

AJR *Information*

Volume LI No. 10

October 1996

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss...

Burden of history

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Ghetto that fought back

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p13

Nation of shopkeepers

Napoleon's
epithet for
the English

boomerangs as profit-minded Chirac cosies up to Saddam. The butcher of Baghdad needs to be caged in, not helped by splits in the Alliance. French splitting tactics spring in part from the anti-Americanism preached by de Gaulle. Nations, like individuals, often resent those to whom they owe a debt of gratitude, and France is doubly indebted to the US: firstly for her liberation in 1944, and secondly for the boost Marshall Aid gave to her postwar recovery.

A significant anniversary

The Battle of Cable Street

Sixty years ago this month, when most of us were lulled into a false sense of security – in Berlin antisemitic placards had disappeared to boost Olympic tourism, and Austria seemed quiescent under Schuschnigg's rule – a landmark event occurred on the English side of the Channel: the 'Battle of Cable Street'.

This country had long enjoyed internal peace, with the last battle on British soil fought in 1745, and no politician assassinated since 1812. For the entire previous century the gun had only played a role on the margins of the political arena, i.e. in Ireland.

And now, on 11 October 1936, the East End of London resembled an armed camp, with anti-Fascists building barricades to deny control of the streets to the 3,000 Blackshirts Mosley had mustered.

Blackshirt was a significant term because so far Britain had – uniquely among the countries of inter-war Europe – been spared the militarisation of politics. Not that the scourges of financial upheaval and mass unemployment, which destabilised Continental societies, were unknown here, but Britain had never – or at least not since Cromwell three hundred years earlier – looked to a 'saviour' in uniform, or to the armed forces as arbiter of the national destiny.

Here the army, the 'junior service', had always been numerically small; composed entirely of non-conscripts, nobody would have called it (in the German fashion) 'the school of the nation'. Nor was the Minister of War a general who ordered ministers about, but a civilian who told the brass hats what to do.

When Mosley tried to lead his uniformed cohorts through the East End he therefore failed – unlike the Stahlhelm or the SA in Germany – to stir martial nostalgia in the breasts of onlookers. His Jew-baiting undoubtedly elicited some support, but although Britain was no stranger to social antisemitism, it lacked a tradition of political antisemitism that a home-grown racist could have

latched onto, as Hitler did to Stoecker in Germany, and to Lueger in Austria.

'Homegrown' is a key word in this context: for all that Mosley was an aristocratic war veteran, he appeared to many Britons as a foreign – Italian, and latterly, German – import. Besides, since the summer of 1936, Spain had provided a blood-curdling example of what the militarisation of politics could lead to. Only a few weeks before Cable Street, General Franco's soldiers had murdered the poet Garcia L6rca – an outrage which had inoculated the vast majority of British intellectuals against the spurious attractions of Fascism.

And, just as earlier that year the *Front Populaire* had come to power in France, so now in the East End a united front of Communists, Labour supporters, Liberals and Jews denied Mosley victory in the Battle of Cable Street. Since throughout the 1930's – that 'low dishonest decade' (Auden) – a Fascist defeat was an all-too-rare occurrence, the events of Cable Street lit a real spark in the encircling gloom. It behoves us to remember those who sixty years ago made the slogan 'They Shall Not Pass' a reality on the mean streets of the East End □

(See also page 13)



Commercial Road looking towards Gardiner's Corner in the 1920s.

Double Profile

New leadership team at Otto Schiff

A new leadership team has been formed to continue and develop the traditions of the residential care and nursing homes and sheltered housing of the Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA). Established to care for refugees from Nazi persecution and formerly managed by OSHA's predecessors, the CBF Residential Care and Housing Association, today's homes provide the highest standards of care to Jewish men and women in their retirement years while maintaining the rich European cultural heritage and way of life.



Allan Blacher, Chairman

At fifty years of age Allan Blacher, Otto Schiff's new honorary chairman, brings an energetic, caring and businesslike view to guiding the association's affairs. Born in South Africa to immigrant parents, post-barmitzvah he continued his education at Carmel College, Berkshire. Allan stayed in England. He married and he and his wife Wendy have a son and daughter.

Developing his expertise in marketing, by the early 1980s Allan was commercial director of the fast-expanding British Airports Authority, subsequently diversifying into interests from chocolates to football pools.

Though a self-confessed avoider of Jewish community committees, at synagogue

he had for many years sat beside a leading member of Otto Schiff's Council and Management Committee, Peter Held, who was at the time searching for a 'younger man' to lead them. In November 1995 Allan accepted an invitation to take on the chairmanship and responsibility for eight homes and sheltered houses with 300 residents of the Otto Schiff Housing Association. His mother-in-law is a resident of Balint House.

Allan regards it as most important that Otto Schiff "be there when they need us". A new brochure guides prospective residents and their families in choosing suitable accommodation and promotes the association's expertise in serving the needs of refugees – part of a need to publicise how well they will be looked after.

A similar priority is being given to maintaining the high standard of residential accommodation to accompany the association's exceptional care. A continuous programme of investment in upgrading and refurbishing homes – residential rooms, public areas, equipment, even the gardens – is in hand. Allan expressed particular gratitude to the AJR for supporting the programme of refurbishment being undertaken at Osmond House in The Bishops Avenue.

For the future, he sees the possibility of helping people to cope in their own homes as an area in which OSHA could well work in close partnership with AJR's Social Service Department □

Tony Shepherd, whose tenure as Chief Executive has already run for a year, was brought up in the Wirral, Cheshire, and had several Jewish friends. He began his career as a sixteen-year-old nursing cadet in a dauntingly large psychiatric hospital in Chester.

On qualifying as an RMN he took up a post as charge nurse (equivalent to a sister) at a hospital which used many of the latest techniques, and followed this with the challenge of a south London hospital for the acutely ill. It was a decade of tremendous progress and far greater understanding in the treatment of mental illness – open wards, new drugs, long-lasting injections and an improved scientific approach.

After spending a year working for the celebrated artist David Hockney at Glyndbourne Opera House, Tony headed a pioneering psychiatric emergency clinic

(copied nationwide) at the Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, as clinical nurse specialist and counsellor, then spent two years tutoring at the prestigious Nightingale School of Nursing, St. Thomas's Hospital.



Tony Shepherd, Chief Executive

In 1988 Tony joined a team carrying out a feeding programme in Calcutta, India. Mornings he worked at a clinic, afternoons on the programme, other times at Mother Theresa's Home for the Dying and Destitute which he found inspiring.

Back in England, he was one of the first NHS Hospital General Managers, responsible for an £8 million budget and over 300 staff. Three years on he was appointed Chief Nursing Officer, then Director, of the Jewish Home and Hospital in Tottenham. When the home was incorporated into Jewish Care, Tony first became General Manager of their five nursing homes, then Senior General Manager and Chief Nurse of all 21 residential and nursing homes.

At the Otto Schiff Housing Association he gives a high priority to staff training and the creation of smaller home units from the larger institutions – Osmond House will be the first to benefit. Tony Shepherd's wealth of experience, knowledge of the Jewish community and commitment to caring for the elderly and retired, is beyond doubt. It is more than probable that membership of the Society of Friends, the Quakers, strengthens his conviction 'to look for good in everyone'

□ Ronald Channing

(Continued in next issue)

The burden of history

The Pope has just visited France, the 'eldest daughter of the Church'. The occasion was the 1500th anniversary of the conversion of the pagan Frankish chieftain Chlodwig who, as King Clovis, is the reputed founder of the country. Though Chirac and John Paul II may thus have had grounds for celebration, the close links between the French state and the Church have often had pernicious effects – most notoriously in the expulsion of the Huguenots during the 17th century. The effect of church-state links on the Jews has been even more malign, extending as it did over a near millenium, from the Crusades to the Dreyfus Trial and Vichy; as late as 1980 monastic houses were sheltering the fugitive war criminal Paul Touvier.

One of the greatest enthusiasts for the *Clovisfest* is Le Pen, who frequently has an actress impersonating Joan of Arc riding in chainmail at the head of *Front National* demonstrations.

The English equivalent of this would have been for Mosley to have a tonsured St Thomas à Becket lookalike in monk's habit head blackshirt marches into the East End. Given the highly developed English sense of the ridiculous, such a weird conjunction of medieval piety and Fascist thuggishness would undoubtedly have been laughed out of court.

An only marginally less risible conjunction of two incompatibles can, however, still be found in the heart of today's London: the statue of Richard Lionheart outside the Houses of Parliament, venerable symbol of British democracy. King Richard was a murderous thug who spent almost all his reign on campaigns of self-aggrandisement in France and the Middle East, and as conqueror of Jerusalem ordered the wholesale slaughter of its Muslims and Jews.

Nearby stands the statue of Oliver Cromwell who, too, was responsible for massacres – of Catholics in Ireland. Cromwell, though, could have pointed to the far more widespread slaughter perpetrated by continental Catholics in the Thirty Years War. He did, moreover, save England from the threat of royal absolutism and the straitjacket of religious conformity; last, but not least, he readmitted the Jews to this country. So, on balance, Cromwell has a vastly more valid claim to a commemorative statue at Westminster than Richard I.

A short distance away stands, cast in

gun metal, Winston Churchill – another man of destiny dogged by controversy. Detractors cite his Dardanelles fiasco, and anti-Labour and anti-Indian sentiments, but all this pales into insignificance when measured against Churchill's never-to-be-forgotten role as saviour of the world from the scourge of Nazism.

Which brings us to Germany, a country that bears a heavier burden of history than any other in Europe (with the possible exception of Russia). The most poignant German symbol of democracy is the arson-damaged Reichstag (currently in process of reconstruction). Roughly halfway between the scaffolded parliament building and the ruined Gedächtnis-Kirche – left unrepaired for half a century as a reminder of war – stands the goldtopped 1871 Siegessäule. This victory column is flanked by the statues of national icons: Bismarck, Moltke, von Roon. The whole triumphalist ensemble negates the message sent out by the fire-blackened parliament building and the bomb-scarred church, between which it is incongruously located. Is it too much to hope that the authorities charged with giving the new/old capital a new homogeneous image will summon up the courage to deal with the Siegessäule in the manner the unification-minded crowds dealt with the Berlin Wall in November 1989?

□ Richard Grunberger

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Reviews

Conman's contrition

Gitta Sereny, *ALBERT SPEER – HIS BATTLE WITH THE TRUTH*, Macmillan, £25.

Researching this book, Gitta Sereny stayed with, and talked to, the families of many high-ranking Nazis. One can't help feeling nauseous at her descriptions of *Gemütlichkeit* in the charming homes these guilty people have ended up in, in contrast to the fate of our relatives. However, her technique has enabled the author to give us glimpses into the deceit, rationalisation and repression of their *Weltanschauung* – as well as into the shame of some of the younger generation.

The newly-qualified architect Speer attracted Hitler's attention early on. After designing a spectacular 'cathedral of light' for the 1934 Nürnberg Rally he was put in charge of major building projects, culminating in a plan for the total rebuilding of Berlin (or 'Germania'). This entailed being at Hitler's beck and call in Berlin and Berchtesgaden, where Speer's family stayed for long periods.

Appointed Armaments Minister in Feb-

ruary 1942, the first atrocity for which he can be held directly responsible was the order to turn all Berlin Jews out of their homes and deport them to make way for German victims of Allied bombing. Next, in his ruthless drive to produce weapons for the German war-effort, he conscripted millions of slave-labourers, many of them concentration camp victims, from all over Europe. The most notorious of these slave-factories was the underground installation Dora near Nordhausen, where rockets were produced. Having himself inspected it, he was fully aware of the inhuman conditions which prevailed there.

Postwar, though surprised to be put on trial at Nuremberg, he devised the ploy which was to save his neck: unlike the other defendants who stayed defiant, he accepted responsibility in a general way for the crimes committed by the Nazi régime. This earned him a sentence of 20 years – while his deputy, Sauckel, who carried out his orders, was hanged!

In Spandau prison visits by a chaplain who had been in the French Resistance helped him explore his feelings of guilt. However, he maintained to the end that he knew nothing of the extermination of the Jews. His cover was blown by the American historian Daniel Goldhagen

who found evidence of Speer's presence at a speech Himmler made in Posen which specifically referred to genocide. Contrary to Speer's alibi that he left too early to hear this, it is quite inconceivable that someone in his position could have been ignorant of what was common knowledge among soldiers serving in the East and sections of the ordinary German population.

In his conversations with Gitta Sereny, Speer made his work for the Reich sound like the reminiscences of a benign civil servant. Nevertheless, despite these evasions, what emerges from these pages is some understanding of how powerful ambition combined with a kind of erotic (though not physical) relationship with Hitler impelled an intelligent man to cast aside every canon of civilised behaviour. Moreover, Hitler's ability to mesmerise the German people also comes out strongly. As Speer's friend Wollters says in a letter to him, "Hitler WAS Germany". In other words, as Goldhagen shows in his depressing book about German complicity in the Final Solution *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, it is too simple to divide the country into nasty Nazis and 'good' Germans.

□ Martha Blend

Roots in scorched earth

Susan Stern (ed.), *SPEAKING OUT: JEWISH VOICES FROM UNITED GERMANY*. Illinois, USA.

Some 50,000 Jews (not counting 10,000 Israeli temporary residents) have now settled in Germany to form a new community of about one-tenth the size of that which existed in pre-Nazi years.

Most of them are prepared to acknowledge the emotional and historical significance of Jews opting for that country as a permanent home; but they do not see their choice as an act of either folly or betrayal.

Nevertheless, they have done a good deal of soul-searching. As Susan Stern points out, they have been forced on the defensive in two ways: by criticism from fellow-Jews, and by their own feelings of guilt for having made their decision voluntarily and in full knowledge of its potential implications.

Particularly controversial is the view ex-

pressed by the historian Michael Wolffsohn. Although he was born in 1947 in Israel and did his military service there, he owes, he declares, allegiance not to the country of his birth but to that which he regards as his beloved fatherland. His parents' and grandparents' move to Israel was, in his opinion, a "kind of transplantation". "Germany was my native soil, my nature – my nation".

Not surprisingly, this attitude has caused a degree of outrage on the part of other German Jews; nor has it stopped him receiving antisemitic hate mail. Yet he insists that he can cope with neo-Nazis and their "unnatural nationalism" without having to modify his own "inwardly directed" German patriotism.

Diametrically opposed to this esoteric stance are two German-born TV journalists and authors. Ralph Giordano states that he has remained in Germany despite the double burden of his own painful memories and the exoneration of far too many Holocaust perpetrators. What made him stay on was the feeling that his ties with the country were stronger than the damage it had inflicted on him, his grati-

tude to Germans who helped him and his parents to survive in hiding, his feelings for his native city of Hamburg, his love for the language and a sense of belonging. The much younger Richard Schneider has stayed on in spite of his conviction that Jews should not be living in Germany. But, for good or ill, they are there now. He desperately hopes (against all hope?) that they will not slip back into a false sense of security, of "belonging" in a "host country", only to finish up in a "perverted form of Jewishness" which "would mean once again allowing the Germans to tell us who and what a Jew is".

Another contributor argues that exaggerated philosemitism serves no purpose, indeed defeats its purpose. The Jewish function in German society, is "to sound the alarm whenever there is a need to make people aware of dangers at hand – which is the case at the moment".

Reactions to this book will differ. Some will respond to it with sympathy, others with regret. And some will take it for what it ultimately is – a cry for help.

□ David Maier

A living tradition

THE HIGH HOLYDAY MUSIC OF BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE, The Music of Louis Lewandowski and the German Liberal Tradition, Jewish Music Heritage recordings, CD and cassette.

Louis Lewandowski's great achievement can be attributed to his ability to express his Central European Jewish heritage in the musical terms of the Austro-German culture of which he and his fellow Jews had become an accepted and acceptable part.

His success has now been taken one step further in a recording of his High Holyday compositions in a superb rendering by the Belsize Square Synagogue choir, in which the words are spoken in the idiom most familiar to the present generation. The difficult task of adapting music originally written for a Hebrew text pro-

nounced in the Ashkenazi fashion to correctly accented Sephardi has been brilliantly accomplished by Lawrence Fine's outstanding chazanut, supported by the choir, its conductor Ronald Rappoport, organist David Lawrence and solo soprano Sue Heimann.

The programme as recorded includes prayers read by Rabbi Rodney Mariner and covers sections of the liturgy of the Days of Awe and from the opening *Selichot* to the Concluding Service of the Day of Atonement. Psalm 130 ('From the depths'), sung to the famous melody of *Kol Nidrei*, and the moving *Unetaneh Tokef* are but two of the highlights of the sequence of familiar prayers. *Mazkir*, the 'Seelenfeier' Service of Commemoration, is included in its entirety. And the beautifully sustained final shofar call is a fitting symbol of the link between the past and present which this recording represents.

□ David Maier

Tragic journey

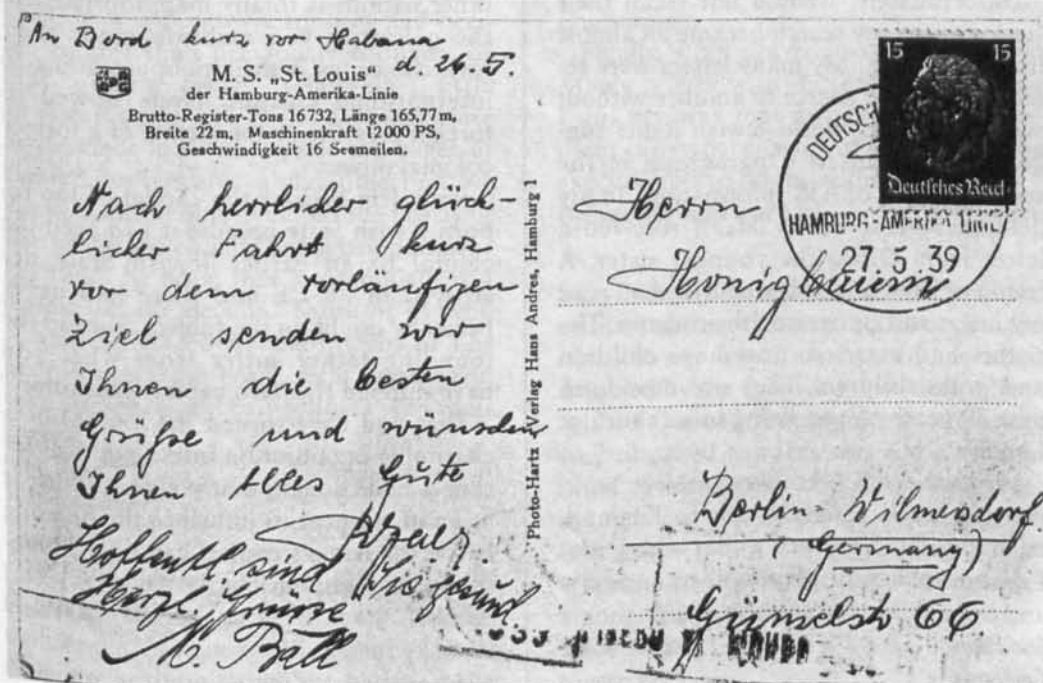
On the 26th May 1939, the day prior to that on which the ill-fated vessel, the *St. Louis*, was due to disembark 937 German and Austrian Jewish refugees, passengers Mr & Mrs R. Ball wrote a postcard to their friend Mr Honigbaum in Berlin. It was franked *Hamburg-Amerika Linie (Deutsche Seepost)*.

Its brief message reveals their relief at reaching a "temporary destination" but conveys no sense of anticipation of Cuba's refusal to permit them to land or of their subsequent fate when the ship re-

turned to Europe.

The postcard is a remarkably rare piece of Holocaust history, one of only four or five known to collectors – three of which are respectively in the Holocaust Museum, Washington, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, and the Jewish Museum in Berkley, California. Mr Edwin Drechsel, an authority on German maritime mail, generously gave it to the author to add to his collection on the understanding that a donation was made to a Jewish charity. He has been pleased to choose the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre as a most appropriate recipient.

□ William Kaczynski



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Letters to the Editor

THE BULLET-SCARRED BALLOT

Sir - It was not 'floating voters' that gave Netanyahu victory, but 55% of the Israel electorate, many of whom are neither religious nor jingoistic hardliners.

To give away part of one's country, for which thousands have died, may be alright for *Merez* people (whose ideas you seem to share) for whom Israel has no historical value, but is a place to live, even if it becomes more and more attenuated, until the Jews are strangers in what was - long before the Arabs - their own country.

Jerusalem
Israel

E S Schwab

THE LATE WALTER SCHWAB

Sir - To add to Rabbi William Wolff's obituary in your August issue: For a short period of time before he moved to Israel, Mr Schwab was a teacher at Stotley Rough School in Haslemere, Surrey. The school was founded by Dr Hilde Lion in 1934 for refugee children.

Sheethanger Lane
Felden, Herts

Franceska Rapkin
Stotley Rough School,
History Steering Committee

FUNDING OF AUSTRIAN NATIONALFONDS

Sir - At the Westminster Hall meeting, on May 7, I suggested to Mrs Lessing-Askapa that it would be reasonable for the Austrian Government to instruct the Austrian banks to offer an interest free loan to enable the Nationalfonds to make the speediest possible settlement to all applicants.

I mentioned that it was certain that a very large number of Jewish families, who were deported in 1940/41, most of them never to return, would have had savings accounts.

The most popular method of saving in Austria then, as indeed now, was an anonymous numbered *Sparbuch und Losungswort*. This means that unless one has the actual *Sparbuch* and knows the code word the bank cannot and will not release any funds.

The point I made to Mrs Lessing-

Askapa was that the capital, plus 55 years compound interest on the vast number of deposits never reclaimed, must have given the Austrian banks a 'windfall' most likely greatly in excess of the compensation now being paid to survivors.

The 'Inheritance Rule' agreed on May 15 is welcome and bestows great credit on the Nationalfonds. However, the immediate full financing would reduce the number of families sadly called upon to invoke the new rule.

Radlett
Herts

Bruno Muller

ACROSSTIME AND SPACE

Sir - I am London-born and was eleven when war broke out. At the time my mother took two Kindertransportees, Lisl (15) and Ditta (13), into our home, and they became part of our family. They were being trained by the Jewish Relief to make beaded floral arrangements. (I used to enjoy watching them). When proficient enough they left us and moved on to earn a living. Unfortunately, we lost touch with them as time passed.

After nearly 50 years I decided to try and find out what had happened to them, whether they were still living in England, or perhaps had moved on, and indeed if they were still alive.

Unfortunately, I could not recall their surname and my search became an almost impossible task. My many letters were referred from one source to another without success. Finally, World Jewish Relief suggested that I insert a paragraph in the search column of AJR Information. To my delight, several weeks later I received a letter from Ditta, the younger sister. A friend of hers, a member of AJR, had read my insert and recognized their names. The sisters had married, now have children and grandchildren. They are now both past 70 years of age, living in a suburb of London.

My own sister who lives in New York, recently made a family visit to England, telephoned and enjoyed a chat with Ditta. I sent a collage of photos, then and now and hope to hear from them again.

San Pedro
California

Ena Jacobs

COMPREHENSIVE BRICKBAT

Sir - The September editorial exhorted us to stop disliking Germans, the kind descending from the Nazis, on the grounds that they paid millions in compensation and pensions.

The one-sided article on page 3, dismissing as reactionary any objection to joining the European Union, which eventually will allow Germany to dominate the continent, is pure political propaganda, and as such, has no place in our journal.

On the letters page one correspondent, after lunching with some German students, concludes that they are different when compared with their criminal grandparents. He conveniently ignores stories of desecration of Jewish cemeteries, and the persecution of foreign workers.

Is there an anti-Jewish Refugee bias in Central Europe? The answer can be found in the letter published last month, from the President of the Austrian Parliament, where he defends the slowness of making payments rather than promising a greater effort to expedite the process, in the secure knowledge that for every month he can delay matters he will save his country thousands of Schillings, as refugees are getting older and gradually dying out.

No more propaganda to persuade us to forget and forgive, please.

Maxwelton Close
London NW7

H E Reiner

TWO-CAPITAL SYNDROME

Sir - The analogy you draw between Jerusalem and the changing capitals of other nations is totally inappropriate. All the countries you mention made their own choice, as is their right according to international custom. None bowed to foreign pressure or the dictate of a former colonial power.

Jerusalem became the capital of the re-born Jewish State because it had been the capital of an earlier Jewish State destroyed in 70 CE and there had never been any doubt on the subject, nor did the founding father suffer from what you have dubbed the 'two capital syndrome'.

That you have turned the journal of a charitable organisation into a political forum is bad enough; that you should use it as an instrument to influence the ongoing battle for Israel's capital can only be described as irresponsible.

East Hill
Wembley Park
Middx

R Willers

EUROSEPSIS

Sir – Your leader in the August issue as good as suspects the Eurosceptics Sir James Goldsmith and Michael Howard of xenophobia and racialism. I beg to disagree emphatically.

AJR Information seems to see all political problems through the eyes of the Holocaust tragedy. It overlooks the fact that the British have to tackle problems other than the Holocaust.

Take the Maastricht Treaty: foreigners who have never set foot on British soil now overrule British High Court verdicts. Or consider Spanish trawlers: they are now fishing in HM territorial waters, while the Spaniards would never dream of allowing the British to extract silver from the Spanish silver mines.

What Hitler could not achieve with guns, Helmut Kohl has now achieved with diplomacy in Maastricht, namely a growing subjugation of Britain by Germany and her vassals. This is what the Eurosceptics are bothered about.

Byron Road
Harrow
Middx

Rudolf J Jaray
(retired Civil Servant)

Sir – Your August leader refers to Jews in 'their host countries'. I never felt a guest in Berlin 1922-1933! I felt a Berliner, a German. I don't feel a 'guest' in England, in the UK – just a latecomer...

Romilly Street
London W1

Peter Zander

CLARE v GOLDHAGEN

Sir – To argue either that the percentage of Hitler's willing executioners had been far greater than previously thought, or that there was relatively little antisemitism in pre-Hitler Germany, are matters not likely to reverse the pages of history. Isn't it now about time that we kindled within ourselves and the hearts of our fellow men a new flame of optimism? Let there be hope that antisemitism is a disease on the decline. Those of us who remain blinkered by the images of our people's darkest hour, seem doomed to take despair as bed-fellows to their graves.

Four Oaks
Sutton Coldfield

Werner Abraham

Sir – On balance I would side with George Clare rather than Daniel Goldhagen. No one could deny the fact of German antisemitism, but between the

18th century and the Nazi period I think it lacked the congenial 'pogromic' viciousness of Eastern Europe. I have never forgotten an anecdote from one of my father's World War experiences. Over lunch members of a Military Appeals Tribunal were discussing antisemitism in Austria when the chairman commented: "If you chaps want to see real antisemitism, come to Hungary with me. If, on driving through the countryside you see an attractive manor house, and ask the coachman for the name of the owner, he will simply reply: 'A Zsidó'".

Deddington
Oxfordshire

F Steiner

Sir – Your leader (August issue) contains some comments on what I am supposed to have said, but never did, in my address to the 1996 AGM.

You state "Clare ascribes a no-greater-than-average guilt for the Holocaust to the Germans". I never said anything of the kind. I did and do, however, dispute Mr Goldhagen's claim that Germans were predestined to commit this horrendous crime because their centuries old hatred for Jews was more violent than that of any other civilised nation.

You further state "comparisons of genocidal Germany with other countries such as the France of Count Gobineau are inept", and so they would be had I ever made them. What I did say was that the chief apostle of racial (as opposed to religious) antisemitism was not a German, but the Frenchman Count Gobineau, whose most ardent disciple, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, was, of course, an Englishman.

Finally, I did not compare Stalin's and Mao's crimes with those of Hitler. What I did say was that any criminal government anywhere will always find the executioners to do its bidding.

Dalham/Newmarket

George Clare

Sir – While not wishing to minimise the crimes of the German state under the Nazis in any way I must confess to being troubled by the following question:

If the German people were so uniformly well disposed towards the Nazis as is so often asserted, why was it necessary for the Government of the day to create the Gestapo?

Perhaps some latter-day Maimonides among your readers could enlighten me.

White Ledges
London W13

D Gold

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The AJR at Work



Lilly Levi, Ilse Rosenzweig and Eric Ruschin, AJR volunteers.

Volunteers take tea

Despite yet another London Underground strike, 71 of the AJR's devoted and valued volunteers spent a warm summer's afternoon getting to know one another and members of staff over tea at the AJR Paul Balint Day Centre.

Director Ernest David spoke of the AJR's appreciation for the good work they did as visiting 'befrienders' and at the Day Centre and Head Office. He introduced Debbie Picker, the new Volunteers Co-ordinator, who said how much she was looking forward to working with them all knowing how much their efforts were appreciated by the members they served. A splendid tea was provided by Sylvia, Susie, Renée and the catering staff of the Day Centre.

The AJR currently has 140 volunteers, 73 of whom help at the Day Centre, 60 visit members in their own homes, while six volunteers help at Head Office. AJR greatly values all their work, but is always in need of more help. If you have some regular spare time and would enjoy help-

ing other members, please call Debbie Picker on 0171 431 6161 for an informal chat about what you could do □

Class of '39

Bertha Leverton, the co-author of *I Came Alone*, a compendium of the experiences of refugee children who came to Britain with the Kindertransports of 1939, spoke to a well-attended meeting of AJR's Northern Group.

Mrs Leverton, who was a Kindertransportee, was motivated by photographs of her grandchildren to initiate and organise 'Kinder' reunions. During recent lecture tours in Europe and South Africa she particularly sought to address the younger generation who were questioning their elders about the Holocaust. She felt strongly that there was an urgent need for Holocaust education; an event of such depravity could never be forgotten.

For information on AJR's Northern Group please call Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091.

□WL

Viennese memorial delay

The AJR has been advised by Simon Wiesenthal that the dedication of the memorial to 65,000 victims of Nazism in Austria, due to have taken place this autumn on the anniversary of Kristallnacht, has been delayed. This has been caused by the exciting discovery of the remains of a 15th century synagogue on the site while the memorial's foundations were being prepared.

The monument is now to be dedicated at a yet-to-be-specified date next year. The AJR anticipates receiving sufficient notice to proceed with plans to organise a group to attend the ceremonies. When known, full details will be published in *AJR Information* □

AJR 'Drop in' Advice Centre at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
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Thursday	3 October
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Tuesday	15 October
Wednesday	23 October
Thursday	31 October
Monday	4 November

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Message from the Director

Much has been written recently on whether the increase in the number of students passing their A level examinations indicates a rise in quality or a drop in standards. To appreciate the situation we need to know what has happened to standards at the top. Have the numbers of students gaining 80% increased or decreased? What has been the trend of good honours degrees at the top universities? Unless we know this, we cannot comment on standards in general.

In fact, although this is a vital issue to the well-being of a nation – and it is surprising that the EEC in its insatiable drive to establish community-wide norms for items like the length of bananas, has not ruled on educational standards – there is another aspect which should not be overlooked.

Provided there is no dilution of centres of excellence – and this is an important proviso – the increase in the number of establishments which can call themselves universities, and the increase in the number of students who can benefit from being exposed to higher education, can be nothing but beneficial to the nation as a whole.

Without such opportunities, thousands of youngsters, ill prepared by their schools for the educational requirements of the modern world, would find themselves on the scrap-heap as the requirements for participants in the working life of modern societies become ever more rigorous.

As machines take over routine or back-breaking tasks, the workforce has to become increasingly skilled and professional. If this is recognised, we shall be on the way to success. If it is not recognised, we shall remain a country with the highest standards in pure research, but still incapable of applying this to practical ends. While this is partially a British problem, there is also a European dimension.

I have long been a critic of the creeping, undemocratic federalisation of Europe and its interference in areas where a legitimate federal government would have no interest, but since we are where we are, is it not astounding that there are no European norms in education and educational qualifications?

□ Ernest David

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

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Monday and Wednesday 9.30am – 3.30pm,
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Morning Activities – Bridge, kalookie, scrabble, chess, etc., keep fit, discussion group, choir (Mondays), art class (Tuesdays and Thursdays).

Afternoon entertainment –

OCTOBER 1996

- | | | |
|-----------|----|---|
| Tuesday | 1 | WIZO LADIES CHOIR |
| Wednesday | 2 | THE GEOFFREY STRUM & HELEN BLAKE DUO |
| Thursday | 3 | SPRING SONATA – Robin & Amalia Brightman (Violin & Piano) |
| Sunday | 6 | CLOSED – Simchat Torah |
| Monday | 7 | A MUSICAL AFTERNOON IN VIENNA – Elizabeth Ward (Soprano) accompanied by Margaret Lion (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 8 | MUSICAL QUIZ – Led by Lily Rudolfer with Annette Saville at the Piano |
| Wednesday | 9 | FANFARE TO OCTOBER – Joanna McDonald (Soprano) accompanied by David Mackie (Piano) |
| Thursday | 10 | THE SPIRIT OF SONG – Licia Robertson (Soprano) accompanied by Philip Mountford (Piano) |
| Sunday | 13 | BE ALERT TO CRIME – Talk & Video Presentation on Crime Prevention given by Stephen Hoare of West Hampstead Police Station |
| Monday | 14 | ACT I-SCENE II – Sharon Burnett (Soprano) – Noriko Proett – Weyland Holford accompanied by Margaret Eaves (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 15 | MY SONG OF LOVE – Katina Seiner accompanied by Peter Gellhorn (Piano) with |

Guest Artist Laszlo Easton (Violin)

- | | | |
|-----------------|----|--|
| Wednesday | 16 | AN AFTERNOON OF OPERETTA – Julie Leyland (Soprano) accompanied by Alison Smith (Piano) |
| Thursday | 17 | WORDS & MUSIC MEDLEY – Maurice Peckman (Tenor) accompanied by Geoffrey Whitworth (Piano) |
| Sunday | 20 | DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Monday | 21 | THE JACK DAVIDOFF TRIO – (Cello-Violin-Piano) |
| Tuesday | 22 | GERSHWIN & HIS CONTEMPORARIES – Emma Gane (Soprano) accompanied by David East (Piano) |
| Wednesday | 23 | AUTUMN LEAVES – Rona Israel (Soprano) accompanied by Ian Pace (Piano) |
| Thursday | 24 | Leslie Townsend (Violin) & Philippa Bale (Piano) ENTERTAIN FOR AN OCTOBER AFTERNOON |
| Sunday | 27 | SANG u. KLANG – Angela & Nicholas Arratoon – Elizabeth Legroux – Adam Kolczynski – Geoffrey Yeung accompanied by Diana Legroux (Piano) |
| Monday | 28 | A POT POURRI OF GREAT MUSICAL MEMORIES – Yacov Paul |
| Tuesday | 29 | SUNRISE-SUNSET – Heidi Pegler (Soprano) accompanied by Michael Robinson (Piano) |
| Wednesday | 30 | THE DABROWSKI QUARTET – Tracie Penwarden (Soprano) – Andrew Farris (Baritone) – Nigel Cassidy (Tenor) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski (Piano) |
| Thursday | 31 | SHARE A TUNE – Judy Magnus & Gillian Sonin (Piano Duo) |
| NOVEMBER | | |
| Sunday | 3 | DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT |

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Courts. Ella Courts (née Mayer), born in Ober Ingelheim-am-Rhein on 18th August 1908, died on 2nd May 1996 aged 87. Her independent mind, common sense and humour will be very much missed by her husband Ben, daughter-in-law Miriam, son Hugh, family and very many friends.

Kaiser. Alice Kaiser, born in Vienna, died aged 85 on 5 June 1996 at Osmond House, where she was a resident for 17 years. All who knew her there enjoyed sharing her wide interests and remember her brave spirit.

Jacoby. Ilse Charlotte Jacoby (née Bloch), born in Breslau, Germany, passed away peacefully on August 19th in Barnet Hospital aged 76. Will always be remembered for her positive spirit, her kindness and care for her many friends at the AJR. Much missed and loved. Shalom. Dan (son), Linda, Sarah and Rachel.

Golden wedding

To all our friends and acquaintances reading this excellent AJR publication we are sending greetings on our 50th wedding anniversary on November 14. Kitty & Hans Schafer, Toronto.

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ROSENZWEIG FRANK (FERRY)

We regret to announce the passing of our dear husband, father and grandfather who passed away on 30th August 1996.

A man whose tireless efforts to help others and whose kindness and generosity in assisting those more needy than himself will always be remembered.

He was an inspiration to us all and will never be forgotten. With love from Ilse, Max, Ruth, Guy and Sharon.

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

The Raphael Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum reopens October 19th. Refurbished at a cost of two million pounds, the gallery houses seven tapestry cartoons by Raphael which are among Britain's greatest artistic treasures. The cartoons, designs on paper from which tapestries are woven, are the largest and most impressive examples of Raphael's genius outside Rome.

Erwin Blumenfeld (1897-1969) is widely acknowledged as one of the outstanding figures in 20th century photography and can still be seen at the Barbican Art Gallery until December 15th.

Now we are 64. Peter Blake at the National Gallery from September 25th to January 5th 1997. The third National Gallery Associate Artist, Blake trained at the Royal College of Art and became a principal member of the British Pop Art movement. The brief for the Associate Artist is to make works inspired by the National Gallery collection. Also at the National Gallery, Sainsbury Wing, will be *Making and Meaning*, Rubens landscapes, from October 16th to January 19th 1997.

At the Bankside Gallery the Royal Watercolour Society Autumn Exhibition is on show from October 3rd to 27th. It will be opened on 2nd October at 12.30pm by Prof. Michael Kauffmann, Honorary Member of the RWS.

The Imperial War Museum is showing *Together, the Commonwealth in War 1914-1953* until November 3rd, a major exhibition illustrating the vital part played in two World Wars and the Korean War by men and women of the armed services.

At the Concourse Gallery, Barbican Centre, from October 8th to November 10th, the Museum of Women's Art is showing *Rubies and Rebels*, Jewish female identity in contemporary British art. This remarkable exhibition sets out to counter shallow and misleading images. It focuses on 20 artists whose gender and Jewishness are crucial to their identity. Their various ages and backgrounds (both Ashkenazi and Sephardi) combine a wide range of practices from traditional painting to mixed media.



Self-portrait, Frances Borden. BP Portrait Award 1996, National Portrait Gallery.

Genesis in the Kiddush Room by Barbara Jackson, an exhibition to be held at Belsize Square Synagogue from September 11th to October 13th, will comprise a set of etchings, plus various small pictures □

'Fiddle' encore

Yiddish cinema remains unique in having no specific homeland, films being produced wherever there was a significant Yiddish-speaking community and Yiddish theatre on which to draw for acting talent. The majority of Yiddish films were made in Poland and New York, with a smaller number in Austria and the Soviet Union.

Yiddish cinema flourished in the 1920s and 30s, reflecting the hopes, struggles and concerns of Jewish people at the time. Recurrent themes were the uprooting of Jews from Eastern Europe, the mass emigration to America in the wake of the Russian pogroms, and nostalgia for the lost *shtetl* way of life. The German invasion of Poland in September 1939 brought it to an abrupt halt.

The evergreen *Yiddle with his Fiddle*, starring Molly Picon as the girl-dressed-as-a-boy, with its folksy story of itinerant musicians and unrequited love – not to mention rags to riches – is typical of the genre. With English subtitles, twenty restored films, never before shown together in England, are being presented for a special season at the Barbican Centre from 12th to 24th October. Joseph Green, who took his American production team back to Poland in 1936 to make *Yiddle*, sadly died earlier this year at the age of 93.

□ Ronald Channing

SBs Column

A Holocaust Memorial to be erected in Vienna's Judenplatz in memory of 65,000 murdered Austrian Jews takes the form of a large stone cube resembling a stack of book ends meant to symbolize Jewish learning. The project has been mired in growing dissent; even some Jewish circles oppose the construction which is sponsored by Vienna's Mayor as well as Simon Wiesenthal. Voices from sections of the population (not necessary political) consider the monument ugly, monstrous and artistically useless.

Sir George Solti who conducted *Fidelio* at the Salzburg Festival this summer plans no longer to involve himself in opera there, but restrict himself to concerts. Having conducted so many operas all over the world, he has yet some projects left, among them *Wozzek*, *Queen of Spades* and *Pelléas and Mélisande*.

A charming personality. Known first as a French-born dancer, later as a film actress, notably as an adorable 'Gigi', Leslie Caron enjoyed world-wide acclaim as a Hollywood star. Now 65, she has retired to France and owns a small hotel cum-restaurant in Burgundy, where she welcomes friends to whom she sings on special occasions.

Birthdays. Alice Treff is 90; the ubiquitous actress, with some 175 films to her credit, was fêted in Berlin. Not-so-young film fans may remember her in the 1932 film *Peter Voss, der Millionendieb*. Ilse Werner, singing and whistling star of UFA is 75. Susanne Almassy, grande dame of Vienna's 'Josefstadt' had her 80th birthday and was honoured as the active doyenne of that theatre. Peter Zadek, giant among the German theatre producers who, some three decades ago, after many years in England, set the German stage ablaze with new ideas, has reached the age of 70.

Obituary. Austrian actor Karl Paryla, has died in Vienna aged 90. He was married to Hortense Raky whom he had met at Vienna's Scala Theatre in the thirties when she was a teenage actress. They were a couple with firm political convictions who spent many years in East Germany □

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Spellbound no more

A commission of experts has just decreed a simplification of German spelling. They abolished that throwback to the Gothic script known as *das scharfe 's'*. In addition, they have changed the spelling of certain words to reflect their literal meaning – from *behende* to *behände* (derived from *Hand*), and from *verbleuen* to *verbläuen* (derived from *blau*). Enforcing consistency does not always make things shorter: for example, *Ballettänzer* will now be *Balletttänzer*. Among foreign words that will be given a more German look, *Ketchup* becomes *Ketschup*.

This reference to food reminds one that there has long been a two-way traffic between English and German. Burger, as derived from hamburger and mutated into cheeseburger, is now part of every toddler's vocabulary.

Not so long ago German terms absorbed into English basically reflected the German preoccupation with war, e.g. the noun 'flak' (from *Flugzeugabwehrkanone*) and the verb to strafe (from *strafen*, to punish). In earlier, happier times Germanisms had been associated with leisure pursuits or the arts: alpenhorn, flügelhorn, abseilen, kursaal, malstick and so on.

Finally, let us not forget those rather portentous German terms, *Weltanschauung*, *Gesamtkunstwerk* and *Zeitgeist* which trip off the tongue of Hampstead intellectuals.

The problem there is often pronunciation. I've heard the Magic Flute referred to as *Sauberflöte*, but what really grates on the ear is to have the name of the Nobel Prize-winning author of *Steppenwolf*, Hermann Hesse, mispronounced in a way that incongruously makes him sound related to the *Stellvertreter des Führers*.

□ RG

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS – OCTOBER 1996

- | | | |
|---------|-------|--|
| Tue | 1 | The National Trust: Pamela Wright, JACS, 2pm |
| Sun | 6 | Religious Education – Pride or Prejudice?: High Holyday discussion with Melanie Phillips, Clive Lawton and John Marshall MP. Sternberg Centre, 8pm, £3 |
| Mon | 7 | Arno Reinfrank, Schriftsteller: Hermann Sinsheimer, Ein Autor als Prophet und Opfer. (In German) Club '43, 8pm |
| Tues | 8 | Heathrow's Air Traffic: Sheila Price, JACS, 2pm |
| Sat | 12 | AGM, Association of Children of Jewish Refugees. Tel. Ian 0171 976 6691 for details. |
| Sat | 12 | Yiddish Cinema in Europe & America, opening film of season, Barbican Cinema. Programme & Box office 0171 638 8891 |
| Sun | 13 | Cable Street & East End Politics in the 1930s: half day seminar by the Wiener Library 1.30-6.30pm, Harkness Hall, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, WC1, £12 |
| Mon | 14 | Gemstones in History: Clement Krysler gives illustrated talk. Club '43, 8pm |
| Tues | 15 | 'A London Florist': Constance Spry manageress Audrey Baker, JACS, 2pm |
| Tues | 15 | Jewish-Christian Relations: Edward Batley, Sussex University, 5pm |
| Thur | 17 | Lunchtime Recital: Robert Max, cello, & Zoe Solomon, piano. Sternberg Centre, 1.15pm, £1.50 |
| Sat/Sun | 19/20 | Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Museum, Notts. Visit & overnight stay, ACJR. Tel. Martin 0181 446 6167 details & booking |
| Mon | 21 | Ostarrichi, a Thousand Years 'Austria': Dorothea McEwan, Warburg Institute. Club '43, 8pm |
| Tues | 22 | An Integrated German Childhood: Bea Green, JACS, 2pm |
| Tues | 22 | Moses Medelssohn & Concept of German-Jewish Symbiosis: Ralph Blumenau, Sussex University, 5pm |
| Sun | 27 | Chava Alberstein, first lady of Israeli & Yiddish song: |

- | | | |
|----------|----|---|
| | | Bnai Brith Jewish Music Festival, Barbican Concert Hall, 4.45pm, £7/£30 |
| Sun | 27 | Klezmer Conservatory Band, Boston USA: BB Jewish Music Festival, Barbican Concert Hall, 8pm, £7/£30 |
| Mon | 28 | Francis Oppenheimer's Diplomatic Career: Dr. Thomas Otto, Club '43, 8pm |
| Tues | 29 | Why are Women neglected in History Books?: Dr Diana St John, JACS, 2pm |
| Tues | 29 | Lotte Kramer reads her poetry, Sussex University, 5pm |
| Thur | 31 | Lunchtime Recital: David Dreebin, piano. Sternberg Centre, 1.15pm, £1.50 |
| Ongoing: | | Yiddish Cinema in Europe & America, 12th-24th October, Barbican Cinema, Box Office & full programme 0171 638 8891 |
| | | Yiddish Theatre in London until 10th November. Jewish Museum, Camden Town, Sun-Thurs, 10am-4pm, £3 |
| November | | |
| Mon | 4 | Journey to Ancient Russia: Ernst Flesch. Club '43, 8pm |
| Tues | 5 | The Kindertransporte: Bertha Leverton, Sussex University, 5pm |

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
 Bnai Brith Jewish Music Festival, 0181 909 2445
 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
 Spiro Institute, Kidderpore Ave., London NW3 7SZ. Tel: 0171 431 0345
 ACJR, Association of Children of Jewish Refugees. Juliet Buckner 0171 254 7886
 AJEB (Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners). Peter Sinclair 0181 882 1638
 ROK (Reunion of Kindertransport) 148 Curtain Road, EC2A 3AR. Tel: 0171 613 4209

The 'ghetto' that fought back

Extracts from

THE BATTLE OF CABLE STREET

by Prof. William Fishman

On October 4th 1936 Sir Oswald Mosley attempted to lead a great march of his Blackshirt contingents through the East End as an act of provocation. What motivated him was the existence of a large Jewish concentration in a traditional area of social and economic deprivation.

At the 1935 General Election, even in constituencies with potential Fascist sympathies, Labour Party candidates had won their seats comfortably. Mosley, understandably, refused to contest the election that year. The acts of brutality perpetrated against hecklers by Fascist stewards in June 1934 at the Olympia meeting (followed by Hitler's 'Night of the Long Knives') alienated the British Union of Fascists, BUF, from its Conservative sympathisers and Lord Rothermere's Associated Press. The BUF had become disreputable, its violence and rhetoric already associated with those of Mussolini and Hitler.

The diminishing fortunes and the hardening of anti-Fascist activity brought about an acceleration of the anti-Jewish campaign; here was a well defined target against which he could muster wider support.

1936 was the year of opportunity. The King's death (January 20th) had evoked an outburst of patriotism. Aggression was seen to pay off: German troops re-occupied the Rhineland and Mussolini proclaimed the annexation of Ethiopia, Western democracies appearing impotent against the totalitarian powers.

Where Jew and non-Jew were neighbours they lived in reasonable amity, and there are innumerable examples of the the poor helping the poor transcending ethnic bounds.

Attacks on individuals and shops were stepped up as gangs of Blackshirts made daily, more often nocturnal, forays into the 'ghetto'. The Board of Deputies of British Jews warned that the community should not draw attention to itself by engaging in militant action in the streets, on the premise that this would play into Mosley's hands.

The Blackshirt concentration of resources in East London approached a reign of terror. In March Mosley organised a BUF meeting at the Albert Hall to

which there was a massive anti-Fascist response, part of which was brutally dispersed by a police baton charge. In June a loudspeaker van, resembling a large troop carrier, filled with Blackshirts was repelled by Anglo-Irish dockers and Jewish immigrants, one of many examples of gentiles coming to the defence of Jews.

On June 7th, at a BUF rally in Victoria Park heavily protected by the police, Mosley made venomous anti-Jewish tirades. In the same park a few days later Fascists pelted LCC leader Herbert Morrison with bags of flour and soot. They also violently disrupted a subsequent march led by Sylvia Pankhurst. In July a vanful of uniformed Blackshirts smashed stalls in Petticoat Lane. There were daily reports of street fights and Jew-baiting.

On 26th September *The Blackshirt* published details of a projected march through the Jewish area, ending with a gathering at Victoria Park Square to be addressed by the leader.

The primary need to stop Mosley *on the streets* was recognised by all Stepney anti-Fascist organisations. 'Battle HQ' were established 60 yards from the front line at Gardiner's Corner, with first aid and command posts at Whitechapel Library, Toynbee Hall and Cable Street. At an Independent Labour Party rally on the 3rd October, Fenner Brockway captured the mood of the locality by calling for an overwhelming demonstration against the Blackshirts.

By noon on the 4th a huge, impassable crowd had collected at Gardiner's Corner. An added obstacle was a tram left standing by its driver. Six thousand foot police and the whole of the mounted division were posted between Tower Hill and Whitechapel. The first contingents of Blackshirts disembarked at Royal Mint Street.

To clear the streets, the harassed police charged again and again into the crowd. Police violence, often vicious, begat violence. Fighting broke out and injuries and arrests mounted up, but the police could make no impression on this immense human barricade. Orthodox Jew and Anglo-Irish docker fought side by side.

Diversion of the march through Cable Street had been anticipated and police were pelted with bottles and refuse from the houses. Reinforcements, mainly dockers, formed a tight defensive vanguard which met police baton charges with stones and bricks.

The Police Commissioner accepted that

the total force ranged against him was impassable and phoned the Home Secretary (who left him to take decisions on his own responsibility). He then told Mosley that it was impossible to proceed, leaving him with no alternative but to march his Fascists off in the opposite direction.

It was a humiliating defeat for Mosley. The victors celebrated at a monster meeting in Victoria Park Square and into the early hours. Another East End legend had been created – the Battle of Cable Street. It proved a turning point, the Public Order Act becoming law in December. This prohibited the wearing of political uniforms and proscribed 'quasi-military organisations', introduced the power to ban processions and reiterated the law against insulting and abusive language.

With the glamour of the uniform removed, the BUF rank and file were cut down to size and the leader deprived of his charismatic trappings. Never again would Mosley risk another march through the ghetto □

(See *Forthcoming Events* for details of Wiener Library seminar, 13th October, on Cable Street and East End Politics).



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Cooking with Gretel Beer



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Meat and mushroom casserole

1 medium-sized onion
2 tablespoons olive oil
½lb (225g) mushrooms
1 lb (450g) small potatoes
1½-2lbs (670g-900g) lean stewing steak
2 chopped tomatoes
2-3 juniper berries
a little chopped marjoram
coriander, salt, peppercorns

Finely slice the onion and soften in the oil over low heat in a flameproof casserole dish. Clean the mushrooms, leave whole if small, otherwise halve or quarter them. Add mushrooms to softened onion, turn up the heat and fry onion and mushrooms together, then add scrubbed but not peeled potatoes and stir over low heat until browned. Add thinly sliced (or diced) meat, stir, then add tomatoes, marjoram, crushed juniper berries, coriander, salt and a few crushed peppercorns. Put into the oven at Gas Mark 3, 325°F, 160°C for about 1½ hours until meat is tender – there is practically no added liquid needed, but check from time to time □

Mauerbach auction

Catalogues for the Mauerbach Benefit Auction, being held in Vienna on 29th and 30th of this month, may be obtained from Christie's of 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT, at a cost of £35 plus post and packing. Telephone 0171 839 9060 □

SEARCH NOTICES

Alfred Schweizer. Descendants of the late Alfred Schweizer, born about 1890, from Cologne, Germany. Associate of Blumenkohl & Schweizer Co. cloth manufacturers; member of Board of the Rheinlandhalle. Left Cologne for England about 1938. Please contact Renate Franz, Dellbrücker Mauspfad 241, D-51069 Köln, Germany. Fax: 221-680 57 36.

Information sought on the following: **Czuppr/Wenig** of Berlin and Dobromil, Poland. **Lipper** of Vienna and Poland. **Haussmann** of Barden/Vienna and Poland. **Merores Israelitisches Waisenhaus**, Vienna – contact sought with girls who were there between 1928 and 1938. Mrs N. Grant, 36 College Road, Framlingham, Suffolk IP13 9ES Tel: 01728 621 269.

Pavel Kohn. The Prague Jewish Community is seeking the children of Pavel Kohn, born 12 November 1889, died 25 February 1951 in Brno, Czechoslovakia. Owner of brick factory, Gustav Kohn & Son, and other properties in Brno, which may now be returned. The Kohn children: Felix (born 4 September 1924), Tomás (20 March 1926) Bettine Marie (10 February 1930) are believed to live or have lived in England, one son serving in the RAF during WWII. Sons probably continued brick business in England as Contine Brick and Cement Works Ltd. of Audrey House, London. Anyone with information please contact Rabbi Andrew Goldstein, Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue Tel: 01923 82 25 92, or Dr. Tomás Kraus, Federation of Jewish Communities, Maiselova 18, PO Box 297, 110 01 Prague 1, Czech Republic.

Fritzi Massary. German operetta diva. Born Friederike Masareck in 1882 Vienna, she lived and worked in Berlin. From 1914-1933 was famous star and living legend. Jewish origins led to her emigration to London and Southampton, then in 1938/39 to USA. Settled in Hollywood and died there in January 1969. Husband, popular actor Max Pallenberg, was killed in 1934 air crash near Prague. Author of her biography is seeking letters, notes, government files & immigration documents for UK and USA. Massary's heirs also being sought. Please contact Anke Westphal, Eberswalder Str. 28, 10437 Berlin, Germany. Tel: 0049-30/449 76 16.

Renee Kopperl, born 15th February 1934 in Vienna-Schwechat, emigrated with her mother to London in 1938. She is being sought by Erich Knoepfelmacher, 18 Isokon Flats, Lawn Road, London NW3 2XD. Tel: 0171 586 2952 □

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Obituaries

Rabbi Hugo Gryn

A survivor who achieved national prominence

Rabbi Hugo Gryn, President of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain and Senior Minister at the West London Synagogue in Upper Berkeley Street, has died at the age of 66. He was a survivor of Auschwitz, but drew on his experiences of the worst in mankind to show an exceptional human understanding and compassion to all those who came to him for counsel and guidance.

Hugo Gryn was born in the Carpathian border town of Berehovo, then in Czechoslovakia, with its large orthodox Jewish community. His father was in the timber business. The Hungarians, who occupied the town in 1938, prevented Jews from going to the local school, so he attended the Jewish gymnasium in Debrecen in Hungary. In May 1944 he and his family were transported to Auschwitz. Only Hugo and his mother survived the war, all other members of his immediate family perished.

He was among the group of 1,000 child survivors brought to Britain by the CBF and he was sent to a hostel in Scotland. He won a scholarship to King's College, Cambridge, and followed this with studies in Semitics at University College, London, under Rabbi Leo Baeck. During Israel's War of Independence in 1948, he volunteered to fight in the *Machal* brigade.

Rabbi Baeck and the Hon. Lily Montagu opened the way for him to continue his Jewish studies in Cincinnati, Ohio, centre of the American Reform Movement from where he graduated in 1957. His first post was in Bombay as both rabbi and director of ORT's vocational training programmes.

Rabbi Gryn began his service to the West London Synagogue in 1964; it was to last the rest of his life. As a Holocaust survivor he directly challenged the revisionists and deniers. He helped to establish, and maintained his involvement with, survivors' groups, and was an adviser to the Imperial War Museum on its planned Holocaust memorial galleries.

A knowledgeable, charismatic though down-to-earth speaker, he entered on a new career as a broadcaster and television personality, initially as a contributor to

the BBC's *Thought for the Day*. But it was as a regular contributor to Radio 4's *The Moral Maze* that he made his mark with a much wider public. Chaired by Michael Buerk, the programme wrestled with contemporary moral issues and Gryn gained cult status with his perceptive insights into the quintessence of moral dilemmas, drawing on the accumulated wisdom and proven practicalities of his own religion.

□ Ronald Channing

Prof. Albert Neuberger

Albert Neuberger, who was born in Germany in 1908, studied at Würzburg University prior to accepting a post at Cambridge University in 1933. His researches in the biochemistry department led to work on secret wartime military projects. After the war he headed the National Institute for Medical Research, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, held the Chair of Pathology at St. Mary's Hospital and was Chairman of the Biochemical Society.

Professor Neuberger, a member of the AJR, went out of his way to help fellow Jewish academic refugees establish themselves in Britain. Following a visit to Israel's Weizmann Institute in Rehovot in 1950 at the invitation of Professor Ephraim Katzir, and then to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Neuberger embarked on an active supporting role – serving as Chairman of the British Friends of the Hebrew University from 1971 to 1980.

Professor Neuberger was a leading member of Golders Green and St. John's Wood Synagogues, and his Judaism sat comfortably with his outstanding contribution to British scientific advance.

□ RDC

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.

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NEWSROUND

Exhibition design

The Imperial War Museum has commissioned Stephen Greenberg, with exhibition designer Bob Baxter, to lead an architectural team producing a design concept for the new Holocaust exhibition at the museum. The two-storey exhibition is due to open in 1999.

Argentine arrests

Shortly after the resignation of Rodolfo Barra, Minister in charge of investigations into the bombing of Buenos Aires Jewish community centre two years ago with the loss of 86 lives, following revelations of his Nazi past, four senior police officers have been charged and placed in custody.

Far right

Austrian-Jewish writer Peter Sichrovsky is standing for the European Parliament on behalf of Jörg Haider's far-right Freedom Party. The son of returnees from the UK, Sichrovsky's book about the difficulty of Jewish integration into Austrian postwar society is entitled *Strangers In Their Own Country*.

London loot

Two tons of looted Nazi gold were given to the British at the end of World War II according to recently discovered documents. It was part of 15 tons of gold bars kept in Swiss banks believed to have been taken from Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

Hitler's bank

The *Jewish Chronicle* reports that it has seen US intelligence documents revealing that Hitler held a Swiss bank account into which he paid the royalties from his infamous book, *Mein Kampf*. Its discovery was seen as underlining the importance of Switzerland as a banking haven for the Nazis.

Nomination

Survivors of the Holocaust, a documentary made by Stephen Spielberg's Shoah Visual History Foundation, was nominated to receive an 'Emmy' television award.

English Yad Vashem

Israel Ambassador Moshe Raviv described the Holocaust Memorial Centre in Nottingham as being a miniature *Yad Vashem*. The Nottingham centre has welcomed groups from churches, schools, colleges, synagogues and Jewish refugee organisations.

□ RDC

One Man's War

Part 14

World apart

The following evening an officer with two Feldwebels arrived on bicycles. They asked who was in charge and who was the interpreter to both of which Meyer replied "I am". We then assembled in the day-room, lit by a paraffin lamp, and the officer produced a sheet of paper from his briefcase and read out something like the Riot Act at great length. He then called on Meyer to translate. Now everybody present more or less understood German and already knew what had been said. And Meyer didn't have much English and for all we knew, this German officer could be a better English speaker than myself. But, Meyer not knowing much Hebrew either, realised that he was in a cleft stick and, with no time to spare, he started "*Ha czin omer* (the officer said)", - at which point his Hebrew gave out. There followed a lengthy pause; when Meyer regained his composure he blurted out "*Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Kosher le Pesach, K'neine horre, Shanah haba b'Jerushalayim*. Running out of words he had a brain wave; threatening T with his forefinger he shouted "*Brit milah, chabibi* (darling)". Now everybody looked up at the ceiling or down at their boots, so as not to burst out laughing.

Once a year, always in winter, the boss bought his supply of coal direct from a coalmine. This was quite distant and provided a pleasant outing for us. It was now 1944. I was driving and a few POWs were needed to operate the handbrakes on the trailers to avoid jack-knifing; our guard had to come with us too.

I did not know it then, but this coalmine must have been in the vicinity of Auschwitz. (Nor did I know of the existence of gas ovens).

At the mine, the trailers had to be driven under a kind of silo, where a lever was moved and the coal started pouring down from above until the trucks were full. Odd pieces of coal fell next to the wagons into the snow and we were aghast to see about a dozen concentration camp inmates, in their striped pyjamas, picking up these stray lumps and shovelling them on to the trucks. These prisoners, all with a yellow star, were young and looked ghastly. They were walking skeletons, half frozen, their feet wrapped in newspapers

inside wooden clogs, obviously near to death. In their emaciated state, they had to hold on to the shovels for support to remain upright and if one fell into the snow, he lacked the strength to get up again.

I never forgot the fright in their eyes lying helpless in the snow, until two others hobbled near, to lift him up. We later learned that these youngsters were too ill to work underground in the mine, where it was warm and they would have got a drop more watery soup.

Impelled to do something for these poor dying creatures, we encouraged the guard to visit the jakes, positioned ourselves next to them and asked, "*Sprechen Sie Deutsch? Mluvish po Polsku?*" But they shied away in fear as soon as we approached. They saw a uniform with shining badges and buttons and polished boots and were afraid of us. For all they knew, we could have been Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian or Estonian units, and perhaps worse than the Germans.

So we tried again, "*Redst Yiddish, farshteyst mamelushon, govarich po Rusku, parlez vous Français?*" Nothing. Then one of our fellows, desperate now, raised his arms to heaven and shouted, "*Shema Yisroel, adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad*", the opening words of the prayer every Jew will have heard a thousand times.

Only then there was some reaction of disbelief with a gesture of 'You? You?' and we pointed at each other, 'Yes, Yes'.

(to be continued)

□ H P Weiner

50 YEARS AGO

SHANGHAI DPs

There are still close to 15,000 Jewish refugees from European countries in Shanghai. They are most anxious to settle somewhere in peace and freedom and to build up a new life for themselves and their children. Living in the Far East, amongst a Chinese population, they are as much displaced as the large number of Jews in Central Europe.

From the many letters received by the AJR during the last few months, it clearly appears that the Jewish refugees in Shanghai, in their great majority, wish to go either to the United States or to Palestine. Approximately 285 men, women and children, the largest group to emigrate from Shanghai since VJ-Day, recently sailed to Australia where they will resettle and find new homes.

Most of these Jewish emigrants left Germany and Austria in 1937 and 1938 and landed in Shanghai which at that time was the last free port in the world where immigration certificates and visas were not required for entry □

AJR Information, October 1946