

AJR *Information*

Volume LI No. 12

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Don't miss ...

**A land fit
for Eros**

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Trust**

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Berlin blues?

Ruth Rothenberg
p14

Sang et terre

Thanks to Le Pen's demagoguery, the canker of racism is eating into municipal administrations along the Mediterranean coast. In a French variant of *Blut und Boden* thinking, the NF Mayor of Toulon has cancelled the projected honouring of the Jewish writer Marek Halter at the city's book fair. "Halter", said the Mayor, "is not attached to the national soil". Has Le Pen's *Ortsgruppenleiter*, one wonders, ever heard of Dumas' black grandmother, Zola's Italian father, or 'Proust's Jewish mother'? □

Reflections on German history and 'Europe'

The past in the present

The editor's suggestion in the previous issue that unified Berlin ought to dispense with the 1871 Victory Column has attracted criticism (Letters pages 6 & 7). Berlin, so runs the counter-argument, is no more compromised by the towering presence of the Siegessäule than Paris is by that of the Arc de Triomphe. Both structures allegedly express a nineteenth-century mentality radically different from our contemporary one.

This argument rests on a superficial resemblance between the impulses that lay behind the construction of both edifices.

The Arc de Triomphe was admittedly conceived as a monument to French military triumphs, but since *la grande armée* spread the *Code Napoléon* far beyond the Rhine – to the delight of many Belgians, Italians and Germans, including Heine – France's victories were not hers alone.

By contrast Bismarck's victory in 1871 only benefited Prussia/Germany. And even she only benefited in economic and self-image terms, because victory enabled Bismarck to discriminate against Catholics, Poles and Social Democrats; his final bequest to the nation was a neutered Reichstag unable to put a brake on the overweening ambitions of the Kaiser.

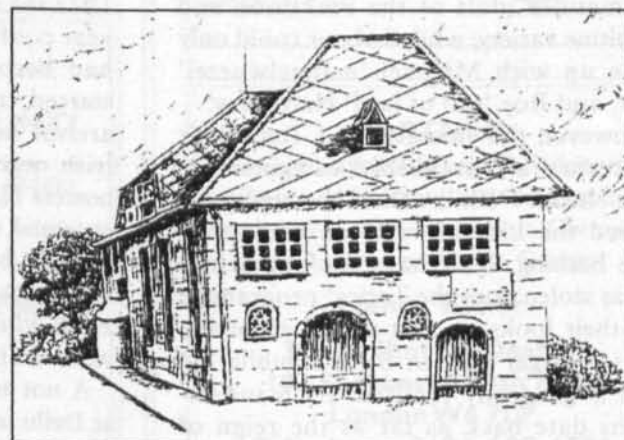
In view of the fact that Kaiser Wilhelm grasped at global power, *Weltmacht*, in the First World War (prefiguring Hitler in the Second) the victory commemorated by the Siegessäule can be likened to a noxious acorn from which an ever-larger poisoned oaktree grew.

However, the fact that Prussia/Germany engaged in 'serial belligerence' – three local, and two global wars in a mere eighty-one years (1864 to 1945) – does not, *pace* her low profile in recent world conflicts, betoken an immutably aggressive disposition. Largely supine throughout the 17th century, Germany had allowed self-aggrandizing powers like Sweden and France to use her as a theatre of diplomatic and military operations; as late as 1800 she was still known as 'land of poets and thinkers'.

The real turning point occurred in the 1813 War of Liberation when a natural reaction against French domination became, thanks to Fichte, Arndt and *Turnvater* Jahn, entangled in xenophobia and antisemitism.

But just as the Teutomaniac tendency had reversed the previous Enlightenment ethos – symbolised by Lessing, Kant and Goethe – so in the half-century since Hitler his erstwhile subjects have effected an astonishing reversal of attitudes and practices.

Given the country's success, unlike Austria, in marginalising its Neo-Nazis, and in making democracy synonymous with prosperity, talk of the Germans using the EU to achieve what two world wars had failed to give them – *viz* dominance over Europe – is an unthinking gut reaction. Anti-German (xeno)phobia is in essence a battering ram deployed by demagogues hostile to the EU. One needs only to cast a glance at the opponents of European integration – from Communists and Le Pen in France via Haider in Austria to Tony Benn and Enoch Powell in the UK – to conclude that 'Maastricht' must be a good thing □



The Old Synagogue at Worms, South West Germany, built in 933, the oldest synagogue and Jewish cemetery in Europe. Drawing by Eric Walters.

Profile

Near centenarian

Dr Fritz Engel, from Vienna, will be 99 this month. He is still fit and active, enjoys life and plays the piano, reads, paints and gives lectures to schools and other organisations about the fate of European Jewry. His self-portrait, accompanying this profile, was drawn just a few weeks ago. He has completed his memoirs *A Chain of Events* with illustrations, for which he is about to find a publisher.

In the first World War, at the age of 17, just before starting his studies at the University of Vienna, he had to join the Austro-Hungarian army and spent ten months on the Russian front. After the war he finished his studies, qualified as a doctor and dental surgeon, and joined the practice of his father, Dr Hermann Engel.

In May 1938 Dr Engel, with his wife Anni and his two children, was able to escape to England. Anni was appointed to



Dr Fritz Engel, a recent self-portrait

run the newly formed refugee home for adults and children in New Milton, and in 1941, after taking the English dental ex-

aminations, he was able to establish himself as a dental surgeon in Bournemouth. He practised in Bournemouth for 25 years. In his 'spare time' he invented and patented the 'Interspace' toothbrush, and set up the company *Daily Use Ltd* to manufacture it. He also invented and produced several reading aids.

Dr Engel was an active member of the B'nai B'rith 'Wahrheit' Lodge in Vienna and he has continued his connection with the B'nai B'rith Bournemouth Lodge. Fritz and Anni Engel have two children: Susan Engel Morand, the well-known actress of the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, and George Michael Engel, who went to Australia, is himself now a grandfather, and after retiring became a fruit farmer.

Fritz and Anni must have been amongst the first refugees in Bournemouth and have kept in close touch with the whole Jewish community over the years. His hobbies include music and he likes to recall his friendship with many orchestral conductors.

□ Dr G M Ettinger

A land fit for Eros

At Blackpool Janet Anderson, Shadow Minister for Women's Affairs, prophesied that under Labour women will be more promiscuous. The mind boggles. One would have thought that given the number of women involved with top Tories, Labour will have a job to better their record.

Beside which, they are disadvantaged by just not being up to it in the looks department. Think back to Anthony Eden – *der schöne Anthony* – and his Labour counterpart Ernest 'pachyderm' Bevin. And even post-Suez the Tories kept on producing matinee idols of the Parkinson and Heseltine variety, while Labour could only come up with Michael 'mangelwurzels' Foot, and Roy 'tub of lard' Hattersley.

However, the emergence of Tony Blair has turned all established categories on their head. While Disraeli reputedly swiped the Liberals' clothes while they were bathing, Blair has gone one better: he has stolen both the Tories' programme and their looks. In fact sexual attraction plays a larger part in British public life than is generally realised. Its manifestations date back as far as the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Everyone knows about the Virgin Queen's romantic entanglements with the Earls of Leicester and of

Essex – the former the love of her younger years and the latter of her dotage. *Incredibile dictu*, it is quite possible that Essex was actually Leicester's illegitimate son, whose inherited looks reminded the ageing queen of her youthful *amour*. This may have given the pro-Irish Essex the chance to have himself sent to Ulster to deal with the rebellion there. Then, when his clemency towards the Irish prompted his recall, he plotted against Elizabeth and was beheaded for treason.

Ireland again formed the backdrop to a lethal love drama among players on the political stage three centuries later. By 1922 the opposing forces in the bloody 3-year conflict known as 'the Troubles' had become so battle-weary that they started negotiations in London. On arrival here Michael Collins, the chief Irish negotiator, fell in love with society hostess Hazel, Lady Lavery. The treaty he accepted was adjudged too favourable to Britain by De Valera, whose hardline followers killed Collins on his return – after which (the married) Lady Lavery walked about in widow's weeds.

A not totally dissimilar situation arose at Delhi in 1946/7. While the British Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, negotiated the handover of power to India, his Indian negotiating partner Pandit Nehru had

amorous assignations with Edwina Lady Mountbatten. In this instance, though, the 'lovers' were spared the nemesis that so swiftly overtook Michael Collins and his *soi-disant* widow.

And what of the love that dare not speak its name? It, too, deserves to figure in the annals of history. Apparently Maynard Keynes, the top Treasury official attending the Versailles Conference in 1919, was much taken with the blonde charms of a junior member of the German delegation. This predisposed him towards taking an even more critical view of the onerous Allied terms imposed on Germany. After resigning from the Treasury Keynes wrote *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* – a critique which, if acted upon, might have prevented the Second World War.

□ Richard Grunberger

**The Chairman,
Management Committee Members
& Trustees of the AJR
wish all members, volunteers
& staff
a very happy Chanukah**

Righting historic wrongs

There are two main groups which act on behalf of Jewish victims of the Holocaust for compensation and pensions claims and indemnification for plundered property in Europe. They are the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) and the World Jewish Restitution Organisation. British organisations affiliated to the Claims Conference are the Board of Deputies, AJA and WJR.

In a recent 12-month period the Claims Conference allocated more than £37 million (DM 83 million) to organisations in eighteen countries which either provided essential social services to elderly Holocaust survivors, or were institutions engaged in research and documentation of the Holocaust. Allocations were also made for the establishment of welfare centres for senior citizens in Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine, and for the provision of food parcels, soup kitchens, meals-on-wheels and care services for survivors.

The plight of thousands of elderly Jewish victims of Nazi persecution in the former Soviet Union, who were unable to receive compensation under the German Federal Indemnification Law, remains a serious concern – especially as the period during which claims should have been made expired in the late 1960s. Similarly, survivors from Eastern Bloc countries had no opportunity to receive compensation after the 1970s.

As the Claims Conference is the successor organisation to heirless and unclaimed personal Jewish properties and the assets of dissolved Jewish communities and organisations, the allocation programme is being funded from the proceeds of returned property in the former East Germany. A major effort is being made to recover such properties in order to generate greater funding.

In 1980 the German Government established a Hardship Fund, administered by the Claims Conference, to provide one-off payments for those previously denied compensation. Some 145,000 people have subsequently received a payment while applications are still received at more than a thousand per month.

President of the Claims Conference, Dr. Israel Miller, revealed that more than 20,000 Holocaust survivors had their claims approved for compensation pay-

ments under the 'Article 2 Fund' which was set up to assist people whose claims for compensation had not previously been made in time, or not made at all, especially people who had been living in Communist states. Strict rules for eligibility were laid down by the Germans and the Claims Conference had to comply with them. These funds were established to help people who should have received compensation but did not.

Thousands of applications are continually processed by offices in Tel Aviv, New York and Frankfurt under strict guidelines. In the majority of cases, archive records and much correspondence is required before applications can be completed.

To enable additional groups of survivors to receive compensation, the Claims Conference is pressing the German Government to liberalise their guidelines. Applications from people who were in concentration camps, ghettos, lived in hiding, or were slave labourers are no longer being formally rejected – even if they do not fall within the present criteria – but are being put on hold while negotiations with the German Government continue.

Because of the strict conditions, there are still people who should be entitled to compensation, but are not likely to receive it unless the rules are changed. There are now ten different categories of victims of Nazi persecution who have still not received any benefit from existing agreements between the Claims Conference and the Federal Republic of Germany. Too many survivors remain wronged and uncompensated. It is time the German authorities stopped being so petty in respect of their predecessors' misdeeds □

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ALL LEGAL WORK UNDERTAKEN

Reviews

Steep learning curve

HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR,
Facing History and Ourselves,
US National Foundation

This resource book, intended for teachers of the Holocaust, combines detailed historical commentary with high moral purpose. It is a distinctively American teaching aid, most obviously in its insistent attempts to establish comparisons in students' minds between the Holocaust and slavery, racial segregation and the dispossession of native Americans. It seeks to make the Holocaust relevant to young Americans by forcing them to confront and, one hopes, overcome the potential for racial stereotyping and prejudice in themselves and their communities. So it turns out to be a means for instructing the young about the virtues and values of citizenship at least as much as a history book about the Holocaust.

The book aims to help teachers to teach students 'to value their rights as citizens and take responsibility for their actions', to stand up against injustice, by including

all other members of society in their 'universe of obligation'. The study of the evils of the Holocaust in the past thus becomes a moral crusade to create freedom, justice and respect for racial differences in the present. Never again must the products of education and science be employed by a perverted regime for the extermination of millions. Instead, education must make students conscious of the moral choices that confront them in everyday life, choices that together make up the historical process, as the choices for passivity, complicity or collaboration made by ordinary citizens under Hitler made history what it then became.

This clarion call for historical study to be infused with moral principle, though attractive, is not unproblematical. On the one hand, the Holocaust, more than any event in world history, demands that the historian take a moral stand, obliging him to consider fundamental moral questions of human guilt and evil. A morally neutral, 'value-free' historical science, studying the history of Nazi Germany with the detached objectivity of a physicist and analysing the workings of gravity or dynamics, would be a poor, stunted thing. But on the other hand, morality is

not a fixed yardstick by which academics can interpret events: a Marxist scholar, or an Islamic fundamentalist, both of whom would claim to be operating on the basis of a system of morality, might draw conclusions from the Holocaust very different from the Western democratic value of active participatory citizenship, based on individual moral conscience, trumpeted forth in this book.

The book's historical commentary is sound and painstakingly assembled, and some of the eyewitness material presented is deeply moving. Teachers and students of the Holocaust would learn much from it. But by concentrating so heavily on the aspects of race and morality, on individual citizens' responses to a regime practising racial persecution, whole intermeshing areas of political and economic history remain blurred; all the patient work by historians over the past twenty-five years, since studies like Karl Schleunes's *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz* began to uncover the political, administrative and economic framework to the Holocaust, is only sketched in. Nevertheless, the book could provide the basis for inspirational courses.

□ Anthony Grenville

Stepping back from the edge

Otto Grünfeld, A SURVIVOR'S PATH,
Aislaby Press, Prague 1995

A fairly recent film from New Zealand featured a psychologically disturbed 'dumb' heroine who only communicated through piano-playing. The film's most arresting image was of the piano plunging into the storm-tossed sea from a frail Maori craft and dragging the heroine down with it.

Otto Grünfeld's autobiographical *Survivor's Path* partly resembles, and partly contrasts with, the screenplay of *The Piano*. The resemblance lies in the author's psychological impairment by the Shoah. The contrasting element is the fact that a piano actually saved Grünfeld from drowning, as it were, in depression.

Czech-born, he had had a middle-class upbringing complete with piano lessons in the now astronomically distant thirties. After the German takeover the Grünfelds endured the relentless tightening of the Nazi vice, till in 1942 they were separated, and Otto was sent to Terezin

together with his elder, much-loved, brother Paul. Conditions in the fortress town-turned-ghetto that served as Himmler's 'Potemkin village' were at first still somehow bearable. One day Otto, whose employment in a bakery warded off the prevalent malnutrition, by chance discovered his own former piano in a storage room. Thereafter, he not only spent hours practising on it after work, but even 'engaged' an older inmate as his teacher.

This, under the circumstances, privileged existence was undermined by news of his parents' death – and ended precipitately in October 1944 with the young brothers' deportation to Auschwitz. There spectacle-wearing Paul was gassed on arrival – eyeglasses betokened hateful Jewish intellectuality to the Nazis – while Otto enjoyed a reprieve.

As a starving slave worker in an underground aircraft hangar near Munich he had practically lost the will to live by the time American troops liberated him in April 1945.

Lethargy still dogged him after arrival in Britain (where he had a cousin). Eventually, though, chance opportunities of playing the piano inspired him to map out

a plan that salvaged his future. He trained as a music teacher, married and raised a family – but still felt emotionally 'disconnected'. Then, after many frustrating years, a type of group therapy enabled him to achieve the long-denied, proper integration into the society around him.

Writing this pain-suffused book obviously formed part of Otto's integration process. No sentient reader could do other than wish him – and it – success.

□ RG

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Way station to Auschwitz

A personal impression of Theresienstadt

Autumnally coloured leaves covered the ground, yet still clung to the trees in Terezin. A large Star of David sat incongruously among grave-stones in the moat of the small fort near the entrance to the grimdest part of this garrison town.

Theresienstadt was built in the 1780s by the Austrian Emperor Joseph II as a bulwark against Prussian invasion of Bohemia and named for his mother Maria Theresa. Its small fortress served as a prison for political opponents of the Habsburgs, among them Gavrilo Princip whose assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo ignited World War I. It assumed a far more brutal function under Nazi occupation.

The first Jews were transported on 24th November 1941 and put into barracks vacated by the German army, but by mid-1942 the sheer number of arrivals led to the Czech civilian population being forced out. Ironically, the ramparts built to keep enemies out were now keeping Jews in.

Built to house 7,000, the town held as many as 50,000 at one time. In all, 140,000 men, women and children were deported to Terezin; disease, hunger, overwork, total exhaustion and a bitter winter in 1942-43 brought the deaths of 34,000 inmates. Rather than slowing down this

galloping human catastrophe, the Nazis built a crematorium which was worked around the clock. It remains today as a silent witness to German engineering and Nazi inhumanity. Over the mass graves nearby a giant menorah now stands guard.

For those who did not die, Terezin became a transit station for the death camps in the east; fewer than 4,000 of the deportees were to survive.

To refute rumours of genocide, in 1944



Terezin's barracks and houses, intended for a population of 7,000, which held 50,000 Jews in atrocious conditions prior to their transportation and murder at Auschwitz and other death camps.

the Germans specially prepared (and partially depopulated) the town to provide a spurious impression of life there for the benefit of the International Red Cross. They even made a propaganda film entitled *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt*.

In the last days of the war, 13,000 prisoners were brought from concentration

camps in Poland and Germany. Those not already dead on arrival brought with them an epidemic of typhoid which continued to decimate the population well after liberation by the Red Army on 8th May 1945.

Some 80,000 names of the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia are newly inscribed on the walls of the Pinkas Synagogue in Prague's old Jewish Quarter, each name a mind-numbing pointer to the loss of life and a thousand-year culture.

□ Ronald Channing

Fraenkel prizewinners

The Fraenkel Prize in Contemporary History, organised by the Wiener Library, has this year been awarded to Professor Jeffrey Herf of Ohio University for his work *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in Two Germanies*, and to Professor Marion A. Kaplan of City University New York for her analysis of *Jewish Lives in Nazi Germany: Women, Families and Daily Struggles*.

Dr Neil Gregor of the University of Southampton and Dr Rainer Liedtke also received awards for those yet to publish a major work. Dr Gregor studied Daimler-Benz during World War II and Dr Liedtke compared Jewish welfare in Hamburg and Manchester from 1850 to 1914.

In 1997 the Fraenkel Prizes will be offered again in both categories for unpublished works on contemporary Jewish history.

(Professor Herf is to discuss his study of the Nazi Past in Two Germanies at the Wiener Library on 16th December).

Anglo-Sachsen

A sign of the times – or *The Times* (which is less than enthusiastic about Europe): the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has just published a booklet entitled *Scenes from a Relationship*. Subtitled 'Britain's German Heritage', it is presumably designed to counter the Germanophobia currently generated in this country as the battering ram of anti-Europeanism.

The booklet makes a number of fairly obvious points, such as that the English people – as well as the English language – have Germanic roots. It likewise points up the link between Lutheranism and Henry VIII's Breach with Rome, and the subsequent birth of the C of E. Inevitably there is a section on royal connections –

the Four Georges, Prince Albert etc. – and another one on Britain's receptiveness to German cultural emissaries like Holbein, Handel and Mendelssohn.

Mendelssohn is cited as only one of several German Jews who enriched British life in Victorian times; others were Hambro, Reuter and Karl Marx.

When the reader turns the pages and comes to 'Hitler's gift to Britain', the roll call of eminent names just goes on and on: Hahn, Pevsner, Kerr, Honig, Roll, Popper, Chain, Born, Neurath, Weidenfeld, Deutsch, Hamlyn, Gombrich, Warburg, Hobsbawm, Goldfinger, Goldschmidt etc. Some names appear twice: Auerbach, Charlotte (geneticist) and Frank (painter) – Freud, Sigmund (psychologist) and Lucien (painter).

A lot of this may be familiar stuff. Prob-

ably less well known is the fact that Jaegers of Regent Street owe their existence to a sickly mid-19th century Professor of Zoology at Stuttgart. (Dr Gustav Jaeger was so concerned about his proneness to ill-health that he pioneered the wearing of woollen rather than cotton or rayon underwear).

He was not the only Herr Doktor to influence British 'fashion'. Some 50 years ago a certain Dr Klaus Maertens had a skiing accident and sought to relieve his pain by designing air-cushioned shoes for himself. When these turned out to be marketable products he had them patented: Today 'Doc Martens' are a favourite type of footwear among young people everywhere. And not only among them: Pope John Paul II has been seen wearing them on holiday! □ RG

Letters to the Editor



CLARE v GOLDHAGEN (II)

Sir – Goldhagen takes it for granted that most Germans knew of the annihilation process. This is not at all obvious. For instance, Leo Baeck, head of the Berlin community, only found out about the mass extermination after his deportation to Theresienstadt in 1943. Christabel Bielenberg, whose husband was incarcerated in a concentration camp because of his involvement in the 20 July Plot, knew nothing of the extermination programme until a train on which she travelled stopped opposite a goods train from which she heard the groans of deported Jews.

My mother, who survived the war in Berlin because she was married to a non-Jew, did know what happened in Auschwitz. Her cleaning lady's husband worked on the railways, and his mate was a train driver taking transports to Auschwitz. She told my mother because she knew she would not denounce her.

Goldhagen gives a detailed account of the gratuitous cruelty exercised by members of the police battalions as they slaughtered Jews. Interrogated about this after the war they all stated that they regarded Jews as vermin to be exterminated. He chides other historians for not having examined the antisemitic roots of this inhuman cruelty. To me the cause of the tortures is quite different. If one set of people are given complete control over others who cannot defend themselves, if the perpetrators know there cannot be any repercussions whatever they do to their victims, then the beast in man appears. I find it difficult to believe that these policemen carried out tortures out of political motivation, and not out of ingrained human bestiality.

Goldhagen claims he does not believe in the collective guilt of the German people and yet his book seems to show just that.

I feel that by being so one-sided and contentious he has detracted from the strength of his case. There must be millions of Germans who remember the evil times and who will say, "It was not like this". I agree with the historian Hans Mommsen that such one-sidedness can lead to a backlash. There probably are already David Irvings at work who will try

to use his exaggerations to prove that many of the events he describes simply did not happen.

Roy Gardens
Ilford, Essex

Peter Prager

BOUQUET

Sir – G Cohn's remarks (Sept issue) must not be left unanswered.

Richard Grunberger is a knowledgeable historian and neither cynical, nor vicious. He publishes and does not suppress the truth. He is a very efficient editor with journalistic and literary expertise second to none.

We all who read *AJR Information* consider ourselves fortunate.

Tadworth Road
London NW2

H Cyvia

BULLET-SCARRED BALLOT

Sir – Your correspondent, E S Schwab (October issue), appears to be somewhat mixed up. He writes:

1. "To give away one's own country for which thousands have died..". Neither the West Bank nor Gaza were part of Israel until they were occupied by the Israeli forces during the Six-Day War in June 1967. Subsequently, the UN Resolution No.242 demanded their withdrawal. It was linked with the recognition of the State of Israel. As the Arabs refused this, Israel was justified in holding on to these territories. The Palestinians have now recognised Israel and are entitled to have their lands returned to them. Israel, in turn, is entitled to ensure that this process does not endanger her security.
2. "What was – long before the Arabs – the Jews' own country". Really? Did not the Jews conquer that country from the Canaanites? Did they not incorporate Southern Palestine by victory over the Philistines?

The Jews have a moral right to their own nation state and, historically, Palestine is the only country to which they have any claim. But we must also understand the Palestinians' rejection of that claim. Had it not been for power-political machinations Israel might have developed

peacefully and be on the way of becoming the land where milk and honey flows – not blood. The killing of Rabin was a tragedy for Israel and, I fear, the election of Netanyahu may lead to more tragedy.

Wendell Road
London W12

Eric Sanders

RESTITUTION

Sir – For six years my lawyers in London and Berlin have battled in vain to establish ownership of a modest estate situated in 'East' Germany in spite of being able to supply the German courts with every conceivable document to prove that my father was the owner of this property and that my brother and I are the legal heirs.

I wonder whether any other readers of your excellent journal have similar problems, and whether anyone has actually received restitution.

Turweston
Nr Brackley
Northants

R Lester

THE BURDEN OF HISTORY

Sir – As one who was born in Berlin, I was a little astonished about your outburst against the Siegessäule. I have always found this column rather amusing. One puffs and puffs as one climbs the many steps to its top, and emerges right under the golden skirts of the goddess.

I know it is decked with guns captured in the 1870/71 campaign against France, but to call it triumphalist after so many years seems to me quite exaggerated. After all one looked at history differently in the 19th century. If one were to destroy it, one should also do away with the Arc de Triomphe, the Albert Memorial and innumerable war-memorials throughout Europe. If we were to destroy all old history in the name of political correctness, what would remain? Would anonymous and soulless supermarkets and high-rise buildings be a fitting legacy to future generations?

Croxley Green
Herts

Gertrude Stranz

Sir – Richard Lionheart never captured Jerusalem, that was Godfrey de Bouillon in 1099, First Crusade. However, he did take Acre during the Third Crusade, 1190 to 1192, and he ordered all the Muslim prisoners to be killed, no doubt, some surviving Jews as well.

As to the Siegessäule in Berlin, there

was some discussion among the Military Government (1945-1947), whether monuments, such as the Niederwald Denkmal at Ruedesheim, the Herrmanns Denkmal at Detmold and the Voelkerschlacht Denkmal, Leipzig, should be demolished, and Military Government authorities decided against it. However, the large cross of the Schlager Memorial near Düsseldorf was removed, also the remains of the statue of the Emperor Wilhelm I, at Koblenz (recently reinstated!).

Linden Lea
London N2

F H Edwards

HAIDER'S COURT JEW

Sir - Maybe a clue to Peter Sichrovsky's bizarre behaviour can be found in the conduct of his father Harry during the Holocaust years. Harry and I had been inseparable friends at school, but lost contact after the Anschluss. To my great joy I met him again at Onchan internment camp, Isle of Man - and received only the barest acknowledgment that we had known each other.

I assume that Harry decided to block out the painful past, and everyone connected with it, as a psychological defence mechanism. Could it not be that his son's link-up with Haider springs from the same motive?

Wilkinson Street
London SW8

Paul Nathanson

Sir - Your hostility and sarcasm towards Peter Sichrovsky is unwarranted. A fascist party fielding a Jewish candidate, and thus espousing Mussolini's, Franco's and Admiral Horthy's brand of non-racist fascism, is a favourable development and should be encouraged, particularly in Austria.

The highly erudite and literate editor should resist a tendency to identify the Jewish interest with his personal left-wing sympathies.

Old Coulsdon
Surrey

G Schmerling

ROTTEN HEART OF EUROPE

Sir - Comparing Haider with Hitler (November issue) is unrealistic. Hitler was unique, and it brings too much 'credit' to the former to be compared with him. Not every herring should be compared with a shark. There are many right-wing politicians with unpalatable opinions in the world today. This does not make them Hitlers. Several Jews took part

in Mussolini's March on Rome and even in Israel right-wing politicians are not unknown!

We all know that Hitler was an Austrian and that on his arrival there he was hailed like the Messiah. May I remind readers that another Austrian, Joseph II, with his *Toleranzpatent* of 1781 (eight years before the French Revolution), started the process of Jewish emancipation. He gave permission for the Jews to study in the Austrian universities. Without a thorough Germanic education - and they did not come more thorough anywhere else - Freud, and all other Austrian-Jewish luminaries, would have had to become itinerant pedlars like so many others of our forefathers.

If I was an Austrian tax-payer, I would be very aggrieved if I were asked to pay pensions and Wiedergutmachung without ever receiving an acknowledgement. I would be tempted to vote for politicians like Haider. I find it unethical to accept money, but not to respond to endeavours for better relations. I do not want to be called ungrateful.

Oxted
Surrey

AW Freud

There is a difference between dubbing Haider 'Hitler's grandson' - a somewhat belittling soubriquet - and saying the two men are comparable. Ed.

DRAWING THE RIGHT CONCLUSION

Sir - I would like to thank Ernest David for his very important item on the various funds relating to Holocaust victims (November issue Page 9). He made the present situation very clear, which is much appreciated.

I consider the subject so important that I am meeting with my four sons to discuss the article. After all, they will benefit eventually if these assets become a reality.

I will therefore suggest they join the Association to assist in keeping up the pressure when we have gone. Other parents might like to do the same. This would one day help their dependants, and also strengthen the AJR.

Thanks again Mr David!

Pages Walk
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Herbert Wolff

NAZI GOLD

Sir - Now we know that vast amounts of stolen Nazi gold are still being held in British and Swiss banks, it is high time

that they were used to compensate those of us who had to leave Germany in 1938 to save our lives. As children aged 15 or under, too young then to go out to work, the right to receive a pension from Germany has been denied us.

It is quite unforgivable that the existence of this gold was kept secret for 50 years. Unless some immediate effort is made by the responsible authorities, there will be no one left to benefit from any restitution payments should they ever be offered.

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Making a Will?

Please remember the AJR

Though we cannot take our worldly possessions with us, we can see that whatever is left behind goes where it will be appreciated, do some good and is needed.

Many former refugees have found their association with the AJR a rewarding one. This is an opportunity to support the AJR Charitable Trust.

The AJR at Work

DECADE OF SUCCESS



Andrew Kaufman, Chairman of the AJR, right, welcomes Dr. Andrew Balint to the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre in West Hampstead, London, ten years after a donation from the Paul Balint Charitable Trust made the opening of the Centre a reality. With them are Max Kochmann, AJR Trustee and former Chairman, centre left, and AJR Director Ernest David, left. Andrew Balint discussed the progress made at the Centre and the plans in hand to meet future needs of an aging refugee community. Accompanied

by fellow trustees Elizabeth Steinfeld and Mary Garay, Dr. Balint was shown the many facilities of which the members of the Day Centre are justifiably proud and he complimented the centre for the great happiness, companionship and practical benefit it continues to bring into the lives of AJR members, many of whom live on their own. Andrew Kaufman thanked the members of the Paul Balint Charitable Trust which had enabled the Day Centre to become the jewel in AJR's crown □

JFS pupils volunteer

Enthusiastic JFS sixth-form pupils volunteered to help AJR members, following a talk given by Volunteers Co-ordinator Debbie Picker at their morning assembly. Teacher Yitzchak Freedman was delighted with the response and very happy with their level of commitment.

After learning about the background and typical problems faced by some of AJR's more needy members, the volunteers will attend a special induction training day. Backed with continual assistance and support from the AJR, most will be visiting elderly members in their own homes, while others may be helping at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre in West Hampstead.

Anyone who may be considering volunteering is invited to discuss how best they could help with Debbie Picker on 0171 431 6161 □

Kindertransport

A group of AJR volunteers and staff saw the acclaimed play *Kindertransport* by Diane Samuels at the Vaudeville Theatre in London's West End. The play is a powerful portrayal of a child's journey to England on the Kindertransport and stirred up strong emotions, particularly amongst those who were themselves former transportees.

A holiday thank you

Dear Everyone - It gives us great pleasure to write to AJR Information about a very delightful six-day holiday which we spent at Eastbourne with other members from the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.

For us the highlight of the week was a half-day trip to Alfriston, the oldest village in the heart of Sussex. The weather

was fine and we enjoyed glorious views of the English countryside at its majestic best.

Our thanks go to Sylvia and Renée, the hostesses and organisers of the whole holiday who looked after everybody so wonderfully well. We all appreciated the tremendous effort put into compiling the quiz questions and enjoyed winning at bingo. We would like to thank David for being such an excellent Quiz Master!

Both of us enjoyed our holiday very much; it did us the world of good. We do hope that we will be able to join our many friends in an AJR holiday party once again very soon.

□ Jennie and Ernest Kenward

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

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Monday	6 January
Tuesday	14 January
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Thursday	30 January

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Message from the Director

Faîtes vos jeux, mesdames, messieurs!
A comparison of figures often demonstrates some strange relationships. This weekend I came across two figures that I found quite amazing. A one penny variation in income tax is worth £1.3 billion. As a nation we spend £4.4 billion on the lottery. In other words, the lottery, drawn once a week, but soon to be drawn twice a week, is the equivalent of 3.4 per cent voluntary taxation or redistribution of income. The difference between this and more usual examples of income redistribution is that in this case, the flow is reversed. It goes from the poor to the rich.

Don't get me wrong. I am not against the lottery. I spend all of 25p per week in the hope that luck will be a lady one night. However, what is so sad is the sight, in newsagents, of people drawing their children's allowance and then spending £5 or more on lottery tickets, plus more on scratch cards.

I might feel less uneasy if I believed that the proceeds of the lottery were wisely used. The promoters were given a licence to print money because the government did not anticipate what a huge success this simple form of gambling would be. This lack of anticipation flew in the face of experience in lotteries around the world and has meant that good causes get less than a fair share. Moreover, the definition of good causes worries me.

In other countries, lottery proceeds go to hospitals, schools, research, etc. In the UK, real charities get a minimal amount of the loot, while grandiose schemes are drawn up to mark the Millennium, and quangos nationwide are scratching their heads to find suitable projects on which to spend money. It is true that opera houses, museums, football grounds, sports stadia are valuable additions to the nation's heritage; but is it not more important to ensure that hospitals are not closed for lack of funds and that schools have adequate books for all their pupils? Having raised the question, I can foresee the politicians' answer. If lottery funds are used in this way, then the Treasury is relieved of its obligations and the lottery becomes an undisguised form of taxation.

As a result, functions that everyone believes to be a necessity in a civilised state, are left starved of funds, while available funds are used for nice but not absolutely necessary projects.

□ Ernest David

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DECEMBER 1996

Sunday 1 DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT

Monday 2 THREE IS COMPANY - WINTER CABARET - Francoise Geller - Kara Wilson Griffin accompanied by Margaret Eaves (Piano)

Tuesday 3 BE ALERT TO CRIME - Talk & Video Presentation on Crime Prevention - Given by Stephen Hoare of West Hampstead Police Station

Wednesday 4 MUSICAL DELIGHTS BY THE TWO 'Ms' - Monika Stach (Soprano) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski (Piano)

Thursday 5 OPERA POPS - Accompanied by Margaret Gibbs (Piano)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
CHANUKAH
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Sunday 8 TEA DANCE - Music by Shelley Weldon

Monday 9 CHANUKAH - A SPECTRUM OF MELODIES - Robert Brody accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano)

Tuesday 10 CHANUKAH CONCERT & SING-A-LONG - Cantor Marshall Stone accompanied by Ronald Rappoport (Piano)

Wednesday 11 CHANUKAH CELEBRATIONS - Jack Davidoff & His Palm Court Ensemble

Thursday 12 LET'S CELEBRATE CHANUKAH WITH SONGS FROM MY ALBUM - Cantor Michael Rothstein accompanied by Sheila Games (Piano)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Sunday 15 DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT

Monday 16 WINTERTIME WITH VIENNESE MUSIC - Claude May (Baritone) with Self Accompaniment

Tuesday 17 THE BERKELEY TRIO

Wednesday 18 WINTER MUSIC 7 SONG - Sue Kennett (Soprano) accompanied by Gordon Weaver (Piano)

Thursday 19 THE TRENTHAM DUO (Piano & Cello)

Sunday 22 SPECIAL END-OF-YEAR CONCERT - MUSIC TO SOOTHE THE SOUL - Guyathrie Patrick (Soprano) accompanied by William Patrick (Piano)

Monday 23 LIGHT PIANO & CELLO MUSIC - Armand d'Anjour (Cello) accompanied by Isabel Koprowski (Piano)

Tuesday 24 CLOSED AFTER LUNCH - CHRISTMAS EVE

Wednesday 25 CLOSED - CHRISTMAS DAY

Thursday 26 CLOSED - BOXING DAY

Sunday 29 CLOSED

Monday 30 CLOSED

Tuesday 31 CLOSED

JANUARY

Wednesday 1 CLOSED - NEW YEAR'S DAY

Thursday 2 CLOSED

Sunday 5 DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Brook. Madeleine Brook died peacefully on 5th October 1996 - sadly missed by her husband Henry and sons Peter, Andy and Stephen and all her many friends worldwide. Always in our hearts.

Hene. The death of Dr. Walter Hene of Hillside, Kingsmore Fields, Glossop, Derbyshire, on 25th October is announced with deep regret. He leaves a widow Leonie and sons Ronald and Richard.

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Employment

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We are looking for an understanding person willing to spend time with an Austrian resident in one of our homes who has limited sight and hearing, but can communicate via a special aid. Rate of pay: £7 per hour. For an informal discussion please contact Betsy Adler, Social Worker, Otto Schiff Housing Association, The Bishop's Avenue, London N2 0BG. Tel: 0181 209 0022.

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Art Notes

Annely Juda Fine Art is showing David Nash's recent sculpture until 21 December. David Nash is one of Britain's leading sculptors with long held concern for the environment. A life-long researcher into the language of wood, Nash utilises traditional methods of woodmanship gathered from around the world.

At the Sternberg Centre the Manor House Society in association with the Festival of Austrian-Jewish Culture presents Ralph Freeman, 'Foundation and Fragments' until 10 December. Freeman utilises fragments of biographical, archival and personal documentary material to create a historical perspective of his family's flight from the Holocaust, as part of the experience of European Jewry from 1900 to 1945.



James Grant, John Mytton, Thomas Robinson and Thomas Wynn in front of the Colosseum in Rome, Nathaniel Dance, 1760, from the Yale Centre for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection showing at the Tate Gallery.

The Royal Academy is showing Alberto Giacometti, 1901-1966 until 1 January 1997. This is the most comprehensive exhibition of work by Albert Giacometti to be shown in Britain for many years and includes one of the finest selections of his sculpture, paintings and drawings ever assembled. Giacometti stands alongside Picasso and Matisse as one of the great masters of the 20th century.

Also at the Royal Academy until 18 December 1996 is an exhibition Living Bridges - The inhabited bridge, past, present and future. Exciting proposals for a new inhabited bridge for the River Thames in London will form the centre-piece of the exhibition.

The Tate Gallery is showing Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century. Over 250 paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures and other objects such as maps, snuff boxes and fans have been gathered together. Important works by Claude Lorrain, Canaletto, Piranesi, Zoffany, Joseph Wright of Derby, Joshua Reynolds, Fragonard and Angelica Kauffmann are on display.

The Victoria and Albert Museum is showing American Photography 1890-1965 until 26 January 1997. It includes 185 landmark images by the major figures of modern American photography □

SB's Column

Vienna. The newly appointed conductor of the Vienna Volksoper is the Israeli Asher Fisch, who directs a new production of the *Land of Smiles* by Lehár. The next premiere at the Theater an der Wien is a revival of *Anatevka* (Fiddler on the Roof).

German Television repeated a dramatization of Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* starring the late Heinrich George, who remains a controversial figure on account of his Nazi past.

Austrian Television continued its series of musical recollections with an afternoon devoted to the songs of Herman Leopoldi. *Ach, Sie sind mir so bekannt* - one of Leopoldi's later efforts, popularized by cabaretist Gerhard Bronner - started the programme, which ended with his ever-green *Kleines Café in Hernals* (lyrics by Peter Herz).

'Der Mai ist gekommen' (Kindler Verlag, Munich) is the biography of 88-year old Hans Hotter whom Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, in his foreword, calls the most important Wagner singer of our times. Over a period of 50 years Wagner performances in Munich, Vienna and Bayreuth were unthinkable without the impressive and intelligent bass-baritone whose Flying Dutchman, Gurnemanz and Wotan became the stuff of operatic legend.

Obituary. The death of Magda Schneider in early autumn occasioned

widespread sorrow among those who witnessed the development of German and Austrian cinema during the 1930s. Magda and her husband, Wolf Albach-Retty, featured prominently in pleasurable and innocuous screen fare before the advent of television, when 'going to the pictures' was a weekly routine for millions. Magda Schneider retired early, bequeathing her cinematic fame to her daughter, international star Romy Schneider □

Recounting experiences

Polyglot Theatre Company, a professional theatre company uniquely dedicated to exploring issues raised by the Holocaust, chose *Ghetto* by Joshua Sobol for its first production. The company's Artistic Director, Leona Heimfeld, is herself the child of Holocaust survivors.

The company's next production is *In Extremis*, an anthology of survival in the Holocaust which attempts to answer the questions 'How does the human spirit survive?', and 'What can we learn from these experiences?'

Central to our work on this production are a number of interviews with Holocaust survivors and refugees whose own experiences will be incorporated into the staged version. We may be looking to someone like you to enable us to tell the truth.

If you could help Polyglot Theatre with *In Extremis*, please contact Leona Heimfeld on 0171 377 5467 □



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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
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In God They Trust

Religion in US politics

In the run-up to the United States' presidential election, Jewish Policy Research invited its new Director of Research, Professor Barry Kosmin, to examine the extent to which voters' preferences depended on their religious affiliation.

Prof. Kosmin, co-author of the influential study *One Nation Under God: Religion in Contemporary American Society* (Harmony Books, New York, 1993), recalled that the name of God had been frequently invoked in the 1992 Presidential campaign.

Bill Clinton, despite personal peccadillos, continually used religious imagery and took every opportunity to give campaign addresses in churches, while George Bush stressed religious commitment far less.

Americans are the most religious people of the world's advanced countries: 90% of voters claim to be believers. The Pilgrim Fathers were imbued with a religious imperative and the Protestant tradition of using the Bible as a guide to history and behaviour remains largely intact.

Religious pluralism in a free market led to the development of a wide range of sects, from Baptists and Methodists to Pentecostals and Mormons. A plethora of television evangelists compete for the viewer's religious loyalties – and their funds. Religious institutions allow the religious consumer to select a faith different from his family's.

Politics in the United States is based on culture and religion and differs significantly from the European model which is class based. The local political culture is the key to success in a Presidential election in which the winner takes all.

The main political issues are also moral issues: abortion, school prayers, guns and violence, gays serving in the armed forces, welfare reform. Similarly, the US feels that it has a moral purpose in the world, with implications for its foreign policy.

Religious loyalties unrelated to class loyalties tend to give rise to political conservatism. Jewish Americans, however, prove the exception, being more liberal than conservative. Clinton remained popular among Jewish Americans, having won 78% of their votes in 1992.

As a coalition of religious affiliations is needed to take the White House, in Prof.

Kosmin's words, "Only a white Southern Baptist can win for the Democratic Party (pace Carter and Clinton); Michael Dukakis, a liberal who was Greek Orthodox from Massachusetts with a Jewish wife, had to lose!"

In this year's campaign Clinton, born in the town of 'Hope' Arkansas, continued to talk of 'covenants and crusades' and use other religious phraseology. Dole had little religion to speak of.

Religion still sets America apart from other modern democracies. Americans want their President to express an understanding of US millennial hopes, a vision, even couched in evangelical language. "A political programme with religious rhetoric" was the way Prof. Kosmin sums it up.

□ Ronald Channing

Open Day at Wiener Library

At the Wiener Library's open day, members and friends were welcomed by the library's director, Professor David Cesarani, before setting off to explore behind the scenes, speak with voluntary workers and staff, meet members of the library's executive and appeals committees and view some of the library's most important items.

Anita Lasker-Wallfisch spoke movingly of her experiences at Auschwitz and stressed the need to develop Holocaust education for the young, after which Anne Marie Steel of Southampton University discussed the techniques and importance of document conservation. This was followed by a screening of Luke Holland's film *Good Morning Mr Hitler* □

FORTHCOMING EVENTS – DECEMBER 1996

- | | | |
|-----|----|--|
| Sun | 1 | The 43 Group: Film of ex-servicemen's post-war secret battle against Mosley's fascists. Harkness Hall, Birkbeck College, Malet Street WC1, 4pm, £6 (£4 cons.) |
| Sun | 1 | Prof. Michael Marrus: Vatican on Racism & Antisemitism on Eve of WWII. Harkness Hall, Birkbeck College, WC1, 7pm, £3 (£1 students) |
| Mon | 2 | Finland: G Holm, Club '43, 8pm |
| Tue | 3 | June Jacobs, President of International Council of Jewish Women, 'A View of Jewish Life Today', JACS, 2pm |
| Tue | 3 | Reminiscences of the 1930s: Walter & Rushi Ledermann, Sussex University, 5pm |
| Mon | 9 | Grosse Männer die ich kannte: Erwin von Bendemann (in German), Club '43, 8pm |
| Tue | 10 | HM Customs & Excise: Morton Morris speaks about his work, JACS, 2pm |
| Tue | 10 | Architecture of English Synagogues: Edward Jamilly, architect & writer, Jewish Museum, Camden Town, 6pm, £5 |
| Mon | 16 | Prof. Jeffrey Herf: Nazi Past |

in Two Germanies. Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, W1, 6.30pm, £3 incl. reception

Mon 16 **Hans Seelig** presents Musical Gems on Record, Club '43, 8pm

Tue 17 **Judge Valerie Jablon:** 'Women at Law', JACS, 2pm

Ongoing: **'The Boys', Children who survived the Holocaust:** Exhibition at the Jewish Museum, Finchley, Sun to Thurs until 2nd March '97, £2

JANUARY 1997:

Tue 7 **The Jewish Chronicle:** JACS, 2pm

Tue 11 **Jo Wagerman:** 'A Life in Education', JACS, 2pm

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

JACS at Belsize Square Synagogue, NW3 4HX. Tel: 0171 794 3949

Club '43, at Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig 01442 254 360

Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1. 0171 636 7247

University of Sussex Centre for German-Jewish Studies. Diana Franklin 0181 455 4785 or 01273 678 495

Sternberg Centre for Judaism, 80 East End Road, Finchley, NW3 2SY. Tel: 0181 346 2288

Jewish Museum, either Sternberg Centre (as above) or at: 129/131 Albert Street, Camden Town, NW1 7NB. Tel: 0171 284 1997

Berlin blues?

Every family with property in Berlin – or anywhere else in former East Germany – has a different tale to tell about their fight to recover it or the complications of selling. But one thing they have in common: no one's case is simple.

Bureaucratic obstruction, natural resistance from present occupants, the continual moving of goalposts – this is the common currency of property restitution. And when that has been sorted out, problems of disposal follow.

The recent case of Ralph Lehmann, who lost in court this summer on a valuation bill he refused to pay because he felt cheated by the surveyor he had employed, highlights the problems which arise because most people are extremely unwilling to return to the seat of painful memories.

As it happens, Mr Lehmann had no problems in establishing his family's ownership of a valuable central Berlin site, which was still entered in the land registry in his grandfather's name. His problems arose when he instructed a well-known firm of British surveyors to value the property from their Berlin office.

The Lehmanns, like others, had received a stream of calls 'out of the blue', to use their own words, in the winter of 1992-93. The amounts offered were so startling – amounting to well over £2 million sterling – that Ralph Lehmann, the retired bank manager of the Golders Green branch of Bank Leumi UK, thought it prudent to check the figure. His business experience told him that an unsolicited offer was only a starting figure for negotiating upwards.

When, three months later, he received a valuation report from the surveyor which halved his property's value, and this was followed by a renewed but lower offer from a persistent firm of developers, Concordia – which just happened to fall neatly just above the valuation figure – Mr Lehmann thought something was amiss.

The situation might never have arisen if Mr Lehmann had actually made the journey to Berlin. But, apart from poor health, painful childhood memories put such a trip out of the question. His Israeli wife, Talia, who dealt with his correspondence, had told the surveyors' firm specifically that he would not go there.

So he was in no position to check up on his misgivings as to collusion between the

surveyor and developers. But by complete chance, his son happened to find himself in Berlin 18 months later.

Astounded by the vast building site which now occupies central Berlin, he phoned his parents to insist that they see it with their own eyes. They finally came and immediately saw that only one developer, Concordia, was active in the area of their own plot in Alte Jacobstrasse.

Since there was no one else to negotiate with, Mr Lehmann felt that he should have been told of the position by the surveyor, rather than be presented with a report which gave no inkling of this and which also, he claimed, had led to his own interest being disclosed, contrary to his instructions.

His wife represented him in court. But she was handicapped by being unable to compel the court appearance in London of a man still working in Germany – although no longer for the same firm – or to obtain the firm's relevant documents.

An amateur in the world of law courts and property, she was no match for counsel on the other side, who simply had to establish that the Lehmanns' suspicions of events in Berlin did not constitute proof to a judge in London.

It is unusual for a case of this kind to be brought in Britain. But it clearly shows that what happens on the ground cannot be monitored from a distance. The complications are increased in restitution cases by the psychological aftermath of persecution.

According to Hans Marcus, a Hamburg-born solicitor working in London, this has a powerful effect on stopping people pursuing legitimate claims. "It is amazing how many people have done nothing about it", he said.

"They shut their minds to it and do not pursue a claim. Yet most people lost a business and valuables, if not property. Stock lists very often still exist and there is a compensation scale." The deadline for this claim was December 1993, the deadline for landed property was December 1992.

Of the two million property claims in East Germany – the overwhelming majority from Germans who defected to West Germany from the Communist regime – an estimated 75,000 are Jewish claims. Most of these properties are in the major cities of Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden.

The figure comes from the Frankfurt office of the Conference for Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, which has put

in a claim for every property which was formerly Jewish-owned but withdraws when the Jewish heirs finally take possession. The claims were made after trawling through every land register to find every possibly Jewish name.

This in turn has caused problems when, for instance, someone discovers only after the 1992 deadline that his or her family had owned property in former East Germany. After the deadline, the Claims Conference claimed the property as heirless. Although it is prepared to make an ex-gratia payment to the original family, such a procedure does not satisfy the family, which feels itself to have been cheated.

A spokesman for the Frankfurt office said: "We are caught, whatever we do. We sell the property and use the proceeds for the welfare of elderly Jews in need, especially in Eastern Europe. You would not want such property to revert to the German government".

□ Ruth Rothenberg



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Cooking with Gretel Beer



Pumpkin Soup

You can serve the soup in the pumpkin shell which makes for a rather unusual presentation – and less washing up!

1 pumpkin weighing 1½-2 kg
120g cubed white bread
50g grated Gruyère cheese
½ pint vegetable stock
¼ pint double cream
salt, pepper, a good pinch ground caraway seeds
to garnish: chopped parsley, croutons or

chopped green pumpkin seeds (from health food stores)

Pre-heat the oven to 200°C, GasMark 6, 400°F. Spread the breadcubes on a baking sheet and toast lightly in the oven. Cut the top off the pumpkin and scoop out all seeds and fibre. Mix together stock and cream and season with salt, pepper and ground caraway seeds. Arrange alternate layers of bread cubes and grated Gruyère cheese in the pumpkin and carefully pour in the stock and cream mixture. Depending on the shape of the pumpkin, you may have some of the mixture left over – set it aside. Replace pumpkin lid and put the pumpkin on a bakingsheet. Bake for about 1 hour – test with a fork or a skewer. Carefully scoop out the pumpkin flesh with a spoon and puree (if you are very careful you can do this with a hand-held mixer inside the pumpkin shell, but you may find it more convenient to remove the whole lot to a bowl or saucepan or a food processor). If necessary, add the remaining stock/cream mixture and re-heat gently. Serve with fried croutons, chopped parsley or chopped green pumpkin seeds □

Austrian Nationalfonds payments

The Inland Revenue have now confirmed that payments from the Austrian Nationalfonds are exempt from any kind of UK income or capital gains tax □

Name games:

A TOUCH OF CLASS

Would Bill Clinton have got to the White House if he had named his daughter Stepney instead of Chelsea?

ADMAN'S VOCABULARY

The Hungarian for uncle is *bacsi*, A term that in Italian means kisses, While in English Saatchi and Saatchi Translates as three hits with no misses.

MIDLANDS ACCENT

In consequence of consistently mispronouncing B-L-A-I-R as B-L-U-R, Claire Short will shortly join the Poor Clares.

MY SON, THE SPIN DOCTOR

Because of the success of his *Leader ohne Worte*, Labour Party insiders have taken to calling Peter Mandelson Mandelson-Bartholdy □

SEARCH NOTICES

Laufenseiden/Taunus. Suchen ehemalige Bürger/Familien aus der Region Laufenseiden/Taunus für Informationen über jüdische Bürger im Zeitraum 1933 bis Kriegsende. Eva Göbel, Im Gartenfeld 9, D 65321 Heidenrod, Germany.

Helmuth Meyer (1915-1974). Information is being sought by his daughter Martine on the late Helmuth Meyer, born Poznan, Poland, fled Germany in 1938, lived in Prague (Praha) 1938-39. His parents, Bernhardt and Dorothea, were pharmaceutical chemists & last heard of in Wroclaw (Breslau) in 1939. A brother Martin may have been in Russia, and there were other siblings. Please provide any information to Dr M Meyer, Tel: 01932-711131

Lili and György Spitzer, who were medical students before WWII from Subatica (formerly Szabadka) Yugoslavia, are being sought by their cousin Klara Hochhauser from Pesterzsébet, Hungary, now living in London as Clare Parker. Anyone with information please contact Clare Parker, Flat 10, Otto Schiff House, Netherhall Gardens, London NW3 5TQ □



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Obituaries

Madeleine Brook

Madeleine Brook, who passed away in October, was a stalwart supporter of the AJR and a stout defender of the interests of German and Austrian refugees.

For the past three years she took on the not-undemanding task of AJR brochure chairperson, claiming anonymity, but holding a position which demanded diplomacy, tact and business acumen in like measure. No one could close a 'deal' quite like Madeleine; the advertiser/supporter would be left feeling that he had been done a great favour – while Madeleine knew that she was adding to the Self-Aid funds which went directly to help needy members.

While involving herself in this work, she was able to inspire a warmth and affec-

tion among her fellow volunteers and the AJR staff which left them all quite bereft when the news of her death reached the AJR offices. Most still feel that she is just about to enter the door with her kind smile, ready to get down to work.

To every one she met or worked with Madeleine brought the common touch. She appeared to have time for everybody and made them all feel that their work was valued. It is a gift given only to a few.

Perhaps the key to her personality is to be found in her secure Viennese childhood and loving family. Her Swiss mother's nationality enabled them to escape to Switzerland where she helped refugees through the Red Cross. Widowed in the 1970s, Madeleine was to enjoy great happiness with her three sons and her second husband Henry with whom she shared an exceptionally devoted relationship. It was impossible not to admire her. She will be well remembered. □ RDC

(See also profile in July issue)

Berthold Goldschmidt

The career of Berthold Goldschmidt who died aged 93, was unlike any other composer's, consisting, as it did, of an auspicious start, a half century of neglect and a triumphant conclusion.

Goldschmidt was born in Hamburg, the son of an import merchant. After attending the Hochschule für Musik he found work, first as coach for the Berlin Staatsoper Orchestra and then as répétiteur at Carl Ebert's Darmstadt Opera. At the same time he began composing – earning praise from the likes of Schönberg – as well as conducting. In the early thirties he established his reputation with the absurdist opera *Der Gewaltige Hahnrei*, the planned performance of which in Berlin was cancelled by the newly installed Nazi government. Thereafter he eked out a living by giving piano lessons.

In 1935 he was interrogated by a Gestapo official with musical leanings who advised him to get out of the country. Goldschmidt instantly left for England, where he settled (for life as it turned out) in a two-room flat at Belsize Park in London.

He began to rebuild his career by teaching, coaching singers and composing, alas, with little hope of performance. He got occasional jobs with the German Service of the BBC in wartime and Glyndebourne Opera afterwards. In 1951

his Shelley-inspired *Beatrice Cenci* won the Festival of Britain opera competition, but remained unperformed while Britten's *Billy Budd* was staged.

Goldschmidt remained an obscure figure on the margins of British musical life until the early 1980s. During the last decade, thanks to Simon Rattle in this country and influential figures in the German musical establishment, he at last received the recognition denied to him for the previous half century. □ RG

REICHSFLUCHTSTEUER

We have been approached by people whose parents, or they themselves, had been made to pay the above tax (in effect an exit-tax) before being allowed to emigrate from Germany.

It is our understanding that it was possible to claim compensation in respect of this tax, up to 31.12.1969.

However, this compensation was not payable to Jews living in the DDR; it is, furthermore, possible that people living in the West may not have known in time about the possibility of compensation.

We would be interested to hear from readers if they or their parents were forced to pay such a tax and have not received any compensation □

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NEWSROUND

Mauerbach millions

More than 8,000 paintings, antiques and other family possessions stolen by the Nazis from Viennese Jews during the Holocaust, fetched more than £9 million at auction, well ahead of all estimates. Jewish community President Paul Grosz confirmed that the proceeds would go to victims in Austria and abroad.

Settling accounts

Britain has returned £13 million of gold, looted by the Nazis, to Albania in settlement of a dispute dating back to the sinking of two Royal Navy destroyers in 1946. £40 million of gold from occupied Europe remains in the Bank of England.

Archive retrieval

The Holocaust Museum in Washington has obtained extensive archives from Russia's security services documenting the German army's mass murder of Jews. Accounts of the postwar trials of Nazis and their Soviet collaborators are included which could reveal that a number greater than six million perished.

Land grab

Brigitte Vital-Durand has alleged that the Municipality of Paris expropriated land left by Jewish victims who were sent to Nazi death camps in World War II. Mayor of Paris Jean Tiberi has ordered a deed-search prior to selling luxury flats built on land owned by the city and let at peppercorn rents.

Deadly gas

Drawing on British, German and American archives, Prof. Annie Lacroix-Riz (a member of the French Communist Party) has accused a French chemical company of manufacturing Zyklon-B gas for the Nazis during World War II. The company was partly owned by IG Farben.

Deep Vichy waters

Elie Wiesel, Holocaust chronicler and Nobel prizewinner, has repudiated his former friend, the late French President François Mitterrand. In his recent memoirs Wiesel expresses his shock at learning Mitterrand was a friend of Vichy police chief René Bousquet who ordered the round-up of Jews.

Road victim

Mark Frankel, star of the film *Leon the Pig Farmer*, has died in a road accident at the age of 34.

□ RDC

One Man's War**Part 16****War psychosis**

Alfred, our guard, beseeched me to let him have chocolate – from our Red Cross parcels – for his sickly little daughter in Prague who had never tasted such a luxury. I said I would do so in exchange for his promise to find out what happened to my parents. Then he went further, saying his wife was mad about sardines, her nerves were so bad that she devoured ten cans a day while she was pregnant. Also she was under pressure from her family and friends, who called her a slut for having a husband in German uniform, so I gave him a tin of sardines. To oil the wheels better, I finally handed over two more items from Red Cross parcels, all in all four different things.

The following had happened; Alfred R. did not get any home leave to go to Prague. Another group of POWs was sent to collect further Red Cross parcels from our depot, but Alfred was not detailed to be one of the guards on this trip. He gave another German soldier a piece of paper, to be handed to me only. The note must have read something like that; 'Your instructions fully memorised, hope to be able to let you have some news soon'.

The German soldier went straight to his commanding officer with this note and quite a few alarm bells must have started ringing in a few places. Alfred was arrested, his wife was arrested, and his flat in Prague searched.

War psychosis was spreading through Germany and placards were to be seen everywhere which warned 'Don't talk – walls have ears!' Initially, the Germans suspected that they had unearthed a link between a British POW to some Czech underground movement via a corrupt German.

Back on the farm, life went on as usual; quite a few inquisitive villagers wanted to know what on earth my offence could have been, to be arrested by the Gestapo and considered it also an achievement to be released again – but I remained *stumm*. I had to tell the inspector and the boss, of course.

It must have been shortly after Christmas, 1944, when one evening my colleagues asked me if my boots were polished and my uniform nicely pressed. I wanted to know why – as it was the middle of the week – so they told me. I

had to get up very early in the morning, a German guard had already arrived and was billeted in the inspector's house for the night and would take me on a long journey by train to the town of Breslau (now Wrocław), a sequel to my Gestapo arrest.

I had already known Heinz, the German soldier who took me to Breslau, from some previous occasion. He was so severely wounded in Russia that he could not carry a rifle but was given a revolver instead. He limped and had largely lost the use of his left arm; having had the left-side of his face blown away, he had been fitted with a glass eye which was about one inch below the level of his other, real eye. I knew I would have no trouble with him on our way to Breslau, because he could not care less about anything. He was an intelligent fellow and knew how grotesque he looked and was only bitter about the fact that they did not let him die, but patched him together again so horribly.

(To be continued)

□ H P Weiner

50 YEARS AGO**FRITZ GROSS AND HIS LIBRARY FOR REFUGEES**

50 years ago this autumn, at the early age of 49, Fritz Gross, a racial and political refugee from Germany (originally from Vienna) died of heart failure in Hammersmith Hospital. A multifaceted man, with interests both in literature and politics, and a passionate bibliophile, Gross arrived in Britain in 1933, living briefly in Oxford and Bath before settling in Bloomsbury.

In a basement flat in Regent Square, he obtained Home Office permission to set up a library for his fellow refugees. By 1945, he had assembled 4,000 volumes, mostly in German, encompassing the fields of classical German literature, English literature in translation, seminal Marxist writings and anti-Nazi works, which he lent out for a mere 1d. per week.

The library also served as a lecture-room and meeting place for German and Austrian exiles including Erich Fried, Karl Otten, Bernhard Reichenbach, Robert Neumann and Hans Flesch-Brunningen (who immortalised it in his novel *Untimely Ulysses*). Musical evenings alternated with programmes of readings commemorating significant figures of the past, like Grillparzer and Nestroy, and of more recent years, such as Tucholsky, Ossietzky and Freud.

Sadly, Fritz Gross never really felt at home in England and, had he lived, he would doubtless have returned to participate in the process of German reconstruction. It would probably have pleased him to know, however, that his library was ultimately used for just this purpose, being sold to the Allied Control Commission to replace some of the books the Nazis had burnt □

Charmian Brinson and Marian Malet