

# AJR Information

Volume L No. 7  
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Don't miss . . .

**Four types  
theorem p.5**

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Bundestag p.12**

**PR and Austrian  
Jew-hatred p.16**

## Did the victors rewrite history?

**A**dam Curtis' *The Living Dead* on BBC 2, asserted that after the war the Allies used all propagandist tricks in the book – including suppression of the truth – to paint themselves white and the Nazis black. Instancing inhuman GI treatment of German PoWs, Curtis almost suggested that morally there wasn't much to choose between the two sides. Would-be-Valiant-for-Truth Curtis blurred vital distinctions: unlike Wehrmacht pogroms, GI atrocities against PoWs were not ordered from on high, nor has agonised debate in this country about the Dresden Raid stopped for 50 years □

A 50-year learning process

## The long look back

**T**he commemoration of the 50th anniversary of VE Day has closed a chapter in world history – the (necessarily lengthy) chapter devoted to interpreting what happened in the course of Hitler's War. After the First World War, Europe had been vouchsafed no comparable period for reflection. The interwar breathing space between the two cataclysms was so brief because the Versailles Settlement had left Germany both with the motive and – paradoxically also the resources – for seeking its violent annulment.

After 1945, the Allies having meanwhile learned from earlier mistakes, Germany received both harsher punishment (occupation, partition, large-scale loss of territory) and readier assistance (Marshall Aid) than after 1918. Allied assistance also took non-material form in the shape of education in democracy. (The Weimar Republic had only been a notional democracy since its élites – academics, civil servants, clergy – were too conservative to believe in popular sovereignty.)

Some of the earliest lessons in democracy after Hitler's War were ill-received: German residents in

the vicinity of concentration camps, who were ordered by Allied soldiers to bury victims' corpses, showed little overt penitence for the crimes committed in their name. However, with the passage of time, the apparently frozen core of the German collective consciousness showed signs of melting – a process aided by such US media products as the TV series *Holocaust* and the film *Schindler's List*.

German public opinion absorbed two further lessons in democracy. In Bonn government and opposition learned to change places without upheaval and evened controversy; abroad the country buried the hatchet with France, mended fences with Israel and sent food to its bitter cold-war enemy, Russia.

To date the process of Germany's moral re-education is well advanced: the inscription in the Memorial Chapel of the Dresden Dom reads: 'What was begun on 30th January 1933 (Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor) ended on 13th February 1945 (the bombing of Dresden).'

In the fraught process of weaning an aberrant nation from its past, setbacks have occurred – even in recent years. One such was the ceremony at Bitburg cemetery with its Waffen SS graves. Others are the exoneration of the Wehrmacht and the trade-off of German civilian suffering (in bombing raids and expulsions from the East) against Nazi crimes. This unrepentant mindset inspired the Dregger Memorandum – published on the eve of the VE Day anniversary; traces of it even found their way into Chancellor Kohl's – and President Mitterrand's – official statements. (How ironic that Mitterrand should have lauded Wehrmacht soldiers just when an exhibition in Hamburg horrifyingly demonstrates their involvement in genocide!)

Nor was it a very salutary experience for TV viewers to see a Birmingham history teacher tell his class that in Nazi Germany a handful of highly motivated baddies told people what to do. To pretend that in the 1930s the German populace was less than highly receptive to the Nazi message distorts the truth – and untruths about yesterday provide poor foundations for the Europe of tomorrow □



Henry and Madeleine Brook greet Lucy Bernheim (right) at the AJR Concert

## What is oral history?

There are many varieties of history. Time was when all we read about were kings and queens, wars and treaties. Fashion changed, and with greater emphasis on socio-economic factors, Churchill's History of the English Speaking Peoples was faulted for devoting many more pages to the Battle of Waterloo than to the Industrial Revolution. With another change in fashion, versions of history drew censure for being 'his story' rather than 'her story'.

Oral history is untouched by fashion, being simply what one generation tells the next (and the one after that) about its own lives.

The unwinding chain of the generations is, and always has been, marked by tension between two opposite forces – that of continuity and that of change. In our own case this tension has been violently distorted: continuity exists merely in the form of reminiscences in the mind – all else has been subject to drastic change, which means that in passing on our memories, we actually create needful links in the chain of generations; to put it another way, we 'make' oral history.

□ RG



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## Profile

### From stepchild of our time to teacher

Herbert Levy was born too late – in 1929 – to have any good memories of Germany, but his early Berlin years were nonetheless filled by the warmth of a close-knit extended family. Soon, though, his father lost his job and he himself was set upon by school playground bullies.

His first school year coincided with the Olympic Games. One summer afternoon, as he and his mother came out of the Tiergarten, they ran into a large crowd



Herbert Levy

lining the road. The next moment strong arms snatched up little Herbert and passed him, over people's heads, to the front of the crowd – so that the lad should get a good view of the Fuehrer on his way to the Olympic Stadium.

One can imagine the turmoil of emotions with which the little mite viewed the approaching motorcade and how he felt when, as protective mimicry, he had to extend his right arm in the Hitler salute.

Though nothing really untoward happened, it was a trauma that left a lasting impression. Thereafter things went rapidly downhill, reaching a nadir with Kristallnacht. In June '39 Herbert left for London to stay with an uncle, a one-time German actor, now a door-to-door salesman. The nine-year-old made himself useful by looking after Onkel Joszi's stock while the latter pounded the pavements.

Two months later Herbert's parents arrived. The resulting appearance of normality was soon shattered by the

outbreak of war. Evacuated to Northamptonshire, Herbert felt so uprooted that the parents connived at his return. He had hardly settled in when another upheaval – namely internment – supervened. Herbert went with his mother to Port Erin, Isle of Man. This too was a painful change, albeit one with a silver lining: internees were spared the Blitz and in the camp Herbert could indulge his youthful penchant for acting. Soon there was yet another change: possessing US affidavits, the Levys were transferred to a mini-internment camp in Wandsworth, London, to be in easy reach of the American Consulate. The stay at Wandsworth, which gave them their first taste of the Blitz, proved fruitless when, due to heavy shipping losses, all Atlantic passenger sailings were suspended.

To compensate, internment was now over and the family enjoyed a measure of normality. The father went into a munitions factory, Onkel Joszi joined the BBC's German section and Herbert attended school regularly. After school hours he took part in amateur theatricals staged by the Hampstead-based Free German Youth.

Soon after the end of the war he passed the matriculation exam and went into an office job; unfulfilled at work he enrolled at drama evening classes. These classes led to non-singing parts with the Sadler's Wells Opera – a hundred appearances in *Die Fledermaus* – and the UK premiere of Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*.

At 21, now a British citizen, Herbert was called up and served in the Army Education Corps. Back in civvy street, after rejecting the stage as too precarious a career, he went into the world of commerce. Once again he filled his evenings with something remote from his daytime preoccupations: he undertook youth work, including amateur dramatics, at Belsize Square Synagogue.

It was there that he met his future wife Lilian, a child survivor of the Holocaust. Bringing up a family they continued their communal activities. This involvement culminated with the Anne Frank Travelling Exhibition to which Herbert, a recent retiree, devotes most of his spare time. In addition he has, earlier this year, published the autobiographical *Voices from the Past (The Book Guild at £12.95 and £6.95)* which serves the same aim as the exhibition: to educate (especially) the young about the greatest crime in history.

□ RG

## Letter from Prague

The Jewish community in the Czech Republic, which has some ten million citizens, must be among the smallest in the world. The total registered in all local communities is around 3,000. It is, however, an interesting fact that the Jewish population has recently started to grow in numbers – in Prague from 850 in 1989 to the present 1,200. Furthermore, the community has become much more active.

This development is undoubtedly a consequence of the so-called Velvet Revolution of November 1989. During the previous totalitarian era, antisemitism was not officially acknowledged and it was even claimed that it did not exist – Zionism was of course an 'unfriendly imperialistic†movement'. The ruling Communist Party oversaw and limited activities of Jewish communities and individuals by means of internal decrees. Jews therefore tended to keep quiet about their faith and interest in Israel and frequently kept these from their children, especially so in mixed marriages. Similarly, they did not talk about the fact that they spent years in Nazi concentration camps and that grandfather, grandmother, aunts and uncles, much missed by children, perished in the camps. Today they are rejoining the Jewish Community. At the same time, their children and grandchildren – we call them the 2nd and 3rd generations after those who survived the Holocaust – are beginning to take an interest in the roots of Judaism, in old and recent history, in traditions and in the suffering of Jews in the 20th century.

Various organisations are being created whose activities are diversifying and enriching the life of Jewish communities. In Prague such organisations are mainly in the cultural field. As examples we can mention the Society for Jewish Culture, the Publishing House Franz Kafka, the Jewish publisher Sefer, Beit Prague and Union of Jewish Youth.

It would be difficult to compile a list of all institutions, organisations and companies which discover, make known and publish works with a Jewish theme or by Jewish authors. Such works are broadcast by most television and radio stations. Then there are the programmes presented at the Prague Jewish Centre. Earlier this year the Centre hosted an evening with the Jewish composer J. Vogel together

with an exhibition of paintings, a lecture on Jewish traditions and customs, a social meeting with the Israeli Ambassador, M. Yegar, a tea dance with music by the O. Ernyeie jazz band, a literary evening with the director of the Jewish Museum and author L. Pavlat, a 'film Thursday' showing *Gideon's Sword*; additionally there were 'Open Meetings' with interesting personalities, a literary evening with Mr. L. Schever, the author of the book *About death which did not come*, and so on. Though we will not detail activities in Prague theatres, concert and lecture halls, we would like to acquaint AJR readers with one outstanding and, in the international context, perhaps unique event.

Radio station Regina of the Czech Republic's state broadcasting system covers Prague and Central Bohemia. Every Tuesday afternoon since December 1994 the melody of the well known song *Hevenu Shalom Aleichem* introduces a thirty-minute programme Shalom Aleichem produced by the Prague Jewish community and edited by L. Pavlat, director of the Jewish Museum. It is in its way a historic step in that there has hitherto never been a special regular Jewish programme prepared by our community. Culturally, the publicity of the programme is not only aimed at the Jews – on the contrary, the programme informs listeners about Jewish problems in the historical and contemporary context and presents information relevant to these themes. Hebrew and Yiddish songs are interspersed among individual items on Judaism, on our recent and ancient history and on the relevance of traditional Jewish ethics to the solution of today's problems. Each programme also includes a talk by, or an interview with, well-known Jewish writers who may be 'in the news' with a new book, or for example, reminiscences of a concentration camp survivor. Book reviews, information about cultural events and worldwide news items concerning Jewish matters also feature regularly.

The Jewish Community of Prague and of the Czech Republic is, after a hiatus of half a century, beginning to resume its place in the sun in Central Europe.

□ H. Orlicky

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## Reviews

## In the eye of the storm

Herbert Freedon, *THE JEWISH PRESS IN THE THIRD REICH*, Berg, £25

Ruth Röcher, *DIE JUDISCHE SCHULE IM NATIONALSOZIALISTISCHEN DEUTSCHLAND 1933-1942*, Dipa-Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, DM54.

When Hitler seized power and began to dismantle the German Constitution, the *circa* half-million Jews were dismayed and worried, but did not immediately panic. (The point needs emphasising for the benefit of the younger generation, many of whom believe otherwise.) This state of affairs lasted, despite steady deterioration, until Crystal Night and the deportations. The two books under review mirror this process.

For Jews unable to find a new home abroad quickly – the great majority – the Nazis' *gleichgeschaltete* (co-ordinated) press was an ordeal to read, so Jewish papers expanded or were newly founded. Jewish journalists, who had been well represented on German papers, all lost their jobs almost immediately, so that much talent was readily available.

Jewish papers had until then been largely geared to informing their readers about local and possibly regional events. After the Nazi accession to power, information for the Jews could be a matter of life or death. A world away from the old type of *Gemeindeblatt* was the *Jüdische Rundschau*, a paper of considerable intellectual distinction and the official organ of the German Zionist Association, which might be compared to the *Jewish Chronicle* here.

In this context one is surprised to be reminded by Herbert Freedon, that in 1933 the *Rundschau* advocated that Jewish "citizens" should stay in Germany. In fairness it must be remembered that visas were hard to come by and Palestine was all but barred.

Even the book's cover design will remind readers who "were there" of the familiar titles of the Jewish papers in the Terrible Thirties.

Frau Röcher's scholarly history of the German-Jewish schools delineates how the community coped with the education crisis when Jewish children were increasingly barred from attendance in "Aryan" schools. In the bigger towns Jewish

schools had already been quite well established on a voluntary basis.

Many more were then founded; these are listed from their inception to closure and their areas of specialisation enumerated. Apart from intellectual pursuits, with Hebrew and Jewish history prominent, much stress was laid on practical skills which would make the pupil a desirable immigrant, particularly in what was then British-mandated Palestine.

One positive byproduct of the segregation of Jewish school-children was that they were thereby spared the derision – and worse – of fellow pupils which would otherwise have been their daily lot.

□ John Rossall

## Geriatric Elsinore

Alan Isler, *THE PRINCE OF WEST END AVENUE*, Jonathan Cape (paperback), London £9.99.

This impressive first novel chronicles how camp survivor Otto Korner, resident of the Emma Lazarus Retirement Home (Manhattan, New York), initially cast as the ghost, than the gravedigger, in the home's amateur production of Hamlet, becomes the director and leading actor.

Korner's reveries switch from childhood in Germany and his coming of age in Zurich to thoughts about his lusty and lively – well, mentally lively – fellow residents; their loves and histories. The author chronicles the trials of mounting an amateur production when illness, death, quarrels and all the impairments of old age dog the attempts to present the play on the home's open day. As he prepares to act the Prince, Korner knows his own end is near. "The readiness is all".

A new member of staff at the Emma Lazarus has the initials, the looks and *chutzpah* of the young woman he loved and lost in Zurich. Her memory has always haunted him. Otto Korner remembers, too, how he refused to leave Germany after Kristallnacht and tries to come to terms with his guilt for the way he treated his wife, and for the death of his wife and son. The misery and horrors of the concentration camp reached their nadir for him in the inability "to retain the merest shred of human dignity".

The narrative moves seamlessly between

past and present; the portraits of residents and staff are rich and full of humour. When the actress playing Ophelia objects to the references to Christian burial in the text, she is reminded that King Claudius has to pray on his knees and is asked, "Perhaps we should equip him with a *tallis* and *tephillin*?" One reviewer has compared Isler to I.B. Singer, another to Saul Bellow. I found echoes of Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* which I loved so much as a teenager. "Ve English", says one of Zangwill's Whitechapel residents, warned about going out in the rain, "Ve English, ve valk abaht in all vedders".

I find a similar humour and compassion in Isler. This novel is complex and intricate and, ultimately, a very moving work. Mr. Isler is said to be writing his second novel. We await it with interest.

□ Laura Howe

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## Four types theorem

As readers will, hopefully, be aware, I am a person of protean diversity – editor, reporter, critic, versifier and jester. With this article I venture into virgin territory, namely sociology, wherein I hope to establish my credentials with a Theorem of the Four Types of Diaspora Jews. The four types are: A the self-hating Jew; B the citizen first, Jew second; C the Jew first, citizen second; D the 100% Jew. These four mindsets are, I submit, unevenly distributed among our co-religionists – so unevenly, in fact, that one could represent their relative incidence by means of a squashed diamond shape. This diagram would show very few self-haters at the top, substantially more (but still not too many) 100-percenters at the bottom – and a huge bulge of Bs and Cs in the middle. The proportion of Bs to Cs varies from country to country as well as from period to period.

In pre-Hitler Germany Bs predominated over Cs; in present-day USA (and France with its North African majority) it is the other way round. In prewar Poland group D was well represented – and still is in pockets (Brooklyn, Stamford Hill) in the contemporary West.

Though the self-hating As are totally insignificant today, they included outstanding intellectuals – Otto Weininger, Walter Rathenau, Karl Kraus, Ferdinand Lassalle – in Central and Eastern Europe; Polish-born Rosa Luxemburg wanted to hear no more tales of 'ghetto suffering'; Boris Pasternak derogated Judaism as a superannuated belief that caused needless suffering.

Today when pitifully few Jews live in Germany or Poland, and fewer still inhabit the mental space occupied by Weininger or Rathenau, the self-haters are a near-endangered species (with the important exception of the inveterate anti-Zionist Naum Chomsky). What is interesting, however, is the relative distribution of prominent individuals – politicians or intellectuals – among groups B or C. The British parliamentary spectrum includes examples of both, with Nigel Lawson and Michael Howard as typical Bs and Greville Janner and Lord Young as unmistakable Cs. Among UK literati Tom Stoppard and Harold Pinter belong to the former group and Arnold Wesker and Bernard Kops to the latter.

In the United States Jewish writers of the greatest eminence, such as Saul Bel-

low, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, are unambiguously Jewish-American with all the hyphenation implies in terms of priority.

In America likewise the whole contentious issue of Jewish identity has spilled over into popular culture, particularly film. It is a truism that the US film industry was largely a Jewish creation, but for its first half century Hollywood steered painstakingly clear of Jewish issues. In the late 1940s it at last produced movies like *Crossfire* that dealt with antisemitism; it is only now in the mid-nineties that we can see movies of Jewish soul-searching.

The film *Quiz Show* opens a window on the absorbing subject of Jewish identity problems in a benign Diaspora. It highlights two clearly contrasted Jewish protagonists, each of them an exemplary representative of his group. The toppled TV quiz champion, Herbie Stempel, is a typical C; he has a Jewish wife, lives in the New York district of Queens and even uses Yiddish expressions when testifying before an august Congressional Committee. By contrast the Ivy League law graduate who finally exposes the quiz show as a scam is a B; he lives in a salubrious suburb, pursues his quarry as a matter of principle and not out of Jewish solidarity and has a gentile wife. It is she who upbraids him as a 'Jewish Uncle Tom' for exonerating the final quiz champion of blame because the latter is a Wasp (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) member of the Harvard University élite.

There is a neat symmetry in the fact that Ralph Fiennes, who plays the flawed quiz show hero, is currently barnstorming in Hackney – that rich Jewish seedbed which has given the United Kingdom Harold Pinter (B), Arnold Wesker (C), and Stamford Hill (D).

□ Richard Grunberger

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## REFUGEE SOLDIERS' REGISTER

Sir – The fact that some 10,000 refugees from Germany and Austria served in HM Forces during the last war is something which appears to have been almost completely forgotten, although I think I can say without fear of contradiction that we contributed to the Allied war effort out of proportion to our numbers. Quite a few of us are still around and capable of telling our tales. However, apart from a single publication, *I Understand the Risks* by Prof. Norman Bentwich, which appeared in 1949, nothing has been written about us.

Having retired some time ago I should now like to put this right and as a first measure am attempting to get as many individual histories as possible. I have started a register, to which I have recently added the 400th entry.

Obviously, if anyone does not want his or her particulars to be published, such a wish would be respected, but I would nevertheless ask that I might be allowed to register at least the name and unit(s) in which the person served. As to my own credentials I might mention that I was in 229 Company, Pioneer Corps, until my transfer to the gunners in 1943.

Neumarkt 3 Peter Leighton-Langer  
64625 Bensheim I  
Germany  
(Tel: 0049-6251-62308)

## REFUGEES NO MORE?

Sir – Of course we are refugees and shall be to our dying days. And so are Vietnamese, Hungarians, Rwandans, Palestinians and many other victims of this turbulent century. We are a sizeable minority of the world's population, and it is the duty of those who are able to do so to ensure that there will be fewer refugees in the future.

On a different subject. Oscar Pressburger's 'The wedding ring' was a delight to read at a time when most fifty-year-old memories are tragic.

Silver End Dorle Potten  
Witham, Essex

## LETHAL HUMOUR

Sir – When I left Germany in August '39 my 15-year-old sister Kitty smuggled out – unknown to my parents – a small notebook with anti-Nazi jokes in her hand luggage; its discovery could have cost us our lives.

The notebook is now in the Wiener Library at the disposal of researchers. Herewith two sample jokes:

a) In the Fourth Reich a questionnaire will ask 'Have you been in a concentration camp – and if not, why not?'

b) A man wants to buy a painting of a prominent Nazi. Shown portraits of Hitler, Goering, Goebbels, etc., he says, "Actually I'd like to hang them all."

Warwick Road Ingeborg Samson  
Bishops Stortford  
Herts.

## MARRYING OUT

Sir – G.F. Manley states (Letters May '95) "Luckily for the world Signorina Laura Capon-Fermi had agreed to marry out." One might add, "Luckily for the Jewish people, an earlier Jewish girl also agreed to marry out: Queen Esther of Purim fame."

Walter Goddard

## THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

Sir – In the May issue Prof. Leslie Brent proposed several answers to the question why Allied Forces did not bomb Auschwitz. A few years ago, a BBC-TV interview put the same question to Sir Leonard Cheshire who had been a group captain in the RAF. One or several escapees from Auschwitz had drawn out a dimensional ground map of the Birkenau installations and Sir Leonard was asked whether it would have been feasible for a group flight based in Southern Italy to bomb them to good effect. Sir Leonard answered that it would indeed have been possible and he indicated on the drawn plan how his aircraft would have attacked

the site so as to minimise casualties among prisoners. He thought an attempt could and should have been made.

The BBC transmission also established that the escapees and supporters had tried to present their case to the Minister for Air Warfare, a person noted for his humanitarian outlook. However, the lower ranks in the Ministry seem to have prevented access to him and withheld the information in ignorance of its general and strategic importance to the pursuit of the war.

Alleyn Road  
London SE21

Ludwig Meyer

Sir – This is dealt with, in depth, in David S. Wyman's *The Abandonment of the Jews* (Pantheon Books, New York).

In his concluding chapter 'What might have been done' Wyman states: "Some military assistance was possible. The Air Force could have eliminated the Auschwitz killing installations. Some bombing of deportation railroads was feasible. The military could have aided in other ways without impeding the war effort. It was, in fact, legally required to do so by the executive order which established the War Refugee Board."

Am Bischofskreuz  
Freiburg

Dr. Otto Ernst Haas

## CAR PARKING PROBLEMS

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Mayflower Lodge  
Regents Park Road, Finchley

Eva Freen

## THE WEDDING RING

Sir – When I read Osca Pressburger's story (May issue) I was overwhelmed by the coincidence with my own.

Born in Berlin in 1909, I came to England in 1939. When war was declared my future husband Georg Lewy joined the Pioneer Corps and was stationed in Kitchener Camp. At our first meeting in blacked-out Oxford Street I stumbled over some handbags; that's how our brief

courtship began. We married in February 1940 at Ramsgate Register Office and the rabbi in the camp performed a Jewish service. As I worked in domestic service in London, neither of us had money to buy a wedding ring.

So one day Georg rang me and asked me to send him a little piece of wire or string to have the measurement for my ring finger. I did that, and his wonderful friends in Kitchener Camp managed to make a lovely little golden ring which has never left my finger to this day.

For security reasons the Home Office changed my husband's name to George Lesley. Unfortunately, he died in 1980 and I now live alone.

Vincent Gardens  
London NW2

Mrs. H. Lesley

### OTTO SCHIFF MEMOIRE

Sir – May I seek some help through your columns for an essay I have been asked to write about the late Otto Schiff.

I was his private secretary in the City from 1933 to 1939 and thereafter worked with him at the Jewish Refugee Committee.

My essay is to be a memoir of Otto Schiff and I feel that memories from some of those he helped would enhance this work. Could I ask any readers who could assist me in this way to send me a brief note which might be suitable for inclusion in this essay? I feel it would be a much wider tribute if this could be done. Unfortunately, nothing of this kind has so far been written and those who knew him are, of course, getting fewer.

Flat 2  
50 Weymouth Street  
London W1N 3LQ

Joan Stiebel

### DISGUST AT RABBI'S WORDS

Sir – After the Bishop of Dover blessed live animals being transported to be slaughtered abroad, the rabbi from Folkstone spoke comparing this cruel situation with the Holocaust.

I find it incomprehensible how anybody can compare these two acts! How many AJR readers saw this depressing programme and felt similarly angry, indignant and disgusted?

Sharpthorpe  
East Grinstead

Gertrud Dann

### Bad faith

Many Jews believe Judaism not to be an evangelising faith. However, in the first centuries of the current era the Jews were rather more successful in attracting converts than Christians. When Constantine made his disastrous decision, not just for the Jews but for mankind, to give Christianity precedence, the Jewish population of the Roman Empire had reached 10%. The Christians were 6%. The very first law passed by the Christians from their vantage point with the Emperor, was to make conversion to Judaism punishable by death – both for the convertee and the convertor. The Rabbinic in their wisdom halted conversion and to this day immense caution is taken for fear of a Christian backlash. When reading early Christian texts one must remember that they were not doing very well so that when the Christian Manifesto, the New Testament, was written they had to market their gods: they diminished Judaism. The gospels are really four polemic novelettes or pamphlets which do not stand up to examination. Thomas Paine, some 200 years ago wrote *The Age of Reason*. It is presently in print as a paperback. In this book he shows up the absurdities and inconsistencies of these four surviving gospels – another nine were rejected and largely destroyed. The anti-Jewish nature of these works is painful.

Another book, *Faith and Fratricide – The Theological Roots of Antisemitism* is by a Roman Catholic, Rosemary Reuther. There are a few Catholics, some of them belonging to religious orders who recognise the guilt and the continuing misrepresentation of Jews in all Christian teaching. The problem is, how can one eliminate anti-Jewish teaching when the very basics of Christian teaching is antisemitic? The fourth gospel is most painful of all. The gospel created a sadomasochistic, family-hating, death-seeking Jesus Christ who is represented as using Satan to persuade Judas Iscariot to perform an act to help Jesus to make his human sacrifice. Having performed that sacrifice under the influence of Satan, he is betrayed by Jesus Christ to be execrated by Christians in every generation. Since Judas is said by the gospel makers and gospel mongers to be necessary for their and all mankind's salvation, why has he not a place of honour? (See Hyam MacCoby's *Judas Iscariot and the myth of*

*Jewish Evil*). "Judas" = "Jew" in Christian consciousness.

Emerging from the Auschwitz memorial meeting on the 50th anniversary of the camp's liberation, one reflected that we had been in the presence of a fine, compassionate, upright man, General Vasily Petrenko. Catholics, who to this day condemn the Soviet Union and its atrocities as being worse than that of the Germans and their European Christian allies, called the army that General Petrenko represented, "Marxist-Atheist". Auschwitz was liberated from its European Catholic Commandant, Hoess, by an army of Marxist-Atheists who were, to a large extent, Asiatic. Certainly that Red Army contained millions who were not European or Christian. Those of us who survived the War should never forget that without the Red Army the outcome might have been different.

□ Gerald Samuels

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### JACS

at Belsize Square Synagogue

#### Programme for July

2pm – 4pm every Tuesday in the Hall

- 4th **Gladys Godley JP**, member of the Synagogue and Joint Programme Officer for JACS, will tell us about some of her experiences as a JP – **'A View From The Bench'**.
- 11th **Elizabeth Fried**, a member of the congregation and a rising singer, will be performing a **Song Recital** including works by Kurt Weill, Gershwin, Schubert and familiar folk songs.
- 18th **Judith Leaver**, Chair of the **Northwood Branch of the Community Health Council**, will be talking about the work of the committee and how it performs within the National Health Service.
- 25th **John Marshall MP**, member for Hendon, will be talking about **'This Year In Parliament'**. So much has happened that this should be a very informative and lively afternoon.

50p for members, 70p for visitors.  
Membership £4 per annum – application forms available at each meeting.

# The AJR at Work

## Concert call



Hella Pick, distinguished journalist and Deputy Editor of the *Observer* newspaper, pictured with Richard Grunberger, Editor of *AJR Information*, at the recital given by the Schidlof Quartet at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London in aid of AJR Self Aid and the Wiener Library.



Former members of the AJR Executive, Helmut Rothenberg, right, and Arnold Horwell, in the concert hall foyer.

## AJR in the North of England

With the help of enthusiastic volunteers, we have established successful AJR groups in South London and in Birmingham (covering the Midlands). We are now lucky enough to have found someone willing to launch a North of England AJR group based in Manchester.

While by definition AJR members do not tend to be in their first flush of youth, we do have a number of members who are second generation and it would be stimulating for all concerned if a group could be established covering both first and second generations. Some activities will appeal principally to one or other generation, but others, such as outings,

music, bridge and lectures, would appeal to both generations.

Accordingly, whatever your age, if you live in the North of England here is an opportunity for you and your families to get together with people from a common background. Please register your interest by phoning Werner Lachs on 0161 773 4091. Subsequently, details of the launch meeting will be publicised in this journal □

## Caring for dementia sufferers

Camden Council's Raglan Street Day Centre caters for people with varying degrees of dementia. Helena King, the centre's organiser, recently spoke to members of AJR's voluntary visitors' group about its work.

A client's suitability for the centre is assessed either by a doctor (GP or psycho-geriatrician) or by a community psychiatric nurse. There is a high staff-client ratio with each carer on average responsible for seven people. The regular programme consists of music, bingo, massage and trips out as well as meals, and an activities programme includes personal and social therapeutic care. The centre is secure, though occasionally attendance has to be discontinued if someone manifests continual violent behaviour.

In the ensuing discussion AJR's volunteers were anxious to learn more about the assessment of dementia and the training of carers, though it was apparent knowledge of dementia was still at an early stage. Some sufferers were capable of presenting a favourable façade, even during an assessment. In the face of apparently irrational behaviour, offering comfort and trying to understand their feelings called for care and personal commitment of a high order. □ LH

## The AGM of Club 1943

The Annual General Meeting of Club 1943 took place at its usual venue, Belsize Square Synagogue, on Monday 15th May. Chairman Hans Seelig reported the sad loss during the year of three of its long-standing members: Mrs. Dora Segall, Mr. Kurt Pflüger

and Mrs. Herta Ningo, all of whom had in the past made valuable contributions as speakers.

There has been an increased interest in the particular cultural programme that the Club provides, resulting in new members attending the meetings. They have helped to enliven the discussions following on the lectures, as has publication of the programmes in *AJR Information*. Speakers, many of whom are eminent in their fields, seem to have enjoyed their visits and readily expressed their willingness to return.

It may be appropriate to highlight just two outstanding events: the visits of the painter Hjórdís Dreschel and the poetess Elizabeth Spencer with her exceptionally sensitive translations of the poetry of Gertrud Kolmar. These two impressed us especially because of their profound artistic and poetic personalities. Other contributors have come from the Club's own members, the universities and members of the P.E.N. Centre, German Speaking Writers Abroad. The season ends on 3rd July with Mr. David Maier, editor of the journal *Our Congregation* and a regular contributor to *AJR Information*. His controversial subject will be "Is there a case for British War Crimes Trials?" The Club re-opens on September 11th □

## South London AJR

For your diary:

The next two meetings of the group will be:

**Wednesday** (note not Thursday)  
**19th July 2-4pm**

Symposium of Members' Life Experiences and their contributions to this country

**Thursday 21st September 2-4pm**

A speaker from the  
Institute of Jewish Affairs

Both meetings will be held at the  
**South London Liberal Synagogue,  
Prentis Road, Streatham**

Tea and biscuits will be served

(Minimum contribution  
AJR members £1, non-members £1.50)

We look forward to your company

**Message from Ernest David**

**T**his year much is being written about the events of 50 years ago, but I also remember 40 years ago, when I was living in Germany as a young officer of the Royal Air Force and, as such, a representative of one of the occupying powers. When the train first passed into Germany it gave me a strange sensation; here was I, a Jewish refugee, returning to Germany in my present capacity. I certainly did not feel that this marked the liberation of Germany from Nazism. Rather, it felt like well-deserved retribution on Germany for having embraced Nazism with enthusiasm in preceding years.

Manfred Rommel was quoted recently as saying that, "The young generation sometimes behaves as if the Nazis were a foreign tribe who settled in Germany in 1933 and disappeared in 1945. We must not forget that they were Germans. Hitler

did not have many supporters left by May 1945, but he had plenty in 1940."

In 1955 I did not get the impression that those Germans I spoke to regretted the Nazi era. They regretted having lost the war.

I believe that things are different today. Within the modern Western European democracies, it is not in Germany that the right-wing extremists are making headway. It is in Austria, France, Belgium and even in the USA. What is comforting and reassuring is that Britain, in 1940 the sole country fighting Nazism, is still today a country where extremists of either side find little favour and have no influence □

**SEARCH NOTICES**

**Rosenthal/Schallmach/Schwartz/Bechner.** Bela Rosenthal is seeking relatives of Siegfried Rosenthal, born 2.4.1896 in Meseritz, and of Else  
*continued*

Rosenthal (first married to Martin Fischer) née Schallmach, born 24.12.1902 in Posen, lived in Berlin before the war. Also for Leo and Larilie Bechner, née Rosenthal, born 25.1.1898 in Meseritz, and Kurt Rosenthal, born 3.4.1899 in Meseritz, who lived in Berlin. Also for relatives of Bela Schwartz, née Schallmach, born in Posen around 1890, and her children Marion and Siegfried.

Please contact Bela Rosenthal, 4 Court Close, St. John's Wood Park, London NW8 6NN.

**Dr. Franz Bial.** Anna and Lily Bial, formerly of Aichholzgasse 5 in the 12 district of Vienna. The Jewish Museum of Vienna wishes to trace Lily Bial, born 1926, believed to have emigrated to England in 1939; may have married after the war and emigrated to Israel, etc. Museum wishes to return recently discovered letters and photographs of her family. Please write to Annette Eisenberg, JMV, Trattnerhof 2/101, A-1010 Wien, Austria.

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*Afternoon entertainment* –

**JULY**

- Sunday 2 THE KENTERTAINERS
- Monday 3 A HANDFUL OF SONGS – Helen Smith (Soprano) accompanied by Philip Mountford (Piano)
- Tuesday 4 TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT LOVE – Ruti Halvani (Soprano) accompanied by Nigel Foster (Piano)
- Wednesday 5 OPERA POPS – accompanied by Margaret Gibbs (Piano)
- Thursday 6 DUO CABARET – Helena Guest (Soprano) accompanied by Barry Wynford-Dawes (Piano)
- Sunday 9 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

- Monday 10 THE LIFE & MUSIC OF IVOR NOVELLO – Presented by Georgina Brazier-Potter
- Tuesday 11 AN AFTERNOON OF LIGHT CLASSICAL MUSIC – Ronen Kory (Cello)
- Wednesday 12 SHARE A TUNE – Judy Magnus & Gillian Sonin (Piano Duo)
- Thursday 13 THE MELODY LINGERS ON – Judith Colman (Soprano) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)
- Sunday 16 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 17 a) OUTING TO TYRINGHAM NATURE CLINIC  
b) HEBE & GEOFFREY IN HARMONY – Hebe (Soprano) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)
- Tuesday 18 THE GEOFFREY STRUM & JOHNNY WALTON DUO
- Wednesday 19 A MUSICAL MEDLEY FOR PIANO & VOICE – Melanie Mehta (Soprano) accompanied by Martin Sharpe (Piano)
- Thursday 20 SONGS FROM FAR & NEAR – Fiona Chen (Soprano) accompanied by Christopher Rouse (Piano)
- Sunday 23 OPEN DAY AT DAY CENTRE

- Monday 24 "ROYAL WOMEN" – IN WORDS – COSTUMES & MUSIC – Presented by Carolyn James
- Tuesday 25 ARTISTRY IN SONG – Lecia Robertson (Soprano) accompanied by Martin Pacey (Piano)
- Wednesday 26 SUNRISE – SUNSET – Heidi Pegler (Soprano) accompanied by Simon Kent (Piano)
- Thursday 27 PIPPA REID ENTERTAINS ON GUITAR
- Sunday 30 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 31 AN AFTERNOON OF MUSIC with Doris Samuels and Marion Hartman
- AUGUST**
- Tuesday 1 THE INTERNATIONAL DUO – Jaehong Yim (Violin) accompanied by Michael Schreider (Piano)
- Wednesday 2 DICHTERLIEBE & OTHERS – Sean Williams (Tenor) accompanied by Andrew Pink (Piano)
- Thursday 3 OPERA & OPERETTA IN AUGUST – Laurence Hart (Baritone) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)
- Sunday 6 DAY CENTRE CLOSED – FAST OF AV

### FAMILY Deaths

**Bernstein.** Gertrude Bernstein died peacefully on 6th May 1995, aged 95. Sadly missed by family and friends.

**Hahn.** We lost our dearest friend Charlotte Hahn so suddenly that we are heartbroken. She died on 29th April and will always be in our hearts. Gusti and Irene.

**Joseph.** Edith Joseph (née Pollak). Born Vienna 1914; died 10 May 1995. Missed by family and friends. Marion, Stephen, Nicola Black.

**Lawrence.** Trudy Lawrence (née Gassenheimer) passed away on 12th May 1995 peacefully, aged 78, after suffering from motor-neurone disease for 22 months. Sadly missed by husband Martin, son David and hundreds of loyal friends. May her soul rest in peace.

**Jarecki.** Hilda Jarecki. A light has gone out. She died on May 10th after a long and painful illness. Mourned by her life-long partner Sophie Friedlander and her family in England, Israel and Germany.

### Golden Wedding

Herta and Walter Kammerling of Bournemouth are celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary. They were presented with a holiday in Venice by their family.

### CLASSIFIED Companions/Carers

Seeking companion to assist elderly woman cope with life. Belsize Park/Chalk Farm area. Would require tact and flexibility, visiting at least daily. Some shopping help useful. Fee negotiable approx. £40-£50 p.w. depending on input. Contact Mike Feingold on 0171 722 9360, or Chris Morgan on 0171 794 4338 Ext. 81.

**Companion/Carer** with secretarial and multilingual skills. Lady prepared to act as companion for elderly or housebound person in North London area. Car owner. Please phone 0181 202 2108.

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### Miscellaneous

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a study by **Alan Bullock** (serialised in AJR Information) A limited number of the complete study are available to AJR members. Please enclose a SAE minimum A5 size.

We invite you to come to our  
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### AJR Outing from Birmingham

Sunday 9th July 1995  
Day trip from  
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Alice Schwab

## Art Notes

The exhibition of works by Isidor Kaufmann (1853-1921) at the Vienna Jewish Museum was accompanied by a magnificent illustrated catalogue. Kaufmann, a member of the Viennese assimilated Jewish community, discovered the rich Jewish life in Moravia, Hungary, the shtetls of Galicia and Bukovina and painted unforgettable pictures of students, scholars, synagogues and prayer-houses. One of the most interesting pictures shown at the exhibition and illustrated in the catalogue was 'The Rabbi's Visit' which was acquired for the Emperor's picture collection and later transferred to the Belvedere Palace. In 1940 it was removed from the collection and sold. It is now in private hands in England.

**Rites of Passage: Art for the End of the Century**, is at the *Tate Gallery* (until 3 September). Works of eleven artists, including Joseph Beuys, are being shown and reflect the artists' responses to changing circumstances in their personal lives, raising issues of sexuality, religion and ageing.

**Mrs Jordan, the Duchess of Drury Lane**, is the title of an exhibition at *Kenwood* (7 September-3 December).

**The Landscapes of France: Impressionism and its rivals**, can still be seen at the *Hayward Gallery* (until 28 August). Very well worth a visit!

There are two interesting exhibitions to be seen at the *Whitechapel Art Gallery* (until 10 September). In the lower gallery there is **Drawing the Line**, a BT-supported National Touring Exhibition from the Hayward Gallery. 180 drawings by nearly as many artists are being shown, including works by Leonardo, Michelangelo and, amongst the moderns, Picasso and Matisse. In the upper gallery there are new works by John Virtue, who was born in Lancashire and studied at the Slade under Frank Auerbach.

We have lots to thank the Swiss for, watches, chocolate and cheese, but less well-known is their remarkable tradition of private collecting. From Manet to Gauguin: **Masterpieces from Swiss Private Collections** is at the *Royal Academy* (until 8 October).



Erasmus of Rotterdam, 1526, engraving by Albrecht Dürer, the British Museum.

**Frank Auerbach and the National Gallery: working after the Masters**, is at the *National Gallery*, (until 17 September). The exhibition comprises small drawings made by Auerbach in the Gallery when faced with problems in his own work, and also six versions of pictures in the Gallery's collection, conceived as independent works. Auerbach, born in Germany, is one of the country's leading artists and one of the most significant members of the 'School of London'.

After its successful 80th Anniversary exhibition, the *Ben Uri Art Gallery* is holding a retrospective exhibition of works by Bernard Scott (1918-1990) (until 23 July). Monica Bohm-Duchen will be talking about Marc Chagall at the Gallery on Wednesday, 12 July, at 7 pm (admission £2 for members, £3 for all others).

**German Renaissance Prints 1490-1550** are being shown in Room 90, at the *British Museum* (until 22 October). This exhibition is drawn from the Museum's own extensive collection and includes works by Dürer, the Nuremberg 'Little Masters', the ambitious print projects of the Emperor Maximilian, polemical broadsheets used by Protestant reformers, large woodcuts for wall decoration and small ornamental prints.

**Marlborough Graphics** are showing **Lucian Freud Etchings: a Retrospective 1946-1995** (until 8 July). Marlborough will also be publishing 'The Etchings of Lucian Freud: a catalogue raisonné by Craig Hartley of the Fitzwilliam Museum at the end of June.

Paul Klee's **The Bauhaus Years** can be seen (until 14 July) at Berggruen & Zevi Ltd, 33 Davis Street, W1 □

## SB's Column

The Jewish Museum in Vienna currently shows the exhibition **Antisemitic Prejudices** (until July 23rd) with exhibits ranging from the days of Burgomaster Lueger to those of Chancellor Kreisky. Attention also focuses on the notorious allegations about 'Jewish attempts at world-domination' and on the eventual mass destruction of 50 years ago.

**Eisenstadt**. This summer the capital of Burgenland province devotes itself to the Esterházy family with an exhibition about their love of art and music, depicting them as princely magnates, diplomats and patrons. A further exhibition is dedicated to the composer Josef Haydn, who spent 30 years with the Esterházy as adviser, music master and conductor.

**A much beloved quiz master**. In our television-influenced age, Germany has produced many show hosts, but few of Jewish origin. Berlin-born Hans Rosenthal, who lost all his family in concentration camps which he miraculously survived, became the most popular quiz-master on radio and television. The autobiography *Two lives in Germany* describes his rise to almost unheard-of popularity among audiences thanks to his quick ripostes and loving understanding of viewer-contestants which made his quiz programme a top show from the Sixties to the Eighties. Rosenthal would have been 70 this spring but, sadly, died in 1987, mourned by millions of enthusiastic fans.

**Birthdays**. Rosalia Chladek, doyenne of modern dance methods, had her 90th birthday in Vienna. She is a prominent representative of inventive expression dance, instrumental in co-ordinating rhythmical movement for the chorus within operatic productions. Nikolai Gedda, the Swedish tenor of Russian origin, whose rôles in opera were as diverse as the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* (Covent Garden 1954) and the title role in *Benvenuto Cellini* (London 1966) celebrated his 70th birthday. His versatility has been demonstrated in melodious duets, performed throughout several decades, usually with soprano Anneliese Rothenberger, and frequently repeated on BBC Radio 2 □

The AJR extends its greetings  
to Carl F. Flesch  
on his 85th Birthday

## German-Jewish Studies

How is one to reconcile the two most contradictory features of the history of German-speaking Jews: the creativity of the 'German-Jewish symbiosis' and the catastrophe of the Holocaust? This is one of the questions which is being investigated by the new Centre for German-Jewish Studies which is being set up at the University of Sussex.

Unlike projects which focus exclusively on Holocaust studies, the Sussex Centre will hope to do justice to the more constructive dimensions of German-Jewish social and cultural experience. This will involve new research designed to reassess some of the shibboleths of conventional history. One example is an ambitious research project on the legend of the Wandering Jew, initiated by the recently appointed Director of the Centre, Professor Edward Timms. This will investigate the correlations between antisemitic myths and actual patterns of migration, focusing on the innovative achievements associated with Jewish social mobility.

The Centre is designed to encourage co-operation with researchers from other institutions, at home and abroad. One of its first international events was the conference on 'The German-Jewish Dilemma: From the Enlightenment to the Holocaust', held at the University of Sussex from 21-24 March 1995 and attended by over 150 people from a dozen different countries. The aim of the conference was to examine the achievements of emancipation as well as the countercurrents of antisemitism, before finally focusing on the catastrophic consequences of National Socialism and the testimony of survivors. The topics ranged from 18th-century debates about Jewish civil rights to the cultural identity of German-speaking emigrants living in Israel. One of the highlights was a challenging lecture by Professor Werner E. Mosse, appealing to participants to re-examine the whole terminology of Jewish studies, starting with the very question of what it means to speak of 'Jewish identity'.

The conference at Sussex was accompanied by a photographic exhibition entitled 'Time Creates Images: Writers whose home was Austria', opened by the Austrian Ambassador, Dr. Georg Hennig. Two emigré authors who have made their home in Britain, Jakob Lind and Stella Rotenberg, gave readings from their

work. As a further tribute to the achievements of literary exiles, Edward Timms and his Oxford colleague Ritchie Robertson have published a volume entitled *Austria Exodus: The Creative Achievements of Refugees from National Socialism*, dealing with a wide range of writers and artists from Stefan Zweig and Elias Canetti to Erich Fried and Hilde Spiel. In the preface the editors argue that "the exodus of German-speaking Jews from Nazi-dominated Europe marks a turning point in the history of the western world". The tragic bereavements and painful readjustments endured by the refugees form the subject of many personal memoirs. With the passage of time, however, it becomes easier to recognize not only the fortitude with which such hardships were endured, but also the resilience with which many refugees responded to their ordeal. The enforced migration resulted in a remarkable enrichment of the social, economic and cultural life of the countries of resettlement, with Britain and the United States as "the main beneficiaries".

Thus the contribution which Jewish refugees and their families have made to British cultural life will form a further focus for teaching and research at the new Centre. Sussex has been awarded £950,000 by the Higher Education Funding Council as a contribution towards the cost of a substantial extension to its library building. Although this will by no means cover the full cost of the 3,000 square metre extension that is planned, the university is committed to raising the balance from other sources. It is intended that a self-contained German-Jewish Archive and Research Centre will be included as one of the distinctive features of this new building, complementing the existing collection of the Mass Observation Unit, a unique documentation of British social life around the time of the Second World War. The successful completion of this Archive and Research Centre will also depend on obtaining financial support from sources outside the university. Through encouraging the study of Jewish history among new generations of British students, the Centre will promote a greater understanding both of the creative potential of multi-cultural societies and of the catastrophic consequences of racial prejudice. For further information contact: Professor Edward Timms, Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QN □

## GERMAN PENSIONS INJUSTICE

The following is an English translation of a petition that has been sent to the Petitions' Committee of the German Parliament on behalf of the AJR, Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners, Reunion of Kindertransport and the 45 Aid Society. Copies have been sent to the German President, Roman Herzog; the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl; the Speaker of the German Parliament, Rita Süßmuth; representatives of the German press; also to the German Ambassador (see next page), the British Foreign Office, the DSS, the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and Mr. Greville Janner QC, MP.

Basically, the petition is intended to highlight categories of claimants we believe should be entitled to German pensions; discrimination against claimants residing in the UK as against those residing in Israel or the USA; and the unfairness of awarding minuscule pensions to certain eligible people □

## Petition to the German Bundestag

Now 50 years after the end of the terrible atrocities committed by the Nazi government of the Third Reich against the Jewish people, there is a moral obligation on the present Federal Republic of Germany to pay reasonable pensions to people who earned or would have earned the right to such pensions. The matter is urgent, as our members are getting older and are in need of these funds now. We recognise that Germany is already paying pensions to many victims of Nazi persecution, but there are still certain injustices and inequalities between different categories of claimant, and between claimants living in different countries. This is demonstrated by the social security agreements recently signed between Germany and the United States of America, and between Germany and Israel. No such agreement has been signed between the UK and the Federal Republic. In the UK there are loopholes where people have not received pensions, or where these are quite inadequate.

(continued on page 13)

## Petition

(continued)

Therefore we the undersigned, representing:

1. Association of Jewish Refugees
2. Association of Jewish ex-Berliners
3. Reunion of Kindertransports
4. 45 Aid Society - Holocaust Survivors

do hereby petition the German Bundestag urgently to amend the German Old Age Pension Laws in order to take into consideration the unjust exclusion from its provisions of many of our members who suffered as a result of National Socialist persecution. We submit the following:

1. Germany has a special responsibility not only for German nationals. In our view it is unjust to exclude people, who, had they been allowed to live a normal life in Germany, would have been entitled to a German pension. There are already exceptions to the present stringent requirements for German nationality in the rules relating to pensions awarded to people who are entitled to payments in respect of Kindererziehung. We know of many specific cases of people living in the UK, not in receipt of pensions from Germany, who would be entitled to them if they had been living in the USA or Israel. It is clearly discriminating that one set of rules should be imposed only on certain categories of claimant, and, in particular on those living in the UK.
2. There is an overwhelming moral obligation for the Federal Republic of Germany to pay old age pensions to people whatever their origin or nationality who were forced to work for Germany either in concentration camps or as slave labour. It should be self evident that anyone who was imprisoned in such circumstances would be a worker entitled to make insurance contributions and should therefore be generally credited with contributions. It is adding insult to injury to be told that such people were not *versicherungspflichtig* in their work activity, because of the racial laws of the Third Reich. It is abhorrent that this doctrine should be resuscitated in German courts today.
3. People who lived underground, in hiding, in Germany and German-occupied territories during the war should also be entitled to pensions, even if, at

the time, they were children.

4. As it has been considered appropriate to pay pensions based on *Kindererziehungszeiten* to victims of Nazi persecution born in or after 1921, it

*Dr Jurgen Oesterhelt*  
*Ambassador*  
*Federal Republic of Germany*  
*23 Belgrave Square*  
*Chesham Place*  
*London SW1X 8PZ*

*Your Excellency,*

*As you may recollect, a meeting took place at the Embassy last November, between Dr Schumacher of the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and representatives from various Jewish refugee organisations.*

*Although it was very helpful to meet Dr Schumacher and some of his colleagues, we were not satisfied that our misgivings about the shortcomings in the present German pension rules for refugee victims of Nazi oppression, were being adequately dealt with.*

*Accordingly we have sent a petition to the Petitionsausschuss of the German Bundestag, requesting changes in the law and in its interpretation.*

*I enclose, for your information, a copy of the text of this petition, which I have also sent to President Herzog, Chancellor Kohl and Bundestags-president Süßmuth.*

*I also enclose the English version of the petition which I am sending to appropriate departments in the UK Government.*

*Yours sincerely*  
*Ernest David*  
*Director*  
**ASSOCIATION OF  
 JEWISH REFUGEES**

is unfair to limit this to the case where children were born before 31 December 1949.

5. People should not be barred from joining the German pension scheme if they are over 65 years old today, as they may have been unaware of the possibilities of making a claim. There has not, in the past, been a clear statement published by the German authorities, available in the UK, on what the full requirements for pension eligibility are.

6. Where someone who was a German national and has been granted *Wiedereinbürgerung* is awarded a pension, this should be payable from the date of the pension application or *Wiedereinbürgerung*, whichever was earlier. If the entitlement is there it is unjust to defer payment to a subsequent date, when the origin for the procedure results from the racial laws of the Third Reich.
7. It is unjust that some victims of Nazi persecution who have been found eligible to receive pensions, should be asked for large back payments that it would take many years to recoup. The rules for the calculation of payments should be amended to ensure claimants receive a reasonable pension from Germany. The rules that now distinguish between real and substituted contributions create anomalies. Awards depend on age and point of entry into the work force of the refugees' country of residence. Refugees who started to work in their host country during the war and post-war period are penalised. *Ersatzzeiten* which have been granted on the grounds of racial persecution are then pushed aside. This is an implicit denial of the persecution and is unjust.
8. It is unjust to demand today, written evidence of the employment, before the war, of victims of Nazi persecution. For the most part younger Jews worked in the environment of state terrorism in the late 1930s to earn their livelihood. Although they received regular salaries, they often did not receive, or no longer have proof of, their employment. The required proofs should be reasonable in the light of the circumstances, and not oppressive.

We realise that some of the matters complained of above are within the discretion of the Federal Government now, while some will require legislative action by the Bundestag. We also realise that legislative proposals would take a long time to come to fruition. Accordingly, we earnestly request that those matters which can be handled by ministerial discretion should be handled quickly and in a positive spirit, and that where legislation is required the appropriate steps should quickly be taken to right what are evident wrongs against now elderly people □

## Cooking with Gretel Beer



### Fruit Roulade

Not necessarily confined to the Summer when strawberries and raspberries are at their best – the roulade is also delicious when filled with bananas moistened with a little rum and folded into whipped cream. Wild strawberries are of course “tops” for filling and even a few wild strawberries mixed with garden strawberries add an extra flavour. Moisten the strawberries with a little Kirsch, or Framboise for the raspberries, but rum is definitely best for bananas.

4 eggs

3 oz (80g) icing or caster sugar

1 generous ounce (30g) plain flour

1 generous ounce (30g) ground walnuts  
about 8 oz (225g) raspberries or  
strawberries

Kirsch or Framboise

1 flat teaspoon vanilla sugar

10 fl. oz (275ml) double cream

butter and flour for the baking sheet

Line a baking sheet measuring approximately 12 x 8" (30.5cm x 20cm) with baking parchment or buttered greaseproof paper, dusted lightly with flour. Preheat oven to Gas Mark 5, 375 F, 190 C.

Whisk together eggs and sugar until very thick and creamy. Lightly fold in the flour and ground walnuts. Spread the mixture over the baking sheet and bake for about 20 minutes.

Sprinkle a sheet of clean kitchen paper with flour and turn the pastry onto this. Peel off the paper whilst the pastry is still hot. Lightly roll up the pastry – it is more a case of folding over than rolling up – and leave to cool. Sprinkle fruit with Kirsch or Framboise. Whisk cream until stiff and fold in vanilla sugar. When the pastry has cooled, trim off the edges, brush off flour and spread with the whipped cream, reserving a little for spreading over the top and arrange the fruit on top. Fold over pastry so that the

filling is in the centre. Wrap the roll in kitchen foil and chill for at least 1 hour. Spread reserved cream over the top or dust lightly with icing sugar □

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## Full circle

It was with some amusement that I observed the wheel's full turn. We arrived in England in 1939 with fear, trepidation, and a few words of English and little else. My parents and I stepped off the ferry into a strange new world. Now, fifty years later, I find it interesting to see how my elder son and daughter-in-law are coping with living in Zurich. Despite hearing me speaking German to his grandparents, learning the language at school and an intensive language course, my son was unprepared for Swiss German, a dialect as broad to his ears as Glaswegian is to a Cockney.

My parents had to learn by their linguistic errors and raised not a few eyebrows in the process, for example by asking a street flower-seller for a “clove for the bottom hole” (a carnation for the button hole). Indeed, during the war my mother became renowned for her quaint English. In her efforts to augment our diet with off-ration products she demanded in a full butcher's shop, “Mr. Bill, have you got any brains?” Similarly, my daughter-in-law's Zurich butcher was not amused when she rejected *vier kilo* (4 Kg) of meat when she was sure she had asked for *ein viertel kilo* (quarter Kg). And a waitress in a staid Zurich tea shop looked somewhat shocked when my son produced an accidental Spoonerism when asking for a *heisse schockolade* (hot chocolate).

Just as some quaint English customs foxed my parents, so some Swiss ones bemuse my children. My mother never did learn that in England people say, “How are you?” as a mere politeness. They do not expect the whole *megillah* from her sore throat to her bowel movements. My children do not understand why the Swiss, standing at a bus stop in the pouring rain, do not respond well to a conversation opener like, “Nasty day, isn't it?” – a fact uncomfortably obvious even to an idiot.

The Swiss, with their Germanic love of rules and regulations, do not always endear themselves to my rebel son and daughter-in-law. House rules in their apartment prohibit doing laundry between 22.00 hours and 05.00 hours (fortunately no regulations seem to apply to the large blackcurrant bush in the garden).

It is a strange old world which turns the wheel full circle, especially for us wandering Jews.

□ Bob Norton

## Obituaries

## Dieter Corbach

**D**ieter Corbach has died in Cologne aged 63. Born to a Protestant teacher couple, he trained as a teacher and youth worker. In 1953 he compiled a youth songbook (to replace earlier ones distributed by the Nazis) which has since sold three million copies.

From the early 1960s he examined how far Christian theology had contributed towards antisemitism and the Holocaust. This led in 1966 to his ordination as a lay preacher in the Cologne district. His attendance at various seminars on the subject of the persecution of the Jews led to his discovery of the various pre-war Cologne Jewish institutions, which included the primary school, the secondary school 'Jawne' and the orphanage. In 1990 he published the book *Die Jawne in Köln*. He succeeded in arranging a number of public functions and having the square where the Jawne stood named the 'Erich Klibansky Platz' after its last headmaster, deported to Minsk with his family. He raised the funds for a memorial fountain - 'The Lion of Judah' - to be placed there; it was commissioned from Hermann Gurfinkel, an ex-Jawne pupil practising as a sculptor in the USA.

Dieter's final wish was that, instead of floral tributes for his funeral, contributions should be sent towards the settlement of the outstanding amount on this fountain.

Only too aware of Jewish suspicions of the Church's missionary activities, he spent much of his final year recommending that references to this in the constitution of his diocese should be eliminated, stressing that Jesus had lived and died as a Jew.

His splendid work throughout more than half a lifetime deserves to be recognised □

## Bertold Hermann

**R**omanian-born Dr. Berthold Hermann has died aged 93. He studied medicine in interwar Vienna and practised there till the Anschluss. Warned by a Nazi ex-patient whom he had cured of VD, he fled Austria and went to Albania where he was consulted by King Zog, among others. In 1939 he came to Britain where he had to

requalify. After internment he worked as a hospital doctor in Scotland; postwar he joined UNRRA in Germany, but from 1947 on he practised in partnership in Finchley till retiring at the age of 84 □

## Wolfgang Hermann

**A**JR member Wolfgang Hermann, who died in his ninety-sixth year, was an eminent art historian and authority on French and German eighteenth and nineteenth century architecture. He came to this country from Berlin in 1933, together with his wife Anni (Marx) and two small children, after being dismissed from his post as keeper of prints and drawings at the *Staatliche Kunstbibliothek*.

At first Hermann gave up all thoughts of continuing as an art historian and joined his brother-in-law in running a zip-fastener factory in Edmonton. But as soon as he received restitution from Germany, he left and devoted the rest of his long and fruitful life to writing and research, publishing several important works that have become key texts in their field.

Anni was his constant helpmate, accompanying him to the library of the British Museum and on his research visits to the continent and to the Getty Centre in Los Angeles. Wolfgang's brilliant mind never dimmed, and to the very end he remained his charming, modest self, willing to discuss any topical subject. Although never affiliated, both Hermanns had a strong attachment to their Jewish roots.

In 1938 they decided, in their great compassion for others, to provide guarantees for two teenagers from Germany, who eventually arrived on a Kindertransport. Wolfgang and Anni not only gave them a secure home, but also guided them in their education and choice of profession. When they left after the war to go their own ways, they always kept closely in touch, and the bond of affection grew ever stronger in maturity. □ EL

## Nazi haven

Historian Dr. Esther Delisle, researching for a new book, has disclosed evidence that French Nazi collaborators were found a safe haven in Quebec province after World War II by sympathisers in both France and Canada. Dr. Delisle had already earned the opprobrium of Quebec nationalists with her first book in 1992 on antisemitism in Quebec in the 1930s.

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## PR and Austrian Jew-hatred

Recently, my quasi uncle Edward Bernays died in America at the ripe old age of 103. Born in Vienna in 1891, and taken to America as a toddler, he became the father of the public relations industry; his book *Crystallising Public Opinion* served as the bible of his profession. One of his most important clients was Thomas Masaryk, the future Czech President, who consulted him in 1917 about enlisting American public opinion on behalf of an independent Czechoslovakia.

The American Jews responded positively to his appeal. Masaryk elicited their gratitude, having defended the Bohemian Jew Hilsner in a turn-of-the-century blood-libel trial. Masaryk also consulted another Jewish public relations expert, Carl Byoir, and generally kept in close touch with the leaders of the American-Jewish community, such as Louis Brandeis. Byoir organised the 'League of Oppressed Nations' (i.e. nations oppressed by Austria), and arranged the Declaration of Independence of Czechoslovakia in Philadelphia. He later became President Wilson's advisor at the Versailles peace conference, which sanctioned Masaryk's new nation, incorporating three million reluctant Germans.

Czechoslovakia was to Austria what India was to Great Britain: the jewel in the crown. Once it was gone, the whole structure collapsed. In 1781, 110 years before uncle Edward's birth and 8 years before the liberalising French Revolution, the Austrian Emperor Joseph II issued the *Toleranzpatent*, lifting many restrictions from the Jews. The number of Jews in Vienna then was less than 1,000, but by the first war, it had increased to 200,000.

In 1914 when the Austrians wanted to teach the Serbs a lesson for the murder of their heir to the throne, and instead became enmeshed in a world war for which they were not prepared, they expected the Jews to be on their side. They had, after all, saved them from pogroms, sheltered and educated them and turned them from a ghetto-confined sect into Europeans. The idea that the Jews should now support the Russians, their persecutors, in preference to their saviours, seemed preposterous. The Jews were much indebted to the Central Powers, which expected them to do everything in their power to

get America into the war on their side, or, at the very least, to keep her neutral. In the early stages of the war, this looked likely in view of the Americans' fury with Britain for interrupting their trade with the Central Powers. But once Britain's leaders realised that without American help they would lose the war, they did everything in their power to swing American public opinion behind them. One of the key baits to lure America to their side was the Balfour Declaration. Although this was published only in November 1917 (after America's entry into the war in April) its gestation period had started as far back as September 1914, when Chaim Weizmann and Nahum Sokolow, of the Zionist Executive, were given the blessing of President Wilson.

The Germans had similar ideas. Even before the war, Kaiser Wilhelm II had demonstrated a sympathetic attitude towards Zionism. He met Theodor Herzl a number of times, once in Jerusalem in November 1898. General Ludendorff's wartime appeal, in Yiddish, to "*Die lieben Jidden von Polen*," pointed out that it would be in their best interest to support Germany rather than Russia. The Austrian Emperor Franz-Joseph I was an absolute philosemite, granting the Jews full citizenship in 1867 and later calling antisemitism "a scandal and disgrace in the eyes of the world" (1892). When, after the third vote, he had to confirm Karl Lueger as Mayor of Vienna, he simultaneously conferred an order on the Chief Rabbi of Vienna. The Jews of Vienna looked back on his reign as the golden age.

From the Jewish point of view, the Western Allies could deliver their promises. The Turkish Empire was falling apart, and soon the British General Allenby was in physical control of Palestine. The dream of Zionism could only be realised in conjunction with Great Britain and not with the Central Powers. It was therefore understandable that the Jews, looking after their own interests, backed the Allies.

With America in the war against them, the Central Powers had no chance of winning. However valiantly they fought, the resources of America were sure to defeat them. It should not be thought that the Jews were the only pressure group in America to advocate war against Germany. There were other parties, which for economic and financial reasons favoured that solution. But there is no doubt that from 1916 onward, the Jews belonged to the 'Let's enter the war against Germany' lobby.

At the Versailles peace conference the promised self-determination was forgotten, to the distress of the people of South Tyrol, the Sudetenland, and other areas. The miseries which followed the lost war in Germany and Austria are well known. It was easy for a persuasive demagogue to blame it all on the Jews. The Jews had not induced America to help the Central Powers, or even to keep America neutral; they had actually helped to bring America into the war against them. The Austrians thought Jewry had done this for its own selfish reasons. They did not differentiate between Austrian Jews, who had fought for their country, and American Jews. All Jews were lumped together, as they remembered their 50-million strong Monarchy. Could this perhaps have been the cause of their hatred? Did they feel that they had to foot the bill for the achievement of a Jewish homeland? Whatever it was – they reclaimed their debt with compound interest at Auschwitz.

□ A.W. Freud

## Family & friends at Osmond House

In a new departure, family and friends of the residents of Osmond House were invited to meet the home's senior staff and voluntary workers at a cheese and wine party. Acting Head of Home, Lyl Maglaqui, welcomed the guests and explained that the gathering provided an informal opportunity for the discussion of residents' needs, complementary to the regular meetings which would follow.

Jo McCarthy, presently acting Head of Care for the Otto Schiff Housing Association, confirmed that she was looking forward to returning to Osmond House as Head of Home later this year.

Rosemary Lewis, Chairman of Osmond's House Committee, complimented the staff on their work with the residents and expressed appreciation for the planning and extra work which the evening necessitated. She reminded everyone present that this year's Osmond House Open Day would take place on Sunday 2nd July at 2.30pm and that raffle books, the proceeds from which would benefit all residents at the home, were shortly to be available.

Among those present were Marion Coyle and Fiona Buckley, Assistant Heads of Home, and Dawn Whelan, Osmond House's secretary.

□ RDC