

AJR *Information*

Volume LIV No. 12
December 1999

£3 (to non-members)

King-sized burgher

Mayors of capital cities often send out messages that resonate beyond municipal boundaries. The antisemitic Burgomaster Lueger, darling of the Viennese, undermined Emperor Franz Joseph's humane notion of a Habsburg state that was home to all his subjects. Conversely, Jerusalem's Teddy Kollek inspired hope while Likud formed the national government. Nor is an anti-Blairite Mayor of London beyond the bounds of the possible. To Londoners pondering their choice we offer this obiter dictum from Ken Livingstone: 'What England did to the Irish only appears less brutal than what the Nazis did to the Jews because it was drawn out over eight centuries' □

The AJR wishes
all its members
a Happy
Chanukah

Looking back on 1999

As end-of-decade years go the current one compares in importance with 1989, which saw the collapse of the Berlin wall and the end of the Cold War. 1999 in its turn witnessed the expiry of the convention according to which a government's ill-treatment of its own subjects was viewed as legitimate exercise of national sovereignty.

Kosovo and East Timor (in their different ways) exemplify the cost of enforcing the startlingly new notion that universal human rights override national governments' scope for villainy within the territory under their jurisdiction. Decisive UN action in Timor has already had a salutary knock-on effect on Indonesia itself. By contrast NATO's earlier and precedent-setting Kosovo campaign has yet to trigger a corresponding eruption within Serbia proper.

Volatile South-East Europe and SE Asia are thus appreciably more becalmed – and civilised – areas than they were a year ago. The same, by and large, applies to the Middle East, where Ehud Barak's relaunch of his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin's policy has elicited positive Jordanian and Palestinian responses in the shape of a clampdown on Hamas. Although only self-deluding optimists would discount the possibility of future setbacks to the Oslo process, the Middle East, too, appears significantly less combustible than last December.

It is in Europe that newly emerging faultlines have revealed hitherto unsuspected fragilities. In the enviably prosperous heart of the continent the Austrian and the Swiss electorate have each propelled a dangerous right-wing demagogue to a position of power. While Haider operating inside an EU-member state maintains a shrewdly calculating silence on Jewish matters, Christoph Belcher in EU-shunning Switzerland has openly endorsed Holocaust denial (which constitutes a criminal offence under cur-

rent German legislation).

The Anglo-American complement to Holocaust denial is isolationist revisionism. This school of 'thought' contends that since Hitler had no hostile designs on Britain or America, Churchill and Roosevelt alike were warmongers who dragged their respective countries into a ruinous conflict in which no vital national interest was at stake.

In the UK isolationist revisionists like AN Wilson and Prof. J Charmley disseminate their toxin from the citadels of Canary Wharf and the groves of academe. Their US counterpart, Pat Buchanan, is considerably more upfront: he has taken to the hustings with his America-first message yet again. A past contender for the Republican nomination, who accuses Jews in public life of owing greater loyalty to Jerusalem than to Washington, Buchanan is currently manoeuvring to become presidential candidate of the Reform Party.

All in all, as we say goodbye to this last relatively benign decade of a uniquely horrible century we have much to be thankful for – but we must keep the unsleeping, ever-lurking monster of xenophobia always in our sights □



AJR Chairman, Andrew Kaufman, meets Osmond House residents enjoying their tea at the Home's official opening. (See page 7)

Profile

Founding father's dutiful daughter

Nowadays the term community service denotes a soft alternative to prison, but in focusing on Eva Trent, née Breslauer, we need to resurrect its original meaning. The ideal of communal service has been a Breslauer family tradition for three generations. Eva's grandfather and father alike were lawyers actively involved in Jewish matters.

In 1933, when the Nazi takeover spelt the end of Dr Walter Breslauer's legal practice, he became secretary of the Berlin Jewish community. He also moved 13-year-old Eva from her previous school to a Jewish one to shield her from government-decreed classroom antisemitism. In 1936 the family emigrated to London, where Eva enrolled at Hornsey School of Art.

At Hornsey she didn't quite blossom into an artist, but became a competent fashion designer. She found employment in the 'rag trade', later switching to war



Eva Trent

work. This consisted of helping to prepare meals for 450 staff and patients at University College Hospital in Gower Street. Henry Moore's Tube Shelterers still reminds her of the scenes she witnessed on her journeys to and from work in those days.

Dr Breslauer had meanwhile written a book on International Law of Private Inheritance and found part-time employment as a bookkeeper with the Jewish Board of Guardians. In addition he did something of really great moment as far as the refugee community was con-

cerned: together with several other emigrated communal activists he founded the Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain.

After the war Eva returned to the fashion trade and in 1948 she married a Viennese fellow refugee employed in the travel industry. Alas, their married life was dogged by tragedy from early on. Their first two children fell victim to the Tay-Sachs syndrome (a condition confined to Jews, just as Sickle Cell Anaemia is to Afro-Caribbeans). Subsequently they adopted a daughter, tragically fated to die of cancer in early middle age.

In 1965, feeling that her full-time presence was no longer required at home, Eva became a volunteer 'befriender' with Camden Council. Four years later AJR opened Eleanor Rathbone House and she joined the House Committee that liaised with the wardens, organised events and visited residents (Eva has kept up her weekly visits - with short intervals - for thirty years!)

Nowadays, approaching eighty, she also acts as a 'telephone befriender' for Jewish Care. Together with her husband she is still active in Amnesty International. Despite all the tragedies in their lives the couple have retained their *joie de vivre* □

Residential home's change of plan

Heinrich Stahl House, a residential and nursing home in north London built for and especially dedicated to the care of victims of Nazi persecution in their later years, is not to be replaced with a new development. This decision by the Otto Schiff Housing Association revises their previous plan, announced earlier this year, to build new accommodation in another location in preference to undertaking the renovation of the present building and the modernisation of its facilities.

The sale of Heinrich Stahl House, which stands on a valuable site on one of north London's most prestigious roads, is, however, to go ahead. OSHA's Council of Management has chosen to consolidate the Association's operations and redirect funds realised from the sale to complete the development of other homes in the group, repay loans and secure the future of the Association.

In the current situation, local authority funding for residents fails to cover even

basic care costs, any addition to maintain OSHA's necessarily high standards having to be met from the Association's own limited resources. OSHA also has to respond to the expectation that standards of accommodation and care offered by their residential and nursing homes will remain among the very best and stay ahead of rising national standards.

In reaching their decision, OSHA had also to take into account the inevitable decline in the numbers of those belonging to the refugee generation, as well as government legislation favouring the provision of support services for the long-term care of the elderly in their own homes.

OSHA's current refurbishment and maintenance programme for other homes in the group is due to be completed next year. Residents of Heinrich Stahl House and their families have been reassured by the chairman, Ashley Mitchell, that no-one will be asked to move to an alternative home without full consideration of the suitability of all the options. (Further enquiries may be directed to Tony Shepherd, OSHA Chief Executive, on 0181 731 7374). □ Ronald Channing

British POWs seek compensation

British POWs who worked as Nazi slave-labourers are bringing legal proceedings against the German government for unpaid wages. Lawyers working for some 3,000 surviving soldiers claim that a share of the £2.2bn compensation already offered to German, American and Soviet POWs should be awarded to the British in lieu of payment and personal injuries suffered. The current deal of £200 per worker is described by some British POWs as insulting.

JACKMAN SILVERMAN

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

26 Conduit Street, London W1R 9TA
Telephone: 0171 409 0771 Fax: 0171 493 8017

Profane and sacred

Remembrance Sunday confirmed the impression that year on year the number of people wearing poppies in their buttonholes diminishes. This is perhaps inevitable since most Britons alive today had not been born in 1945.

The fact that 'the past is another country' also needs to be taken into account when debating the merits or demerits of the proposed official Holocaust Remembrance Day (see Letters to the Editor, p6). Naturally the debate also takes place in the columns of the *Jewish Chronicle* where the well-known columnist Norman Lebrecht fired off a broadside headed 'Jack Straw can include me out of Holocaust Day'. The writer started off by lambasting the Home Secretary for inflating police recruitment figures and ordering brutal policing of the Chinese President's state visit. Later on in his piece Lebrecht predicted an aura of self-congratulation enveloping a British Holocaust Day and a Murdoch-style trivialisation of the event. He ended by slating Tony Blair for his Labour Party Conference speech demonising the 'Forces of Conservatism.'

What Lebrecht has done is reprehensible on two counts. For one he (mis)used the Holocaust Day debate to attack the Labour politicians who mooted the idea. Not to mix words, he has dragged a super-sensitive near-sacred matter down into the grubby arena of party politics. In the process he lets fly at such bogus targets as political correctness and multiculturalism.

Can he not conceive that even fallible politicians may be sincere in expressing their abhorrence of such monstrous atrocities as the Shoah? I am sure that this feeling of abhorrence fed into Tony Blair's (and incidentally Vaclav Havel's) unflinching stand over Kosovo - as well as into Jack Straw's disclosure of a German Jewish refugee grandmother.

So much for Lebrecht's unconscionable politicising of the Holocaust issue. On the issue itself we must take cognisance of the fact that a number of recent occurrences have played into the hands of Holocaust deniers. First there was Anne Frank's father's admission that he had tampered with his daughter's diary entries (touching on relations with her mother and her own sexual awakening). Then came the revelation that Benjamin Wilkomirski's *Fragments* was the fictitious

account of Maidanek death camp written by an emotionally disturbed Swiss non-Jew. And now we have the temporary closure of the *Crimes of the Wehrmacht* exhibition by its organisers because a small percentage of the photographs displayed have been found to depict Russian and not German atrocities.

With an ill wind rising in Austria and Switzerland to fill the sails of Holocaust deniers, the institution of a (hopefully Europe-wide) Remembrance Day would serve as a still sorely needed deterrent to the peddlers of racist poison.

The proposed Remembrance Day would remind the world that the Nazi Holocaust was not merely six million-fold murder but a crucial first step on the road towards abolishing what makes human beings human. Hitler once notoriously called conscience, like circumcision, a Jewish invention.

Holocaust Remembrance Day would not only constitute an act of piety towards millions of innocent victims of race mania; it might also make posterity aware that a world 'cleansed' of Jews would have been one bereft of conscience, natural justice and all finer feelings.

□ RG

GERMAN and ENGLISH BOOKS BOUGHT

Antiquarian, secondhand and modern books of quality always wanted.

We're long-standing advertisers here and leading buyers of books from AJR members.

Immediate response to your letter or phone call.

We pay good prices and come to collect.

Please contact:
Robert Hornung MA(Oxon)
2 Mount View, Ealing,
London W5 1PR
Telephone 0181-998 0546
(5pm to 9pm is best)



AJR

Tel: 0171-431 6161

NEWTONS

Leading Hampstead Solicitors

22 Fitzjohn's Avenue,
London NW3 5NB

- ★ All English legal work undertaken and German, Swiss & Austrian claims
- ★ German spoken
- ★ Home visits arranged

Tel: 0171 435 5351

Fax: 0171 435 8881

PARTNER

in long established English Solicitors (bi-lingual German) would be happy to assist clients with English, German and Austrian problems. Contact

Henry Ebner

Myers Ebner & Deaner
103 Shepherds Bush Road
London W6 7LP
Telephone 0171 602 4631

ALL LEGAL WORK
UNDERTAKEN

AUSTRIAN and GERMAN PENSIONS

PROPERTY RESTITUTION CLAIMS EAST GERMANY- BERLIN

On instructions our office will assist to deal with your applications and pursue the matter with the authorities.

For further information and appointment please contact:

ICS CLAIMS
146-154 Kilburn High Road
London NW6 4JD

Tel: 0171-328 7251 (Ext. 107)
Fax: 0171-624 5002

Reviews

Papal fallibility

John Cornwell, *HITLER'S POPE: THE SECRET HISTORY OF PIUS XII*. Viking, 1999, £20.

The battle over Pius XII and his failure to speak out over the Holocaust has recently been reignited by the proposal to beatify him. Cornwell started out with the intention of correcting the negative picture left by Hochhuth's play *The Deputy*, but having been given access to Vatican archives in good faith, he was left, as a Catholic, in 'a state of moral shock'. Pius XII was born Eugenio Pacelli, from a family that had served popes from Pius IX onwards as officials and lawyers. He himself became a canon lawyer and Vatican official, reaching prominence as nuncio in Munich and Berlin from 1917, cardinal secretary from 1929 to 1939 and pope until his death in 1958.

Cornwell sees a link between Pacelli's appeasement of Hitler and the Third Reich and his antisemitism or at least antipathy to Jews. Pacelli certainly rubbed up against entrenched Catholic views about Jewish obstinacy and blindness towards the true revelation. His grandfather advised Pius IX on the notorious case of Edgardo Mortara, a Jewish child kidnapped from his family, on the say-so of a maid, who claimed that he had been secretly baptized. In spite of worldwide pleas to return the child to his parents Pius IX refused and the boy later became a Catholic priest. From his time as nuncio in Munich, Cornwell prints, for the first time, a letter describing an interview between Pacelli's assistant Schioppa and Max Levien, the leader of the first Munich Soviet, in April 1919. It is full of the usual anti-Jewish diatribes, when Levien himself was not a Jew, though some other leading figures in the Munich soviet republics were. Pacelli probably shared the widespread view that Jews figured more than averagely in the revolutionary activities of the period; he may have thought the same of American capitalist democracy, whose materialism he disliked. But such prejudices, which unfortunately were only too common, did not prevent Pacelli from perceiving clearly that Nazism and Christianity were incompatible and that racial antisemitism was the main reason. Fighting National Socialism and antisemitism was, however, well down his list of priorities and this had little to

do with his feelings about Jews.

Pacelli's energies as nuncio in Germany were concentrated on negotiating concordats at Länder and Reich level. Concordats were means by which the papacy reinforced its control over the Church. Pacelli was firmly committed to the centralizing authoritarian view of the papacy as it developed after the first Vatican Council of 1870, which proclaimed the doctrine of papal infallibility. To him bolshevism was the original evil and he tended to lump SPD and KPD together as Marxists, as did most Germans of right-wing views. In the crucial period after the Nazi electoral breakthrough of September 1930 he became increasingly convinced that coalitions between the Centre party and the Nazis might have to be formed. If the Centre party had tamed the SPD then it could tame the NSDAP.

This was also the view of Ludwig Kaas, the first priest to become chairman of the Centre party and also a noted canon lawyer, between whom and Pacelli there was a close relationship. Pacelli and Kaas believed in authoritarian government and held political democracy in low regard. Once Hitler was chancellor Pacelli was eager to seize the chance of negotiating the long-desired Reich concordat, when the new chancellor, with total cynicism, offered it. Pacelli and Kaas pressed the Centre party to vote for the Enabling Act and later to dissolve itself. Rome encouraged the German Catholic bishops to scale down their previous stance on the incompatibility of Christianity and National Socialism. Pacelli did not have a high regard for the social Catholicism that was well entrenched in the Centre party and was prepared to sacrifice the party for the sake of the concordat. Thus the Vatican became the first foreign power to conclude a treaty with the Nazi regime.

Much of this might well have happened without Pacelli and the chances of the Centre party or the Catholic Church seriously inhibiting the establishment of the Hitler dictatorship were already low in March 1933. The courageous, but always limited, protests of Faulhaber and Galen notwithstanding, there was never a possibility of mounting a comprehensive Catholic resistance to Nazi anti-Jewish measures. In the early years of the Third Reich these measures were sufficiently gradual and Catholic anti-Jewish prejudices widespread enough to allow the

attitude 'let the Jews help themselves' to prevail. Pacelli did not want to force German Catholics to make an agonizing choice between their national and their religious allegiance and this was one of his prime motives in all his dealings with Hitler and the Third Reich. When Pius XI finally issued the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* in March 1937 it was late in the day. Even its carefully guarded language, which owed a lot to Pacelli's drafting, enraged Hitler and brought strong counter measures by the Gestapo.

The central issue in the controversy about Pius XII is his silence about the Holocaust. The Vatican had plenty of evidence about the murder of European Jewry, but the Pope clung with great determination to neutrality between the belligerents. He still feared Soviet communism more than Nazism and gave some support to the Ustasha régime in Croatia and Franco in Spain, because they were Catholic. His condemnation of the uniquely monstrous Nazi crimes against the Jews, which reached his doorstep with the deportation of the Jews of Rome in 1944, was always carefully hedged about and not explicit. There were considerations beyond those of politics and diplomacy in motivating Pius XII and Cornwell makes an important contribution in elucidating them. The pope had a mystical view of the Church as the body of Christ and an immensely elevated view of his office as the Vicar of Christ on earth. An ecumenical sense of solidarity with the followers of other faiths and denominations, whether they were Jews or Orthodox Serbs, let alone with humanity as a whole ranked below his responsibility to his own flock. The horrors and sufferings which surrounded him, to which he was not insensible, may well have accentuated this state of mind, with its implication of a Manichean gulf between darkness and light. It was a mentality which enabled his conscience to accept and even to make a virtue of the diplomatic circumlocutions and prevarications which he practised. At the end of his book, Cornwell decides that Pius XII was not a saintly exemplar for future generations, but a deeply flawed human being. This is perhaps slightly overstating it. Pacelli was personally a saintly man with great charisma, but as pope he was the wrong man for a time of extreme moral challenge. □ Edgar Feuchtwanger

Reviews (continued)

Young poet behind barbed wire

Frederick G Cohn, *A LUCID INTERVAL* Premier Fois Publications, London, 1999, £5.99.

The number of memoirs recounting the experiences of refugees from Hitler in British internment camps has grown considerably over the years since the Government's panic measures of summer 1940. Some, like Eugen Spier's *The Protecting Power* and Alfred Lomnitz's *Never Mind, Mr Lom*, have become minor classics of the genre.

This book, the fictionalised memoirs of a young refugee who was interned with his elder brother in Britain and Canada, follows to some extent in the mould of its forebears. But at the same time it provides new insights into conditions in the Canadian camps and adds a reflective dimension, by setting the internment ex-

perience in the context of the writer's present situation, as an elderly man looking back on a formative, if at times hugely frustrating, phase of his life. So we observe the course of the young Martin Rosen's life in internment, from Kempton Park racecourse via the notorious Wharf Mill temporary camp and the Isle of Man to distant Quebec, while also following his emotional development and his first hesitant steps as a writer.

The debates among the internees about the injustice of their treatment have often been rehearsed, not least in the letters column of the *AJR Information*. On the one hand, the sense of outrage at the internment of Jewish refugees from Nazism as 'enemy aliens' and despair at their confinement behind barbed wire by the country which had allegedly given them sanctuary. On the other, their awareness that a British camp was immeasurably preferable to its Continental

counterparts and their attempts to justify the British government's actions as understandable in time of extreme national emergency.

In the case of those like the Rosen brothers, who had reached Britain after a perilous flight from the invading Germans across Poland, a residual sense of obligation to the land of perceived safety preserved their respect for British justice and fair play, which they saw demonstrated by the parliamentary debates held on internment even as German bombs rained down on London. Interestingly, Rosen's fear that the French Canadians would have been only too happy to hand their Jewish prisoners over to the Nazis, an aspect of internment rarely mentioned, is supported by recent research showing that conservative-Catholic circles in Quebec gave refuge post-war to Nazi collaborators from occupied France.

□ Anthony Grenville

Lost Jewish community's heritage to be preserved by Polish MP and US agency

Andrzej Folwarczny, a member of Poland's Parliament and chairman of the Polish-Israeli Parliamentary group, has given his support to an imaginative project aimed at preserving and making new use of the former *Beth Tabara* and prayer hall at the Jewish cemetery in Gliwice (formerly Gleiwitz) in Upper Silesia, by converting it into a concert hall and conference centre.

Today Gliwice has only a very small Jewish community, a branch of that in Katowice (Kattowitz), none of whom were members of the pre-war Gleiwitz community. Among the several hundred members of the original Jewish community, who were murdered in Auschwitz in 1942 and 1943, were the parents-in-law and uncle of former AJR chairman, Max Kochmann who is lending his support to the project together with former Gliwice residents and their children now living in the UK.

The handsome prayer hall, built in the gothic revival style by a Viennese architect, was consecrated in 1903 and is one of the few remaining Jewish historical buildings in Poland to have survived the Nazi occupation intact. The renovation



Polish MP Andrzej Folwarczny who is leading efforts to restore the Gliwice prayer hall for use as a cultural centre.

and conversion project is being undertaken by the Forum Among Nations Foundation, established by Mr Folwarczny in Gliwice in 1998 to promote a climate of tolerance and friendly relations between peoples in Poland, with the co-sponsorship of the US Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, founded by Congress in 1985 to preserve cultural sites in Eastern and Central Europe of significance to US citizens.

The project will also make provision

for the permanent care and security of the Jewish cemetery where, it is hoped, that a memorial inscribed with the names of the town's Jewish citizens who perished in the Shoah will also be erected.

After the war people of many cultures settled and lived together in Gliwice. It is therefore appropriate that the project sets out to increase the interest of all the townspeople in their heritage and to educate their children in a common history. This includes that of the former Jewish community and the key role played by many of its members in the development of Gliwice as a leading industrial and trading centre.

As part of an exhibition to be established, Mr Forwarczny is anxious to obtain photographs, records and other documents of the Jewish community and of their families who lived there. Please write to Max Kochmann, c/o the AJR, if you can offer any such documentation or wish to have fuller details of the project.

□ Ronald Channing

Annely Juda Fine Art

23 Dering Street (off New Bond Street)
Tel: 0171-629 7578 Fax: 0171-491 2139

CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

Letters to the Editor



NOT AS BLACK AS HE WAS SHIRTED

Sir – You describe (November issue) Oswald Mosley as 'putative Gauleiter of German-occupied Britain'. Not initially, according to Himmler's plans. This role would have been given to Prof. Franz Six.

His was a case of voluntary self-demotion through ideological zeal, for Prof. Franz Six abandoned the Economics Faculty of Berlin University, of which he was dean, to become advisor to the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*) on scientific matters and chief of an *Einsatzgruppen* commando. Six was sent on a mission to collect archives from the Kremlin, but, failing to reach his destination, spent 25 days in Smolensk, tracing captured political commissars from among the Russian POWs, for execution. Postwar his plea that he remained 'always a scholar and never a policeman' did not save Prof. Six from a twenty-year sentence, which, in the changed political climate of the period, was commuted in 1951 to one of ten years. This meant freedom a year later.

London NW11

Gerald Fleming

SLAVEDRIVERS IN SUITS

Sir – I am most grateful to Rudy Kennedy and BBC2 for having brought to the attention of a wide viewing public the involvement of a totally unrepentant German industry in slave labour crimes. My variety of xenophobia (September editorial) is that the slave drivers in suits (October editorial) are still very much around and will, with their economic clout, shape the EU.

Ipswich, Suffolk

Frank Bright

KRISTALLNACHT COMMEMORATION

Sir – When the Germans celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Fall of the Wall, they had the tact to hold at least one meeting to commemorate the November Pogrom which falls on the same day.

I chanced on a broadcast of this meeting on "Sky". Practically everyone – Bush, Gorbachev, Joschka Fischer, etc. – was there.

One speaker, whose name I failed to catch revealed that German stonemasons had given freely of their time to repair recent damage at a Jewish cemetery and that Bundeswehr soldiers had acted as unpaid labourers and guards.

This surely merits the widest publicity among our members.

Shrewsbury, Shropshire

M Landau

IGNAZ BUBIS

Sir – Your editorial comments printed below my letter (November issue) were unreasonable and as far as I am concerned, unacceptable. I reiterate my objection to the phrases 'the child of *Ostjuden*', 'strong lad', 'astonishingly chose to settle in Frankfurt', which you saw fit to use in your obituary.

My point that Bubis' burial in Israel fitted into a religious Jewish tradition was borne out by the recent interment there of the late Chief Rabbi Jakobovits.

London NW8

Peter Galliner

Sir – I fully agree with Mr Galliner's letter in the November issue and am at a loss to understand your remarks about Churchill in the footnote. To my mind, neither you nor I would now be alive without Churchill's magnificent leadership during World War II.

Poole Kurt, Dorset

J Land

I wrote that Pat Buchanan's denunciation of Roosevelt as a warmonger was paralleled in Britain by Alan Clark's attacks on Churchill. What is puzzling – or objectionable – about that? Ed.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Sir – In the foreseeable future, none of us survivors will be left alive – so there will be no individual remembrance of the murdered six million.

It will become just a minor event in history, taught in schools and universities, but eventually almost forgotten.

A recognised Memorial Day would make the world acknowledge the unspeakable horrors we now remember on Yom Hashoah and would be a constant reminder of a time hopefully never forgotten or repeated.

Cheadle Hulme
Cheshire

Eva E Gillatt
(née Oppenheimer)

Sir – It is very important to commemorate the Holocaust. We have Trafalgar Day, Armistice Day etc. – so why not a day to remember and honour the innocent citizens who were brutally murdered. Gypsies, homosexuals, Jehova's Witnesses etc. also need to be remembered. But it has to be made clear that the Jews were the main sufferers.

Even though atrocities are still perpetrated all over the world the Holocaust was unique in the cold blooded industrialised extermination of the victims.

London SW16

Ruth Leggett

Sir – I believe Holocaust Remembrance day should be 9th May. On that day my father was liberated from Terezin and Europe was at peace for the first time in six years. (It is also Freedom Day in the Czech Republic). If we want a United Europe let's have a spring day so the survivors, the elderly, children and the disabled can attend any special commemoration.

Westcliff-on-Sea

Larry Lisner

MIGHT-HAVE-BEENS OF HISTORY

Sir – The assassination of Archduke Franz in 1914, was nothing more than releasing the safety catch. The German language, in a rare exception, has managed to outperform the versatility of English, by differentiating between *Anlass* and *Ursache*. Thus Gavrilo Princip's action was the former and emerging nationalism in the Balkans the latter.

Friedrich III's throat cancer was an irrelevancy of history.

London NW8

Erwin Brecher

Within the pseudo-constitutional framework of Bismarck's devising, the Kaiser enjoyed considerable power. The peacefully inclined Frederick III would not have indulged in his son's naval race with England – one of the root causes of the Great War. Ed.

NOT QUITE FORMULA ONE

Sir – Reviewing Ronald Harwood's *Quartet* (October issue) you charge the playwright with plagiarism and recourse to filthy language. As far as I know the sin of plagiarism was committed by some of the greatest writers and composers. After all they must find ideas somewhere and can't always be original. – As to filthy language, this seems to be almost obligatory in modern drama, I personally don't like it, but in this play it suits the

character Donald Sinden is portraying.

I enjoyed *Quartet* immensely for its clever dialogue, superb acting, never-ending surprises in the development of the characters and beautiful stage set. Theatregoers seem to agree with me, because it is well patronised. I know only of one case of someone walking out: an older person, who was not prepared to watch scenes set in an old people's home – probably too near the knuckle.

Northwood

M Herz

I WAS A TEENAGE XENOPHOBE

Sir – Sometime during the mid-1930s a new, obviously foreign, boy arrived at our gymnasium, in Vienna's First District. Our whole class, Jews and non-Jews alike, kept him at arm's length. He spoke incorrectly, heavily accented German and had an unpronounceable surname that lacked vowels. Instead of Lederhosen, the universal school uniform of that time, he wore some long woolly garment. He did not know the names of the members of the Austrian *Wunderteam*, the best footballers of Europe. Even worse, he could not ski! On sports afternoons he was not invited to participate. We neither knew nor cared where he lived and what his parents were doing. He only stayed a few terms and after he left, I started to realise his identity. A Polish Jew, he had left Germany for "safe" Vienna.

Oxted, Surrey

AW Freud

THANK YOU BRITAIN FUND

Sir – Anne Pisker (Letters June issue) is the erstwhile Anne Marie Pick, one of the stars of the swimming club Hakoah, Vienna. I am glad that age has not staled her to the extent of allowing sentimentality to cloud her judgement: if it had not been for the war we would all still be housemaids.

London E17

Mrs Edith Poulsen

SORELY NEEDED INDEX

Sir – Janet Langmaid's obituary states 'she had begun working on the – very much needed – comprehensive index of this journal'. Sadly, her work has come to an end at an early stage.

Are there any plans to continue with the project? You are on your fifty-fourth annual volume. There must be many institutions around the world who would welcome an index of *AJR Information* as an important research facility.

I suppose it comes down to resources. Surely a plan can be devised and the cost estimated. It is too much to hope that this letter will evoke a response from potential sponsors?

London NW3

Ludwig Berlin

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

Sir – The *Riesenrad* was first shown in London in 1895. I have always understood that Vienna's *Riesenrad* was made in England and then transported to Vienna.

Sutton, Surrey

Paul Bass

NO RESTING PLACE

Sir – Who does Jennifer Langer suppose should have been instrumental in preserving the remains of a Jewish cemetery near Breslau? The Poles who were forcibly resettled there as a result of the Yalta agreement? The Germans who were equally thrown out? Or the pitiful remnants of the Jews? As you may know, it is only through the heroic efforts of one Pole, M Lagiewski, that the Lohestrasse cemetery in Breslau has been preserved. When I wrote to *AJR Information* in early 1991 suggesting that we, the survivors of Breslau Jewry, should contribute to its upkeep there was deafening silence all around.

Arundel, West Sussex

F Goldberg

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Sir – The claim that children carry the Holocaust traumas of their parents has never been substantiated. The Second Generation Trust's insistence on perpetuating the victim status of the children of refugees is worrying. Giving people treatment in these circumstances is dangerous, especially if offered by unqualified people touting for patients.

London NW3

Herta Reik

BON MOTS

Sir – In answer to "How odd of God to choose the Jews", "Because it's the Goyim – who annoy 'im."

Kenton, Middx

Michael Scott

Bushey Heath, Herts

Barry Hyman

BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square, London N.W.3

Our communal hall is available for cultural and social functions.

Tel: 0171-794 3949

Osmond House reopens with highest standards of dementia care

Osmond House, a residential home in north London, which offers specialised care for members of the Jewish refugee community suffering from dementia, has been re-opened following the completion of a radical refurbishment and re-equipment programme. As part of the Otto Schiff Housing Association, the redevelopment project was made possible by the granting of an interest free loan from the AJR.

Standing on The Bishop's Avenue in Hampstead, close by Kenwood's park and gardens, the home's individual rooms with en-suite facilities for 49 residents, comfortable lounges and small dining areas, together with a high level of staffing, help to achieve a very high standard of care for all the residents. The home also has a new landscaped garden specially designed for wheelchair access.

Opened originally in 1962 to provide residential care for the increasing number of elderly members of the Jewish refugee community in Britain, some thirty years on it became evident that Osmond House required extensive renovation to bring it into line with today's much-improved standards. It is now recognised that people with dementia are far more comfortable living in smaller, more homely environments rather than in the large institutions which were popular in the 1960s.

Osmond House has been converted into a modern home which regards each resident as a valued member of the community and emphasises their abilities rather than their disabilities. Particular consideration is given to the emotional needs of those who experienced the trauma of Nazi persecution. The traditions of the Jewish faith, Shabbat and the High Holydays, are observed, while Jewish continental cuisine is prepared in the home's own kosher kitchen.

In a ceremony hosted by the Chairman of OSHA, Ashley Mitchell, Rabbi Rodney Mariner affixed the mezuzah to the entrance doorpost and local MP, Dr Rudi Vis, declared the home open in the presence of the Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Jeremy Davies, Chairman of the AJR, Andrew Kaufman and many other benefactors, as well as the home's staff who conducted visitors on tours to explore the facilities and meet the residents.

□ Ronald Channing

AJR Reports

HERMIONE CELEBRATES HER 100th BIRTHDAY

Vienna-born Hermione Weiss celebrated her hundredth birthday in fine style with her sister Irma, her brother Erwin and her many friends at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. While Erwin played the piano – he is a former Director of the Vienna Conservatoire – everyone joined in singing 'Happy Birthday' to Hermione who blew out the candles on her cake with only a little help.

The family left Vienna in 1938 and 1939, meeting up in England with the help of the Quakers. After the war Hermione ob-



Hermione Weiss (right) at her 100th birthday party at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.

tained a position in John Lewis, the department store in Oxford Street that had been largely destroyed in the bombing raids on London and was later rebuilt.

There she spent the rest of her working life in the accounts department before retiring.

Though Erwin had returned to Vienna to pursue a musical career after the war, he visited his sisters regularly and they retained their very close relationship, often enjoying concerts in the Albert Hall and the Festival Hall and continually adding to a large collection of classical recordings. Hermione and Irma still live independently together in the flat near Russell Square into which they moved in 1943 and from where they travel regularly to the AJR Day Centre once a week to enjoy good food and good company.

□ Ronald Channing

Movie mogul intrigues Luncheon Club members

Sir Sidney Samuelson, the film impresario, who was knighted in recognition of more than half a century's work as a leading figure in the British film industry, was the guest of the AJR Luncheon Club. He recalled how his grandparents, arriving as refugees from Prussia in the 1880s, opened a tobacconist's shop in Southport where his father was born. Sir Sidney's father later became one of the town's first film exhibitors and went on to pioneer the 'renting out' of film programmes throughout the country but, with the arrival of the 'talkies' in 1927, his business collapsed.

Leaving school in 1939, at the age of 14, Sir Sidney's first job was as a cinema projectionist. Following National Service in the RAF, after the war he began work as a cameraman, buying his own camera and renting it to other film-makers when he was short of work. With the start of commercial television in the 1950s, Sir Sidney's film camera rental business prospered, particularly as the BBC recognised the high maintenance standards he kept.

Unsurprisingly, Sir Sidney became further involved in film production as a 'behind the camera' man, befriending many of the leading producers and directors of the day. Once filming had started,



Sir Sidney Samuelson, addressing the AJR Luncheon Club

a film's star could afford to be more demanding and temperamental. He recalled that when making the fabulously successful *The Prince and The Showgirl* with Laurence Olivier, Marilyn Monroe could well decide not to learn her lines or just not to turn up!

It was Sir Sidney's view that, "Jewish people had so much to do with the creation of the film industry that they created Hollywood". All the great immigrant producers, from Louis B Mayer down, were immigrant Jews, though he couldn't help wondering why talent from the same roots had inexplicably failed to produce a world-class film industry in Israel, despite his own company doing all it could to help.

□ Ronald Channing

Brighton & Hove

Director of the Brighton Jewish Film Festival, Judy Ironside, was guest speaker at the Sarid group. She discussed the evolution of the festival and its importance for the local community and also spoke of her role as sponsorship raiser for this non-commercial event.

Her talk was illustrated with an extract from a German film, *Der Jude Levi*, about a rural community in the early 1930s and a moving French production, *Zachor* (Remembrance), which consisted entirely of photographs of Holocaust victims with English/Yiddish commentary.

A group discussion followed before Fausta Shelton on behalf of Sarid thanked the speaker.

□ Frank Goldberg

Pinner

Actress, Jenny Nemko, discussed her rocky path to a performing career. Achieving this ambition was made especially difficult as her father wanted her to become a doctor. She studied drama, married an actor and then retrained, to continue her career in broadcasting.

Robert Lowe, bass baritone with piano accompaniment, will perform a selection of classical music as a highlight of the Chanukah meeting on 2nd December. Latkas and doughnuts will be served. Pinner Synagogue.

□ Walter Weg

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

Sing-a-Long Tea Dance

with **Shelley Weldon**

15 Cleve Road, London NW6

SUNDAY 5TH DECEMBER 1999

3pm to 6pm

'Lighting of the 3rd Chanukah candle'

Tickets £6

Apply Sylvia, Renée or Susie

AJR 'Drop in' Advice Centre at the

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL

between 10am and 12 noon on the
following dates:

Wednesday	1	December
Thursday	9	December
Tuesday	14	December
Wednesday	22	December
Thursday	6	January

and every Thursday from
10am to 12 noon at:

AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Froggnal,
London NW3 6AL

No appointment is necessary, but please bring
along all relevant documents, such as Benefit
Books, letters, bills, etc.

Third Great Season

AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

on Wednesday 15th December 1999
at 15 Cleve Road, NW6 3RL
11.45 for 12.15pm

Guest speaker: **Maurice Soffer**
'Six Profiles of a Retiree'

Reservations £7.50 for everyone!
from Sylvia, Renée and Susie
Tel: 0171 328 0208

••• Viewpoint •••

Wall games

I can remember the Berlin wall within months of its erection in 1961, virtually overnight, to prevent the mass exodus of citizens of the relatively impoverished East German communist state still under the heel of its Soviet liberators. Most futile attempts to climb it to enter the affluent western sectors were thwarted by barbed wire, mines and well-armed East German police with vicious dogs. Spontaneous shrines to the victims – inevitably portrayed as freedom-lovers by the western media – evoked limited sympathy from me.

At the Brandenburg Gate, protected firmly behind the wall in the east and bordered with American warning signs, sentries returned your inquisitive gaze by peering back through powerful binoculars.

Though passage into the eastern sector was banned for West Germans, as a citizen of an occupying power I readily joined a tour bus passing through the incongruously named 'Checkpoint Charlie' with only millimetres to spare. Here, just a short while earlier, American and Russian tanks had faced each other, bringing the world closer to the brink of World War III than any of the protagonists were ever prepared to admit.

Through no-man's land was a city devoid of traffic, shop windows, or the bustle of commerce – literally a horse-and-cart economy. Where the shells of burned-out buildings still stood around a main square, in 1933 books by Jewish authors had been torn from the national library's shelves to be consumed on a Hitlerite bonfire. Nearby a grass mound covered the bunker in which the Führer met a much-belated demise. Monuments and mass graves, to Russian soldiers who lost their lives while razing Berlin to piles of rubble, were the focus of attention.

Many applauded the *de facto* division of the vanquished Germany into two separate states; it diminished the threat of a resurgence of German militarism. When, in 1989, the tacit withdrawal of guaranteed Soviet military intervention made the maintenance of the GDR and its Berlin wall unsustainable, German reunification was accomplished in the blink of an eye, even the Russians giving grudging public acceptance. The ensuing decade has seen Germany re-establish its capital city in Berlin and place itself once again at the epicentre of European affairs

□ Ronald Channing

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6

Mon., Tues. & Weds. 9.30am-3.30pm. Thurs. 9.30am-6.30pm. Suns. 2pm-6.30pm

Afternoon entertainment programme –
DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

Wed	1	Sylvia Eaves accompanied by Margaret Eaves, piano	Thur	16	Michael Goldthorpe, tenor accompanied by Harry Lester, piano
Thur	2	Alla Krauchuk, soprano, accompanied by Simone Townly, piano	Sun	19	David Rose, baritone, Jean Aird, mezzo, accompanied by Margaret Gibbs, piano
Sun	5	TEA DANCE – Live Music by Shelly Weldon	Mon	22	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Mon	6	KARD & GAMES KLUB	Tue	21	Joann Creed, recital and lecture
Tue	7	CHANUKAH with Jack Davidoff	Wed	22	Nikki van der Zyl, accompanied by Daphne Lewis, piano
Wed	8	Mark Rosen accompanied by Daphne Lewis, piano	Thur	23	Susan Wilde, soprano, accompanied by Chris Orland, piano
Thur	9	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton accompanied by Peter Gellhorn	Sun	26	CLOSED – BOXING DAY
Sun	12	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT	Mon	27	CLOSED
Mon	13	KARD & GAMES KLUB	Tue	28	CLOSED
Tue	14	OPERA POPS – accompanied by Margaret Gibbs, piano	Wed	29	CLOSED
Wed	15	LUNCHEON CLUB – Guest Speaker, Maurice Soffer	Thur	30	CLOSED
			Sun	2	CLOSED
			Mon	3	CLOSED

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birthdays

May. The AJR would like to extend their best wishes to Harry May on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

Renfield. On the occasion of a special birthday the friends of Ruth Renfield send her best wishes and thanks for unstinting and kind care of the residents of the Heinrich Stahl House.

Classified

Retired Bachelor living central London interested in home life, arts, theatre and travelling abroad seeks the companionship of a lady in similar circumstances and interests to share in all these activities on a 50/50 basis. Please reply to Box No. 1253.

Collector wants pre-war German military toys (Lineol) etc. 0181 440 1738.

Miscellaneous Services

Manicure & Pedicure in the comfort of your own home. Telephone 0181 343 0976.

Day Centre

Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. New Clothes for Sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans etc. Wednesday 1 and Thursday 16 December 9.45-11.45am.

Societies

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

AJR MEALS ON WHEELS

Variety of high quality kosher frozen food is available, ready made and delivered to your door via the AJR Meals on Wheels service.

Service available to members in North and North West London.

3-course meals cost £4.50 each plus £1 per delivery.

Phone Susie Kaufman on 0171-328 0208

for details and assessment interview.

Meals can also be collected from 15 Cleve Road, Mondays-Thursdays.

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household electrical work.

PHONE PAUL: 0181-200 3518

ALTERATIONS OF ANY KIND TO LADIES' FASHIONS

I also design and make children's clothes
West Hampstead area
0171-328 6571

Widely Published Author (English - German)

Requires part-time secretarial assistance. Shorthand and word processing.

Regents Park area

Please reply to box number 1254 or Fax 0207 587 8187 with CV and quoting hourly rate

Optician

Dr Howard Solomons BSc FBCO

Dental Surgeon

Dr H Alan Shields

&

Chiroprapist

Trevor Goldman SRC

by appointment at

The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6

Please make appointments with Sylvia Matus, Tel: 0171 328 0208

ADVERTISEMENT RATES

FAMILY EVENTS
First 15 words free of charge, £2.00 per 5 words thereafter.

CLASSIFIED, SEARCH NOTICES - £2.00 per five words.
BOX NUMBERS - £3.00 extra.

DISPLAY ADVERTS
per single column inch
65 mm (3 column page) £12.00
48mm (4 column page) £10.00

COPYDATE 5 weeks prior to publication

WHY NOT ADVERTISE IN AJR INFORMATION?

Please telephone the Advertisement Dept
0171-431 6161

TORRINGTON HOMES

Mrs Pringsheim, S.R.N.
MATRON

For Elderly, Retired and Convalescent

(Licensed by Borough of Barnet)

- ◆ Single and Double Rooms.
- ◆ H/C Basins and CH in all rooms.
- ◆ Gardens, TV and reading rooms.
- ◆ Nurse on duty 24 hours.
- ◆ Long and short term, including trial period if required.

From £300 per week
0181-445 1171 Office hours
0181-455 1335 other times
NORTH FINCHLEY

BELSIZE SQUARE APARTMENTS

24 BELSIZE SQUARE, NW3

Tel: 0171-794 4307 or
0171-435 2557

MODERN SELF-CATERING HOLIDAY ROOMS, RESIDENT HOUSEKEEPER
MODERATE TERMS
NEAR SWISS COTTAGE STATION

Residential Home

Clara Nehab House

(Leo Baeck Housing Association Ltd.)
13-19 Leaside Crescent NW11

All rooms with Shower W.C. and H/C Basins en-suite
Spacious Garden - Lounge & Dining Room - Lift
Near Shops and Public Transport
24 Hour Care - Physiotherapy
Long & short Term - Respite Care - Trial Periods

Enquiries: Josephine Woolf
Otto Schiff Housing Association
The Bishops Avenue N2 0BG
Phone: 0181-209 0022

OSMOND HOUSE

Volunteers are needed to man the reception desk in our newly refurbished Home in The Bishop's Avenue.

If you have a morning or afternoon free to work in lovely surroundings please contact Judy Marks on 0181 731 7360 who will be pleased to give you more information and have an informal chat.

AJR GROUP CONTACTS

Leeds HSFA:	Heinz Skyte 0113 268 5739
West Midlands: (Birmingham)	Edgar Glaser 0121 777 6537
North: (Manchester)	Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091
East Midlands (Nottingham)	Bob Norton 01159 212 494
Pinner: (HA Postal District)	Vera Gellman 0181 866 4833
S. London:	Ken Ambrose 0181 852 0262
Surrey:	Ernest Simon 01737 643 900
Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)	Fausta Shelton 01273 688 226
Wessex: (Bournemouth)	Ralph Dale 01202 762 270

FORTHCOMING EVENTS DECEMBER 1999

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Thu 2 | Lunchtime Recital:
Beethoven and Schubert on violin at the Sternberg Centre, 1.15pm £2 |
| Sun 5 | Richard Grunberger:
<i>The integration of Continental Jews into Anglo-Jewish Society.</i> Meretz UK, 8pm. £4/£2.50 |
| Mon 6 | Richard Grunberger:
<i>Art and Politics</i> , Club '43, 8pm. |
| Mon 6 | Zangwill and Woman's Suffrage: Meri-Jane Rochelson, University of Southampton, Highfield Campus, 6pm. Tel: 01703-592261 |
| Mon 6 | So Sing Already!
Musical performance at New End Theatre, 8pm. £8/10. Also Dec 12 & 13 |
| Tue 7 | Credit Where Credit is Due: <i>The Discoveries of August Kekulé, Archibald Scott Couper and Josef Loschmidt.</i> Alfred Bader, University of Sussex, 5.15pm. |
| Sun 12 | Family History Workshop: The Jewish Museum, Finchley, 4-6pm £2/3 |
| Mon 13 | E. Flesch: In the Wilds of Southern China, Club 43, 8pm. |
| Thur 16 | The New Millennium - Members' Expectations, plus entertainment, chaired by Ruth Leggett at the Kit Briscoe Suite, 11.30-3pm. |
| Mon 20 | Hans Seelig: Goethe Music. Seasonal refreshments follow, Club 43, 8pm. |
| Current: | |
| Until March 2000 | The Jewish Dickens: Israel Zangwill, The Jewish Museum, Camden (3 Nov-14 Mar) £3. |

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

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

Jewish Museum, Camden Town-129/131 Albert Street, NW1 7NB. Tel: 020 7284 1997 and 80 East End Road, Finchley N3 2SY. Tel: 0181 349 1143

Meretz UK. 37a Broadhurst Gardens. Tel: 0181 348 2613

New End Theatre, 27 New End, Hampstead, NW3 1JD. Box Office: 0207 794 0022

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

University of Sussex Centre for German-Jewish Studies. Arts Building, Room A 155. Contact Diana Franklin. Tel: 0181 381 4721

Art Notes

The National Gallery takes one decade in Renaissance Florence, the 1470's, to demonstrate how the Medicis' dominance over the city boosted the arts, exemplified by Botticelli, the Pollaiuolo brothers, Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci. An obsession with collectable artefacts of the ancient world (engraved cameos, Roman coins) and Old Testament events influenced much emblematic design, such as Pollaiuolo's paintings of nude males in combat, or the tondo (circular painting) often depicting the Epiphany. Art workshops carried out monumental commissions and encouraged experiment in colour and perspective, swift drawing to convey expression, light and shade falling on artificially textured drapery.

Concern with their image as a small but redoubtable city state led to a passion for the Israelite heroine, Judith, who tempted and then murdered the Assyrian general, Holofernes, with his own sword. Botticelli luridly shows the Assyrians swooning over their dead leader, lying languid and sensual but for his headless state and Antonio de Pollaiuolo's acclaimed bronze statuette of Judith captures the touching rectitude and resolution of the Israelite widow.

The greatness of Venus' Conquest of Mars, lies in her serenity and quietude as she watches over Mars' sleeping form. As happened to many great artistic icons the commercialisation of the face of the Botticelli Venus diminishes the integrity of the whole work, whose essence is the spiritual rhythm between the gods themselves. It is assumed that Venus was the wife of Lorenzo's brother, Giuliano. Known as La Bella Simonetta, she died of consumption in her early 20's and was considered so beautiful that she was placed in an open coffin with her golden curls cascading around her face. Botticelli's famous profile portrait of the troubled Giuliano, with black page-boy hairstyle and robed in carmine, suggests a repressed sadness – possibly the loss of his wife, or the premonition of his own assassination while still young, which Lorenzo escaped.

The National Brazilian associate artist, Ana Maria Pochecho, explores her fascination with Pollaiuolo's St Augustine in her



Holocaust Memories, charcoal drawing 1998, Michele Franklin.

own show, **Luz Eterna**. In her super-realistic installation, the saint is a black-hooded victim of organised violence, surrounded by Mafia types and shocked women. Its power derives from her translation of a typical renaissance theme into a contemporary idiom reflecting the artist's own roots. The heavy and stunted figures with their hugely expressive almond eyes, are distinctly Mayan; the stylistic pose, redolent of native Indian art. Pochecho also borrows biblical themes. She is fascinated by Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and their haunting faces reflect the horrors of the triptych beneath.

The authenticity of artistic experience is bravely faced by Michele Franklin in her exhibition of prints and drawings, **Where was the whole World?** at the Sternberg Centre until January 6 and opened by AJR's joint chief executive, Ronald Channing.

Brought up in Vermont and then Golders Green by a Jewish father and a native Indian mother, Franklin uses the grid-like metaphor of the Auschwitz railtrack to convey the horrors of a time not her own in dark enigmatic pieces, some narrative, some semi-abstract.

Inevitably Franklin's work invokes comparison with the first-hand experience of Holocaust artists like Bedrich Fritta or Karel Fleischmann. Unlike the shocking imagery provided by victim-artists, Franklin's prints and drawings are introspective, more fluid and inevitably more self-conscious. This does not invalidate them as artistic commentary on the

Holocaust, but they can never possess the brutish, haunting integrity of those who were there. □ Gloria Tessler

SB's Column

Kurt Weill's Music will be heard at London's Barbican Centre during the weekend 14-16 January 2000 which will feature the composer's works under the slogan *Berlin to Broadway*. The BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sir Andrew Davis and the BBC Concert Orchestra, will perform the *Berlin Requiem*, the *Lindbergh Flight* and *Der neue Orpheus*. The programme will also include Dreigroschenmusik (which created Weill's popularity) with Ute Lemper recalling the typical Berlin cabaret songs.

Schnitzler in London. The Diorama Studio Theatre will present *Anatol* from 7 to 19 December at 34 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1. This will be one of the few opportunities to see the Austrian author's work apart from rare revivals at London's National Theatre.

Yiddish Theatre in Vienna. Austrian-born Kurt Rosenkranz who left Vienna as a boy in 1938 and returned in 1947, is founder of a 'Jewish School for adults' which runs Yiddish classes, lectures and exhibitions at its Praterstern site. Having brought the Yiddish Theatre of Montreal to Vienna last year, he has now arranged for the Romanian Teatrul a Evreiesc of Bucharest to present two plays by Shalom Alechem at the Rabenhof.

Obituary. German-born Ilse Wolf, who died aged 78, was a soprano of great power who – to quote *The Times* – enriched the cultural life of her adopted country. She reached Britain in the late Thirties and became a lieder and oratorio singer of renown. She was a member of the Chelsea Opera Group under Colin Davis, later specialised as a lieder singer and, more recently, taught at Trinity and Morley colleges.

Berlin Opera. While such opera houses as the New York Met, La Scala and Covent Garden continue with programmes mainly consisting of Verdi, Puccini, Wagner and Richard Strauss, Berlin's Deutsche Oper and Deutsche Staatsoper opened this season with less frequently performed works: *Carmina Burana*, *Moses and Aron*, *Wozzeck*, *Lulu* and *Mabagonny*. Critics wonder whether this will become a significant trend for the future? □

HOUSE DOCTOR

How to avoid failing vision

As people get older their vision often changes so that they need stronger glasses. However, for some people the problem is more serious and they may even lose their sight.

There are five main causes for visual loss: damage to the nerves of the eye due to strokes, damage to the eye from glaucoma, damage to the retina due to diabetes, sudden damage to the retina such as detachment or haemorrhage and changes to the nerves at the back of the eye known as macular degeneration. In many cases people may not be entirely unable to see even if they are registered blind or carry a white stick.

In macular degeneration the nerves of the eye that are concentrated at the area of the retina where most fine vision is perceived, become damaged and die. The patient is left unable to clearly see fine work but able to perceive shapes, outlines and light and darkness. Their peripheral vision may be much better than their central vision. Sadly for this type of visual loss there are no really effective treatments though low visual aids may improve what sight exists.

Many of the other types of visual loss can however either be prevented or treated. The incidents of strokes may be reduced by lowering high blood pressure, stopping smoking and reducing raised levels of cholesterol.

Glaucoma is a condition where the pressure in the eye becomes raised above normal. Its incidence tends to increase with age but is easily detected by opticians when sight tests are per-

formed. Patients above the age of 65 years should probably have their ocular pressures measured regularly in order to determine that they are not suffering from glaucoma. The condition when found, can be treated with either drops, oral medication or sometimes with surgery. If untreated the high pressure in the eye ball constricts the blood supply to the optic nerve and this results in damage to the nerve and reduced vision.

Diabetics whose blood sugars rise and fall erratically are much more prone to develop damage to the retina due to the diabetes. Regular eye checks by appropriately trained staff should detect this diabetic change at an early stage. Laser treatment often helps but the most important preventative measure is strict control of the underlying diabetic condition.

Sudden damage to the retina such as tears, detachment or haemorrhage do occur and these are more common as patients become older. Any sudden loss of vision in one eye or part of one eye requires assessment within 24 hours. If such a tear or detachment has occurred it may often be limited or even reversed by laser therapy at an appropriate centre. Laser treatment is used to close off burst blood vessels or to weld the detached retina back on to the base of the eye. If left untreated such damage can result in permanent visual loss.

Though in some cases deteriorating vision may be unbearable, for many people their loss of vision can be limited or reversed with appropriate action or prevention! □ *Dr Max Bayer*

Regretfully, personal correspondence cannot be entered into

Fraenkel prize winners announced

This year's Fraenkel Prize in Contemporary History from the Wiener Library in London as been awarded to Professor Robert Moeller of the USA, for his work, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of German*, and to Dr des Till van Rahden of Germany, for his manuscript, *Juden und andere Breslauer: die Beziehungen zwischen Juden, Protestanten und Katholiken in einer deutschen Grosstadt von 1860 bis 1925*.

Next year's Fraenkel Prize is open to applicants submitting work in the field of

Contemporary European History. Central European and Jewish history in the Twentieth Century, the Second World War, fascism and political violence are subjects of specific interest to the Wiener Library. Prizes will be given for outstanding, unpublished work with an award of \$5000, which is open to all applicants, and one of \$3000, which is granted to those who have not yet had a major work published. Further details may be obtained from the Administrative Secretary of the Wiener Library. Tel: 0171 636 7247 □

HOMECARE SERVICE

The AJR is pleased to offer members the benefit of a Homecare Service scheme

The service is intended to help members remain in their own homes

Financial assistance is available where needed.

For further information please apply to the Social Services team on 0171 431 6161 or write to
AJR Social Services, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal, London NW3 6AL

Companions of London

Incorporating
Hampstead Home Care

A long established company providing care in your home

- ★ Assistance with personal care
- ★ General household duties
- ★ Respite care
- ★ Medical appointment service

'OUR CARE IS YOUR CARE'
0171 483 0212/0213



SPRING GROVE

214 Finchley Road
London NW3

London's Most Luxurious RETIREMENT HOME

- ★ Entertainment - Activities
- ★ Stress Free Living
- ★ 24 Hour Staffing ★ Excellent Cuisine
- ★ Full En-Suite Facilities

Call for more information
or a personal tour
0181-446 2117
or 0171-794 4455

Simon P. Rhodes M.Ch.S.
STATE REGISTERED CHIROPODIST
Surgeries at:
67 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (opp M&S)
Telephone 0171-624 1576
3 Queens Close (off Green Lane)
Edgware, Middx HA8 7PU
Telephone 0181-905 3264
Visiting chiropody service available

Science Notebook

Pre-millennium musings

The year 2000 of the Common Era is almost upon us, to be greeted by hundreds of millions of people with jubilation tinged with apprehension. But why is so much fuss being made about it? The underlying reason for the excitement is that we count in tens because we have ten fingers. Thus the centuries (multiples of 10×10) and especially the less frequent millennia (multiples of $10 \times 10 \times 10$) appear to assume a special significance. In contrast, the Mayans of Central America, who lived in a tropical climate, counted with their fingers *and* their toes so their number system was based on 20. The ancient Sumerians and Babylonians preferred units of 60 so they would have chosen to celebrate the year 1800 instead of 2000.

The way we reckon time is a fascinating story. It has evolved from a combination of astronomical phenomena, religious anniversaries and arbitrary decisions in human history. In particular, all civilizations had to adapt to three facts of nature whose origins they usually did not understand until much later. These are day and night (due to the spinning of the earth on its axis), the lunar month (the time for the sun-illuminated moon to circle the earth, and the seasons. These depend on the distance from the sun which varies during the solar year as the tilted earth pursues its elliptical path around the sun.

The earliest civilizations, including the Jewish, Babylonian, Chinese and Greek, based their calendar on the cycles of the moon which are easy to observe. Their basic year of 12 lunar months (each 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes and 3 seconds) was therefore slightly more than 354 days. Unfortunately this did not synchronize with the solar year (currently 365 days, 5 hours 48 minutes and 45 seconds) which determined the seasons which were crucial to agriculture. How to deal with this annual shift of almost 22 days was solved for the Jewish calendar by Hillel II over 1,500 years ago. In this so-called Metonic cycle, 12 normal lunar years of 12 lunar months are intercalated by 7 lunar leap years of 13 lunar months to end up with almost exactly 19 solar years (to within $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours). A similar discovery had been made even earlier by the Babylonians and the Chinese.

A calendar based on the solar year itself was able to be employed by the Egyptians as early as 6000 years ago because they made use of the regular annual flooding of the Nile as a natural dating tool. With the growth of astronomical knowledge the solar year became accepted in most societies but the awkward number of days in it posed a problem. A calendar year of 360 days was often chosen (and is the reason why we still divide a circle into 360 degrees). Different interpretations were placed on the 5 extra days: the Egyptians assigned them to the birthdays of the gods while the Babylonians and the Mayans regarded them as unlucky or evil. The Egyptians even allowed for the extra $\frac{1}{4}$ day by introducing a leap year of 366 days every fourth year. During Julius Caesar's dalliance with Queen Cleopatra he was struck by the Egyptians' advanced method of timekeeping and on his return to Rome he arranged for a drastic reform of the confused Roman calendar. The resulting Julian calendar came into being in 45 BCE in the Roman empire and eventually throughout the western world.

Yet the Julian calendar was not perfect either. Its year of 365 days and 6 hours was some 11 minutes longer than the true (tropical) solar year. Over the next 16 centuries this built up into a sizeable 10-day anomaly. A physician named Aloysius Lilius then calculated that the annual drift could be avoided if 3 days were removed from the calendar every four centuries. He therefore proposed that all centennial years (which were previously counted as leap years because they were divisible by 4) should be leap years no longer unless, like the year 2000, they could be divided by 400. This rule was incorporated into a revised calendar promulgated by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 CE. More spectacularly, it included a jump of 10 days in October 1582 to rectify the backlog. This greatly worried people who felt they had lost ten days of their lives (especially if it included their birthdays) and some riots took place. Nevertheless, the Gregorian calendar was soon accepted by the catholic countries of Europe. Many Protestant countries, however, regarded it as a Popish plot and Britain held out until 1752 when a jump of 11 days became necessary. China only came into line in 1949 by an edict of Mao's.

While the secular world now happily accepts the Gregorian calendar, religious establishments have been more conserva-

tive. The Jewish holy days as well as the Christian Easter (but not Christmas) are still determined by lunar-solar calculations while the religious life of Hindus and Moslems continues to follow the lunar cycle. The Moslem fast of Ramadan, for example, comes 11 days earlier every year. We must also remember that the starting dates of most calendars have religious origins. The Jewish calendar counts from the biblical day of creation, the Moslem one from 622 CE when Mohammed fled from Mecca to Medina and the Julian Gregorian calendars from the birth of Jesus. But since astronomical evidence suggests that Jesus was born in 4 BCE, his 2000th anniversary may have already taken place several years ago.

□ Prof Michael Spiro

SEARCH NOTICES

Bernard Steiger and Karl Frei both aged approximately 75, who came on the Kindertransport from Dresden, Germany, in December 1938 are sought by David Vogel. Information to: 3210-59 Ca Minito, East Bluff, La Jolla, Ca. 92037.

Major J. F. Hayward and other former **British Occupation Army** members are sought by historian researching Nazi looted Jewish libraries in Austria and the partial return of books after 1945. Contact Dr. Evelyn Adunka, Deinhardtsteingasse 18/9, 1160 Vienna, Austria. Tel/Fax 43 1 485 83 86

News of **Jan Lokwiecki** is sought by the brother of Janina Talkowska who both worked as forced labourers in then called Heiligenbeil in Ostpreussen (East Prussia) in a hotel from February 1941 until early 1942. Both were sheltered by Rev. Father Westfal and his housekeeper, Frau Pingel. Contact L. Talkowski, 83 Church Rd, Peasedown, St. John, Bath, BA2 8AB. Tel: 01761 432 260

Alfred Johnny Steevens (formally Alfred Schnitzer) born 5/4/1902, Berlin-Schöneberg, is sought by Peter and Helen Berger. Alfred moved to Britain in August 1939 from Brandenburgische Strasse 40, Berlin and lived in the Kitchener Camp, Richborough. He worked as a Clerk before joining the 74th Company P.C. - army number: 13053438. In 1948, Alfred was living in Kensington Park Road W11. Any information, please contact, 12a Portman Gate, 41 Broadley Terrace, London NW1 6LQ. Tel: 0171 723 5434. E-mail: peterberger@cs.com

Ruth Schwiening (née Auerbach) born 15/5/1935, Breslau, seeks Kindertransportees. Ruth arrived at Harwich on 3/2/1939 and was registered no.43548 by the Jewish Refugee Committee before being fostered by Mr and Mrs Hart of Forest Hill, London. If you remember Ruth please contact her on 01455 292035 □

Stent's remembrance of times past

India, 1944-1946

It was the autumn of 1944. I was sunbathing aboard a converted troopship, steaming slowly along the jetties of Port Said; Arab boys in small boats were hurrying alongside, offering to sell us their oriental goodies or just begging for *baksbeesh*. What on earth was I doing there in the war?

I had been gazetted Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Royal Engineers in August 1944, just a few weeks after D-Day. Having previously received some special training in the "decommissioning" of German Tellermines, I expected and wanted to be sent across the Channel quite pronto. After all, the main object of joining the Forces in 1940 had been the hope that one day I could ride on a white charger through the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, shouting, "We are the Masters now!"

I hung around for a few weeks waiting for my posting orders, whiling the time away with such war-essential tasks as helping the Home Guard to throw a Bailey Bridge across Wimbledon Common. Shortly after accomplishing this feat – thanks to an RE sergeant who knew how to do it – I received an order to procure a complete outfit of tropical clothing for myself. This could hardly be needed for northern Europe. I was deeply disappointed but the War Office would not budge.

It was only once I had boarded a troopship at Glasgow that I learned we were bound for Bombay. Ours was the first converted P&O liner not to have to round the Cape of Good Hope, but to sail through the Mediterranean. Whilst passing through the Suez Canal the ship got stuck on a sandbank. It took three tugs and 24 hours to prise us loose. In 1966 I remembered the incident when, after Nasser's nationalisation of the Canal, everyone said that Egyptian pilots could never cope. We had had a British pilot at the time.

On board ship I was one of the censors charged with scrutinising the mail which the troops sent to their loved ones at home. One of the letters, from a corporal to his wife, aroused my suspicion. He reminded her of their daily reading of the bible and recommended in particular a passage in Exodus 14 Verse 15. The Anglican padre on board was delighted to lend me his authorised Version of the Bible. The passage read: *And the chil-*

dren of Israel shall go on dry land through the middle of the sea. We were just in the middle of that very sea. So out came my scissors. It had been drummed into everyone aboard never to disclose in their letters where we were and where we were bound for.

Within a week or two of being disembarked in Bombay I was posted to the back of beyond, an Army Engineers Stores depot in the Punjab, which employed Indian civilian storekeepers who were running a profitable sideline. Whenever asked to get a shipment ready of, say, nails or screws, they sorted them out into two heaps: one meant for the King and one for themselves. My major contribution to the war effort was to check that they were not cheating. I became quite desperate and volunteered for whatever was going, including gliders, parachutes and even the mysterious Force 36 under Orde Wingate behind the Japanese lines in Burma.

Suddenly I was called to the Depot's C.O., a pre-war regimental Sergeant Major – now a commissioned Major – with a healthy disdain for us lily-livered civilian officers. He accused me of having pulled strings on high. I had no idea what he was talking about, whereupon he handed me a message from GHQ in New Delhi. I had been promoted Staff Captain and was to report as soon as possible to the C-in-C of the Engineers in Delhi. This was about one of the cushiest, most desirable, jobs in the establishment of army India. Before anyone could change their mind, I got my Pathan "bearer" (servant) to sew two more pips on to my tunic and rode the train post-haste to Delhi.

The Major-General there instructed me to report to the Colonel-in-Charge of the Timber Section. Later I found out that he had asked for me by name. I was even more puzzled. He turned out to be a charming, erudite, former manager of a sawmill in Burma. At this stage I did not really know the difference between hardwood and softwood and had never seen a log nor swung an axe. Just the man to be put in charge of all sawmilling hardware; no piece of such equipment could be supplied for civilian or military equipment throughout India without our Section's say-so. Once I had got to know Colonel Waters better, I asked him over a drink in the mess why he had plucked me by name for his vacancy. This was his answer: "The General showed me a bunch of CVs of recently arrived subalterns to select one for my vacancy. They all looked

very much alike, the same sort of background and education. All rather dull. Then I looked at yours. Different sort of background. Born in Berlin, studied at Bonn University. I thought 'that chap might liven up the Mess a bit'. Reading German law at Bonn had at last borne some fruit for me.

It did not take long for me to get accustomed to living the life of a member of the ruling class, even if creature comforts were sometimes lacking. Crouching in a small tin tub in my bungalow in the officers' compound, waiting for my bearer to pour piping hot water over me and rubbing my back, ready for the pre-prandial *chota-peg* (small drink) and watching fascinatedly the small lizards creeping along the walls, I could not help musing over the strange transformation this Captain *Sabib* had undergone. Maligned underdog in Nazi Germany, refugee in England, one of HM's most loyal internees, ace potato peeler in the lowest of army units, the Pioneer Corps and now privileged member of the British Raj establishment as well as member of the exclusive Gymkhana Club (restricted to officers and gentlemen and their snooty *memsabibs*). My poor wife and child in London were sleeping under a steel table and eating spam, when available, whilst the VIs rained down, whereas I was living like Reilly. It just wasn't fair. Had I really become and deserved to become, a pukka Englishman or was I just pretending, an impostor? These maudlin moments never lasted long, nonetheless stayed with me during those two years in India.

I could never take to many aspects of Mother India; the dirt, the abysmal poverty, the false servility of many of my *babus* (clerks), obsequious to me, rude towards their fellows. I abhorred the iniquitous caste system. One day I drove a jeep through a typical village, together with an Indian fellow officer, when I noticed a gaggle of small children crouching in the sand outside an open window, silent and listening. My colleague explained that they were *barijans*, untouchables. No decent Indian child would sit together with them in the same room; if the excluded child wanted to pick up bits of learning, it had to do so outside the classroom through the window. This was not a society at peace with itself. Jealousy, envy, discord were rampant inside GHQ. I could never see how this vast country could ever govern itself. I was, of course, totally wrong.

□ To be continued

Obituary

Lord Jakobovits

As Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth of Nations from 1967-1991, and thereafter (until his recent death at 78) as Emeritus Chief Rabbi, Dr Immanuel Jakobovits greatly enhanced the status not only of Anglo-Jewry, but Jews throughout the world. The AJR, in particular, mourns his loss, for Dr Jakobovits, like many of us, owed his survival to the prudence of his parents in seeking sanctuary in 1930s Britain.

Born in Koenigsberg, East Prussia, and receiving much of his Jewish education at Berlin academies, Jakobovits was brought up in a strictly orthodox milieu which characterised his outlook throughout life. Before his elevation as Chief Rabbi he had held the posts of Chief Rabbi of Ireland and rabbi of the prestigious Fifth Avenue Synagogue in New York. His reli-

gious zeal was matched by intense love of Zion, though the views he expressed often brought him into conflict with fellow Zionists. As a former refugee he had much sympathy with displaced Palestinians, once describing their plight and Israel's behaviour towards them as "a stain on humanity".

His advocacy of the importance of the individual in society as opposed to state intervention was warmly welcomed by large sections of the wider community, including the Conservative leadership of the day under Margaret Thatcher. She wholeheartedly supported his elevation to the peerage in 1988, the first such honour to be bestowed on a rabbi. In the House of Lords Jakobovits emphasized the views he cherished as a staunch believer in family life and sexual fidelity. He

strongly denounced divorce, abortion, loose living and homosexuality among other ills in society as he saw them and as his religion taught him.

Lord Jakobovits specialised in medical ethics and wrote extensively on the subject. Not the least of his contributions to Anglo-Jewry was his stress on the importance of Jewish education. He sired the foundation of Jewish primary and secondary schools and was proud to be associated in particular with an independent secondary school in North London named Immanuel College in his honour. In all his pious and conscientious endeavours he was wonderfully assisted by his wife Amelie, who survives him with six children and over 30 grandchildren.

□ Lionel Simmonds

Prime Minister's support for UK Holocaust Remembrance Day

The Government has proposed the introduction of an annual Holocaust Remembrance Day in the United Kingdom, a day of reflection, solemn ceremony and commemoration for the six million Jews and other civilian minorities who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

The Home Office circulated the proposals to representative bodies in a consultation paper to which both Prime Minister Tony Blair and Home Secretary Jack Straw added supporting contributions. The Prime Minister referred to the fact that, though the tragedy of the Holocaust was focused primarily on the Jewish people, as other groups were also persecuted, the commemoration had implications for everyone. "The period of Nazism and the Second World War remains of fundamental importance to both our national values and our shared aspirations with our European partners" he stated. "A Holocaust Remembrance Day provides a national focus for education and promotes a democratic and tolerant society free of the evils of prejudice and racism".

Reflecting on the purpose of a designated day of remembrance, Jack Straw emphasised that it was "to ensure that the

horrendous crimes against humanity, committed during the Holocaust, are never forgotten and its relevance for each new generation is understood", adding that the principle was widely supported in Europe and beyond.

The date recommended as the most suitable for the commemoration - to commence in the year 2001 - is 27th January, the day of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945. This would suit schools and colleges and harmonise with commemoration days elsewhere in Europe. Other dates for consideration include *Yom Ha Shoab (Holocaust Memorial Day)* - marked in Israel and observed by Jewish communities worldwide, the liberation of Bergen-Belsen on 15th April, Anne Frank Day on 12th June and the anniversary of *Kristallnacht* on 9th November 1938.

The Government intends inviting cultural and community groups, including the business community, to consider which activities would best raise Holocaust awareness. The consultation paper also stresses the importance of education, both within the national curriculum and for the public at large.

A special working group chaired by the Home Office, which included representa-

tives from the Board of Deputies and the Holocaust Educational Trust, assisted in the drafting of the proposals though, perhaps surprisingly, without the participation of the AJR, which remains the largest organisation in Europe representing the interests of Jewish refugees from Nazi persecution. While the AJR is strongly supportive of this move to introduce a permanent Holocaust Remembrance Day in the UK, consultations on the detailed proposals were curtailed to meet last month's Home Office deadline.

□ Ronald Channing

30 YEARS AGO

30TH ANNIVERSARY

This month sees the 30th anniversary of the opening of Eleanor Rathbone House, Highgate. The opening was attended by members of the Rathbone family, Baroness Stocks (the biographer of Eleanor Rathbone), Hugh Rossi MP and the Mayor of Haringey. After a speech of welcome by Sir Henry d'Avigdor-Goldsmid MP, Chairman of the Jewish Trust Corporation, AJR Chairman, A.S. Dresel described the amenities offered by the House, which contained fifty-four self-contained flatlets.

NEWSROUND

Photographs cause outrage

A feud amongst academics over an exhibition in Osnabrück of World War II photographs, has caused a three-month closure. The organisers claim that the exhibition proves that ordinary German soldiers committed Holocaust crimes, whilst some historians believe that a handful of photographs have been faked or depict Soviet crimes against Ukrainians. Independent historians are investigating the claims.

Papon requests pardon

French collaborator, Maurice Papon, responsible for the deportation of 1,500 Jews to Nazi death camps in World War II, is to request a pardon from President Jacques Chirac. Papon escaped to Switzerland shortly before sentencing but was extradited to France. Because of his escape, Papon was refused leave to appeal against a 10-year prison sentence.

Survivors face charges against Nazis

Two Holocaust survivors who confessed on German television to trying to poison Nazi soldiers 53 years ago may face attempted murder charges under the same law meant for the prosecution of Nazis crimes against Jews. Members of the Jewish organisation Nakam (Revenge) used arsenic to poison the camp's bread supply for 12,000 German and SS POWs.

Medal for British Schindler

Israel paid tribute to Frank Foley as one of the 'Righteous Among Nations' at a ceremony at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. Captain Foley, who died in 1958, used his position as Chief Passport Officer at the British Embassy in Berlin prior to WWII to issue passports to German Jews - placing himself in great danger as he had no diplomatic immunity.

Stolen art to be sold

Two paintings stolen from the head of the Jewish community in Florence, while he was in hiding during the Second World War, are to be auctioned in Florence.

Currently in the Dunedin art gallery, New Zealand, half the proceeds will go to his two grandsons.

Re-writing the past

American archaeologists believe that after the discovery of Semitic stone inscriptions in Egypt, merchants and mercenaries created the oldest alphabet several hundred years earlier than had been thought. The script dates from around 1850BC whereas the Canaanite inscriptions from the Sinai-peninsula are dated 1600BC, indicating that the simplification of writing from hieroglyphics took place earlier than previously recognised. NP □

RE-BRANDING AJR'S JOURNAL - TIME FOR A CHANGE?**A CASE FOR CHANGE ...**

When AJR's journal began publication in the mid-1940s, it focused exclusively on the presentation of *information*. With the passage of time and the renewed availability of paper for printing after the war, an enlarged format made it possible to diversify and enhance its contents. As a consequence, for the past half-century, a journal that has conveyed editorial opinion, conducted debates (eg on Europe), featured scholarly contributions, carried book and arts reviews, has continued to be called *AJR Information*.

Without question, such a title is a misnomer and has the additional drawback of sounding lacklustre. While this may be of limited concern to our core readership, if the AJR wishes to reach out to and encourage the active participation of a second and subsequent generations, we need now to update our presentation and add representatives from a younger generation to our contributors.

I recommend the re-branding of AJR's much-valued journal under the title of '*AJR Mosaic*' because it connotes our common identity as descendants of Moses. *AJR Mosaic* (or possibly *AJR World, Journal, Chronicle, Review* or some such) would be sub-headed 'Journal of the Association of Jewish Refugees' - making both its origins and its publishers quite clear. In my opinion the name change would also encourage contributions from younger journalists and open up the prospect of a wider circulation of the journal (with an increased advertising revenue) and further extend the awareness and influence of the AJR as we enter into the third millennium. □ Richard Grunberger, Editor

The views and opinions of all our readers are invited on the options of retaining the existing name of the journal, favouring a change of name to *AJR Mosaic*, or proposing an alternative name for consideration. Please write to the Editor.

A CASE AGAINST CHANGE ...

The monthly journal of the Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain has been published under the name *AJR Information* since 1941 and in a format not dissimilar to that still currently in use, since 1946. As such it has become a familiar and eagerly anticipated monthly friend and guide to members of the Jewish refugee community, both in this country and wherever there are AJR members in other parts of the world.

Any possible consideration of a change to the journal's extremely well-known name (now perhaps to be regarded as an established 'brand') should have to take into account the goodwill which has accrued to it and through it over the past half century and more.

The distinguished Editor of *AJR Information* will no doubt continue to seek out and encourage the publication of articles, reviews and opinion from members of both older and younger generations. The children of the victims of Nazi persecution already form a significant proportion of the members and the leadership of the AJR and will inevitably become the bulk of the membership in the years ahead. In my opinion, a change in the name of the journal will neither, of itself, encourage or discourage contributions from younger journalists or increase its circulation.

Although our entry next month into another epoch has become widely accepted as a time of change regardless of the degree of necessity, the coming of the third millennium should be of no relevance to our Jewish readers. Neither should it be used to provide the occasion for a change from the name *AJR Information* which I anticipate will continue to maintain its high standards of journalism and provide a channel for the continuation of German-Jewish culture in the UK and elsewhere. □ Traditionalist



Winter is on its way.
Perhaps it's time to
Consider **Homeshare**

Homeshare, a registered charity, finds and vets younger people of a caring nature who will:-

- Sleep in your home and
- Do 10 hours per week of household tasks
- In return you offer them accommodation

Companionship - Security - Mutual benefit

Phone Homeshare on 0171 378 6645 Registered charity No. 1071502