

AJR Information

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Don't miss . . .

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Rees-Mogg is wrong!

The EU boycott of Austria for taking Haider's minions into government still draws flak from *The Times*. Ex-editor Rees-Mogg argues that if Communists can hold ministerial office in Paris, Hitler admirers should do so in Vienna. This argument is fallacious because it leaves Austria's historic guilt as Hitler's cradle – and pace-setter of antisemitism – out of account. (Given all this, it is also disappointing that Lord Weidenfeld was one of the few UK personalities prepared to meet the Austrian Foreign Minister on her recent London visit) □

The pitfalls of politics

Along with Shakespeare, Parliament has been this country's greatest contribution to civilisation. If government is a necessary evil – a truism only anarchists will dissent from – then all reasonable people must surely agree that democracy constitutes the 'least bad' form of government.

There are however alternative models of democracy. Britain's mid-nineteenth century Chartists wanted annual parliaments, and in contemporary Switzerland contentious issues are resolved by referendum rather than the votes of elected representatives. More importantly, election to the House of Commons is by the first-past-the-post method whereas many other legislatures – from the Weimar Reichstag to the Knesset and the Italian Parliament – represent(ed) a mirror image of the electorate's political diversity. (The Knesset's unwieldiness stems from the continental provenance of Zionism, and the Weimar Constitution – dubbed 'the most democratic in the world' in 1919 – had been devised by the Jew Hugo Preuss).

If first-past-the-post discriminates against, and inhibits the growth of, smaller parties, proportional representation allows them to proliferate. Such a proliferation necessitates the cobbling together of – inevitably unstable – government coalitions; it also gives strategically placed groups, such as the Orthodox in the Knesset, a leverage disproportionate to their strength in the country.

A country which exhibits the disadvantages of proportional representation in even more acute form is Italy: the Italian republic has had fifty-eight(!) governments since the war. Last month some forward-looking politicians tried to reform this system which makes the conduct of government business resemble driving a car with the handbrake on. Although a majority of Italians who took part in the referendum voted for reform, nothing changed because over half the population couldn't be bothered to turn out to vote.

Voter apathy is one of the bugbears of democracy. At the recent London mayoral election a mere

third of all Londoners cast their ballots, despite the brouhaha surrounding 'Red Ken'.

What lies behind this apathy? Could it be that the man or woman in the street views politicians as careerists only out for number one? It is certainly true that for years now sleaze has hardly ever been out of the political news – but the same could be said of sport which is followed by millions.

Nor are politicians as a breed demonstrably corrupt. The more one reads about such cultural icons as Graham Greene, Benjamin Britten and Picasso (or the rivalry between Olivier and Gielgud) the more one appreciates the sterling character of the last Tory and the present Labour incumbent at Number 10 Downing Street.

Another simplification that must be resisted is the view that politicians like Tony Blair and William Hague engage in bouts of shadow boxing while powerful media machines, owned by the likes of Rupert Murdoch, influence 'hearts and minds'.

In fact media – or any other – tycoons tend to follow where politicians have led, and not the other way round. Murdoch has just appointed a pro-Labour editor to the *News of the World* because he senses that the Tories will lose the next election. (By the same token Krupp started financing the Nazis in 1930 when they showed themselves capable of garnering millions of votes.) □



The Queen discussing the realities of life under Nazi oppression with Auschwitz survivors Esther Brunstein, left, and Tauba Biber when opening the Holocaust Exhibition in London's Imperial War Museum. She is accompanied by IWM chairman, Prof Robert O'Neill. (See report page 16).

Photo IWM

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Jewish community Ombudsman

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The official can be contacted by writing to: The Ombudsman, c/o The Board of Deputies of British Jews, Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NF. Tel: 020 7543 0105 □

Profile



Erwin Brecher

Third career at 79

Born in Budapest in 1914, Erwin Brecher moved with his family to Vienna in 1919 where his father worked as an art dealer. His second language – German – saw him through university education in Vienna, Prague and Brno where he variously studied engineering, mathematics and physics. Being of Czech nationality, he was drafted into the Czech army in 1937 but left for Switzerland in 1938 when Hitler's troops marched into the Sudetenland. Not permitted to work in Switzerland, Erwin made his way to England in early 1939 and – assisted by the CBF – found refuge with a non-Jewish family and employment as a draughtsman. He was able to help his parents and two brothers, who had left Vienna for Paris after the *Anschluss*, to come to England. He also undertook further studies in London.

His Czech passport had enabled Erwin to leave German-occupied Czechoslovakia and enter Britain (as a friendly alien) with relative ease; it was this fact which also saved his immediate family although his distant family were not so fortunate.

When war broke out, Erwin volunteered for the RAF but, because of his technical qualifications, was required to work in a 'reserved occupation' and joined De Havilland to work on the Beaufighter aircraft design. He acquired a British passport in 1943. After the war, he sought, once

again, to fulfil his wish to fly. However by this time he had met his Berlin-born wife to be, Ellen, who gave him a clear choice: flying or marrying her. He wisely chose the latter.

Until the early 1960s, Erwin tried his hand at import/export, in one case arranging a deal with the Turkish Government which led to the repayment to Britain by Turkey of a huge debt which had remained unpaid since before World War I. For the next twenty years or so, he earned his livelihood in the financial world and was a Lloyds underwriter until retiring in 1984. Although he continued with some financial consultancy work, Erwin began to find a life of bridge, chess and holidaying "boring" and at the age of 79, he began a new career writing books on puzzles and scientific subjects, the first being published in 1994.

He now has twenty-seven titles to his credit (fifteen of which have been published) including a stage play and a script being considered by a film production company. On the stocks is a docu-drama telling the story of Nazi Germany's nuclear research programme, the fear of US scientists that the Nazis would win the race to develop the atomic bomb and two rare events which changed the course of history. He undertakes his research at the British Library, in government archives and from the voluminous material on his heavy oak bookshelves.

□ Marion Koebner

The race card

Race came into prominence in the mid-nineteenth century as a pseudo-scientific – but hugely emotion-charged – concept. Contrary to popular belief, it had not always been uppermost in people's minds. In England an admittedly small number of Blacks had been integrated without any friction in Dr Johnson's day. Things got worse in the 1800s when, in response to the abolitionists' campaign, slave trading ship-owners whipped up anti-Black feelings.

A more complex development affected German Jews at around the same time. While, aided by the Liberal *Zeitgeist* – both in economics and politics – their integration into society proceeded apace, newfangled racism thought its time had come with the sudden economic downturn in the 1870s. This was the decade of the Stock Exchange crash, blamed on Jewish speculators, of Wilhelm Marr's coining of the term 'antisemitism', and of Schönerer's dictum '*Was der Jude tut ist einerlei, in der Rasse liegt die Schweinerei*'. (It doesn't matter what the Jew does, his race makes him disgusting.)

Abroad Schönerer had counterparts among the pogrom-minded Russian Slavophiles, as well as the anti-Dreyfusards who founded the *Action Française*. In Britain, too, race became an issue in the 1900s when Parliament passed the Aliens Act.

After the Great War race feelings erupted in the USA, as attested by the rise of Ku-Klux-Klan lynch mobs, and the introduction

of ethnically biased quotas for immigration.

Racism finally reached its murderous apotheosis in Nazi Germany. After 1945, though undermined by the Reich's collapse, it did not disappear with it.

While antisemitism had little to feed on in a partly *judenrein* postwar Europe, anti-Black racism persisted in the American Deep South, and, most notoriously, in colonial (or settler-dominated) Southern Africa. However, from the 1960s onwards Africa shook off both colonial and white settler rule.

Alas, in the process, unscrupulous African leaders whipped up 'reverse' racism. Thirty years ago Idi Amin expelled the Asian minority, who were both wealthier and more enterprising than black Ugandans. Today Robert Mugabe acts similarly towards comparably placed white Zimbabweans in a bid to perpetuate his bloody rule. Appropriately one of his sidekicks glories in the nickname Hitler, and he himself sports the hairy caterpillar version of the trademark Hitler moustache. Alas in playing the race card this kleptocrat with the doctorate has any number of European counterparts. At recent regional elections many Italians followed the Austrian example and voted the anti-immigrant ticket. Hysteria about asylum seekers is currently rising in the UK. But we can at least take comfort from the fact that at opposite ends of the Balkans – the 'powder-keg of Europe' – Croatia, as well as Greece, has lately returned outward-looking anti-racist governments to power.

□ Richard Grunberger

RGs Yiddish ABC (continued)

Goldene medineh (part-German, part-Hebrew derivation) Golden country, i.e. the United States

Hoben chaishek tsu (part-German, part-Russian derivation) To have a yen for

Ich hob dich in bod (German derivation, lit. I have you in the bath house) I despise you

Kvellen (from German *Quelle*, source) To glow with pride. Cf *the Book of Kvell*, a Jewish family album, where the *Trooping of the Kalle* takes pride of place (There is also the time-honoured catch phrase '*Kvell and the world kvells with you – kvetch and you kvetch alone*')

Leibtzudekel (from German for body covering) sleeveless vest with fringes worn by the Orthodox

Meloche (Hebrew derivation) craft or trade, as in *viel meloches und wenig broches* Jack of all trades, master of none

Nekome (from Hebrew *nakamah*, revenge) As in *a nekome oyf di vantzen, as das boiz brent* A revenge on the bedbugs when the house burns down of cutting your nose off to spite your face

Oysgemutshet worn out

Parnosse (Hebrew derivation) livelihood. Not to be confused with Parnassus, the realm of the muses

Rishes (from the Hebrew *rosche*, evildoer) antisemitism. Not to be confused with *embarras de richesse*, an embarrassment of riches

Shmirt zich oys di schich (Lit. wipe your shoes clean) You're welcome! □

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Reviews

Kinder's lifetime odyssey

RESCUED, A 60 YEAR JOURNEY,
Golden Reed Productions, London.

Any attempt to recapture on film the urgency and pathos of the exodus of nearly 10,000 children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia – the majority Jewish – can be no easy task, especially within a limited budget.

Rescued, a 60-year journey, relates the poignant story of the children of the Kindertransport who were offered refuge in Britain in 1938 and 1939. The film's director, Sue Read, and co-producer and editor, Jim Goulding, opted to concentrate on testimonies from a number of adults recalling their experiences as children, straight to camera. Their narrative is interspersed with reconstructions of sad partings on steam-obscured railway station platforms where parents bade heart-rending farewells, and in tearful carriages as lonely children travelled across Germany, the Netherlands and the Channel to find sanctuary and helpful 'bobbies' on arrival in England in marked contrast to the brutality of their uniformed German counterparts.

The concept for a film dedicated to the Kindertransport originated from a 1997 conference on emigration from Munich attended by Bea Green. She subsequently engaged the interest of film-maker Sue Read who made a video of the 1999 Kindertransport reunion in London. Although the reunion does not feature in *Rescued*, the invaluable contribution made by the reunion's organisers, Bertha Leverton, David Jedwab and Bea Green, is acknowledged in the film's credits.

As the story of the rescue unfolds and the human tragedy revealed through the Kinder's eyes, comprehension of the enormity of the parents' decisions, to offer their children some chance of a future at the expense of their own, chills any observer familiar only with civilised social custom. Among the featured witnesses (including several AJR members) are Dr Alfred Bader, Susi Bechhofer, Lord Dubs, Fred Dunston, Fred Durst, Ernst Frankel, Dr Amy Gottlieb, Warren Mitchell, Dame Simone Prendergast (daughter of Elaine Blond) and Chazan William Usher; Lord Attenborough, whose family adopted two girls stranded by the outbreak of war, delivers a dignified commentary.

Rescued does not make use of an orchestral soundtrack to assist in stirring the emotions, nor does it incorporate more than minimal archival material from the Third Reich; both are understood to command prohibitively high fees. Rather it remains true to the recollections of the Kinder, sensitively if necessarily edited.

While it is anticipated that *Rescued* will be premièred on one of the major television channels, this is only to be the beginning of its use and influence. Its backers and supporters, Lord Attenborough not the least among them, intend *Rescued* to become a key component of Holocaust and refugee studies curricula in schools, colleges and universities, for it is aimed at young people who can relate to the children whose drama is portrayed. It will be translated into several languages and remain in continual use as irrefutable testimony.

□ Ronald Channing

Artists and aryanisers

Irene Lawford-Hinrichsen, *MUSIC PUBLISHING AND PATRONAGE, CF PETERS: 1800 TO THE HOLOCAUST*. Edition Press, 2000. £25.

This is a comprehensive history of the Leipzig music publishers CF Peters told through the story of two remarkable men, Max Abraham and his nephew Henri Hinrichsen (the author's grandfather). Founded in 1800 the firm was connected with Beethoven and other important composers. The arrival of the innovative Dr Max Abraham in 1863 as a partner was an important milestone. Abraham, the son of a businessman and Mayor of Danzig, grew up in a wealthy cultured home, and later studied law and banking in Bonn, Paris and London. With the huge advances in printing technology in the middle of the 19th century and Abraham's business acumen, 'Edition Peters' was able to introduce first-class editions of the Classics at reasonable prices (*gut und billig*). Abraham also sought out contacts with influential musicians and composers of the time including Brahms, Schumann, Bruckner and Liszt, and developed an especially close friendship with Edvard Grieg. In 1894 Abraham founded the Peters Music Library in Leipzig, a free reference library open to all, which housed thousands of books and original manuscripts.

He was succeeded by Henri Hinrichsen who expanded the business further by becoming more international and developed CF Peters' representation in the USA. Hinrichsen collaborated with the significant composers of his time such as Max Reger (who became a close friend), Mahler, Schoenberg and Hans Pfitzner (the admirer and supporter of Adolf Hitler). The problems surrounding the publications of Mahler's 5th Symphony and Schoenberg's Five Orchestral Pieces are discussed in some detail in the book. It shows Hinrichsen's exasperation with Mahler, who, after the publication of the symphony, constantly revised the work after every performance.

In the final part of the book the story darkens. It tells movingly of the rise of the Nazis, the 'aryanisation' of CF Peters, and the eventual murder of Henri Hinrichsen in the gas chambers of Auschwitz in September 1942.

Because of Hinrichsen's standing as a music publisher and as a respected member of the establishment, he probably naïvely thought he would (as the author politely puts it) 'be spared the excesses of the regime'. But by 1939, the transfer of ownership (*Arisierung*), really a form of pillage, had been completed. The new owners were Dr Johannes Petschull and Dr Kurt Hermann, both full card-carrying members of the Nazi party. Henri Hinrichsen's entire wealth was confiscated in 'taxes' levied against Jews who sought to emigrate. The elderly Henri and his wife Martha eventually managed, after cruel delays and endless humiliations, to obtain visas for Belgium. The new Nazi owner of the publishers, Dr Petschull, had ignored pleas to speed up the necessary paperwork involved in their family's applications. The Germans invaded Belgium in May 1940, the frail Martha died in September 1941, and the first Jews from Belgium were deported to Auschwitz in August 1942.

After the war, Walter Hinrichsen (the middle child of the family), who had emigrated to the USA in 1934, returned to Germany to reclaim the business and naturally wanted to replace Dr Petschull. Because Petschull had hidden important items during the war, a deal was done in which Petschull could continue as a partner in the company if he located the hidden items. Astonishingly, the 98-year old Dr

Continued on next page

Cont.

Petschull still heads CF Peters in Frankfurt.

The book has clearly been meticulously researched and tells in exhaustive detail the changing fortunes of the family dynasty – with only the chapter on Edvard Grieg being perhaps a little too long. Also, the Austrian composer Anton Webern is erroneously described as Jewish. (Indeed Webern's youngest daughter Christine was an enthusiastic member of the *Bund deutscher Mädchen*.) One hesitates to criticize the author's over-lenient attitude towards the Nazis, since after all she is writing about members of her own family, but I feel she is being legalistic when on the final page of the book, she states, without qualification, that the aforementioned Dr Petschull is one of the rightful owners of the company. These reservations apart, this book does offer many interesting insights into the interaction between the *ideals* of creative artists and the *business* of music publishing. It also tells the human story of a successful and long respected family cruelly persecuted and its world destroyed. □ *Nicholas Gotch*

Kunstraub

Jonathan Petropoulos *THE FAUSTIAN BARGAIN*, Penguin Press, London, 2000. £20.

It still comes as a shock to discover the sheer number of works of art which the Nazis plundered from their victims during the time of the Third Reich. And it is equally sickening to know that many of the erudite and sophisticated elite of the art world, who collaborated with their rapacious rulers over 50 years ago to perpetrate this most appalling act of theft, escaped virtually unpunished.

Historian Professor Jonathan Petropoulos, who is also Research Director of the US Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets, has provided a well-researched and forthright account of the events behind this wholesale pillaging and names some of the museum directors, dealers, critics, historians and artists whose actions allowed 'the most extensive looting campaign in history' to happen.

Millions of works of art were involved. Figures mentioned by Petropoulos give an idea of the scale of the theft: 21,000 works of art confiscated from French Jews; 17,000 'degenerate' works, mainly by Jewish or modern artists, taken from German state galleries; the Rothschilds' collection in

Vienna worth around 70 million Reichsmarks; and 8,000 works acquired for and stored in the Führermuseum, planned to be Germany's prime collection. These figures are just a sample. A bigger impression comes from a claim – not in Petropoulos' book – that there are more than 110,000 works of depredated art still missing, worth anything between \$10 billion and \$30 billion.

Many of the works taken by the Nazis were 'aryanised', a euphemism for being stolen from Jews. Some were destroyed as they fell outside the Nazis' own approved (but boring) '*völkisch*' style of art. But many others found their way abroad, marketed under Nazi orders and efficiently organised to great personal profit by the dealers who were directly in cohort with men like Hitler, Göring and Himmler.

Perhaps the saddest part of Petropoulos' account is the way many of those who signed up for this Faustian bargain were later rehabilitated and went on to lead comfortable lives and successful careers. The blame for much of this must rest with the Allies after the war. According to Prof. Petropoulos, while the Allies did an admirable job of returning many works to their rightful owners, they did not seek punishment for the perpetrators. Many obviously guilty men were tried after the war. But with the establishment of the German state in 1949, the Allies handed over the courts to German jurisdiction, and judgements then became much more lenient. Within months, said one observer, 'Nazi after Nazi got off scot-free or with a ridiculously low fine because the courts were impotent or dishonest.'

During the postwar period, many of those who collaborated with the Nazis were able to combine their wealth, intelligence and social and business skills to revive their careers. They kept in touch with, and protected, each other. Some, it is believed, ran a private market where plundered works they had managed to hide changed hands with trusted customers, while others were smuggled to Switzerland and 'laundered'. As one (innocent) Nazi art plundering expert contends, they 'used what they stole as their pension.'

Some, however, paid the price of compromising their ethical and moral standards. A small number of them, conscious of their misdeeds, committed suicide. For them, their pact with the devil was no bargain.

□ *Stuart Gilles*

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Letters to the Editor

ECUMENICAL PONTIFF

Sir – Your excellent leading article in the May issue reminded me of the story of Schachne Hiller in Martin Gilbert's *The Holocaust*, which also appears in much greater detail in Yaffa Eliach's *Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust*.

In 1942 Helen Hiller contrived, just in time, to smuggle her two-year-old son Schachne out of the Cracow Ghetto, knowing that she and her husband were doomed. She handed him to a kindly, childless Catholic couple, the Yakowitches, telling the wife: "I want my son to be brought up a Jew" and this she promised to do. However as the child grew older and Mrs Yakowitch grew fonder of him, she felt she should have Schachne baptised. But she was troubled by her promise and decided to consult her parish priest who had a reputation for wise counsel and trustworthiness. When she told him what she had promised, he firmly told her the child should continue in his Jewish faith according to his parents' wishes and refused to consider performing the ceremony. Schachne did survive and had a successful career in America, becoming, as his mother had hoped, "proud of his Jewish heritage" – and ever grateful to Mrs Yakowitch.

The name of the priest who had only recently been ordained was Karol Wojtyla – your penitent pontiff.

Deddington,
Oxon

Ralph Elsley

UNCIVIL CIVIL WARRIORS

Sir – You engage in Haredi-bashing and do not give a balanced view. The majority of Haredim (God-fearing) in Israel are not as extreme as the inhabitants of Mea She'arim, many of whom have lived in Jerusalem since long before Herzl proclaimed his vision of a Jewish State. They are devout and do not engage in crime. Most are poor because they prefer to serve God to seeking wealth.

In the eyes of the ultra-Haredim, Israel is a Zionist state of Hebrew-speaking heathens. It is true that they wish to impose their way of life on co-religionists, because they sincerely believe this to be for their

benefit. If several people are in a boat and one makes a hole "only under his own seat", all will drown.

After the Six-Day War in 1967 when the Israeli Defence Forces miraculously defeated all neighbouring foes, even non-religious Israelis concurred with "Not by the strength of my hand, but by the hand of God" was this victory achieved.

In the Mussaf Amidah on the festivals, (religious) Jews recite "Because of our sins we were expelled from our country and exiled from our land." If this tragic event had not occurred, all subsequent persecutions could not have happened: the Martyrs of York, the Crusades, the expulsion from Spain, the Russian pogroms and the Holocaust.

London N15

Henry Schragenheim

Sir – Don't you know that Mea She'arim is not only home to ultra-orthodox Israelis but also to the followers of Rabbi Hirsh, a small sect who have aligned themselves with Yasser Arafat, do not recognise the State of Israel and use every opportunity to demonstrate their allegiance to Palestinian rule in Jerusalem?

Your offensive contention is a slap in the face to every orthodox/ultra-orthodox Jew in Israel who is a loyal subject of the Jewish State, unless you make it clear beyond any misunderstanding that there is an abyss of a difference between them and the followers of Rabbi Hirsh.

Wembley Park
Middx

R. Willers

'UNITS ARE FRIENDS'

Sir – Help comes from the most unexpected quarter. For years I have been making fruit wine and puzzling how to convert the liquid concentrate sold in tins weighing 1 lb into the pints quoted in recipes. Now the Science Notebook (May) has revealed that 280 cu.ins is one gallon, a figure I have never seen quoted anywhere before. Maybe this monthly should be renamed the 'Learned Journal' after the article on the origins of the decimal system.

Actually not all Europeans took to kilos

and metres. Fruit and veg on Berlin markets were sold by the Pfund, abbreviated lb, and in halves and quarters of that unit (actually ½ or 10% more than the British pound). The German slide gauge from my slave labour camp days has two scales, the mm to an accuracy of 25 thousandths, and the Zoll to 1/128th and no concession to metrication there. The Zoll is actually an inch and was used commonly in heavy industry, particularly in threads, such as the Whitworth.

Ipswich

Frank Bright

Sir – Even Napoleon did not dare to metricate time, and so we are stuck with the Babylonian 12 hour day, and 60 minutes per hour (5 x 12 = 60) the combination of the 5 human fingers, if the thumb is included, and the "duodecimal" system which is based on the figure 12. Had the post-Napoleon French Academy been a little more foresighted, *that* is the system they should have picked, rather than the decimal system, based on two human hands, hence the Roman V = one hand, and the Roman X = two hands!

Mercifully, time was never tampered with and we can refer to half, or quarter of an hour, knowing that the resultant 30 or 15 minutes can be easily sub-divided further.

And then there is the biblical 7-day week. I believe that the early Bolsheviks tried to metricate the week, but a "day of rest" after 9 days of work was found objectionable, and having a 5-day week gave the workers too much time off! So they reverted to the traditional Sunday after 6 days of work!

London N6

HG Stevens

THE AGE REVOLUTION

Sir – What the Chancellor ignores is that most of us remain sufficiently *compos mentis* to prefer a regular sum in our bank account to deal with as we think best instead of being told that *x* is for heating, *y* is for the TV licence and 75p is our pocket money. Our National Insurance contributions were based on earnings, not on some nominal national index which we now know that governments in the '60s and '70s manipulated.

Gordon Brown is, I am certain, a kindly godfatherly type but in 6 or 10 years' time, he will give way to one Michael Xavier Portillo. Whilst the Tories were the party more willing to care for the underprivileged for most of the 19th century, and

Harold MacMillan, in our time, was not too bad, since 1979 the Conservatives have changed tack and have pursued, and since 1997 promoted, a tax policy of transferring benefits from the poor to the rich so that without the protection afforded by statute, we can only expect increasing hardships from them.

Saffron Walden

Francis Deutsch

WAY BEYOND HIS KEN

Sir – We had a Robertson jam factory in Catford. Due to Ken's obsession with gollywogs, the Lewisham Council ordered them to take their trademark down from the front of the factory. When Robertsons refused to do so, the Council closed them down with the loss of 300 jobs.

London NW4

A Saville (Mrs.)

LIFE CERTIFICATES

Sir – Having waited until most of the refugees are elderly before issuing any kind of compensatory payments, visits to their hometowns as guests of the State, or any pensions (and then only after undergoing the most arduous administration procedures), I see now that Austria and Germany plan to make it even more difficult for elderly people to claim their meagre pensions. Most people have reasonable access to doctors, solicitors or bank personnel; the Austrian Embassy, DSS offices, police stations etc. are rather harder for them to access.

The continuation by the German, Austrian and Swiss authorities in issuing more and more paperwork to determine those people "entitled" to any/further compensation drags out what they have been required to do by other authorities, until such a time when there are no more survivors to deal with these questions themselves.

London N14

Rita Hockman

GERMAN PENSION

Sir – I have just come across Mrs A. Kirschen's letter "Euro Complaint" (January issue). I fully share her anxiety of the ever-decreasing amount of the monthly German pension due to the conversion from Deutschmark to Euro.

When and where is it going to end? We may end up with a zero pension.

Middx

H.O.

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

Sir – When will we learn to be tolerant? When will the media learn to write positive articles? *AJR Information*, ('Way beyond his Ken' and 'The penitent Pontiff') under the actual Editor, does nothing else but stir up the feelings of old people instead of writing pleasant articles about nice things which also happen every day in this world.

Wembley Park

Rolf Weinberg

Middx

BERLIN EXHIBITION

Sir – Members from Berlin may wish to know of an important exhibition 'Juden in Berlin 1938 – 1945', which Bundeskanzler Schroeder opened on the significant date of 8 May.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to the opening ceremony, and can recommend anyone visiting Berlin this summer to see this very moving exhibition, which tells the stories of survivors and displays fascinating relics of the period. The exhibition is at the Centrum Judaicum in Oranienburgerstrasse, Berlin, and runs until 20 August, but this date may well be extended, as attendances have been high following excellent reviews in the Berlin press.

London SW3

Ruth Wing

ENGLISH AS SHE IS WRIT

Sir – Today I passed the All Aboard shop in Cricklewood Broadway where I saw a label on a settee with the words 'special offer price £90 – Three piece sweet'.

I wonder whether they supply custard with it?

London N12

Ernest Brown

THANK YOU

Sir – I wish to thank you for having made it possible through your kind offices for a former teacher, Mrs Karoline Jahn, now living in England, to get in touch with my sister Renate and me just in time for us to congratulate her on her 90th birthday.

She used to teach us at the Carlebach Schule in Leipzig until the school was ransacked on Kristallnacht.

It so happens that my sister and I have recently received an invitation from the Mayor of Leipzig to visit the city for the first time since 1939.

Eastcote, Middx

Walter Weg

SEARCH NOTICES

Anna Breier, born London 1946/1947, daughter of Sabina Breier (born Leipzig), niece of Karl Breier. Sought by her aunt Irmgard Breyer, Bldg. 1, Apt. 311, 9537 Weldon Cir., Tamarac, Florida 33321-0818. USA.

Carl Georg Leburg, born Strasbourg July 1878. Brother of Julius Leburg. Last known address in 1930s: 48 King's Court, Forty Lane, Wembley Park, Middx or Heidelberg. Descendants please contact Barbara Algaze née Leburg, 3306 Coolidge Ave, Los Angeles, California 90066 or Algaze@aol.com

Heaton Road Hostel, Manchester. Kurt Strauss, Ernest Weinberg, Rudi Moll (Molle?), Werner Katz, Oskar Levy (now Lawton), Hans Salomon, Guenter Growald, Theo (Joe?) Hartmann, Helmut Sonnenfeld all left Burgerwes Haus, Amsterdam May 1940 via Liverpool for Manchester. Contact Lou (Ludwig) Adler, 1565 Coralwood Court, Decatur, Ga. 30033, USA. 001 404 633 3416. Email: omiadler@bellsouth.net

Hanna Rosenberg (born 1928), left Baumanngasse, Vienna for Maida Vale, London 11/1/39 with her mother Gabriele and **Inge Schrecker** (born 1928), left Hansalgasse, Vienna for London 10/5/39 with her parents Georg and Elsa. Both sought by former school friend Hedwig Millian, Tivoligasse 63, A-1120 Vienna.

Leipzig lawyers Information about the following pre-war lawyers sought for an exhibition to be staged in Leipzig: Jakob Braude (b. 14.12.1902, Fürth), Daniel Cohn (b. 3.6.1881, Tuchel), Leon Dressler (b. 25.9.1895, Tarnopol), Walter Herbert Franke (b. 6.8.1893, Leipzig), Wilhelm Harmelin (b. 8.11.1900, Leipzig), Marianne Hauptmann (b. 5.11.1905, Leipzig), Alfred Jacoby (b. 11.9.1893, Leipzig), Arthur Kaufmann (b. 8.11.1901, Leipzig), Richard Lentscher (b. 5.12.1903, Stuttgart), Heinrich Lewin (b. 27.10.1901, Leipzig), Adolf Lilienthal (b. 30.9.1890, Münster), Bruno Mannes (b. 11.4.1899, Öderan), Ernst Meyerowitz (b. 28.2.1910, Königsberg), Kurt Sabatzky (b. 23.4.1892, Köslin), Robert Schless (b. 28.11.1901, Leipzig), Herbert Strauss (b. 22.6.1900, Leipzig) and Paul Zander (b. 25.5.1884, Leipzig). Contact Hubert Lang, Rechtsanwalt, Lortzingstr. 12, D-04105 Leipzig. Tel: 0049 341 2115173 □

AJR Reports

KINDER'S FIRST AJR GET-TOGETHER



Photo: Ronald Channing

Members of Kindertransport, the AJR's special interest group met for the first time at the AJR Day Centre in West Hampstead and enjoyed an excellent three-course luncheon. They were greeted by KT-AJR organiser David Jedwab, above, who emphasised that the benefits of KT-AJR membership included regular meetings at the Centre. Bertha Leverton, founder of RoK, met many Kinder for the first time since last year's reunion.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Brighton and Hove

Cyril Jacobs, a member of the Board of Deputies and retired executive of Marks & Spencer, told how in his capacity as editor of Marks & Spencer's newsletter for their retired Staff Association, he followed up an announcement of the burial at Bournemouth Jewish Cemetery of a former staff member. From a son who attended the funeral he discovered that the mother had escaped from the Warsaw Ghetto thanks to Oskar Schindler. After the war, she made her way to England via Japan where she married a non-Jew. All three sons were Barmitzvah, but no further information was available.

Although no-one in his audience was able to answer Cyril Jacobs' request for further information, the ensuing discussion illustrated the value of monthly meetings. Any reader able to shed light on the life of the late Lina Willis, please contact Myrna Glass at AJR head office.

□ Rudi Simmonds

Next meeting 17 July.

Manchester

The next meeting is on Sunday 2 July at 2 pm at the Morris Feinmann Home, 178

Palatine Rd., Didsbury, Manchester 20. John Chillag will speak on 'How to find documentation of the Holocaust and Nazi era'. Refreshments served after the meeting □

Pinner

Annette Saville, an accomplished musician, experienced teacher and a member of Pinner group, took us 'Round the World' on her piano starting at her Vienna home 'City of my Dreams' (and my nightmares!) and ending up in London with 'Lambeth Walk' and 'I'm a Londoner' as she has become. With seemingly effortless ease, she whisked us across international borders as she recalled much-loved tunes such as the German 'Lily Marlene', Czech 'Beer-barrel polka', Russian 'Volga Boat Song' and a selection from 'Fiddler on the Roof'. Of course we visited 'Jerusalem' but also New York 'Broadway', the West Indies, South America and Australia 'Waltzing Matilda' before it was time for tea.

□ Walter Weg

The next meeting will be on Thursday 6 July: 'Chicken soup and all that' by (medical) Dr Stewart Drage.

Bournemouth break

From the moment we 38 elderly ladies departed from Cleve Road to the moment we returned a week later, it was a time of total relaxation and freedom from even the smallest worries and responsibilities. 38 elderly ladies means 38 different characters with differing moods and expectations. Every single one of us got our share of love and attention from Sylvia and Renée who accompanied us.

The week would not have been the same without David's skilfully arranged quiz and Bingo evenings and his witty and good-natured company. Bournemouth is as beautiful as ever and we were extremely lucky with the weather.

My unreserved and sincerest thanks go to Sylvia and Renée for their constant patience and unfailing good humour. Can we please start making plans for next time?

□ Alice Wickham

Garden Party

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Tuesday	11	July
Thursday	20	July
Wednesday	26	July
Tuesday	1	August

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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.

Member's award

Believed to be the first Jewish woman – and certainly the first German refugee – to be so honoured, Glasgow resident Lore Lucas has been awarded a long service medal by the Women's Royal Voluntary Service in which she has served for more than 20 years.

Born in Germany in 1920, after training as a nurse in Switzerland in 1938, Lore came to Britain and dedicated her life to helping others in a most unselfish and unobtrusive way. Married to the late Reinhold Lucas – also a refugee from Germany and a Holocaust survivor – Lore's main interests are playing bridge and doting on her granddaughter Gillian.

□ Peter Walt Rodney

Life certificates

– a clarification

The notice published in the June issue should read as follows:

For those receiving an Austrian pension, a life certificate (*Lebensbestätigung*) will be recognised by the Austrian pension authorities only if signed and stamped by the Austrian Embassy (London), an Austrian Consulate (Birmingham, Edinburgh and Newcastle-upon-Tyne), a police station, a DSS office, a municipal authority (councillor) or notary public. Signature by solicitors, banks, doctors or clergy is not acceptable.

A housebound pensioner may obtain a letter signed and stamped by a medical practitioner stating he/she is alive on that date. The letter, together with the life certificate (which must be signed by the pensioner but **not** by the medical practitioner) should be sent to the Embassy in London for authentication and forwarding to the pension authority.

For those receiving German pensions, a life certificate (*Lebensscheinigung*) may be signed and authenticated only at the German Embassy, a police station or by a notary. Signature by solicitors, banks, doctors or clergy is not acceptable. **The reverse of the form should always be checked as the requirements of individual pension authorities vary.**

A housebound pensioner may take the same action as described above for Austrian housebound pensioners.

□ AJR Social Services Department

... Viewpoint ...

Playing the game

When Sir Henry Newbolt penned his paean epitomising public school games as ideal training for acquiring the military virtues, he would have comprehended neither the pounds, the passion, nor the violence invested in today's sporting contests.

Those whose formative years following WWII coincided with a golden age in British sport, witnessed our national cricket and football teams continuing the victories won by 'England' in two world wars through ritualised conflict on the playing fields. Their heroic exploits became extensively reported on the back pages of national newspapers, while BBC television introduced the thrill of the game into our living rooms on a magical small black and white screen. A whole new genre of commentators painted colour on to the monochrome picture, among the best John Arlott, EW Swanton and Brian Johnston.

England's sporting heroes were expected to win everything, and they often did. The incomparable skills of Len Hutton and Denis Compton – whose winning sweep at the Oval for the Ashes remains unforgettable – with Alec Bedser trundling in to bowl his medium-paced

swingers. Peter May and Ted Dexter were class batsmen who could be relied on to make runs, Fred Trueman and the late Brian Statham gave us true pace bowling, while Jim Laker and Tony Lock routed the Australians on a sticky wicket.

On the football pitch too it was assumed that England had the best team in the world. The glory days after the war saw the incomparable Stanley Mathews, Billy Wright, Tom Finney, Nat Lofthouse and Alf Ramsey, but their reign was ended and national pride shocked when Hungary and its star player Puskas decisively defeated England and introduced postwar Britain to other nations' sporting prowess. England's World Cup win over Germany in 1966 proved their last great achievement of the century.

Despite media hype, our national cricket team have long been outclassed by virtually all former colonial students of the game. England's football success in defeating the old enemy in Euro 2000, after an interval of 34 years, masked a second-rate spectacle. Only on Continental streets do England's fans continue to fight the battles of WWII, knowing little and caring less for the immeasurable benefits of a new European order.

□ Ronald Channing

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JULY/AUGUST 2000

Afternoon entertainment programme –

Sun 2 KAFFEE KLATSCH – Live music with Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton – BY TICKET ONLY

Mon 3 KARD & GAMES KLUB

Tue 4 Hanna Yaffe entertains

Wed 5 THE KENTERTAINERS

Thur 6 Tricia Dibb, soprano, accompanied by Michael Heaton, piano

Sun 9 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

Mon 10 KARD & GAMES KLUB

Tue 11 Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton, accompanied by Peter Gellhorn, piano

Wed 12 Maire Halliday & John Halliday, accompanied by Michael Heaton, piano

Thur 13 Viola & Piano, Katrin Gilbert & Stephen Baron

Sun 16 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

Mon 17 KARD & GAMES KLUB

Tue 18 Jo Parton, soprano, accompanied by Lewis Lev, piano

Wed 19 Amanda Palmer, soprano, accompanied by Marek Dabrowski, Piano

Thur 20 Margaret Gibbs, piano

Sun 23 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

Mon 24 KARD & GAMES KLUB

Tue 25 Alison Wheeler, soprano, accompanied by Angus Cunningham, piano

Wed 26 Ilya Ushakov, violin, accompanied by Yaron Shavit, piano

Thur 27 Jenny Kossew entertains on accordion

Sun 30 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

Mon 31 KARD & GAMES KLUB

Tue 1 The Frowde family entertain, accompanied by June Moore, Piano

Wed 2 Angela Arratoon, accompanied by Eldad Neumark, piano

Thur 3 ONE-MAN BAND – Freddy Hill

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Heinsheimer. Liesel Heinsheimer aged 88, died peacefully in her sleep at her Chiswick home on 23 May. The cremation took place on 25 May at Golders Green Crematorium. The widow of Dr S I Heinsheimer, she is much missed by her daughter Ruth, son-in-law Peter, grandsons Simon and Tom, soon-to-be daughter-in-law Karina, and her many dear friends in the community. The family would particularly like to thank her two wonderful carers, Joan Wallace and Kay Griffin, who helped her retain her dignity and independence to the end.

Lawrence. Kenneth Lawrence died on 30th January aged 86. Greatly missed by Else, his loving wife of 65 years, daughter Eve, son-in-law Arnold, three grandchildren, family in the UK and abroad and friends in Oxford.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS JULY 2000

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| Sun | 2 | Religious opposition & paternal conflict in Halevy's La Juive.
Dr Diana Hallmann,
Kentucky University.
Spiro Institute 8pm.
020 7431 0345
Entartete Musik.
Concert St John's, Smith
Square. 7.30pm. Jewish
Music Festival. |
| Sun | 2 | Guided walk: Jewish City of London.
10.15am. 020 8349 1143 |
| Mon | 3 | Facets of Jewish Education in the 20th Century. Lucie Kaye-Schachne. Club 43.
7.30pm. 01442 254360 |
| Tues | 4 | Jews & cabaret.
Alexandra Valavelska
talks and sings. Leo
Baeck College. 8pm.
020 8349 4525 |
| Wed | 5 | Rivka Golani in conversation.
Hungarian cultural
centre. 5.30pm.
020 7240 6162. |
| Sun | 9 | Jewish culture day at the Dome. 11am-6pm.
0870 606 2000. |
| Mon | 10 | "Gemütliches Beisammensein" with
music. Club 43. 7.30pm. |
| Fri | 14 | East of Eden. |
| till Oct | | Watercolours by Moish
Sokal. Sternberg Centre,
020 8349 5654 |
| Until Oct | 29 | Taxi Jewish Taxi Drivers & the London cab trade. Jewish
Museum, Finchley.
0208 349 1143. |

Art Notes

Tate Modern Opening. A power station once fated to be demolished, has now transmuted into Tate Modern. It is a vast space, straddled from above by a gigantic 30ft steel spider created by **Louise Bourgeois**. At ground level the turbine room is cold and as steely as Bourgeois' high steel towers, which suggest a hangover from the building's industrial past. Its essence is preserved through the tinny, rusty, clonking sounds of the factory.

The sense of art being turned inside out is enhanced by the grey brick, tall steel pipes, black metal girders and the entire visceral, guttural essence of the place. The post-modern touch is lent by the obligatory green opaque glass behind which the escalators ascend to the four thematic galleries upstairs. They are: **Landscape/ Matter/ Environment; History/ Memory/ Society; Still Lives; Nudes.**

Many concepts seem designed to demonstrate that art can come from nothing. Detritus, rubbish, industrial filings are used to create form. **Cesar Baldaccini** uses filings of industrial processes. The **Still Life** gallery shows the radical innovation this form has taken over the past century. There's a range of artists from **Picasso** to **Anthony Caro** and **Rosemary Trankel**; **Cezanne's** water jugs to **Donald Judd's** blue faced stacks in steel, aluminium and paper. **Tony Cragg's** *Stacks* comprises a mixed media stack of various unexpected materials which manage to convey an organic cohesion not unlike **Damian Hirst's** dissected cow.

Many artists here seek to explore the relationship of everyday objects and their owners. **Arman Fernandez's** 1960's woman – said to be based on his wife – takes a grandfather clock base on which he places a glass box for her head containing tamipax, broken mirrors, bottles and other rubbish. A misogynist, if ever I saw one! **Jean Tinguely**, uses the geometry of a working machine subversively to illustrate anarchic preoccupations. Most stunningly **Dorothy Cross's** *Virgin Shroud* sculpture is a direct Freudian quotation. She takes a woman's form covered in cow-skin, with cow udders coming out of her head like horns.

The Landscape section is really *mind-*



Thirty-foot Steel Spider created by Louise Bourgeois

scape. **Barbara Hepworth** here tries to transform nature into a powerful mental place. Her *Pelago* was inspired by two arms of land encircling the sea, caught up with tight bands. **Salvador Dali** and **Mark Rothko's** surrealist works are marked by dreams and the development of psychoanalysis. **Frank Auerbach** is obsessed with urban landscape, and the bombsites of the Second World War. He is also captivated by Greek myths which he conveys in his own, equally veiled and mysterious manner. **Bridget Riley's** geometric abstracts often powerfully evoke heat and sound, such as her mesmeric *Late Morning*, where you can almost hear the pre-noon song of the cicadas in the Mediterranean before the heat of the day.

The galleries are well designed, offering private spaces and wonderful views from long windows, including St Paul's across a manicured lawn and the Millennium Bridge which has now brought one Cathedral nearer to another. Life, as ever, will imitate art.

□ Gloria Tessler

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SB's Column

Two gifted brothers. The talents of the brothers Fall (Leo and Richard) were much appreciated by light music fans during the Twenties. Moravia-born Leo Fall, a compatriot of Leo Slezak and Maria Jeritza, was an inventive composer whose works competed with the great Lehar and Kalman operettas. His *The Dollar Princess*, *Madame Pompadour* and *Der Fidele Bauer* are still known and occasionally performed today. By dying in 1925 he avoided the fate of his younger brother Richard, composer of such song hits as *Ob Katherina* and *Unberufen toi, toi, toi* who, after emigration to the States, had the unfortunate idea of returning to France clandestinely, where he was recognized and taken to Auschwitz.

Kurt Masur, conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, will succeed Charles Dutoit at the Orchestre National de France. He is at present chief conductor of the New York Philharmonic and will take over the London Philharmonic next autumn.

CDs to remember great names. A series of CDs have been issued by ÖRF (Radio Austria). Texts by Ferenc Molnar are spoken by Elfriede Ott, while Peter Weck recites *Roda, Roda* (the *k-und-k* counterpart to the USA's Mark Twain) and Christiane Hörbiger reads from the works of Raoul Auernheimer, author and *Neue Freie Presse* journalist.

Marlene Dietrich. The National Film Theatre at London's South Bank will show a collection of photographs of the *Movie star at work and play*. The exhibition (July to mid-August) will be accompanied by a short film season □

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Science Notebook

The story of Penicillin

The 1945 Nobel Prize for Medicine, shared by Alexander Fleming, Ernst Boris Chain and Howard Walter Florey, was given for "the discovery of penicillin and its therapeutic effect for the cure of different infectious maladies". The history of this miraculous drug, as the press dubbed it, is a fascinating one.

Fleming's discovery

Alexander Fleming, a Scottish bacteriologist, had worked all his life in London at St Mary's Hospital Medical School. On 3 September 1928 he was examining a culture plate containing staphylococci bacteria. The plate had become contaminated by a blob of green mould, and he noticed that all around it the staphylococci colonies had disappeared. The mould must have produced a substance which was killing the bacteria. Fleming called this unknown substance penicillin after the mould had been identified as belonging to the genus penicillium. Although Fleming carried out various experiments with the penicillin solutions he found them to be unstable and he was unable to isolate the active component.

Florey and Chain

The scene now shifts to the University of Oxford. In 1935 Howard Florey, a bright Australian, was appointed as its Professor of Pathology. To help with his researches on natural antibacterial substances he recruited the able young Jewish chemist Ernst Chain who, born in Berlin, had left that city in 1933 for Cambridge. In Florey's laboratory Chain searched the scientific literature for suitable substances and selected penicillin as a promising candidate. By successive solvent extractions and other chemical operations Chain was able by 1940 to obtain 100 milligrams of penicillin in the form of a stable brown powder. It was later shown that only about 0.1% of this powder had been penicillin itself. Although British funding was tight – the war had started – Florey managed to obtain a grant from the Rockefeller foundation in America to recruit more workers. The penicillin team was then able to show that mice injected with virulent streptococci were cured by penicillin injections. To carry out human trials, however, required several thousand times more material. Florey's department was therefore converted into a penicillin factory

using makeshift equipment like milk churns. When in 1941 there was enough penicillin to treat several severely ill patients, their improvements were dramatic. Since British firms were concentrating on the war effort, Florey then persuaded three large American pharmaceutical companies to mass-produce penicillin. After the D-day landings this saved the lives of thousands of wounded troops.

Public acclaim

In 1942 Fleming again involved himself with penicillin after requesting enough material from the Oxford group to cure a seriously ill friend. The news reached the press and reporters besieged Fleming at St Mary's. However, when they also tried to interview Florey in Oxford he unwisely refused to see them. As a result, it was Fleming alone who received public acclaim and after the war he went on triumphant tours of USA and Europe. Americans were astounded to learn that he had not benefited financially from his discovery while the American penicillin producers, who had taken out patents, were earning huge profits. In fact Chain had earlier pressed Florey to apply for a patent but the British medical authorities at the time described this as "money grubbing". In consequence, British firms making penicillin were humiliatingly forced to pay royalties for a British discovery to American companies.

Patent rights

After this experience the British attitude to patenting changed significantly. Lately the question of patenting has been in the news again, in connection with international work on characterising the human genome (the total set of genetic information in humans). American companies want to patent their contributions while British researchers – recently supported by President Clinton – believe this basic knowledge should be freely accessible to all. The huge amount of data involved may ultimately become available on the internet.

□ Michael Spiro

DIARY DATE:

AJR CONCERT

Sunday 29 October

Imperial College, London

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Taxi!

Under the cheeky title 'Taxi-driving and Jobs for Nice Jewish Boys', Prof. Barry Kosmin explored the choice of trades for Jewish immigrants who came to London from Russia and Poland at the turn of the last century, and the attractions of the taxi trade to their native-born children. He described "the Jewish professions" as medicine, law, accountancy and...taxi-driving! As late as the 1970s, of London's 16,000 licensed cab drivers, some 30% still were Jewish, and in Hackney and Redbridge 10% of all Jewish workers were in the cab trade.

A Yiddish-speaking Russian immigrant stood no chance of finding employment in the docks or produce markets of London's East End, but burgeoning demand for cheap and reliable personal transport from London's West End provided foreigners with a unique opportunity. Neither formal qualifications nor a written test were needed; only the ability to acquire a detailed 'knowledge' of London's streets and buildings and a good moral character, especially sobriety.

Though being a self-employed taxi driver



Photo: Ronald Channing

Prof Barry Kosmin explains why taxi-driving in London became a Jewish profession

held limited status, it allowed maximisation of income and independence, especially not having to suffer a demanding boss in a sweaty workroom, for many the only realistic alternative. After World War I few parents wished their children to follow

them into the *shmutter* trade. Though economic depression brought few job opportunities, the cab trade offered an outdoor career free of the threat of unemployment that provided owner-drivers with their own family transport. Driving long hours in London's traffic was tough and demanding. Self-employment also meant no paid holidays, sickness benefit, pension or a fixed retirement age, many cab drivers continuing to work well into their 80s and even their 90s!

Leisure could be sacrificed for earnings, and vice versa, which put a pleasant semi-detached home in the suburbs within reach. With no strong trade union and freedom from routine and supervision, taxi-driving appealed to Jewish individualism, as well as providing the opportunity for *Shabbat* observance. However, Prof Kosmin pointed out that the third generation, with its enhanced educational achievements and ambitions, had preferred careers in finance and the distributive trades to driving dad's taxi.

□ Ronald Channing

Taxi, an exhibition on Jewish taxi-drivers and the London cab trade, is at the Jewish Museum, Finchley, until 29th October, Mon-Thurs 10.30am-5pm and Sundays to 4.30pm.

KT memories

"If you pass the 11+ that's the school you'll go to", said my foster-mother, pointing to a rather grand building with handsome wrought iron gates.

I was lucky. I was good at sums (those endless problems about taps filling a bath). Also I had by then absorbed enough English to write a decent composition, and verbal reasoning seemed reasonably easy.

In consequence, one bright morning, I received my passport to success: a place at Torquay Grammar School. Scarce financial resources went into buying the uniform - velvet hat for winter and Panama for summer, regulation navy gymslip, white blouses with tie in the school colours. One of the blouses was second hand and chafed my neck. The hats too had graced other heads but who was I, a refugee, to demand more?

My stay at that school was not entirely undistinguished. True, at sport I received a blow to the head from a carelessly wielded hockey stick which put me off the game for ever, and rounders would find me half asleep in a deep field. Yet I won a verse-speaking competition and did well in my

end-of-year examinations.

I owe a great deal to the education I received there. Thanks to the morning assembly I know most Anglican hymns except those that mention the name of Jesus, an omission the only concession to the fact that a third of the school was Jewish.

There were magical moments such as the rehearsals and performances of the school play and happy times spent in the *Cercle Français* or the debating society. But the curriculum was a relentless cavalcade of the British past and geography lessons focused almost entirely on the pink areas on the map (there were a lot of them in those days!)

How we, with our immigrant background, were supposed to fit into this picture was never discussed. Some people would say: "You had a good English education. What are you complaining about?"

I am indeed grateful for the many doors it opened, but the psychological damage of this steamroller approach of another culture to a teenager's undeveloped sense of identity also has to be taken into account. That damage in my case was compounded by the fact that, as a

Kindertransport refugee, I had to grow up without the benefit of parents to understand and explain.

□ Martha Blend

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Concrete reminders

Rachel Whiteread's design for Austria's still-to-be-unveiled Holocaust memorial in Vienna's Judenplatz is a white concrete cast of the inside of a library, sufficiently detailed to show the spines of the books. Whiteread captured public attention with her prize-winning concrete cast of the interior of an about-to-be-demolished house in Bow, East London, which was removed to reveal her solitary inside-out work of art standing on open parkland.



Solid concrete 'Hochbunkers' in Hamburg with houses painted on them to disguise their original function as air-raid shelters.

Having spent time in Berlin, Whiteread expressed the view that the Teufelsberg 'mount', a 111 metre-high grassed-over mound of rubble from wartime's bombed Berlin, was a peculiar kind of monument. Its very permanence made it a memorial, albeit a 'hidden' one. Two of Berlin's 40-metre-high concrete flak towers, having resisted all attempts to demolish them, were also buried and landscaped.

In a suburb of Hamburg, a number of five-storey-high concrete air raid shelters, *Hochbunkers*, which had been disguised by painting their exteriors to give them the appearance of housing, could not be demolished in safety. Made from solid concrete, in all probability they will remain in perpetuity as a reminder of the past.

□ Sue Monsell

Imaginary victimhood

Inside the courtroom on the final afternoon of his libel trial, David Irving was reading his final statement. Passionate, eloquent, charismatic, it was the stuff of first-rate drama. Here, I felt, was a man trying to present himself as the victim of a Holocaust-obsessed Jewish conspiracy.

The cult of victim has become one means of manipulating memory of the Holocaust. This was highlighted after the publication of *Fragments*, ostensibly the memoirs of a child survivor. Subsequently the author, Benjamin Wilkomirski, was exposed as a fictitious creation.

What was striking was the extent to which Wilkomirski – or Bruno Dossaker, as he really is – craved to have his story validated. He could have submitted his book as a work of fiction and received as much if not more literary acclaim. Instead, he needed to be the boy he was writing about, to hold the painful memories he had obviously acquired through extensive research. It was as if being a survivor of untold horrors conferred a certain glamour that he would have never acquired through the anonymity of his Swiss identity.

A fascinating counterpart to the Wilkomirski affair was the revelation that Palestinian academic Edward Said had enjoyed a comfortable childhood in Cairo rather than being turned out of his Jerusalem home during the 1948 Israel Independence War as he had often intimated. It was also revealed that members of Said's family had evicted Martin Buber, the eminent Jewish philosopher, from the Jerusalem property they owned. The Holocaust factor comes into play in view of the perception that the Western world's guilt facilitated the creation of the Jewish state. Where Wilkomirski's re-creation of memory had a purely personal agenda, Said's was surely political.

Between Israelis and Palestinians, the cult of victimhood has persisted even at the level of national self-perception. All too often the enemy 'perpetrator' is projected in the image of the Nazi. Thus the frequently-voiced, if somewhat inappropriate, charge that the Israelis behaved like 'Nazis' towards the Palestinians and the equally incongruous allusion made by the then Israeli Premier Menachem Begin during the Lebanon War of 1982 that "Hitler and his henchmen" were holed up in the PLO bunker in Beirut.

In ironic contrast to these later claims were the years immediately following the

Holocaust when surviving victims were shunned if they attempted to share the memory of their experiences. A child survivor recounting this many years later was prompted to state: "My war began in 1945". In many countries the reluctance to listen might be attributed to a feeling of guilt or merely a preference not to know.

In Israel, where a new breed of Jew was being raised, the very concept of being a victim was shameful and smacked of the Diaspora. The memory of Jews in their millions going "like sheep to the slaughter" was a trauma that needed to be exorcised. Even the founding of Yad Vashem was dogged with disagreement and controversy.

It was the Eichmann trial that released a torrent of suppressed memory. It may be surmised that the evidence presented by the prosecution and the various witnesses enabled many survivors to break free of the restraints that had forced them to keep silent. An observer has reported on the amazement of Israelis viewing newsreel features of the trial who would suddenly see acquaintances or neighbours speaking to the camera of horrifying memories that had never been discussed or shared.

In the final decades of the last century, how to commemorate the Holocaust became a subject of vigorous contention, even within Jewish communities. This was particularly apparent in Vienna with the focus on the *Judenplatz*, designated to hold the official Holocaust memorial which has been designed by the British sculptress Rachel Whiteread. Underneath the square, however, are remains of a synagogue demolished in 1421 after the first expulsion of Jews from Vienna. For many Viennese Jews, these ruins seem a more appropriate monument in that they symbolise the centuries-old hatred of Jews that paved the way for the Holocaust.

□ Emma Klein

50 YEARS AGO

NEO-NAZISM IN AUSTRIA

According to the *Neue Front*, the Salzburg organ of the Federation of Independents, a certain Dr Slavik is trying to reunite former Nazis in a new leader corps.

In Lower Austria, a certain Josef Kubitzka is appealing for a National Democratic League, whose newspaper bears the significant name *Oesterreichischer Beobachter* (Austrian Observer).

□ AJR Information July 1950

A third way

At the invitation of the Institute of Jewish Policy Research, Tom Freudenheim, Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of the Berlin Jewish Museum, spoke about the 'Jewish Culture Debate' in America. Whilst the differences between the UK and the US were great, we could learn from each other, he said.

Sketching American stereotypes of the "authentic Jewish tradition" – the Yiddish-speaking, bearded, shtetl Jew portrayed in *Fiddler on the Roof*, and the mythical tillers of the land in Israel – he explained that Americans had, until now, seen authenticity as "belonging to others". A major change in the Jewish identity debate in American postwar melting-pot society came with the Holocaust as a further defining concept.

Freudenheim doubted that Jewish education had been the motivation for the burgeoning Jewish education programmes in the US day school movement. In contrast, recent developments showed that cultural expression by "Jewish" artists was validated for its own sake rather than because it might further Jewish purposes.

The changes necessary to recognise the new cultural debate included a plea to old-style Jewish patrons to support local artists (rather than, for example, regarding sponsorship of Israeli art as 'more Jewish'). Further, Americans should realise that Jews and Jewish culture existed not only in the



Tom Freudenheim

US and Israel but most particularly in Europe. Freudenheim's insistence that Jewish leaders must be trained to recognise Jewish culture was echoed by a young London Jewish artist in the audience.

Following some thought-provoking questions from the audience, Freudenheim was asked to describe the Berlin Jewish Museum and – more controversially – the Berlin Holocaust Memorial. Lord Rothschild, who was in the chair, endorsed his view that to disapprove of the Memorial was taboo, but that it seemed to be disliked by Germans and the German-Jewish community alike. □ Marion Koebner

The Kraus syndrome

When Theodor Herzl launched Zionism in the 1890s many prominent Jews remained hurtfully indifferent, while some – fearing that the project for a Jewish State would lay them open to the charge of dual allegiance – actively opposed him. One opponent, the vitriolic Viennese editor Karl Kraus, went a crucial step further and actually accused Herzl of wanting to set up a Jewish kingdom so he could be its king!

The Kraus syndrome, i.e. the tendency of some Jews to ascribe the lowest possible motives to Zionists, is still with us. In late May the journalist Matthew Lewin told *Evening Standard* readers of his shame at ever having been a Zionist.

His anti-Zionist charge sheet starts with atrocities against Palestinians in the 1948 War – atrocities which, incidentally, an 'awkward squad' of Israeli historians has revealed in the last decade. Next he lists the unspeakable squalor of Palestinian refu-

gee camps in Arab countries – as if their squalor was the fault of the Israelis. The next charge relates to the killing of innocent civilians – something the Israeli army surely intended as little as did NATO in the Kosovo campaign. Fourthly, Lewin lists the torture and 'hostage status' of prisoners. This charge, alas, stands up – but needs to be examined in the context of unrelenting terrorism. Finally, Lewin expresses outrage that some Israelis, (prosperous, well-educated US immigrants prominent among them) are given to chanting 'death to the Arabs'. In so doing, he ignores the fact that the Knesset has outlawed race hatred, and banned Meir Kahane's *Kach* Party in the aftermath.

Lewin's *J'accuse* concludes with a virtual call for a boycott of trade and sporting links with Israel. How bizarre that this latest virulent manifestation of the Kraus syndrome should coincide with the hope-inducing Israeli pull-out from Lebanon! □ RG

'Castle' counterblast

Dear RG – Your comments on the Burgtheater (May issue) are not those of a 'neutral observer.' We should also remember the other side: the fact that Else Wohlgemuth returned in triumph after the war, that Karl Eidlitz (husband of Alma Seidler) went back as an *Ehrenmitglied* and that Ernst Haeussermann (not quite as Aryan as depicted) was made director from 1958 to 1968. He was well known to me personally, and dissuaded me from going back to Vienna which I had contemplated at the time. These people felt happy and became 'true Viennese' once more. Ernst Lothar directed at the Burg. The half-Jewish Otto Schenk appeared as a guest actor and Otto Tausig recently joined for a while.

As for the recently deceased Paula Wessely, she thoroughly deserved the soubriquet Vienna's 'Duse'. She was the embodiment of simplicity, of touching innocence and of genuine expressions of feelings. Her films *Maskerade* and *Episode* won international acclaim; the fact that she also appeared in the Nazi movie *Heimkehr* was an irrevocable mistake which she regretted for the rest of her life.

Finally why should a magnificent author like Heimito von Dodderer not have stayed put? A German-writing author has to have a German-speaking public; otherwise there would be more Stefan Zweig type tragedies. □ SB

AJEX Military Museum

The AJEX Military Museum often receives enquiries from families searching for relatives who served with the Jewish Infantry Brigade. To be able to deal with such enquiries more effectively, the archivist invites anyone who served with the Brigade either as a member of the Palestine Regiment or Allied Forces – or knows someone who did – to write to him at AJEX, AJEX House, East Bank, Stamford Hill, London N16 5RT □

NEW VENUE

Remembering For The Future 2000

International Holocaust Survivors' and
Second Generation Gathering

Sunday 16 July 2000
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LOGAN HALL, LONDON WC1

THE QUEEN OPENS BRITAIN'S MAJOR NATIONAL HOLOCAUST EXHIBITION

The Queen, escorted by the Duke of Edinburgh, inaugurated the new, permanent Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum in London. They were received by the Duke of Kent in his capacity as President of the Museum, and among the accompanying party were the Home Secretary Jack Straw, Secretary of State Chris Smith, Israel Ambassador Dror Zeigerman, Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, the Director General of the Imperial War Museum Robert Crawford and the Holocaust Exhibition Project Director Suzanne Bardgett.

After viewing the exhibition, the Royal party met a number of survivors and other contributors to the project including Ben Helfgott, Roman Halter, Esther Brunstein, Kitty Hart-Moxon, Freddie Knoller, Ezra Jurman, Antony Lerman, Bea Green and Professors Martin Gilbert and David Cesarani who acted as historical advisors.

Vital addition

Before The Queen stepped forward to unveil a commemorative plaque, Prof Robert O'Neill, Chairman of the Museum, spoke of the new extension as a "vital addition to the history of modern conflict," which demonstrated the danger of persecution turning into mass murder. He pointed out the importance of the survivor testimonies that are shown at appropriate stages throughout the exhibition and paid tribute to the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn as a valued advisor whose recollections were also presented.

Chris Smith applauded the success of the Imperial War Museum in recording this period with such sensitivity. "It contains the facts, the full horror," he said. Education remained the basic priority dealing with issues of discrimination, prejudice and genocide. It was a "matter of pride," that Britain had joined the community of nations trying to address these issues and achieve a more tolerant society.

Vanished world

Speaking on behalf of Holocaust survivors, Esther Brunstein confessed to being overcome by the painful memories. "I find myself transported back into a time when I lived on another planet where evil reigned supreme in the middle of a civilized and cultured Europe," she said. The exhibition recalled "the vanished world of European Jewry, their pulsating life, so rich in substance, shape and colour, which was

completely wiped out." Turning to the question of resistance, Esther believed that "Just to survive one day in the camps and ghettos and retain a sense of human values was an act of resistance," while the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was "the first organised armed revolt against Nazi tyranny."

During the ceremony a cello recital was given by Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, a survivor of the Auschwitz camp orchestra, with her son Raphael and grandson Simon and John York at the piano.

Narrative of genocide

Four years in the making, the Holocaust Exhibition forms the largest element of a new extension to the Imperial War Museum, supported with a £12.6 million grant from the National Lottery and a further £5 million from private donors. The display covers two floors and uses original artefacts, documents, photographs and film, presented in a distinctive architectural framework narrating the Nazis' genocide of the Jews, and of Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, gypsies, homosexuals, the handicapped and prisoners of conscience.

The creation of the Holocaust Exhibition was a collaborative enterprise overseen by an IWM team headed by Suzanne Bardgett. The exhibition's designers, Stephen Greenberg and Bob Baxter, adopted a documentary approach which enables the visitor to become involved in the unfolding story of Nazi expansion and terror, and gripped by the dilemmas and personal tragedies of the persecuted. Many mementoes and documents were donated in response to appeals made in *AJR Information* and in survivor publications.

Historical material

Among the rare and important historical material on display, obtained from former concentration and extermination camps in Germany, Poland and the Ukraine, are a funeral cart from the Warsaw Ghetto and the letters of an eight-year-old French Jewish boy who hid in an orphanage before his betrayal and deportation to Auschwitz. A detailed thirteen-metre-long model of the arrival ramp at Auschwitz-Birkenau unloading Hungarian Jews from cattle-truck trains in 1944 makes a particularly powerful impact.

The new exhibition will play a vital role in Britain's understanding of the Holocaust for present and future generations.

□ Ronald Channing

NEWSROUND

Belated apology

Argentina's President Fernando de la Rúa, during a visit to Washington's Holocaust Museum, apologised to the Jewish people for pre-war restrictions placed on the entry of Jewish refugees into Argentina while Nazi criminals had later found refuge there. Jewish organisations welcomed his statement but wanted the prosecution of Nazis still at large in Argentina.

Cat out of bag

The proposed beatification of Pope Pius XII may have suffered a setback. As reported in the *Jewish Chronicle*, documents discovered in a Roman flea market show that, from late 1940, the Pope was kept fully informed of Nazi atrocities against European Jewry.

Another excuse

German companies which pledged to share in funding recently agreed slave and forced labour compensation are holding up final agreement and distribution to claimants. They argue that full immunity against prosecution in the American courts has not yet been guaranteed.

Dunkirk remembered

An AJEX delegation joined other veteran organisations commemorating the 60th anniversary of the evacuation from Dunkirk in laying a wreath at the Dunkirk memorial. A service of remembrance for fallen Jewish servicemen was conducted at a British military cemetery.

War-crimes amnesia

SS men and widows in Germany are still receiving war disability pensions despite a 1998 law disintitling them. One former SS officer successfully resisted an application through the courts to refund monies paid to him in error.

Weizman's early resignation

Israel's President Ezer Weizman, nephew of the State's first President Chaim Weizmann, is to resign three years before the completion of his official term of office allegedly for having accepted personal monetary gifts. A former RAF Spitfire pilot, he was founding father of Israel's elite air force and masterminded the destruction of Egypt's planes on the ground during the 1967 Six-Day War.

□ MK