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Don't miss . . .

Pink triangle and yellow star

Richard Grunberger p3

Russia's red brownshirts

Prof Richard Sakwa p13

Zbaszyn

Martin Berger p16

Bursting through walls of silence

The French 'absurd' play *Asmodee*

features a corpse which, left unburied in a room adjacent to the stage, keeps growing till it bursts through the walls. What an apt metaphor for the Shoah! Its victims were denied proper burial also in the sense that their slave drivers and murderers frequently escaped punishment. However, thanks to the spotlight focused on Swiss banks, French picture galleries and German insurance companies and industrial giants, the truth is at last bursting through the walls of self-induced amnesia and unacknowledged guilt □

The echo of Weimar grows ever louder in Russia

A dybbuk is haunting Europe

In 1918/19 Germany stood on the brink. The old Imperial regime, self-aggrandizing abroad and mock-democratic at home, was in its death throes – while a new order embodying the opposite principles waited in vain to be born. Alas, its birth turned out to be a stillbirth. The reactionary governing caste of the Wilhelminian Empire – army, bureaucracy and industrialists – lost little power during the Weimar Republic. When the latter expired, the Blombergs, Schachts and Krupps as readily served the Fuehrer as they had previously done the Kaiser. The birth of a truly democratic Germany was postponed for decades; it has arguably only been finally accomplished with last year's smooth transfer of power from Kohl to Schroeder.

A *dybbuk* in Jewish folklore is a demon – the errant soul of a deceased that has crept into, and taken possession of, the body of a living person. Recent events in Russia – General Makashov's blood-curdlingly antisemitic speech, the assassination of Galina Starovoitova – suggest that that country is in the grip of demoniac possession, and that the demon possessing it is none other than Hitler.

The real Hitler extirpated Weimar democracy after fourteen short years; his revenant bids fair to throttle Russian democracy in an even shorter space of time.

In 1932, when the Nazis were closing in for the kill, their solid block of 230 Reichstag deputies, together with the smaller Communist faction, reduced the political centre to a minority in the legislature. Although Nazis and Communists were both hostile to the Weimar Republic, they did not actually collaborate – other than during the transport strike of November 1932.

In present-day Russia the Duma is dominated by a Red-Brown (Communist-Nationalist) bloc. This near-merger of what has long been perceived as opposites on the political spectrum has produced the mind-boggling picture of General Makashov – who, as a Communist, must pay lip service to the Jew Marx – telling a public meeting that he wished to take at least a dozen 'Yids' with him when he died. (See page 13)

Makashov's pogrom incitement has neither been censured by the Speaker of the Duma, nor triggered a breach-of-the-peace charge in the courts. The leading parliamentarian to raise the alarm, Galina Starovoitova, died in a hail of bullets a few days later.

Her assassination prompts comparison with that of Walter Rathenau in 1922. The only positive result of that outrage was a massive protest strike by Berlin workers; Starovoitova's funeral too drew a massive crowd of twenty thousand mourners.

The Weimar *dybbuk* is dancing on the grave of Russia's finest democratic politician; what's more, it is waiting to do a waltz with Lenin's corpse resurrected from the mausoleum □



Nathan and the Knight Templar. Engraving after a painting by J.C. Frisch, 1806

Profile

Scholar with
real empathy

The discourse between the first and second generation is beset by a perennial dilemma. On the one hand we want to spare our children the vicarious experience of our traumas of uprooting and bereavement, but on the other we find their scanty knowledge of our former lives disappointing.

No such disappointment awaits anyone meeting UK-born Tony Grenville. His father owed his relatively painless escape from Nazi rule to the fact that he had the Dunhill agency for Austria; having arrived here with his wife he managed to establish a business dealing in smokers' requisites and fancy jewellery.

Tony was born in 1944, went to a prep-school in Surrey and from there, via a scholarship, to Harrow. Though he encountered no antisemitism at Churchill's *alma*



Dr Anthony Grenville

mater, he resented the anti-intellectualism prevalent at the school (many of whose pupils came from the landed gentry).

At 18 he gained a scholarship to Oxford, read Modern Languages at Christ Church, and got a first in the finals. In the 'city of dreaming spires' he neither succumbed to trendy radicalism nor did he cultivate fellow alumni with such aristocratic names

as Ancram, Aitken, Dunglass and Hogg. (In contrast he is still friends with a theatre director and a gallery owner first met at school).

After graduating – and a brief stint in the Civil Service – he opted for a career in academia. He gained a PhD with a dissertation on the playwright Georg Kaiser, and went on to teach German Literature first at Reading and then, for 15 years, at Bristol. (Meanwhile he published a book on Weimar culture entitled *Cockpit of Ideologies*).

As time went on his interest switched to the more specific topic of *Exil Literatur* and the sociology of exiles, i.e. refugees. In order to pursue research in this area he came back to London. Since 1995 he has been Honorary Secretary of the Research Centre for German/Austrian Exile Studies. He has also been interviewing Shoah survivors for the National Sound Archive and for Spielberg's Visual History Project.

Last but not least, Tony is currently trawling through early issues of *AJR Information* with a view to producing a study on the sociology of the refugee community. □ RG

Britain's post-1933
refugee policy

In the 1930s, thanks to Britain's position as a world power, Cabinet policy impinged on three areas: the UK itself, Palestine (a British League of Nations Mandate) and the Empire.

As regards immigration into Britain, the trickle of the early and mid-thirties widened into a comparative flood in 1938/39, when four successive hammer blows – the Anschluss, the Munich Agreement, the Kristallnacht pogrom and the occupation of Prague – followed each other in the short space of twelve months. By the outbreak of war Britain had accepted 65,000 refugees from Nazi oppression.

In Palestine the picture was less clear-cut. The first wave of German-Jewish immigrants, spurred by the Nazi *Machtergreifung*, had to compete with the pent-up demand of Polish Jews for the limited number of certificates. During the subsequent years the Government set aside the liberal recommendations on immigrant numbers put forward by the Peel Commission, which it had itself appointed. Under the pressure of increased persecution in Central Europe Jewish illegal immigration increased, in response to which HM Gov-

ernment pressured Romania, Greece and Bulgaria into exercising stricter control at their ports. (King George VI personally asked Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax to demand that officials in Berlin prevent Jews from departing illegally.) In May 1939 Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald – arguing that Britain had to choose between Islam and the Jews – issued a crucial new White Paper. This cancelled Churchill's White Paper of 1922 which acknowledged a Jewish right to enter Palestine: it effectively meant that, when Jewry's need was at its greatest, the door into Palestine virtually swung shut.

Meanwhile diverse schemes involving British colonies – Kenya, N Rhodesia, British Guyana – had been mooted and shot down by the imperial functionaries concerned. The Viceroy of India deemed it 'useless' to try and settle German Jews in the subcontinent. Australia informed the 1938 Evian Conference on Refugees that, having no racial problem, it didn't intend to import one.

But the picture was not uniformly bleak. In Britain public disgust at the savagery of the *Kristallnacht* pogrom caused HM Government to waive existing regulations in order to admit nearly ten thousand refugee children as 'transmigrants'. The Kindertransports stand out like a bright candle in

enveloping darkness.

Finally, though the UK could have – as it proved after the war – absorbed significantly more than sixty-five thousand people fleeing for their lives, it still has a better record on this issue than any other country. The United States, a huge country made up of immigrants, only admitted twice as many as Britain; vast, empty Canada kept its doors closed. □ RG

(This is a compressed version of Sir Martin Gilbert's lecture before an invited audience at University College, London, on 10 November 1998.)

50 YEARS AGO

THE FOURTH VOLUME

With the current issue, *AJR Information* enters its fourth year. Many of the problems which were in the foreground when this journal was first started have disappeared, but others no less pressing have taken their place, and the hope for an unending period of peace, so strongly felt during the war, has faded in the light of present realities.

Two issues are dominating the work of the Association of Jewish Refugees in the coming year. One, the question of restitution of Jewish property in Germany, and the other one, the ever-growing problem of employment for certain age groups of refugees in this country. □

AJR Information, January 1949

Pink triangle and yellow star

At the time of the recent gays-in-the-cabinet brouhaha grave voices warned, yet again, of the danger of a bigoted Britain going down the same road as 1930s Germany.

This rather glib comparison belongs to the stock-in-trade of self-important Cassandras, and bears no relation to the actual situation. Late 1990s Britain enjoys, if that's the word, unparalleled sexual liberty, not to say licence. As to 1930s Germany, the homophobia prevalent then still cannot be equated with the attitude towards the Jews.

For one, homosexual SA desperados like Ernst Roehm and Edmund Heines had given Hitler 'victory in the streets' before they themselves fell victim to a bloody purge. For another, a lot of Nazi literature and cinema was steeped in the homoerotic ethos of an oath-bound (*verschworene*) community of warriors.

Significantly the great 'exemplar', the soldier-king Frederick the Great, had been a homosexual, although this was 'airbrushed' out of the many films about him. Thirdly, the gay screen idol Gustav Gründgens flourished in the Third Reich, thanks to his own Thespian gifts, Göring's patronage and a face-saving *mariage blanc* to Marianne Hoppe. (Film fans used to serenade them with 'Hoppe, Hoppe, Gründgens, Wo sind Eure Kindgens?')

In the 1920s, Berlin had been notorious for its sexual *laissez faire*. But it boasted more than sleazy bars – not least the Institute of Sexual Research, creation of the Jewish reformer Magnus Hirschfeld. Immediately after the Nazi takeover the Institute closed and Hirschfeld emigrated.

Interestingly enough, in earlier decades prominent Jews had not always acted in a manner currently deemed politically correct. Heinrich Heine, for instance, did not scruple to call August von Platen, with whom he had a literary feud, 'an ostrich who buries his head in the sand while brandishing his *Steiss* (*posterior*) up in the air.'

A generation later the Social Democrat journalist Kurt Eisner (who was to achieve notoriety in the Bavarian Revolution of 1918) revealed that the arms tycoon Friedrich Krupp had indulged in paedophile practices on his Italian estate. A worse scandal erupted when Maximilian Harden, editor of *Die Zukunft*, tarred the Kaiser's favourite, Count Philipp Eulenburg, with the homosexual brush. Of course,

what motivated those revelations was not homophobia, but the desire to undermine pillars of the Wilhelminian Establishment.

In the aftermath of the Great War two half-Jewish icons of gay literature came to prominence in the West: the English war poet Siegfried Sassoon, and the French novelist Marcel Proust.

Meanwhile, first Russia and then Germany fell under totalitarian rule. In each case policy towards homosexuality was beset by contradictions. Germany has already been touched on. In Russia liberalisation in the wake of the Revolution was followed by a drastic reversal. When André Gide, the West's most prominent pro-Soviet man of letters, visited the USSR in 1936, he was appalled by the persecution of homosexuals in the Red Army. The Soviets, nonetheless, retained the sympathies of the Western intelligentsia, because in the same year the Spanish Civil War broke out, and brought shock news of the Fascist murder of the homosexual poet Garcia Lorca.

After the Second World War Stalin kept newly discovered evidence about the homosexuality – and putative suicide – of Tchaikovsky as secret as he did blueprints for the atom bomb. In America, meanwhile, the leaking of atomic secrets to Russia triggered the McCarthy witch hunt, with 'Reds' and Liberals, as well as homosexuals as its prime targets. A bizarre aspect of this shameful chapter in American history was this: McCarthy's special investigator, Roy Cohn, who remorselessly hounded suspected homosexuals, was himself a 'closet gay'. (Or, in keeping with Cohn's character, that should perhaps read *Klosett gay*).

Richard Grunberger

History prizewinners

This year's winners of the prestigious Fraenkel Prize, awarded for contributions to contemporary history, have been announced by the Wiener Library.

Dr Joanna Bourke has received the prize, open to all entrants, for her work bluntly entitled *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth Century Wartime*. The prize awarded to historians yet to publish a major work was made to Dr Gunnar S. Paulsson for his work on *Hiding in Warsaw: The Jews on the 'Aryan Side' in the Polish Capital 1940-1945*. It is anticipated that both prizewinners will be invited to lecture at the Wiener Library on their award-winning topics □

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Reviews

A truly great man

Michael Ignatieff, *ISAIAH BERLIN – A LIFE*, Chatto & Windus, 1998, £20.

Isaiah Berlin died in November 1997, and the anniversary of his death has seen the publication of this beautifully written, affectionate and in places very moving biography. In it we find lucid expositions of the philosophical ideas for which Berlin became famous: his attack on utopian ideologies; his insistence that our most treasured values must collide (so that we must, for example, sacrifice some liberty for the sake of equality and vice-versa); his distinction between positive and negative liberty; his attack on theories of historical inevitability; his establishment of the History of Ideas as a previously practically unknown academic subject; his special fascination with the attractions and dangers of both Rationalism and Romanticism; his sympathetic understanding of 19th century Russian thought; his guarded respect for the expression of nationalist identities; and much else besides.

But this book is primarily an account of Berlin's career and personality: discussion of the ideas just mentioned takes up a relatively small part – not much more than a quarter – of the work. This is enough to whet the appetite, which can then be satisfied by dipping into the roughly seventy essays and lectures which have been published and edited in (so far) eight volumes by Henry Hardy.

But someone who knows Berlin only from Hardy's published collections will discover in Ignatieff's biography an area of his interests and activities which is touched on in only three out of these seventy pieces. Ignatieff brings out just how important Berlin's Jewish background was to him and how involved he was with Zionism and with Israel.

It was all rather complicated. Though a religious sceptic, he observed the High Holy-Days. This, he said, had nothing to do with religious beliefs but was a declaration of his Jewish allegiance and identity. When he worked for the Foreign Office in Washington during the war, he was caught between his allegiance to Britain, which at that time was hostile to Zionist aspirations, and his own allegiance to Zionism: he had to defend British policy in public, but privately he did what he could to promote the Zionist cause with American officials. He was a friend of Chaim Weizmann,

supported Weizmann's pro-British against Ben-Gurion's anti-British attitude, and actually wrote the powerful paragraph in one of Weizmann's speeches in 1946 which condemned the violence of the Irgun and of Lechi. In 1947 Weizmann asked Berlin to become his Chief of Staff; but Ben-Gurion also tried to enlist him, offering him in 1951 the directorship of the Israeli Foreign Office. Berlin declined both offers, though he felt guilty about doing so. He was not temperamentally suited to the infighting that such involvement in Jewish politics would bring with it; nor, for that matter, was he greatly enamoured of what he thought was the way in which Jews saw everything from an entirely Jewish-centred perspective. The roots of his Zionism were neither religious nor historical. He had sympathy with nationalism although he was not a nationalist himself. He believed that a Jewish state was a necessary refuge for Jews who had been persecuted. There they could live a life of normality, and Jews in the Diaspora also gained in personal dignity as the result of the existence of a Jewish state. But he was always uneasy that the assertion of Jewish nationalism was at the expense of the rights of Arab nationalism; and in a letter he wrote a few days before he died, he called on the Israeli Government to allow the Palestinians their own state.

□ Ralph Blumenau

Death-defying art

Judi Herman, *SAVING CHARLOTTE*, Bridewell Theatre, EC4.

This is a play full of surprises. The central theme of a young pregnant Jewish woman going to her death in Auschwitz is deeply sad, and it is told with a simplicity of feeling.

Yet, illuminating Charlotte's story are unexpected elements. Those who have read about Charlotte Salomon will know about her paintings, which are an integral part of the play. She called the whole series of paintings *'Theater oder Leben?'*.

The plot is conveyed through fast-moving mini-scenes, depicting Lotte's childhood and adolescence. Events in her life in Germany, including the Nazi terror, are told in dramatic snapshots. The cast of four play all their roles with masterly energy and well-defined characterisation. The timing and the lighting are both excellent, and the play is informed by an ironic humour.

Special mention must be made of the music Lotte herself had chosen to accompany the paintings. The actress playing her stepmother, who was a singer in real life, sings beautifully. The music comprises some of the loveliest pieces ever written; the notes on the piano quietly attract the ear and then disappear into silence.

All concerned give a consummate performance – and, although the dramatic tension slackens in the second half, the play is a theatrical experience.

□ Jean Freedman

An exhibition of Charlotte Salomon's work runs at the Royal Academy till January 17.

Insight and Outlook

John D Rayner, *AN UNDERSTANDING OF JUDAISM*, Berghahn Books, £13.50.

Founded at the turn of the century in order to "invest Judaism with contemporary relevance", this country's Liberal Jewish movement has a good deal more in common with American Reform than with the mainstream *Liberale* Judaism of Germany and Austria, of which many of our readers have first-hand or inherited experience, and which pursued the same objectives, albeit with greater commitment to tradition. Significantly, the Berlin-born author of this collection of sermons, confesses to having "wrestled with the conflicting claims of tradition and modernity during almost the entire second half of the twentieth century".

Described in Rabbi David Goldberg's foreword as "the most consistent and respected exponent of Liberal Jewish thought" for the last forty years, Rabbi Rayner has a clear remit to offer his understanding of Judaism to a rather wider audience than the congregation whom he first addressed.

The first part of the book is devoted to Biblical exegesis. Rabbi Rayner offers a refreshingly new interpretation of many of the familiar passages contained in the weekly Scripture readings and he identifies some of their most striking messages. The story of the Flood, for example, allows him to enlarge on what he describes as "the biggest of all issues" – the future of humanity characterised by the acceptance of moral responsibility on the part of each individual member. A similar lesson is deduced from the Tower of Babel story.

On the face of it, its main theme is a negative view of civilisation which is un-

typical of the Bible and of Judaism. But in Rabbi Rayner's view it only condemns materialism in so far as it might lead to arrogance and pretentiousness. "When technological progress outstrips moral and social progress... civilisation gets out of hand". He returns to the subject of public and private morality in several references to current affairs. He describes the 1994 Hebron massacre as "the most appalling atrocity committed by a member of our people for many centuries" and leads on to stress the need for Jews to pursue political aims with due regard to the dictates of morality: we, of all people, had to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. "History", he says in another context, "is governed by a moral law of cause and effect".

The attitude of Liberal Judaism to ritual sacrifices is discussed in fascinating detail in a sermon on the first *parashah* of the Book of Leviticus. Rayner cites the Psalmist's disdain for sacrifices being regarded as the Almighty's food and drink. He also uses it to support his charge of ambivalence on the part of rabbinic Judaism and some of its latter-day interpreters in that it believes, on the one hand, that "sacrifices are not for ever", while praying on the other hand for their restoration in the Messianic Age. He suggests two means of overcoming this dilemma. One is to subscribe to the ultra-Orthodox line and hope for the re-institution of sacrifices in a rebuilt Temple; the other is to follow the Liberal view that all ritual sacrifices, real or substituted, should be left behind as belonging to an early, and unrepeatably, stage of our historical development.

Special days in the religious calendar require special services and special sermons. A number of these are collected in Part II of the book. Here, too, he seeks to persuade by argument, not by injunction. He applies his scholarship and his eloquence to studies of the "Season of Freedom" – Pesach, the "Season of Revelation" – Shavuot, of "Repentance and Atonement" – the High Holydays, of "Gladness" – Sukkot and Simchat Torah, of "Dedication" – Chanukah. Each enjoins us to pause for self-examination quite irrespective of our religious leanings. To quote but one outstanding example: his interpretation of the *Akedah*, the Binding of Isaac, by his, our, father Abraham, makes compulsive reading because it throws a new light on a key passage of our Hebrew Scriptures.

Predictably, much in this book is rather controversial. The presentation of the Liberal attitude to women's services falls into

this category. So does the author's interpretation (re-interpretation?) of the ritual kindling of Shabbat lights which leads him to propose a basic formula for the concept of Progressive Judaism: "The assertion that what the Bible forbids God has commanded is a clear recognition that significant religious innovation and advance occurred in later as well as earlier times". Perhaps it is appropriate to conclude this review of Rabbi Rayner's important contribution to Jewish thought in general by quoting his own conclusion: "We can grasp the Torah and build an enduring civilisation on it. The choice is ours".

□ David Maier

'Lost' art treasures

Britain's half-hearted attempts to return artworks, looted during World War II, to their rightful owners is examined in a study undertaken by the Holocaust Educational Trust.

Hitler's nineteenth century tastes were reinforced by Alfred Rosenberg's condemnation of twentieth-century western art and culture. Deliberate destruction of 'unwanted' works of art commenced in 1936; large-scale confiscation and destruction of Jewish property began in 1938.

On the outbreak of war the SS took over responsibility for the looting of cultural assets, a process led by Rosenberg. Sometimes, in quasi-legal transactions, owners were forced to sell for occupation marks. Thousands of stolen works were traded, then laundered through neutral countries, especially Switzerland. Following the invasion in 1942, all Soviet museums were looted and the scale of theft became enormous.

Although Britain was slow to accept that it would be unjust for art looted from Jews in Germany to be taken as restitution by the Allies, it was recognised that much of the best was formerly held in private Jewish collections. It became official policy to restore identifiably Jewish property to its owners or their heirs, but works stolen before the outbreak of war were excluded!

Britain did not assemble or publish any record of works of art stolen from British owners, unlike other major European countries, and British involvement stopped altogether at the cut-off date for claims in 1949.

□ RDC

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Letters to the Editor

COMPENSATION FOR SLAVE LABOUR

Sir – The news that Audi, BMW, Daimler-Benz, Krupp and Siemens are being sued in courts in the USA and that Volkswagen is offering £7.5 million is not the good news it would appear to be at first sight.

I have in my possession just one page, page 129 of the 700-page Red Cross book (published at Arolsen in 1969) linking concentration camps with German firms. I worked in the village of Friedland in Lower Silesia. Only part of page 129 covers Friedland, a very small part of Niederschlesien, an even smaller part of the Deutsches Reich, and an insignificant part of occupied Europe. Even so it lists no fewer than nine firms, and one mine, as employing slave labour.

At that rate *thousands* of firms, some small, some large, took advantage of what the Reich offered. Many may have since gone under or merged and become unrecognisable. That turns the whole enterprise into a lottery. A common fund would be a more equitable solution.

Ipswich, Suffolk

Frank Bright

THE SHOAH AND THE OFFICERS' PLOT

Sir – Gestapo interrogation documents (Dipper – *The German Resistance and the Jews*) show that in the main their attitudes did not differ substantially from the antisemitism expressed by the regime that they meant to overthrow.

These people were muddled and confused but were nevertheless reactionaries, by class and politics, still striving for a *Grossdeutschland* preferably free of Jews.

Unlike Mr Freud I ended my army service as a lowly sergeant after a stint in the reconnaissance troop of a tank regiment and later in Field Security unsuccessfully denazifying the German police of a large town.

London N6

Hugh Fisher

COMPENSATION FROM AUSTRIA

At a memorial meeting of Theresienstadt camp survivors on 9 November at Vienna's *Aspangbahnhof* (the one time *Umschlag-*

platz) representatives of former Austrian Jews in Israel and the USA decided on joint action in forwarding compensation claims to the Austrian authorities.

We want to enlist support from Austrian Jews in the UK, so that we may speak on behalf of Austrian Jews globally.

Tel Aviv 61164

Gideon Eckhaus

POB 16457

BANKING (MAL)PRACTICE

Sir – I suggest that the complainant writes to the Pension Centre in Berlin and asks that future cheques be sent direct to him expressed in Sterling. This method works well. Cheques are sent by Deutsche Bank, London, direct to the recipient and show the relevant exchange rate and are free from any of the bank charges often raised by local banks for the privilege of crediting foreign payments.

New Barnet, Herts

KG Speyer

Sir – I agree with your correspondent – my Midland Branch did not even warn me! However, I raised it with my local branch because I considered I should know what the bankers were doing with my money. They took it up with Midland International at 1 Poultry. The reply on March 9th 1998 was as follows:-

'The German Government has changed the way it sends the funds to the UK. The reason for this change in processing methods by the German Government was simply to save costs all round – with the new system they send a computer tape to the UK and Tempo Operations pick up the payment details in German marks, convert the amount to sterling with a £1.50. charge each time, and credit through BACS to the account. No advice is generated each month, and there is no system possibility to do so.'

It therefore appears that Midland can do nothing about it. I assume other banks have the same problem?

It seems a highly unsatisfactory computer system; it appears that Tempo Operations should generate some documentation. I did wonder whether to enquire of the Bank Ombudsman, but have not done so.

Chelmsford

Mrs Marie Wolfe

Essex

INVITATION

Sir – Ex-Berliners who are planning to spend a holiday in Florida in February 1999, are invited to participate in a Former Berliners' Re-union Picnic taking place on 28 February 1999, 11am at the TY Park in Hollywood, Florida.

Should you be in Miami or Ft Lauderdale, give me a call, Fred (Manfred) Naftalie 954 454 3699, and I will tell you how to get to the Park where you might meet old, long lost Ex-Berliners and Schulkameraden. Last year's picnic was attended by 90-100 Ex-Berliners.

Florida, USA

Fred (Manfred) Naftalie

NAKED

Sir – Grunberger seems to justify his vitriolic and silly attack on four West End plays by reference to his "heavy duty theatre going". Give it up chum, you are too old and out-of-touch! His space-filler ends with typical Grunberger journalese: "Cromwell – send the Roundheads down Shaftesbury Avenue!!" Fortunately, the Cromwell/Grunberger Roundheads would do no damage since *Antony and Cleopatra* is performed at the Olivier, *Copenhagen* at the Cottesloe, both at the South Bank, *Invention of Love* at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, and *The Blue Room* was staged at the Donmar Theatre. But then, like physics, geography obviously had not been up to 'O' level in Grunberger's schooling.

Address withheld

Peter Wright

The lack of 'O' level geography imputed to me is good, clean fun. Actually, Shaftesbury Avenue was my shorthand term for London's theatres, in the way Fleet Street used to be for the British press.
Ed.

GOMBRICH'S BLOTTING PAPER

Sir – I express no view on your difference of opinion with Professor Gombrich, but it did strike me as a misdescription in your first note on the subject to call him "Ernest Gombrich". Like the late György Stern (Sir Georg Solti, rather than Sir George), Gombrich has always remained Ernst, even with his British title.

Banbury, Oxon

Francis Steiner

CORRECTION

The obituary for Eva Reichmann (November issue) stated that she was the Editor of *Der Morgen*. This is incorrect. Reichmann, marvellous as she was, was only a contributor.

London NW3

G Jacobi (née Dienemann)

At the going down of the sun . . .



Public interest in the 80th Anniversary of Armistice Day was extensive, no doubt enhanced by being the last 'round figure' anniversary at which veterans of the First World War are still with us to recount their memories.

Thousands of Britons crossed the Channel to commune with lost family members and former comrades and, at sunset, to hear the last post sounded at the Menin Gate at Ypres. Inscribed on it are the names of 54,896 soldiers lost in the Ypres battles with no known graves, and a further 34,888 are recorded at Tyne Cot, the largest British cemetery of all.

Tragically, numerous cemeteries are set among the battlefields of the Western Front, all well tended, often by gardeners whose grandfathers were the first to take up the task. Some of them are vast, others

isolated with fewer than a hundred burials. At Etaples, a cemetery with 11,530 burials, among which Jewish graves bearing the Star of David are randomly distributed, a small plot stands in isolation containing a further eighteen Jewish interments between 1916 and 1918. One hero buried here is Cpl A Ferner DCM, a Londoner aged 21. A poignant 'PS' inscribed on the pure white stone reveals that his broken-hearted mother died just five weeks after him.

On the site of a heavily defended German position known as the 'Labyrinth', the 45,000-grave German war cemetery at Neuville St Vaast, Jewish tombstones are readily identified by their rounded tops among a sea of crosses. It is easy to reflect on the tragedy of a war where Jews fought for King and country – on both sides.

□ Sue Monsell

Kristallnacht remembered

The sad and epoch-shattering events of Kristallnacht were remembered by Anglo-Jewry at public commemorations, especially by those who recalled their own personal tragedy.

At the Harrow Arts Centre, the locally-based Tolerance Education Trust presented a thoughtful programme, relying on Rabbi John Rayner as a capable compère, as well as to describe his experiences as a young child in Berlin prior to securing refuge in Britain by Kindertransport. Anita Lasker-Wallfisch recalled how her own fate hung on her talent for the cello in the surreal Auschwitz women's orchestra.

Much of the evening was devoted to a number of works played superbly by cellist Raphael Wallfisch accompanied by his son

Benjamin. Lotte Kramer expressed her feelings through the medium of her own poetry, while the young children of the Heritage Youth Choir stole the show, a credit to their conductor Vivienne Bellos. Beth Shalom director Stephen Smith's moving oratory drew deeper meanings for both Jew and non-Jew alike.

The programme at the Wigmore Hall, co-promoted by the Second Generation Trust, centred on the human voice with songs and *lieder* sung by a number of outstanding artistes who donated their performances. Juliet Stevenson presented appropriate readings and Raphael Wallfisch contributed moving interpretations of Ravel and Rachmaninov. The inclusion of historical recollections, or a prayer for those lost in the Holocaust, would perhaps have better satisfied many among the audience who were prepared to reawaken dark memories sixty years on.

□ Ronald Channing

Wallenberg memorialised in Argentina

A memorial in honour of the Swedish diplomat and saviour of many Hungarian Jews, has been unveiled in Argentina's capital, Buenos Aires. The monument, a replica of that dedicated by the Queen and President Weizman in London, similarly owes much of its creation to anti-racism campaigner Sir Sigmund Sternberg.



Perhaps it was Raoul Wallenberg's acquaintance with Jewish refugees from Hitlerite Germany when he worked in Haifa from 1935 to 1937, which fired his passion to oppose Nazi atrocities against the Jews. Accredited as his country's First Secretary in Budapest in 1944, Wallenberg, who issued Swedish *Schutzpässe* and set up 32 safe houses under the Swedish flag, is credited with helping to save the lives of 100,000 Hungarian Jews. After setting out for a meeting with the commander of the victorious Soviet army, Marshal Malinovsky, he was never seen again in the West.

Wallenberg himself is quoted as saying "There is no choice. I have taken on this assignment and will never be able to go back home without knowing within myself that I have done all a man can do to save as many Jews as possible."

□ RDC

Budapest memorial

Dr Rezso Kasztner negotiated a deal which enabled 1,684 Hungarian Jews to escape to Switzerland in return for trucks and other goods. Ninety-year-old survivor Laszlo Devecseri has erected a memorial to Dr Kasztner in the presence of other survivors, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*. Kasztner was murdered in Israel in 1957 accused of collaboration □

AJR Reports

Madeleine Brook memorial bridge evening

Guests at another of the AJR's successful special bridge evenings in memory of Madeleine Brook, were welcomed to the Paul Balint Day Centre by the evening's organiser, Ann Marx. She was pleased to report that the funds raised that evening, together with the proceeds of the Day Centre's recent Open Day, contributed towards the purchase of a large and much-needed freezer for the kitchen.

Dinner, served personally by the centre's top trio of Sylvia, Renée and Susie before play commenced, whether a meat or fish dish was chosen, was universally rated as 'delicious'. While AJR Director Michael Radbil became acquainted with the guests, play began in earnest, continuing until an interlude for well-deserved coffee and biscuits.

Madeleine's husband Henry was delighted to be among the players, who all look forward to the next bridge evening. In the meantime, of course, the AJR's own Kard and Games Club, which meets every Monday with lunch included, at 15 Cleve Road, always welcomes newcomers. Call 0171 328 0208 for more details and bookings.

□ RDC

PINNER AJR

Pinner group's guest speaker Barbara Lanning enlightened members on the depiction and description of watermills and windmills in art and literature – from Constable's *Flatford Mill* to those immortalised by the Dutch masters under perpetually cloudy skies and mentioned in classics such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. She illustrated her talk with coloured slides, including those of mills still working in this country under the aegis of English Heritage.

□ MG

SOUTH LONDON Birthday party

SLAJR celebrated its 4th birthday in great style with plenty of good fare by courtesy of M&S.

Under the guiding hand of chairman Ken

Ambrose, the members discussed a number of topics which included Kristallnacht, contemporary refugee problems, the apparent quiescence of antisemitism and, of course, the Holocaust. But spirits never flagged.

□ RL

SLAJR's next meeting will be on 14th January 1999 at Prentice Road, when Norah Gittins of the AJR and Hilde Ambrose will discuss 'Compensation – finding your way through the jungle'.

Wonderful week

What a wonderful week we had in Bournemouth under the caring and thoughtful guidance of Sylvia and Renée! The weather was very kind to us so that we could enjoy the sunshine, take walks and breathe the lovely air.

In the mornings we went on a coach trip; the evenings were devoted to music, bingo and quizzes. Of course, on Friday night the ladies were able to light the candles, and on Saturday morning everyone enjoyed the Kiddush. Thank you for a lovely holiday.

□ Ema Baginsky

New appointments

In order to accommodate the AJR's developing role, **Myrna Glass** has been appointed Outreach Worker (one day each week). Formerly headteacher of a Jewish primary school and deputy headteacher of Sinai School, for the last seven years she has headed the JNF's Youth and Education Department, addressing educators and social groups throughout the country.



In a further appointment, **Helena Reid** takes over the responsibilities as Social Worker formerly held by Nikki Sender. Helena was a member of Norwood Ravenswood's NW London Social Work Team and

prior to that worked for the B'nai B'rith Housing Society for six years □



Michael Radbil, AJR Chief Executive, recites the traditional prayers and lights the candles on the first night of Chanukah at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.

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HOUSE DOCTOR

Prostate problems

As most men reach their 60s and 70s the problem of having to get up at night to pass urine, or being less able to hold their urine during the day, increases. Usually this is due to enlargement of the prostate gland which sits outside the base of the bladder surrounding the urethra (the tube leading from the bladder to the penis). With time, gradual enlargement of the prostate gland brings two main effects: pressure on the base of the bladder produces the feeling of needing to pass urine more often than before, and constriction of the urethra makes the urinary stream less powerful.

Until fairly recently the only cure for these symptoms was surgery, either from outside the abdomen or via a small telescope-like instrument passed up the urethra. All or part of the prostatic gland was removed, allowing better urinary flow, though often a few weeks significant post-operative discomfort was anticipated. More recently, two types of medication have been introduced, one which shrinks the prostate gland by altering the hormonal balance of the body, the other acting on the muscle of the urinary tract increasing the rate of flow and reducing obstruction.

Whilst in many cases the symptoms are caused by the benign growth of the gland, as they grow older an increasing proportion of men will develop cancer. For most this is entirely non-serious. (80% of 80-year-old men will have a small focus of cancer if the prostate gland is examined under a microscope.) For a few men, however, prostatic cancer is not confined to small areas, but can spread throughout the prostate gland and thereafter to other parts of the body.

Blood tests and special investigations may readily distinguish between benign growth and cancer of the prostate, while the type and severity of urinary symptoms may not. It is therefore prudent for men with increasing problems with their urinary tract to consult their doctor, both to determine the cause of the problem and to have the appropriate treatment which today may well not involve surgery. As the adverts say, 'Don't delay, enquire today'.

□ Dr Max Bayer

Personal correspondence cannot be entered into

... Viewpoint ...

Dangerous talk

The art of communication evolves perpetually in concert with civilized society's advance. While language is essential, the need to transmit it over geographical distances follows close behind.

Shouting always had its followers, but it was soon preferable to memorise or inscribe a message of battles lost and won – then run like hell. Indeed, the Olympic Games claim their origin in this singularly unappealing activity.

Horses merely speeded up the process, whether galloping from Aix to Ghent or opening up the Wild West by Pony Express. Turnpike roads further reigned in the time needed for horse-drawn coaches to trumpet a swift passage for the mails, and enabled the Rothschilds to bank on staying ahead of their Euro competitors.

Other cultures saw the propagation potential of inter-hilltop communication: Red Indian braves smoked their squaws sweet messages back to the wigwam, while stout Englishmen readied beacons throughout the land to warn of an impending Napoleonic invasion. Flag-waving semaphor was as effective on land as at sea. Substitute sound for sight and, within

living memory, church bells warned of danger or heralded victory, as did air-raid sirens.

Railways, a gigantic forward leap in carrying passengers, parcels and the night mails, in turn conjured up the invention of the telegraph, which opened up the telephone's break-through into simultaneous transmission and reception of the spoken word. Radio communications took to the ether and now hurtle through space to bombard an eager conglomeration of terrestrial aerials, cables and satellite dishes.

In this decade nothing has caught the popular imagination more than the opportunity to carry a personal communications transmitter and receiver. Despite extortionally high charges, eight million people in the UK already carry a mobile phone.

But the clever little microwaves which reach out to find us may well present significant dangers. Heavy users could be at risk of contracting high blood pressure, short term memory loss or even cancer. With low radiation mobile phones on the way, surely present users would be well advised to act with caution and prudence.

□ Ronald Channing

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

Afternoon entertainment programme –
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1999

Sun	3	Katinka Seiner and Laszlo Easton accompanied by Malcolm Cottle, piano
Mon	4	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Tue	5	Primrose Powell and Andrew Wells, piano
Wed	6	Rosmata Templeton, soprano, Michael Goldthorpe, tenor and Peter Hewitt, piano
Thur	7	Ilya Ushakov, violin and Yaron Shavit, piano
Sun	10	Anna Morris, violin and Julietta Demetriades, piano
Mon	11	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Tue	12	Abigail Gorton, soprano and Kelvin Lim, piano
Wed	13	Ann Sheffield, cello, David Richmond, violin and Madeleine Whitelaw
Thur	14	Jack Davidoff entertains
Sun	17	Nicholas Brod, piano
Mon	18	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Tue	19	The Geoffrey Whitworth Duo

Wed	20	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur	21	Elizabeth Menezes, soprano, David Menezes, tenor and Justin Bissell, piano
Sun	24	Kerry Gill, soprano, John Taylor, baritone and Charlotte Ellis, piano
Mon	25	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Tue	26	Julie Leyland and Andrew Wills, piano
Wed	27	Helen Blake entertains
Thur	28	Geoffrey Strum and Helen Blake
Sun	31	Suzanne Bezkorvany, cello, Sergei Bezkorvany, violin and Hermoine Goldsmith, piano
Mon	1	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Tue	2	Bernard Wilcox, tenor, Julia Beneti, soprano and Elizabeth Ellwood, piano
Wed	3	Nicola Smedley, soprano and Jan Cunningham, piano
Thur	4	Geraint Parfitt, violin and Andrew Bullough, piano

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Dudley. Ellen Dudley died peacefully in her 95th year. She will be sadly missed by her daughter Karin, her lifelong companion Ruth and friends.

Zeitlin. Gerti Zeitlin (née Stirn) born in Frankfurt, died peacefully at home 1 September 1998, aged 90. A warm, intelligent and dignified human being much loved and sadly missed by all her family and many friends.

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Miscellaneous

Schubert-Mozart concert at Kew. 31 January 3pm. Tickets £5. 0171 435 5199.

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Day Centre

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Societies

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

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Jeckes in Israel

was the name of a programme transmitted by Channel Four at 1pm on Saturday 31 October.

If any reader took a video of it would they, please, contact the Editor of *AJR Information*

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Art Notes

January sees the opening of stunning exhibitions in London of paintings by two of France's greatest artists. Riches indeed! **Portraits by Ingres** at the National Gallery brings together – for the first time outside France – a comprehensive exhibition of paintings and drawings by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867), famous for his paintings of Napoleon and other great figures of his day. Ingres' development is traced from his early student days in Paris, his fruitful years in Rome, to his dazzling portraits of high society women in Second Empire France. Ingres was a superb draughtsman with a wonderful eye for character and a unique talent for capturing feminine beauty. His technical virtuosity, his rhythmic design and his rich glowing colour mark him out as one of the greatest portraitists of the nineteenth century. (January 27 – April 25).

Monet in the Twentieth Century is the Royal Academy's blockbuster, guaranteed to attract the crowds. Some 80 important paintings have been assembled, including enchanting views of Monet's garden at Giverny and atmospheric scenes of London and Venice. Though Claude Monet (1840-1926) is one of the best-loved artists of the nineteenth century, yet many of his paintings were created in the twentieth century. This exhibition concentrates on the extraordinary flowering of his late work which includes some of his greatest and most innovative paintings. The highlight of the exhibition is the group of seven large-scale water-lily panels, some measuring more than 18 feet in length, which he painted in his declining years in his garden at Giverny. These highly decorative works, with their vibrant brushwork, rippling surfaces and translucent colour are marvellously evocative, yet almost abstract, anticipating perhaps the post-war abstract movements. Unmissable. (January 23 – April 18).

Other exhibitions currently on view include **Turner in the Alps** at the Tate Gallery, comprising watercolours and drawings stimulated by Turner's tour of the Alps in 1802. The Whitechapel Art Gallery has an exhibition of one of Germany's leading contemporary artists, **Rosemarie Trockel**, whose imagery is often inspired by anthropology, consumerism and objects of



Madame Mortessier by Ingres, 1780-1867, at the National Gallery

everyday life, while the Barbican is showing sculpture by **Keir Smith** which reflects the influence of the Italian Renaissance.

□ Barry Fealdman

SB's Column

Erich Kästner (1899-1974) who ranks as one of the most original German writers of the century, achieved fame in the early thirties with the novel *Fabian* and his children's classic *Emil und die Detektive*. His unrelenting sarcasm, which often extended into the political sphere, caused him to be banned by the Nazis, and he was forced to write under various pseudonyms. His dramatised novel *Drei Männer im Schnee* is currently playing under the title *Das lebenslängliche Kind* at Vienna's Josefstadt: this, together with a new production of *Pünktchen und Anton* at the Burgtheater remind a new generation of a prolific writer who found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Vienna. The Staatsoper programme for the current season is undoubtedly the most ambitious among continental opera houses. The 56 operas in the repertoire include traditional favourites by Verdi, Wagner, Mozart and Puccini as well as such rarities as Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*, Massenet's *Herodiade* and Verdi's *I Vespri Siciliani*.

Gundula Janowitz, the internationally acclaimed soprano, will be giving a recital of songs by Wagner, Liszt and Schumann at London's St John's, Smith Square on Tuesday, January 19th.

Obituary. Bernhard Minetti, who died aged 93, was considered 'the German actor of the century'. On stage for seven decades, he is reputed to have acted in 450 roles in over 7000 performances. Thomas Bernhard dedicated four of his plays to him; this was strange, since the playwright was fiercely anti-Nazi, whereas Minetti had a record of subservience to the regime □

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Wagner in Jerusalem?

Already in Wagner's own lifetime opinion about him was deeply divided. On the one hand George Bizet wrote: "The charm of his muse is inexpressible. Here are voluptuousness, tenderness, love".

On the other hand Friedrich Nietzsche asked theoretically: "Is Wagner a human being at all? Is he not rather a disease? He contaminates everything he touches - he has made music sick." To Israelis, Wagner and his music have always been deeply repugnant and although excerpts from *Lobengrin* were included in a concert by the Palestine Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini in 1938, Toscanini himself was boycotting the Wagner 'shrine' of Bayreuth. A few months later, as rehearsals for Wagner's *Meistersinger* prelude were taking place in Palestine, news of the *Kristallnacht* reached Tel Aviv, and the Wagner piece was promptly replaced by Weber's *Oberon* overture. The composer's works have not been publicly performed in Palestine or, subsequently, Israel, ever since.

Following the establishment of full diplomatic relations with West Germany in 1966, the management of the Israel Philharmonic decided to lift the ban on Wagner and Richard Strauss. Public outcry, however, forced them to go back on their decision.

In 1981, Zubin Mehta, then director of the Israel Philharmonic, decided to perform the *Liebsteod* from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* as an encore in Tel Aviv. The strategy was designed so that any offended audience members who wished to leave could do so. In the event, however, the reaction was dramatic. Audience members attempted to storm the stage, while the sound of the orchestra was drowned by angry shouting. The show, this time, did not go on.

Zubin Mehta continues to defend Wagner's music today, while stressing that he has no respect "at all" for the man behind the music. Mehta has since been made musical director of the Israel Philharmonic for life.

The year following the eventful concert in Tel Aviv, Israel's state radio lifted its ban on Nazi-connected composers, stating: "It is our duty in a democracy to assure free access to information."

In the 1990s, the works of Richard Strauss have been performed regularly at various events on the Israeli classical music scene, including performances by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. In 1991

Daniel Barenboim, a perennially popular figure in Israel, defended Wagner. A planned concert including Wagner works had to be cancelled, however, after twelve musicians refused to take part and a barrage of letters was received from the public. Richard Strauss, whose links with the Third Reich are less ingrained in the public psyche, is now played in Israel, while Wagner remains taboo.

Opinions vary wildly on the subject. Should the political leanings or activities of an artist completely overshadow their artistic works to the point of being banned in a state? Does the Wagner case rankle particularly painfully in Israel, not because of the composer's own beliefs but, rather, due to the widespread effect of his racially-inspired musical works?

Chopin and Liszt were also antisemites, yet they have never been unperformable in Israel. The whole issue offers serious food for thought.

□ Jane Edwards

Slave labourers' reunion

Holocaust survivor Freddie Knoller returned to Germany for the first time since his liberation from captivity at Bergen-Belsen in 1945, together with fellow AJR members, Rudy Kennedy and Henry Wermuth.

The three former slave labourers joined a reunion of other Jewish internees, survivors of the 15,000 forced to work in appalling conditions on the construction of IG Farben's Buna-Monowitz artificial rubber factory at Auschwitz. Freddie had been rounded up at Drancy, east of Paris, in October 1943. At Buna he heaved 50 kilo bags of cement every day on a starvation diet. Most did not long survive the ordeal.

The International Reunion of Former Slave Labourers' three-day conference in Frankfurt, organised by the Fritz Bauer Institute, attracted 90 participants from Israel, the USA, France, Germany, Belgium and Holland.

Freddie was both moved and impressed by the incredulous responses of German schoolchildren whom they addressed, unable to grasp the inhumanity of their own grandparents' generation. The survivors fixed a plaque to the offices of IG Farben in memory of the many who perished.

□ Ronald Channing

Erich Maria Remarque

Erich Maria Remarque, the centenary of whose birth is now being commemorated, is gradually becoming increasingly accepted as a major German writer.

It is eighty years from the end of the First World War - supposedly the war to end all wars - in which the novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* (*Im Westen nichts Neues*) is set. Remarque's novel has lost none of its impact and none of its relevance.

Born in Osnabrück, he was sixteen when the First World War broke out and was called up for military service in November 1916. He was injured in 1917, the year his mother died. He changed his middle name in memory of his mother.

The Nazis burnt his first two books in 1933 and they deprived him of his German citizenship in 1938. In 1943, his sister Elfriede was executed by the Nazis for resistance activity; a street was named after her in Osnabrück in 1968.

Remarque left Europe in 1939 on the last transatlantic sailing of the 'Queen Mary' before the war. He settled in America and was very much part of the European emigré colony, which included Lion Feuchtwanger, Emil Ludwig, Alfred Döblin, Bertold Brecht, Robert Musil, Joseph Roth, Thomas and Heinrich Mann. These authors were in a foreign country, without readers and without money, and Remarque materially helped his colleagues.

Remarque's exotic companions included Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo. In 1958 he married Paulette Goddard. He died in 1970 in Switzerland, where he is buried.

Although Remarque wrote about a dozen novels, none of the others had quite the success of *All Quiet on the Western Front*. A biography by Wilhelm von Sternburg has been published in Germany, where a large-scale reconsideration of his entire oeuvre is in progress.

□ Gerald Holm

See also programme for 1943 Club.

Gedicht

Und ist jetzt mein Name 'anon'?
Beförderung ist es doch schon?
man wird mich so nennen
ich muss mich bekennen
mein 'ich' ist dem 'id' ganz entflohn!

□ Manfred Landau

Penned after a letter to the Editor was published without attribution.

Russia's red brownshirts

When the Soviet regime disintegrated in the early 1990s the communist movement was faced with the choice of two exits from the old system. One door marked 'social democracy', was the route chosen by the majority of the successor parties in Eastern Europe. The other labelled 'nationalism', was sadly the path taken by the bulk of Russian communists.

In numerous publications their leader, Gennadii Zyuganov, has advanced a heady brew of national-communist ideas. In his view, Russia is nothing if it is not socialist, but his socialism is stripped of the old internationalism that characterised the thinking of the founders of the movement. His writings are, moreover, permeated by conspiracy theories. When polite, he talks in terms of an American-inspired 'new world order' as the greatest threat to Russia, but in less discreet moments he veers towards old ideas of a *Judaeo-Masonic* world conspiracy against Russia, instigated by the money-grubbers of Wall Street. The fact that a disproportionate number of Russia's enormously wealthy oligarchs, like Boris Berezovsky and Vladimir Gusinsky, and their 'reformist' allies (including Boris Nemtsov) are of Jewish descent, provides circumstantial evidence to support his theories. The anti-Russian views of Alfred Kokh, who headed the Russian privatisation agency before being dismissed on corruption charges, add fuel to the fire. He fled to America, where, in an interview, he spoke of Russia as incorrigibly awful, as if he bore no responsibility for its present fate. These people are known in Russia as 'provokers of antisemitism'. A pointer to Berezovsky's 'anti-nationalism' for example, was found in his links with Chechen, rather than Russian, criminal networks.

It has been argued that the Jewish-Caucasian gangster alliance is the main support of the Yeltsin regime, opposed by more 'national' oligarchs who allied with the opposition.

In the 1980s the Pamyat group attained a certain notoriety for their virulent Russian nationalism and antisemitic views. These ideas, given an intellectual gloss by Igor Shafarevich in his infamous article called *Russophobia*, circulated among supporters of the 'Red-Brown' coalition between 1991-93. The whole tendency, however, suffered a setback in October 1993, when the hardliners were defeated and the Russian White House taken by storm. The Yeltsin system, dominant from 1993 to

1998, was based on a certain political etiquette in which antisemitism was deemed unacceptable and only subsisted on the margins of Russian political life.

With the decline of the Yeltsin system, however, the ugly trend once again re-emerged with some force. Already in late 1997 the governor of Krasnodar, Viktor Kondratenko, had voiced anti-Jewish sentiments and Alexander Lebed excluded Judaism from Russia's traditional religions (although he later made good the omission). As Russia's crisis worsened Aleksander Barkashov's traditional 'fascist' party Russian National Unity (RNE), gained increasing support; today indeed it appears to be one of the fastest growing political movements in Russia, with its modified swastika symbol found everywhere.

In late October 1998 Communist Duma deputy Albert Makashov claimed that 'Yids' were responsible for the country's problems and should be rounded up and jailed. He issued the call 'To the grave with all Yids', and expressed the wish to 'take at least a dozen Yids' with him when he died. Instead of being expelled from the communist Duma faction, stripped of his parliamentary immunity and charged under various articles of existing legislation outlawing 'incitement of ethnic tension', the response among his colleagues was remarkably muted. Zyuganov himself did the minimum possible in the circumstances, expressing disapproval but taking no action, while the Duma as a whole could not be prevailed upon to vote for a strongly-worded rebuke. The censure motion was defeated, with most communist deputies voting against or abstaining. In an interview at this time Zyuganov noted that 'There is not a single audience today that does not ask questions about the subject of Jews. And this subject should alarm all of us. It is no secret that the personnel policy followed by Yeltsin has violated the principle of national representation in all our country's law enforcement agencies, the economy, finances and journalism... Today the Russian people feel encroached upon'. He noted that 'there are too many ethnic non-Russians' presenting the television news, serving in the cabinet, and occupying other prominent posts. Jews comprise only 0.5 per cent of the Russian population, while ethnic Russians make up 81 per cent. There is not much left in Zyuganov's thinking of the old communist proletarian internationalism.

Yet in all of this we should be careful. In response to Makashov's statement and Zyuganov's limp response, Berezovsky

called for the CPRF to be banned, while former acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar accused the Communists of turning into Nazis, and argued: 'If Russia wants to remain a democratic country it should ban the Communist Party'. Any attempt to ban a movement with the plurality of seats in parliament and with strong support in the country would, however, put an end to any democracy in Russia.

It is decidedly ominous that the communists can only see a way forward through ethnic conflict. At the same time, calls for them to be banned serve the interests of the oligarchs, who fear renationalisation of assets shamelessly appropriated by themselves.

□ Prof Richard Sakwa
University of Kent

SEARCH NOTICES

Robert End, born 10.1.1905 in Bensheim, emigrated 1939 from Dolni Pocernice, CSR, to London. Last known address (1963): 48 Wilberforce Road, Finsbury Park, N4. Information as to his whereabouts, or respectively, date of death, name and address of executor is sought by Franz Joseph Schaefer, Am Berg 4, 64625 Bensheim, Germany.

Landsberg/Warthe region's Jewish survivors and their families, among them Family Koberstein, are being sought by recent returnee whose maternal grandparents (Lenz) originated from Landsberg (now Gorzow Wielopolski). Please contact Yohanan Grossman, D-12459 Berlin, Plönzeile 37, Germany. Tel: ++49-30-535 1102.

Historian would like to trace **Mrs Löwenstein** (Berlin, Nigel/RSA) and **Mr J Bloch** (Frankfurt/M, London) or any of their descendants, to request use of family correspondence (from the Wiener Library) for doctoral research and obtain written permission from the copyright holders. Please contact Steffen Unverfehrt, c/o Ben Barkow, Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London WIN 2BH. Tel: 0171 636 7247.

Michael Rachlis, architect, lived and worked in Berlin. Emigrated to London 1935 and died 1953. Anyone knowing his life and work please write to Dr Myra Warhaftig, Dessauer Strasse 39, D-10963, Berlin, Germany □

Cooking with Gretel Beer



Yeast cake with plums

Baking a cake is the best antidote for a cold, particularly if it is made with yeast. A warm, slightly steamy kitchen can work wonders in warding off colds and chills – and you'll have a delicious cake to reward you for your efforts. In fact, quantities given make two cakes and you can freeze half the dough for later use.

For the dough:

¼ pint (125ml) milk
 ¾ oz (20g) fresh yeast
 2 oz (60g) caster sugar
 11 oz (300g) strong flour
 pinch of salt
 3 oz (80g) butter
 2 teaspoons vanilla sugar
 2 eggs
 grated lemonrind
 butter & flour for the baking sheets

For the topping:

1½ lbs (650g) plums
 2 tablespoons caster sugar
 ground cloves
 nutmeg
 cinnamon
 vanilla sugar

Heat the milk to lukewarm. Cream yeast with a teaspoon of the sugar in a cup, fill to about two-thirds with lukewarm milk and sprinkle with a teaspoon of the flour. Set in a warm place to prove. Sift remaining flour, salt, vanilla sugar and sugar into a bowl. Set the butter to soften in a warm place.

When the yeast starts to bubble, add it to the flour, work in the remaining milk, eggs, lemonrind and finally the softened butter. Beat well with a wooden spoon or use the dough hook attachment of an electric mixer – or simply your hand – until the dough is smooth and shiny and starts to blister. Cover with a cloth and set to rise in a warm place until nearly doubled in size – about an hour.

Knead the risen dough lightly and divide

Serving the community

B'nai B'rith's largest lodge in Britain, the Leo Baeck London Lodge, has served its members, as well as supporting a much wider spectrum of good causes and communal needs, for more than 55 years. The Lodge regards its prime task as helping both with individual welfare needs and deserving projects, a considerable amount being allocated every financial year for these purposes.

The Lodge meets every Wednesday evening (except during July and August), presenting a full programme of formal and informal cultural and social activities, at its own premises accessibly situated in Swiss Cottage. Recently the Lodge has enjoyed a Brains Trust with four leading personalities on the panel, and among the guest lecturers have been the Editor of the Jewish Chronicle, the Curator of the Tate Gallery and Professor Peter Pulzer delivering this year's Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture.

Ten active committees give consideration to a variety of needs, ranging from those met in old age to those encountered by prospective post-graduate students. New members, both men and women, are most welcome. Please contact the President of the Leo Baeck Lodge, Stuart Willner, on 0181 368 2989, for further details.

□ RDC

into two equal parts. Butter and lightly flour two baking sheets measuring approximately 8 x 11 inches and press out the dough over the surface of each baking-sheet – the easiest way of doing this is to use your hand previously dipped in warm water.

Halve the plums and remove the stones. Cover dough with halved plums, dust very lightly with sugar, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg. leave to rise for about thirty minutes, then bake at Gas Mark 7, 400°F, 200°C for about forty minutes. Dust with vanilla sugar whilst still warm.

Incidentally, it does not matter whether the plums are put on top of the dough before or during the dough's second rising or even if they are placed on top just before the baking sheets are put into the oven. The only difference will be the amount of juice from the plums and this in turn depends on the type of plums used. The best plums are the small blue ones – rather like large damsons which are called *zwetsbken* in Austria and sometimes sold under this name in this country – with variable spellings! □

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Obituary

Norbert Wollheim

ABerliner, N.W. acted as Kindertransport trainmaster in 1938/39 but, with his wife and small child held hostage by the Nazi authorities, he always had to return. The family were deported to Auschwitz where only he survived. After liberation he involved himself passionately in restitution matters. His suit against IG Farben for forced labour resulted in a settlement fund from Farben of over six million dollars, which was distributed among other survivors. He was one of the leaders of the Holocaust survivor group, of which 7000 met together in Jerusalem in 1981.

He also continued his support for the children of the Kindertransports, and I was privileged to work with him and call him friend. He was involved in the first reunion of Kindertransport survivors in North America, and spoke several times on their behalf in Berlin during pension negotiations. He was on the Board of the American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, as well as the World Federation of Bergen-Belsen Survivors.

He will be missed by many.

□ Edward Behrendt

Founder USA Kindertransport Association

Virtue reality

On the night of Kristallnacht in November 1938, synagogues in Germany and Austria were destroyed or damaged beyond repair. Many were of great architectural significance; indeed most were designed by the non-Jewish architects of their day and valued as an integral part of the German-speaking cultural legacy.

A group of students at the Technical University of Darmstadt, near Frankfurt, inspired by Prof Manfred Koob, have re-created three of Frankfurt's lost synagogues using computer-aided-design techniques. Despite a paucity of architect's drawings, plans and photographs, destroyed by those anxious to erase any sign of a vibrant and rich Jewish cultural tradition, it has been possible to bring buildings back to life as three-dimensional models, if only on the screen. The memories of surviving former congregants have proven a most valuable source of information.

The team plan to re-create fifteen of Germany's most imposing synagogues, for which project both government and city support has been forthcoming. However, Prof Koob refuses to accept any funding from Jews in the belief that they should not be asked to pay for that which others destroyed.

□ RDC

A BAKER'S DOZEN: WORDS WITH DIFFERENT MEANINGS

An aide to our very own inter-generational dialogue

Word	First generation	Second/third generation
ACCENT	Pronunciation indicating foreign origin	Emphasis
ALIEN	Non-British UK resident registered with the police	Creature from outer space
BLOOMSBURY	House that served as HQ of refugee welfare agencies	District inhabited by Virginia Woolf's friends
CAMP	Place of detention of torture	Mannered, effeminate
CARDIGAN	Sweater with buttons	Commander in Crimean War
CONVERSION	Process involving baptismal water	Process involving North Sea Gas
COOL	Moderately cold	Elegant
CRICKET	Grasshopper	Game
HUYTON	Notorious internment camp	Harold Wilson's constituency
JOINT	US-based charity	Cigarette filled with illegal substance
STRIKER	Arthur Scargill	Alan Shearer
UNDERGROUND	Illegal opposition	Tube
WICKED	Morally bad	Excellent

FORTHCOMING EVENTS -
JANUARY 1999

- Wed 6 **Wessex Area AJR Group:** psycho-therapist Laurie Phillips gives 'An Introduction to Healing', at a Bournemouth venue, 2.30-4.30pm. Phone Sacha Abrahams on 01202 555 525 for details
- Mon 11 **Ernst Flesch** illustrates his journey to Iran with slides. Club 43, 8pm
- Thur 14 **South London AJR:** Compensation, Finding Your Way Through the Jungle, Norah Gittins & Hilde Ambrose, Lily Montague Hall
- Thur 14 **Lunchtime Recital:** Nili Newman, flute, & Rebecca Holt, piano, play Bach, Fauré & Karg-Elert. Sternberg Centre, 1.15pm, £2
- Sun 17 **Midlands AJR:** Myrna Glass, AJR Outreach Worker, 1pm, £3 inc. lunch. Tel: 0121 373 5603/705 5396
- Mon 18 **Dr Richard Dove,** University of Greenwich. Theatre of War: The Austrian Theatre 'Laterndl'. Club 43, 8pm
- Mon 25 **Richard Grunberger,** Editor of AJR Information, talks on 'Great Antisemites'. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 26 **Prof David Cesarani:** 'Arthur Koestler, a Homeless Mind', Wiener Library, 6.30pm, £3. Admin Sec: 0171 636 7247
- Thur 28 **Lunchtime Recital:** Michael Linsey, piano, plays Liszt, Haydn & Janacek. Sternberg Centre, 1.15pm, £2

February:

- Mon 1 **G Holm,** Erich Maria Remarque. Hundert Jahre (in German). Club 43, 8pm

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club '43, at Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig 01442 254 360
Sternberg Centre for Judaism/Jewish Museum, Finchley, 80 East End Road, N3 2SY. Tel: 0181 346 2288/349 1143
South London AJR. Ken Ambrose 0181 852 0262

NEWSROUND

Berlin Kristallnacht commemoration

President Roman Herzog and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder joined members of the city's Jewish community in a commemoration of the 60th anniversary of Kristallnacht, at which Jewish leader Ignatz Bubis warned of the dangers of growing "intellectual nationalism" and antisemitism. Germany has designated January 27th, the date of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945, as a national day of remembrance.

End of state antisemitism

German-born former Chief Rabbi, Lord Jakobovits, addressing a Kristallnacht memorial gathering in London, said that Jewish communities were now free of state-sponsored persecution. Kristallnacht had marked the beginning of the destruction of European Jewry, but today rights to Jewish practice and culture were widely respected.

Front divided

The ban on France's National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen standing for public office has been confirmed by a Versailles court. He forfeits his seat and is disbarred from standing in next June's European Parliamentary elections. His deputy, Bruno Mégret, plans to take his place and head a list which includes Charles de Gaulle, a grandson of the late president.

Argentina, Nazi refuge

The international Commission for the Clarification of Nazi Activities in Argentina (CEANA) reports that 150 war criminals entered the country as fugitives of Hitler's Third Reich during the Peronist régime in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Jewish sources regard this as a gross underestimate.

Oswiecim's synagogue

Former resident and Holocaust survivor 70-year-old Hirsch Kornreich attended the rededication of the synagogue in the Polish town of Oswiecim, Auschwitz, which was returned to the Jewish community under recent legislation. The infamous death camps were built near the town.

Auschwitz crosses

Polish Catholic fundamentalists, led by Kazimierz Switon, placed religious plaques on the 240 crosses which they erected earlier this year. The Polish Government, after losing a court ruling, has been prevented from taking over the site. □ RDC

Zbaszyn

Zbaszyn is not a well-known name. It is not one of the infamous, gruesome places of mass Holocaust destruction, but it was certainly a few steps on the way – steps which my parents and I had to take without choice. The events which I describe occurred 60 years ago, but I remember them only too clearly.

We were Polish Jewish citizens living in Germany. On 6 October 1938 the Polish Government decreed that Polish passports held by citizens outside Poland would lose their validity, unless certified in Poland when presented there by their holders before the end of October. The clear aim was to deprive some 50,000 Polish citizens, mainly Jews in Germany, of their Polish citizenship.

On 27 October a policeman came to our door in Hagen to deliver a circular addressed to us personally. "Please read this through" he said good-naturedly. My parents read it together, ashen-faced. We would have to be out of Germany in three days, it said.

At the crack of dawn, the police appeared and gave us two hours to get ready for our journey East. We were taken to a small local police station where all the other Polish Jews of the town were arriving.

Rabbiner Abt, schoolmaster and synagogue minister, but not Polish, turned up of his own accord to offer support. Two weeks later, after we had gone, he was imprisoned during Kristallnacht.

At the railway station a train stood ready for us. The officials and the police behaved correctly and even helpfully. The train moved off and the long journey East began, calling at various pick-up points. At Dortmund the platform was teeming with Jews, all loaded with bales of bedding and clothing, perhaps most of their possessions.

Late at night we arrived at the border town of Neu-Benschen. We had to leave the train, a mass of people and their belongings. A young man from our town, Herr Zinnemann, asked me to carry his bag of sandwiches as he had developed a severe pain in his arm. Whilst my parents carried our suitcases, I carried my mother's hat box and Herr Zinnemann's sandwiches. In the customs hall all luggage had to be opened for the most thorough inspection. They examined the hat box but not the sandwiches. Eventually, a group of us was taken to a bus. Herr Zinnemann's arm now

felt much better and he recovered his bag of sandwiches. We later learnt that the bag contained a great deal of money besides the sandwiches. Had the customs men found his money on me my parents and I would have been finished.

We arrived at a road barrier and a border post consisting of a small hut lit by an oil lamp. Two none-too-sober border guards in Polish uniforms were not very pleased to see us. With many an expletive, they collected our passports and let us through the barrier so that we found ourselves in a cobbled clearing on the Polish side of the barrier. We were allowed to find shelter at the adjoining inn, where we sat hunched over tables, trying to get some sleep. Our few marks were just about enough to keep us going with glasses of tea. Most people were quiet, as if resigned to whatever would happen to them. One woman was hysterical because she had become separated from her 13-year-old son.

A few days later we were transported on to the nearest town – this was Zbaszyn. We spent our first night there in a derelict flower mill, sleeping on the floor and making ourselves as comfortable as possible. Many people had been installed during previous days and we claimed a patch within a row of families along one of the mill walls. It was cold, it was dark, it was miserable. The saving grace was the presence of various Polish Jewish organisations which had already rushed to Zbaszyn to help. There were soup kitchens, medical services and clothes distributions.

Since nobody was allowed to leave the town, we simply had to make friends and visit people. The committees organised concerts, calling on whatever talent was locally available.

Finally, in June, the papers required for our emigration to England came through.

En route we made a trip to Hagen to visit friends who were still there. I ran into Helmut Marx from our school. Yes, he said quietly, the synagogue had been burnt down and services took place in the school room. A Yad Vashem list shows Helmut and his family to have been deported.

Just before our expulsion, my mother had bought two new suits and left them to be altered. She had carried the ticket around for the nine months of our time in Zbaszyn. Now, in Hagen, we went to the shop and presented the ticket. The assistant produced the suits, correctly altered, without comment. That's Germany.

□ Martin Berger