

AJR Information

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De mortuis nihil...

The Latin injunction not to speak ill of the dead has recently been breached twice in public. First the former *Times* editor William Rees-Mogg payed tribute to Isaiah Berlin by bracketing him with James Goldsmith (see page 16). Subsequently an even worse desecration of a grave took place on *University Challenge*. Asked to name a politician who had been Conservative, Labour and Fascist in turn, a brain-dead contestant came up with Churchill, instead of Mosley.

One can just imagine Alan Clark muttering to John Charmley: "would that in 1940 Churchill had indeed been leader of the Fascists, and Mosley Prime Minister"! □

Reflections on two supremely important anniversaries

On the cusp

This issue reaches our readers on the cusp between two important anniversary dates: last year's centenary of the birth of Zionism, and this year's golden jubilee of Israel.

1897 had seen the publication of *Der Judenstaat* and the convening of the World Zionist Congress at Basle. The time was ripe; throughout the preceding decades hitherto submerged nations had either gained independence, like Italy, or spawned liberation movements (e.g. the Poles, Czechs, Finns, etc).

Zionism belonged to the latter, while also partaking of the character of the American Blacks' back-to-Africa movement – trigger for the creation of Liberia, as a settlement for emancipated slaves.

In the late 1890s the geographical, as well as cultural, fragmentation of Jewry produced a vastly disparate response to Herzl's initiative. While crowds in Wilna hailed him as 'King of Israel' things were vastly different in his home town, Vienna. The Chief Rabbi disavowed Zionism, Stefan Zweig doubted whether middle-class Jews would forsake their Ringstrasse apartments for pioneer settlements, and Karl Kraus accused him, in the pamphlet *Eine Krone für Zion*, of literally coveting the crown of the projected Jewish state.

As indicated by the Wilna incident the reaction among *Ostjuden* was diametrically different. But even in Poland the Orthodox demonised Zionism as a sacrilegious project to preempt the Messiah, while the Bundists denounced it as a bourgeois-nationalist diversion from the workers' struggle.

The doubters scoffed, but within 40 years the greatest wrong ever done to a people proved how right Herzl had been. Ultimately, though, darkest night was followed by a part rosy-hued, part blood-coloured new dawn: the birth of Israel in 1948.

The new state rested on dual foundations: the pioneers' readiness to work and fight and the world's discharge of a moral debt after Auschwitz.

After half a century of intermittent conflict the rosy dawn has given way to a High Noon that finds the Jewish state doubly embattled. There are those like the late Isaiah Berlin, (apostrophised as 'the wisest man on earth') who saw the most worrying

battle lines drawn not around Israel – but within it.

Though the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin opened a Pandora's box of evils, talk of incipient civil war between Left and Right would be scaremongering hyperbole. However, the cohesion of Israel and of the diaspora communities is put into dire peril when a Sephardi Chief Rabbi talks, Ayatollah-style, of 'vomiting out' the non-Orthodox. And how is one to evaluate a Prime Minister who denigrates the opposition Labour Party (whose founding fathers, notably Ben-Gurion, created the State) as 'un-Jewish'? The extent to which the United States' witchhunt against 'un-Americans' undermined its moral credibility during the Cold War ought to serve as a salutary reminder in this regard □



Illustrated Haggadah by Aaron Schreiber, Pressburg 1730. Hochschule Library Exhibition, Leo Baeck College, 11-18 January.

Profile

'Political' sculptress

The National Portrait Gallery off Trafalgar Square presents a visual *Who's Who* of British public life. Visiting it, one is gratified to see how many of 'our' people – Gombrich, Perutz, Hobsbawm, Weidenfeld – adorn its walls. Less immediately apparent, though, is the refugee presence not only among 'sitters', but also among artists. A large group portrait of trade union leaders is the work of Hans Schwartz, and a small carving of James Joyce that of AJR member Renée Mendel.

The sculptress was born during the Great War in Schleswig-Holstein, where her family had long been in the leather trade. She attended the Lichtwark Gymnasium in Hamburg, a progressive school which awakened her interest in art. Lichtwark was progressive in the widest sense of the word: Renée remembers a trip to London in 1927, when, at the invitation of the Quakers, Lichtwark pupils sang anti-war songs in Trafalgar Square.

In the early Thirties she studied sculpture, first in Berlin, and then Paris. There, in 1934, her terracotta statues exhibited at the *Salon d'Automne* first attracted attention. Subsequent study periods in Italy



Renée Mendel

and Spain were cut short by political turbulence; finally she received a UK residence permit on the recommendation of Professor Borenus of University College, Art Advisor to the Royal Family. In London her parents joined her just before the outbreak of war.

The war prompted Renée's interest in the *genre* of political sculpture (an interest which has remained with her ever since). She produced busts of Lords Halifax and Beaverbrook, to which, at the height of the war, she added one of Soviet Ambassador Ivan Maisky.

Her contribution to the Free German League of Culture's *Sabotage* Exhibition at Regent Street in 1942 was a piece which

showed Churchill and Stalin standing at opposite ends of a map of Europe pulling a rope tightly round Hitler's neck in the middle.

As a rare diversion from her political preoccupations she sculpted the heads of Laurence Olivier and Renée Asherson, the romantic leads in the 1944 film version of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

Renée's interest in showbiz subjects resurfaced in the early 1960s with *The Beatles*, an ensemble piece sold at Sotheby's. A few years later the Six-Day War brought her back to politics and she sculpted *The Wailing Wall* (complete with praying *Chassidim*), an exhibit which a local GP, Dr Winsley-Stolz, purchased and tried to present to the Israel Museum.

Unfortunately some subsequent political sculptures have been deemed unsuitable by exhibition sponsors. The Bank of Scotland disapproved of *The Balance of Power* which featured Ronald Reagan in the guise of an eagle and Leonid Brezhnev in that of a bear. Similarly her *Idi Amin*, endowed with a Janus-like dual profile, was removed from the Royal Exchange.

Undeterred, Renée Mendel has continued to exhibit elsewhere, for instance at the John Denham Gallery in 1987 and at the Ben Uri in 1997. Now an octogenarian, she shows undiminished enthusiasm for work!

□ Richard Grunberger

Interviews for the 'Spielberg Foundation'

One of my most rewarding activities has been interviewing for the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, founded by Steven Spielberg out of the profits from *Schindler's List* with the aim of carrying out 10,000 video interviews world wide with survivors of the Holocaust. That specifically includes all those who suffered persecution by the Nazis for racial reasons, refugees, Kindertransportees, those who survived in hiding, underground or in the Resistance, as well as camp survivors. The end product will be a uniquely full record of a historical event, ensuring through the testimony of survivors that it will never be forgotten.

I was able to secure a place on the second of two UK training programmes, held in Manchester in March 1997. There, some twenty of us were trained in interviewing techniques and told how to acquire the

historical background that equipped us to conduct informed and in-depth interviews with survivors from all over Nazi-occupied Europe.

My fellow interviewers, a motley band of all ages and occupations, are held together by their commitment to their work, and are as delightful as they are dedicated. The regional organiser for Britain, Bernice Krantz, is a volunteer like all her interviewers; together with Sharon Tyler she has created the entire organisation that has to date carried out 500 interviews – 45 interviewers, cameramen, training sessions, relations with HQ in California, innumerable administrative details – while coping with a job and two student children. The Foundation in Britain has no gleaming offices amply staffed and funded by Hollywood megabucks; it relies on voluntary efforts freely given.

The interviews are time-consuming, as they consist of a lengthy pre-interview followed some days later by the interview itself. I find the work draining but gratifying. The interviewees are not surprisingly nervous (so am I), but telling their story

often seems to enable them to communicate at a level that I can only admire.

The interviews are archived and their contents painstakingly catalogued, so that when they are computerised, researchers and historians will have easy access to the filmed interviews and to a vast range of information indexed in detail subject by subject. The interviews will not be generally accessible on the Internet, but will only be available to bona fide researchers for educational and historical purposes at a small and strictly limited number of institutions like Harvard and Yale universities and Yad Vashem.

The Foundation intends to cease interviewing next June. Bernice Krantz is determined to have another 500 interviews done by then, and I believe that her target can be met. We are, however, short of interviewees, so I appeal to AJR members who might wish to record their experiences for future generations to come forward before the opportunity is gone. The number of the Shoah Visual History Foundation to ring is 0171 483 3981.

□ Anthony Grenville

Austrian fairy tale

Back around 1910, when Franz Joseph still paced the echoing corridors of the Hofburg and all seemed right with the world, two children – Louise and Heinrich – were born under the Double Eagle.

Their life stories could not have been more divergent – yet they showed amazing similarities. Louise Rainer was Jewish, petite and pretty, while Heinrich Harrer was a well-built peasant lad with powerful legs.

Those legs, and singleminded ambition, carried Heinrich ever upwards in several senses of the word. He became a mountaineer and earned fame by scaling the seemingly impossible-to-climb North face of the Eiger. But his was not fame as ordinarily understood: he, and other climbers, appeared in a famous photograph bathed in an aureole of light emanating from the face of the Fuehrer.

Louise Rainer had meanwhile ascended different, but correspondingly dizzy, heights. Acting ability and good looks had taken her – via stage parts under the direction of Max Reinhardt – to Hollywood. Here a supporting role in only her second film, *The Great Ziegfeld*, earned Louise an Academy Award. Within the year the female lead, opposite Paul Muni, in *The Good Earth* secured her (a then unique) second Oscar.

Back in Graz, Austria, meanwhile, Heinrich Harrer, resplendent in SS uniform played the male lead in *the* Wedding of the Anschluss Year. His co-star: the daughter of the world-famous geographer Alfred Wegener (of Continental Drift fame).

Louise Rainer's nuptials also occurred during her Oscar-studded glory year. Following in the footsteps of Paulette Goddard, aka Mrs Erich Maria Remarque, she married the (leftwing) scriptwriter Clifford Odets of *Golden Boy* and *Sweet Smell of Success* fame.

In true tinsel town fashion the Odets-Rainer marriage broke up by 1940. At the same time Heinrich Harrer – who had gone straight from his honeymoon to climb in the Himalayas – achieved his greatest feat. Interned in British India at the outbreak of war, he escaped across incredibly difficult terrain to find 'refuge' in Tibet, and had become tutor to the young Dalai Lama in the forbidden city of Lhasa. Leaving the Buddhist 'state' ahead of the Red Chinese invasion he wrote *Seven Years in Tibet*. This best-selling book is now a blockbuster with heart throb Brad Pitt cast as the brown-shirt-turned-Bud-

dhist tutor.

The film only makes brief mention of Nazism – while Harrer is on record as equating Red Chinese oppression in Tibet with Nazi genocide against the Jews.

Louise Rainer, who is happily still alive (and resident in London), can simultaneously be seen on the screen in person: she plays the roulette-addicted Russian Countess in the Dostoevsky-inspired film *The Gambler*.

(True to its fairy tale nature the above demands a certain suspension of disbelief. Postwar, when challenged about his SS membership, Harrer claimed he had donned the death's head-embroidered black uniform merely as his wedding day apparel – and never thereafter.

For her part, Louise Rainer was economical with the truth by 'allowing' MGM publicity to describe her as Austrian-born. In fact she hailed from Düsseldorf. However, when MGM boss Louis B Mayer learnt this, he wrinkled his nose with disdain and said: 'Make it Vienna – sounds much more romantic').

□ Richard Grunberger

Mind your language!

This seems to have been the thought uppermost in the minds of the French statesmen who, alarmed at the inexorable advance of English towards a global language, set up the *Francophonie*. This bloc of French-speaking countries stretching from Martinique to Mauritius, and from Lebanon to Laos, recently held a conference at Hanoi, Vietnam.

Time was when everybody of elevated status, from King Frederick of Prussia to the Russian nobles in the pages of Tolstoy, spoke French. Alas, no more. English powers ahead, driven ever onwards by computerspeak, pop music and Walt Disney.

Let us imagine a worst case scenario in which *Francophonie* cannot stem the tide, and French becomes extinct some time in the third millennium. What will the world have lost outside the texts of Corneille, Racine and Molière? I would nominate such hard-to-translate phrases as *faute-de-mieux*, *mise-en-scène*, *cri du coeur* and *dénouement*. Conversely, if English were to disappear, I suggest the greatest loss to mankind, always excepting Shakespeare, would be just one two-word phrase: fair play. (And, in the case of German, just one word: *Schadenfreude*). □ RG

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Reviews

Have pen, will travel

Marcus Patka, EGON ERWIN KISCH,
Böhlau Verlag, Wien

Stages in the life of a combative author, the subtitle of this book, illustrates its flavour. For someone like me, who had known Egon Erwin Kisch mainly as a teller of colourful tales – of searching for traces of the Golem in the attic of Prague's Altneuschul, or of encountering the now octogenarian writer of Emperor Franz Joseph's 1914 manifesto *An meine Völker* in a spiderweb-festooned ministry basement, because the authorities had forgotten to pension him off – this added a new dimension. Prague-born Kisch earned the reputation of the 'world's first investigative journalist', when, aged twenty-eight, he accidentally stumbled upon and then exposed the k & k cover-up of the Colonel Redl spy scandal in 1913.

At the end of the Great War, in which he had been wounded, he acted out a revolutionary pantomime in newly republican Vienna. As leader of the Red Guards, a splinter group of radicalised demob-happy soldiers, he attempted to occupy the offices of the *Neue Freie Presse* (where

his brother Paul worked). Paul appeared at a first floor window and shouted at the rifle-toting Kisch in the courtyard 'Das schreib' ich der Mutter in Prag' which stopped the revolutionary in his tracks.

Early failure did not deter Egon Erwin, however. He placed his pen and person at the disposal of the Revolution for the next quarter century.

During Weimar years he wrote for the *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* (AIZ) a mass circulation paper created by the indefatigable 'Red Goebbels' Willy Münzenberg. He visited America, the Soviet Union and China as reporter. From Moscow's Red Square he broadcast a Czech language May Day commentary, asserting that the rain-drenched parade was actually proceeding in bright sunshine. When subsequently challenged on this misrepresentation, he made the rejoinder 'In the land of Socialism the sun always shines'.

When, from 1933 onwards Paris-based Münzenberg masterminded the Comintern's counter-attack on Nazi Germany, Kisch and his compatriot André Simone (aka Otto Katz) – wrote, spoke and travelled tirelessly for the cause.

The Spanish Civil War found Kisch sending back reports from the Republican lines. (One of the photographs from this war shows Kisch, his surgeon brother and other hospital personnel – all dwarfed by

the towering presence of Paul Robeson).

Soon after the outbreak of the Second World War he went to Mexico via the United States which would only grant the notorious 'Red' a transit visa. War-time Mexico was a centre of leftwing emigré activity in which Kisch joined enthusiastically. He also wrote most movingly about an Indian jungle village whose inhabitants practised a primitive form of Judaism and linked this to his shattered reaction to news of the Holocaust.

In 1946 he returned to Prague where the Communist apparachiks greeted him with feigned warmth. The reason for this reserve was threefold. In the all-enveloping miasma of Stalinist paranoia all comrades who had gone West during the war were suspect. In addition the Nazi occupation years had left the Czechs deeply antisemitic and bitterly anti-German – and Kisch was both a Jew and a German-speaker.

During the last years of his life Kisch was never in the limelight, though he did receive a perfunctory state funeral on his death in 1948. Maybe this relatively early death was fortunate. One cannot but surmise that if he had lived on into the Fifties he would have found himself in the dock alongside his long-term associate André Simone in the Slansky Trial.

□ RG

Mitterand syndrome

Brian Moore, *THE STATEMENT*, Bloomsbury,
1995, £14.99

This fine novel focuses on the canker that has been gnawing at the roots of *La France* ever since her disasters of the Second World War. It is the work of an author who could by no stretch of the imagination be described as francophobe.

The fact that Moore has chosen a thriller – almost detective story – form has dismayed some critics, but I can find no fault with the way in which he describes the relentless pursuit of a former *milicien*, Pierre Brossard. (The *milice* were Vichy's equivalent of the SS). Brossard is wanted for the murder of 14 Jews, in 1944, at Dombey, Alpes-Maritimes.

The story opens with the statement of the title, which is found on a corpse in a car on a country road. What the statement conveys is that this is the corpse of Pierre Brossard and that the Dombey case is now closed. In passing, the statement also

blames the Catholic Church for hiding that man for more than 40 years.

Moore skillfully goes over these 40 years of Brossard's life without either demonising or excusing him. Nor does he give any credence to the argument of a section of the Catholic Church that they help fugitives from whichever side.

Whenever we meet Pierre Brossard – and his identity is well concealed so that the reader can only dimly guess at it – he is outwardly suave and submissive to the doctrines of the Faith, but inwardly an unreconstituted sceptic as well as anti-semitic. Those who aid and abet him, and they are by no means only clerics, suffer from what one might call the 'Mitterand syndrome', namely having an iron in each fire.

Moore handles these ingredients with real skill. The book is so well written that one can give it the accolade of un-put-downable. The end is, however, a secret which readers must find out for themselves.

□ John Rossall



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Altneuland revisited

A hundred years ago, at the end of the first Zionist Congress in Basle, Herzl confided to his diary: "Today I founded the Jewish State. Were I to say so aloud, people would laugh. In 50 years, all will see it". Herzl did not wait so long before fleshing out his prophetic vision in writing and in 1902 published his novel *Altneuland*. After 60 years I returned to the book I first read as a child in Vienna and, with clear memories of my excitement then, was amazed how much it gripped me even now. It is not great literature but a gifted writer's answer to the taunts that his ideas are just a pipe-dream.

The framework is a slender romance. In the despair of unrequited love for a light-headed girl whose parents reject the impecunious hero, he joins an eccentric Englishman to retreat from the world, leaving his little money to a destitute Jew-

ish refugee family. Twenty years later finds him on a stop-over in Palestine where the former poor refugee boy, David Litvak, is candidate for the presidency. Essentially the book shows how the Jews of Europe came to Palestine and established a modern welfare state with the latest scientific and technological developments from Europe. Besides mordant caricatures of the hero's former friends and acquaintances, Herzl describes the Jewish State as a vibrant society with a composite culture and vigorous political debate.

The Arab question is posed formally by the hero: why do you not object to the Jews taking over? The reply is fulsome: they bring prosperity and a better life for all of us. (Thereby quite ignoring the question of national sovereignty, the Zionists' basic motivation). Symbolically, David Litvak's good friend is Reshid Bey, a Berlin-educated chemist, and the two families are very close.

The visit coincides with elections fought

out between Jewish chauvinist conservatives and David Litvak, who clearly has Herzl's sympathy. On one occasion, David takes his guests to a co-operative settlement where he lectures his audience on the beginnings of socialism in Europe, and cites the pioneers of Rochdale who 'did much for you and for the whole of mankind'. He talks of the Utopian-socialist settlements on which their village is modelled and of Ralahine, in Ireland, where poor labourers built a thriving community only to be driven off the land when their landlord lost his estate through gambling. But, "...the lesson of Ralahine was not lost...we founded thousands of Ralahines..."

The 1997 centenary celebrations are over. The central part of Herzl's vision, the State of the Jews, has been powerfully realised, yet too much of its essential spirit has been shunted aside today and remains still to be achieved.

□ Avraham Shomroni

Pile-up of paradoxes

The headline 'Tory leader in showdown with Big Business' (prompted by the CBI conference at Birmingham) must be a prize item for serious connoisseurs of paradox. Not that the UK is the only happy hunting-ground for paradox collectors. In the USA liberals (i.e. Democrat Congressmen) have voted down Free Trade legislation, and in Russia Red Flag-waving Communists march alongside icon-brandishing orthodox priests in anti-government demonstrations.

In this country it is the seemingly endless debate about Europe that offers the lover of paradox the richest pickings.

Consider: in our increasingly ethnically mixed continent Britain is the only country which has totally marginalised politicians peddling race hate. France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Austria and Norway all have (or recently had) ultra-Right parties with voter appeal.

However, in all the above-mentioned countries still susceptible to the Fascist virus, the proportion of the electorate favouring closer European integration is higher than in Britain (where a recent poll showed two thirds of the population opposed).

Yet it was in Britain that in the mid-Nineteenth Century an Italian-descended baptised Jew could become Prime Minister, and where Austrian-born Trebitsch

Lincoln, Indian-born Shapurji Saklatvala and Czech-born Robert Maxwell had no difficulty in entering Parliament.

In pro-European Germany, on the other hand, not only can non-Germans not be Bundestag candidates, they are even debarred from voting *per se*. German citizenship law is so narrowly based on blood ties that even the German-born offspring of second-generation Turkish immigrants are still denied voting rights. (Chancellor Kohl, meanwhile, favours Turkish EU membership).

Another contemporary British paradox is that Prime Minister Blair, whose large parliamentary majority is, moreover, buttressed by the Lib Dems, could conceivably lose a referendum on Europe. Commentators think that Labour's biggest stumbling block in the Euro-debate is not the Tory opposition but the press tycoons Murdoch, Black and Rothermere.

Which raises the question: Do people vote as newspaper proprietors tell them, or do newspapers adjust their editorials according to shifts of opinion among their readers? What speaks in favour of the latter interpretation is that Rupert Murdoch (who in the Tories' glory days had prompted the headline 'Its *The Sun* won it') actually made pro-Labour noises in April 1997, as did Lord Rothermere.

The most *recherché* paradox in all this is the fact that two out of the three press barons who extol Britishness as against a

hybrid Euro-mishmash are only notionally British: the US-resident Rupert Murdoch is Australian, and Conrad Black is Canadian. As to Lord Rothermere, he only narrowly escaped Central European (and royal) birth. What happened was that his grandfather's campaign against the 1919 Peace Treaties in the *Daily Mail* put Horthy's Hungarians so much in his debt that they offered him the Magyar crown. However, it didn't take the first Lord Rothermere long to decide that he preferred governing a press empire to the Kingdom of Hungary.

□ RG



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Letters to the Editor

VARIETIES OF ANTISEMITISM

Sir – Allow me to reply to Mr Lachs' letter (November issue). The American Zionist lobby irrefutably tried to get America into the war on the Allied side. For instance, the influential Jewish public relations expert Carl Boyer organised the 'League of Oppressed Nations', (i.e. oppressed by Austria). Boyer later became President Wilson's advisor at the Versailles peace conference. Vienna born Edward Bernays, the great-grandson of the Chief Rabbi of Hamburg, assisted Masaryk's efforts in collecting money for his new Czechoslovakia, and hence for the break-up of the Austrian monarchy. The Balfour Declaration was Britain's quid pro quo for these Jewish efforts and this was expected by the American Zionists. Why else should Great Britain have risked antagonising the numerous and powerful Arab nations? It was a choice between losing WW1 or losing Arab goodwill.

From a Jewish point of view, their action showed remarkable foresight. There would have been no Israel if Germany had won the war, (the Turks would never have agreed to it) but no Holocaust either. From the Germans' point of view, the Jews had shamefully betrayed them.

The above are historical facts and have nothing to do with antisemitism. Jews upset national uniformity by creating a potential fifth column. Let me give two examples:

In the Torah (Exodus 51.10) the King of Egypt says: "Let us deal wisely with them (the Jews)... In case of war, they may join our enemies and fight against us". This does not make the Torah antisemitic.

Secondly, Queen Maria Theresa expelled the Jews from Prague not merely because they were Jews, but because they tended to support the more liberal Frederick the Great during the Silesian war.

Oxtd
Surrey AW Freud

Sir – Mr A W Freud holds 'The Jewish Lobby' in America partly responsible for that country's entry into the First World War on the Allied side.

Historians like James Stokesbury, in his *Short History of World War One* state that the reasons were in fact complex:

America had granted large loans to Britain. With the collapse of Russia there loomed the prospect of victory by the Central Powers; at the same time the reason for America's reluctance to fighting alongside a brutal autocratic dictatorship had disappeared.

The British had decoded and passed to the US government a letter from a German diplomat that, in the event of a German victory, promised US territories to both Mexico and Japan.

The precipitating cause, though, was the issue of German unrestricted submarine warfare.

In mid-March 1917 German submarines sank four clearly marked unarmed American merchant ships with the loss of 36 lives.

By early April the US were at war with Germany.

The effect of American Zionist lobbying must have been extremely marginal indeed.

Against this, it should be remembered that Zionists at that time represented but a small minority of World Jewry. Throughout the First World War Jews served loyally in the Armed Forces of the countries where they lived.

Many Jews lost their lives in the fighting, and in Germany quite a number were awarded the Iron Cross for outstanding bravery – a fact of which the Kaiser must have been well aware.

If Mr Freud is right, why did Goebbels not level this particular libel against us?

Bushey Heath
Herts

J Buck

CONTENTIOUS ISSUE

Sir – With reference to *The Myth of Rescue*, I wish to remind readers that the pre-war attitude of America and Australia was purely racist.

Right-wing organisations in the USA pressed for *all* immigrants to be white, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. For this reason they imposed strict quotas, according to place of birth. Polish-born people like my parents had no hope of getting into the USA.

Australia also wanted to remain 'pure' British and did not admit any other immigrants.

In Palestine, the British government

gave in to Arab pressure, and severely restricted our immigration.

The only place in the whole wide world we could go to without any restrictions was Japanese-occupied Shanghai. That's where my parents went and saved themselves from the Holocaust.

London NW4

Mrs A Saville

LEFT-RIGHT CONFUSION

Sir – The October editorial contained nonsense quite out of order for a monthly geared to a literate readership.

Pauline Hanson may be an uneducated one-time-fish-and-chips shop proprietor but her views, right or wrong, are perfectly legitimate and need to be aired without having to be tarred with a McCarthy-type smear so memorable for people of our generation.

Immigration is a serious business in Australia. If Britain had the ratio of immigration we had in the post-war years, you would now be living in a country of 115 million people. I have heard Hanson called a 'fascist', but whatever I have read about her statements, I have been quite unable to find a nexus with fascism. As far as I am aware, she has never called for the expulsion of anyone.

It is bad enough if truth goes out the window in times of war. In peacetime this should not happen. I will not re-subscribe to *AJR Information*. Let them write for their constituents, but 'include me out'.

Farrer, ALT
Australia

Bern Brent

CRI DU COEUR

Sir – We who have married out stand accused by our Orthodox brethren of perpetrating a 'silent Holocaust' – whilst we, who were Jewish enough to be done to death by the Third Reich, truly fear for Israel's future. This is because of the religious fanatics who hold sway over the Knesset. Netanyahu's all too transparent efforts to appease US Jewry during his visit to America did little to convince the five million US Jews, even with phrases like 'No power on earth can rob any Jew of his or her identity'. Such statements will surely be torn to shreds upon his return by the likes of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. Ill-founded assurances that this new 'Identity Bill' is not likely to affect tourists seem the height of hypocrisy, and Binyamin Netanyahu may just wake up one of these days to find not only tourism, but also financial and political support from the Diaspora, to be at an all

time low. If he wants to prove that he has the country's interests at heart, now would be the time to talk to Mr Peres with a view to creating a government of National Unity to curb the destructive influence of unmitigated fundamentalism.

Sutton Coldfield

Werner Abraham

IT OCCURSTO ME ...

Sir - In his feature (November issue) Mr Ernest David uses the expression "mass hysteria" five times to describe the popular reaction to the death of the Princess of Wales.

I watched the events of that remarkable week on television. I saw great masses of people but not a trace of hysteria.

The reasons for the unprecedented universal surge of sympathy for the dead princess is still the subject of much debate, not least among religious leaders. There is general agreement that hysteria was conspicuously absent and played no part in it.

Sneath Avenue
London NW11

Eric Conrad

Sir - Isn't Mr Ernest David being a little bit too subjective to be equating the "mass hysteria" "whipped up" by the international media after Diana's death, with that perpetrated by the *Voelkischer Beobachter* against Jewish Germans? Might a more valid interpretation not be that 'people' were manipulating the media to give them more of Diana, because of what her life and her death meant to them?

Peter Zander

Sir - Mr Ernest David's frequent outbursts against the European Union (See December issue) could be regarded as an abuse of privilege of access to your pages unless you allowed others an equal opportunity to put the opposite view.

In the first place it seems bizarre for someone of our background to divide Europe and Britain into *them* and *us*. It seems that the European nations see a benefit in drawing together, which escapes Mr David.

He develops his theme by saying that it does not make sense to unite in a larger Europe, when Belgium, Spain and Italy are torn by demands for internal regional independence - as, of course, we are with Scottish and Welsh demands for independence. To my mind he illustrates very well the pitfalls of centralised power within states. As regional populations become better educated and better informed, they want greater control over their destiny; a noticeable trend even in

England itself. A large measure of independence is possible and works well, under a federal system such as exists in the United States and Germany, where the Länder have a good deal of local autonomy. (Incidentally, I would not be surprised if a Texan felt he had less in common with a New Englander than an Englishman feels he has in common with, say, a Dutchman). In a federal Europe, where the power of central governments will be diminished, there is a real opportunity for devolving more power to regional levels. Central governments will be taken up less with conflicts with their neighbours and will have less grounds for stirring up the nationalism which was the curse of Europe until the Treaty of Rome.

Along with his pessimistic assessments, Mr David disregards the real achievements of the EU. In spite of all the cultural, political, religious and economic diversity, is it not astounding that in the short time since Maastricht, Italy, Spain and Portugal have made such tremendous strides in putting their economic houses in order that the former two, and possibly also the latter, will have brought chronic inflation and burgeoning deficits under control? Is it really conceivable that we are the only nation in step and that the others are misguided Lemmings?

Surely their achievements to-date are more than the 'wishful thinking', which is all that Mr David thinks of the EU. And for a Jew whose cultural heritage lies in Europe to want to stand aside instead of participating in the Europe of the future is incomprehensible to me.

Richmond
Surrey

RB Tait

BOUQUET

Sir - Copies of *AJR Information* are a jewel of coverage and style. I read them all from cover to cover, and now use them as a sample for the secretary in the company I work for as to how proper English should be written.

Kiryat-Shmonah
Israel

Fedor Schon

Congratulations, Bertha!

Bertha Leverton, founder and tireless worker for RoK (Reunion of Kindertransportees) a sister organisation of the AJR, celebrates her seventy-fifth birthday this month. But for Bertha *I Came Alone* would not have been published, and the 1989 Harrow reunion would not have taken place. Till hundred-and-twenty! □

AJR SPECIALS

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The AJR at Work

Lord Haw Haw's captor

Geoffrey Perry left Germany as a boy, but returned at the age of 23 as an officer in the British Army. Fifty-seven years to the day after he joined up he recounted some of his exploits as the guest speaker at AJR's popular Luncheon Club.

Arriving in Britain as a refugee in 1936, Geoffrey Perry obtained work in London as a journalist for the *New York Times* and *Daily Mirror*, but was interned after the outbreak of war. He subsequently joined the army and was granted a commission in 1943.

In April 1945, on the eve of the Rhine crossing, he was transferred to a special task force in Brussels and given secret orders to take over the German media! On the surrender of Hamburg on 3rd May, his unit captured Radio Hamburg's studios intact. Three hours later the station was back on the air with Geoffrey announcing its 'new management'.

Carrying out his mission to shut Nazi newspapers and create new ones in their place, he went to Flensburg, near the border with Denmark, to take over the local newspaper. Flensburg retained its status as an enclave under the protection of Hitler's successor, Admiral Doenitz, so Geoffrey



Lord Haw Haw's captor Geoffrey Perry

camped outside the town.

On 28th May, when he went to collect firewood, he noticed a down-at-heel character whose voice, in response to an innocuous question, sounded like that of the infamous William Joyce who broadcast Nazi propaganda to Britain. "Would you be William Joyce?" he challenged. The man replied giving a German name, but made for his pocket. Without hesitation Geoffrey drew the Luger pistol he had confiscated from a Hamburg policeman and wounded Joyce, who collapsed. Documents in his pockets revealed his true identity. Joyce was later executed as a traitor in the Tower of London.

□ Ronald Channing

Lords a'sleeping

The rather elderly members of the House of Lords who appear to be taking a comfortable after-dinner nap, are in fact leaning back to listen to the debate on specially secreted not-too-loud-speakers set into the backrests of the chamber's red leather benches. This was revealed to AJR members who joined a specially arranged tour of the Upper Chamber and Palace of Westminster.

Entering through the Sovereign's Entrance under the massive Victoria Tower, visiting the Queen's Robing Room and following the route taken by her when she attends the State Opening of Parliament, led them through the corridors and lobbies of power to the ornate Lords' Chamber, then to the Commons - rebuilt after German WWII bombing - and the vast Westminster Hall where Charles I stood trial and Winston Churchill wryly accepted his Graham Sutherland portrait,

later destroyed by Lady Churchill.

Since everyone enjoyed the event immensely they expressed the hope that the AJR will arrange similar visits in the future.

□ RDC

SOUTH LONDON AJR Beth Shalom experience

South London AJR's prime object in visiting the Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre in Nottinghamshire was to see its exhibition of European Jewish history illustrating Hitler's rise to power and the Holocaust. Opened in 1995, the Centre had made such an impact that it was now fully booked a year ahead! Founder-director Stephen Smith, who greeted us warmly with his mother Marina, addressed the group.

I planted a rose bush in the memorial garden to my parents whom I last saw when I was only eight years old.

□ Herbert Wolff

Bournemouth holiday

I would like to thank the AJR for taking us on a week's holiday to Bournemouth once again. The meals and service at the Normandie Hotel were excellent and everything was done to make us feel at home.

Sylvia, Renée and her husband entertained us every evening with a quiz, bingo and music which were most enjoyable. All being well, I hope to go again in the Spring.

□ With gratitude, Melanie Peek

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It occurs to me...

Have you ever thought how much of our daily life is based on trust and confidence? Often this is justified but often trust is abused, so much so that one hears people say that no one is to be trusted.

Normally one trusts one's bank to keep one's money safely, yet look at Japan where the bankruptcy of a large financial institution has rocked the markets and required the tax payer to bale out depositors.

Whether one actually trusts politicians, even from one's own side, is a moot point. Up to a point one has to, as otherwise there can be no democratic process, but we all know of countless cases of broken promises.

We have to trust the police to keep our society safe, and yet how often do we hear of miscarriages of justice resulting from deliberate lies on the part of police?

Some years ago there was a case decided by the House of Lords, in which it was held that a doctor had no duty to advise his patient of the consequences of surgery, because it would breach the traditional doctor/patient relationship. In other words, you should trust your doctor implicitly.

We have to trust suppliers not to sell us faulty goods. Employers have to trust their employees are serving the best interests of the organisation, while employees have to trust they will be adequately rewarded and fairly treated.

No matter what laws are in place to protect the citizen, whether laws on negligence, contract, food hygiene, employment, banking protection, those who wish to trample on that fragile plant called trust, proliferate.

Why is this? Is there a common feature among those who breach trust? Although there is no simple answer to a complex question, it is possible to identify a number of causes.

Obviously, greed and the urge to amass money is a major factor. Fear that the other person will not keep his side of the bargain is also a strong motivator, but in many cases the key objective is merely power. Where power is not achieved by violent means, it is often acquired by politician-style promises of doing good, but as Lord Acton said: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely".

□ Ernest David

... Viewpoint ...

City shambles

In the 1960s Sir William Holford's 'modern' Paternoster Square, replaced the half-remembered World War II bomb sites with a typical windswept, office-box surrounded, desultory car park cover which masqueraded as a fitting neighbour for Wren's Renaissance masterpiece, St Paul's Cathedral. To this day a pub, Burger King and subterranean public lavatory remain the square's main tourist attractions.

A decade ago developers of this superb site attempted to con the public into accepting massively out of scale neo-classical, loggia-centred office blocks which left a few poor souls shopping underground and the rest working open plan behind ridiculous façades. Some divine power apparently took pity on poor Londoners and decreed that – in spite of a hugely expensive PR effort, glossy brochure, exhibition – the project's underlying un-

worthiness as prime cityscape could not be concealed.

That brings us up to date. A new scheme for the redevelopment of Paternoster Square has just hit the news sheets. It bears the name of Sir William Whitefield (and six other less than household names) and from the press pictures has the appearance – yes you are ahead of me – of a 1960s pastiche development with some added classical features to keep Prince Charles content!

A conglomeration of offices, shops, restaurants and cafés centres on another square, now lowered to a less intimidating street level. However, should the scheme ever be realised, the area will remain dead every evening and night; not one flat, house or other living establishment to spark Ludgate Hill into life is included. Back to the drawing board – please.

□ Ronald Channing

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Afternoon entertainment programme –

JANUARY 1998

Thur 1 Closed
Sun 4 Debbie O'Brien, piano
Mon 5 Amanda Palmer, opera
Tue 6 Aids for the elderly, courtesy of Keep Able Ltd
Wed 7 Joanna McDonald, soprano
Thur 8 Katinka Seiner & Malcolm Cottle, piano with Lazslo Easton, violin
Sun 11 Judy Magnus & Gillian Sonin, piano duo
Mon 12 Ian Adams sings
Tue 13 Geoffrey Strum & Helen Blake
Wed 14 Valerie Hewitt, soprano & Anne Berryman, piano
Thur 15 Tina Birkeland, soprano & Phillip Mountford piano
Sun 18 Rachel Taite, soprano,

John Taylor, baritone & Charlotte Ellis, piano
Mon 19 Louise Merrett, soprano & Margaret Marinkovic piano
Tue 20 Musical Memories, Yacov Paul
Wed 21 Luncheon Club (Day Centre open)
Thur 22 Natalie Box, violin & Geoffrey Whitworth, piano
Sun 25 Mark Rosen, baritone & Daphne Lewis, piano
Mon 26 Nikki van der Zyl & Daphne Lewis, piano
Tue 27 Stefani Pleasance, soprano & Angus Cunningham, piano
Wed 28 Sue Kennett, soprano & Paul Webster, piano
Thur 29 Elizabeth Ward, soprano & Robert Jeffrey, tenor

February

Sun 1 Melanie Mehta, soprano & Jean Brown, piano

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Philip. Gustav Philip. Together with my family I mourn the loss of my dear Gustl, died 14 November 1997, now at peace, Rita.

Power (Kozuszek). Beila Power born 30.9.08 in Poland, died 14.11.97 in Bournemouth after a long illness. Deeply mourned by her daughter Leonora and her granddaughters Joely and Justine and all her family in Israel.

Roberts (Rosenstern). Vernon Oscar Roberts of Northampton died peacefully on November 21st after a short illness. Husband of the late Hilde. Will be sadly missed by his daughters Susan and Marion and their families. No flowers by request, donations and all enquiries c/o A Abbott & Sons, Funeral Directors, Bedford Road, Rushden, Northants NN10 OLZ. Tel: 01933 312142.

Tryger (formerly Herman Trieger). Harry Tryger died at the age of 93 in Prestwich, Manchester. He joined the Pioneer Corps in January 1940.

Wharton. Dr Alfred D Wharton, after a courageous fight against illness, passed away on 10 November 1997. Very much loved and missed by wife Ruth, children Carole, Frank and Geoffrey, relatives and friends.

CLASSIFIED Accommodation

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Personal

Hermann Sinsheimer. Wer weiss noch von dem Autor, gest. 1950 in London? Arbeite an Gedächtnisartikel. Reinfrank, PEN Club, 10 Pattison Road, London NW2. Tel: 0181 986 9235.

Miscellaneous

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Societies

Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners. Please contact Peter Sinclair 0181 882 1638 for information.

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AJR GROUP CONTACTS

S. London: Ken Ambrose
0181 852 0262
Midlands: Edgar Glazer
0121 777 6537
North: Werner Lachs
0161 773 4091
Leeds HSFA: Heinz Skyte
0113 268 5739

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Art Notes

Making and Meaning; Holbein's **Ambassadors**. The 500th anniversary of Holbein's birth is marked by an instructive exhibition at the National Gallery, the centrepiece of which is his masterly double portrait, with its strangely distorted skull and other intriguing elements. By bringing together many superb paintings and drawings by Holbein on loan from major European collections, the exhibition illuminates the social and political scene of England and France in the sixteenth century. Until February 1.

Also at the National Gallery until January 18 is **Hogarth's Marriage-à-la-Mode** which concentrates on the six paintings which together tell the story, half-comedy, half-tragedy, about money, folly, disease and death. The accompanying related prints reveal Hogarth's talents as an engraver, which helped to make him so highly popular among the masses.

The Circus and Art, at the Boundary Gallery until January 17, reflects the fascination that artists have had with the glamour and vitality of the circus. Morris Kestelman, Jacqueline Morreau, Gillian Kogan and Jacob Jugashvili contribute paintings and works on paper that make an immediate appeal. Scotland's best-

known portrait painter, **Sir Henry Raeburn** (1756-1823), is the subject of a major international loan exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery until January 18. Included are some of the artist's finest paintings.



The Ambassadors, Hans Holbein, 1533. Special exhibition at the National Gallery.

Carl and Karin Larsson: Creators of the Swedish Style is at the Victoria and Albert Museum until January 18. The show underscores the impact their work has had on design the world over. More than 300 exhibits, including photographs, furniture, watercolours and textiles illustrate the imaginative Larsson style.

□ *Barry Fealdman*

SB's Column

Tel Aviv-Vienna. A visit by the *Jiddische Theater* to the small auditorium of the 'Josefstadt' in November aroused unexpected interest. The visitors performed Ilja Ehrenburg's *Leiserke Roitschwanz*, a tragicomedy about assimilation, and *Josbe Kalb* by Joshua Singer. The Polish-born director of the theatre, Shmuel Atamon, who emigrated to Israel in 1948 also acts with 'Habima' and has many film credits.

Stephen Sondheim, contemporary America's 'Mr Music', has provided the world with successful stage musicals since his 1957 debut (he wrote the lyrics for *West Side Story*). Most of his work - *Company*, *Follies*, *A Little Light Music* was also

produced in Europe. His latest show *Into the Woods* is soon to make the rounds of the continent.

Haider - the next Chancellor? The author Eric Sanders who recently visited Austria and interviewed observers of the political scene will speak about this subject at the Anglo-Austrian Society in London on January 29th.

Obituary. Käthe Gold who died in Vienna, aged 90, had started acting in child parts in 1914. In the course of a very long acting career she played in 1930s Berlin under Gründgens. Later, taking up residence in Vienna she joined the 'Burg' ensemble and appeared as Ophelia, Gretchen etc. She was also an ideal interpreter of modern playwrights like Miller, Tennessee Williams and Eugene O'Neill □

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- JANUARY 1998**

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Mon 5 **Hebrew Calligraphy for Adults:** Morris Bryer, artist & calligrapher. Jewish Museum Camden Town, £5, 2pm

Wed 7- **'Bums on Seats' by**
11 **Michael Snelgrove:** STARS Theatre Company, The Bull Theatre, 68 High Street, Barnet. Wed-Sun 8pm & Sun at 5pm, £6. Box Office: 0181 449 0048

Sun 11 **Leeds HSFA:** AGM & Social, Queenshill Day Centre, 2.30pm

Sun 11- **Exhibition of Hochschule**
18 **Manuscripts & Books:** Leo Baeck College & AJR, Sternberg Centre. Sun-Thurs, 11am-4pm

Sun 11- **Reconstruction of Jewish**
12 **Life After WWII:** Conference. Contact Wiener Library, Reg. Fee £15

Mon 12 **Dr Anthony Grenville,** London University Centre for German & Austrian Exile Studies: Anna Seghers - two exile works: *Das siebte Kreuz* & *Der Ausflug der toten Mädchen* (in English). Club 43, 8pm

Thur 15 **Pam Schweitzer** **Reminiscences:** Founder of Age Exchange Theatre. South London AJR, Lily Montagu Hall, Prentis Road Synagogue, 2pm

Sun 18 **Legacy, a play by Shauna Kantor:** Cockpit Theatre, London NW8, £15, 2.30pm. Box Office: 0171 431 0837

Mon 19 **Karel Szymanowski, influences on the composer's work:** Stefan Dreja BA. Club 43, 8pm

Tue 20 **East End Timber & Woodturning Trades 1860-1910:** Bryan Diamond, Jewish Museum Finchley, £2, 8pm

Mon 26 **Prof Dr Lothar Kettenacker, Deputy Director German Historical Institute:** British fears of a German dominated

Europe. The legacy of WWII. Club 43, 8pm

Sat 31 **The Golem, a play by Peter Wolf:** Special AJR performance & discussion, Polyglot Theatre Company, Bridewell Theatre, Ludgate Circus, EC4, 7.30pm, £6. Call 0171 936 3456

February:

Sun 1 **Jewish Life in Berlin after Auschwitz:** Ronald Golz, Belsize Square Synagogue, £3, 3pm

Tue 3 **JACS at Belsize Square Synagogue** begins its 1998 programme

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

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

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

Jewish Museum, Camden Town, 129/131 Albert Street, NW1 7NB. Tel: 0171 284 1997, and at Sternberg Centre

Sternberg Centre for Judaism/ Jewish Museum, Finchley, 80 East End Road, N3 2SY. Tel: 0181 346 2288

South London AJR. Ken Ambrose 0181 852 0262

SEARCH NOTICES

Lesser, Weiss & Stevens. KVG Moore of the 5th Kings No.2 'T' Force OCA is looking for S/Sgt Lesser (German), Sgt 'Ossie' Weiss (German) and L/Cpl Stevens (possibly Austrian), who served as interpreters in Germany from 1945-48. Please contact Henry Morris, AJEX House, East Bank, London N16 5RT. Tel: 0181 800 2844.

Elli Grossmann, originally from Vienna, married a British soldier in Israel and moved to Britain. Erich Schwarz (now Eric Sanders) would very much like to make contact with her. Please write to 117 Wendell Road, London W12 9SD. Tel. & Fax: 0181 743 7966.

Former Breslau residents who may be interested in meeting old friends and acquaintances please write to Vera Bass, c/o AJR Information Box 1240, to arrange a possible reunion in London in Spring 1998.

Holocaust Victims' Insurance Policies. Did you or a relative take out an insurance policy anywhere in Europe before or during the Second World War? Have you or a relative ever tried to reclaim

an insurance policy such as life, dowry or property insurance and have been turned down? Do you have any recollections of insurance coverage during this period including families in which there were no survivors but who may have had some insurance cover? **The Holocaust Educational Trust** is writing a history on Holocaust victims' unclaimed insurance policies and would like to hear any personal experiences. Please contact Dr Daniel Summerfield, HET, BCM Box 7892, London WC1N 3XX. Tel: 0171 222 6822.

Frankfurt study. Monica Kingreen wishes to hear from people with knowledge of the Jewish community who lived in the area north of Frankfurt for a planned book. Please write c/o Synagogenstrasse 18 D-61130 Windecken.

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Fateful Fatima

At the time of writing, aftershocks in the devastated earthquake zone of Central Italy are prompting fears of an even bigger imminent catastrophe. Such fears, underscored by the approaching millennium, have made many inhabitants of Umbria turn back to consult the dire predictions in the writings of Nostradamus and the 'three secrets of Fatima'.

The secrets of Fatima were allegedly revealed by the Virgin Mary in 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution, to three Portuguese peasant girls, herding sheep, who communicated them to the Pope in Rome. Although the predictions vouchsafed to the three shepherdesses have been locked away in the vaults of the Vatican ever since, their secrecy has been gradually eroded. The first generally known prediction, a hellish vision of 'charred bodies in an ocean of fire' has been interpreted as presaging World War

Two. The second states 'Russia will spread her errors through the world causing wars and persecution, but ultimate disaster can be averted if she reconverts to Christianity'.

We know the text of the second 'secret' prediction in such detail because the Milanese Cardinal, Ildefonso Schuster, actually disclosed it to the world in 1942. The timing was significant. In that year Italian troops were taking heavy casualties on the Eastern Front, where Mussolini had sent them at Hitler's request. For a Catholic prelate to stress the 'errors of Russia' in 1942 implied that the Church endorsed Operation Barbarossa, Hitler's unimaginably bloody campaign to wipe out the Soviet Union and turn Slavic Eastern Europe into a huge German slave empire.

The pretext for that attack, which Stalin had gone to extremes of appeasement to avert, was the threat Bolshevism posed to European civilisation. This perceived threat was immensely useful to the Nazis. Not only did it help entice the Catholic Church into the Fascist camp, it also made

conservative-minded writers – T S Eliot in England, Henry de Montherlant in France, Ernst Jünger in Germany – sympathetic to rightwing thought.

In reality the Bolshevik bogey had been inflated out of all proportion in the two decades since the October Revolution. Lenin's attempt to spread communism beyond the Soviet borders had ended in failure in Munich and Budapest in 1919, and on the banks of the Vistula in 1920. What followed were 'serial' debacles of the Left in Italy (1922) Germany (1933) Austria (1934) and Spain (1936). Thus Cardinal Schuster was being blatantly partisan in favour of the Axis powers when he published the Fatima warning about Russia 'spreading her errors through the world' at that crucial point in the war before its outcome was finally decided.

After this revelation of the second secret of Fatima it is a moot point if anybody outside earthquake-prone Umbria really needs to have the third secret revealed to them. □ RG

A new production of The Golem

According to legend, in sixteenth century Prague, Rabbi Judah Löw created the *Golem*, an artificial monster, in order to protect his community from racial hatred. But the *Golem* spiralled out of control and the Rabbi had to turn him back into the clay from which he sprang.

Polyglot Theatre Company's new production retells the famous Jewish myth. Peter Wolf's compelling dramatisation chronicles the death of faith and the birth of humanity through the eternal struggle of a good man born in an evil time □

The Golem is at the Bridewell Theatre, Bride Lane, Ludgate Circus from January 27th to February 21st, Tuesdays to Saturdays at 7.30pm and Sundays at 3.30pm. Bookings £9 (£6 concs.) at the theatre box office: 0171 936 3456. **Special AJR Evening and discussion with the producer and cast on Saturday 31 January at 7.30pm.**

Paradox of Jewish life in Germany

It is difficult not to question how any Jews could make their homes in Germany after the war. Ronald Golz,

who was born in London the son of refugees, tackles this question in a talk to be given at Belsize Square Synagogue.

Ronald Golz spent his formative years in Stanmore, but in 1961 as a teenager went with his parents who returned to live in Germany. He responded to the perceived paradoxes of his position by non-participation. While the Six-Day War strengthened his Jewish identity, the nascent student movement revealed the new generation's condemnation of the Third Reich and their parents' role in it. □ RDC

Ronald Golz speaks on 'Jewish Life in Berlin After Auschwitz' at Belsize Square Synagogue on Sunday 1st February 1998 at 3pm. £3 (£2.50 in advance from synagogue).

Germany's Enid Blyton

Else Ury, of *Nesthäkchen* fame, had been established as the country's most popular children's writer by a poll in 1928. Between 1900 and the Nazi accession to power Ury produced a grand total of thirty-nine books. In 1935 she was expelled from the *Reichsschrifttumskammer*. In 1938 she visited her nephew Ernest Heyman in London, but returned to Berlin to care for her elderly mother. Ury died at Auschwitz in January 1943.

In postwar Germany *Nesthäkchen* enjoyed renewed popularity both in print and on television. To commemorate the 120th anniversary of Ury's birth two exhibitions opened concurrently – at the Haus der Wannsee Konferenz, and the Heimatmuseum, Charlottenburg – in November 1997. Among the exhibits was the suitcase with which the writer had undertaken her final journey (and which a group of secondary-school pupils had discovered on a study visit to Auschwitz). □ RG

50 YEARS AGO

BIRTH OF THE JEWISH STATE

The decision of the United Nations Assembly to divide Palestine into two separate independent states does not seem to have put a definite end to the protracted struggle over the political future of the Holy Land. On the contrary, the struggle may now enter its decisive stage.

But from the Jewish point of view the decision of Flushing Meadow is an everlasting landmark in Jewish history. It means the official recognition of the legitimate right of a Jewish community on ancient Jewish soil to free national life in its own state.

The UN decision has created a new status for the Jews, a natural refugium of persecuted Jews all over the world. By taking in immediately some 150,000 Jews from the D.P. Camps the Jewish Agency hopes to render more favourable the present composition of the population which would be 538,000 Jews and 402,000 Arabs in the 'Jewish State' □

AJR Information, January 1948

Jewish surnames

In his flippant piece *The Romance of Jewish Surnames* the Editor tried – *pace* his quote ‘Goldfisch, Karpf and Wal-fisch could populate a whole aquarium’ – to show the funny side of a serious matter in Jewish history.

Joseph II was, for all his faults, far advanced for his time and the conditions in his empire. In order to modernise and unify the administration, he tried to introduce many changes in his territories. Most of them backfired and had to be cancelled. Only some remained, among them the abolition of Jewish ghettos. That was the time of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. With all their other troubles, the Imperial administration carried on. Latin was abolished as the official language, Catholic priests lost some of their power, and village elders and town mayors took their place. As long as the Jews lived inside the ghetto they were under the direct jurisdiction of King, Duke or Emperor, with their local rabbi as contact to the government. Under those conditions most Jews used only patronymics and only very few families, mostly recent arrivals, had surnames

relating to places of origin or to special and uncommon trades. After the exit from the ghettos, for reasons of taxation, military service and higher education, they had to be given surnames.

Today, with IBM computers, the Israeli Home Office has trouble with a few thousand Ethiopian immigrants. Can one imagine the poor town notary daily dispensing hundreds of names in villages surrounding a place like Lemberg? Probably for a small consideration one could choose a better sounding name. For example: Rosen, with all the derivations like Rosenstengel, Rosenblatt etc, has a Hebrew meaning and root. Rosen in Hebrew is a noble. For the rest there were always Schwarz, Weiss, Roth, etc. After the Holocaust, when most of those typical Central European names were wiped out, some of the survivors were very anxious to safeguard the remaining family names. I remember the bitter feelings aroused when Mr David Gruen (who called himself Ben-Gurion), out of exaggerated nationalism, demanded that every officer cadet adopt a Hebrew-sounding surname. I was one of those.

Under those circumstances, a shallow joke in this matter is in bad taste.

□ Fedor Schon

Cooking with Gretel Beer



One of the simplest supper dishes ever – perfect for supper on a tray. I find Marks & Spencer's Crusty Rolls are best for this recipe, but soft rolls can also be used, only they take a little longer for the initial browning in the oven.

Cheese Puffs

2 eggs
2oz (60g) butter
1½oz plain flour (40g)
¼ pint (140ml) milk
2½oz (70g) grated Cheddar or Cheshire cheese

salt and pepper
pinch powdered mace
4 crusty rolls
butter for the rolls

Preheat the oven to Gas Mark 7, 425°F, 220°C. Separate egg yolks and whites. Melt the butter in a saucepan, stir in the flour. Gradually add the milk and cook until the sauce has thickened. Add cheese, salt, pepper and mace. Remove from the heat and beat in the egg yolks, one by one. Set aside to cool.

While the sauce is cooling, halve the rolls and scoop out all the soft inside – use it for breadcrumbs later on. Prick the resulting shells lightly with a fork, spread the insides with butter and set them on a baking sheet. Put the shells into the oven for a minute or two – the insides should just be tinged with colour.

Whisk the eggwhites until stiff and fold into the cheese sauce. Pile the mixture into the shells and put them back into the oven for about 5-6 minutes. They will look rather spectacular – and they will taste every bit as good as they look – moist and still slightly runny inside, with the crisp shells making a perfect contrast □

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Obituary

Stefan Lorant

Stefan Lorant, the creator and editor of Britain's first and most influential pictorial magazine, has died at the age of 96.

Picture Post was launched in October 1938, printing bold, black-and-white photographs illustrating the daily lives of ordinary people, images hardened into history during the Post's heyday during World War II.

Budapest-born Lorant first earned his living accompanying silent movies on the violin, but soon moved on to still and ciné photography. In 1925 he edited Germany's new-style *Das Magazin* followed by five years editing the *Münchener Illustrierte Presse* which ended in 1933 when he was imprisoned for six months by the Nazis.

Finding asylum in the UK, he published *I Was Hitler's Prisoner* and created the innovative pocket magazine *Lilliput*. His major contribution to British life, *Picture Post*, (financed by Edward Hulton) reached a circulation of 1.7 million! He used his personal influence to warn of the dangers from Germany, but Churchill alone was sympathetic.

Paradoxically, on returning from the USA in 1939 from working on an edition devoted to Britain's potential ally, he was classified as an enemy alien and had his car and cycle confiscated. Disillusioned, he left for Massachusetts to begin a new career in a similar genre there, returning to Britain only once, in 1990, to accept an honorary doctorate from Bradford University. □ RDC

Joseph Dollinger

Joseph Dollinger, who has died aged 90, spent his life in four different countries and followed half a dozen different callings. Born in Austrian Galicia, he lived in Weimar Germany till his early twenties; and in Belgium during his late twenties; the rest of his years were spent in Britain.

Of Chassidic background, he was apprenticed to the textile trade, but later earned a living as a diamond cutter; through all this time he pursued musical studies. His successful debut as a professional singer in Düsseldorf coincided with Hitler's advent to power and he left for Belgium. In Antwerp he was chazan at

the Holländische Synagoge and also sang in the Richard Strauss opera *Salome* under the composer's own baton.

Dollinger came to London in 1939, and was engaged as chazan at the Western Synagogue. When it was destroyed in an air raid, he joined ENSA and entertained the troops around the country. Through ENSA he also met his wife.

Later he appeared in the West End, most notably in *The Lisbon Story* but, despite his splendid voice, failed to carve out a showbiz career.

The early postwar years saw him manufacturing handbags, but from 1956 he was chazan at Belsize Square Synagogue, retiring twenty-one years later, at the age of seventy. □ RG

Else Goldschmidt

Else Goldschmidt, who has died aged 88, joined AJR, together with her husband Robert, on arriving in England from South Africa in 1961.

Born in Bad Koenigstein (Taunus) she had trained as a nursery school teacher and married in 1932. With one young daughter, the couple emigrated to South Africa in 1936 where they had another daughter. They were a close and happy family and made many friends. In England they again managed to settle in among family and friends. Tragically, Robert died in Egypt during a holiday, which was a terrible blow to Else. But she managed to carry on and kept busy doing social work as a much-appreciated volunteer since its opening, at our Day Centre. She arranged Bridge tables and other games, until illness and failing eyesight prevented her from continuing.

Late in life she found a companion through the Day Centre. It was a bonus of happiness against all expectations.

Else was a dear friend to me since we all came to England from South Africa. I shall miss her very much. □ Marianne Herz

Croatian criticism

Israel's establishment of diplomatic relations with Croatia has brought criticism from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Jerusalem, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*. Croatia's wartime Fascist Ustashi murdered hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and gypsies. The present government continues to glorify them and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman cast doubt on the events of the Holocaust in a book he wrote □

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NEWSROUND

Token payment

Riva Shefer of Riga, Latvia, 75, was the first recipient of money from the Swiss Humanitarian Fund (£235) set up by Swiss banks and businesses to assuage criticism of profitable war-time laundering of stolen gold for the Nazi régime. It intends to provide 27,000 eligible Holocaust survivors with some £600 (\$1,000) each.

Mrs Shefer, who hid in cellars and forests but lost most of her family, is one of only 80 Holocaust survivors remaining in Latvia. Most of Latvia's 50,000 Jews were either shot in nearby forests or killed in Salaspils concentration camp.

Greece memorial

A bronze memorial depicting writhing figures was unveiled by the President of Greece to 56,000 Holocaust victims in Salonika, home of a flourishing centuries-old Jewish community, on the spot where they were gathered by the Germans for transportation. Adolf Eichmann supervised the most complete destruction of a European Jewish community. Fewer than 2,000 survived and only 40 live in Salonika today.

Warsaw tribute

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook laid a floral tribute to the deportees of the Warsaw Ghetto at the Umschlagplatz memorial site where deportees were crammed into wagons and transported to the Treblinka death camp. He pledged to seek restitution for the ageing survivors.

Delayed account

The Department of Trade's inquiry into an estimated present-value £700 million held in British banks by Jews on the outbreak of war and confiscated as enemy funds, failed to be published prior to the London conference on Nazi gold. The Holocaust Educational Trust reported that the funds had been used for compensating British companies for trading losses.

Out in the cold

An open letter to Chancellor Helmut Kohl from 92 members of the Knesset protested that whereas Nazi war criminals received pensions, 100,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors in Eastern Europe had received no compensation. The German Parliament has only now closed the loophole which benefited Nazi war criminals since the 1950s.

□ RDC

He stooped to conquer

Imagine the scenario: Mike Tyson, ex-world champion, ear-chewer and convicted rapist, departs this life, and the journalist writing his obituary cites him alongside Martin Luther King as twin exemplars of the Black – or, in PC language – Afro-American spirit.

Something not totally dissimilar happened recently, when ex-*Times* editor William Rees-Mogg bracketed Isaiah Berlin with James Goldsmith as admirable representatives of the 'Jewish spirit'.

Poor Isaiah Berlin! It must have been the crowning posthumous insult to this peerless humanist to be mentioned in the same breath as the moneyed swashbuckler James Goldsmith.

What (apart from paternal ancestry and financial acumen) was, in fact, Jewish about Sir James? Certainly not his much-vaunted love of family. Collecting half a dozen wives and/or mistresses, and siring diverse children, hardly demonstrates an attachment to family values as commonly understood. Nor, indeed, does the quip 'A man who marries his mistress creates a job vacancy' for which Sir James may well be best remembered. (Characteristically, in coining that *bon mot* he was plagiarising the French playwright Sacha Guitry).

But Sir James' serial adultery and plagiarism pale into insignificance beside his political free-booting. The disenchantment with politics which deters almost every third person in this country from voting, could only have been reinforced by the sight of a tycoon who fancied 'big bucks' would earn him influence, if not power.

And the UK Independence Party did, in fact, influence the result on 1 May, if only marginally. More importantly, it caused the Tories, fearful of being outflanked on the Right, to move in a rightward, Europhobic direction.

The 1980s saw the rise and brief efflorescence of the Social Democrat Party. But though, by 1990, the SDP was a corpse, its soul had transmigrated into the body of the Blairite Labour Party.

What happened to the shortlived UK Independence Party is both similar and different. It, too, is now a corpse with its soul speaking, Dybbuk-like, out of the mouth of Hague's Tory Party. The difference lies in the fact that the transmigrating soul of the SDP pushed Labour towards the centre, whereas the Goldsmithian dybbuk is pulling the Tories close to the edge.

For Rees-Mogg to compare his egregious buccaneer to the wise and gentle

Isaiah Berlin, therefore, comes close to desecrating the latter's grave.

□ Richard Grunberger

Hochschule für Wissenschaft des Judentums

The Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums was the centre for the study of Judaism and the liberal rabbinical seminary in Berlin. The institution opened in 1872, after attempts to establish a faculty for Judaica at a German university had failed, as an independent school for "the preservation, advancement, and dissemination of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*" (scientific study of Judaism).

From the outset the school served also as a training centre for rabbis and religious teachers, but its academic approach was reflected in the name Hochschule. In 1883, however, the government forced the school to change its title to *Lehranstalt*. From now on the institution was no longer a college but an institute. After World War I the name was restored to Hochschule, but the Nazis downgraded it again to *Lehranstalt* in 1934. Whatever the designation the institution was of a high academic level. The historian, Ismar Elbogen, joined the Hochschule in 1903 and stayed until 1938, Hanokh Albeck became research scholar in 1920 and was lecturer in Talmud from 1926 until 1936, Julius Guttman taught Jewish Philosophy from 1919 to 1934 and Leo Baeck began lecturing on midrashic literature in 1912.

They all published their major contributions to the scholarly study of Judaism as members of the faculty. During the Nazi period the *Lehranstalt*, under the leadership of Leo Baeck, was the centre of spiritual resistance against the oppression until it was forced to close in 1942. Its library met with the same fate as other Jewish libraries. In so far as books and manuscripts had not been smuggled out of the country, they were confiscated and (at least partly) stored in Offenbach in order to become part of "Die Bibliothek des neuen Deutschlands". What happened to the library after the war remains unclear. One of the former librarians of Leo Baeck College, the late Mrs Dorfler, discovered a small part of it in London; which was then bought for the Hochschule's successor Leo Baeck College. This residue is now kept as a separate section in the Library.

□ Dr Piet van Boxel