

# AJR Information

Volume LII No. 2  
February 1997

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Don't miss . . .

## Redefining the Holocaust

Ronald Channing p2

## Three colours black

Richard Grunberger p5

## A disputatious community

Paul M Cohn p16

## Tinseltown trivialisers

**H**olocaust denial ranks among the most heinous crimes. It is, of course, impossible for any Jew to be a 'denier'; nonetheless some have been trivialisers of the Holocaust. Cohn-Bendit and Harold Pinter, for instance, likened US actions to Hitler's at different times.

Now the celluloid icons Dustin Hoffman and Goldie Hawn compare the Bonn government's measures against Scientology to Nazi antisemitism. Could Dustin possibly be a descendant of ETA Hoffmann of *Tales* fame? And how appropriate that Goldie's surname Hawn sounds like the German noun *Hohn* (derision). Truly, *nomen est omen!* □

The Pope's endeavour to 'square the account'

## From deicide to reconciliation

**M**illennium is a loaded word, having mystical connotation over and above its literal meaning of a thousand years. Christian mythology links the millennium to the Second Coming, inaugurating the reign of peace on earth. (The Nazis notoriously exploited this ambiguity by calling their supposedly indestructible regime *das tausend-jährige Reich*).

As the year 1000 AD approached many Christians expected the End of Days. Similar millenarian expectations were raised – and dashed – when 1500 AD passed uneventfully. Now the impending advent of the year 2000 AD is powerfully concentrating minds in the Catholic hierarchy. The Vatican has already rehabilitated the 'heretics' Galileo and Darwin as part of a pre-millennium 'squaring of accounts'. Later this year Rome is to host a symposium on Jewish-Catholic relations with the intention of seeking pardon for past mistakes. Symbolically climaxing this process of reconciliation the Pope intends to retrace the travels of Abraham in the Holy Land, and to climb Mount Sinai in the company of Jewish (and Muslim) leaders.

This will involve a precipitous climb in every sense of the word. The 2000-year-long history of Catholic attitudes to Jewry is a record of gutwrenching infamy rooted in the gospel writers' imputation of Jewish guilt for the Saviour's death. There followed the Judeophobe diatribes of Church Fathers like St Ambrose, Church Council decrees enforcing the Yellow Badge and usurious practices on the Jews, the Crusades, the lethal fictions of 'desecrating the host' and of 'ritual murder', ghettoisation, the Inquisition, and so forth.

As late as the 1930s Catholic prelates in Germany's neighbours indulged in Jewbaiting: Poland's Cardinal Hlond promoted a boycott, the Slovak Monsignor Tiso led indigenous Fascists, Croatian bishops backed the Ustasha.

Post-1945 the Rome-based Austrian Bishop Hudal helped war criminals escape to South America, French monks hid Paul Touvier, and the Bishop of Kielce refused to intervene in an ongoing pogrom (which he almost justified by construing it as a protest against Stalin's Jewish satraps in Warsaw).

The Church's huge debit account – which in-

cludes Pius XII's silence during the Holocaust – is, to a limited extent, offset by actions redounding to its credit, such as saving several thousand Jews in occupied Europe. Since the war the Church has officially forsworn antisemitism, and in 1960 the Second Vatican Council declared that 'what happened in Christ's passion cannot be blamed on all the Jews then living, nor on Jews living today'.

Since then the present Pope has knelt in prayer at Auschwitz. Even so the subsequent row over a Carmelite convent at Auschwitz and the long-delayed removal of a 'ritual murder' memorial in the Tyrol, clearly indicate that a change of heart at the top of the Church doesn't necessarily affect deep rooted attitudes among the lower clergy as well as the laity. One doesn't want to sound unduly negative, but if the Vatican really wants to square accounts it will have to renounce a large part of the Church's past.

Could as crucial a point of Catholic dogma as the Apostolic Succession – ie the notion that each occupant of St Peter's throne hands spiritual grace on to the next – withstand critical scrutiny of, say, the conduct of Pius XII? □



Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) who forced Jews to wear distinctive dress and engage in money-lending.

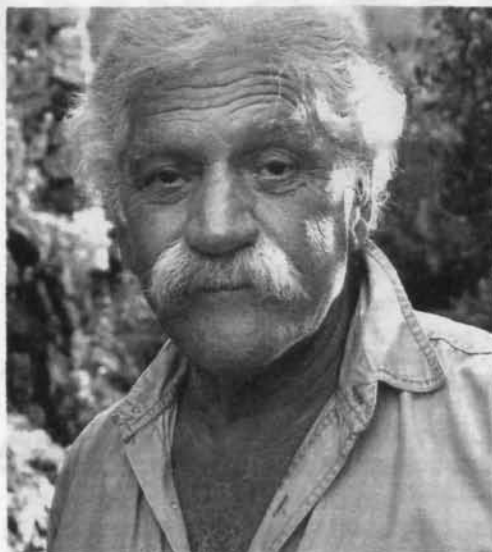
## Profile

## Out of Behemoth's belly

**Y**akov Lind was born in Vienna in 1927. After the Anschluss the eleven-year-old was sent on a Kindertransport to Holland. There he went on *bachsharah* (agricultural training for Palestine). Work on the land initially shielded him from deportation, but by 1943 it was his turn to board the Eastbound trains.

Though only 16, he was physically strong. He tore off his Yellow Star, acquired forged papers and went 'underground'. Work on the Rhine barges took him to Germany, where he miraculously survived the war.

Postwar he rejoined his family in Palestine/Israel, where he did diverse jobs as well as army service. The early 50s saw him back in Vienna on a Reinhardt seminar scholarship. Eventually, he settled in Hampstead. He worked at the Wiener Library, studied English and began to write. He also married (Anglo-Jewish) Faith, a



Yakov Lind

literary scout and ardent Communist. Not surprisingly their Hampstead circle leaned leftwards and mainly comprised refugees.

And not just any old refugees – but 'names' (in the non-Lloyd sense of the word) like Eric Hobsbawm and Erich Fried. At times Lind's gut loyalty to Israel made him clash with these preachers of the gospel of Marx, but the friendships lasted. A less consistent friend

was Elias Canetti, who told him 'I would never have spoken to Thomas Mann in the tone of voice you adopt towards me'.

If Canetti's conceit proved justified in the long run – he gained the Nobel Prize for Literature – Lind didn't do too badly, either. The surrealist Holocaust fable *Soul of Wood* (1962) brought him acclaim in Germany as well as the US and UK. His reputation in Germany declined after two more novels, but in America the opposite occurred. Meanwhile he had mastered English, in which language he began writing his autobiography.

From the mid-sixties onwards he conducted creative writing classes on US campuses and performed on the American lecture circuit. (He also had a play performed in New York).

Although this life style involved a certain amount of 'high jinks', Lind continued work on his autobiography as well as some English-language novels.

This month his seventieth birthday will be marked by the symposium 'Crossing the Language Barrier' at Sussex University and a staging of his New York-premiered play at the Vienna Volkstheater. Happy birthday, Yakov!

□ RG

## Redefining the Holocaust

**T**he Institute of Contemporary History and the Wiener Library's recent evening classes on Holocaust history aimed to increase awareness of its unique collection on the Holocaust and the Third Reich. Convenor and planner of the series was the Library's young and ebullient education officer, Dr Jo Reilly.

Participants included teachers, students, survivors, children of survivors, and a number of interested professional people. A comprehensive overview of the subject included persecution of Jews in Germany, Nazi ghettoisation policy, Jewish resistance, the lack of Allied response and war crimes trials. Among guest lectures Professor David Cesarani's penetrating analysis of the *Einsatzgruppen* (in fact mobile murder squads) and Trudi Levi's moving story of survival were the highlights.

Attempting to deal with the major issues in ten weekly sessions proved demanding, according to Dr Reilly, but the course's success has led the Wiener

Library to consider promoting more. At the final session Dr Reilly invited participants to voice their views on the increasing interest in making a study of the Holocaust, not least by non-Jewish academics.

For the Jews the decimation of Jewry by Europe's dominant power cannot be regarded impersonally as another chapter on the darker side of European history. The loss of a thousand Jewish communities within living memory and the attempt to erase our age-old religion and culture leaves not one Jew untouched.

Since World War II, the establishment of the State of Israel, its ingathering of refugees, its wars and its security have taken centre stage in the concerns of Jews worldwide. Only with the prospect of an end to a permanent threat to Israel's survival can Jews afford the luxury of contemplating the twentieth century's story of Jewry's most tragic failure to determine its fate.

British attitudes remain distinct as a consequence of this country's success in avoiding occupation. Britain and its Empire were preoccupied with winning the war, not with according any priority to the protection of European Jewry. The

myth of plucky Britain holding off the European invader not only continues to feed an enduring diet of war films on TV screens, but has more than an echo in today's negative attitudes to advances in European integration.

Renewed interest in Holocaust studies, due in part to 50th anniversary commemorations of World War II victories, can be more simply explained as a function of the passage of time. Contemporaries of the Holocaust, formerly reluctant, now seem prepared to discuss and record memories in their retirement years.

While non-victims of the Holocaust cannot be expected to comprehend the enormity of that crime, new centres of record and research are providing the public with open access and an insight into this period. In Britain the Imperial War Museum's planned wing will certainly compare with such centres in the USA and Israel. Whether the lessons learned will help prevent genocide in the future is doubtful – but the moral of Israel as a nation responsible for its own security and the destiny of its people is clearly drawn.

□ Ronald Channing

## 'Jews' in a (field)grey area

December's headlines promised – as a seasonal gift to antisemites – revelations about Hitler's Jewish soldiers. However, the allegedly sensational evidence turned out to be pretty much old hat. As early as 1938 it was rumoured in Vienna that Goering's deputy, Erhard Milch, was an *Ehrenarier* (honorary Aryan). The fact of the matter was that Goering had pressured Milch's Jewish mother into signing a document denying that he was her son.

In other words *Mischlinge* of the first degree under the Nuremberg Laws could overcome the handicap of tainted birth if a top-ranking Nazi – or a powerful institution like the Wehrmacht – backed their applications. The army did this in cases of half-Jews whose service in the Great War had given them valuable expertise. They submitted the case of intelligence Major Bloch to Hitler who prevaricated, saying the matter was to be reconsidered after the war. Meanwhile, Major Bloch – acting on the orders of intelligence Chief Canaris – got Rabbi Schneerson out of occupied Warsaw and sent him on his way to New York.

Because of this, history may one day judge that, of the two half-Jews, the Wehrmacht Major's action was more important than the Air Marshal's. Milch 'merely' made the Luftwaffe more lethally effective – thus prolonging the war – whereas Bloch saved the Lubavitcher movement from languishing in the absence of its charismatic leader. If, as can be argued, the organised strength of Lubavitch aided Netanyahu's victory in the 1996 Israeli elections, Major Bloch's Warsaw 'heist' will have done for the Middle East what Ludendorff did for Russia in 1917 by getting Lenin on to that famous sealed train.

But I digress. What readers of the newspaper revelations will have wondered about was the motivation of the likes of Milch and Bloch, (and other half-Jewish officers) serving in the Nazi armies. It is fairly obvious that these men, whatever their 'racial' make-up, had no residual sense of Jewishness in their psyche – other than a frantic desire to get away from it. In Germany the inner compulsion to feel part of the host nation was stronger than in more pluralistic Britain or France.

The flight into Germanness was a wide-

spread Jewish syndrome. It left neither Heine nor Walter Rathenau untouched. It made Ernst Lissauer pen *Gott strafe England* in 1914. In the 1920s Max Naumann set up the *Verband national-deutscher Juden*. In 1933 the Jewish editor of the *Süddeutsche Hefte* Kossmann welcomed Hitler's takeover of power – whatever it portended for his own future – because it 'united a hitherto bitterly divided country'.

And all these men were fully Jewish, whereas the Jews in fieldgrey had one German parent, and frantically wished they had had two. In the best German mystic tradition they probably thought risking death would bring about their rebirth free of the taint of racial inferiority.

□ Richard Grunberger

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## Reviews

## Ninety-nine parts medicine, one part poison

A Fleischhacker, H Stoecker, *DAS WAR UNSER LEBEN*, Verlag Neues Leben, Berlin 1966

**O**n the eve of the Second World War almost ten thousand Kindertransportees found themselves in the UK. Many had been cut off from everything: parents, relatives, school, familiar landmarks and native tongue. The world no longer seemed to make sense. In their first year, or so, in Britain some felt so lonely that even internment appeared a change for the better.

Later, on their release from the camps, quite a few no longer felt isolated or confused. Behind the barbed wire they had had the – somewhat problematical –

good fortune of coming under the influence of veteran Communists offering them both comradeship and a philosophy which purported to make sense of the world. These Communist 'youth workers' proved highly effective proselytisers: by the time internment ended, the combined membership of the FDJ (Free German Youth) and Young Austria in Great Britain approached 1600.

The nucleus of the 600-strong FDJ had come over from Prague at the time of Munich and – alongside the fellow-travelling *Freie Deutsche Kulturbund* – established a presence in Hampstead (as well as local groups elsewhere). With many houses in London standing empty on account of the war, they managed to acquire club premises for meetings and cultural events, as well as hostels where part of the membership lived.

FDJ members led very busy lives. They supported the war effort both at work and through help with the potato harvest, waste paper collections, etc. – in addition to organising political discussions,

play readings and contact with English youth groups.

In late 1943 the leadership called on members to join the British army, and around hundred-and-fifty did so. Several were killed in action; many made a sizeable contribution by intelligence and education work among PoWs and as translators at postwar trials.

With the disbandment of the FDJ in 1946 the membership divided into three more or less equal parts: returnees to Germany, transmigrants to the US and Palestine, and British residents.

*Das war unser Leben* is an anthology by diverse hands. The bulk of the 15 contributors were returnees, most of whom settled in the DDR to help build Socialism. Reading between the lines one senses that they were all – to a greater or lesser degree – disappointed. However, some derive solace from their conviction that they fought 'the good fight', irrespective of the outcome. It would be cruel to rob them of their illusions.

□ RG

## Suffering does not ennoble

Tim Waterstone, *A PASSAGE OF LIVES*, Headline, £16.99 (1996)

**W**aterstone has been criticised for mixing grand tragedy with the thriller form. Well, so did Dostoevsky. I personally find his attempt entirely successful. Not for one moment could any reader, Jew or Gentile, possibly be bored, or fail to identify with the characters. (Even so I admit to a slight twinge of queasiness over fictionalising the Holocaust).

In this case, however, the sojourn of the Jewish protagonists in the camps is brief – occurring just before liberation – but the shadow of the catastrophe lies ever over them.

They have not exactly been ennobled by their experiences. All of them are involved in a cabal to obtain Nazi gold hidden in Switzerland. One man, who operates a fine scam involving charities alongside working for the CIA, is not a million miles removed from Robert Maxwell. A woman who was forced into prostitution in a camp is now a ludicrously unsuccessful terrorist. Another man, a Viennese lawyer, manages to come a spectacular cropper. All of them hate Joseph

Hermann, a Communist historian, whom they accuse of having collaborated with the Nazis in Buchenwald. Hereafter the plot thickens and all sorts of ramifications occur.

The ending is more tragi-comic than tragic, but believe me, the mix does work to the reader's ultimate satisfaction.

□ John Rossall

## A boffin in the Balchin mode

Prof. Ralph Benjamin CB, *FIVE LIVES IN ONE, An Insider's View of the Defence and Intelligence World*, Parapress, £16.95.

**T**his is an unashamed story of success after a difficult start. Ralph Benjamin's father had been a respected Jewish banker in Darmstadt. He helped his four sons to leave Germany after 1933, but he and his wife were trapped and perished in the Holocaust.

Ralph came to England in 1939 as a penniless young refugee. He finished school but then had to become an electrician's mate until a generous Czech spotted his ability and sponsored him at Imperial College where he took a 'first' in electrical engineering in 1944. He never

looked back. He was sent as a junior scientist to (what became) ASWE, the Admiralty Surface Weapons Establishment, where he spent the next 20 years.

Almost immediately, Benjamin began to make radical new proposals for the processing, display and best use of information from radar in naval ships. His central idea was to combine the piecemeal and fragmented radar data into fully integrated display systems. His 1947 patents are still the basis for current military command-and-control information systems, as well as for civil air traffic control systems. By the time he left in 1964, he had become a dominant influence on ASWE's postwar programmes and achievements. He then became Director of the Underwater Weapons Establishment in Portland, and later Chief Scientist at GCHQ Cheltenham where he produced many more new ideas.

After retirement, he went to the NATO Technical Centre in The Hague, with a step down in rank, but evidently not in influence. Even after his final return to the UK, rather than relax, he took on a whole cluster of visiting professorships. But with all the recognition and honours accorded him later, one senses that his finest hour was as a young man at ASWE when both the British and US Navies regarded him as

(continued on page 5)

## Three colours black

To say that I drank in politics with my mother's milk is only a slight exaggeration. Already in primary school I thought in terms of Reds – us – and Blacks – them. (In interwar Vienna, incidentally, red meant not Communist, but Social Democrat). Blacks, i.e. *die Schwarzen*, denoted Catholic Party members, whose leader Monsignor Seipel – a dead ringer for Alan Rickman's De Valera in the *Michael Collins* movie – wore clerical garb.

I had difficulty in understanding how a Jew could do any other than hate *die Schwarzen*. They were Catholic Neanderthals opposed to the enlightened reforms – large scale public housing, health care provision and modern schooling – which earned Red Vienna the world's respect. Some of the greatest Jewish minds grasped this: both Alfred Adler and Karl Popper left Catholic-dominated Austria before the Anschluss.

Next I lived in a part of London where German was occasionally heard in the streets. Even so I hardly came across the term *shvartze* until I read stories by Dan Jacobson. In my innocence I initially thought the word Afrikaans, till I discovered it was a Yiddish epithet for Negroes. After a while I noticed that the term *shvartze* was also current in London and New York (where it denoted, respectively, Afro-Caribbeans and Afro-Americans). This form of verbal condescension has,

### A boffin . . . continued

a guru on information systems in their ships. His achievements must rank with those of other ex-refugees whose work has made them known to a much wider public.

There are few factual errors, but the grand-dukes of Hessen would not have been amused to see themselves described as Battenbergs. They created the name for the morganatic offspring of a younger son who had defied protocol by marrying a mere countess.

Benjamin's book has shrewd asides on how to run government research and some rather earthy asides by way of anecdote; but above all, it gives a first-hand insight into what it feels like to be a 'boffin', perhaps not matched since Nigel Balchin's classic *The Small Back Room*.

□Peter E Trier

incidentally, drawn a riposte: Senator Jessie Jackson's 'Hymietown' epithet for New York.

On a visit to Israel I came across the offending word again, but with quite a different meaning. When German speaking Tel-Avivians say *die Schwarzen* they mean the ultra-orthodox cohorts massed in Jerusalem.

Nowadays they enunciate this phrase with so much venom that one might think Jerusalemites inhabited another, hostile country. Given that, maybe we should think the unthinkable, i.e. partition. Maybe creating another country offers the way out of the Jewish state's seemingly irreparable secular/religious split.

Following the historic precedent of Israel and Judea, let there be two Jewish states! One, with Tel-Aviv as capital, would glory in its bathing beaches, strand cafés and cinemas – all decked out with Blue-White flags, symbols of sea and sand.

The other, centred on Jerusalem, would susurrate with prayer and *pilpul*. Its national colour – replicating the sheen of gabardine kaftans, the sombre hue of shtreimels, and the austere tonal values of bindings of learned tomes pored over by Talmud scholars – would, of course, be *schwarz!*

For inspiration the Blue-White flag bearers would look west to Palm Springs (Tel-Aviv means Hill of Spring) – while *die Schwarzen* could look east to Teheran.

□Richard Grunberger

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## Letters to the Editor

### CLARE v GOLDHAGEN (III)

Sir – Peter Prager (December issue) states that the Christian population did not know what happened to the Jews during World War II. They might not have known specific locations, but where did they think all Jews went? They were rounded up and walked through the streets with their belongings to the railway station. It is doubtful that much could have been done by individuals, and some must have been shocked and upset, but quite a few took over the Jewish homes that were vacated. They knew all right!

Winchmore Hill Road  
London N21

F Tromer

Sir – Peter Prager's letter brought to mind scientific evidence produced by the American psychologist S Milgram in 1963.

He simulated a prison environment with student volunteers divided *randomly* into prisoners and warders. The warders had to respond to orders enforcing prison regulations with *infringements* punished by the book. Gradually the regulations were tightened and offenders punished more severely. Prisoners thus became cowed, submissive and evasive, clearly 'different' from the warders, who readily assumed their superior role as powerful representatives of the establishment.

Zealous warders exceeded their orders and bullied prisoners without effective restriction by their peers. When bullying progressed to violence Milgram had to terminate the experiment.

I share Peter Prager's view that, "if perpetrators know there cannot be any repercussions, whatever they do to their victims, then the beast in man appears".

Burns Road  
Aberdeen

Ian Lowit

Sir – Prager's belief (December issue) that the 'beast in man' accounts for the 'gratuitous' Nazi cruelties must be contested. Observers on the whole agree that sadistic *pleasure* was rarely seen. Except for the highest ranks, Nazis in

general were under unremitting emotional pressure to conform and to prove their conforming zeal. Personal pleasures were frowned upon as they could break the imposed mould.

The cruelties are better explained as occasional outbursts relieving the pressure, or as a punishment for the victims as visible signs of the psychological pressure and of physical inconvenience imposed on the perpetrators; or as 'brave' acts in defence of a cause noble in Nazi eyes. They are the outcome of imposed character deformation and mental corruption.

A 'beast in man' can be tamed by simple change in circumstances; a deformed character must be healed. The healing process often fails and always takes a long time, years for an individual, generations if large groups are affected. The particular tradition, education and dictates involved play a large role in the processes of both character deformation and its healing. It has taken 50 years for emergence of a new German generation, or rather part of it, able to face the emotional pain of a truthful view on the guilt-ridden past.

Goldhagen's book and his lectures have helped to break through the emotional barrier against admission of crimes by an earlier generation.

Imposition of character deformation has shown itself anew in former Yugoslavia and in Ruanda; it may yet threaten to arise in other countries. Hence an appropriate analysis is needed. The catchword of 'beast in man' is unsuitable and a dangerous analgesic.

Alleyn Road  
London SE21

M L Meyer

### MAUERBACH AUCTION

Sir – I was somewhat astonished to receive a letter from Mr Grosz stating "only the most needy Jewish survivors of the Holocaust in and from Austria will benefit". In fact it had previously been said that not only Holocaust survivors would benefit, but Austrians who can honestly prove – and I have documentary evidence – that they were victims of Fascism.

There must be many like myself who had to leave Austria after the Anschluss and lost everything, so surely we should be the first to be considered. I obviously bow to the better knowledge of the Steering Committee who are disposing of the money, but should not some thought be given to those of us who have to carry the burden of perpetual memories which have scarred all our lives?

Cheltenham  
Glos

S I Bollen

### SIEGESSÄULE

Sir – I trust *AJR Information* will resist Mr Al Fayed's inevitable take-over bid. That gentleman badly needs a really funny topic to give lift-off to his *Punch*, and what, presently, could be more comical than the editor's worries concerning Berlin's Victory Column.

That monument's continuing existence may upset you, Sir, but it obviously didn't upset the French. If it had, they would have blown it up in 1945/46.

Dalham/Newmarket  
Suffolk

George Clare

### HAIDER'S COURT JEW

Sir – I could not believe that I would see the day when your distinguished journal would publish a letter extolling the virtues of Fascism. Presumably the writer is Jewish, and perhaps he should be reminded that the greatest Fascist of them all was a certain Adolf Hitler.

Birch Grove  
London W3

Herman Scott

Sir – Mr G Schmerling, obviously never read history – or if he read it, never understood it.

To call Mussolini's or Franco's brand of non-racist fascism a favourable development because they did not too actively persecute Jews, and to suggest that Austria, of all countries, should follow the same path induces me to express my absolute disgust and horror.

Mr Schmerling obviously never heard of Guernica or the excesses of Franco's and Mussolini's militias, the terror of their jails and torture chambers.

I suggest it is time for Mr Schmerling to change his belief from "What is good for the Jews is good for the world" to "What is good for the world is good for the Jews".

Toronto, Canada

John Patton

## THE PAST IN THE PRESENT

Sir – The December editorial ends by saying that since some highly offence-giving personalities are against 'Maastricht' one must conclude – if you please – that 'Maastricht' is a good thing. This is sheer demagoguery.

The root of all the trouble is in my view – and not only mine – that *AJR Information* breathes everywhere a cold indifference to British affairs and British tradition.

Harrow  
Middlesex

Rudolf J Jaray

## PROPERTY IN THE EX-GDR

Sir – I would like to draw attention to a problem whose importance is sometimes not fully recognised.

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If the property belonged to the GDR government, what legal claim has its previous owner or heirs?

Putney Hill  
London SW15

G F Manley

## RESTITUTION

Sir – My wife was rounded up in Budapest on 20th October 1944 and force marched towards Austria, arriving there in the middle of December. The Austrian camp was liberated by the Russians on 2nd April 1945.

Since her absence from her native land and forced incarceration on German territory was thus less than six months, the Claims Conference cannot pay out. Surely, even if such a six-month-rule is applied, it should count from the date of the forceful removal from a person's domicile and until his/her return?

There cannot be all that many survivors left today and I suggest that the German Federal Government could make a gesture in recognising this situation and accepting the claims?

Elsworthy Road  
London NW3

Thomas E Konrad

## OLD IN THE TOOTH

Sir – How interesting to read about Dr Fritz Engel at 99 (Profile December issue). Many, many congratulations to him!

Both my wife and I were patients of his – and still have our own teeth.

Pages Walk  
London SE1

Herbert Wolff

## Confronting Holocaust dilemmas on stage

### 'In Extremis' at the Young Vic Theatre

*'How does the human spirit survive when both the body and the community are being destroyed?'*

**I**n *Extremis* is the latest play from the young Polyglot Theatre Company whose productions are concerned with issues arising directly from the Holocaust. The play explores the spiritual dimension of human survival in the face of



Leona Heimfeld, founder and artistic director of Polyglot Theatre and producer of *In Extremis*, is the daughter of Holocaust survivors. Her previous productions include *Ghetto* and *Dreams of Anne Frank*.

extremities of brutality and murder using a combination of scripted stories and eyewitness testimonies.

The play's authors are Bernard Kops, winner of the Writers' Guild Award for 1995, Bonnie Greer, winner of the Verity

*'What can we learn from these experiences to enrich our own spirit in the turbulent world of 1997?'*

Bargate Award, Peter Wolf, librettist and playwright, and Maggie O'Kane the award-winning journalist for *The Guardian* and *Observer*. Each of the play's four main elements focuses on a particular aspect of survival given meaning from the writer's own experiences. Shorter stories describing individual moments of survival are interspersed between them.

For its material, *In Extremis* has drawn on a wide number of sources as diverse as correspondence between Nazi doctors carrying out human experiments, the paintings of Marc Chagall, the direct testimony of Holocaust survivors and Yaffa Eliach's *Hassidic Tales of the Holocaust*. *In Extremis* celebrates humanity's indomitable spirit as Polyglot presents drama at its most challenging and controversial.

*In Extremis*, at the Young Vic Theatre from March 6 to 22, is directed by Leona Heimfeld. (Young Vic box office: 0171-928 6363).

**Special Performance:** The AJR is promoting a special performance of *In Extremis* on Wednesday 12th March at 7.45pm at the Young Vic Theatre, The Cut, SE1. Actors and audience are invited to discuss the issues the play raises following the performance.

Bookings for this special event are available only from the offices of AJR. Please telephone 0171 431 6161 for details of ticket availability □

## AJR

invites you to a special presentation and discussion of

### 'In Extremis'

a new play on the Holocaust  
by the Polyglot Theatre Co.

at the Young Vic Theatre, The Cut, SE1  
Wednesday 12th March at 7.45pm

(Refreshments & meals available)  
Tickets for unnumbered seats £6

Booking direct for Special AJR Evening – 0171 431 6161

# The AJR at Work

## An AJR voice at Limmud conference

**A**JR member Trudi Black recalled her childhood memories of arriving in pre-war Britain as a refugee and made a deep impact on all those taking part in an AJR workshop, part of the week-long Limmud educational conference. Trudi left her family behind in Germany and arrived in Scotland, speaking no English and having no idea of what was in store for her.

The workshop, which was the first organised by AJR's Volunteers' Co-ordinator Debbie Picker, opened up a discussion on the difficulties and successes of Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe who settled in Britain, recognising the vulnerability of elderly members of today's community. Much interest was shown in the ongoing work of the AJR in meeting the changing needs of its aging membership, especially of the importance of AJR volunteers who give their time and concern to assist and communicate with these very special people.

Leaflets, posters and a new portable exhibition stand helped to publicise the AJR's work to a thousand delegates who



*Trudi Black, who recounted her experiences as a child refugee, at the Limmud conference.*

spent a very fruitful and constructive week at the conference. Among leading contributors were Judge Aron Owen, who spoke on the Holocaust in Jewish law, and Swiss Ambassador François Nordmann who discussed the vexed question of Holocaust victims' assets in Swiss banks □

## Common cause in Leeds

**D**irector of the AJR, Ernest David, was the welcome guest at a well-attended meeting of Jewish refugees and Holocaust survivors living in the Leeds area. The meeting was organised by Leeds Jewish Welfare Board and chaired by AJR member Heinz Skyte.

Ernest David outlined the AJR's own special history, described the nature of its present work and looked at some responsibilities the Association was likely to take on in the years ahead. He offered the support and help of the AJR to the new group and hoped that it would become associated with the AJR, something the group promised to give their serious consideration. It was quite clear that the benefits for people in the Leeds area from similar refugee backgrounds, to socialise in such a group, receive and offer help when needed and to share their experiences, were widely recognised □

## Life saver

**M**r Weiss is a 90-year-old client of the AJR who recently had the misfortune to fall in his flat. As a result he became completely immobile, could not answer the phone or callers at the door, and his cleaning lady was not due until the following week. He did have a fully functioning help-line pendant, but unfortunately had left it in the bathroom out of reach!

For two days he was left incapacitated, without food and drink, unable to summon help. Fortunately, AJR's social worker had a regular appointment on the third day. Receiving no reply to her call, she asked neighbours who suggested that Mr Weiss was on holiday. Intuition and experience, however, told her that all was not well, so after collecting a key from a distant relative, she returned to find Mr Weiss in a sorry state on the floor in the freezing cold.

## History File

BBC Television is featuring the experiences of Elsbeth Rosenfeld in Nazi Germany on 26 February at 12.05pm in the *History File* series.

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**Monday 3 February**

**Tuesday 11 February**

**Wednesday 19 February**

**Thursday 27 February**

**Monday 3 March**

and every Thursday from

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**AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a  
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*No appointment is necessary, but please bring  
along all relevant documents, such as Benefit  
Books, letters, bills, etc.*

When the ambulancemen arrived she had to insist that Mr Weiss be taken to hospital – their reluctance to do so resulting from the shortage of beds. Mr Weiss has made an excellent recovery, but AJR's social worker made sure that sufficient home-care was arranged for him before he was allowed to return home.

If you have a help-line pendant, please wear it at all times.

□ WW

## It occurs to me...

Most of us barely escaped from mainland Europe by the skin of our teeth and did not rush back to our Heimat when this became possible. Why are some of us now so keen to join a European Union – a federation being established without a democratically designed constitution? The one body in the structure that has any degree of democratic legality – the European Parliament – is a toothless creature. Power lies in the hands of bureaucrats and politicians, some of whom are bent on building a union strong enough to compete with, and stand firm against America, while others are out to milk the system for as much as they can get away with. The Europe that I voted for at the time of the referendum in the UK was an economic union, not a political union. It is now said that the Treaty of Rome always envisaged political union. If so, this was not made clear to the voters in the British referendum in 1975.

On the 'federal' issue, an article in the *Sunday Telegraph* of 8 December makes the point that the individual states in the US have more freedom than the component states of the EU will enjoy. In that sense the EU is more a unitary state in the making than a federation of states.

This whole rush towards a common currency, leading inexorably to a full union, reminds me of the story of the emperor's new clothes. The sound-to-sense ratio is overwhelming. Leaving aside the personalities and vague statements about how necessary it is to be at the heart of Europe, what has our membership of the Community actually done for the UK and what will the common currency and full political union do for us in the future? The pros and cons have never been rationally set out.

Two arguments have been made in the past. One is that we are better off economically by being part of Europe and the other is that a European Union is a guarantee of peace – no more intra-European wars.

As far as the economic argument is concerned, we have a greater deficit in our European balance of trade than with the rest of the world, and we cannot be excluded from European trade because of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

A federation does not remove the risk of war. Some of the cruellest wars have been

(continued on page 14)

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### FEBRUARY 1997

- |           |    |  |
|-----------|----|--|
| Sunday    | 2  | VIVA VOCE  |
| Monday    | 3  | THE GEOFFREY STRUM & HELEN BLAKE DUO   |
| Tuesday   | 4  | FUN-LOVING-LIFE – Fiona Tanner (Soprano) accompanied by Frances Kelleher (Piano)                         |
| Wednesday | 5  | SONGS THAT LEAVE THEIR MARK – Mark Rosen (Tenor) accompanied by Daphne Lewis (Piano)                     |
| Thursday  | 6  | SILVER STRINGS – Stacey Broide (Piano) & Roman Broide (Cello)  |
| Sunday    | 9  | DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT   |
| Monday    | 10 | MY SONG OF LOVE – Katinka Seiner accompanied by Peter Gellhorn (Piano) with Guest Artist Laszlo (Violin) |
| Tuesday   | 11 | LET ME SING FOR YOUR SUPPER – Douglas Poster   |
| Wednesday | 12 | DAY CENTRE OPEN – LUNCHEON CLUB  |
| Thursday  | 13 | A MOVABLE FEAST – Melanie Reid (Soprano) accompanied by Rianka Bouwmeester (Piano)                       |
| Sunday    | 16 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT   |
| Monday    | 17 | THE GRAND TOUR IN SIXTY MINUTES – SONGS & PIANO SOLOS by Maurice Peckman & Norman Treiger                |
| Tuesday   | 18 | A WINTER MUSICAL BOUQUET – Ann Kenton-Barker & Basil   |

- |           |    |   |
|-----------|----|---|
|           |    | Taylor (Baritone) accompanied by Marion Hartman (Piano)   |
| Wednesday | 19 | OPERETTA FAVOURITES – Barbarina Wild accompanied by Richard Hare (Piano)  |
| Thursday  | 20 | THE SINGING DUO – Jack & Rita Davis   |
| Sunday    | 23 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT  |
| Monday    | 24 | THE DULCET TONES  |
| Tuesday   | 25 | TRINITY COLLEGE ENTERTAIN AGAIN – Susan Moore (Soprano) & Baritone with Piano Accompaniment   |
| Wednesday | 26 | THE SWEET SONGS OF SOPHIE ROGOVSKY – YIDDISH FOLK SONGS AND AN AMUSING & EMOTIONAL ACCOUNT OF JEWISH LIFE IN RUSSIA DURING THE POGROMS – Margaret Dent accompanied by Philippa Groman (Piano) |
| Thursday  | 27 | THE DABROWSKI QUARTET – Tracie Penwarden (Soprano) – Andrew Farris (Baritone) & Nigel Cassidy (Tenor) accompanied by Marek Dabrowski (Piano)  |
| MARCH     |    |   |
| Sunday    | 2  | CONCERT BY THE HENDON STRING ORCHESTRA – Conducted by Roy Budden  |
| Monday    | 3  | SONGS FROM MANY LANDS – Rev Dov Speier (Guitar)   |
| Tuesday   | 4  | AN HOUR IN VIENNA – Fenella Humphreys (Violin) & Carole Marnoch (Soprano) accompanied by Simon Mulligan (Piano)   |
| Wednesday | 5  | THE GEOFFREY STRUM & HELEN BLAKE DUO  |

**FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Deaths**

**Wittelson.** Nathan Wittelson died peacefully on 20th December, 1996, greatly missed by his wife Paula and all friends.

**Garston.** Richard Garston passed away suddenly December 18, aged 74. A kind and loving husband and father, deeply mourned by his wife Mitzi, son David, daughter Helen, sister Lisl Weiss, brother Victor, in-laws, cousins, nephews, nieces and many friends.

**Boehm.** Annelise Boehm passed away on December 20th 1996 after a short illness. Loved and sadly missed by her family and friends.

**Brieger.** Emmy Brieger (former wife of Kurt Richard), née Levy, born Munich 24.12.12, died 23.12.96 in London after a long illness borne with dignity and humour.

**Krumbein.** Kurt Krumbein, born in Vienna 27 November 1920, died in London on 11 November 1996.

**Rosenthal.** Eleonore Rosenthal, née Haase, born 12 April 1901, died after a short illness at home in Richmond on Thames on September 14th 1996. Deeply mourned by her daughter Elizabeth (Betzi) and missed by friends.

**Guttman.** Hildegard Guttman, a founder-member of the AJR, formerly of Highstone, Camden Road, London NW1, died peacefully on 30 November 1996. Her friends and relatives miss her greatly.

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Alice Schwab

## Art Notes

From 20 February to 26 May the Barbican Art Gallery is showing Modern Art in Britain 1910-1914. The exhibition will include Gauguin's *Tahitian Women on a Beach*, Picasso's *Woman with Mustard Pot*, Matisse's *Reclining Nude*, Van Gogh's *Pieta*, and Cézanne's *Le Viaduct à l'Estaque*. These will be shown alongside work by such British artists as Vanessa Bell, David Bomberg, Roger Fry, Henry Gaudier-Brzeska, Spencer Gore, Duncan Grant, Augustus John, Wyndham Lewis, Helen Saunders and Walter Sickert.

Lucie Rie and Hans Coper: Potters in Parallel will be at the same venue at the same time. This is the first major exhibition in London to explore the careers of the most innovative of all post-war potters, both, incidentally, Jewish refugees from the Nazis.

The Marlborough Gallery is showing Frank Auerbach, new paintings and drawings till 15 February. Marlborough Graphics will also stage a retrospective of all Auerbach's etchings from 1954.



Edvard Munch, self portrait, 1863-1944, British Museum.

At the British Museum the current exhibition in the Print and Drawings Gallery (closing in April) is of acquisitions made between 1991 to 1995 and presents a cross-section of material dating from c.1450 to the present day.

From 26 February till 18 May at the Sainsbury Wing. Discovering the Italian Baroque; The Denis Mahon Collection. This collection of 17th and 18th century

Italian paintings by Guercino, Guido Reni, Domenichino and Annibale Carracci is the finest formed in Britain this century. 79 paintings and a selection of about 30 drawings will be on display for the first time.

A spectacular suite of galleries devoted to silver opened at the Victoria and Albert Museum on 27 November 1996. The new Silver Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum will house the National Collection of English Silver from 1200 to 1800, with a magnificent display of over 1200 objects illustrating the history, beauty and versatility of the material.

The Ben Uri Art Society Picture Fair will take place on Sunday 26 February at 21 Dean Street, W.1. Tickets are still available □

## SB's Column

One hundred years ago. When a young man of Spanish origin, with the short surname So grew up in the United States, he was so impressed by the glitter of that country that he added USA to his name. John Philip Sousa was a prolific composer of military marches like *Semper Fidelis* and *Washington Post*. In 1987 he produced *Stars and Stripes Forever*, the most famous of them all.

Fifty years ago. December's Gold and Silver presentation at the Royal Opera House celebrated fifty years of continuous opera performances at that house. It also should be recalled that one year later, in 1947, the Vienna State Opera visited London for the first and, so far – only – time, bringing *Salome* and *Così fan tutte* to the Garden under the baton of Clemens Krauss and Josef Krips. The star singers in the ensemble – Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Erich Kunz and Maria Cebotari – were joined by their ex-colleague Richard Tauber. It was Tauber's last stage performance before his death in the following year.

Sopranos' Longevity. The recent death of Joan Hammond at 84 underlines the fact that a number of outstanding sopranos enjoyed a long lifespan. Frieda Leider died aged 87, Maria Jeritza and Maria Ivogün reached 95, and the remarkable Eva Turner died in 1990, only two years short of a century.

Evergreens on the German-speaking stage. 1996 statistics of the most-performed works show Brecht's enduring appeal. Hamburg staged *Puntilla*, Berlin

*Dreigroschenoper*, and Vienna Arturo Ui as well as the *Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Other box office draws were Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* and Klaus Mann's *Mephisto*.

Birthday. Deanna Durbin who now lives on a French farm, has turned 75. Remembered as a charming young girl in the thirties and forties, her clear, fresh and natural voice made films like *Hundred Men and a Girl* and *Can't Help Singing* into major box office attractions □

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## Naturalisation for pension purposes of former citizens of Danzig, 'Bohemia and Moravia' and the 'Sudetenland'

The AJR has received a Press Release from the German Embassy in London, whose text has been translated into English:

**N**aturalisation under paragraph 13 RuStAG. Naturalisation of former citizens living abroad has generally failed because of lack of public interest and reluctance to take up residence in the Federal Republic and to give up current citizenship.

The Federal Ministry for the Interior (Bundesinnenministerium), whose approval is required for all naturalisations under paragraph 13 RuStAG, has now decided in favour of applying paragraph 13 RuStAG on the lines of Art.116 II GG, to the small group of persons excluded from acquiring German citizenship by decrees of the Nazi regime.

The regulation facilitates applications for naturalisation under paragraph 13 RuStAG by persons who can prove that they are former nationals of Danzig, or citizens of the Sudetenland or the so-called Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and that they were excluded on racial or religious grounds from the mass naturalisation of such citizens.

Note that the regulation does not apply to stateless persons or foreign nationals then resident in these areas.

Application may only be made by members of the survivor generation. It should, however, be understood that each individual case will need to be separately examined and that the consent of the Ministry of the Interior will have to be obtained in each and every case. There can, therefore, be no question of a new, additional, or general, opportunity for naturalisation. The measure will benefit only a very limited group of people. False hopes on the part of all manner of interested groups should therefore be strongly discouraged. The naturalisation of applicants resident outside the Federal Republic will remain a strictly exceptional procedure.

Persons affected are asked, in the first place, to telephone Mrs Hengge at the German Embassy in London on 0171-824-1461.

Please note the AJR know no more than is stated above □

### SEARCH NOTICES

**Charlotte Glinert.** Acquaintances are being sought of the late Charlotte Frieda Glinert (Recklinghausen, Zbaszyniu) who arrived in 1939, worked as a domestic, and whose last known address was Haverstock Hill, London. Please contact Dr Lewis Glinert on 0181 203 5320.

**Montague (Monty) Jacobs.** Geboren 1875 in Stettin; gestorben am 29.12.1945 in London. Doktorand sucht dringend für seine pressehistorische Dissertation über "Georg Bernhard und die deutsche Presse bis 1933" Familienangehörige, Freunde, Berufskollegen oder Bekannte des Berliner Journalisten Monty Jacobs. Kontakt-Adresse: Johannes Mikuteit, MA, Spenerstrasse 28, D-10557 Berlin. Tel: +1049-30-3925330 □

### 50 YEARS AGO

#### SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

When the time comes to put on record the achievements of the Jewish immigrants from Central Europe who sought refuge in this country from Nazi persecution, it will be acknowledged as a merit that the Association of Jewish Refugees did not start its work with high-sounding phrases and ideologies. A sober, practical programme, inclined to action rather than speculation, promised to assist its followers in their burdensome task to adjust themselves step by step to the country that was to become the scene of their future lives.

The AJR, in the midst of its strenuous work and practical planning, is not entering into competition with historians and philosophers of the future. But to those eager to learn, it offers inspiration and enlightenment through the guiding words of some of its chosen teachers □

Eva G Reichmann  
AJR Information, February 1947

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## Natural break

**H**ow do you make your first break into television? Everyone who's anyone seems to be making some kind of appearance on the 'box' these days. Have you, like me, wondered when it was going to be your turn? Well it came about like this. I met one Nick Stewart who, after some polite conversation on Jewish religious practice, revealed himself as a television producer.

Friday lunchtime came the call. "Would you like to take part in LWT's midday Sunday discussion programme?" The subjects would be feminism, disestablishment of the C. of E. (Prince William not knowing what religion he should be putting down at Eton) and attitudes on street begging. Images of panels of the great and the good flashed before my eyes, with me seated comfortably amongst them. Instant recognition in the streets! Well no.....not for me, not this time anyway. No, Nick wanted me to be one of the audience.

## Island untouched by time

**S**omewhat of an odd man out in the Arab world, Tunisia has Jewish communities co-existing peacefully. They are still considerable in and around the capital, and smaller communities still function in Sfax, Sousse and Testour.

Our major interest, though, was to visit the Isle of Djerba where an ancient Jewish settlement allegedly dates back to escapees from Nebuchadnezzar. However, the oldest confirmed evidence is the 10th century tomb of one Cohen.

The island, smaller than the Isle of Man, is situated at the SE of Tunisia, not far from the Libyan border. Level with the northern most latitude of the Sahara, temperatures in August can only be described as frightening (44C). The view from the aircraft revealed an arid landscape. Sand with palms, cacti and of course olives.

Of the 5000 Jews resident in 1956, only just over one thousand remain. The reason is the pull of Israel, not any local antisemitism. Hara Kebira (the 'big ghetto') boasts a large Hebrew cemetery, and silversmiths who still work gold and silver in ancient Byzantine designs.

We visited 'The Ghriba', the synagogue famed throughout the Middle East and centre of an international pilgrimage

Well, that'll do nicely.

I arrived early at LWT, was checked off on a list and invited to coffee and croissant. Was joined at the table by Margaret, a charming, cherry-faced Irish lady who held strong Catholic convictions. All given seat letters and numbers by production assistant Sarah. Hang on, I'm not in the A team - I'm in 'C'. OK, I can make my presence felt from there.

Called to the studio. This is it. Lights, cameras, sound, action...not yet, not yet. Why do a few of those people towards the centre have those little lapel microphones? Intros by the floor manager, panel take their places, presenter Olivia initiates a trial run in celibacy in the Roman Catholic priesthood. Get my chance - catch Olivia's eye. Make quick point that "in the Middle Ages just about every ordinary male would queue up to take holy orders and join the club, but today's shortage of candidates for the priesthood has brought a questioning of ancient church taboos." Not bad for

starters I thought.

First topic, Prince William and disestablishment. After the panel's views, Olivia turned to the vicars and Salvation Army types in the audience. 'Defender of the Faith', King Henry VIII, *et al.* Better not try this one. Feminism? OK, plenty to say. Wait a minute! Why is it that Olivia's directing her questions only to those who were given lapel mikes? Olivia turns to the audience and pounces, "What do you think Margaret?" Margaret blushes even redder but gives a clear account of doctrine she was preordained to utter. Next topic, begging. Same again. In all, just two or three non-microphoned guests got a look-in.

Well, I'd been on the tele hadn't I? In the TV game you have to make a start. "Perhaps you'll come back for another programme" says Nick. Perhaps I will, perhaps.... after all it is live TV and to appear on the box is definitely one up. Anyway, it won't be next week - the programme's in Glasgow!

□ Ronald Channing



*The Rabbi maintains the ancient Torah reading tradition.*

each Pesach. This building dates from the 1920s and has opposite its hostel for the 'Pesach pilgrims'. The plain white concrete exterior is in sharp contrast to the ornate heavy wooden doors leading to a unique interior with Moorish arches and columns, geometrically decorated tiling and an intricate ceiling. A team of rabbi, chazan and elderly congregants conduct a non-stop vigil reading from the Torah - a tradition here dating back literally thousands of years.

The seating was arranged in a series of small squared off sections and therefore gave the impression that a full synagogue

consisted of a large number of forums suited for discussion and/or business. The bimah and ark were in an area off to one side of the synagogue, thereby rendering sight of the ark and hearing of the Torah virtually impossible to anyone not within that area. Everyone was expected to remove shoes and all the local participants were in bare feet.

Of major interest was a display of antique scroll breastplates and sundry silverware collected and donated mainly by French 19th century Jews, although I noticed some items much older. This display ran wall to wall for about six metres in what looked like glass-fronted display cabinets set in a rear wall. Closer inspection revealed hinges and I realised that these were, in fact, the doors to the widest ark I have seen in any synagogue. There are 12 scrolls in the ark, and one is apparently of a great age. Communication was very difficult, but I think they said 1200 years. There are three everlasting lights, large bowls of liquid wax with appropriate wicks, hanging very low - less than 1 metre from the floor.

Conversation was in a mixture of rusty French and even rustier Ivrit whilst their language is Aramaic. But the inevitable bond was there nonetheless, and we were made to feel especially welcome. A day to remember.

□ Gordon Greenfield

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS – FEBRUARY 1997

- Mon 3 **Isolde Kurz'** autobiographical novel **Vanadis, father & daughter problems:** Dr Gabriele Rahaman, Birkbeck College. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 4 **Philately:** Irene Lawford talks about stamp collecting. JACS, 2pm
- Thur 6 **Lunchtime Recital:** Anne Solomon, violin, & Dominic Saunders, piano. Sternberg Centre, 1.15pm, £2
- Sun 9 **Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners:** Social & address by Member of Board of Deputies. Canons Hall Community Centre, Stanmore, 2.15pm. AJR members invited. Enquiries to Peter Sinclair 0181 882 1638
- Mon 10 **Songs from the Synagogue:** Chazan Avram Levin of Ilford Synagogue sings & plays Chazanut recordings. Jewish Museum, Camden Town, 2.30pm, £5
- Mon 10 **Experiences of Exile in England:** Dr Stephan Howald, London University. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 11 **The Salvation of Danish Jews:** Walter Goddard tell how the Danes stood by the Jews. JACS, 2pm
- Tue 11 **Family Papers as a Source for the Study of German-Jewish Relations:** Prof. Lewis Elton and Kenneth Ambrose. Sussex University, 5pm
- Wed 12 **Wednesday Observer Annual Review:** Editor Arnold Horwell. Bnai Brith Leo Baeck (London) Lodge. Open meeting, 11 Fitzjohns Avenue, NW3, 8pm
- Thur 13 **Vichy Law & the Holocaust in France:** Prof. Richard Weisberg, Yeshiva University, New York. Wiener Library, 6.30pm, £3 (cons)
- Mon 17 **Ignaz Moscheles, an Influential Jewish Composer:** Henry Roche, Head of Music Staff at the Royal Ballet & a direct descendant. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 18 **History of Russian Jews in China:** Alex Faiman. JACS, 2pm

- Tue 18 **Role of the German Churches in the Making of the Holocaust:** Herbert Loebel. Sussex University, 5pm
- Thur 20 **Lunchtime Recital:** Naomi Hyamson, mezzo-soprano, & Janet Haney, piano. Sternberg Centre, 1.15pm, £2
- Sun 23 **Chess Simul:** Play chess champion **Jonathan Speelman.** Sternberg Centre, 2.30pm, £7 for players registered prior 14 Feb. £2 spectators
- Mon 24 **Serbian Minority in Germany since 1945:** Dr Peter Barker, Reading University. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 25 **Professional Life in the Theatre:** Actor Joe Shear reminisces. JACS, 2pm
- Wed 26 **Ignorance of science is more dangerous than of the humanities:** Annual debate, chair Lesley Willner. Bnai Brith (London) Lodge, 11 Fitzjohns Avenue, NW3, 8pm
- Thur 27 **Why Auschwitz Was Not Bombed:** Dr Richard H. Levy. Wiener Library, 6.30pm, £3 (cons)
- Ongoing: **'The Boys', Children who survived the Holocaust:** Exhibition at the Jewish Museum, Finchley, Sun to Thurs until 2nd March '97, £2
- MARCH 1997:**
- Sun 2 **A Thousand Years of Polish Synagogue Architecture:** Prof. Anthony Travis. Jewish Museum, Camden Town, 2.30pm. £5
- Mon 3 **The Visual Arts in Internment:** Dr Klaus Hinrichsen, art historian. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 4 **Archaeological Evidence of the Nazi Holocaust in the Ukraine:** Prof. Richard Wright, University of Sidney, Australia. Wiener Library, 6.30pm. £3 (cons)
- Tue 4 **Songs & Music for Everyone:** Shirley Gurevitz entertains. 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  
Jewish Museum, 129/131 Albert Street, Camden Town, NW1 7NB. Tel: 0171 284 1997, and at Sternberg Centre. Sternberg Centre for Judaism, 80 East End Road, Finchley, NW3 2SY. Tel: 0181 346 2288  
University of Sussex Centre for German-Jewish Studies.  
Diana Franklin 0181 455 4785 or 01273 678 495  
AJEB (Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners). Peter Sinclair 0181 882 1638

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A kindertransportee's experience of uprooting, exile and regeneration  
Judith Elkan (London): A psychoanalytic commentary on Diane Samuel's play *Kindertransport*

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(continued from page 9)

civil wars in single states such as Spain and Bosnia, and between parts of a federation wishing to break away as in the American Civil War. A common defence and foreign affairs policy for Europe is unrealistic. The states of Europe have too many conflicting interests vis-à-vis the Arab World, Turkey, Croatia, America, etc., for there to be voluntary agreement and without voluntary agreement the Union will collapse.

Like the emperor, the European Union, *in my opinion*, is nude; devoid of rationale and dressed in make believe. And who is or will be the emperor?

□ Ernest David

**Cooking with Gretel Beer**



**Chocolate/Almond Biscuits**

Very simple to make – you don't need biscuit cutters even.

You shape the dough into a roll, leave it in the fridge overnight and then simply slice it before baking, and the biscuits will

taste every bit as good as the wonderful aroma which fills the kitchen!

- 50g (2oz) plain chocolate
- 130g (4½oz) butter
- 130g (4½oz) icing sugar
- 250g (9oz) plain flour
- 50g (2oz) whole blanched almonds
- 1 teaspoon vanilla sugar

Break the chocolate into small pieces and set to melt in a small bowl over steam.

Sift together flour, sugar and vanilla sugar. Crumble butter into sifted ingredients, then work to a dough with the softened cooled chocolate, then work in the almonds.

Shape into a roll about 3cm (1½ inches) in diameter.

Wrap with kitchen foil or clingfilm and put into the fridge overnight.

Cut into thin rounds with a sharp knife and bake on a buttered and floured baking sheet at Gas Mark 5, 375°F, 190°C for about 10 minutes □

**'Only the best'**

**Manchester's Morris Feinmann Home**

The days when grandparents moved in with their children or grandchildren if no longer able to cope on their own, seem a distant memory. Loneliness can prove as significant a threat to a long and active lifespan as medical concerns, and a solution to both dependency and boredom can be provided by a good residential home.

Manchester's Morris Feinmann Home for the elderly retired provides its residents with the very highest standards of nursing, care, activities and a friendly atmosphere, essential ingredients of a fulfilling life. The home was founded nearly 40 years ago by a group of refugees with reparations funding, and ever since its chairmen and treasurers have been former refugees. A new wing was added when it became a residential and nursing home, and later new kitchens, laundry and staff facilities. Every room in the home has been completely modernised. Today the home serves all of Manchester's Jewish community and offers a choice of accommodation in large and small rooms, bed-sitting rooms, and suites with or without kitchens, together with full service which includes breakfast-

in-bed when indulged!

Last year saw the completion and occupation on an adjacent site of a purpose-built apartment block, Barfield House. This has spacious one and two-bedroom apartments with fitted bathrooms and kitchens. Nursing care and domestic cleaning are available on request and the facilities of the home can also be enjoyed. Associated with the development is a new high dependency Nursing Wing with facilities for ten residents and the very latest in special aids.

From its refugee origins and throughout its history of service to Manchester Jewry, the Morris Feinmann Home has acted on its motto 'only the best will do'. It continues to provide a special northern Jewish ambiance and to meet the exacting standards of today's appreciative residents.

□ RDC

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## NEWSROUND

**Critical report**

The Swiss investigation into Holocaust victims' bank accounts has produced a highly critical report, according to the *Jewish Chronicle*. A panel of experts has begun a full-scale investigation into Switzerland's wartime financial links with the Nazi régime.

**Grave desecration**

Neo-Nazis desecrated graves in Rome's main Jewish cemetery with barbed wire and wooden swastikas. Rome's Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff placed the blame firmly on Nazi skinheads.

**Belsen's liberator**

Brigadier Robert Daniell, the British officer whose tank charged the gates of the infamous concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen in April 1945, has died at the age of 95. Belsen was the first camp to be liberated by the British Army.

**Children of the Holocaust**

Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld has published a biography and photographs of a fourth of the 11,000 French-Jewish child victims of the Holocaust. He hopes eventually to complete this memorial project by including every child.

**'Enigma' interpretations**

Transcripts of secret German wartime radio signals, intercepted and decoded by Britain's 'Enigma' code-breaking system, may be placed in the public domain. They could reveal direct information on the German's annihilation of East European Jewry.

**Pensions for Waffen-SS**

German war pensions are being paid to Waffen-SS veterans from Eastern Europe living in the UK, the *Sunday Times* reports. Former Home Secretary Lord Merlyn-Rees, chairman of the Parliamentary war crimes group, has asked Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley to check the list against the UN central registry of war criminals.

**Holocaust denial**

Labour MP Mike Gapes, who is introducing a private member's Bill that would outlaw denial of the Holocaust, is confident of the support of most Labour and Liberal Democrat members as well as some Conservatives. Home Secretary Michael Howard regards such a law as being counter-productive.

□ RDC

**A disputatious community****Jews in Hamburg from the 1580s to 1850**

Hamburg is a free city, founded as a fortress in 825 on the lower Elbe and run democratically by a Senate. There is no record of a Jewish community before the end of the 16th century, but in the 1560's the Senate initiated a policy encouraging foreign traders, and in 1584 some Portuguese merchants came to settle in Hamburg. It was assumed that they were Catholics, but after a while the locals realised that they were Jews and in 1603 demanded their expulsion, which however was resisted by the Senate. At this point Altona enters the picture, having come into being in the 16th century as the result of a dispute between the guilds. One group left Hamburg to settle outside, but chose a place "all too near" ('*All to nah*' in the local dialect). In 1600 its patron was Ernst, Count of Holstein-Schauenburg, who was keen to foster trade and so encouraged outsiders to settle there. Some of the 'Portuguese' (Sephardim) went there; at about the same time Ashkenazim from West Germany came to Altona, where a German-Jewish (i.e. Ashkenazi) community was founded in the early 1600's by one Samuel Jehuda Löb Altona, my great-grandfather.

In those days each Jew who was settled had a letter of protection from the local ruler; on the ruler's death this had to be renewed by his successor. This 'particular privilege' was in 1612 replaced by a 'general privilege' (*Generalgeleit*). After the death of the last Count of Schauenburg in 1640, Altona came under Danish sovereignty. This was noticeably more liberal; where Danish rule in Altona was a straight line, Senate rule in Hamburg was a zig zag. For example, though synagogues were not allowed in Hamburg, Jews held services in private houses, which was connived at by the authorities. The first synagogue in Altona (in a private house) dates from 1622; a special building was not put up until 1684, while in Hamburg the first synagogue building appeared in 1790.

There were occasional anti-Jewish riots in both Altona and Hamburg, e.g. the *Henkeltöpfchentumult* in Hamburg in 1730, when a Christian boy, struck by a

Jew, dropped and broke the pot of milk he was carrying. The rabble on such occasions was supported, in spirit at least, by the citizenry and the clergy, who again called for the expulsion of the Jews from Hamburg. Earlier, in 1649, they had got their way, but with little satisfaction. The Jews mostly went to Altona to live and came into Hamburg during the day, so they paid their tax elsewhere but remained as competitors. In the 1650s the presence of Swedish troops drove the Jews back to Hamburg, where they were now allowed to stay. Much of this is described by Glückl von Hameln, a contemporary who provides a very graphic account in her memoirs.

Because for many years the Hamburg Jews had to bury their dead in Altona, they shared a cemetery with the Jews there. But disputes arose, which were finally settled when in 1671 the triple community (*Dreigemeinde*) Altona-Hamburg-Wandsbek (AHW) was founded. Wandsbek, in the East, a village on the banks of the Wandsee, first appeared in the records in 1296. Though Hamburg was the largest of the three, Altona had the largest Jewish community and had the greatest say in community affairs. The Sephardi community, at first more important, was soon overtaken by the Ashkenazim, and I shall mainly be concerned with the latter.

(to be continued)

□ Paul M Cohn

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