

AJR Information

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Don't miss...

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Lethal xenophobia

Johann Strauss is one of those composers - like Chopin or Verdi - who represent their nation. Not that Strauss represented the Austrians in every respect; they would hardly have concurred with the pro-Gypsy sentiments suffusing *Der Zigeunerbaron*. They still don't. Last month four gypsies were killed in the Burgenland, scene of simultaneous lethal attacks on Croat refugees. The climate in which such Neo-Nazi terror burgeons was created by incomplete postwar de-Nazification, which in turn stemmed from the wrongful Allied designation of Austria as 'Hitler's first victim.' It is far too late now to repair these mistakes; one can only hope that EU membership will wean the Austrians away from their backwoods mentality.

Richard Grunberger

Thoughts on the war's most sombre anniversary

The Nadir of History

The commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz had a twofold significance. Above all they brought - probably for the last time - the unspeakable sufferings so-called human beings inflicted on members of the same species to the attention of the world. Secondly, the commemorations showed the degree to which the various nations and institutions implicated had over the last 50 years purged themselves of guilt for their sins of commission or omission.

The following facts are established beyond peradventure: Auschwitz represented the absolute nadir of human history. At Birkenau SS personnel, driven by the bloodlust of Stone Age man, applied industrial methods to mass extermination. Such a wedding of technical efficiency to mindboggling black evil has no historic counterpart - not in the Armenian massacres, nor in Stalin's deportations, or even Pol Pot's atrocities. It is absolutely *sui generis* as is the ideology that instigated Auschwitz. No document comparable to the 1942 Wannsee Protocol decreeing the destruction of an entire people has so far been - or ever will be - found in the Sultan's Palace at Istanbul, in the Moscow Kremlin, or in Phnom Penh.

The guilt for Auschwitz has been endlessly debated. This is not the place for replicating this debate. Rather let us analyse the readiness with which the implicated nations and institutions have confronted their guilt.

As for the Germans, the government and the Churches, municipalities, newspapers, etc., alike, have been - justifiably - concerned to purge themselves. The Catholic bishops, in particular, used the Auschwitz anniversary to issue their most explicit condemnation yet of Christian antisemitism. Polish bishops spoke out similarly, though their statement chimes in awkwardly with President Walesa's reluctance to acknowledge the very fact of Jewish suffering at Auschwitz. (Oswiecim in Polish popular mythology was a torture chamber for their patriots - not a charnel house for Jews).

So much for the evildoers and the - more or less impassive - bystanders. What about the Russian liberators? In his commemorative message President

Yeltsin duly praised them - but, following Soviet precedent, he omitted the very mention of Jews.

Which brings us to another world leader who could not bring himself to mention the word Jew. The German and Polish bishops' disavowal of antisemitism, one notes with dismay, proceeded alongside Vatican moves to canonise the Pacelli Pope, Pius XII. Saint Eugenio Pacelli would make strange company, indeed, for Saint Maximilian Kolbe who volunteered to die in place of another concentration camp inmate.

Let all those who would defend the silent Pope's wartime record on grounds of 'averting a greater evil' recall what happened in 1943 when Cardinal Galen of Münster spoke out and denounced Nazi 'mercy' killing from the pulpit. Some of the monks who distributed leaflets with his sermon were caught and executed, while the high-profile prelate remained at liberty - but, most importantly, the euthanasia programme stopped. Which indicates that even in the Third Reich (popularly supported) resistance was conceivable. Its almost total absence from the German - and the wider non-Jewish - reaction to the Holocaust contributed to the nadir of history. □



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Preconditions for peace

The question whether the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Accord had produced a change in their attitudes to each other was debated at an Institute of Jewish Affairs symposium.

Jewish Chronicle editor Ned Temko, a former Middle East correspondent, thought no ideological change had occurred and that the notion that 'things will never be the same' was a premature illusion. Dr. Ghada Karmi, a Palestinian at the School of Oriental and African Studies, noted an immediate, though superficial, change in attitude by Israeli Jews. The Palestinians' initial welcome to the agreements reflected satisfaction at their progress on the road to statehood; disappointment and frustration would, however, lead to anger and resistance.

Dr. Ephraim Karsh, Director of Mediterranean Studies at King's College, London, thought the agreements had "made a major difference". Israel was now recognised by several Arab countries, including Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. A "break through" which included the first step towards Palestinian nationhood had been achieved and patience was essential for further progress. Saida Nusseibeh, coordinator of Jewish-Arab Dialogue in Europe (JADE), saw a significant acceptance of change among the Palestinians who were now ready to listen, but much work remained to be done. She envisaged the development of a Benelux type of economic association between Israel, Jordan and a Palestinian state. Dr. Karsh could, however, foresee limits to economic cooperation; he felt the Palestinian diaspora ought to be harnessing itself to the development of a state. Pressed on the apparent contradiction between Israel's attitude towards Jewish as opposed to Arab immigration to Israel, Dr. Karsh argued that if and when the Palestinians had a state, they too could enact their own right of return.

□R.D.C.

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Profile

Margot Williams

Born in Berlin "in the year dot," as she put it, Margot grew up in a pleasant suburb, an only child, but with many friends. Her father was a neurologist and the family's social circle appeared exclusively to consist of doctors. At the early age of eleven, she, too, decided to pursue a medical career. She enrolled at the university as a medical student, but the threatening political situation brought her studies to an abrupt end. Her interest in medicine was, however, undiminished and she began her training as a nurse at Breslau's Jewish hospital.

Tragically, aged only 54, her father died and the political situation worsened, forcing Margot to leave for England without her mother who was too ill to travel. Soon after war was declared and she was interned with other 'enemy aliens'. Margot acted as a camp nurse, and after release, returned to London to stay in a nurses' hostel. It was at this time that she met and became engaged to Maurice Williams, a philatelist and journalist. They married in Dunstan Road Synagogue in 1944 and had a daughter the following year.

A busy social life centred around not only philately, but also her husband's other two loves, cricket and football. When her daughter reached the age of six, Margot returned to nursing training, qualifying as an SRN.

In 1950, with the opening of Otto Schiff House in Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead (later converted to sheltered flats), Margot was appointed to take charge of the admissions. It was essential to speak German; dealing with displaced - and often disturbed - people required consideration and humane understanding for their needs. Working from the AJR offices, as the other homes were established and added to her portfolio, for 32 years Margot was the Admissions Officer, interviewing people in London and other parts of the country to assess their suitability. "Although I had only a part-time job," she recalls, "I was on the go practically every day". At that time potential residents were both fitter and younger than today's applicants, and applications far exceeded places available.



Margot Williams

During her years of service Margot formed many valuable friendships. Her husband died in 1976 and, she says, "If I wouldn't have had my work with the AJR, I would have broken down."

Margot retired officially in 1985, but continued with her work for the homes. She remains a very active member of Osmond House House Committee where she visits at least once a week. Still a driver, she makes a point of visiting all residents who have to spend time in hospital. As if that wasn't enough, Margot is also a volunteer worker at the Royal Free Hospital, turning her hand from serving in the hospital shop, running a tea trolley and, more lately, manning the enquiry desk. Active in B'nai B'rith and Belsize Square Synagogue among other pastimes, one wonders how she copes when many much younger are happy to put their feet up in front of the television.

A bright, intelligent and smart lady, Margot follows the early careers of her two adoring grandsons with a wry sense of humour. She remains totally involved in the welfare of the residents in Osmond House, several of whom she has befriended for many years. At the time of her retirement Theo Marx wrote, "Your work at AJR brought you into contact with virtually every resident. . . You carved out a niche in the refugee community which is without parallel."

□R.D.C.

Chopping Blok

Pre-1918 more Europeans lived in multinational Empires than in nation states. Since the disappearance of the Habsburgs, Romanovs and Ottomans, nation states have been the norm - at least in Western Europe. Anti-Spanish Basques and even anti-French Corsicans are more of a nuisance than a problem.

The one West European State with a genuine deep-seated nationality problem is Belgium. Here the Dutch-speaking Flemings and Francophone Walloons have been joined in a marriage of inconvenience since the medieval Dukedom of Burgundy.

When Belgium gained independence in the 1830s, industrial Wallonia was ahead of largely agricultural Flanders and French, a world language of culture, had the edge over Dutch. Ever since, Flemish resentment at French predominance - part real, part imaginary - has been a constant in Belgian internal affairs.

Surprisingly, under Nazi rule the language divide didn't matter a great deal; 'Gauleiter' Degrelle was a French speaker and Walloon volunteers formed an entire division of the Waffen SS. Conversely, Flemings as well as Walloons helped to hide Jews.

Over the past half century of independence, while Brussels has grown into the 'capital of Europe', the internal wrangling has gone on unabated. These days the *Vlaams Blok* (Flemish Nationalist Party) are setting the pace. The *Blok* has a short term and long term agenda. In the short run they demand the compulsory repatriation of immigrants, but their ultimate goal is nothing less than the creation of a sovereign Flemish state with a de-Frenchified Brussels as its capital.

While the attraction of such a far-reaching change for Dutch speakers can be doubted, the *Blok's* radical anti-immigrant platform has earned it an alarming degree of popularity: nearly thirty percent of Antwerp's voters backed it at the last municipal election.

Filip Dewinter, the *Blok* leader, resembles the Austrian would-be *Führer* Haider. He is young, speaks in measured tones and dresses in Yuppie - rather than skinhead - style. His anti-immigrant tub-thumping is directed at highly visible targets: Moroccan and Turkish unskilled labourers. Dewinter's hidden xenophobic agenda undoubtedly targets the Jews, but

with the taboo on antisemitism in the prevailing political climate he softpedals the issue.

Antwerp's cohesive 20,000-strong Jewish community is, according to Liberal Party spokesman André Gantman, now waking up to the danger posed by the *Vlaams Blok*. A Jewish-populated district has voted an Auschwitz survivor, who lectures schoolchildren on the dangers of Fascism, on to the City Council. On the 55-strong Council Gantman's Liberals work closely with the other democratic parties to stymie the 18-strong *Blok* faction. General elections loom ahead; they will show whether Belgian democracy is inclined to put its head on the chopping *Blok*.

□R.G.

Budapest remembers

At a service in Budapest's Great Synagogue, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the ghetto, the arrival of the Red Army was recalled. They drove out the Nazis and their Hungarian accomplices in the Arrow Cross, freeing some 150,000 Jewish survivors. The synagogue and the buildings around it have been renovated and a wall plaque commemorates the event.

JACS Belsize Square

A cordial invitation is extended to all AJR members to a recently formed branch of 'JACS', the Jewish Association of Cultural Societies. Highlights of the programme to date have been a lively debate on the Israel Peace Accord between Laurence Brass, Malvyn Benjamin and Sidney Shipton, Professor Eric Moonman sharing reminiscences of his years as an M.P., and Sally Fiber talking on 'Family Life in the Jewish West End', a once vibrant community.

Meetings are held every Tuesday afternoon from 2pm to 4pm at the Belsize Square Synagogue Hall, London NW3, and a full and varied programme has been arranged for the spring and summer months covering political, social, cultural, religious and local issues. Annual membership is £4 with 50p per meeting to cover the cost of refreshments. (You do not need to be a member of the Belsize Square Synagogue). For further information please call Mrs. Henny Levin (at the Synagogue) on 071-794 3949.

Island occupation

Moscow archives, recently uncovered by Guardian reporter Madeleine Bunting, shed new light on the years of German occupation of the Channel Islands. It was revealed that 46 suspected war criminals never faced prosecution, probably because the degree of collaboration would be exposed, as well as evidence of the largest mass murder ever on British soil - an estimated 3,000 imported slave labourers died. The then Bailiff of Guernsey, who was knighted, provided the occupiers with names of Jewish residents.

AJR member honoured

Mrs. Eva Evans was appointed MBE for services to the University Association for European Studies, the UK Association for European Law and the UK Committee for the College of Bruges in the New Year Honours list.

Schidlof Quartet

The Schidlof Quartet, who are the guest artistes of the AJR and the Wiener Library at a concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 14th May, are also playing in a concert of German-Jewish composers for the Manor House Society, in celebration of 50 years of peace, on 30th April. □



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Renaissance Holocaust

La reine Margot (France 1994, Director Patrice Chereau). On general release.

In *La reine Margot* (Jewish) producer Claude Berri and his director put the story of the French Religious Wars on screen to stunningly dramatic effect. It is, of course, a story brimful of drama. In 16th-century France the Catholic Valois, a dysfunctional family who run the Borgias a close second, occupy the throne, but their kingdom is threatened by Spain from without and religious disension from within. The veteran soldier Coligny, a Protestant, is a father figure to the unstable mother-dominated King Charles. Coligny wants to unite Catholics and Protestants in a patriotic war against Spain. The same aim of unifying the religious factions lies behind the marriage of the King's sister Margot to the leading Protestant, Henry of Navarre. Queen Mother Catherine de Medici, resentful of Coligny's influence over King Charles, arranges to have him killed. When the assassination is botched she hatches a larger plot to wipe out all the top-ranking Protestants (who are present in Paris for the royal wedding). The retina-ravishing splendour of the wedding ceremony consequently soon gives way to a vast gut-wrenching massacre which few Protestants survive. Crucially, one survivor is Margot's husband Henry, and another her newly - and randomly - acquired lover, la Mole.

Henry is a virtual prisoner in King Charles' palace where his life is threatened by Catherine de Medici's ceaseless plotting. One plot involves gluing pages of a hunting manual together with arsenic paste. Alas, it isn't Henry, but the King who picks up the poisoned book. Not that Catherine is overly dismayed at Charles' demise; she preferred her second son Anjou all along - a preference she shows with hugs and kisses that have little of the maternal about them.

Anjou now becomes King, while Henry manages - with la Mole's help - to reach the safety of his native Navarre. The film ends with Margot, i.e. Henry's adulterous wife and la Mole's lover, likewise setting out for Navarre.

La reine Margot interleaves the unfolding of highly-charged historical events with the lurid interplay of outsize personalities like the (literally) poisonous Catherine de Medici and King Charles

who gains in stature as life inexorably drains away from him. A similarly riven personality is of course the eponymous Queen Margot who grows before the bedazzled cinema-goer's eyes from wayward royal strumpet into a warmly compassionate creature.

But the film is more than the sum of its parts. What it is, ultimately, about is the bloodlust generated by religious bigotry and the way the French come to grips with their shameful past. A flavour of Nazism is conveyed by the murderous Catholic mobs turning Paris streets into a charnel-house, while shots of corpses being stacked after the massacre evoke images of the Holocaust.

In visual terms *La reine Margot* comes close to being a cinematic masterpiece, and the performance of Isabelle Adjani (Margot), Jean Hughes Anglade (Charles) and Lisa Virni (Catherine) are exemplary. For all that I would only advise those with a strong stomach to go and see it.

□R.G.

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Out to launch

Lord Weidenfeld, *REMEMBERING MY GOOD FRIENDS*, Harper Collins, 1994, £20

Coming to England in 1938 as a 19-year-old with little financial or emotional support (his parents did not get out of Austria till later), what George Weidenfeld has achieved is amazing. He describes his family as less than orthodox, though descended from a long line of rabbis. His solitary childhood combined with his father's library gave him an early taste for reading. Young Arthur (the name George was adopted later) went to a Catholic school in Vienna where he experienced encouragement from some teachers, hostility from others.

Going to university in 1937 he finds some professors already seduced by the Nazi doctrines of race and blood. With duels *de rigueur*, he proves his manliness by fighting one, even though Jews were not supposed to have this 'honourable' redress for insults. An interesting sidelight: Kurt Waldheim helps him after the Anschluss by supplying notes of the lectures he is forbidden to attend.

After the arrest of his father, it becomes clear that he must leave Austria. Arrived in England, he joins the circle of refugees in the Hampstead area and is given hospitality by various ladies prominent in the Jewish community, among them Mrs. Schwab. When war breaks out he is taken in by a kindly English couple at Evesham in the West Country. There one well-meaning acquaintance remarks: "I hear you come from Germany. Did you know the Görings?"

He finds work with the BBC monitoring German broadcasts to Europe. A friend advises "You must get to know people!" This he does with a vengeance. (In fact one or two of the chapters of his book read like an appendix to 'Who's Who' and should be rapidly skimmed over).

With the end of the war, he conceives the idea of a publishing house which he launches with the help of a scion of one of England's most illustrious families, Nigel Nicolson, the son of Vita Sackville-West. They make an unlikely but apparently symbiotic partnership.

He publishes some novels, one of which, Nabakov's *Lolita*, nearly gets him into trouble with the law. However, his chief interest is in publishing histories and memoirs, notably Hitler's *Table Talk* and the memoirs of Hitler's architect, Speer, newly released from Spandau prison. He

meets the widow of Ribbentrop and makes polite conversation about her London 'friends'. His encounters with these notorious figures are described without emotion. This deadpan approach occurs also in what for others would have been a highly charged experience - his first return to Vienna. There is just a brief mention of the fact that his grandmother had been deported to a death-camp.

One of the most fascinating parts of the book is his analysis of Israeli politics and personalities, including the rivalry between the aging Chaim Weizmann and Ben-Gurion. Lord Weidenfeld has a shrewd understanding of both the Arab attachment to their land which the Israelis underestimated, and the Israeli need for a defensible country. Perhaps the most genuine feeling expressed in this book is his awe at the 'miracle' of the founding of the State of Israel which he has tried to serve in many ways.

His private life has not till lately been as successful as his public one and no wonder, for with all these hundreds of good and famous friends, how could he have found time for it? He comes across as the man of action rather than deep thought and one must accept his achievements as such.

□Martha Blend

The East is red (or brown)

Paul Hockenos, *FREE TO HATE, The Rise of the Right in post-Communist Eastern Europe*, Routledge, 1993, £17.99.

Free to Hate takes a sharp look at the astonishing events that followed the breakdown of the Communist empire. Everywhere the post-'89 era started as a carnival of democracy, and is now threatened by the escape of a Fascist genie from the bottle. There is nothing fictional about it. Just old hates so long diverted (rather than eradicated) masquerading in new disguises when this is found advantageous - but where tolerated they take the past forms. With these differences: the new stormtroopers, being skinheads, have bald pates and are devotees of music their old mentors would have condemned as decadent jungle rhythms.

Hockenos underlines that the throwbacks to Stalinism and to Nazism often make common cause, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and from the Oder to the Danube. In the former GDR the Dresden

Neo-Nazi leader, Rainer Sonntag, was also engaged in sex shop protection rackets, and was shot dead by an enraged shop owner (shades of the pimp Horst Wessel of the Nazi national anthem). In Berlin one of the leaders was revealed as a former Stasi spy.

In Hungary, where the old Communists are re-forming under a new name, their opponents play on antisemitism, although the author considers the Magyars less given over to that 'pastime' than the Czechs - and it goes without saying, the Slovaks. Hockenos thinks that, in the Czech rump, Vaclav Havel's towering presence obscures the prevailing hatred for all minorities in that once totally Western and democratic state. Skinheads try to terrorise central Prague and there have been bloody fights.

In Romania the Securitate, a 'cleaned-up' version of Ceausescu's political militia, has penetrated the new parties. Admittedly, Jew hatred has been obscured by the persecution of the Hungarian minority which, to its dismay, is coupled with the few remaining Jews as Romania's arch enemy. In Hungary the new Nazis present the matter precisely the other way round. Enemy No.1 are the Gypsies, described as blacks by the obviously colour-blind Balkanians. They share the persecution with foreign workers brought there by the Communist régimes. These are often Vietnamese, but African and Asian students are also attacked. Even tourists are not always exempt. The skinheads consider themselves part of a kind of 'Neo Nazi International' though they are just as capable of hating each other when they belong to reciprocally hostile nations.

Antisemitism without Jews is the astonishing phenomenon most bizarrely present in Poland where there are only 5,000 left. At election time no less a personage than Lech Walesa implied that his opponents in the former Solidarity movement were rootless Jewish intellectuals. However, the author sees the possibility of real democratic forms emerging out of all this turmoil. His solution: the inclusion of the East in a truly United Europe.

□John Rossall

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Letters to the Editor

PROFESSOR SIR GEOFFREY ELTON

Sir - The obituary of my late brother refers to the 'fascinating fact' that he was a descendant of one of Moses Mendelssohn's intimates and that this information was obtained, not from him, but from another source. Our ancestor in question can only have been our greatgreatgrandfather Samuel Mayer Ehrenberg who, in establishing a liberal Jewish School, followed in Mendelssohn's footsteps. However, as he was only thirteen when Mendelssohn died and to the best of my knowledge never even met him, he can hardly have been one of his intimates. Could it be that the 'fascinating fact' could not be obtained from my brother, because of the latter's respect for historical accuracy?

Two articles in the same issue of AJR seem to me relevant to your statement that Geoffrey was 'decidedly lukewarm to his own heritage and no longer considered himself a Jew'. In 'Treason of the Intellectuals' you castigate two eminent savants, Popper and Bondi, who - like Geoffrey - found their spiritual home not where their forefathers' had been, as having been 'diminished by their failure'. But you do not apply the same yardstick in 'A celluloid cabal', when you state that current leading Hollywood Jews have no connections with their founding fathers, 'some of whose number were veritable monsters'.

Mendelssohn himself might have had more sympathy than you for those who left the Jewish faith. "*Die edle, massvolle, milde und ruhige Person des Nathan (ist) selbst das getreue Bild Moses Mendelssohn's*" (S. Hensel, *Die Familie Mendelssohn*, Berlin 1989, p. 15) and it was Nathan - in Lessing's great play - who said: "Der echte Ring vermutlich ging verloren". Or, as Frederick the Great, Mendelssohn's contemporary and a noted representative of the enlightenment, said: "*In meinem Staate kann jeder nach seiner Façon selig werden*".

Great Quarry
Guildford, Surrey

Professor Lewis Elton

TREASON OF THE INTELLECTUALS?

Sir - Your 16 column inches sledgehammer not only failed to crack Dr. Klein's 2 inch nut, it did not even hit it. You entirely missed the point that Popper's philosophy belongs to a different world from that of faith.

You scored some formidable intellectual minus points with all that mumbo jumbo about the cerebral propensity of our ancestors. Evidently not all Jews benefit equally from it! Also, grand-filial gratitude, homage and solidarity may have led some to Judaism, but it also led many more into morally indefensible dogma.

In the interests of brevity I won't go on.

Potter Street
Pinner, Middx.

H.S Grunewald

Sir - What an insult to say I was diminished by failure to recover a Jewish identity I never had!

Just to escape your censure, as being bereft of nobility I would have had to learn Hebrew, and the Torah, and become a hypocrite, confessing a religion I had never learnt, did not believe in, disagreed with, from which I had been separated by two generations. . . what an extraordinary idea!!

Connaught Ave
Grimsby

E.H. Kenneth

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

Sir - From his elevated position ex-Chief Rabbi Lord Jakobovits has declared himself on the BBC's Timewatch - opposed to the establishment of a British-based Holocaust Commemoration and Documentation Centre. If he thinks it is time to let bygones be bygones and to start looking to the future by funding Jewish schools rather than (if I understand him correctly) waste moneys on a solitary Holocaust Memorial, I would ask him a pertinent question:

In over twenty years as Chief rabbi did he ever attempt to persuade his flock to perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust among future generations? Preaching to the converted is not what this is all about

- though even the converted need to be knowledgeable and well-briefed when imparting historical data.

Penrhyn Road
Colwyn Bay, Clwyd

Deborah Goldberger

ZIONISM NOT OK

Sir - I want to express my concern that almost without exception, Zionist lies, disinformation and platitudes are swallowed whole by Jewish people everywhere who then wax lyrical about 'the miracle that is Israel.'

And what nonsense to claim that the Ethiopian Jews were lifted out for humanitarian reasons. This was a highly secret and covert operation, undertaken with the consent of the White House, and which, when it came to light, caused the Israeli government considerable embarrassment. The whole point of this exercise was to further help destabilize the Ethiopian economy, already prey to a dreadful civil war and to acquire a ready-made underclass for the state of Israel.

Belgrave Street
Rochdale

Stefan George

Sir - When seen against the historical background, the only valid indigenous title of the land, maliciously called Palestine by Rome, belongs to the Jews.

Until well into this century, the Arabs regarded 'Palestine', a national entity unknown in their history, as an unfounded and arbitrary demarcation of modern origin imposed by outside powers against their wishes. In contrast, for Jews mindful of their people's history, it delineated their ancient, unrelinquished homeland (never claimed as such by any other people), from which they had been forcibly exiled as punishment for their epic resistance to Roman domination.

Kingsley Road

S. Goodman

Kingswinford, W. Midlands

DR. KELLNER'S PROPHECY

Sir - According to Mr Hutterer (Chajesgymnasium Reunion, January issue) Dr. Kellner movingly remarked 'Shema Israel will be said for longer than Heil Hitler' on the occasion of the closure of the school in October 1939. This is not correct. The remark was made more than a year earlier at a *Maturafeier* in 1938. I was myself present, and it was a highly emotive occasion with Nazi flags flying on the surrounding buildings and the Viennese police actually guarding the

building against attacks! Dr. Kellner emigrated to Palestine in December 1938 and the headship was taken over by Prof. Noël.

Priory Gardens
London N6

Henriette Fishlock

FACILE EDITORIAL

Sir - If, as you truthfully say, we are indeed 'brothers under the skin' you surely cannot take serious exception to anybody getting confused about the relative political identity you claim for us. Are you really suggesting that a Tibetan Buddhist and, say, a Burmese Buddhist are comparable in their political identification with an Israeli and a non-Israeli Jew in theirs? The complexity of this matter surely does not lend itself to such facile treatment.

Harcourt Drive
Earley, Reading

Arnold Rosenstrauch

FACING THE WRONG WAY

Sir - What a good idea - in your January issue - to point Iphigenie "searching for the Land of the Greeks with her soul" in a different direction, as she had obviously not found it for over a hundred years in the direction that Feuerbach pointed her.

Decoy Avenue
London NW11

Hanne Norbert

INJUSTICE

Sir - I would like to protest through your pages against the apparent injustice a number of Austrian Refugees suffered at the hands of the Bundesversicherungsanstalt fuer Angestellte (BFA), Berlin. Some time ago it became known that women born before 1921, with children born abroad before 1949 could apply for *Kindererziehungsleistungen* under the *Vorschriften ueber die Wiedergutmachung nationalsozialistischen Unrechts (WGSVG) . . . gemaess 294 SGB VI*.

Together with numerous others I made an application to the BFA including a multitude of photocopied documents, duly "stamped" by the German Embassy. My application was acknowledged, I was sent further forms which I returned fully answered.

To my great surprise I received a letter this month informing me that I was "eligible in principle" but because I had my "ordinary abode" from 12.03.33 to 13.03.38 in Austria the directions about *Kinderbeitrag* did not apply to me.

Though my "Austrian credentials" were made clear right from the start, I would still have accepted the decision but for one fact: I know for certain that a number of women who applied under the same conditions (*Altoesterreicher*) have already received the *Kinderbeitrag*.

The only explanation I can find for this, is that the rules were changed in the "middle of the game". That does not seem good enough. I should think we have suffered enough without being made fools of as well.

The Green,
Southgate

Jenny Zundel

REFUGEES NO MORE?

Sir - True, we are no longer refugees, but we are identified in this way and probably have little choice. While one should not accept other people's perceptions of oneself, it is foolish to ignore them altogether.

The term 'refugee' seems to me to be an invisible parallel to the tattoo marks of our less fortunate sisters and brothers. These can be removed, but only at the expense of pain for the people concerned.

Mallwyd
Machynlleth

Manfred Landau

Sir - To say we are not refugees implies that we have overcome the trauma of our past, and been fully absorbed in the culture of our host country.

But is this correct? Even if we had an 'easy' emigration, many of us still suffer nightmares, or harbour feelings of guilt. What about language? How many of us are accent-free? And are our fears for the future of Europe not more intense because of our past experience?

Our memories go back to Hermann Leopoldi (I was born in Vienna), and not Gracie Fields, and, dare I confess, I sometimes count in my original language. Fate has decreed that we live in a foreign country, and most of us are happy here and consider it home. But not even the Anglicised spelling of a family name shows that we are assimilated, any more than a small Xmas tree did so many years ago.

Maxwelton Close
Mill Hill, London NW7

H.E. Reiner

Sir - You mention (p.14, January issue) 'The Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners'. On that basis, and to be logical, is it not time for you to decide to change the masthead of your journal to AJER Information - for members of the Association of Jewish Ex-Refugees?

This would not change the fact that 'we are what we are' (Mr. David's message in the November '94 issue). 'AJER' still includes the word 'refugee', so I think as an ex-refugee whose father died in Dachau in November 1938, I'll settle for that.

Linfields

K.L. Orpen

Lt. Chalfont, Amersham

Sir - The majority of Central European Jewish refugees who arrived here pre-war neither invoked pity nor expected or received charity. We arrived with very little except a multitude of skills and a desire to live without fear of persecution.

Unlike successive waves of economic migrants who, on arrival, received housing, child and other state benefits, our generation received nothing. We did, however, contribute immediately to Britain's scientific, artistic and economic life. To imply that our refugee status in some way reproaches the indigenous population with being unkind or unhelpful is ridiculous. Refugees we were and refugees we remain. After fifty-three years of living in England, which I love, I still feel a 'Mischling'. I am neither English nor central European - just a happy and settled refugee.

Loughborough Road

Bob Norton

Ruddington, Nottingham

Sir - We have all made some sort of life for ourselves. I have many English friends and acquaintances, and I hardly ever speak German. I never read German literature now; too difficult to translate. I am British-naturalised, and later by marriage, but I am not an emigrant, nor an ex-refugee.

I am a refugee from Nazi oppression, grateful to this country for saving my life (and of course loyal to Israel as well), but I am a REFUGEE!

Colmer Road

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The AJR at Work

Timely help

Many of our members, now well into their retirement years, continue to lead active and fulfilling lives and to pursue a wide variety of interests, which may include days at the Balint AJR Day Centre and most certainly reading *AJR Information* from cover to cover. Many members also have good reason to appreciate the key supportive role played by the AJR's social workers in providing all manner of extra help which enables them to maintain their independence, in their own homes, as long as possible.

WHO'S WHO IN THE AJR

HEAD OFFICE

Ernest David - Director
 Carol Rossen -
 Assistant to Director
 Agi Alexander -
 Head of Social Services
 Norah Gittings - Social Worker
 Wendi Wilson - Social Worker
 Ruth Finestone - Social Worker
 Laura Howe -
 Volunteers Co-Ordinator
 Katia Gould -
 Sheltered Accommodation
 Richard Grunberger -
 Editor AJR Information
 Ronald Channing -
 Publications & PR Manager
 Gordon Greenfield - Accountant
 Andrea Goodmaker -
 Lynsey Zimmerman -
 Reception/Membership

DAY CENTRE

Sylvia Matus -
 Day Centre Organiser
 Renée Lee - Assistant Organiser
 Joanne Botsman - Assistant
 Joan Kupler - Assistant
 Susie Kaufman -
 Catering Manager
 Joseph Periera - Caretaker

From time to time, however, the AJR has to put its 'rescue operation' into action. Recently, one of our elderly gentlemen members failed to respond to a routine call and neither did he reply to the telephone. AJR's social worker, suspecting something was not quite right, persisted in trying to reach him, assuming, rightly as it turned out, that he was at home but in some kind of difficulty.

Eventually she heard sounds of movement and, with patience and encouragement passed through the letterbox, coaxed Mr.X to the door which he just managed to open before the emergency services were called. Mr. X (we can't reveal his name for professional reasons) was in great pain having fallen in the bathroom and, it later transpired, fractured his leg. An ambulance was called immediately.

Fortunately, Mr. X comes from a tough school and soon made a very good recovery, but living on his own in his weakened condition would inevitably lead to further falls and he might not be so lucky next time. So the social worker successfully put a strong case for him to be admitted to an Otto Schiff Housing Association home. There he has settled in very happily. His children, who now visit him regularly, are delighted with the AJR's professionalism, dedication and concern, and are grateful for the warm and caring environment their father now enjoys. □

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

Midlands AJR

A meeting to consider the viability of inaugurating an AJR group, based on Birmingham and serving members in the Midlands area, took place in December last year and was attended by 18 people.

Following discussion, it was agreed to begin regular gatherings and to make further contact with fellow ex-refugees to offer help where needed. The importance of meeting others from similar backgrounds was also recognised, particularly for people living in the country who had little contact with other Jews.

A committee was formed to consider further the content and venue for future meetings: Edgar Glaser (Chairman), Theresa Bloom, Henry Aron, Fred Landau and Ken & Sonja Shindler.

The next meeting of Midlands AJR will take place on 26th March 1995, at 3pm, at the Birmingham Progressive Synagogue, 4 Sheepcote Street, Birmingham B16 8AA. (Sheepcote Street is off Broad Street and the synagogue is the second building on the right). The meeting will be preceded by a light lunch at 1.30pm; please let Corinne Oppenheimer know in advance if you require lunch.

Tel. no: 0121-705 9529. □

AJR 'Drop in' Advice Centre

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
 15 Cleve Road, London NW6
 between 10 a.m. and 12 noon on the following dates:

Tuesday 7 March 1995
Wednesday 15 March 1995
Thursday 23 March 1995
Monday 27 March 1995
Tuesday 4 April 1995

and every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at:
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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Message from Ernest David

The Jewish calendar contains days of commemoration of death and destruction and days which commemorate liberation. With Purim celebrating a disaster avoided, those of us who managed to escape from the *Shoah* can take stock and be thankful.

We are thankful that we were lucky enough to have been allowed into a democratic country, whose people are generally far less antisemitic than those of many other nations.

It is impressive that so much media effort is going into the commemoration of those of our people who, 50 years ago, were not so lucky, and yet some of the programmes shown on television give some food for thought.

It was quite eerie to listen to Richard

Dimbleby's first impression on entering Belsen without his once mentioning the word Jews, and even when he revisited the site in 1965, there was no mention of Jews, but the final shot showed a large cross. As Elie Wiesel said, "Not all victims were Jews, but all Jews were victims."

The programme on the silence of Pope Pius XII was also illuminating, in that, even when he did make cautious mention of suffering, for example in his encyclical '*mit brennender Sorge*', again there was no mention of Jewish suffering. This man, who is being considered for beatification, only once condemned Nazism unambiguously. That was in June 1945. Luckily, despite the lack of condemnation of State murder by the Vatican, the church at grass roots level in various countries did help to shelter and rescue Jews.

In the midst of evil and widespread indifference, there were bright spots of goodness, and during our Purim celebrations we, who escaped murder, can rejoice at being alive and resolve to do all in our power to fight intolerance.

Happy Purim!

□ Ernest David

'Kaffee Klatsch'

The atmosphere of a Vienna Kaffeehaus was reinvented at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre when members enjoyed a 'Kaffee Klatsch'. The caterers did everyone proud with apfelstrudel, Viennese pastries and a variety of open sandwiches. A very pleasant afternoon was completed by playing Viennese music, on members' own records, which brought nostalgia and amusement in equal measure to many. □

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

Tel. 071 328 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 -

MARCH

- Wednesday 1* ALL THAT JAZZ - Kathleen & Miriam Gilbert (Violin) accompanied by Bridget Marshall (Piano)
- Thursday 2* LIGHT CLASSICAL MUSIC - Trinity College of Music
- Sunday 5* DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Monday 6* THE GEOFFREY STRUM & JOHNNY WALTON DUO
- Tuesday 7* SPRINGTIME MISCELLANY - Popular Songs & Arias - Michaela Davies (Soprano) accompanied by Jean Paul Gandy (Piano)
- Wednesday 8* HEBE & GEOFFREY IN HARMONY - Hebe (Soprano) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)

- Thursday 9* EMOTION - RHYTHMS & GESTURES - THE POWER OF INDIAN DANCE - Presented by Lakshmi Haas
- Sunday 12* GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ - Presented by Lily Rudolfer "HAMANTASHEN" - A PURIM CONCERT by Ronnie Goldberg (Songs & Guitar)
- Tuesday 14* "QUARTISSIMO" AT PURIM - Alison Friend, Norma Roth, Suzanne Goodman, Ann Sadan accompanied by Sheila Games (Piano)
- Wednesday 15* TWO VOICES & A PIANO - Eddy Simmons & Helen Blake
- Thursday 16* WIZO CHOIR AT PURIM
- Sunday 19* ANNETTE SAVILLE ENTERTAINS FOR PURIM
- Monday 20* THE MUSICAL DUO - Jack Harris & Happy Branston
- Tuesday 21* AN AFTERNOON OF MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT - Lara Jane Moyler (Soprano) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski-Pernas (Piano)
- Wednesday 22* "50 YEARS ON - A 1940s VARIETY SHOW" - Anita Elias
- Thursday 23* SPRING MUSIC & SONG - Sue Kennett (Soprano) accompanied by Gordon Weaver (Piano)
- Sunday 26* DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT

- Monday 27* THE BUSHEY SHOW GROUP
- Tuesday 28* OPERA & OPERETTA IN MARCH - Laurence Hart (Baritone) & Joanne Fellerman (Soprano) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)
- Wednesday 29* JERRY WRAY - MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE BAND - Entertains on Clarinet & Keyboard
- Thursday 30* THE BEST OF THE 'CANTUS' PIANO TRIO - Amanda Palmer (Soprano) Armen Boldy (Tenor) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski-Pernas (Piano)

APRIL

- Sunday 2* AN APRIL CONCERT - Gordon Mackay (Violin) & Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)
- Monday 3* VIENNESE MUSIC - Claude May (Baritone) with Self Accompaniment
- Tuesday 4* A MEDLEY OF SONGS & ARIAS FROM MUSICALS, OPERETTA & OPERA - Kim Whyte (Soprano with Self Piano Accompaniment)
- Wednesday 5* A CONCERT FOR AN APRIL AFTERNOON - Geoffrey Strum accompanied by Johnny Walton (Piano)
- Thursday 6* THE MUSIC MAKERS - Elizabeth Winton & Stan Longmire with piano accompaniment

FAMILY EVENTS**Birthdays**

Schiller Congratulations and best wishes to Susie Schiller on her 90th birthday (22nd February) from Trude, Leni, Friedl, Ida, Ruth and Gary.

Diamond Wedding

AJR members Eva and Rudi Jones (Jonas) celebrated their Diamond Wedding in January. Their marriage took place in Paris on 3rd January 1935.

Deaths

Romano Elvira Romano died 3rd January 1995. A special lady who will be sadly missed by her many friends at the AJR Balint Day Centre.

Romano Elvira (Vera). Sadly missed by her friends Eva and Mary.

Aronow Alexander Aronow passed away 1st December 1994. Mourned by his wife and family.

King Ronald Michael King (Werner Oppenheim, Kinder Transport from Berlin). Peacefully on 7 January 1995 in London aged 72 years. Eternally loved - Shalom.

Fulda Louise Fulda, formerly of Breslau/Munich, passed away on 1.1.95 in her 99th year. Much loved mother of Beatrice and Henry and sadly missed by all her family and many friends.

Bischoff Olga Bischoff, née Löbel, wife of Hermann and well loved teacher of rhythmic gymnastics at the Berlin Bar Kochba 1935-38, and Bulawayo, Rhodesia, until 1960. Passed away peacefully aged 89, on 25th January 1995 after a long illness. Deeply mourned by her daughter Ann.

Kreisky Gerda Kreisky has left us for ever, after a long stay in hospital. We shall miss her and remember her with affection. Ilse Evans, Betty Goldschmidt and Ruth Young.

Bertram Irma Bertram, died 13th January 1995. Remembered with love and will be sadly missed by all her family and friends.

Segal Dora Segal, on 6th February 1995, at Edenhall Marie Curie Centre, died peacefully after a short illness. Leaves a void in the lives of her family and many friends.

**Dora Segal
Obituary
in next issue**

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

The Ben Uri Art Society is showing (until 9 April) a wide range of Irene Scheinmann's works, including her recent series of paintings and etchings entitled *The New Wilderness*. Irene, Baghdad born, has lived in England for many years; she has exhibited widely and was the founder of the European artists' association 'Print Europe'. Together with Irene Scheinmann's work, the Ben Uri will also be showing sculptures by Dania Appel, her first exhibition in London. Dania trained in Switzerland and Israel and studied stone carving with the Romanian sculptor Tuvia Iuster.



Irene Scheinmann, 'The Tree of Life', etching.

An exhibition of *Literary Portraits*, photographs by Mark Gerson FBIPP, is at the *Manor House* (until 15 March). Gerson claims to have photographed more literary figures than anyone else in this country and fifty works are being shown, including portraits of Somerset Maugham, Evelyn Waugh, Pinter, Priestley, Golding and Arnold Wesker. He will be having a major retrospective exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery next year.

The *Imperial War Museum* is marking its 1995 Victory Festival by an exhibition about London and Londoners at war, through photographs, films, sound recordings, documents and personal mementoes, incorporating a Civil Defence HQ in the Blitz and a Lyons Corner House. In the Home Front Memorial Gallery there will be the names of 60,000 men, women and children killed by enemy action during the Second World War.

Other exhibitions include the *Channel Islands*, *Fashion on the Ration* and *War Paint*.

There are three fine exhibitions at the *National Portrait Gallery*. The first is *The road from 1945: Makers of post-war Britain* (until 18 June) which comprises a selection from its portraits of the period, including Attlee, Bevan, Beveridge, Churchill, Gaitskell, Wilson, etc., as well as portraits of scientists, artists and personalities from the world of cinema, radio, music and sport.

Also at the *National Portrait Gallery* (until 11 June) is *Richard Avedon: Evidence 1944-1994*. This is a retrospective exhibition organised by the Whitney Museum of American Art of the work of a photographer who occupies a prominent and singular position in recent art history. The exhibition is sponsored by Harpers and Queens and contains some 200 black and white photographs covering 50 years of Avedon's work.

György Gordon, born in Hungary in 1924 and trained at the Budapest Academy of Fine Art, fled to England during the Hungarian uprising in 1956. For 20 years he taught at the Wakefield College of Art. A retrospective exhibition of his paintings and drawings, to celebrate his 70th birthday, is being held at the Na-

tional Portrait Gallery (until 25 June).

The *National Gallery* is showing *Spanish Still Life: From Velasquez to Goya*, sponsored by Glaxo Holdings plc (until 21 May). Three early scenes of everyday life by Velasquez are on display, as well as four still-life paintings by Goya.

The Revival of the Palladian Style. Lord Burlington and his House and Garden at Chiswick is the subject of a *Royal Academy* exhibition (until 2 April). Richard Boyle, third earl of Burlington (1694-1753) was the architect and owner of Chiswick House. He was a leader of the Palladian Revival and developed Chiswick House on an understanding of the architecture of Palladio, reworked in a new and original style. The gardens were laid out by William Kent over a period of seventeen years. The exhibition includes 122 paintings, drawings and engravings of the house and garden. Each Sunday during the exhibition at 1.30pm a complimentary bus service, provided by English Heritage, will travel from the Royal Academy to Chiswick House and return from there at 4pm.

Willem de Kooning is considered one of the most influential American artists. An exhibition of some 70 of his paintings, drawn from collections all over the world, is at the *Tate Gallery* (until 7 May). □

SB's Column

Treasure Trove. The epic of Jewish extermination, originally called 'Dos Lied fun ojsgehargetn jiddischen Volk', just published by Kiepenheuer & Witsch, is a poem of considerable length, written in Yiddish by Jizchak Katzenelson and translated into German by Wolf Biermann, who recently recited excerpts at the Vienna Burgtheater. The work was written in Auschwitz during 1943/44, its author murdered there in 1945. The manuscript, hidden in bottles and in a leather suitcase, was subsequently smuggled into Palestine. Biermann, who has been a translator for over 30 years, calls it 'the most important work about the greatest tragedy in history'. It is a sincere effort to transfer knowledge of the Holocaust from people's brains into their hearts, which, Biermann hopes, will give future generations greater understanding.

Joseph Roth - a remarkable Austrian author. To mark the centenary of Galicia-born Joseph Roth, the Vienna Jewish

Museum mounted an exhibition. Though best known for his novels set in the old monarchy (e.g. *Radetzky Marsch*), Roth also made his contribution to contemporary journalism and was a staunch opponent of rising National Socialism. Member of the Vienna literary circle and a friend of Stefan Zweig, Joseph Roth had an untimely death at the age of 45 as an exile in Paris.

Advance announcement. The Royal Opera House Covent Garden announces a balletic triple programme including *La Ronde*, to be premiered on 27th April (booking from 20th March). It is based on the play by Arthur Schnitzler, with music composed in Hollywood by Erich Wolfgang Korngold (not identical with the waltz theme by Oscar Straus).

Obituary. Peter Hay, the Austrian actor and cabaretist who has died at the age of 80, was a popular figure on Vienna's 'smaller stages' such as the 'Simpl' where he was regularly seen during the Fifties and Sixties. He also partnered Karl Farkas in the top television programme *Bilanz der Saison*. □

Hitler and the Holocaust (Part 6)

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

The whole operation was wrapped in secrecy. As little as possible was committed to paper, and where that was unavoidable, it was standard procedure, strictly followed, to employ such coded euphemisms for extermination as evacuation, 'resettlement' or 'special treatment'. Hitler made clear what he wanted orally, leaving it to Himmler and Heydrich, as leaders of the SS, to convey the necessary orders, using the stock formula in accordance with the Führer's wishes.

An answer, however, had to be found to the question of how the SS proposed to put to death, under conditions of secrecy, several million Jews brought together from all over Europe. We can document in detail the steps by which the methods used moved from (a) the use of carbon monoxide in specially built trucks, developed by Herbert Lange, one of the euthanasia programme technicians, to (b) the purpose-built gas chambers, developed by another recruit from the euthanasia programme, Christian Wirth, to (c) the use of prussic acid gas, Zyklon B, which enabled the SS technicians at Auschwitz to claim that they were able to exceed the 'productivity' of the other death factories.

Hitler did not wait for all the practical problems to be solved before ordering the deportation of the remaining Jews from Berlin, Vienna and Prague. The gas chambers, however, were not yet ready to receive such numbers. What happened can be illustrated by two examples from the former Baltic States investigated in post-war trials. Five convoys of German Jews from Munich, Berlin, Frankfurt, Vienna and Breslau which arrived in Kovno were massacred in Fort IX on 25th and 29th November. In Riga, another thousand from Berlin who had been kept in a siding all night were pulled out of the train and shot between 8.15 and 9 o'clock in the morning. They were followed the same day by 14,000 Jewish inhabitants from Riga itself who were massacred in snow-covered pits in the Rumbuli Forest outside the city.

Those Jews who were not shot on arrival were crammed into the already overcrowded ghettos of Warsaw, Lodz and other Polish cities, and those who survived the conditions there were gassed during the 'cleansing' of the ghettos in 1942.

Having launched the deportation programme precipitately in the autumn of 1941 on Hitler's orders, the SS leaders found it necessary to call a conference to discuss the large-scale problems of organisation involved in carrying out 'a total solution of the Jewish question in Europe'. Known as the Wannsee Conference, it met in Berlin on 20th January 1942.

The minutes of the meeting record:

Around 11 million Jews come into consideration for this final solution of the European Jewish question, who are distributed among the individual countries as follows. [Among those listed were the 330,000 Jews in England and 4,000 in Ireland]. In the process of carrying out the final solution Europe will be combed through from west to east.

The Wannsee Conference accepted that priority must be given to the 'cleansing' of occupied Poland. Himmler required the members of each SS team selected for 'special duties' to swear personally an oath of silence, telling them: 'I have to expect of you superhuman acts of inhumanity. But it is the Führer's will.' Goebbels, who had given the signal for *Kristallnacht*, wrote in his diary on 27th March 1942:

Starting with Lublin, the deportation of the Jews to the east has been set in motion. It is a pretty barbarous business - one would not wish to go into details - and there are not many Jews left. One simply cannot be sentimental about these things ... The Führer is the moving spirit of this radical solution both in word and deed.

A year later Himmler had a report prepared for Hitler on the progress made with the Final Solution during 1942. The total number of Jews who had received 'special treatment' - altered to read 'who had passed through camps in the Government General' - was 1,873,000. Re-typed on the special Führer typewriter with large letters for Hitler to read, it was eventually returned to Eichmann with Himmler's instruction: 'The Führer has taken note: destroy. HH'.

With the ever-growing demands of the armed forces on German man-power, the inmates in concentration camps became important as a source of labour. The SS

created an economic empire by supplying labour, including prisoners of war and foreign workers, to firms making armaments. The availability of cheap labour led Germany's leading chemical firm to build a synthetic rubber factory adjoining Auschwitz and to add a labour camp of its own, Monowitz, as part of the Auschwitz complex. The Jews who were fit enough were not immediately killed but were literally worked to death in appalling conditions. Their final release came only when they were removed to the gas chambers. Methodical as always, even in costing murder, the SS accountants made an estimate of their operating costs:

The hiring of concentration-camp inmates to industrial enterprises yields an average return of 6 to 8 RM, from which 70 pfennig must be deducted for food and clothing. Assuming an inmate's life expectancy to be nine months, we must multiply this sum by 270. The total is 1,431 RM. This profit can be increased by rational utilisation of the corpse, i.e. by means of gold teeth fillings, women's hair (used for stuffing mattresses), clothing, valuables, etc., but on the other hand every corpse represents a loss of 2 RM which is the cost of cremation.

This can be accurately described as 'the industrialisation of murder'.

To be continued

SEARCH NOTICES

Historian Seeking Internees. If you were a Jewish refugee interned in Great Britain at the beginning of World War II, I would like to talk to you about your experiences. Please contact Professor Maxine Seller, 23 Clifton Gardens, Little Venice, London W9 1AR. I will arrange our interview at the time and place most convenient for you.

Peter Jennings, born 19.7.1902 and **Gertrude née Guttman**, born 15.9.18, of Vienna, sought by a relative in Israel. Please respond to Box No. 1275.

Edmund Eric Mandle. The State Trustees of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, are seeking the heirs of Eric Mandle, a 'Dunera Boy', who died intestate in 1991. Born June 25th 1913 in Austria to Max Ludwig Mandle and Helena, née Friedmann, he had a younger sister Emilie. Please contact Messrs. Marotta or White, State Trustees, Melbourne, on (03) 677 6444 or 1800 133 095 (Toll Free) with any information on him, or the whereabouts of his sister and family.

Letter from the European Union

Jewish Conservative ex-MEP Derek Prag tells the following story. Just after Margaret Thatcher was ousted from being Prime Minister, he was sitting next to Jacques Delors. He asked him if he was not a teeny bit sorry that Maggie had gone. He replied: "Not a bit, but I'll tell you who is and that's the Prime Ministers of European Union Governments. They were only too happy to have her say what they themselves were thinking." A similar situation seems to have grown up around John Major.

Margaret Daly, another Conservative ex-MEP, quoted Sir Leon Brittan. He says that the EU believes that the United Kingdom is out to destroy the Community. This is being openly discussed and doing the UK untold damage. Mrs. Daly pointed out that our business investment from overseas was \$28 billion in 1978 and was now well over \$200 billion. She attributes this to our membership of the EU. She added that the European Parliament and the Commission's position is that they need the Brits and think we are mad to behave as we do towards them.

In spite of the Treaty on Independence regarding Commissioners to the EU, there is nevertheless the feeling that the Commissioner is always on his Government's side. It is countries' Governments that get the plum jobs and not individual commissioners. Sir Leon Brittan lost out because of Britain's perceived attitude to the European Union. He was deprived of the political East Europe part of his External Trade Portfolio, which is the really interesting side of it. Sir Leon wanted desperately to open up Eastern Europe to Western economies in the EU. With the arrival of Sweden, Austria and Finland, this would have been an exciting project for him. He was bitterly disappointed.

But Pauline Green, Labour MP for Barnet and Socialist Group leader in the European Parliament, has no time for the way Sir Leon Brittan behaved over the issue. He indicated that he might resign. Her press release said, amongst other things, that "he was behaving like a spoilt child". She accused him of being motivated by personal greed and ambition and of not being a "team player", a charge she also laid at the Tory party's door.

Derek Prag thinks the problems that the

UK has with the EU stem from distorted reporting. Things to our advantage seem not to be reported at all and events such as the addition to the EU of the above nations, are not reported properly. He maintains that media hype runs the UK. This feeling is shared by Pauline Green. During all the hysteria about cucumber directives, she pointed out that we started growing straight cucumbers, had been for some time and that the directive actually helps our farmers to sell them. This has never been properly reported. But although UK reporting does not help our cause in the EU, she also blames the Tory Government.

On the Middle Eastern peace moves Pauline said the Labour group were very supportive of the Israelis. She has great sympathy with those who suffered in the Gulf War and feels it says a lot for them that they showed such restraint under extreme provocation. She also supports Prime Minister Rabin in his efforts with the peace process. Pauline shows insight into the whole Middle East problem. She understands Rabin's difficulty in getting the Israelis to accept the initiatives. She also has sympathy for the ex-guerrilla Arafat's problem in trying to hold his people together as a democratic leader, since, unlike Rabin, he has no experience of participatory democracy.

She discussed with Shimon Peres ways in which the EU could help the peace process. The way forward is successfully to conclude the present negotiations on a new package for Israel. This includes encouraging Israel's access to the European market-place. The Labour Group is in the forefront of this. Hamas came into its own during the Gulf War when Arafat made his mistakes. The Socialist Group now wish to increase aid to the Palestinians as a way of immediately improving their living standards and thus undermining Hamas' influence. Hence the importance of financial support for Gaza and Jericho continuing, in spite of the rumours that funding is being mis-channelled. The EU is monitoring the situation closely. She can see peace coming to the Middle East, but concludes that atrocities there will continue well into the future.

She sees the recent Casablanca conference as having been very important to improving trade between Arabs and Israelis. Nine ministers and many bankers and businessmen from Israel took part and were doing business with the Arabs at the

conference. This, according to Pauline Green, was a hugely important development. In the long term she is optimistic about the future.

We also spoke about domestic matters of importance to the Jewish community in the UK. We touched on Shechita. David Morris, a Welsh MP, has tried to find a fine line between animal welfare and religious rights. The Socialist Group feel that it is not part of their role to interfere in age old traditions which have stood the test of time. She is in constant touch with the Board of Deputies, particularly Martin Savitt, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, whenever a subject affecting the Jewish Community arises.

The Conservative group were, as we know, heavily defeated in the last European elections. Many of those who lost their seats last time had served for years in the Parliament. Some like Derek Prag have a distinguished career behind them. He was vice-chairman of the Institutional Committee and had wanted to stand as that organisation's chairman. An interesting insight into how the Parliament really works was that he was nominated and had all-party support to get the job. However, the Spanish wanted the chairmanship. It is rumoured that deals were done and he was informed that if he did not withdraw his name, any recommendation for a UK honour would have to be reconsidered, so the Spanish had their way.

Which brings me to another gripe that the Conservatives have with the honours system. Derek Prag's long history of good work for the disabled is legendary. He organised the first referendum in 1974/75. Also, through sheer persistence he managed to get approximately £1 million for innovative projects in his constituency in Hertfordshire. If anyone was eligible for an honour for his work it would have been Derek Prag. Other MEPs of fifteen and twenty years' standing also got nothing. Yet one person was made a Baroness after only serving for five years. It is rumoured that Patricia Rawlings, a well-heeled Jewish lady, wined and dined all the right people in the House of Lords during her MEPship, with the desired result that she was made a peeress in the Honours List. There are still some bad vibes amongst those who were not so fortunate or so wealthy.

□ Nikki van der Zyl

Cooking with Gretel Beer



Walnut Meringues

I discovered a long time ago that cooks can be divided into two distinct groups: those with left-over egg yolks and those with left-over eggwhites lurking in the fridge. I belong strictly to the latter class and one of the nicest ways of using them up is to make small Walnut Meringues (in fact you could use chopped hazelnuts instead of walnuts, but walnuts are better). Two eggwhites will yield 2-3 dozen small meringues.

2 eggwhites
2 1/2oz (70g) icing sugar
2 1/2oz (70g) chopped walnuts
2 1/2oz (70g) chopped candied peel
rice paper

Whisk eggwhites and sugar in a bowl set over a saucepan half-filled with simmering water until very thick. Remove from heat and whisk until cold. Fold in chopped walnuts and candied peel.

Cover a bakingsheet with rice paper and place teaspoonfuls of the mixture on the rice paper, well apart. Bake at gas mark 1/2, 250°F, 120°C for about 1 1/2 - 2 hours until dry and very lightly tinged with colour. Set to cool on a rack. □

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POSTHUMOUS PRAISE

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What other lensgrinder turned *philosoff*?

FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING

Yachnas may take in each other's washing
But Weightwatchers shun indiscriminate *noshing*

POETIC JUSTICE

Among fellow scribblers Swift lost *punim*
Over "Lilliput's" unpronounceable Houyhnhm

SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Shadchonim carry drab umbrellas
Pass data on to single fellas
Shadchenkes trawl through shoals of gels
Who, unaided, can't hear wedding bells
Like desperately-seekin Suzan
Who craves a thirty-something *chozen*
Then, at the Trooping of the *Kalle*
The *kehillé* clap - think they're at the Hallé

WINTRY CHEER

Chanuka - candlelit season of *latkes*
And of shanks wrapped in long flannel *gatkes*

SEX AND DEATH

Wife-swapping is randomly practised in Esher

Which to this day lacks a *Chevra Kadisha*

□R.G.

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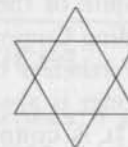
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Obituaries

Lord Schon

Frank Schon who died, aged 82, was the son of a Viennese lawyer. Gymnasium-educated, he joined a chemicals business while continuing law studies in the evening. He spent a great deal of the 1930s in Czechoslovakia, where he married and whence, in 1939, he escaped to Britain.

In 1940 with borrowed money he established a small chemicals manufacturing company in Cumbria, a hitherto deprived region ripe for industrial development. One of the company's first products were firelighters which saved on wood and paper as a wartime economy measure. Postwar the firm, called Marchon, expanded into detergents and its subsidiary Solway Chemicals manufactured sulphuric acid and cement. Expansion continued apace: by 1965 Marchon Products and Solway had more than 2,300 employees and a fleet of ships for transporting phosphate rocks from Morocco.

Over the following years Frank Schon was appointed a member of the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation and became a founder director of the Overseas Marketing Corporation and adviser to the Ministry of Technology. Created Baron Schon of Whitehaven in 1976, he ended his maiden speech in the Lords with the words "The debt I owe to the kindness and humanity of the British people cannot be discharged."

Frank Schon also had diverse social and cultural interests; he chaired the Cumberland Development Council and served on the council of King's College, Newcastle. His hobbies included golf; he once memorably achieved a hole in one in a game against the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

Heinz Bernard

Heinz Bernard, who died aged 70, had an extraordinary history. He was brought up as the only child of a wealthy orthodox family, the Lowensteins, in 1920s Nuremberg. Only as an adult did he discover that he had in fact been adopted as a small child and that, to his delight, he had an elder brother and sister living in Israel.

On arrival in England at the age of 15, he was thrown on his own resources. He spent many years in a variety of jobs

working, among other jobs, as a rabbit-skin stretcher, a timber porter, a laboratory assistant and a waiter in a Soho gambling club. During this latter job he began saving up to study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

Having graduated, he toured Cornwall in what was probably the last of the old-fashioned family touring companies. His political beliefs had led him, while still a drama student, in the direction of the Unity Theatre and later in his career he became its director. He produced Brecht's *Mother Courage* and Brecht-Feuchtwanger's *Visions of Simon Machard* there. Later he spent some years as director/actor at the Century Theatre, followed by a two-year stint as the "rabbi" in *Fiddler on the Roof* at the Haymarket Theatre.

He interrupted his career to spend ten years in Israel, where he acted in Hebrew at Habima and became well-known to generations of Israeli children in a long-running English-teaching series on TV. It took him some time to re-establish his career after returning to Britain in 1981; last year, while already in poor health, he took on a variety of roles in the eight-hour marathon, *The House of The Spirits*. No one who knew him will ever forget his warmth, enthusiasm and enjoyment of life.

Richard Krautheimer

Richard Krautheimer, born in Fürth of Jewish parents, a leading art historian of our era, died in Rome at the age of 97. He was prominent as a historian of medieval church architecture in Rome and other cities in the Mediterranean area, and author of a history of sacral architecture from antiquity to the late Byzantine period which formed a volume in the Pelican History of Art.

After emigrating to the United States in 1933, he lectured at the Institute of Fine Arts in New York. He went to Rome in 1971 where, at over 70, he became virtually the centre of the Bibliotheca Hertziana, an art institute of the Max Planck Society right up to the end of his life.

Although not religious, he never abandoned Judaism, even though conversion might have secured him a professorship in the Weimar Republic.

□F.H.

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Red-Letter Day: 19 July 1928

Although it was not recorded in any newspaper, on that day a 26 year-old Professor of Theoretical Physics of the University of Rome, married 21 year-old Signorina Laura Capon in a civil ceremony in Rome. The groom's parents may have been socially somewhat below that of the bride's, but it was not a misalliance. Enrico Fermi's grandparents were farmers in the Po valley, but his father had risen to be a senior railway administrator for a whole province. Fermi himself had had a most promising career before him, with a Chair of Theoretical Physics being created specially for him at the tender age of 26. He had graduated "Summa cum laude", and, after taking his doctorate, he had studied under Max Born at Goettingen and then under Paul Ehrenzweig at Leiden. No one could have a better start as a physicist.

Laura was the daughter of Augusto Capon, Commander in the Italian navy in World-War I; in 1932 he was to become Chief of Italian Naval Intelligence and an Admiral. In 1944, he died an old man at the death-camp of Auschwitz, where he had been transported.

Experimentation

The young Fermi couple lived a happy and active life in Rome, and in due course they had two children, a daughter born in 1931 and a son five years later. Professionally, Fermi was experimenting with the irradiation of a series of elements with neutrons, the atomic particle which was later found to fission - i.e. split - atoms of uranium and plutonium. His success was variable, until, on the 22nd October 1934, he inserted a layer of paraffin between the neutron bullets and a silver target. He noted that the silver became strongly radioactive, hundreds of times more so than without the paraffin layer. He explained that behaviour by assuming that the neutrons were slowed by the paraffin, which could then be captured by the silver target. This resulted in the silver, now containing extra neutrons, becoming radioactive. For this work, Fermi was awarded the Nobel prize four years later, in December 1938.

In the same year, in 1938, Mussolini published his first antisemitic laws which prohibited inter-marriage with Jews and

the education of Jewish children in state schools, inter alia. There were only 40,000 Jews in Italy, fewer than 0.1% of the population, nearly all fully integrated into Italian society and physically indistinguishable. Many Jews had been early and keen supporters of Mussolini, even participants in the March on Rome. There seemed to be no valid reason for Mussolini's U-turn regarding the Jews, except to please Hitler and demonstrate his loyalty to him.

Mrs. Fermi, the former Miss Capon, was a Jewess. Her children were half-Jews. Her father had been dismissed from the navy. It was obvious to her that life for Jews in Italy was going to be made difficult, if not impossible. Fermi agreed with his wife that the only solution to these political developments was emigration to America.

Nobel Prize

In December 1938, the whole family was invited to Stockholm for the presentation of the Nobel prize to Enrico Fermi. After this ceremony, they did not, as expected, return to their home in Italy, but went directly to New York, where they arrived on the 2nd January 1939. Perhaps the pogrom in Germany on the preceding 10th November had precipitated this decision.

Within four years of arriving at their new domicile in America, where they were treated as enemy aliens for some of the time, Fermi designed the first atomic reactor. He persuaded the American authorities to provide the money and built and operated it. He used pure graphite instead of paraffin to slow down neutrons, and uranium as the target, which, on neutron capture, became explosive plutonium. His reactor became "critical" on the 2nd December 1942, in the squash-court of the University of Chicago. It proved beyond reasonable doubt that atomic energy and bombs were realisable propositions.

Literally within days of that success, the American bomb programme went into full swing. In January 1943, a special engineering department started construction of the atomic laboratories at Los Alamos, under the overall command of General Leslie Groves and the scientific leadership of Robert Oppenheimer.

Two and a half years later, the first atomic bomb was successfully tested in the desert of New Mexico. Three weeks after the test, on the 6th August 1945, the town of Hiroshima was destroyed, a few

days later Nagasaki met the same fate. These two bombs ended the war.

America's gain

What would have happened if Fermi had *not* married Miss Capon on the 19th July 1928, apart from probably missing a church wedding? Statistically, his marriage to a Jewish girl was most unlikely. Given their proportion, Fermi was 1,000 times more likely to marry a Roman Catholic than a Jewess. If that unlikely alliance had not taken place, there would have been no pressing reason for Fermi to emigrate. He would have continued living and working in Rome, most likely in cooperation with his German counterpart, Werner Heisenberg, of a similar age. The two physicists knew each other from their student days under Max Born at Goettingen. The combination of Fermi and Heisenberg would have made a formidable team, the latter having become a Nobel Laureate in physics six years before Fermi, in 1932. Italy's gain of Fermi would have been America's loss. Fermi and his German associates might have built an atomic reactor not in Chicago but, say, at Joachimstal in the northern Sudetenland, the location of the only source of uranium in Europe. When Robert Oppenheimer was a young boy, his parents took him there on a visit to the mines, and it inspired his future career; in the year of Fermi's Nobel prize it was annexed by Hitler.

In the late 1930's, Germany was well ahead in atomic research; for instance Otto Hahn split the uranium atom at the end of 1938, at the very time when Fermi left for America. Half a year later, just before the war, a German professor Siegfried Fluegge, wrote a most perspicacious article on the possible development of atomic energy but, lacking the courage of his convictions, did not believe the scientific evidence and failed to follow it up. The more clear-sighted and adventurous Fermi would certainly have done so, as he demonstrated so ably in America. Luckily for the world, he was not in German-controlled Italy, or Germany might well have won the race for the atomic bomb. He was in America, because he had married a Jewish girl on the 19th July 1928, and did not wish his children to suffer from discrimination. The date of his marriage must be a memorable one in the history of the world.

□A.W. Freud