

AJR Information

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£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss . . .

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Perils of publicity

David Mellor resembles the young lady from Riga who went for a ride on a tiger. The particular tiger he elected to ride during his rise to cabinet rank was media publicity; few will forget his 'star turn' on television news berating a hapless Israeli officer in Gaza whose lack of English left him unable to answer back.

Now Mellor has provided a tasty morsel for the same media he once deliberately supplied with eye-catching copy. He proved a less adroit tiger handler than befitted – to continue the zoological metaphor – a legal eagle puffed up with effortless superiority.

Postwar Germany's guilt of omission

The Fires of Rostock

In any society, whether democratic or totalitarian, 'published' and public opinion can be out of sync. In this country, for instance, the death penalty would be back on the statute book if the 'people' rather than 600-odd parliamentarians had their say. (To state this is not to denigrate the man in the street – but to point out that the working of parliamentary democracy is based on the interaction between political elite and grassroots.)

If countries like Britain evince occasional divergences between government policy and popular feeling, dictatorial regimes show huge gaps. Nowhere did such a gap yawn as wide – *pace* the events of the late Eighties – as in the ludicrously ill-named Peoples' Democracies.

Pretence of internationalism

The DDR typified the gap better than most. Its official media pronounced the country free of the Nazi taint

on the threadbare grounds that the capitalist sponsors of Nazism had all absconded to the West. East Berlin likewise proclaimed its internationalism while ghettoising darkskinned guest workers – Vietnamese, Mozambicans, etc – in segregated compounds.

East Germany resembled nothing so much as a prefabricated house built without a damp-course. With no air – in the form of open debate about the visibly present foreigners, or totally absent Jews – circulating through the artificial edifice mildewed notions of unadulterated Germanness clung to the walls of its cellars.

Whereas the DDR not only omitted to fundamentally eradicate the Nazi mindset, but re-inforced it by its own authoritarianism, West Germany underwent (albeit limited) Denazification. Thousands of tainted judges, civil servants and others, admittedly kept their posts, but in the educational and artistic spheres profound questions about the roots of the 'German catastrophe' were raised and debated.

Instances of moral blindness

Even here, of course, instances of moral blindness occurred. Professor Nolte argued that the Holocaust slotted into a normal pattern of 20th century atrocities, and Chancellor Kohl both laid wreaths at Bitburg Waffen SS cemetery and attended the reburial of Frederick the Great at Potsdam.

Bonn also licensed extreme rightwing parties, provided they eschewed actual physical violence.

Ever since the fall of the wall rightwing firebrands from the West have been active in the East, where they found plenty of combustible material. Thanks to Communist mismanagement the economy is near-moribund; equally crucially, thanks to Communist authoritarianism, tolerance and cultural diversity are unknown concepts in the five new Länder.

This is the background to Rostock. After that pogrom the Land Interior Minister of Pomerania said he understood the frustration of the Rostockers who had applauded the neo-Nazi thugs. His comments cannot be condemned too strongly. If the issue of the right to asylum is settled by 'the street' it will fatally damage the mechanism of interaction between political elite and grassroots, which is at the heart of democracy. □

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Genuine fakes

A notebook from the forged Hitler diaries has been sold in Frankfurt to an anonymous buyer for about £19,000.

The Sunday Times serialised the fake diaries after a German forger, Konrad Kujau, sold a collection of 60 notebooks to the German magazine *Stern* in 1983.

Kujau was jailed for forgery. Since being freed he has opened a Stuttgart art gallery specialising in fakes. □

Mameloshen marches on

As a practice, circumcision has long been familiar to non-Jews (and not just to any old non-Jews, as Dr Snowman's attendance at Buckingham Palace in the 1950s testified). As a word, though, *bris* is an exotic newcomer in English, liable to pop up in the most unexpected places; a recent opera review referred to Delila's shearing of the sleeping Samson's locks as a *bris*.

Shmooze is a marginally longer established 'anglicism', or at least anglo-americanism. We hear from the States that a Barbra Streisand benefit concert for Bill Clinton, to be attended by a bevy of Democrat supporters from Hollywood and Broadway, has been called 'the ultimate shmoozerama'.

Lastly, an out-and-out newcomer to the C O D: *maven*. When a Sunday broadsheet described an Englishwoman appointed editor of *Vogue* as 'New York's latest fashion *maven*' a columnist in the *Independent* complained that neither he nor any of his colleagues knew what the word meant. This complaint indicated how independent of – not to say cut off from – the *Zeitgeist* the *Independent* scribes are. Would any writer on film nowadays admit to ignorance of such terms as *shmaltz* or *shlock*? By the same token how can anyone write knowledgeably about the fashion industry to whom such insider-speak as *shmutter* or *maven* is all Greek?! □

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Profile

Spiritual guide



Rabbi Curtis Cassell

Photo: Newman.

On first meeting Rabbi Curtis Cassell appears to be a very serious man. He speaks knowledgeably, and with *gravitas*, about a wide variety of subjects. However, within a few minutes one finds oneself smiling, then laughing, then scratching one's head and wondering if one is being teased. The serious mask is a mere cover, from under which an extremely sharp wit operates. Sharp, but not cutting, the Rabbi's humour is gentle and works towards putting people at ease, rather than on edge.

Curtis Cassell was born in Oppeln, Upper Silesia, the son of a wine merchant. ('We were always a spiritual family' says the rabbi, the first glimmer from beneath the cover). He obtained his rabbinical qualifications at the *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin. In the years 1936–39 he held the appointment of Rabbi of Frankfurt/Oder. In August 1939 he managed to obtain a visa for Australia, but never got there. He left Germany for England, from where he was to fly by KLM airlines but, on the outbreak of war, KLM ceased to accept holders of German passports.

In Britain Rabbi Cassell joined the Pioneer Corps. He was to serve throughout the war in the United Kingdom eventually becoming an interpreter in POW camps.

After the war Curtis Cassell's first rabbinical position was the leadership of the Progressive Congregation in Glasgow,

where he chaired the Jewish Refugee Committee. That was in 1945. Three years later he received a call to the prestigious West London Synagogue, where he was to spend nine years. During this period he also served on the Board of the AJR.

In 1957 Rabbi Cassell was offered the position of Rabbi to the Reform Congregation in Bulawayo, at that time in Rhodesia. He accepted the post instantly because it presented a great challenge ('And then I had to go home and look it up in my atlas'). He stayed in Africa until his retirement in 1977, when he returned to London, which he had come to love during his time here. ('When I left Bulawayo they made me a lifetime member of the *Chevera Kadisha*, the Burial Society'.) On his return to London Rabbi Cassell rejoined the Board of the AJR. He continues to take an active role in the community, as does his wife, Cecilia, who acts as a voluntary visitor. He is also involved in research and writing on the history of the reform movement.

His most recent reminiscence concerned an invitation he received to attend an ecumenical memorial service in a Catholic church in Frankfurt/Oder on the 50th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*. He was not greatly moved by the usual speeches until one layman mentioned the 'kindly eyes' of a Jew he had known. From this description Rabbi Cassell recognised one of his pre-war congregants. He felt moved again when, at the end of the ceremony, the presiding clergyman turned to him and said: 'Please accept, on behalf of your people, our confession of sin and regret. Please bless our congregation'. This memory will remain with him forever.

We extend our sincerest congratulations to the Rabbi on his eightieth birthday this month and wish him and Mrs Cassell many more happy years together.

□ M.N.

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Schools in the shadow



Vera Lachmann, 1942.

Photo Private.

In June my aunt Beate Planskoy travelled to Berlin on her first visit since she left on a Kindertransport in 1939. Fifty-three years is a long time and Beate never thought she would return, but she had been talked into it by the persuasive curator of Berlin's Wilmersdorf Museum.

Three months earlier the museum had opened the exhibition *Hier is kein Bleiben länger*, (after the words of Nelly Sachs), dedicated to the achievements of 5 Jewish women who had run schools for Jewish children during the 1930s. One of them, Vera Lachmann, was Beate's aunt, and from 1936 Beate had attended the school as its youngest pupil.

The museum authorities have travelled the world to collect photographs, stories, mementoes of the five schools. They organised a programme of seminars and lectures by former pupils, held in the museum and walking tours of the beautiful Grunewald district, where the schools were located. It was strange to see this activity which had

been carried out under threat and in the social fringes now the object of such civic tributes.

Vera Lachmann had aimed at a rarified academic career, but in 1933 she instead put her talents to practical use and opened a school for some of the Jewish children now excluded from the public system.

Familiar with Goethe

Each of the five schools commemorated had a quite different character. Some had been established as independent schools long before the Nazis but in 1933 all the Aryan pupils had to leave. Since Jewish emancipation and the social integration there had been a steady decline in enrolment at Jewish schools. The Nazis changed that and 1937 saw the peak number of children in Jewish schools. Vera's pupils were mainly from assimilated backgrounds, more familiar with Goethe than the *Gomorra*. As she later said in an interview '... *Um etwas zu tun and auch, weil es dringend nötig war, sammelten wir verlorene Kinder von der Strasse auf and fingen eine Schule an*'.

Extraordinary institution

From all accounts the Lachmann *Schule für nicht-Arische Kinder* was an extraordinary institution. It was situated in a rambling old chauffeur's house, provided by a cousin. The staff were far more high powered than in any normal school, teaching drama, storytelling, languages to the highest standards, and staging plays or Mozart operas. Vera's own leadership was inspirational, though her financial and practical skills were non-existent. Only pupils who could afford it had to pay fees, and only staff who needed it were given salaries. Everyone who could supplied their own chair. During periodic financial crises Vera's uncle Max Warburg came to bale her out.

For the pupils it was an inspiration. Years later, scattered throughout the world, they wrote to her citing happy memories of their time at the school at 35 Jagowstrasse, and

reminding her how she had captivated even awkward pupils with her retelling of the Greek myths. Despite the outside adult world, which had grown ever more threatening, they had retained the fondest memories of the rather chaotic, freewheeling but creative institution.

Sometimes the threats came pretty close. Ironically, next door to number 35 was the residence of Heinrich Himmler. Beate remembers having daily to walk past the SS guard on the way to school. Sometimes a football went over the fence into Himmler's garden, which the guards always threw back. Nearly as bad was an old peoples home which backed on the garden. Its antisemitic residents made remarks like 'Jewish children should not make so much noise' when playtime shouts disturbed them.

Escape through Sweden

The school was under constant danger of being shut down. Though barely five foot Vera had a formidably strong will. On several occasions she dared confront the authorities. But eventually the Gestapo moved in at the end of 1938. Vera spent the next few months working in the Jewish emigration headquarters helping some of 'her' children to leave. Finally at the end of 1939, when the war had begun, she could do no more and managed to escape through Sweden.

By the time I knew her, much later, she was following her original course as a classics professor in New York. Yet she had derived such pleasure and purpose from the school that she had carried it on in another form. For 26 years she ran a boys' summer camp in a primitive site in the Blue Ridge mountains, North Carolina. It specialised in music and arts and there was the same slightly crazy, happy-go-lucky atmosphere.

We visited the museum exhibition with a sense of relief to know that Vera had managed to leave. Until nearly the end she believed that it was better to stay in her beloved Germany and oppose because the bad times would pass. A fellow teacher who attended the exhibition recalled vivid rows where she argued this point with him. Two of the other women featured in the exhibition did not get out. Vera never came to terms with what happened.

□ Suzanne Franks

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Reviews

Elsinore among the grot

HAMLET by William Shakespeare, Riverside studios, Hammersmith, and touring

‘Why can’t we have a Jewish Hamlet?’ Frances de la Tour complained in an interview in the 1980’s. I sympathised. After all, the Danish prince had a penchant for friends named Rosencrantz or Guildenstern. (As, incidentally, did other Royals: Edward the Seventh chummed up with Ernst Cassell, and Austrian Crown Prince Rudolf with Moritz Szeps).

‘And why can’t we have an 18 stone Hamlet?’ continued de la Tour, obviously thinking of her (then) husband Toni Kempinski. At this point she forfeited my support. I can, if pressed, accept a slim female Hamlet (Frances de la Tour herself), or even a septuagenarian female Hamlet with a wooden leg (Sarah Bernhardt) – but not an overweight Sumo-wrestling one. Nor, for that matter, an over-age male.

Perverse casting

Shakespeare’s gloomy Dane long prefigured Freud’s discovery of the Oedipus complex, being both a would-be parricide of his substitute father Claudius and repressed wooer of his mother Gertrude. In a play shot through with Oedipal feeling it therefore seems perverse to cast a Hamlet – Alan Rickman – old enough to be Ophelia’s (Julia Forbes) father. Equally crucially, Rickman, an unrivalled impersonator of icily detached villains (*Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Bob Roberts*), fails to carry conviction as the near-desperate potential avenger. He gives the line ‘O, from this time forth/My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth’ a dying cadence as if – contrary to the thrust of the plot – he had already inwardly opted for the second alternative. By contrast, elsewhere we find Hamlet on all fours hurling saliva-flecked abuse at the similarly prostrate queen (Geraldine McEwan), but even this climactic closet scene generates more heat than light.

Rickman has not only been ill-served by his director Robert Sturna but also by the costume designer. Granted that as a student Hamlet may conceivably have purchased the odd cast-off at Wittenberg’s equivalent of an Oxfam shop, but here his entire wardrobe consists of *shmutters*.

As for the ghost, he shuffles into view like a vagrant escaped from the set of *The Last of the Summer Wine*.

All in all, the cast appear in the ill-matched melange of costumes – from courtiers’ togas, through *Lanzknecht* jerkins to Edwardian tailcoats – by which contemporary directors advertise the ‘timelessness’ of the play they’re staging.

The stage-set rounds off the generally ‘deconstructed’ look of the production: mounds of sand, bits of wood, a disarray of books, a rainwater barrel, scattered leaves, the odd dustbin. Is this Brecht’s ghost crying *Verfremdung* from beyond the grave? Or the ‘politically correct’ revelation of the grot beneath the feudal glitter?

Brecht, the greater debunker of power holders (‘General Tilly won a battle and Mother Courage lost three shirts’), would have applauded the final scene where Fortinbras of Norway, a jerkin-clad lager lout, struts to centre stage and divests himself of his Doc Martens which a frockcoated Danish courtier gingerly deposits in the wings. The rest is silence.

Postscript Frances de la Tour asked ‘Why can’t we have a Jewish Hamlet?’ Pre-Anschluss Vienna actually had one: Hans Jaray at the Deutsche Volkstheater. I, who saw Jaray’s Hamlet, somehow doubt that I’ll remember Rickman’s for as long.

□ R.G.

Half-learnt lessons

Alice und Gerhard Zadek MIT DEM LETZTEN ZUG NACH ENGLAND Dietz Verlag, Berlin 1992

This is a book in which a husband and wife take turns in telling their story.

The spouses had a lot in common even before marriage: Jewishness, birth in post-Great War Berlin, working class background and early political awareness. The rise of Nazism intensified both their left-wing leanings and Jewish consciousness. They had to attend Jewish schools and Gerhard went on *hachshara*; ultimately though, in wartime Britain they decided that their future lay in a – hopefully Socialist – post-war Germany. One person who, more than any other, influenced this decision was Herbert Baum, charismatic organiser of an illegal Jewish anti-Nazi cell liquidated by the Gestapo.

Having married in Manchester (where they also joined the German Communist

Party in exile) they returned to the Eastern Zone of Germany in 1947. Gerhard worked in journalism till the 1950s purge of suspect returnees from the West pushed him into the politically less sensitive area of industrial management; Alice became a social work administrator.

They were around 70 when the DDR, which they had helped to build, collapsed. This would have been a shock to the system for people half their age; the Zadeks rode with the punch and wrote their joint autobiography.

I read it with decidedly mixed feelings. On the one hand there are poignant evocations of the Alexanderplatz seen through a child’s eyes, of the Grenadierstrasse, and of Jewish family life (‘Papa, who was Rosa Luxemburg?’ ‘A Polish Jewess who made a lot of *ishes* for us German Jews’).

Stressing roots

On the other, ‘political correctness’ à la DDR keeps rearing its ugly head. The Zadeks stress their working class roots in contrast to the bourgeois origins of such returnees as Brecht and Stefan Heym; Zionism is depicted as an instrument of British Imperial ‘divide and rule’ policy; Alice writes apropos of Manchester’s VE Day celebrations ‘Little did the revellers know that British soldiers would still be stationed in Germany years hence’. But what I found really insupportable was Gerhard’s post-Unification comment that the coming of democracy to East Germany went, as if by design, hand in hand with increased neo-Nazi activity.

Proto-Nazis are, alas, found in every European country, but they surely stand less of a chance in a setting of unfettered debate than in one where the Jewish ‘problem’ gets swept under the carpet.

□ Richard Grunberger

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ALL LEGAL WORK UNDERTAKEN

Black Streicher

In early September Channel Four's *Devil's Advocate* programme directed a searchlight onto the phenomenon of Black antisemitism in the U.S.A. and the attempt to spread it to this country.

Devil's Advocate was conducted by the redoubtable Darcus Howe, himself black, who subjected Leonard Jeffries to relentless questioning.

Dr Jeffries is a black professor (currently suspended from City College, New York) who alleges ludicrous pseudo-grievances against the only community which has never persecuted him. On the contrary, young U.S. Jews have even sacrificed their lives for Black civil rights. In fact, real neo-Nazis accuse the Jews of having shipped the Negroes to the States and Britain. Out of this murky brew the black antisemites have distilled the charge that Jews conducted the slave trade and that they also participated in a conspiracy to infect Africans and Afro-migrants with AIDS. (These canards can probably be traced back to the Blacks' sympathies with Islam and hostility towards Israel.)

Darcus Howe tried to make Dr Jeffries explain why a man of his standing could go to such lengths of Afro-Centrism as to propound theories of 'Ice People' - whites who, driven by Ice Age chill, stand for domination, destruction and death - and 'Sun People' who have the opposite values communalism, co-operation and collectivity.

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

- Nov. 2nd Alan Freeman.
German Reunification and its Consequences.
Nov. 9th Dr Carol Diethel.
Thoughts on the Death of Wedekind's Lulu.
This is what happens to bad girls.
Nov. 16th David M. Jacobs.
The Jewish Community of France.
Nov. 23rd Roland Hobsbaum.
The Economy of Japan.
Nov. 30th Walter Lewis.
Walter Rathenau. His Assassination 70 years ago.
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).

What, moreover, Howe queried, has all that to do with Jews? Jeffries riposted that they, (and the Mafia), controlled Hollywood, and made films denigrating the Blacks. Challenged on the AIDS allegations the professor sidestepped the question by stating . . . that U.S. Negroes had been deliberately infected with syphilis in an experiment in the 1920s. The Jewish involvement in this was not mentioned.

Interestingly, Dr Jeffries was over here as part of the 'Sun people's' protest against the Columbus celebrations; in other words Black antisemites load on us the transgressions of Ferdinand and Isabella, who expelled the Jews from Spain but employed Columbus.

□ John Rossall

From KuDamm to Archway

Laura Selo, *THREE LIVES IN TRANSIT, Excalibur, 1992, £6.95*

The three Gumpel girls were the issue of one of those happy and prosperous Jewish families who were torn apart by the events which eventually shattered Europe. The author is very aware of often having reached and retained safety by the merest chance.

On the kindertransport to Britain the three sisters wanted to stay together, but who would take in three foreign children? Such an angel materialised for Laura, Lilo and Romi in the solid and seemingly commonplace shape of a slightly dowdy spinster running a tiny tobacco shop in the

Archway area. (It, too, has been devoured by time and a road-widening scheme.) The threesome were a handful for this utterly conventional Englishwoman, but they made a go of it and were quite happy, Laura helping in the shop when Miss Harder was fighting to keep afloat in the wartime economy. Yet fate struck once more when Miss Harder died in the nearby Whittington hospital and the girls were cast adrift again.

But they did not despair. Laura became 'Annie the maid', and had one or two employers who could have graced a Dickens novel, and eventually she joined the ATS. Quite surprisingly she does not once complain about her life in the Forces; she enjoyed it and made friends.

Her other qualities are a sense of humour and a large degree of selfknowledge. These help to keep the book interesting and readable.

□ J.R.

Righteous gentile

WHO SINGS THE HERO? BBC Radio 4, 16.9.92

This programme celebrated the deeds of a Dutchwoman, Gertrude Wijsmuller, who defied Adolf Eichmann to save the lives of hundreds of Jewish children.

The tribute combined dramatised episodes, with the characters portrayed by actors, with the evidence of Richard Grunberger, one of the children rescued from Vienna.

The mood of the playlets was set by Richard Tauber singing of a happier Vienna, an ironical counterpoint to the events portrayed.

The reasons for Gertrude Wijsmuller's interest in the fate of Vienna's Jewish children was not made very clear; suffice it to say that she cared for them sufficiently to walk straight into the midst of post Anschluss Austria in 1938 and confront Eichmann himself.

Villains, alas, always get the best parts in plays. Jonathan Tafler made the criminal seem almost acceptable. But then that was the real Eichmann's game. He fooled Gertrude, who later said that she had felt a smidgeon of redemption in him at the time.

The broadcast, although well-intentioned, had several defects. Some of the factual data were incorrect; more crucially, a humorous interlude was both ill-chosen and rendered in inappropriate East End accents.

□ J.R.

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Letters to the Editor



A BALLOT-PROOF FUTURE?

At Mr Blumenau's request we reprint excerpts from previous correspondence, followed by his rebuttal:

Sir - When you list a number of present and past MPs who harbour 'anti-Jewish or (antisemitically tinged) anti-Israeli sentiments' you do not make clear which you consider to be anti-Jewish, and which anti-Israeli, conveying the impression that you don't think the distinction really matters. The tendency of some Jews, especially in representative positions, to be careless about this distinction may create the very antisemitism of which they complain.

Ralph Blumenau

The Jewish community has to face up to rising antisemitism. Ralph Blumenau thinks British Jews must support MPs who criticise Israeli actions to prove their loyalty to the United Kingdom. The debate between Zionists and anti-Israeli Jews reminds me of 1937/38 debates in Vienna between the 'Unionists' (assimilationists) and the Zionists.

Hawkshead Lane
Hatfield, Herts

Henry Toch

Sir - Mr Toch's letter libellously distorts mine published in July. By no stretch of legitimate interpretation can one deduce from my letter that 'British Jews must support M.P.s who criticise Israeli actions to prove their loyalty to the United Kingdom'. I think no such thing. I did say that Jews should not automatically label all critics of Israel as anti-Semites. They should avoid this knee-jerk reaction not to prove their loyalty to the United Kingdom, but because it is intellectually sloppy, emotionally paranoid, and therefore politically counter-productive. Of course all Jews have to combat genuine anti-Semitism. In that cause I am united even with Mr Toch. I just wish he didn't wage that battle with crooked weapons.

Kensington Park Road
London W11

Ralph Blumenau

APPORTIONING GUILT

Sir - Your August Editorial raises the question of whether Heisenberg and other German scientists deliberately chose not to develop the atomic bomb.

A biography of Heisenberg, *Uncertainty*, by David Cassidy, published in 1945, quotes Weizächer, one of the scientists involved, as saying 'I believe the reason we didn't do it is because all the physicists didn't want to do it, on principle. If we had wanted Germany to win the war we would have succeeded'. Heisenberg is quoted as making statements similar in intent. Cassidy remarks that there is no evidence to support these claims. It would be interesting to know whether time has clarified these issues.

Philpot Street
London W1 2DP

Dr T. L. Lukes

Sir - Whilst it is true that many German women were absolutely crazy about Hitler, Winifred Wagner can hardly be counted as one of them. A German national by marriage, she was nevertheless an Englishwoman by birth. Like her compatriot Unity Mitford, she was one of Hitler's most ardent foreign admirers.

East Hill
Wembley Park, Middx

Ruth Willers

DISADVANTAGED GROUP

Sir - As a 'Kind' who arrived in Harwich in December, 1938, with 10 Marks in his pockets, may I make the following comment:

I do not think any legitimate job is degrading if no 'better' job is available. This applied particularly in our situation as newcomers with a poor command of the English language in times of unemployment. After Lowestoft, the Salvation Army in Harwich, and Dovercourt, someone found a factory job for me in Lambeth. I was 16 and my pay was 14/6 per week. I didn't particularly like it; indeed, I hated it. But I was clear-sighted enough, even then, to understand that it was better than no job at all. To this day I am grateful to that firm, Watts & Sons, for employing me when jobs were as scarce as hen's teeth.

Canberra, ACT
Australia

Bern Brent

LINGUAPHONIES

Sir - Mr K. L. Orpen should have been in less of a hurry to display his ignorance. 'Acculturation' is a perfectly acceptable term in current use and can hardly be described as a neologism since, according to 'A Supplement to the Oxford English

Dictionary' (which refers to it as of U.S. origin) it dates back to at least 1880! I may add that the 1964 edition of the COD lists the verb, 'acculturate'.

Greville Place
London NW6

A. Fainberg FIL FRSA

CHERCHEZ LA FEMME

Sir - My father owned the house in Hamburg where Emmy Sonnemann's father was the porter. My late mother knew her quite well, and I can confirm that she was helpful to Jewish people.

Fulham Road
London SW7

H. H. Marcus

VERSE AND WORSE

Sir - Re Dr Casey: It is one thing to satirise your own but quite another to be tactless where others are concerned.

Harcourt Drive
Earley, Reading

Arnold Rosenstrauch

LYING THROUGH GOLD TEETH

Sir - The publication of the Goebbels Diaries in *Der Spiegel* could not, in fairness be termed 'giving the evil Doktor a sounding board'. Describing the sinister machinations surrounding the publication in the *Sunday Times* and *Daily Mail*, *Der Spiegel* used scathing criticism. The very context in which it published extracts, with telling photos and 'soundbites' describing the unspeakable character of the man puts *Der Spiegel* firmly on the side of the righteous.

Temple Fortune Hill
London NW11

Dr F. Shelton

AJR BOUQUET

Sirs - You have done a wonderful job for my sister and I am so happy that during the remaining years left to her she will be cared for. I have just rung the home and have been told that she has settled in well.

Anyone from your organisation who wants to come to Zimbabwe for a holiday is very welcome to stay at my daughter's place, she runs a business with accommodation, without charge.

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Compounded guilt

The German language teems with compound nouns such as *Kriegsschuld-lüge* or *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, which English-speakers find difficult to disentangle, never mind understand. *Kriegsschuld-lüge*, war guilt lie, encapsulated right-wing feeling about (a clause in) the Versailles Treaty which held Germany responsible for the outbreak of World War One. *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, overcoming the past, is the duty incumbent upon post-World War Two Germans to probe their nation's complicity in Nazi crimes.

Treading a fine line

Just as in Britain accountants know how to tread a fine line between tax avoidance and tax evasion, so opinion moulders in German-speaking countries have perfected merely-going-through-the-motions of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* into a fine art form. The crudest variant of this was practised in the old DDR; it said that since Fascism resulted from capitalism, and capitalism had been abolished on their side of the Wall, the sole guilt for the Nazi past rested on the Bundesrepublik.

In West Germany a prime example of deliberately aborted *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* was Hans Jürgen Syberberg's Hitler film made in 1977. Syberberg intended the exact opposite of Claude Lanzmann's aim in *Shoa*, which was to focus on the all-too-willing human cog-wheels in the Nazi death machine. Syberberg's Wagner-style 7-hour epic *Hitler - A Tale from Germany* 'vapourised' the thousands, who unquestioningly implemented the Final Solution, by the simple device of loading all the guilt on one man, the Führer.

Austrian analogy

Austria produced an analogous phenomenon. In a history school textbook published in 1982 the author Dr Tscherne wrote:

'Following the National Socialist takeover of power Jews were excluded from the *Volksgemeinschaft*. After the assassination of a German diplomat in Paris by a Jew there occurred the destruction of Jewish shops and many synagogues. During the war one proceeded (*schrift man*) to mass executions of Jews in Poland and occupied Russia. In 1941 the Final Solution of the Jewish Question was ordered: in all German-occupied territories the Jews were arrested and transported to camps. The camp at Auschwitz became the epitome of the killing grounds where Jews were mur-

Multi-issue group



Just a few of those attending the ACJR AGM.

Photo: Newman.

The Association of Children of Jewish Refugees (ACJR) convened on Sunday 20 September at the Survivor's Centre, Hendon, for its seventh Annual General Meeting. The meeting was well attended and, all-in-all, a rather upbeat occasion.

Official business was conducted with despatch, and the news was mostly good: membership is up on last year and the Treasurer was able to announce that the group's finances had been sufficiently in the black to allow a £181 donation to Heinrich Stahl House, with a similar sum being earmarked for another charitable donation in the near future.

The election of the committee followed. The candidates - Chairperson Linda Stern, Vice-chair Anne Salinger, Treasurer Ian Rosmarin, Administrative Secretary Rachel Benedyk, Membership Secretary Naomi Fletcher, and members Juliet Buckner, David Cronheim, Pauline Levis, Jackie Mansbach, David Selo and Malcolm Waldwere - were elected unopposed.

The whole AGM, from apologies for

dered in gas-chambers and then burnt'.

This account neither travesties nor trivialises the truth. And yet: 'there occurred' ... 'man schrift' ... 'were transported' ... 'were murdered', etc are all impersonal, or passive voice, formulations which conceal as much as they reveal about the Holocaust. What they conceal is the existence, never mind the identity, of the thousands of willing intermediaries - civil servants, policemen, soldiers, railwaymen et al - who wrought the will of the 'one' upon the six million.

□ Richard Grunberger

absence to any other business, took only 35 minutes and was followed by a grand buffet supper, which lasted a great deal longer.

Because most of those present have similar backgrounds and many experiences in common it is not surprising that the general atmosphere was warm and easygoing. Within ten minutes of arriving, a total stranger could find himself involved in conversations which can range from the problems of producing a perfect chocolate mousse to photography via the implications of privatising the Department of the Environment's library section and the advertising of Guinness products. This is no 'one issue' group.

The ACJR can also boast a lively calendar of events which includes cinema and theatre outings, nature rambles, weekends away and Seder Night services. Advance notices of all these events appear in the organisation's regular newsletter. If you wish to find out more about the ACJR please write to Box No. 1227, AJR, 9 Adamson Road, Swiss Cottage, NW3 3HX.

□ M.N.

Technical 'expert' triggers legal proceedings

The Vienna Jewish Community has started court proceedings against the journalist Richard Nimmerrichter of the mass circulation *Kronen-Zeitung*. The columnist contravened the recent Austrian law against Holocaust denial by his statement of 10 May 1992 that 'relatively few Jews were gassed at Auschwitz - since the murder of so many people with gas is technically simply not feasible'. □

The AJR at Work

Tripping the light fantastic



Veteran waltzers (left) and beginners alike can benefit from expert tuition (right). Photos: Newman.



It is time to cast off those dowdy feathers and display your twinkling toes at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre as the new twice-monthly dance classes get into full swing. Every other Thursday afternoon the centre grooves to the music of Joe Loss, Victor Sylvester and many other great dance band sounds.

The only problem at the moment is that

the ladies' enthusiasm for the terpsichorean arts far outweighs that of the gentlemen. Yes, the men are outnumbered. This is not to say that there are not enough to go round, they are simply more shy about letting themselves go on the dance floor. Some, however, do manage to cast off their inhibitions and shake their collective booties. The effect is almost magical. As couples

glide around the centre the years can be seen slipping away.

It isn't all nostalgia though. When the well versed dancers have had a warm-up waltz, the floor is opened up to those who wish to learn new steps. Professional dance teacher Lynn Musik is on hand to explain the finer points of the Rumba to first-timers and the secrets of the perfect *paso doble* to those who wish to brush up rusty routines.

The dance class is just one of the new activities on offer during the extended hours at the day centre. It is part of the enjoyment to provide self-entertainment which involves a high level of audience participation from members. The upcoming fashion show is a further example of how day centre members look to themselves for witty ways to make full use of the facilities at their disposal.

In the meantime anyone who wishes to learn the Lambada should shimmy down to Cleve Road where a warm reception awaits any aspiring Astaires. □ M.N.

Dynamic duo

The guest artists at this year's Annual Charity Concert are John and Kathryn Lenehan. This husband and wife duo was established in 1985 when they were awarded first prize in the Royal Overseas League competition and made a highly acclaimed debut at the South Bank Centre. As well as being one half of a duo each has an excellent record as an accomplished solo performer.

John Lenehan is well known in his own right as a chamber music pianist and performs regularly in recital and on television with many of the country's finest musicians. He also composes and arranges music for silent films and, as director of 'Sound for Silents', has performed his soundtracks to great critical acclaim both in the UK and abroad.

Kathryn Lenehan's career has taken her to Australia, Switzerland and Canada. Since her 1983 solo debut she has been in increasing demand. she has broadcast for BBC Radio 3 and ABC (Australia), appeared at the Aldeburgh prom concerts, the Harrogate and Brighton International Festivals and given numerous performances at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Wig-

more Hall. She has just made her first CD recording with the clarinettist Fiona Cross for the Meridian label.

The duo will be performing works by Dvorak, Mendelssohn, Debussy, Schubert, Rachmaninov, Ravel, and one specially commissioned piece by Barrington Pheloung.

Mr Pheloung is also possessed of an impressive set of credentials. Born in Australia, in 1954, he won a place on the International Course for Professional Composers and Choreographers at Surrey University in 1977. Since then he has written 48 commissioned pieces for ballet and dance companies in Britain and Europe.

In 1979 he was appointed Musical Advisor to the London Contemporary Dance Theatre and toured up until 1990 as its Principal Conductor.

Since 1985 he has composed music for the TV series *Inspector Morse* and *Boon* and the documentary series *Red Empire*.

The piece Mr Pheloung has composed for this concert holds special meaning for those attending the concert as he had tried to relate the music to the refugee experience. How he will choose to represent this experience in musical form is yet to be seen, or heard, but whatever the outcome it is sure to be very interesting. □

FASHION SHOW

What are they wearing in the Paris basin this year? Find out at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre on:

Sunday 29 November –
3.30–4.30 p.m.

Tea – 2.45 p.m.
Supper 5.45 p.m.

Entrance £2.50 (Ticket only)

Talking shop



Some members of the discussion group preparing for the afternoon's debate.

Photo: Newman.

A new discussion group has been added to the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre menu of activities. The regular meetings of the group are led by Mr Rolf Weinberg, a tenant at Cleve Road. The response has been very healthy and the sessions are proving extremely lively.

The subject under debate varies from week to week, with topicality as the main criteria. Initially the group is asked to nominate a topic for discussion; if there is any disagreement about the viability of the subject the Chair makes a choice on behalf of the group.

Political issues, economics and cultural problems are frequently mooted and, as is sometimes the case with such 'loaded' subjects, discussion often becomes heated.

The talks provide great enjoyment for the participants. Not only are they informative, but the cut-and-thrust of intellectual debate can be a real tonic. There is a great deal more to keeping fit than simply taking exercise; keeping mentally fit is important too.

If you would like to join in the great debate contact Bobbi Spencer on: 071-328 0208. □

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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

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

Afternoon entertainment -

NOVEMBER

- Sunday 1 Musical Quiz - Presented by Dennis Snowman
- Monday 2 Melody Hour - David Jedwab (Tenor) accompanied by Mabel Witztum (Piano)
- Tuesday 3 Four Strings Each - Light Classical Entertainment with Violin & Piano - Lucy White & Madeleine Whitelaw
- Wednesday 4 Trinity College of Music - Light Classical Music
- Thursday 5 Sue Parker At The Piano

- Sunday 8 AJR CONCERT At Queen Elizabeth Hall. The Day Centre will be open
- Monday 9 A Feast of Nostalgia with Alan Kane
- Tuesday 10 The Two Rs Cabaret - Richard Moody accompanied by Robert Douglas (Piano)
- Wednesday 11 Gerard Tichauer Entertains at the Piano
- Thursday 12 AJR SINGERS - Conducted by Angela Arratoon accompanied by Gerard Tichauer (Piano)
- Sunday 15 Love Unspoken - Favourite Arias & Duets - Lianne-Marie Skrinari (Soprano), Sean Sweeney (Baritone) accompanied by Kevin Bashford (Piano)
- Monday 16 Eddy Simmons Sings & Entertains with Gerald Benson at the Piano
- Tuesday 17 Jack Davidoff & JulesReubin Entertain on Violin & Piano
- Wednesday 18 A Feast of Songs - Terri Thomas (Soprano) accompanied by Lynda Ang (Piano)
- Thursday 19 Songs & Arias - John Freeman (Bass) and Helen Blake (Soprano & Piano)

- Sunday 22 Take a Quick-Step Back in Time with Geoffrey Strum (Tenor) accompanied by Johnny Walton (Piano)
 - Monday 23 Four Strings Each - Light Classical Entertainment with Lucy White & Juliet Davey
 - Tuesday 24 Recital by Young Musicians of the Purcell School
 - Wednesday 25 Ex-Directory Variety Group
 - Thursday 26 CANADIENNES COULÉ - Diana Sharpe (Soprano) and Allyson Devenish (Piano)
 - Sunday 29 FASHION SHOW - Presented by Marcia Sheeter accompanied by Valerie Hewitt (Piano) (Ticket only)
 - Monday 30 Light Classical Music - Tessa Newman (Piano) & Isbael Barry (Soprano)
- 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 Trinity College of Music - Light Classical Music

FAMILY EVENTS

Birthday

Landau Professor Hans Landau celebrated his 100th birthday on 27 October. Congratulations from his wife, daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

Deaths

Barker Claire Barker has died after a short illness on 20 September. Much missed by husband Kurt and daughter Sue.

Freund Susanne Freund (Jerusalem) passed away on 24 September, 1992, after a long illness. Deeply mourned by her uncle and aunt Werner and Hilde Georke (Leeds) and all her friends.

Graetz-Jacoby Johanna Graetz-Jacoby (Mother of Marianne Fried, Basel) died, aged 98, on 22 September 1992. Sadly missed by her family.

Reichsthaler Melanie Reichsthaler, nee Ullmann, born Vienna 1899, died on 27 September after a short illness. Remembered by her friends and cousin Trude Levi.

Reis Ruth 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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Flat wanted. Two bedroom flat in N.W.5 required for young family (one child). Max rent £500 p.c.m. Box No. 1229.

I am working on the oeuvre catalogue of my father, the painter Anton Kerschbaumer. I am anxious to trace the whereabouts of two persons, both of whom I know owned paintings by my father. Siegfried Roos, Banker, moved to Zurich in the late twenties; Bruno Israel, art collector. Information please, to Box No. 1230.

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

It is well worth making the long journey to the Whitechapel Art Gallery to see the *Juan Gris exhibition* (until 29 November). Gris (1887–1927), one of the great Cubist artists, made sumptuous use of colour but remains one of the lesser known painters of his period whose work has not yet been fully explored. This is the first time his work has been shown in depth in Britain; the exhibition brings together about 60 paintings and 30 drawings from many sources.

The Art of Ancient Mexico at the Hayward Gallery (until 6 December) is a major exhibition of pre-Columbian sculpture and pottery. The ancient culture of Central Mexico has long fascinated Europeans; visitors will be intrigued by the influence that these early works have had on such artists as Henry Moore and Max Ernst.

New paintings by Bridget Riley *According to Sensation* can also be seen at the Hayward Gallery (until 6 December). Bridget Riley was the first contemporary painter to have had a full-scale retrospective exhibition at the Hayward.

Ukiyo-e Paintings, the pleasures to be enjoyed in Japanese cities during the Edo period (1600–1868), is an exhibition at the British Museum in two parts (25 September–29 November; 1 December–31 January 1993). On show will be over 100 screens, hanging scrolls, handscrolls and albums, with an important group by Holksai (1760–1849), one of the best-known of all Japanese painters.

The *Ben Uri Art Gallery* will be holding a prestigious exhibition (9 November–20 December) of the work of Claude Rogers O.B.E. (1907–79), a founder member of the Euston Road School. A member of the Rodrigues family, Rogers studied at the Slade and then, with Sir William Coldstream and Victor Pasmore, established the Euston Road School, with Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell as external advisors. The present exhibition comprises some 50 paintings and drawings, mainly from private collections.

Eduardo Chillida, one-time goalkeeper for the San Sebastian football club, is a very important Spanish artist. An exhibition of his sculptures and works on paper is being held at Annelly Juda Fine Art (until 14 November). Works by Peter Lanyon (1918–



Priest, Central Veracruz, Clay, 200–900 A.D. – National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico. Photo: Mario Carrieri.

1964) are being shown at the Camden Art Centre (until 3 January 1993). This is a new National Touring Exhibition from the South Bank Centre sponsored by B.T.

The major exhibition forming part of the Barbican Centre Scandinavian Festival is *Border Crossings*, featuring 14 of Scandinavia's most exciting artists (until 7 February 1993). Among the pictures exhibited is a group of major late works by Edvard Munch (1863–1904).

The Last Goodbye. The exhibition of documents, photographs and personal testimonies illustrating the story of the Kindertransport returns to Belsize Square Synagogue from the 11 to 29 of November. For details contact Henny Levin on 071-794 3949. □

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SB's Column

English National Opera will have new directors in 1993 as Peter Jones and Mark Elder will follow the call to Munich. New director Dennis Marks has chosen young Sian Edwards as replacement for Mark Elder, and plans to be realised by the new team are awaited with interest. Some lovers of traditional opera may hope for less experiments with new works, and Sian Edwards, aware of the problems confronting a female conductor and musical director, is anxious not attempt 'competition' to Covent Garden; she has firm ideas about young talents to be promoted and the works to be included in the repertoire; she will – in her own words – 'be careful with Strauss and Wagner'.

Austrian Notes. The legendary operetta star Martha Eggerth, widow of tenor Jan Kiepura, visited Vienna to appear in two performances of Marcel Prawy's Robert Stolz revue *Servus Du*. – The city of Graz is to commemorate one of Styria's most popular authors, Peter Rosegger, often condescended to as a 'Heimatsdichter' with a special exhibition in 1993. Linz, capital of Upper Austria, musical highlights under the title 'Sound City' during September and October with works by Mahler, Bruckner and Bernstein, and a concert performance of Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*. The musical *Elisabeth*, recently premiered in Vienna illustrates the life of Emperor Franz Josef's 'Sissi' within the framework of contemporary politics, the rapidly declining power of the monarchy and Elisabeth's assassination in 1898.

Opera Films. There will be notable performances at London's NFT during November/December when some favourite singers of 'olden days' can be seen and heard; Grace Moore in her 1934 film *One night of love*, Lily Pons in *That girl from Paris* (1937) and Rise Stevens of Met fame in the *Chocolate soldier* (with music by Oscar Straus) which was shot during World War II.

Obituary. Gerhard Hetzel, leader of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, became the victim of a mountaineering accident in the Alps at the age of 60. Hetzel began his musical career in Lucerne and Berlin and joined the Vienna Philharmonic in 1969, becoming leader in 1972 when he succeeded Willy Boskovsky. John Cage, the American composer and pupil of Schönberg, died two weeks before his 80th birthday. □

A history of the Jews in the German-speaking lands

Part 5: The Reformation Period

Martin Luther

The year after the Pope had pronounced against the Dominicans in the Reuchlin controversy (see last issue), Martin Luther pinned up his 95 Theses on the church door of Wittenberg, and the German Reformation began.

The Protestants prided themselves on being people of the Book. More vigorously than the Humanists, they claimed to found their faith on the Bible and nothing but the Bible; and they repudiated those Catholic doctrines and institutions which had no biblical warrant. And because they saw the whole Bible, the Old as well as New Testament, as the word of God, they had to take seriously what the Old Testament said about the Jews being God's Chosen People. The New Testament, they thought, did not repudiate the Old but had quite naturally grown out of it; and, so Luther originally believed, once Christianity had been purified and shorn of its non-biblical elements, the Jews would come to accept this natural development, as indeed many Jews had done at the time of Christ, whom Luther regarded as the greatest of all Jews. By purifying Christianity, Luther thought he would prepare the way for the mass conversion of the Jews. In preparation for this, of course, Christians would have to extend brotherly love to the Jews. In 1523, in a pamphlet entitled *That Jesus Christ was a Born Jew*, he honoured Christ as a Jew, poured scorn on the foul lore of ritual murder, profanation of the Host etc that had brought so much suffering to the Jews, and he called for their economic and social emancipation. Christian persecution, he said, was to blame for such unlovely characteristics as the Jews had developed in response; treat them with friendship, and they would perceive virtues in Christianity which naturally remained hidden for as long as they could only see the most brutish cruelty in Christian behaviour towards them.

But the conversion that Luther hoped for did not take place: indeed, some Jews even saw in Luther's respect for them some hope that it was he who might convert to Judaism. In the end, Luther went the same way as Mohammed had done: he, too, had hoped to win the Jews over to his beliefs, and when that hope had been disappointed, had waged furious war against them. Luther was never a man of moderation, and

when he finally saw they remained true to their faith, the vehemence of his reaction was extreme. In 1542 he published another pamphlet, *Against the Jews and their Lies*, in which he called on Christian princes to proceed against the Jews with the utmost ferocity: they should burn down their synagogues and destroy their homes, confiscate their prayer books and holy writings, seize their property, forbid them to lend money, and expel them 'like mad dogs' from their lands. All this was couched in the utmost violence of language which seeped into the consciousness of Germans for generations to come.

Yossel von Rossheim

Even before this diatribe was published, some of the protestant princes had done what Luther desired. In 1537 the Jews were expelled from Lutheran Saxony. On the verge of expulsion from Lutheran Brandenburg in 1543; they were saved by the efforts of a remarkable Jew, Yossel von Rossheim. A prosperous financier from Alsace, and recognised by the Jews and the Emperor alike as the spokesman of Jews (*stadtlan*) throughout the Holy Roman Empire Yossel owed his influence to a number of factors. He was the only *stadtlan* in German history whose authority was acknowledged by every Jewish community (for they were usually far too jealous of their communal independence to submit to one spokesman.) The Emperor Charles V found him and his co-religionists useful as suppliers of money and provisions for the wars in which he was engaged almost throughout his reign; but Yossel must in any case have been a remarkably persuasive advocate, because time and again his intervention to protect his co-religionists was effective. On one occasion he had the active backing of Philip Melanchthon; and he tried, in vain, for a meeting with Martin Luther also. At any rate he managed to prevent the expulsion of the Jews from Brandenburg in 1543. Alas, it was only a temporary reprieve: the expulsion took place 30 years later.

Jews also fared ill in some of the German states which embraced Calvinism, like the Palatinate from which they were expelled for a time – although Calvin himself was quite well disposed towards them.

One of the explanations for this renewed persecution was that the Reformation had

killed the relaxed and fairly tolerant spirit of the Renaissance: in the bitter religious wars between Protestants and Catholics, both sides tightened up on their respective orthodoxies and were determined the extirpate heresies or any other deviations; and in that atmosphere things would go ill for the Jews.

It had been thus during the last religious war, the Hussite rebellion in Bohemia at the beginning of the 15th century. The Hussites had been the forerunners of the Lutherans in embracing the Old Testament in their biblical fundamentalism. So the Catholics had accused the Hussites of being a Judaizing heresy, and the Jews of supplying them with arms. The result had been their expulsion from Austria in 1421, and from Bavaria in the following year. This did not prevent the Hussites from attacking the Jews for not converting, from burning them at the stake, or from sacking the Jewish quarter of Prague.

The Hussite rebellion had been crushed by the Catholic armies; but the struggle against the Lutherans and Calvinists was far more difficult, and Protestantism made irreversible headway in Europe. The Catholic Church responded to the advance of the Reformation with the Counter-Reformation; and the easy-going Renaissance Popes were succeeded by stern theologians like Paul IV (1555 to 1559) and Pius V (1566 to 1572). In his Italian possessions the devout Charles V was their ready instrument, and he expelled the Jews from Naples in 1540; but, as we have seen, he followed the opposite policy in the Holy Roman Empire, where the Jews enjoyed his protection. However, his successor, the Emperor Ferdinand I, expelled the Jews from Bohemia in 1542. As so often happened in history, before and since, the expulsion harmed the government as much as it harmed the Jews, and in 1545 the decree was revoked; only to be reimposed in 1557, and then once more revoked five year later.

The Jews of Prague

The next three Emperors (Maximilian II, Rudolf II and Matthias, whose combined reigns spanned the period from 1564 to 1619) all protected the Jews of the Empire as best they could. Indeed Matthias had the leaders of an attack on the Frankfurt ghetto executed. The Emperor Rudolf made Prague his capital, and during his and his successor's reign the Jewish community of Prague was the most flourishing of Europe, with a high level of culture and prosperity. The head of the community for much of this time was Mordechai Meisel, who has been described as 'the first Jewish capitalist', and who financed Rudolf's war against the

Turks. The Emperor gave him land (including church lands) as a security, and even attended his funeral – which did not stop him from having all the childless Meisel's possessions returned to the Crown. During his life-time, the princely financier spent much of his wealth in philanthropic activities from which both Jews and Christians benefitted. He endowed the Jewish quarter of Prague with a hospital, with several religious buildings, and (allegedly) with the Jewish Town Hall with its Hebrew clock face which still exists. He also brought Rabbi Judah Loew, known as the *Maharal*, from Worms to Prague. The *Maharal* was a distinguished talmudist, kabbalist, and mathematician, a strong personality revered for his piety, and one of the great religious teachers in the history of Judaism. He lived to be over 80, and became the subject of many legends; one was that he had created a *golem* by his mystical craft – another, that he exercised power over Death. Both legends are depicted in a statue outside Prague's (non-Jewish) Town Hall where he is flanked by the *golem* and a nude woman – the latter to illustrate the story that only when she distracted him for a moment did the Angel of Death have a chance to take him. The *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, which devotes four columns to his teachings, observes how ironical it is that he is better known to later generations for these legends than for his original and profound ideas.

□ *Ralph Blumenau*

Masonic wodge

The Führer, himself an artist *manqué*, had two favourite artists: the architect Albert Speer and the sculptor Arno Breker. In keeping with the preferences of their megalomaniac patron Speer's and Breker's work tended towards gigantomania; the two also earned gigantic sums executing his commissions.

After the war Speer's and Breker's paths diverged. Speer first served a jail sentence, and then enjoyed acclaim as an author. Breker, on the other hand, slipped into relative obscurity unalleviated by the publication of an autobiography with the pompous title *Im Strahlungsfeld der Ereignisse*. He kept busy, nonetheless – only now he sculpted muscle-bound sporting personalities in place of Nazi heroes. Not that there was a great difference between the two: his Hitler commissions had all looked athletic, intrepid and, of course, Nordic. It could be argued that in the Third Reich Breker's art had subserved the illusion that all Germans were supermen immune to weakness, illness and death.

The sculptor – or, as some would say, monumental mason – who died last year, aged ninety-one, has now himself proved immune to death. The town council of Nörvenich, near Düren in Westphalia, has decided to turn a local Schloss into a Breker museum. Aficionados of monumental kitsch, of whom there is no shortage, will thus be able to feast their eyes on the array of Teutonic Schwarzeneggers in stone, and Valkyries promising pneumatic bliss, with which the sculptor populated Hitler's dreamscape.

□ *R.G.*

German grievance

A *questionable form of remembrance* was the title of a recent article in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* that dealt with the way American Jewry perceives the Holocaust. Günther Gillessen opened his piece with a reference to Art Spiegelman's *Maus* – a comic-style retelling of the Holocaust in which the Jews figure as mice and the Nazis as cats. The journalist conceded that, contrary to expectations, the strip-cartoon treatment of such a sombre theme worked, but criticised Spiegelman for making the terms Nazi and German interchangeable. He then went on to inform his readers that by 1993 eleven US cities will have Holocaust museums; in addition, the school curriculum in many States includes Holocaust studies.

Gillessen continued: *If others won't let the wound of the mass crime heal then, almost of necessity, present and future generations of Germans will remain identified with the crimes of their fathers. This will narrow down interest in Germany to watchful probing for indications of renewed antisemitism.* ABC Television recently broadcast an hour-long programme about German hostility to foreigners which alternated shots of Bundeswehr passing-out parades with archive footage of marching Nazi columns.

How, Gillessen asked rhetorically, should German politicians deal with this phenomenon? He suggested that Bonn withhold financial support from Holocaust museums – which the German Consul-General in Detroit had promised – unless the museum display makes mention of German righteous gentiles, of the moral motivation behind the Officers' Plot, and of the postwar restitution undertaken by the Federal Republic. □

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Would anyone with personal memories or experiences of former booksellers in Berlin, who would be willing to give written information, or answer an interview, please contact: Bezirksamt Charlottenburg von Berlin, Büro der Bezirksbürgermeisterin, z.hd. Herr Pannemann, Otto-Suhr-Allee 100, 100 Berlin 10.

Moses Niemand came to London in 1939 from Vienna, where his family, originally of Polish descent, had lived since 1914. Last known address: Christian Road, Whitechapel, London E1. He served in the British army and served in Germany at the end of the war. Would Mr Niemand, or anyone who has any information about him please contact his friend Hans Frankl, who has not seen him since 1977, at 115 Cashmere Avenue, Khandallah, Wellington 4, New Zealand.

An American organisation is producing a documentary film about the life of **Bertha Pappenheim** late of Der Jüdische Frauenbund. Would anyone who knew her, or was associated with her in some way, and is willing to have their commentary video-taped (this can be done in their own home) please contact: Roberta H. Schwartz, 1224 Lake Street, Evanston, Ill. 60201, USA.

Dr K. Singer, last known residence (19.07.65) Stanmore, Middx., and **Elen Jellinek**, born 23.01.1909. Information about the above, or any surviving relatives, is needed with respect to the estate of Friedrich Jellinek, deceased on 03.12.1990. Please contact Andreas Beeking (Administrator of estate), Nymphenburger Str. 36, 8000 München 2, Germany.

Helga and Klaus Tischauer, siblings from Hamburg, arrived in Britain in 1938, aged 19 and 17 respectively. Helga remained in UK, Klaus went to Canada, possibly as an internee. Please contact Jewish Refugees Committee: 071-387 3925.

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VERSE AND WORSE

PEN-CLUBBED

When critics call my verse
Sheer doggerel, and worse
I draw solace from the rumour
That they've no sense of humour

LENI RIEFENSTAHL

She used the camera's hocuspocus
Shot the Fuehrer in soft focus
Shrunk from Goebbels' personal embrace
Shrieked 'Me a Nazi? What a jibe!'
Filmed a nobly naked race
Of Blackamoors as *ersatz* master race

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Those who know Grecian myths would call
her Galatea
But that's just pedants' talk and neither
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For it is by his accent that ye shall know the
Brit

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Cookery Corner

The following recipe is, as usual, not meant to be followed to the letter. It is a guide for those people who, like me, often find bits of vegetables wrapped in clingfilm in corners of the fridge a couple of days prior to making the weekly shopping trip. If you have a small hoard of half-onions and peppers, left over mushrooms, single potatoes and small pieces of cheese which seem to spend forever hanging around, this is an ideal way to get rid of the lot in one fell swoop.

No. 8 ESPERANTO OMELETTE

Ingredients (serves as many as you like)

2, 3 or 4 eggs

1 small potato

½ large onion (or one small one)

½ red or green (or both) peppers

4oz cheddar cheese (or whatever else you have around)

2-3 mushrooms (as many as you like really)

Salt, pepper, mixed herbs

3 fluid oz milk

Method:

Crack the eggs into a mixing bowl and add a generous splash of milk. The pepper, salt and mixed herbs can be added at this stage. Beat all together vigorously until well mixed. Peel the potato and chop into small cubes. Boil until soft. Chop the onions, peppers and mushrooms and fry until sweated. Chop the cheese into small cubes and add to the beaten eggs. When the potatoes are soft, drain and add to the eggs. The same for the fried vegetables. Give the whole thing a gentle stir and pour into the frying pan at a medium heat. As it cooks stir once or twice to ensure the mixture is not burning underneath. Make sure the grill is on full. When the mixture in the pan begins to bubble through take the pan from the ring and place it under the hot grill. As the surface browns the mixture should begin to rise. Rotate the pan occasionally to ensure the surface browns evenly.

Serve with fresh bread and salad.

□ M.N.

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Obituaries

Herta Silberstein

From the early 1940s Herta Silberstein worked at Bloomsbury House, the Headquarters for many Jewish organisations, as secretary to Rabbi W. van der Zyl, who was employed by the Refugee Children's Movement. In 1950 she joined the staff of the Jewish Blind Society (now merged with the Jewish Welfare Board) just two weeks before the opening of its first holiday home in Cliftonville, Kent. She was to spend the next 30 years managing the holiday scheme, in which time over 20,000 people were able to enjoy the facilities of the home. She also oversaw the home's move to Bournemouth.

She is remembered by her colleagues and friends for her efficiency and coolness in crisis.

In 1978 she entered Osmond House where she settled comfortably. Even here Herta Silberstein never lost her desire to help others. Though very unassuming, Herta was unforgettable and she will be missed. She died on 29 July, aged 89.

□ Rosemary Lewis

Hans Walter Philipp

With the death of Dr Philipp at the age of 87, our community has suffered a loss.

Berlin-born he lost his sight at an early age. Learning braille, he became so proficient that he was able to teach it and to transcribe it.

Dr Philipp came to this country in 1939; after retiring, at 65, from the Royal National Institute for the Blind he became a stalwart worker at the Jewish Blind Society in Stamford Hill. His knowledge of scripture was immense, and he kept in constant touch with current developments, by, among other things, listening to the taped editions of *AJR Information*.

His hobbies included the study of Esperanto; a few years ago he had no hesitation to accept an invitation to Warsaw to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the death of the Esperanto founder L. L. Zamenhof.

Friends will miss his humour, his conversation and the warmth of his company.

□ W. E. Goddard

Birthday

Dr Frank Falk 85

At the age of 85, Frank Falk's physical and mental capacity has in no way diminished and he remains a servant of the community. He continues to practise as a Chartered Accountant, making rounds to visit his clients. He does not confine himself to dealing with tax matters, but also helps with the personal problems some face. His assistance has been of particular value in recent years to Nazi-victims from East Germany able, since 1990, to make restitution claims. Dr Falk has also provided valuable help to people claiming German pensions when the voluntary contributions option was introduced, and has written articles for *AJR Information* on these issues.

Frank is still very active in the B'nai B'rith Leo Baeck Lodge Cultural Activities Committee and as an officer of the Leo Baeck Housing Association. He is also a life-member of the B'nai B'rith District 15 Executive Committee. At the same time he continues to be active on the National Council of the Zionist Federation, and serves as joint chairman of the Ex-Servicemen's 1943 committee. He has only

recently retired as chairman of the Israel Cultural Committee of Belsize Square Synagogue, and from its board.

We would like to wish Frank Falk, and his wife Lilo, many more happy and active years. □

A 'Profile' of Dr Falk appeared in the September 1991 issue of *AJR information*.

RESTITUTION - COMPENSATION

We like to remind readers that the last date for registering claims for Restitution of and/or Compensation for Property in the Eastern part of Germany (including East Berlin) will be the 31st of December 1992. We shall be pleased to assist in preparing and submitting claims.

Please contact Mr H. H. Marcus or Dr Karsten Kuehne at Pannone & Partners (incorporating Pritchard Englefield & Tobin) 14 New Street, London EC2M 4TR.
Tel. 071 972 9720, Fax 071 972 9723.

40 Years Ago
this Month

LETTER FROM JERUSALEM

The Way of All Flesh: The news that the meat ration will be reduced to 100 gms per month has caused some consternation - especially among Israel's butchers. With just over a kilo per head of the population to sell over the whole year, it wouldn't be worth their while to keep their shops open. So far, only the sweet shops - in the absence of chocolate - have had to supplement their trade with stationery and tourist souvenirs, and no suggestions have yet been made to keep the butchers going. Jerusalemites still remember, from some years ago, the sign in a butcher's shop in Rehavia: 'I slaughter myself twice weekly'. It is feared that, in the meantime, the man might have learned English and made good this threat - just once.

Sad Record: Israel has the sad distinction of holding the world record in fatal traffic accidents. While there are only 23 cars to 20,000 citizens, 18 persons out of 100,000 were killed on the road last year. Comparative figures in the U.S.A. are 264 cars and 22 fatal casualties; in Britain, 75 cars per thousand with 9 killed per 100,000. And yet, one cause of accidents is almost unknown in Israel: driving under the influence of drink. For the Jewish State is the country with the proportionately smallest number of alcoholics. The world's heaviest drinkers are in France which has 22 drunks for every 1,000 people.

HERBERT FREEDEN

AJR Information November 1952.

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Professor Eugen Mittwoch (1876–1942)

Professor Eugen Mittwoch, whose death occurred 50 years ago in November, 1942, was one of AJR's most distinguished founder members. A scholar and philanthropist, he was born in Poznan province, and at 18 became a student at the University of Berlin. Although originally intended for a rabbinical career, he changed to Oriental languages, graduating in 1899. After a visit to the Middle East he became lecturer in Semitic philology at the University of Berlin; he also taught Ethiopic and Amharic in the new Department of Abyssinian at the *Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen*. During the first World War he was head of the *Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient*. In 1919 he became professor at the University of Berlin, and the following year director of the *Orientalische Seminar*.

His wide knowledge of Eastern languages included Arabic, Hebrew, and the South Arabic languages of the Sabaeans and Himyarites, who lived in Southern Arabia long before the rise of Islam, and whose writings are known only from inscriptions, which he helped to decipher. Among his many publications are a study of Ibn Saad's biography of Mohammed, as well as popular Amharic texts, including proverbs, riddles, fables and children's games.

He was equally at home in Jewish scholarship, and had been chairman of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin, besides being a member of the executive of the Berlin Jewish Community.

In 1933, he was suspended from his professorship and lost his post as director of the *Orientalische Seminar*.

Relieved of academic duties, he spent more time than hitherto on social work, an activity close to his heart. The need for relief work among Jews had greatly increased, and while the main office of the American Joint Distribution Committee was transferred to Paris, Mittwoch was charged with



Eugen Mittwoch.

Photo: Private.

the task of directing the Berlin office, aiding victims of oppression and helping them to emigrate.

He was on a mission in Paris in November 1938, when the events of *Kristallnacht* caused friends to persuade him not to return. In April 1939, he was re-united with his wife and children in London. When, in the following year, *Picture Post* published an article on the beneficial contributions made by refugees, he was listed

among those whose work had enriched British science and culture.

His last publication was about a hitherto unknown fragment, written in Arabic but in Hebrew letters, by Saadia Gaon, whose death in 942 was to be exactly one thousand years before Mittwoch's own. Since this essay appeared posthumously, the editor, Erwin Rosenthal, added a postscript, from which the following lines are taken:

'Professor Mittwoch's many contributions to Semitic epigraphy, his model editions of Arabic, Ethiopic and Aramaic texts, his deciphering of inscriptions on objects of Islamic art, his pioneer researches in the Ethiopic dialects and their literary documents, have . . . enriched the whole range of Semitic philology, Islamic historiography and literary history. . . . The scholar in him represented only one side of his rich life. He was ever ready to help, to encourage, to guide. Nobody appealed in vain to him. . . . In the difficult years since Hitler came to power he extended his helping hand to many, bringing his administrative skills to the tasks of Jewish relief in which his international reputation helped him not a little'.

□ Ursula Mittwoch



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