflicted unbelievable cruelties on anyone – from policemen to *peons* – who stood in their way. When the tally of victims approached 25,000 Professor Guzman was captured, but his 'philosophy' goes marching on. □ R.G.

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## Search Notices

**Peter Würfl**, born 11 January 1931 and **Jochen Würfl**, born 15 June 1932, from Dangast/Varel, East Germany. Father died Sachsenhausen 1943. Grandparents Ferdinand Baruch and Lina Baruch-Cohen. Peter and Jochen should contact: Emile E. Edelmann at Revittam AG, Kufurstendamm 14, D-1000 Berlin 15, Germany, where they will be given details of a property to which they may be heirs.

**Zdenka Guth** (married name unknown) from Rokycany, Czechoslovakia, moved to Prague when she married. Her two daughters were sent to England in 1939. One married and returned to Rokycany to seek compensation for the family's small lock and key factory. Susan Cammer Gerstein of 329 Waban Avenue, Newton, MA 02168, USA seeks information about the two daughters' whereabouts.

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## Woche der Begegnung in Baden-Baden

**T**hough most reunions arranged by German towns for their former Jewish citizens follow a broadly similar pattern, the encounter in Baden-Baden last September differed from the norm in several respects.

First of all in its fortuitous, albeit unintentional, timing. It became abundantly clear during the meeting that the present wave of Neo-Nazism had, so far at any rate, left the great majority of the German population quite untouched. One might have expected some of the official speeches to contain predictably adverse comments on this phenomenon. In the event it received scant mention, and such was the prevailing atmosphere that no-one seemed to mind it.

Secondly, of Baden-Baden's Jewish citizens, in 1933 having numbered only 230, only about 75 participated, which gave the

reunion a more informal character. This enabled the organisers to deal with visitors' individual requirements with exemplary efficiency. Significantly, four hire-car and bus firms had, free of charge, placed vehicles at the disposal of the guests.

Last but not least: the 'spirit' underlying the event. There was no attempt at cover-up. The candour of the speakers (with the Lord Mayor in the forefront), who emphasised the difficulties and tensions inevitably facing both organisers and guests, removed much of the stress from the outset.

### Successful ruse

The centre piece of the event was an exhibition called *Jews in Baden-Baden*. To appreciate it fully one has to know that, initially, Baden-Baden had been singled out by the Nazi regime as a showcase to demonstrate to the outside world the normality of conditions in Germany, thereby attracting foreign visitors and currency. The ruse was successful: There was an increase in the number of guests from abroad; in 1936 it was the highest since 1923 and incidentally included the Lord Mayor of London. More important, it even deceived a number of German Jews. Between 1933 and 1936, 78 Jews emigrated, but 192 moved in, mistakenly believing that this international spa would offer them greater protection against persecution. It was only in 1937 that the pretence was dropped with a vengeance – there was a lot of catching-up to do. Hence, attitudes in Baden-Baden changed

more abruptly than elsewhere; this enabled the exhibitors to show the sequence of events in a more concentrated form than would have been possible otherwise.

They did not attempt to gloss over anything. Exhibits relentlessly demonstrated the perverted sadism of the rulers by reproducing published decrees, official and private communications, letters of denunciation, and numerous photographs. The focussing on the fate of a few individual families gave the exhibition maximum impact.

Its designer, Angelika Schindler, a curator at the Suedwestdeutsche Rundfunk, has set down the details in a book entitled *Der verbrannte Traum* ('Dreams reduced to ashes', Verlagshaus Elster, Buehl-Moos). It is a model of its kind.

The idea, mooted at the conclusion of the encounter, to preserve the exhibition permanently will hopefully come to fruition. It would be an effective method of exposing Neo-Nazi lies about the Holocaust.

□ Carl F. Flesch

## 40 Years Ago this Month

### CHAIM WEIZMANN

There are few leaders of revolutionising movements who have the good fortune of living to see the fulfilment of their ideas and dreams. Chaim Weizmann was one of them, and his life was crowned by the highest reward statesmanship may achieve.

Together with other Jews all over the world, we mourn the death of a man who, as first President of the State of Israel, has a unique place in Jewish history. As Jews who are now citizens of Great Britain, we realise that Britain's assistance to building up the Jewish homeland was, to a large extent, due to Chaim Weizmann's spadework; it is significant that the Prime Minister, Mr Winston Churchill, at his first public speech after the President's death went out of his way to pay tribute to him. As Jews from Germany we shall always gratefully remember that, immediately after the Nazis came to power, he initiated constructive measures for the resettlement of German Jews in Palestine. His influence on German Jewish life before 1933, however, also left its mark inside and outside the Zionist movement in Germany. He paid several visits to Germany to address public meetings and to establish personal contacts. It was, last not least, the result of his efforts that so many leading non-Zionist German Jews supported the cause of Palestine and joined the Jewish Agency when, in 1929, it was extended to non-Zionists.

Representatives of the AJR have called at the Israeli Embassy to express their sympathy.

AJR Information December 1952.

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