

AJR Information

Volume L No. 4

April 1995

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss...

Trading with the enemy p.4

The gun p.13

Kashrut in the Castle p.16

Aginccourt aftermath

Constant chauvinist jeering by a French executive 'English schools are worse' 'Englishmen worse dressed' 'English football fans worse behaved' etc. - drove a British banker from his Wall Street job. The taunts and the subsequent litigation demonstrate that the Channel is far wider than the 22 miles separating Dover from Calais. It must be admitted that the Frenchman was basically in the right - but one feels tempted to ask him the sixty-four thousand ecu question. 'Who, cher Monsieur showed up worse in 1940?'

Religion and politics: a volatile mix

Ayatollahs brandishing the cross

At the risk of giving hostages to fortune, one can say that the ultra-right has ceased to pose an imminent threat in Europe (with the obvious exception of Yugoslavia's successor states). Germany has a government with sufficient 'national' appeal to marginalise the extreme right wing. In France Le Pen has presented himself as saviour of *la patrie* for too long to sustain his appeal. In Italy Gianfranco Fini has formally disavowed his Fascist antecedents, and in Moscow Zhirinovskiy is increasingly seen as the clown rather than crown prince of Russian politics.

Britain's Neo-Nazis prosper on the football terraces, but not at the polling booths. Virulent far right parties are, of course, active in Austria and Belgium, but both countries' EU membership ought to immunise them against more widespread infection.

We should, however, beware of cheering prematurely. The 1990s could be called a period of drought after the deluge caused by the thawing of the Cold War. Under drought conditions brush fires inevitably occur; one such conflagration was the recent US Congressional elections.

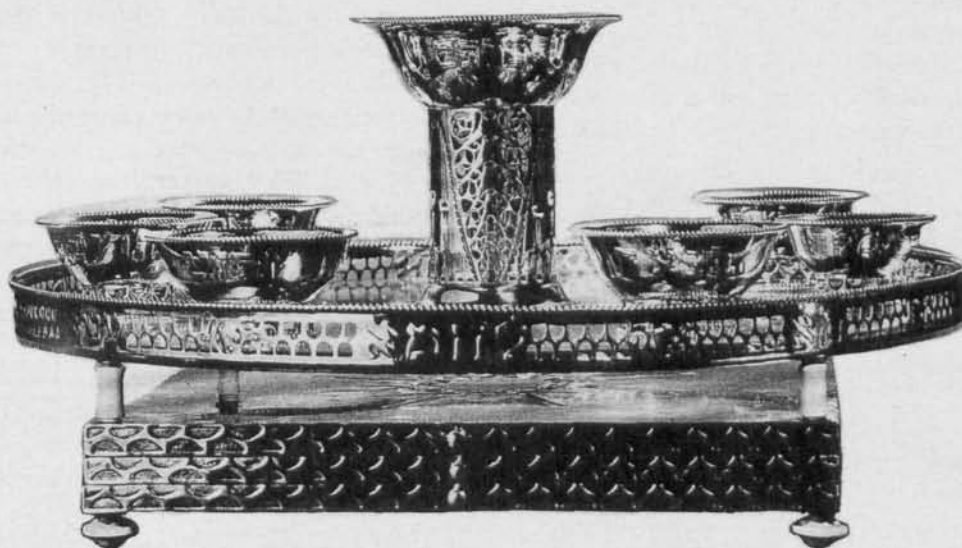
The rightward swing in America is dangerous not merely because a Republican Congress acts as a brake-shoe on a Democrat President - a house divided against itself cannot stand - but also because religion and politics produce a volatile mix. Behind Speaker Gingrich and Senator Dole stand the massed ranks of Christian Coalition fundamentalists, gun lobbyists, anti-evolution-

ists, telly evangelists and anti-abortion campaigners.

However dubious their stance on domestic issues, it is even more potentially dangerous in that the Christian coalition harks back to the isolationism of the interwar US which did so much harm to the rest of the world; a modern addendum for the latter-day American Firsters - whose attitude towards the rest of the world could be summed up in the phrase *let the devil take the hindmost* - is a gut feeling of hostility to the UN. Now it must be conceded that a world body formerly headed by Kurt Waldheim inspires little confidence, but the United Nations is the only antidote to global chaos our strife-torn globe possesses.

As far as US Jewry is concerned, the politicking Christians pose an additional danger. Imbued with missionising fervour they, or a good many of them, will not rest until the conversion of the first deniers of Christ, i.e. the Jews.

Halfway through the nineties the human race thus presents a bizarre mirror image: in the East militant Islamicists aim to convert the rest of the world by brute force - and in the West crusading Christians seek a similar end via the media and politics. □



The AJR wishes all our readers a Happy Passover

Story untold

At a symposium on the role of the Jewish journalist, part of Jewish Book Week (of which the AJR is a sponsor), the editor of the Jewish Chronicle, Ned Temko, expressed his general satisfaction with the investigative and broad-ranging reportage of his newspaper. He was even encouraged to believe that the Jewish community had been strengthened in some way over the last five years – despite acknowledging there was much evidence to the contrary.

Elena Lappin, newly appointed editor of the *Jewish Quarterly*, saw her publication shrugging off a dry-as-dust appeal to seek more radical and non-established critiques of Jewish history, literature and politics. Melanie Phillips, formerly of *The Guardian* and now an *Observer* columnist, was unaware of any special pressures brought to bear on her when writing about events in which some of the players were of Jewish origin. She believed that an open debate on Islam could provide more serious problems, as the castigation of Salman Rushdie had demonstrated.

It was left to Matthew Kalman, editor of the iconoclastic *New Moon* magazine, which is aimed at Jewry's 20s and 30s age group, to expose the Jewish press' apparent reluctance to criticise and appraise the relevance and effectiveness of Jewish institutions. In addition, there was a failure to recognise the emergence of a 'secular Jewry', who had no identification with religious institutions, and to provide a service in the Jewish press to which they were entitled. In his view it was foolish not to acknowledge a community in decline. The implication was that Jewish journalists, and the journals for which they wrote, should service the needs and requirements of the community as it exists in reality, rather than how it is complacently perceived. □RDC

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Profile

One to the power of four

Time, wrote the poet, has a winged chariot. In consequence our ranks are gradually thinning. However, let's not despair: there is a second generation coming up. Of their number we have already profiled Anne Salinger and John Dunston, stalwarts of our daughter organisation, the Association of Children of Jewish Refugees.

This month's profilee, Graham Oppenheimer, is yet another in our (intermittent) series focusing on second generation figures. A professional musician like Anne Salinger, Graham shares John Dunston's propensity for getting projects off the ground. His own Cologne-born father had arrived here in 1935 as a thirteen-year-old with his parents. In the disturbed circumstances of the time he missed out on a university education – for which he made up by taking an Open University degree half a century later – but managed to qualify as an electrical engineer and to set up his own business.

In consequence, Graham grew up in a middle-class Jewish-liberal environment (which did not prevent one of his three brothers from becoming a rabbi at Gateshead). The others went respectively into medicine and psychiatry.

Graham says of himself that he has been messing about with violins since he was eight. He won a music scholarship at Millfield School, whence he went on to the Manchester-based Northern College of Music and the Eastman School in the United States. Thereafter, as a regular participant in the International Musicians' Seminar at Prussia Cove he received tuition from the likes of Sander Vegh and Peter Schidlof. He became a member of the English Chamber Orchestra and, later, a member and principal viola of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

In the late eighties he married, setting up home in Leicester, not far from his parents. At around the same time he initiated the Leicester International Music Festival, now an established event gaining an increasing reputation for high standards and innovative programming.

In 1993 Graham was instrumental in setting up the Schidlof Quartet. (The late Peter Schidlof, his never-to-be-forgotten

teacher, had, by coincidence, 'shared' Graham's father's internment camp in 1940).

As to the quartet, being new, they are relatively unknown. The AJR membership will, however, soon be well acquainted with them. Around a thousand of us will see – and hear – Leicester's very own Fab Four on 14th May; the rest will be able to read all about them in the next issue of *AJR Information*. □



Graham Oppenheimer



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A visit to the Freud Museum

The house is set in a street of massive and ornate Edwardian villas. Its simpler redbrick façade, broken only by a large bay, stands out among these. A plaque states: The founder of psychoanalysis lived here 1938-1939. I lingered outside for a moment, wondering what kind of environment he had created for himself in this country.

When I pushed open the door, I found myself in a light and spacious entrance-hall. I noticed a showcase with a sample of Freud's collection of antiquities: heads of goddesses, an Egyptian cat, a Chinese figurine. On one wall there is a print of Rembrandt's painting of Moses with the tablets of stone. To the right and left are reception rooms, Freud's library and his consulting room.

The library is darkened by shelves full of heavy leather-bound volumes, but the dining room has a more domestic atmosphere. The furniture includes a tall cupboard decorated with motifs of fruit and flowers and some fine chests and tables inlaid with marquetry. On the wall are pictures of the Berggasse taken after the Anschluss, with the swastika draped ominously over the lintel. They show Freud's consulting room as it was in Vienna, a portrait of Freud himself, and a picture of his desk, crowded with figurines and statues.



Freud's desk

The negatives were developed after the war. They constitute a moving record, which would otherwise have been lost, of the ambience in which Freud practised for so many years. In lighter vein are snapshots of the mountain resorts where his

large family relaxed in summer, away from the oppressive heat of the city.

The consulting room contains the famous couch padded with deep cushions and covered by a rug with richly-coloured oriental patterns. On this the rat-man and other patients told their stories. A large Greek vase tops a stand, and everywhere there are shelves and showcases crammed with antiquities, a veritable squirrel's hoard of relics of the past, some culled from his visits abroad, others bought from local dealers. With its dark furnishings and clutter of ornaments, I would have found the room intimidating, but his patients seem to have felt no such inhibition.

Upstairs in the more sparsely-furnished rooms are pictures of Freud's daughter, Anna, herself a psychoanalyst, with children from the nurseries in which she worked in Vienna and London. Here are the framed certificate of the OBE she received from the Queen, and various documents relating to the family's emigration from Austria. One of these states that a "tax" had been duly paid by Freud to the Nazi authorities. With influential friends like Princess Marie Bonaparte to help him and enough money to pay the extortionate "tax", all the Freud family, with their housekeeper and furniture, were allowed to escape to London. (Would that others had been so fortunate!)

In another room is a video-recording pieced together from various home-movies. Some show the Freuds in happier times in Austria with their dog, and surrounded by friends and neighbours bearing gifts for their golden wedding. Finally there are pictures of the Freud family in Paris, and one of the frail figure of Freud himself taken in London shortly before his death. In a message to the viewers, he tells of his struggle to help patients with neurotic illnesses and the resistance his theories encountered. In spite of this, the Freudian slip and the interpretation of dreams have become part of our everyday concepts, and most people, whether they agree with his theories or not, would regard him as one of the intellectual giants of our age.

His house gives a fascinating glimpse into his world.

□ Martha Blend

The Freud Museum, Maresfield Gardens, NW3, is open from Wednesday to Sunday between noon and 5pm. The concessionary rate for visitors is £1.50.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Place a message in the souvenir concert brochure for the Schidlof Quartet's Concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 14th May. You will be both helping to further the essential work of the AJR and extending your personal greetings to friends and fellow concert-goers.

'WELLWISHERS PAGE'

Your message, of not more than 14 words please, and donation of £25 should arrive at the AJR office before April 20th.

The Brochure Chairman, AJR,
1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal,
NW3 6AL. □

Hitler's gifts to Britain

Accompanying a two-page article under this title by Paul Johnson, the *Sunday Telegraph* printed the following 'checklist' of refugee contributions to British Life:

The Buildings of England (Pevsner 1951-74); Penicillin; Spinal Unit, Stoke Mandeville Hospital; Thames & Hudson; S.G. Warburg; Pergamon Press; *The Red Shoes* (1948); The Amadeus String Quartet; *The Open Society & Its Enemies* (Popper 1945); *The Road to Serfdom* (Hayek 1944); the scientific possibilities of the nuclear bomb; André Deutsch publishers; Octopus Books; Weidenfeld & Nicolson; the Sternberg Centre for Judaism; *The Third Man* (1949); holography; the Warburg Institute; Alfred Wiener Library; *The Story of Art* (Gombrich 1950); *Black Narcissus* (1946); *Colonel Blimp* (1942). □

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Reviews

Trading with the enemy

Yehuda Bauer, *JEWS FOR SALE? NAZI-JEWISH NEGOTIATIONS, 1939-45*.

Yale University Press, 1995. 306 pp (inc. index), £17.95 (hardback)

‘Who saves a life, saves the entire world’ is the talmudic saying poignantly recalled in the film *Schindler’s List*. It is also the theme running through Yehuda Bauer’s brilliant new analysis of one of the most painfully controversial chapters of modern Jewish history: the attempts which Jews and others made to bargain with the Nazis for the lives of men, women and children caught in the trap of the Final Solution’s evil logic. Were those, it has been asked time and again, who entered into such transactions simply fools, or were they cowardly collaborators, traitors worthy of contempt? Or are they the unsung heroes of the Holocaust? Professor Bauer’s scholarly appraisal of that which might have been, as well as that which was, provides at least some of the answers with its revealing insight into an important aspect of our people’s darkest hour and which, perhaps, has not so far been adequately covered.

The first of these ‘bilateral’ transactions took place relatively early on in the time following the Nazi takeover in Germany. By 1934 most German Jews had come to the conclusion that prepared emigration was the only course to take; and this was quite acceptable to the regime, which for the time being, was satisfied with the prospect of a Germany made *Judenrein*. An arrangement was arrived at between the Jewish Agency and the German government by which Jews with property could leave for Palestine and transfer their capital there in order to set up new commercial enterprises committed to purchasing goods supplied by German manufacturers, as well as to offering employment to other Jewish emigrants, thus both accelerating the desired ‘outflow’ of Jews and boosting German exports. This transfer – *Ha’avarah* in Hebrew – was not acceptable to certain Jewish circles, notably the Zionist-Revisionists and most US community leaders. But others saw it as a step towards the fulfilment of the Zionist dream as expressed by Herzl.

In the event, by 1938 over £8 million of capital had come to be ‘transferred’ to Palestine and 20,000 German Jews had escaped. The arrangement was abandoned only when the Nazis changed their policy from one of ‘forced emigration’ to one of brutal expulsion and expropriation and, in due course, complete annihilation.

In the light of the Evian Conference of 1938 and the 1939 British White Paper on Palestine it became clear that for Jewish refugees most doors were closed or closing. Such negotiations on the matter as took place between the Germans and the British and Americans failed, not only because the available resources proved to be insufficient, but also because the Nazis had by then decided that the ‘Jewish question’ would be ‘solved’ one way or the other (‘*so oder so*,’ as Goering put it) once Germany was in control of Continental Europe; and by the autumn of 1941 the mass killings had begun in German-occupied Poland.

From then on, the possibility of saving even a few Jews by any available means became the urgent concern of many Jewish activists. On the Nazi side it was considered that the end-result would not be greatly affected by such deals as might be made since these were, as they saw it, only temporary ‘reprieves’. Thus Himmler and his team were not averse to any bargain from which a tactical advantage could be gained for Germany. Moreover, German reverses in the field, like Stalingrad and EL Alamein, provided an incentive for possible peace initiatives – on German terms, needless to say – and talking with and about Jews might, so the Germans thought, serve as a suitable opening gambit.

Nominally independent Slovakia became a *locus operandi* for this development. In an attempt to halt the wholesale deportation of that country’s Jews to Poland and extermination, one leading rabbi approached a Jewish agent of the Gestapo (there were indeed such, as Bauer shows) with the suggestion that a substantial bribe might be on offer if the calamity were to be averted. And when the deportations were indeed suspended against the payment of a sum of money in a desirable ‘hard’ currency, the Jewish leaders launched another, most astonishing initiative: nothing less than a proposal for the release of all the remaining Jews of Eastern Europe through personal bribery and formal ransom payments. This, the ‘Europe Plan’, foundered on the twin

rocks of world Jewry’s inability to find the enormous sums involved and the Western Allies’ grim resolve not to be distracted by side issues from their war aim – Germany’s unconditional surrender.

Some 7,000 Slovak Jews sought safety in neighbouring Hungary. But in the Spring of 1944, here, too, the large-scale deportations started and by the summer only about 250,000 Jews were left (in Budapest, none elsewhere in the country) out of over 800,000 at the beginning of the war. Bauer considers the options which were available to save them and concludes that there were only two: “either despair and attempts to save only individuals, as many of them as possible, or negotiations with the murderers.” A third, collaboration with neutral diplomats (such as the legendary Raoul Wallenberg), was to be added later. The two best known negotiators on the Jewish side were Joel Brand and Rudolf Kasztner. The author describes in detail the famous ‘trucks for blood’ proposal, involving mainly Brand and Eichmann, with Himmler probably leading from behind, because his “basic desire to murder all the Jews [did] not contravene his readiness to use them, or some of them, as hostages to be exchanged for things Germany needed.” Kasztner managed to put nearly 1,700 Jews (including members of his family) on a ‘train to freedom’ – it was in fact diverted to Bergen-Belsen. The number of Jews who did survive in Budapest is put at 62,000.

Did the *Ha’avarah* amount to trading with the enemy? Were the Europe Plan, the Brand mission, Kasztner’s efforts, all the dealings with Nazis to save at least some Jewish lives ever justifiable? As befits an historian of Yehuda Bauer’s standing, he analyses the question (and its repercussions) ‘with great reserve and circumspection’ in order to avoid the dangers of intertwining ‘moralising or sermonising . . . with problems of historical interpretation.’ He succeeds not least also in putting the record straight on the many post-Holocaust misconceptions and misconstructions; and, interestingly, he agrees with Hannah Arendt’s theory on the ‘banality of evil’ as a key to understanding seemingly incongruous behaviour patterns. Above all, he achieves that rare literary triumph: a scholarly study on a complex subject which reads almost like an absorbing novel. Alas, this is not a work of fiction!

□David Maier

New twist to old tale

Enoch Powell, THE EVOLUTION OF THE GOSPEL, Yale University Press, 1994 £16.95

Jesus was stoned to death by the Jews and not crucified by the Romans. That is the conclusion drawn by this erstwhile Conservative Government Minister and noted classical scholar (Professor of Greek at Sydney University at 25).

Why should Jews take any notice of yet another re-interpretation of Christian theology, however erudite and possibly heretical? For the layman Powell's book is all but unreadable. It is Bible text criticism – which precludes enjoyment of a purely literary nature. No, the indignation the book has aroused among Jewish (and some Christian scholars) stems from this:

At the very time that Gentiles, the Pope among them, have accepted the baselessness of the charge of deicide against the Jews, Powell tries to establish that Jesus was convicted of blasphemy for claiming to be the son of God. He contends that the Romans were not interested in the theological quibbles of a troublesome subject people, and left native fanatics to carry out their traditional penalty (stoning to death) for such blasphemy. Such a contention feeds the deepest springs of Jew-hatred.

In my estimation that is not the author's conscious intention. I feel that Mr Powell sees himself as the unbending scholar who follows the paths of his research to whatever conclusions they lead him. (His foreword states that he has consulted no other interpreters and takes issue only with 'the sources').

However, Jesus was perceived not only as the Messiah, but as the descendant of King David and therefore heir to the throne of Judah and all Israel. Now that was a claim which *did* interest the occupying power, from Pontius Pilate, to the imperial government in Rome itself, via the demoted but still princely successors of Herod the Great. Claims to kingship, backed by armed Zealots (called knifemen by the Romans) could lead to insurrection. Hence the Romans mocked Jesus by affixing the ironic title King of the Jews to his cross.

Many scholars uphold this view adduced by the Roman historian Tacitus and the Jewish historian Josephus (and often depicted by Renaissance painters).

However, Powell sees it as a later sop to

the Jewish wing of Jesus' followers who wanted the blame to fall on the Romans. He claims to have followed the earliest source in the interpretation of the Gospel according to Matthew. He holds that the other two synoptic evangelists, Mark and Luke, copied from Matthew and often 'corrected' him, and reinterprets the Sermon on the Mount, making the term children synonymous with pagans (i.e. those without the Law). In Powell's reading the healings and exorcisms referred to in the Gospel may well have been the freeing of the afflicted from pagan gods; Jesus wished to lead the Gentiles to salvation by faith well before St. Paul.

Enoch Powell has the reputation of a maverick and frequently attracts sarcastic comment, but for some of the reasons given above the peril hidden in his message should not be overlooked.

□ John Rossall

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Letters to the Editor

AUSTRIAN INVITATION

Sir – Please allow my wife and me to share the following request with you: We lead an independent church in Wiener Neustadt, 27 miles south of Vienna. During the week of 22-29 May 1995, we are extending an invitation to Jews who were born in Wiener Neustadt (or lived there before the Second World War) to a 'week of encounter'. Through Dr. David W. Weiss of Jerusalem, the son of the last rabbi, we have already received the addresses of 30 Jews from Wiener Neustadt.

There are three reasons for our invitation:

1. Great injustice and unspeakable suffering were inflicted on Jewish citizens of our country in Nazi times. We cannot simply distance ourselves from the 'sins of our fathers', especially considering the fact that it was Christians of every denomination in our land who were primary participants. We accept responsibility for this guilt and want to confess it face to face to those affected.

2. As Christians we believe that the Jews are God's chosen people with whom he has made an eternal covenant. We are called by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to 'bless' His people Israel. That has become a deep concern of ours.

3. Through this outreach we want to demonstrate that former Jewish citizens will be received in a different spirit than when they had to leave the city.

As time is short, please contact us by phone on 43/(0)2620/2971. The cost of the airfare and hotel stay will be paid for by our church.

Pastor Mag. Helmuth & Uli Eiwien
Brunnengasse 21
A-2732 Würflach, Austria

PERCEIVED LACK

Sir – I am writing to support Mr Schragenheim's suggestion, in your February edition, to introduce a regular column of Jewish religious interest. Even if this has not been done in the past, there is no reason why it should not be done now – there is always room for improvement.

No doubt there are many members un-

interested in such a column, but all they need do is skip that particular item. By not having such a column at all, however, you are depriving some members of a topic which is fitting in such a journal, and, indeed, many other journals carry such an item.

London NW4

Richard Kaufman

ALIBI FABRICATORS

Sir – How refreshing to find you, as always, calling a spade a spade. I would also point out that antisemitic Jews often act as they do not only to save their skins, but to reap material benefits.

Thus it can hardly be a coincidence that Joseph Ben Mathias indulges in his *Bellum Judeicum* in embarrassing overglorification of the Flavian dynasty – indeed he changed his name to Josephus Flavius – and that all his books were to receive the Imperial seal of approval. 1900 years later, Erich Fried's literary oeuvre would not have become so popular in Germany and Austria, had it not been for this Jewish author's highly ambiguous attitude to Nazism.

Finally, your emphasis on the integrity of Hermann Levi and Dominic Lawson reminds me of Mark Antony's "and Brutus is an honourable man".

Lambourne Road
Chigwell, Essex

Fred Rosner

Sir – I am your disappointed fan! How can you say that 'anti-Zionism' is antisemitism's "not so distant cousin"? As my clever 93-year-old Berliner mother Anita pointed out to me, as I read your article *Alibi fabricators* to her, the one is political, the other racist! Surely it is up to me both to define my identity and have a view and a policy vis-a-vis that quartet – not the Schidlof! – German, English, Jewish, Israeli, with guest viola Christian, lapsed....

Good wishes to your non-partisan approach!

Romilly Street, WI

Peter Zander

FRAUDULENT

Sir – *Der Spiegel* reports under the headline 'Falsche Erben' that a three-

cornered fight has developed over the ownership of a prominent site in Leipzig, where the city's largest synagogue, the Tempel in the Gottschedstrasse, stood until Kristallnacht.

The dispute is between – a) the city council, – b) the present-day Leipzig Jewish community, consisting of some 30 elderly postwar arrivals and a few newcomers from Russia, and – c) The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

The unrepresentative Jewish 'community' sold it to the city council in 1987, fearing that it might be taken from them. Both are said to want to erect a memorial to the extinct former real community on the site, where there is a monument already. However, though the community is gone, many of us survived in different parts of the world. But the Claims Conference, self-appointed legal heir and representative of all Nazi victims, is laying claim to the synagogue and (as I know from personal experience) to other Jewish property, private and communal, all over Leipzig for the 'benefit of Holocaust survivors world-wide'.

I grew up in Leipzig's large and splendid *Gemeinde* and affectionately remember our many fine synagogues, school, youth house, hospital, sports grounds and other communal properties. They were all endowed, used and maintained by the community. Its members, wherever they are now, are the only rightful heirs to its restitution or compensation. If the Claims Conference were willing to accept that, and to work for us, I would back their claim wholeheartedly.

Complete records of every member of the 'extinct' community are still kept at the present community's office in the Loehstrasse, and in the police and city's archives (they were very good at recording their every deed, however dastardly!)

Some survivors from the ex-DDR have never received any compensation for their sufferings, receive no pension and may be very hard-up now. Some may not need or want anything now. But I hope that they too will agree with me that we should have the right to determine what happens to any such restitution or compensation. And what memorial, if any, is put up to commemorate our dear ones!

Please write and tell me your views and ask other former Leipzigers for theirs. I have quite a lot of information here.

Park Lane
Wembley, Middx.

Lilli Engelhard

BOUQUET

Sir - I look forward to AJR Information more and more. Is it improving, or am I getting older and nearer to my roots? Keep it up!

Cenacle Close

S.P. Haig

West Heath Road, London NW3

HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

Sir - Your Director, Mr. Ernest David, needs all our support in the quest for the establishment of a Holocaust Museum. This surely has become a matter of urgency as our generation is diminishing by the day. I heartily endorse the oath taken at Massada, 'NEVER AGAIN', but this has at its core a different meaning.

When my parents were so cruelly murdered in the Holocaust, I resolved to avenge their death by the only way open to me, namely, to ensure that they will have Jewish grandchildren. Only by perpetuating this resolve will the oath NEVER AGAIN become a reality. Anybody who has acted otherwise has violated the memory of their dear ones and will have given Hitler a posthumous victory.

Sneyd Road

Martin Teich-Birken

London NW2

INTELLIGENCE AND CHARACTER

Sir - The debate about heritability strongly suggests that by intelligence we mean that capacity which enables its possessors to avail themselves of those opportunities which, to their more decent fellows, remain closed on moral grounds. In your sketch 'Alibi fabricators' (February issue) you seem to have found an ingenious way out of the current moral impasse by the interesting proposition that above average intelligence corresponds to below-average character.

St. Swithun Street
Winchester

Gertrud Walton

ANTICLIMACTIC

Sir - Re Walter Freud's BEFORE THE ANTICLIMAX, the following might be of interest. I was in the same unit as Walter, but in a different group which actually never became operational. The four of us, three Austrian social democrats and my-

self, were stationed in Southern Italy during 1944/5.

There we spent several weeks interviewing Austrian prisoners of war in order to establish whether any of them were genuine anti-Nazis. Eventually some of them were selected and came to us for training to be dropped in Austria.

The first one was a young man called Hasl. It was my job to train him in the use of a small suitcase wireless transmitter. On one occasion my colleague Wirl, who had joined us from North Africa, came by and heard me tell Hasl that the maximum transmission distance of the set was 300 miles. Wirl became very excited and upset. It appeared that one of his tasks in North Africa had been to translate the instructions for this set into German. Many of those sets were dropped at random in Southern Austria in the hope that some anti-Nazis might find and use them to make contact with the British command. It was known that some had tried and been caught by the Gestapo. There had never been any chance for their transmissions to reach us as far as North Africa.

My colleague Hasl was eventually dropped in Austria and made his way to his home town of Graz. Last summer I visited his family (he died earlier) and his brother showed me his hiding place when transmitting. He made contact with the British base quite regularly, but no use whatsoever was made of the information he sent through. Nor was he ever contacted after the war.

Wendell Road E.S.

London W12

Sir - Having read the longwinded, Germanically phrased article by A.W. Freud with the Special Operations Executive in Austria, I am not unduly surprised over the treatment he received at the British Embassy in Paris, nor that he was not contacted by the War Office to render an account of his activities.

Ravenscroft Avenue
Wembley, Middx.

Ralph Freeman

DORA SEGALL

Sir - You may have already heard that, after a long and active life, our friend Dora Segall died on February 6 at Edenhall Marie Curie Centre, London. We are thankful for the gentle way in which she left us: quietly, evenly and regularly breathing and then just ceasing to do

so, with a calm expression on her face.

In his address at Golders Green Crematorium, Rabbi Mariner expressed the feelings of family and friends who could be present by emphasising that the occasion was not only one for mourning, but for giving thanks for Dora's entire life. Her vibrant personality and good humour stayed with her throughout her long life as did her enthusiasm and open-mindedness for new developments and ideas. She was always a total warm-hearted human being, dedicated to the needs of others and committed to fulfilling the tasks she set herself: wishing each day could have lasted longer.

Many tributes have been paid to our dear Dora in words, letters, flowers and donations to Edenhall Hospice where she received such excellent care during her last ten days. Her death leaves a great void in many lives, but she will always remain with us in our memories.

Bromefield

Marianne Calthrop

Stanmore, Middlesex

Michael Levin

(See obituary on page 15).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held at 15 Cleve Road,
West Hampstead, London NW6 3RL
on

THURSDAY 8 JUNE 1995
at 7.30p.m.

AGENDA:

Annual Report 1994

Hon. Treasurer's Report

Discussion

Election of Committee of
Management*

Followed by a talk by
Prof. Edward Timms

- * No person other than a committee member retiring by rotation shall be elected or re-elected a committee member at any general meeting unless-
- he or she is recommended by the Committee of Management or
 - not less than twenty-one clear days before the date appointed for the meeting, notice executed by 10 members qualified to vote at the meeting has been given to the Society of the intention to propose that person for election or re-election together with notice executed by that person of his willingness to be elected or re-elected.

The AJR at Work

South London AJR

South London AJR continues to flourish. 47 people turned up to the second meeting (as against 38 the first time) and 15 of them were new members. Whatever happens to us in the future, I think we have finally laid to rest the old illusion that there are virtually no AJR members living south of the Thames and that they can therefore be safely ignored.

We had a most welcome address from Ernest David, Director of the AJR, who outlined the activities of the Association and gave us many useful hints as to how we could develop ours with the support of NW3.

Richard Grunberger, Editor of AJR Information, gave us an excellent and entertaining account of the past and present of that most informative of journals, which many of us read from cover to cover each month. During the lively discussion which followed he collected a considerable number of bouquets for his work and hardly any brickbats. Our thanks are due to both speakers for making the afternoon both instructive and enjoyable.

We again enjoyed a magnificent tea. It was decided, however, that in future we would have only one 'nosh-up' a year and would fast on tea and biscuits for the rest.

Thanks are due to the 26 members who completed the questionnaire letting us know which speakers and outings they would like. There was no shortage of good ideas, but few volunteered to contact one of the suggested names themselves. The momentum of the group should not have to rely on one or two individuals, and I hope that in due course most of us will become involved in the organisation and running of activities we all want to enjoy. In the meantime I shall be summarising the questionnaire responses for the next meeting.

Martin Goldenberg, member of the executive committee of the Wiener Library, will be guest speaker our next meeting and talk about its activity as an international centre of Holocaust literature and records. We will also have the opportunity to plan the next few meetings together and perhaps an outing or two.

I look forward to seeing many of you on Thursday, 27th April, from 2 to 4pm at the South London Liberal Synagogue, Prentis Road, Streatham.

□Ken Ambrose

Palm Court nostalgia

Jack Davidoff returned to entertain members at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre with his violin and ever-popular Palm Court Ensemble and a well chosen repertoire of nostalgic music evoking Vienna in every bar. *Wine Women and Song* by Johann Strauss were so freely distributed that everyone joined in singing the melody. Braham's *Hungarian Rhapsody* immediately captured the attention of the audience. As a bonus, between the items Jack told some lovely 'meises' (which left only the non-Jewish members of the Ensemble looking slightly perplexed).

Back with the music, the Ensemble moved through *En Chambre Separée*, then to float on Maryan Backwill's enchanting cello rendition of *The Swan* by Saint Saëns with its strong balletic imagery. *Play Gypsy*, *La Composita*, *Ochichornya* and *Two Guitars* completed the programme to enthusiastic applause. In thanking the Ensemble Sylvia said they would always be very welcome.



Jack Davidoff leading the Palm Court Ensemble

The members of the Ensemble are: Derek West, Norman Rosenberg, Ron Tarn and Debra Kirk, violins; Michael Busse, viola; Maryan Backwill, cello; Linda Tyler, piano; and Jack Davidoff playing the solos on a violin he made himself. □

Special Meeting

At a meeting on 19 February 1995 to discuss an extension of AJR activities a number of topics were raised, including:

- bridge, other card games and chess sections
- literary (with emphasis on German language) and music sections
- outings to exhibitions, theatre, concerts
- general 'coffeehouse' get togethers
- reminiscence groups
- discussions on Jewish issues

It was felt that some groups might meet in people's houses, while others, if the attendance was too large for a private home, could meet in a location to be organised by the AJR, e.g. Eleanor Rathbone House or the Sobell Centre.

While the AJR would help organise facilities, transport, etc. it was felt that activities of this nature, similar to the groups established in South London and in Birmingham, should be self-led.

Anyone wishing to participate, or to learn more of progress, should contact the AJR on 0171 431 6161. □

AJR SEDER NIGHT

We are pleased to announce that a

SECOND NIGHT SEDER

will be held on **Saturday 15 April** at the **Paul Balint AJR Day Centre** 15 Cleve Road, NW6

led by

Cantor Marshall Stone

Please phone: 0171-328 0208

for application forms.

Seating is strictly limited so prompt replies will be required to ensure places.

Unfortunately, as there is limited space, wheelchairs cannot be accommodated.

6 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.
£18 per person

Message from Ernest David

Recently the Austrian President, for the first time, acknowledged that Austria was not just a victim of the Nazis, but was in many cases a willing collaborator in Nazi atrocities.

Now, 50 years after the liberation of Belsen, both Austria and Germany are still dragging their heels in the matter of pensions to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution. Many people have received reasonably satisfactory pensions, but it is astounding how both Germany and Austria, in their own ways, put difficulties in the way of certain categories of pension applicants, although such applicants form a relatively small proportion of total pensions. Certainly there are fewer of these disadvantaged pension claimants than there are ex(?)-Nazis and their dependents drawing healthy pensions.

The Germans shelter behind the European Community to reduce the categories

of people to whom they will pay pensions, for example by rejecting applicants who may have been born in Germany, but not of a German father.

Even when someone is eligible for a pension, both the German and Austrian rules are so framed that sometimes people are asked for such large back payments into the schemes that it would take many years of pension payments to recover.

In the case of Austrian pensions, refugees who were only six years old in 1938 are disadvantaged as against those who were eight years old.

In the case of Germany, those who are now 65, but have not previously reclaimed German nationality, cannot now make a back payment.

The rules appear to be deliberately designed to exclude rather than to include. Is this the way to compensate for the criminal actions of the predecessor government?

Ist das nicht eine Schande? □

Something cooking

Providing the delicious kosher meals served at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre are our special foursome: Jeff Heywood, Head Chef, Ya'acov Azulay, Assistant Chef, and Mary Matovu and Adil Bouanani, Kitchen Assistants. All members have a word of appreciation for the quality and variety of the cuisine they enjoy at the Centre which we heartily endorse. □

WANTED

Bridge and Chess Players

The AJR is planning to start Bridge and Chess sections. Play may take place in the daytime and/or evening according to demand. Anyone interested please contact AJR on 0171 431 6161. □

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

Tel. 0171 328 0208

Open Tuesday and Thursday 9.30 a.m. – 6.30 p.m., Monday and Wednesday 9.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m. – 6.30 p.m.

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

Afternoon entertainment –

APRIL

- Sunday 2* AN APRIL CONCERT WITH VIOLIN & PIANO – Gordon Mackay (Violin) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)
- Monday 3* VIENNESE MUSIC – Claude May (Baritone) with self accompaniment
- Tuesday 4* MEDLEY OF SONGS & ARIAS FROM MUSICALS, OPERETTA & OPERA – Kim Whyte (Soprano with own piano accompaniment)
- Wednesday 5* A CONCERT FOR AN APRIL AFTERNOON – Geoffrey Strum accompanied by Johnny Walton

- Thursday 6* THE MUSIC MAKERS – Elizabeth Winton & Stan Longmire with piano accompaniment
- Sunday 9* DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 10* SANG u. KLANG – Angela & Nicholas Arratoon, Diana & Elizabeth Legroux accompanied by Maurice Hermele
- Tuesday 11* LET'S MAKE MUSIC – Hans Freund
- Wednesday 12* DUO KINNOR ENTERTAIN WITH A POT POURRI OF MUSIC – Madeleine Whitelaw (Piano) & David Richmond (Violin)
- Thursday 13* DAY CENTRE CLOSED AFTER LUNCH
- Sunday 16* DAY CENTRE CLOSED – PESACH
- Monday 17* DAY CENTRE CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY
- Tuesday 18* THE RICHARD TAUBER MEMORIES – George Kazanzi (Baritone) accompanied by Happy Branstion (Piano)
- Wednesday 19* a) OUTING TO THEATRE b) THE TRINITY QUARTET
- Thursday 20* DAY CENTRE CLOSED AFTER LUNCH
- Sunday 23* DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

- Monday 24* A SPRING MUSICAL BOUQUET – Ann Kenton-Barker (Soprano) accompanied by Gloria Moss (Piano)
- Tuesday 25* SONGS FOR EVERYONE – Shirley Gurevitz accompanied by Sylvia Cohen (Piano)
- Wednesday 26* GEMS FROM OPERETTA & THE SHOWS – Lena & Leslie Phillip
- Thursday 27* SHADES OF PALM COURT – Patrick Kilbride (Violin) accompanied by Jennifer Hunt (Piano)
- Sunday 30* DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

MAY

- Monday 1* LIGHT CLASSICS & SHOW SONGS – Carmen Lasok (Soprano) accompanied by Phillip Mountford (Piano)
- Tuesday 2* TWO IN A BAR – Fiona Cooper (Soprano) accompanied by Mark Dabrowski-Pernas (Piano)
- Wednesday 3* LE JAZZ – Dave Kelbie & Steve Elsworth
- Thursday 4* LANCELOT BRAGANZA & HIS KEYBOARD
- Sunday 7* VIVA VOCE

CLASSIFIED**Deaths**

Aronsfeld, Helga who died on 17 March. We will always love you. Her life was love. Never to be forgotten. Caesar, Esther and Elly. Sabatsky, Herta née Neumann, widow of Kurt Sabatsky, died peacefully aged 95 years on 19th March 1995 at Heinrich Stahl House. Deeply mourned by daughter Ruth, grandson Melvyn and many friends.

Balogh, Irene, of Bishops Stortford, died peacefully at Highfield Nursing Home in Ware in her 100th year on Saturday 18th March 1995. Beloved mother of Gertie (Trudy) and mourned by her family.

Companions/Carers

Companion/help for active elderly lady in Wimbledon. Own comfortable room. No cleaning but cooking welcome. Terms to be arranged. Tel: 0191-946 2756.

URGENT

Sunday Day Centre Organiser. Owing to illness, the AJR urgently require a man or woman to act in the temporary capacity of Day Centre Organiser at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre in West Hampstead on Sunday afternoons. We are seeking a responsible person who enjoys working well with a team of other people. Salary negotiable. Please phone the Director, AJR, on 0171-431 6161.

Miscellaneous

Electrician City and Guilds qualified. All domestic work undertaken. Y. Steinreich. Tel: 081 455 5262.

Manicure and Pedicure in the comfort of your own home. Telephone 081 455 7582.

'Time Creates Images'. The Spiro Institute and the Austrian Institute are jointly presenting a photographic exhibition to commemorate the 50th anniversary (1945-1995) of the Second Republic of Austria. For details phone 0171 431 0345.

Liberation of Belsen

The Institute of Contemporary History and Wiener Library are marking the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Belsen with a gathering of survivors, eyewitnesses and historians on 9th and 10th April in London. Please contact immediately the Conference Secretary, Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BH, if you wish to participate.

Volunteers needed at Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road, NW6 3RL

- 1 General helpers, prepared to work as members of a team for a variety of duties, including one person with book-keeping skills.
Hours 9.45am - 3.45pm Monday to Thursday
also 3.30 - 6.30 Tuesday and Thursday.
- 2 a nurse/first-aider sought for Tuesdays 9.45 - 3.45.
- 3 a musical person to lead choir Mondays 10.30 - 11.30
- 4 'relief' people to come in when others sick or on holiday.

Enquiries to Sylvia Matus, Day Centre Organiser
Tel: 0171 328 0208, Monday to Thursday 9.00am - 3.45pm

Lily Freeman

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

In advertising its academic symposium *After Auschwitz: the influence of the Holocaust on the visual arts* which takes place on 5 & 6 April, the *Courtauld Institute* states that "the impact of the Holocaust on the fine arts, in contrast to literature and film, remains a curiously neglected area of cultural enquiry." This criticism is partly met by *After Auschwitz Installations*, an exhibition of larger pieces at the *Imperial War Museum* (until 17 April), organised by the Imperial War Museum in collaboration with the South Bank Centre. The installation pieces are by Jean Sylvain Bieth (France), Melissa Gould (USA), Lily Markiewicz (Germany) and Pam Skelton (UK). The South Bank Centre's separate exhibition in the *Royal Festival Hall Galleries* is entitled *After Auschwitz: Responses to the Holocaust in Contemporary Art* (also until 17 April) and is curated by Monica Bohm-Duchen.

Our old friend Lily Freeman will once again be showing her pictures at *Burgh House*, New End Square, NW3 from 10-21 May. *The Victoria and Albert Museum* will be showing *Picturing Plants: A History of Botanical Illustration* (10 May to 24 September) to coincide with this year's Chelsea Flower Show.

Impressionism in Britain is an important exhibition at the *Barbican Art Gallery* (until 7 May). This is the first comprehensive survey of the development of Impressionism in Britain and features over 200 works by 100 artists. *The British Museum* features an important exhibition *Drawings by Adriaen and Isaac Van Ostade and their Followers* (until 23 April). At the same time it is also showing *The Rumbustious World of Thomas Rowlandson: The Prints 1774-1822*. The exhibition comprises eighty hand-coloured prints, roughly divided between social subjects and political issues. Paintings and etchings by *Erich Wolfstfeld* (1884-1956) are being shown at the *Belgrave Gallery*, Englands Lane, London, NW3. Wolfstfeld was Professor of Painting and Etching at the Berlin Academy from 1920 until dismissed by the Nazis in 1936.

The Manor House Society is showing paintings and mixed media works by six

artists from Bosnia, all now in exile, (until 13 April).



Eric Wolfstfeld, 'Galician Jew'.

Annely Juda Fine Art is showing *Three Works in Progress* by Christo and Jeanne-Claude (until 20 April). The works comprise *Reichstag* (project for Berlin), *The Gates* (project for Central Park, New York), and *Over the River* (project for Western USA). A 60-page catalogue with 45 colour illustrations is available at the exhibition. □

SB's Column

Tradition. The Vienna Musikverein, celebrating its 125-year jubilee, is not only known as the home of Vienna's Philharmonic orchestra, but is deservedly popular through the famous annual New Year's concerts which are transmitted worldwide. Each New Year's Day the orchestra, under the baton of outstanding conductors – like Claudio Abbado, Carlos Kleiber, Ricardo Muti, Zubin Mehta or Lorin Maazel, mainly play Strauss music (a routine introduced by violinist Willy Boskowsky who conducted the event for 25 years). During the rest of the year, programmes follow the 1870 precedent when Johann Herbeck presented Beethoven symphonies and choral works. Whatever the programme, the Musikverein remains a place of unbroken tradition.

Berlin. The Metropoltheater, famous since the twenties as a premier venue for operettas, will re-open under the direction of tenor René Kollo, proud descendant of the Kollo family who were closely connected with the creation of Berlin's lavish musical revues.

Birthdays. German-speaking theatre audiences celebrated the 90th birthday of Bernhard Minetti, a most versatile actor who began his long career in Berlin in 1927. In the course of the 60 years he played more than 300 parts from Schiller to Beckett, Pinter and Thomas Bernhard. Often compared to Werner Krauss, Minetti created a powerfully dark and strange impression by his demonic stage presence.

Actress Maria Becker, daughter of Reinhardt ensemble member Maria Fein, acted at the Zürich Schauspielhaus from 1938 to 1965. She also played in Munich, Vienna and Hamburg and crowned her career in the eighties with an appearance as a female Mephisto in Goethe's *Faust*. Nowadays, 75 year-old Maria Becker has her own touring company, the Schauspieltruppe Zürich, which includes her husband Robert Freitag and Will Quadflieg.

Carola Höhn, the German film and TV actress, has celebrated her 85th birthday. □

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

Hitler and the Holocaust (Part 7)

Continued: Lord Bullock's authoritative lecture given under the auspices of the Yad Vashem Committee of the Board of Deputies.

To carry out the Final Solution required the co-operation of a very large number of people reaching up from the SS troops, the camp guards, the technicians, the doctors and administrators to the planners and organisers. Eichmann, Heydrich and Himmler, all of whom shared in the responsibility to some degree, the last three to a very great extent. Hitler's responsibility, however, although he never visited a death camp or saw a murder squad at work, is different and unique.

There was only one man among the Nazi leaders who could have conceived of carrying out so grandiose and bizarre a plan. Not the bureaucrats who attended the Wannsee Conference and were concerned with the practical problems it presented. Nor the SS officers in Poland and the Baltic States, who were ready enough to carry out mass killings to relieve the overcrowding in the ghettos and camps for which they were responsible – but who had no interest at all in bringing large additional numbers of Jews into their territories and seeing these used as killing grounds for the extermination of the whole of European Jewry. Hitler alone had the imagination – however twisted – to conceive of such a plan, and if there was one year in which he was capable of making the leap from imagining such a 'solution' as fantasy to imagining it as fact, it was 1941.

This was the year in which he had shown his terrifying capacity to turn into fact another part of his 'world view', the fantasy of *Lebensraum* in the east, by launching the German army against the Soviet Union in an unprovoked act of aggression. As in the case of Operation Barbarossa, Hitler himself had neither the ability nor the interest to organise the execution of his Final Solution himself: that he left to Himmler and the SS, as he had left organising the invasion of Russia to the Army General Staff. But if there had not been a Hitler to conceive of such projects and to convince others that such fantasies could actually be turned into fact, neither would have occurred.

Hitler's second contribution to the Fi-

nal Solution was to legitimise it. Those involved in carrying it out knew very well that it was a state secret which could never be admitted in public. They understood why there was no signed Hitler order. Hitler's references to his 'prophecy speech' – to which he referred six times in major speeches, each broadcast between January 1942 and March 1943 – were enough to convince them when Himmler and Heydrich said they were carrying out the Führer's orders. As Führer, he combined all the principal offices in the state, party, and armed forces, giving him a unique authority with which to reassure them that, however disturbing the job they were called upon to do, they were acting in the interest of the German Volk. As Himmler told his commanders on 4th October 1943:

This is a page of glory in our history which has never been written and can never be written. We can talk about it quite frankly among ourselves, and yet we will never speak of it publicly. It appalled everyone and yet everyone was certain that he would do it next time if such orders should be issued . . . I am referring to the Jewish evacuation programme, the extermination of the Jews. We had the moral right, we had the duty to destroy this people which wanted to destroy us.

Hitler was the guarantee of this.

Hitler's final contribution was to supply the will not only to launch such an operation but to insist that it would continue up to the end of the war, long after everyone knew it was lost. As the Russians drove the Germans back the search for Jews still continued all over Europe and the transport was found to move them to Poland at a time when the railways were under constant attack from the air and hard-pressed by the demands of war.

Sitting amid the ruin of his hopes in the Berlin bunker in February 1945, the man who had first appeared in history 25 years before ranting against the Jews recalled the warning he had given in his 1939 speech and remarked with satisfaction: 'I told them that, if they precipitated another war, they would not be spared and that I would exterminate the vermin throughout Europe, once and for all . . . Well, we have lanced the Jewish abscess: and the world of the future will be eternally grateful to us.'

I come to my final question: how credible is the figure of between 5 and 6

Update on Claims Conference Article 2 Fund

We have been informed that the monthly payments of DM 500 to successful applicants will commence in August 1995. There is no deadline for applications to the Article 2 Fund and claimants residing in Great Britain should address their applications to the Claims Conference, Article 2 Fund Office, Wiesenau 53, 60323 Frankfurt/Main 1, Germany. □

million Jews shot, gassed or dying in the ghettos in a period of less than five years? In the experience of Western Europe and North America such figures are very hard to believe. British loss of life in World War II, for example, on all fronts, civilian as well as military, was 388,000; French, 810,000; American (including the Pacific) 295,000.

We still fail to grasp, however, the extent to which the scale and violence of the fighting in Eastern Europe exceeded that in the West. Russian losses are put at more than 21 million, 11 per cent of the total population, a third of them civilians; German at 6.8 million, 9.5 per cent of the population, half of them civilians. The lands between the Elbe and the Volga were fought across twice, their crops destroyed, their cities battered, millions deported to work in Germany, millions more driven from their homes. Anything resembling ordered existence ceased to exist, and human life to have any value.

Against this background it no longer appears incredible that 5-6 million Jews perished. No less important for our purposes is the fact that the background explains why, as a result of the confusion and the loss or deliberate destruction of records, the losses, especially of the civilian population – non-Jewish Russian and Polish, as well as Jewish are bound to be estimates – and may well be under-estimated as the opening of the Soviet archives has shown.

One figure frequently brought up by the so-called revisionists is that of 4 million Jews originally said to have been put to death at Auschwitz. Subsequent research – not by the revisionists – has shown that this was a gross mistake, made by the Soviet prosecuting team at the Nuremberg Trials, and it is now accepted that the number put to death in Auschwitz was 1.1 million, possibly 1.5 million, 90 per cent of whom were Jews. This reduction has already been taken into account in the total figure for Jewish deaths. □

THE GUN

Seventeen when you bought it, though
you looked younger.
The small-arms dealer took cash, no
questions asked.
Tempered steel under socks as you dressed
for school,
six bullets snug in the clip the ultimate
answer.

It gleamed between you and the
blackboard
when the biology teacher twisted genetics,
all those friendships shyly webbing the
classroom
judged by the tape measure held against
you.

When Kristallnacht sharpened
November's frost
your father opened the door before it
imploded.
Four Storm-troopers leaned in to the dark
hall,
glass on the blue and white tiles,
splintered wood,

the house invaded like a foreign country,
room after room shuddering under their
jackboots,
windows targeted, cracked open to the
night,
your grandmother dragged by the hair,
wailing in Yiddish.

Did they sense the silence of held breath
as you came of age wondering whether to
fire?
Two streets away a synagogue was
burning,
tree shadows in the garden, frozen
flowers.

Brownshirts sweaty with work well done,
... volunteers from inviolate homes ...
they dragged you to stand on the front
door steps.
None of them noticed the jut of the gun

or how the heavy pocket swung
and you parried the blows one-handed.
In the early dawn you became an
encumbrance.
They yawned and left you, white with
miracle.

Narrowed by shock, your mother opened
a crack
and you stood in the hall with the
morning.

Your father sprawled all angles on the
floor.
Blueness round the mouth sank into her
widowing.

But you pumped his chest for the least
quiver of breath,
until she touched you, new man of the
house.
When evening came you flung the gun far
out
into the river's dreaming layers of silt.

□Jill Bamber

War crimes investigation

Baroness Blatch, Minister of State at the
Home Office, has told the House of Lords
that war crimes investigations would not
necessarily end with the cessation of
Home Office funding for the Metropoli-
tan Police's War Crimes Unit. It was the
Metropolitan Police Commissioner who
had the power to decide whether or not
investigations would be concluded and re-
sultant prosecutions supported. □

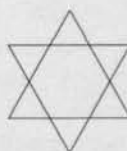
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Cooking with Gretel Beer



Spinach Soufflés

Excellent as a main course for a light – and Spring-like – luncheon or supper and if baked in individual small soufflé or ramekin dishes, a rather elegant starter for a festive meal. Serves 4-6.

12-14 oz (340g-390g) cooked and well-drained spinach
 salt ground mace or nutmeg
 1 heaped tablespoon butter
 1 lightly heaped tablespoon plain flour
 4 fl. oz (110ml) milk
 2 eggs
 1 oz (25g) grated Parmesan cheese
 butter and flour for the soufflé dishes

Press out all the water from the spinach, then sieve it or pass it through a blender or food processor. Season with salt and ground nutmeg or mace. Pre-heat oven to Gas mark 6, 400 F, 200 C.

Butter and flour a large soufflé dish or 4 – 6 small ones. Melt the butter, stir in the flour and gradually add the milk. Cook until thickened, then stir in the spinach. Separate egg yolks and whites and fold in grated Parmesan cheese. Whisk whites until stiff and fold into the mixture. Divide between four or six small buttered and floured soufflé dishes or put into one large one. (Quantities are sufficient for four moulds measuring 3 inches – 7½ cm in diameter or six moulds measuring 2½ inches – 5 cm in diameter). Bake until nicely puffed up and browned on top (fifteen to twenty minutes for a large soufflé, eight to ten minutes for small ones, but take this as a rough guide because ovens can vary a lot). Serve at once. □

AJR

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A book with a life of its own

When my autobiography, *PEARLS OF CHILDHOOD*, was published in 1988, I hoped that this story of a Czech – Jewish girl growing up in wartime Britain would be well received, but I never expected such a large and diverse response. It has gone through eight editions and has appeared in paperback and as a 'Talking Book'.

Two years ago it was published in Prague and also serialized on Czech radio. Even Czech TV showed an interest and sent a crew to Britain to make a 40-minute documentary on my life.

What pleased me more than the favourable media reaction were hundreds of letters from all over the world. I was touched to learn how many readers were moved by my story, that it helped some to come to terms with their past, others to cope with illness, bereavement, loneliness. One of the most poignant letters came from an elderly woman in Prague. Alone and bedridden, facing surgery, she prayed for death, until she started to listen to the serialization of my book on the radio. Somehow the courage and the *joie de vivre* of the little girl I was then gave her courage too... "Now at last I have your book!" she wrote. "It stands propped against my bedside lamp and each morning, as I wake, I look at your dear face smiling at me from the cover, I remember your strength and courage and I know I can face yet another day..."

I was thrilled to hear that sometimes I am quoted in synagogues and churches, that the head of an adoption/fostering agency recommends my book to her staff and to prospective parents as giving an insight into the mind of a child torn from home. I particularly treasure the dozens of letters from children. One wrote "Thanks to your book I have realised how very much I love my country..." Another, "Never again will I take my home and my parents for granted. I cannot imagine life without them..."

Every letter is an unexpected bonus, but it was the publication of my book in the USA which brought me the best bonus of all – a relative, a long lost and now much loved second cousin! What a lot of catching up we had to do – all of 55 years!

There was another memorable event which I owe to my book. Since the death of my parents, my home town, which I

visit occasionally, seemed impersonal, full of strangers. But all that changed when my autobiography was published in Czech. People stopped me in the street, wanting to shake my hand. The mayor held a reception in my honour and every child in the town, from thirteen years upwards, was assembled in the large hall for an informal get-together. Every one of them had read my book. "So have most of the townfolk," remarked the mayor. I was moved beyond words, it seemed as if my parents were there with me savouring the happiness of that day, and, all at once, I was home...

□ Vera Gissing

Vera Gissing gives readings from, and talks on, her book to adult groups and schools, with any proceeds going to AKIM, a Jewish charity which helps handicapped children in Israel. She can be contacted on: 01-491-575 791.

Danish liberator

The fate of Harry Pistol, an Austrian Jew serving in the British Army as reported in an AJR Information search notice of February 1995, who was the first British soldier to enter Denmark on 4th May 1945, has been revealed. He died 12 years ago. While serving in the Royal Army Service Corps as a driver in North Germany, he was ordered to take the German generals, who had surrendered to Field-Marshal Montgomery, into Denmark.



*So you only had two Seders this Pesach.
 Thank God we could afford more!*

Obituaries

Hedwig Stevens

Hedwig Stevens, who died in January, aged 91, lived her early life in Vienna and came to England in 1939 with her husband Siegfried and young son Eric. She mastered the English language, learned office skills and from then on was never out of work. "This country is a paradise", she often said, "nobody interferes with you". The Hitler experience gave her an unshakeable sense of her Jewish identity and a desire for strong family unity.

Her greatest pleasures stemmed from an active social life with fellow refugees, mainly in the cafés and clubs around Swiss Cottage, and in following the fortunes of her three granddaughters.

Her last years were difficult. She nursed her husband through long years of Alzheimer's disease and both Hedwig and Siegfried lived in Leo Baeck House before transferring, in 1985, to Osmond House.

Until the very end, Hedwig was interested and curious about everything, enjoyed newspapers and television and arguing with visitors and Osmond House staff, for whose patient good humour she was always grateful.

Dora Segall

Born into a liberal Berlin family 91 years ago, Dora Segall showed an early penchant for the arts, but at her mother's insistence trained as a secretary and ran the office of the German Playwrights' and Composers' Association in Weimar days. She married a Social Democrat journalist working for the German Broadcasting Corporation.

In 1933 he was briefly imprisoned and she lost her job. Thereafter she worked for the *Reichsvertretung* in various capacities; from 1937 she was delegated to the *Jüdische Frauenbund* where she served under Hannah Karminski, with whom she became great friends. In 1939 the Segalls came to London, where he eventually headed the group of Social Democrats in Britain while Dora worked under the tutelage of Anna Schwab in the Welfare Department of the Jewish Refugee Committee.

Postwar she served on the committee of British Aid for German Workers and studied for a Social Science Diploma, which she gained in 1947.

After the reorganisation of Bloomsbury

House in 1949, Dora managed the Subscription Department of Lange, Maxwell and Springer, the chrysalis of the emerging Maxwell media empire. From 1956 she was the Secretary of the London Office of the Leo Baeck Institute, giving sterling assistance to the late Robert Weltsch up to (and beyond) his emigration to Israel.

Her spare time activities revolved around the AJR Club where she worked closely with Margaret Jacoby. When Hanna Karminski House opened its hospitable doors in the mid-sixties Peter Herz (of Blue Danube Club fame) apostrophised her as *die Seele des Hauses*. A more tangible honour was the Federal Order of Merit – for refugee welfare work and services to German-Jewish reconciliation – she received from the German Ambassador in 1984.

Ronald Michael King

Born in Berlin as Werner Oppenheim in 1922, he lost his father at five, but was fortunate to be put on a Kindertransport in 1939. He took up a place at Claysmore School in Dorset, thanks to the generous sponsorship of the school's Headmaster, Evelyn King.

Interned the following year, Werner joined the Pioneer Corps days after his 18th Birthday. Later he transferred to the East Yorkshire Regiment, a stepping stone to achieving his ambition to join the Parachute Regiment. He became a member of the 6th Airborne's 22nd Independent Parachute Brigade. In deference to his benefactor, he changed his name to 'King'.

On D-Day he was in the 4th plane, the 32nd soldier to land in Normandy, six hours before the Invasion, and subsequently saw service in France and Holland, being amongst the first liberating troops to cross the Rhine and enter Bergen Belsen. His service career subsequently took him to the Far East.

With the ending of hostilities and his return to civilian life he concentrated on a career in importing minerals and manufacturing electrical components and cables, eventually building his own business.

He seldom spoke of his earlier years, of trying to come to terms with the murder of his mother and other relatives at Auschwitz, of his striving for recognition and his achievements in business and as a respected 'Mensch'. □

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April 3rd Dr. Erik Millstone (Lecturer at the Science Policy Research Unit, Sussex University): Science in the Policy Making Process.

April 10th Hans Seelig, M.A. (formerly Middlesex University): Music and Romanticism (with recorded illustrations).

April 17th No Lecture (Passover).

April 24th Dr. R.S. Lenk (author and publisher): The Joys and Pitfalls of Self-Publishing. (Dr. Lenk is author of *The Mauritius Affair*, the story of a remarkable escape by a group of Jews from Germany. He will refer to this book).

May 1st Mrs. Elizabeth Spencer (journalist, author, translator): Gertrude Kolmar, her Jewish Poetry, with bi-lingual readings. (Her bi-lingual edition *The Shimmering Crystal* will be published in June).

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Apology

The AJR apologises for any delays in the delivery of the March edition of *AJR Information*. As far as can be ascertained, these were caused by a lack of communication between the distributors and the Royal Mail which we will be doing our best to overcome for subsequent editions. □

Kashrut in the castle

The drive into the hills was pleasant: well tended, neat fields; verges teeming with poppies and cornflowers; magnificent mixed forest of conifers, beeches, oaks and white-stemmed birch trees bathed in the morning sunshine in differing shades of green. We wondered what we would find at our destination. It could be a new exciting project or nothing at all. But even in the latter case the scenery would have been worth the effort.

We found the castle easily on top of the hill. Workmen were busy touching up the outside walls. When we rang the bell we were shown into an elegant, obviously newly painted, one storey building just below the castle. The archive was kept there, we were told.

An elderly gentleman opened the door and welcomed us, the custodian of the archives and cousin of the owner of the castle, the Baron von Stein.

A few years before his retirement Franz, my husband, became interested in his roots and started researching. This quest took us to a village in Thuringia, made newly accessible through German unification. We had obtained the list of the graves in the cemetery and as soon as it was easy to travel to former East Germany we went to see if we could still find some traces. We found four family graves, a synagogue, a mikvah and the house where the Jewish school used to be. They were all in disrepair. No Jews lived in the village anymore.

In the nineteenth century there were 180 Jews out of 450 inhabitants. We were surprised at finding these facts – and even more surprised when at the State Archives in Meiningen we discovered that there had been five villages in the area with a large number of Jews. We found a thick catalogue listing all the documents relating to these Jews from the middle of the 17th century onward. We had found a goldmine: the material had not been seen by any scholar for well over 65 years. We returned to the village twice, got involved with the restoration of the very attractive half-timber synagogue and the only remaining mikvah in Thuringia. But the story that deals with the buildings deserves a separate chapter.

The project went now much past the family research: it became an historical study of the area. The search for more material continued and a few months ago Franz had news of a private archive in a

castle on the border of what was East Germany. This was the archive in which we found ourselves last July.

Baron von Stein is approximately fifty years old and lives in his magnificently restored castle with his wife and three sons. He deals in timber, as he owns large forests. The fields are cultivated by his cousin. Baron von Stein is the descendant of the knights who were once protectors of the Jews on their land. They issued their letters of protection not entirely out of altruism, but very much for financial reasons. The amount of tax paid by Jews was phenomenal and, as we were able to see from the documents, brought in much larger sums for the landlords than agriculture. The Jews were mainly cattle dealers, meat purveyors and moneylenders, all occupations not followed by the Christians of the area; since they were not competing with them most of the time, they were able to live in peace with their neighbours.

From previously found documents we knew that Franz's ancestors were for some time under the protection of the von Steins and now we were in their archive. During the first morning various members of the family came down into the archive to welcome us. The Baron himself came and enquired if there was anything we needed. We were overwhelmed. We were even more astonished when during the morning one of the sons came to invite us for lunch at the castle.

We accepted the invitation gratefully. The Baroness received us in a most friendly manner. She apologized that we would eat next to the kitchen, but as we were only ten at table it was not worth going to the dining room. The wall was hung with a beautiful Flemish tapestry and I did not think that we were treated that badly. The Baroness herself cooked the meal which was excellent. She was very proud that all the vegetables and the salad came from their own garden. We had a delicious meal of game which the Baron and his sons had shot; they hunted regularly. The invitation for the midday meal was repeated all the four days during which we researched the archive. On the second day we were fourteen at table and thus moved into the dining room, where all the walls were covered with magnificent tapestry. Franz was always seated on the right of the Baroness while I sat on the right of the Baron. Our research was followed with great interest and we were shown round all the rooms of the castle. On that day a delicious fillet

of beef was served as the main course.

On the third day the main item on the menu was fillet of pork baked in pastry. When it was brought to the table the Baron told me that usually they first wrap the pork in ham, but they had omitted it this time. I received this information without particular interest; sometimes I tend to be rather slow. But when he repeated it the third time the significance of this revelation suddenly struck me. I asked the Baron if he gave me this information because we were Jews.

"Yes, yes, we especially left out the ham."

Neither Franz nor I are at all religious and we eat everything, but I had to explain some facts of kashrut to the Baron and to the assembled company. Also that if we were staunch about ritual we would not have been able to partake of any of their delicious meals, which would have been a great pity.

In the evening they celebrated their wedding anniversary in a restaurant in the mountains, where they insisted we join them.

In our researches previously we had only traces of Jews living in the area from the early 18th century onward. In the Baron's archives we found documents which confirmed that already in 1632 Jews paid taxes to the Barons von Stein. When we took our leave that night, we were invited to stay in the castle on our next visit. Franz told the Baron that he did not think that his ancestors had been invited to the Baron's table by the Baron's ancestors.

□ Trudie Levi



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