

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Entering the lists

At the end of 2002 the *Independent* asked 52 public figures - from Tariq Ali to Michael Winner - to list their heroes and villains of the year. The villains named and shamed in the paper's columns extended from such transient celebrities as conman Peter Foster and butler Paul Burrell to the likes of George Bush and Ariel Sharon. The last named two received six 'villain' nominations each but, since President Bush also figured as 'hero' on one entry, the Israeli premier won the villainy stakes by a short head. Not that the 52 'movers and shakers' showed total bias: three actually listed Osama bin Laden as their devil, and one each nominated Saddam Hussein and Robert Mugabe. Still, the fact remains that Ariel Sharon topped the devils' league table.

Astonishingly, no one named the Iranian, Syrian and Saudi heads of state, who finance suicide bombings, or the mullahs who sentenced a Nigerian 'adulteress' to death by stoning, or the head of Cairo TV responsible for screening *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

It would not have been so bad if at least one of Sharon's accusers had nominated the Israeli opposition candidate Amron Mitzna as their hero, but none mentioned the fact that, uniquely in the Middle East, an Israeli prime minister can actually be voted out of office.

Tariq Ali made Noam Chomsky his hero - picking a Jew who, professing to see Israel as Washington's catspaw, would not shed a single tear over its destruction. In his encomium on Chomsky, Tariq Ali gives him the pretentious appellation *refusenik* - as if occupying a professorial chair at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

were on a par with sharing a lice-infested bunk in the *gulag*. Ali, the patrician onetime barricade-builder in Grosvenor Square turned all-purpose pundit, shows cavalier disregard for the meaning of words, the basic raw material of punditry. Having demeaned the term *refusenik*, he waters down the connotation of *untersmenschen* by attaching that loan word from Hitler's vocabulary to Sharon's perception of the Palestinians.



Tom Stoppard



Woody Allen

The fact is that two years into Sharon's premiership, Palestinian students attend Israeli universities and Palestinian voters elect Knesset members who potentially affect the shape of the incoming government. Of course, Palestinians in the Territories are suffering death and hardship, but they are casualties in a war for whose outbreak Sharon bears less culpability than Arafat.

Tariq Ali seems to think that his background entitles him to pontificate about the Middle East. He, who currently peddles pacifist nostrums to resolve the Iraq crisis, has in the past done little to resolve the crisis in our northern cities. Where was he when disaffected Pakistanis in Bradford made a public bonfire of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* and, a decade later, burnt buildings in their own city?

But even if we can show up the

mendacity of the deep-dyed Israel-baiters, the decibels of their vituperation keep rising. A favourite tactic of theirs is the 'double standards' charge (i.e. why should Iraq be barred from acquiring nuclear weapons if Israel has them?). This contention leaves out of account the pivotal fact that the Jewish state was almost strangled at birth by its Arab neighbours, whose combined population today is 20 times

that of Israel. (If one adds non-Arab Muslim states like Iran and Pakistan to the equation, Israel is outnumbered 50 to one.)

More crucially, it ignores the geopolitical reality that even a nuclear-armed Israel could never hope to suborn the 22 states in the Arab League - while the latter, led by an A-bomb-happy Saddam Hussein,

could obliterate Israel.

The unthinking refusal of many bystanders to take this on board is one of the woes that currently beset us. Another is the fact that some of the most cerebrally endowed of our co-religionists - Chomsky, Hobsbawm - have squeezed their brains into the vice of Marxism, and consequently reject Zionism as 'bourgeois-imperialist'. A third is that Jewish-born luminaries with the double qualification that their brains have not been addled by Marxist dogma and that they enjoy 'street cred' - Tom Stoppard, Woody Allen - seem indifferent to the fate of Israel.

Would that we still had an Isaiah Berlin in our midst who could plead the case for the existence of a Jewish state before the bar of public opinion. Is it too much to hope that someone of the calibre of Simon Schama will step into the breach?

Schizophrenia under dreaming spires

Richard Grunberger

The other night, BB2's *Arts Review* discussed Christopher Hampton's *The Talking Cure* (currently showing at the National Theatre). This is a play about the formative stage in the development of psychoanalysis and focuses on the fraught relationship between Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.

However, the discussion, which should have been about the merits of the play, was sidetracked early on when Tom Paulin denied Jung any standing as a thinker. Jeanette Winterson tried to defend the Swiss psychologist but was slapped down by Paulin, who rubbished Jung's ideas about the 'racial subconscious' and his theory of archetypes as so much mumbo-jumbo. Then the Oxford don landed his killer blow: he quoted Jung's deeply ambiguous attitude to Nazism.

One part of me was pleased to note that Paulin has not forgiven those European intellectuals who committed *la trahison des clercs* by compounding with Nazi ideology in the 1930s. Another part of me was puzzled as to how this attitude squared with Paulin's lapse into Goebbels-style demonisation of Israeli soldiers and Nazi-style rhetoric calling for the murder of Orthodox settlers from the USA.

Someone who is as sensitive as Paulin is to the erosion of humanitarian values by the poison of prewar racism cannot be oblivious to the alarming overlap between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. This overlap has existed since the 1920s, when the Muslim Brotherhood first preached *jihad*, and Amin al Hussein, the Mufti of Jerusalem, incited a pogrom in Hebron in response to Jewish immigration.

However justified the Palestinians may be in demanding national self-determination, they forfeit such a claim by denying the same right to the Jews. And how sincere can protestations to the contrary be when Arab anti-Zionists - whether secularists like Arafat and Saddam or Islamists - subscribe to the same image of the Jew as delineated in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*?

AJR supports third Holocaust Memorial Day

Ronald Channing

For the third year in succession, the University of Sussex marked Holocaust Memorial Day with a full programme on campus of talks, films and discussions, attracting students and lecturers of all disciplines from this and the neighbouring University of Brighton, as well as teachers from local schools. This year's programme, centred on the theme 'Survivors and Refugees, 1933-2000', was introduced by Sussex's Vice Chancellor, Prof Alasdair Smith, and Brighton's Vice Chancellor, Prof Sir David Watson, who presented an address on the German-American philosopher Hannah Arendt.

Holocaust survivor Janina Fischler Martinho's eye-witness testimony of the dissolution of the Lodz ghetto was followed by that of Professor Abdul Lalzad, a refugee from Afghanistan. Headmaster Anthony Edkins led a discussion group on the challenges posed by presenting the moral dilemmas inherent in the Holocaust to children with limited horizons.

Sussex's Centre for German-Jewish Studies, under its Director, Prof Edward Timms, are especially pleased that this pioneering venture continues to receive the generous support of the AJR, furthering the relationship established between the two organisations by the late Max Kochmann, former AJR Chairman and chairman of the Centre's support committee.

Earlier in the week, AJR's Head of Community Relations, Ronald Channing, discussed the significance of Holocaust Memorial Day and the work of the AJR with presenter Estelle Lovatt on north London's Shalom radio. At the



At Camden's Holocaust memorial are, left to right, Rabbi Janet Burden, who recited memorial prayers, playwright Julia Pascal, the Mayor, and children of the Kindertransport, Bertha Leverton and Ruth Fallman

Wiener Library, the publication of a memorial book entitled *Before They Perished: Photographs Found in Auschwitz* was complemented by an address given by the German Ambassador, HE Thomas Matussek. This was followed by a moving recollection by Auschwitz survivor and author Arno Lustiger and a commentary on photographs drawn from the book by Dr Hanno Loewy of the Fritz Bauer Institute in Frankfurt.

At the Jewish Museum, Finchley, the exhibition *Am I My Brother's Keeper?*, which explores the subject of rescue in the Holocaust, occasioned an opening lecture by Prof Mark Roseman on the Wannsee Conference in January 1942 and its influence on what became known as the 'final solution'.

Senior AJR staff attended a Holocaust commemoration event organised by the London Borough of Camden dedicated to the national theme 'Children and the Holocaust'. Among those speaking in the Council chamber were two children of the Kindertransport, Bertha Leverton and Ruth Fallman, a former pupil of the Berlin School for the Deaf, Julia Pascal, playwright and writer on the Holocaust, Rabbi Janet Burden, Councillor Roger Robinson, whose Dutch family perished in the Holocaust, and the Mayor of Camden.

AJR Journal

Richard Grunberger Editor-in-Chief
Ronald Channing Executive Editor
Howard Spier Editorial and Production
AJR Journal, 1 Hampstead Gate,
1a Froggnal, London NW3 6AL
Tel: 020 7431 6161 Fax: 020 7431 8454
e-mail: editorial@ajr.org.uk
www.ajr.org.uk

JACKMAN
SILVERMAN

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

26 Conduit Street, London W1R 9TA
Telephone: 020 7409 0771 Fax: 020 7493 8017

Roll of dishonour

Richard Grunberger

The Albrecht Dürer exhibition at the British Museum features a portrait of the artist's patron, Pirkheimer, who also befriended the great Humanist scholar Johannes Reuchlin. A philosemite, Reuchlin produced the first Hebrew grammar and dictionary widely available in Renaissance Europe.

Reuchlin achieved additional prominence through combating *Johannes Pfefferkorn*, a converted Jew, who, at the behest of the Dominican friars of Cologne, scoured the Rhineland confiscating and publicly burning copies of the Talmud on the grounds that it incited hatred against Christianity.

Three centuries later Germany witnessed another instance of a (converted) Jew denigrating his ancestral heritage when *Karl Marx* equated the ethos of Judaism with that of greed-driven capitalism. In the 1890s the journalist *Maximilian Harden*, no less right-wing than Marx had been left-wing, warned his co-religionists not to let their concern for pogrom-threatened Jews - primarily in Tsarist Russia, but potentially even in anti-Dreyfusard France - lead them into criticism of German foreign policy, the single-minded aim of which had to be the enhancement of the Reich's power.

In Austria, meanwhile, another Jewish-born journalist, *Karl Kraus*, savaged Theodor Herzl, whose outrage at the Dreyfus scandal had galvanised him into converting vague centuries-old Zionist longings into a political project. In *A Crown in Zion* Kraus dubbed Herzl a megalomaniac, who advocated the creation of a Jewish state essentially so that he might make himself its monarch.

After the Great War the aforementioned extremes of Left and Right became ever more pronounced. In Germany, *Max Naumann* created the pathetic Verband national-deutscher Juden. The Austrian Social Democrats ordered their Jewish members - e.g. the young *Bruno Kreisky* - to disaffiliate from the Jewish community. In Soviet Russia, the *Yevseksia*, or Jewish sections of the Communist Party, set about zealously

destroying Jewish religious institutions and secular Hebrew culture.

One would have expected Hitler's genocide to substantiate the case for a Jewish state beyond peradventure. But this, alas, did not hold universally true - not even among Jews. Although anti-Zionist Jews were always numerically insignificant, they made up for their paucity by their celebrity status. Their number included the sometime First Lady of Poland, *Madame Gomulka*, *Yergeni Primakov*, architect of the Soviet-Iraqi alliance, Gaddafi's chum *Bruno Kreisky*, and the ANC leaders *Joe Slovo* and *Ronnie Kasrils*, to both of whom Nelson Mandela gave government posts. Slovo died too soon after his elevation to make his mark as a spokesman for anti-Zionism. Kasrils, on the other hand, still holds office in the current Mbeki cabinet, and has a high profile among calumniators of Israel. Taking a leaf out of Robert Fisk's book - cf the *Independent* journalist's assertion that the Israelis carried out a massacre in Jenin - Kasrils compared the IDF's actions in Bethlehem in retaliation for a suicide bombing to the Sharpeville shootings in South Africa. This is typical of the hyperbole employed by the anti-Israel lobby. After all, Sharpeville turned world opinion against the apartheid regime and heralded its ultimate demise.

Anti-Zionist Jews further included Nobel Prize winners of literature like *Boris Pasternak* - who viewed Jewish identity as 'an ancient burden to be discarded' - and *Nadine Gordimer*. Pride of place among the anti-Zionist Jewish elite, however, goes to two men who derogate Israel as a small Satan linked to the Great Satan of the United States: *Harold Pinter* and the eminent linguistics professor *Noam Chomsky*.

Of Pinter no more needs to be said. As for Chomsky, he made the headline-grabbing assertion that every single US president since 1945 deserved to be indicted as a war criminal under the terms of the Nuremberg Judgment. By a strange coincidence, he produced that *coup de foudre* in the very week that ex-US President Jimmy Carter received the Nobel Peace Prize!

NEWTONS

Leading Hampstead Solicitors
advise on
Property, Wills, Family Trusts
and Charitable Trusts

French and German spoken
Home visits arranged

22 Fitzjohn's Avenue,
London NW3 5NB

Tel: 020 7435 5351

Fax: 020 7435 8881

CONSULTANT

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

Contact Henry Ebner

Myers Ebner & Deane
103 Shepherds Bush Road
London W6 7LP
Telephone 020 7602 4631

ALL LEGAL WORK
UNDERTAKEN

AUSTRIAN and GERMAN PENSIONS

PROPERTY RESTITUTION CLAIMS EAST GERMANY - BERLIN

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

For further information
and an appointment
please contact:

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

Tel: 020 7328 7251 (Ext. 107)
Fax: 020 7624 5002

Breaking the cycle of violence

Emma Klein

'Jihad' and 'Amalek' are terms which reverberate across the centuries. Intrinsic to Islam and Judaism respectively, they also reflect a group dynamic common to many cultures. This is the split between the desire to nurture and protect one's own and the urge to project all the negativity one refuses to acknowledge onto the other, the outsider.

The Pentateuch contains many injunctions to blot out the name of Amalek, the archetypal enemy who attacked the Israelites as they were coming out of Egypt, smiting the weakest and the most vulnerable. Jihad, a term all too frequently employed in our day, is believed to have been coined by the prophet Mohamed. It is understood as a holy war against the so-called 'infidel' - popularly perceived in the West as all who fail to follow the tenets of Islam. September 11 2001, the most devastating example of Jihad to date, witnessed the harnessing of modern technology to this ideology.

Psychoanalytic literature dwells at length on the twin tendencies of idealisation and demonisation, which flourish in a climate of religious or nationalist fanaticism. In his book *Terror and Transformation*, James W Jones speaks of the 'conjunction of an idealised nationalism and religion', which sanctifies violence against the outsider who is perceived as a threat. Any unwanted feelings of unworthiness, which arise from contact with this idealised concept of nation or religious precept, are projected outwards onto others, who consequently become debased, subhuman and worthy of extinction.

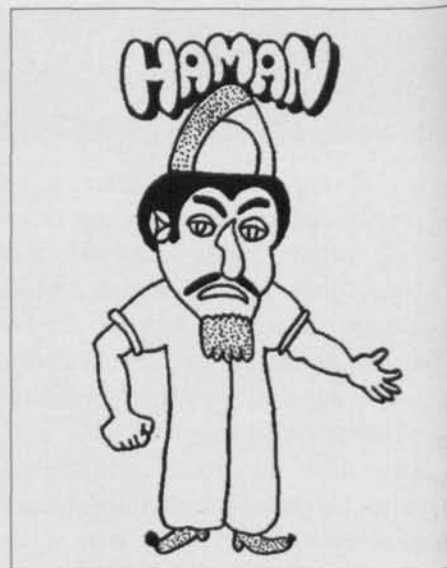
How relevant is this dynamic to the world of the scriptures? Certainly the biblical Amalek and his own descendants, Agag, the Amalekite king whom King Saul was enjoined to destroy, and Haman, the villain of the Purim story, are portrayed as the

embodiment of evil. While Haman clearly sought the destruction of the Jews of King Ahasuerus's realm, the glee with which Jews throughout the generations have symbolically drowned out his name and the rejoicing which accompanied the wholesale slaughter of his family and followers, suggest that he and they are seen as less than human.

The war against Amalek, the Pentateuch warns, will be pursued from generation to generation. Moreover, it is this struggle with Amalek that the renowned medieval biblical commentator, Maimonides, cites as one of the few instances when war is justified. Indeed, Hitler, Arafat and others are not infrequently labelled as Amalek reincarnate. Similarly, while Islam's dispute with the Jews may be traced back to the days of the Prophet, the constant stream of vilification and demonisation of Jews spewed out by the Arab media today provides ample justification and incitement for acts of 'martyrdom' in the name of Jihad.

Psychotherapist Jenny Beddington, experienced in conflict resolution, explains one major motive for demonising the other as 'an inability to forgive and move on from past grievances. The history remains in the present.' Irrespective of historic context, she points out, such splitting can occur whenever a group feels threatened by a culture with different values - for example differing perceptions on the role of women, differing sexual mores or different political systems. Equally, where groups are very similar and feel threatened by loss of power and identity, the same splitting may occur in an effort to preserve separateness and identity. 'In extreme cases of splitting, where hatred predominates, violence is used to keep the group separate and feeling powerful, to eliminate the other group and to settle past and other conflicts.'

Is there any way of breaking this cycle



of violence? Might it be possible to find a new perspective on the war against Amalek and the concept of Jihad? In his book *The Eternal Journey*, Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg cites the Hassidic tradition which interprets the words of the Pentateuch as 'to you Amalek', meaning Amalek is within you - within all of us. 'The war against Amalek', Wittenberg concludes, 'means fighting evil both within ourselves and without. If we ignore the former, we too quickly become like Amalek.'

Wittenberg's words found an echo in a recent lecture by the Israeli-born Islamist Sara Svir. Speaking on 'The Greater Jihad', Svir claimed that 'the idea conveyed by this term is that the true jihad is not the one against infidels but the one against one's own inner Self. To struggle with the external "other" is easier than to struggle with the inner "other".'

And from the crucible of conflict, a glimmer of hope was afforded by the case of a Palestinian suicide bomber who only partially succeeded in detonating his explosives and was taken to a hospital in Israel where he received the best medical treatment alongside survivors of other bombing incidents. 'Not all Jews are bad', he declared on leaving hospital. 'You can have a bad Arab in the same way as a bad Jew.' In this context, encounter with the 'other' can be seen to offer the most effective means of laying the foundations of a process, which might eventually lead to the transformation of perception.

Esther Rantzen relives journey of Czech children on TV

AJR phones jammed with calls

Ronald Channing

Following the broadcast on Carlton Television of *Winton's Children*, a moving documentary produced and reported by Esther Rantzen, the AJR received well over 100 enquiries.

Prompted by the AJR's telephone number, which was given at the end of the programme, the largest category of enquirers were non-Jewish people who recalled friendships with children who came to Britain as German-speaking Jewish refugees, whom they had lodged, gone to school with, or just befriended. The passage of time meant the friends had lost contact, but the programme had re-awakened a desire to renew their former relationships.

Many others were keen to trace lost relatives. Those with a Czech connection were directed to the archives of the Czech Jewish community shown in the film. Sadly, other enquirers sought to establish the fate of relatives who had perished in Auschwitz or in another death camp. Most encouraging was a call from a lady who, having recognised a photograph of her elder brother, deduced that the picture of a four-

month-old baby which accompanied it was of herself!

Following three weeks in Prague, in which he worked from a hotel bedroom on his self-imposed task to save as many children as possible, Sir Nicholas returned to London where he worked late every night to find homes and the £50 required to fund each child's entry. The popular photographic magazine *Picture Post*, founded by the Hungarian-born German Jewish refugee Stefan Lorant, published Sir Nicholas's letters seeking assistance.

Among the children who gave their recollections to Esther Rantzen were Lord Alf Dubs, Vera Schaufeld, Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines, Käthe Strenitz (last month's *AJR Journal* profilee), Vera Gissing and Rudy Wessely, a 77-year-old retired university lecturer with whom Esther returned to Prague, a city he had last seen at the age of 14.

At the Pinchas Synagogue (now a museum), with the names of 80,000 victims of the Nazis inscribed on its walls, most of the victims taken to Theresienstadt then transported to Auschwitz, Rudy pointed out his

parents' names, remarking how fortunate he was not to have been similarly commemorated. Rudy and Esther stood together on the station platforms from where most of the children had bid their parents a final goodbye, before travelling on through Dresden into Holland. Here they were given a warm greeting and good food, and then taken from the Hook of Holland by ferry to Harwich and train to Liverpool Street Station, where, amid scenes of 'chaos' - freely admitted to by Sir Nicholas - children were matched up with their sponsors.

Sitting with Esther in the Wessely family's former flat, in which he had spent his last day with his parents, Rudy confessed that there were memories too much to bear and "too many ghosts" for him to return to Prague once again. From the Czech Jewish community's archives he learned that his father, a judge who was imprisoned in the small fortress in Theresienstadt, and his mother had been reunited for their final journey to Auschwitz.

"It defies all understanding," said Esther Rantzen.

Crimes Against Humanity: Holocaust Memorial Day at Imperial War Museum

Of particular relevance to the Imperial War Museum's Holocaust exhibition is the newly opened permanent exhibition *Crimes Against Humanity: An Exploration of Genocide and Ethnic Violence*. Its central element is a specially commissioned 30-minute film which runs continuously throughout the day. The film is not recommended for children under 16. A small interactive learning centre provides an opportunity to explore the histories of particular instances of mass murder and genocide.

This year's Holocaust Memorial Day at the Museum was also devoted to a number of moving films on the theme 'Children and the Holocaust'.

In *Loving the Dead* (1991), film-maker Mira Hamermesh returned to Poland in search of her mother, who died in the

ghetto. The film is far more than a personal odyssey: it looks at the surviving Jewish communities of Eastern Europe and at the shadow the Holocaust has cast over so many lives. In a personal appearance at the screening of her film, Ms Hamermesh argued strongly for conciliation between Poles and Jews.

Children Must Laugh is a half-hour re-edited version of a 1936 film recording the work of the well-known Medem sanatorium for children from the Warsaw Ghetto slums. This frankly propagandistic film, made by the Bundist party, highlighted the clearly positive results of spending time at the sanatorium - heralding, it was said, a bright future for the Jewish children of Poland. With the heaviest irony, just a

handful of years later the sanatorium was razed to the ground by the Nazis and its occupants deported to the extermination camps.

The Hidden Children (2001) tells the story of three Jewish children whose parents sent them to Christian families to save their lives. After the war the children emerged from their hiding places forced to face an unknown future in an unfriendly world. *Silence* (1998) is a short animated film about a Jewish child hidden by her grandmother in the Terezin ghetto. *Angel of Bergen-Belsen: Luba and the Diamond Children* (1998) recounts the story of Luba Trysynska, a Polish Jew who for several months concealed 54 children from the guards at the extermination camp.

HS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

EDITORIAL LINE DISPUTED

Sir - I fully endorse the aims of the AJR and therefore wish to remain a member. But I do disagree so much with your editor, who appears to monopolise the journal with his uncompromising political orientation.

Gertrude Evans
London SW7

Sir - I enjoy reading *AJR Journal* because of, and sometimes despite, the editor's stance - same as I happen to enjoy reading the *Daily Telegraph* despite its stance on a number of topics, and, at other times - Israel, for instance - because of it. Which only proves, I suppose, that we can all agree at times to disagree - a supposedly English virtue.

Robert Miller
Leatherhead

Sir - Readers like myself feel that 'the Jews' are not a nation and that we do not live in an international Jewish spiritual community, which I call national semitism. Nor does being of Jewish stock mean citizenship of Israel. It may be your definition of yourself, and your presumption that other definitions are false, that lead to ructions. There are many degrees and variations of assimilation. Perhaps in Berlin, which did not vote for the Nazis, it was different from Vienna.

Peter Zander
London W1

Sir - Sadly we have Jews like Harold Pinter and Gerald Kaufman MP who spread hate against Israel, but I believe letters from V Baruch, K Strenitz and V Ross represent the majority of readers. Richard Grunberger is an excellent editor.

Clare Parker

Sir - Amazed at the anti-Israel leanings of the people who write to the journal, I should like to express my and Nicole's appreciation to you for keeping sane amidst Jewish Jew-haters. For those who say they are at liberty to criticise Israel so severely, here is a quote from the *New York Times*: 'Criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic ... But singling out Israel for opprobrium and international sanction - out of all proportion to any other party in the Middle East - is anti-Semitic ...' (16 October 2002).

Ernest David
(Ex-Director, AJR)

Sir - I would venture to suggest that among the letters published in this journal there is an over-representation from the *Guardian*-reading (and -believing!) minority. It is true, of course, that we are more likely to put pen to paper when we strongly disagree. Therefore, to maintain a semblance of balance, may I endorse most of the views expressed in your front-page articles and say how sorry I feel for those who honestly believe that:

- (1) A majority of Jews in Israel (as well as in the diaspora) would fail to support peace with the Palestinians if, in return, the Palestinians credibly offered and delivered peace with Israel.
- (2) Saddam Hussein has no chemical, biological (or 'dirty' nuclear weapons) and in any event would refrain from deploying them.
- (3) The USA is an 'evil empire' and must be opposed and condemned.
- (4) Unrestricted migration into Europe, from mainly Muslim countries, by people whose life in those countries is in no way threatened is desirable. I believe

that the Roman Empire collapsed when the movement of people from the East eventually reached an unsustainable level. Admittedly the Renaissance followed - but I haven't got a thousand years to wait for its second coming.

Laszlo Roman
London N22

GERMANY SENDS OUT MIXED SIGNALS

Sir - Recently there has been a spate of books to illustrate how the Germans too suffered during the Second World War. Günther Grass has written about the sinking of the KdF cruise ship *Wilhelm Gustloff* off the Baltic near Königsberg in February 1945. The ship was torpedoed by a Russian submarine with the loss of some 700 passengers being evacuated to the west of Germany - it was heavily overloaded. The German press demanded the trial by an international war crimes tribunal of the Russian captain, who, it seems, is still alive. The hubbub died down when it was disclosed that among the passengers were some 3,000 armed marines - making the ship a legitimate target - and that a substantial number of the other passengers were *Volksdeutsche*, who had been encouraged to migrate to Poland in 1939/40 to take over farms from forcibly evicted Polish citizens.

One German magazine which recently ran articles on the expulsion of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia after the Second World War made no mention of the disruptive actions of those Germans leading to the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1938.

Professor Friedrich's attitude is regrettably too common, usually culminating in the horrors of the bombing of Dresden. More detailed research would have shown that this bombing was militarily justified, given that at that stage Dresden was one of the most important rail junctions and marshalling yards used to shuttle troops and equipment between the two fronts. As an inland

river port, it was of strategic importance. The Heinkel Flugzeugwerft serviced war planes.

Herbert Haberberg
Barnet, Herts

GOOD FOR THE JEWS?

Sir - Ironic, isn't it, that under a Jewish chancellor, Bruno Kreisky, the Austrians still maintained that they were victims of Nazi Germany and therefore hardly paid any reparations at all. Then, with the advent of Haider, the country seemed to accept responsibility, and paid at least some of its financial debts to Holocaust victims. Out of evil came some good. However, how good for the Jews was Kreisky - and how good would Joe Lieberman be if, by some miracle, he became US President?

Peter Phillips
Loudwater, Herts

JUSTICE DENIED

Sir - Your editorial (November 2002) asserts: 'Today's French wince at the recollection of their wartime conduct ...'. Not as far as the persecution of Jews is concerned! Rather than feel sorry for the victims, they feel sorry for the perpetrators. Brought to trial at last, M. Papon, who sent hundreds to their deaths, has been released.

Frank Bright
Ipswich

FRITZ MULIAR

Sir - As a former school friend of Fritz Muliari, may I set the record straight (see RG's Interface, November issue)? Fritz grew up as a Jew, the son of a Jewish father and a gentile mother. Following the Anschluss his mother, either to protect him or genuinely to come clean, attested that his real father was not Jewish. Whereupon a heartbroken Muliari Sr emigrated to the USA, where he soon died of a broken heart. Now rehabilitated as an Aryan, Fritz was drafted into the Wehrmacht.

Jussi Brainin
Oxon

REFUGEE FOLKLORE

Sir - Much as I admire the serious subjects you cover in your excellent journal, don't you think that just occasionally you might offer your readers something lighter - for instance an anecdote from the early years? Sample: Viennese lady to her landlord: 'There is a train in my room, and if you do not give me another ceiling, I will undress' (*Es ist ein Zug in meinem Zimmer und wenn Sie mir nicht eine andere Decke geben, werde ich ausziehen.*)

F Reichmann
Finstock, Oxon

UNEASY LIES THE HEAD

Sir - Your correspondent Francis Steiner (January issue) is quite right: this is an allusion to the trial of Queen Elizabeth's physician, the *marrano* Rodrigo Lopez, in *The Merchant of Venice*. The play was written in the same decade as the trial of 1594, in which Lopez was vilified as a Jew and which ended with his (politically corrupt) conviction and execution for allegedly attempting to poison the Queen. The reference occurs in a speech by the crudest Jew-baiter of the play, Gratiano, in the trial scene in Act IV, Scene 1:

... thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for
human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell
soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy
unhallow'd dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starved and
ravenous.

The themes adumbrated here are those of the transmigration of human into animal souls and vice versa, and of the decline of humanity to the level of beasts. By making the beast a wolf (*lupus*), Shakespeare is punning on Lopez's name. But of course Gratiano does not speak for the great playwright, who had earlier made Shylock passionately assert his status as a human being in the 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' speech.

SS Praver
Queen's College, Oxford

ARE YOU ON A LOW INCOME AND IN NEED OF HOMECARE HELP?

AJR might be able to offer financial assistance.

Members who might not otherwise be able to afford homecare please contact:

Estelle Brookner, Secretary
AJR Social Services Dept
Tel: 020 7431 6161

Companions of London

Incorporating
Hampstead Home Care

A long established company providing care in your home

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

'OUR CARE IS YOUR CARE'
020 7483 0212/0213



SPRING GROVE

214 Finchley Road
London NW3

London's Most Luxurious
RETIREMENT HOME

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

Call for more information
or a personal tour

020 8446 2117
or 020 7794 4455

enquiries@springdene-care-homes.co.uk

Simon R Rhodes M.Ch.S.

STATE REGISTERED CHIROPODIST
Surgeries at:
67 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (opp M&S)
Telephone 020 7624 1576

3 Queens Close (off Green Lane)
Edgware, Middx HA87PU
Telephone 020 8905 3264

Visiting chiropody service available

ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

The powerful ritualism of the Aztecs has influenced many artists, including Henry Moore, and art movements. Aztec culture rose to prominence around 1325, dominating central Mexico from the Gulf coast to the Pacific. The Aztecs first settled in Tenochtitlan, now Mexico City, and their empire reigned supreme for two centuries until the Conquistadors seized the territory in 1519, fusing primitive skills and beliefs with European Christian sophistication. **Aztecs at the Royal Academy of Arts** is claimed to be the largest and most comprehensive survey of this culture ever mounted. Over 60 per cent of the works have been loaned from Mexico, and several have never been seen in public before.

The Aztec universe was divided into three levels: Topan, the upper world, the world of men, and Mictlan, the underworld. Its beliefs are the stuff of nightmares. Spirits and entities abound, such as Cihuateotl, the malevolent spirit of women who died in childbirth, said to have haunted crossroads at night to capture the souls of children. In their celebration of the cycle of life, death and the natural world, the Aztecs followed a rigid hierarchy: kingship, war and human sacrifice.

Yet the Aztecs used art not for its own sake but to serve religion, propitiate the gods and acknowledge the provenance of the earth and earth gods. There were animal counterparts to the gods: the eagle and jaguar were associated with the sun. Their creative style derived from the religions and artefacts of earlier cultures, such as Teotihuacan and the Toltecs of Tula. The Teotihuacans gained power from the trade in obsidian, used in much of Aztec art, as are stone, wood,

ceramics, turquoise mosaics and gold.

Aztec wars were never territorial but were fought in the relentless pursuit of human sacrifices, as the number of sacrificial vessels and altars testifies. Thus Aztecs bear with them an atmosphere of monolithic structures, pyramids, ritual cruelty - all the negative primitivism that Western civilisation tried to eradicate. What survives is an art that is solid and totalitarian. Squat figures representing deities moving between the worlds are consistently the heavy Mayan type.



Head of a youth c. 1500 Photo: Michel Zabe

More appealing are the animal sculptures, particularly the coiled snake or the rabbit or dog made out of stone, using precious stones like obsidian. A drunken youth is depicted with red shells for eyes representing drunkenness. Alcohol, banned by the Aztecs, was derived from fermented juice of the maguey cactus. There is a particular irony in some of this art, such as the wise old man with the body of a youth. The Aztecs were puritan and frowned on nudity, frequently clothing their female statues. A female nude statue might have worn real hair and a green stone was placed in her heart area.

Most powerful is a life-sized terracotta sculpture of Mictlantecuhtl, the Lord of Death, a half-flayed man with his rib cage exposed and his liver hanging out. A terrifying figure - but he has the endearing face of a cartoon character.

RG's INTERFACE

Mishpochology (1) The Jewish Museum in Frankfurt is marking the centenary of Carlo Levi with an exhibition of 60 paintings. Although Levi was first and foremost a painter, he had trained as a doctor and gained international fame with the publication of *Christ Stopped at Eboli* (1948), an account of his internal exile as an anti-fascist. Two cousins of his, similarly involved in resistance activists and famous as writers, were Primo Levi and Natalia Ginzburg.

Mishpochology (2) The film actor Daniel Day Lewis, a strong Oscar contender for his performance in Scorsese's *Gangs of New York*, has a penchant for portraying Irish characters. This obviously has to do with his father, the poet Cecil Day Lewis, but he also benefited from a Jewish genetic input. Daniel's mother was the actress Jill Balcon, the daughter of Sir Michael Balcon, the head of Ealing Studios. Daniel's current wife, moreover, is the daughter of Arthur Miller.

Film Festivals (1) The Stockholm International Film Festival has given a Lifetime Achievement Award to the stage and screen actor Erland Josephson. Josephson played the Jewish antique dealer in Ingmar Bergman's classic *Fanny and Alexander* and appeared in the same director's *Scenes from a Marriage* and *Face to Face*. He also worked with Andrei Tarkovsky and Istvan Szabo.

Film Festivals (2) For the last few years New York has staged a Sephardic Film Festival. One of the highlights of the current festival was *The Last Jewish Town*, a documentary about the town of Guba in Azerbaijan, which still has 4,500 Jewish inhabitants. They claim descent from the tribe of Benjamin, one of the ten lost tribes, and practise an archaic lifestyle which includes shamanism and strictly defined roles for men and women.

Literary prize Norman Lebrecht, former music columnist of the *Daily Telegraph*, won the Whitbread New Fiction Prize for his novel *The Song of Names*.

The password

LAISSEZ-PASSER

Directed by Bernard Tavernier

On selected release

The conduct of the French under German occupation has been hotly debated over the last half-century. The Nazis pursued a two-track approach. On the one hand, they left the French under no illusion that they were a subject nation; on the other, they allowed them minimal cultural autonomy to foster collaborationism and impress neutral opinion.

This policy produced a spurious golden age in the theatre, while film studios kept working flat out producing expertly crafted soporific movies. *Laissez-passer* is set against that background of twofold make-believe; it shows the inner workings of a dream factory where everyone pretends that art can blot out reality.

Some readers may remember the enthusiastic postwar reception for Marcel Carné's mammoth *Les Enfants du Paradis* - and the questions it prompted. Had the film aimed to persuade the French that the occupation regime respected their culture, or did Carné primarily engage a cast of thousands to stop Frenchmen being shipped to Germany as labour conscripts?

The protagonists of *Laissez-passer* are inextricably caught in a similar dilemma. If they bring the highest degree of perfectionism to their work, are they thereby lightening the wartime burden on their fellow countrymen, or are they doing the Nazis' bidding by masking nasty reality under a tinsel of fake glamour? The film finally answers this question when its main protagonist quits his job to join the *maquis*.

Somewhat disappointingly, we are not shown this dramatic development, but are told of it in the epilogue. The reason for this deliberate low-key approach is that *Laissez-passer* is a historically true account, and lacks the cumulative build-up of tension a fiction writer would have imposed on it.

This is not to deny its very considerable virtues, the first of which is absolute verisimilitude. At the end

REVIEWS

of three hours the audience leaves the cinema with the very smell of wartime Paris - a sour compound of drains, fear and inadequate nourishment - in its nostrils.

Nor does the film gloss over the antisemitism rampant in wartime France. After an air raid a passer-by surveying the damage emotes: 'Typical! The RAF hit the Renault plant, but they spared Citroën - which is Jewish-owned!' In another sequence, a collaborator boasts of having acquired the furniture of Harry Baur (the famous Jewish actor murdered by the Nazis). Nonetheless, I admit to wallowing in nostalgia throughout the film thanks to the script's constant mention of Baur, Prévert, Clouzot and other all-time greats of French cinema.

Richard Grunberger

A simple film

SOBIBOR, OCTOBER 14, 1943, 4 PM

Directed by Claude Lanzmann

Institute of Contemporary Arts, London

Claude Lanzmann came upon the story of the Sobibor concentration camp while researching his monumental film *Shoah*. This led to an interview in 1979 with Yehuda Lerner, one of the leaders of the revolt in Sobibor. The French director decided that an independent film - 95 minutes long, compared with the nine-hour *Shoah* documentary - was justified, 16 years after the production of *Shoah*. There can be no doubt that it was.

Sobibor is a simple film with little camerawork, no music, and no cinematic manipulations. It is this, together with Lanzmann's brilliance, that makes it simultaneously heartbreaking, powerful and joyous. It is an unsentimental celebration of Jewish perseverance. In the film Yehuda Lerner tells his remarkable story, from his arrival in one camp to his subsequent escape from eight camps, prior to his role in the uprising. Lanzmann keeps the camera trained constantly on Lerner, allowing his

words and expressions to speak for themselves. It is fascinating to watch Lerner tell his story in Hebrew and then to listen to the translation into French for Lanzmann. There are additional subtitles in English for the cinema audience.

Sobibor contains no archival footage of the Holocaust. Nor does it attempt to recreate the uprising at that specific time of day by any means other than Yehuda Lerner's eyewitness account. The second half of the film is composed almost entirely of Lerner relating his memories of Jewish prisoners staging a hastily planned revolt against their Nazi captors. Lanzmann's unflinching gaze hardly moves from the stoic face of Lerner, whose story of survival is an affront to the shameful notion that Jews accepted their fate without a struggle. On the day and time given to the title of the film, a plan was set in motion, whose success was based by the conspirators on the predictability of German punctuality. Without this the revolt would have failed.

Lanzmann's slow-moving camera captures shots of modern-day rural and urban Poland while, at another time, he focuses on a field of geese, as Lerner describes the pathological Nazi mentality. The geese were reared in some camps and provoked into quacking during the extermination sessions so that the cries of suffering of those being killed would not be heard.

I saw this remarkable film on a Sunday afternoon when, despite The Mall being closed to cars, the ICA cinema was completely full and the audience, consisting of many young and non-Jewish people, watched in reverential silence.

Martin Hasseck

A case of unrequited love

IMPOSSIBLE LOVE: ASCHER LEVY'S LONGING FOR GERMANY

Roman Frister

Weidenfeld and Nicholson £20

For a suitcase containing documents spanning five generations of a German-Jewish family to fall into the hands of a writer who was himself a Holocaust survivor, is surely a rare case of

serendipity. And if the Levy family had been able, posthumously, to seek a chronicler, they could have found none better. Roman Frister has succeeded admirably in reconstructing the history of a family, which, from humble beginnings, was to become one of the most prosperous among the Jews in Pomerania, and in resurrecting a vanished way of being - the 'impossible love' of the title.

It was Jacob Levy the innkeeper, formerly Jackel the peddler, who first felt this overwhelming love for the fatherland surge in his heart, on learning of Napoleon's defeat at the hands of the Prussian army. His son, the Ascher Levy of the subtitle, his grandsons, Bernhard and Julius, and, to a great extent, even his great-grandsons, were shaped by this almost obsessive patriotism which, for generations, had characterised many 'Germans of the Mosaic persuasion'.

Not that the Levys were anything but devout Jews. Nor were they and their associates unaware that their 'impossible love' was unrequited. Recognition of the pervading undercurrents of antisemitism, however, did little to erode their passion for their country. Levys fought with distinction in both the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and in the Kaiser's army. Admittedly, Bernhard Levy would eventually acknowledge the 'narrow rickety bridge' connecting his twin loyalties, but, like others in his family, would never think of living differently.

Zionism, certainly, was considered anathema, as opposed to making donations to impecunious Jews who lived in the 'Holy Land'. Indeed, Ascher Levy's journey there in 1871, together with his cousin, Morris Gottschalk, a successful Berlin stockbroker, and Heinrich Graetz, the renowned historian, is vividly recorded, as are the efforts of the trio to fund an educational foundation in Jerusalem. Nonetheless, Herzl's *Judenstaat* was dismissed with contempt by most of the Levys in the same way as *Mein Kampf*, which appeared 30 or 40 years later. It was Ascher's grandson, Siegfried, the only one to survive the Second World War, who observed that the two works were 'like two ends of one stick'. Another grandson, the artist Rudolf Levy, whose

homosexuality and marriage to a gentile made him the 'black sheep' of the family, did, however, achieve some posthumous recognition.

It was not only the advent of the Nazis that brought to an end the Levy line. Ascher's grandsons had no sons. Many of his great-granddaughters, however, survived, by abandoning family tradition and moving to Palestine, where they became active Zionists. They were joined there during the 1950s by Siegfried's childless widow, Lisbeth, who had preserved the family documents in a suitcase which, after her death, was consigned to the Jaffa flea market.

Emma Klein

Refuge in humour

IN AND OUT OF HARMONY: TALES OF A CANTOR IN THE HITLER ERA Charles Lowy

Lomont Publishing,
£8.00 + £1.50 p&p
(lowy@leonardlowy.co.uk)

Strictly speaking, these are not tales, but autobiographical episodes, 23 in number and each averaging three or four pages in length. All are told with detachment, modesty and, especially, humour.

Charles Lowy was born in 1911 in Bratislava (then Pressburg). His father came from Hungary, his mother's family from Holland. In 1937 he was appointed cantor in a Munich synagogue. Following Kristallnacht, he fled to Hungary, eventually becoming assistant chief cantor at the splendid Dohány Street synagogue. He spent the years 1942-45 performing forced labour for the German army. In 1947, knowing little English, he arrived in Glasgow, where he was appointed cantor of the Queen's Park Synagogue. Eleven years later he became cantor of the Hampstead Synagogue in London's Dennington Park Road. He died in 1998.

It is despite the horrific background he depicts - or more probably because of it - that the author has frequent resort to humour of the recognisably 'Jewish' self-parodying variety.

At one stage, Charles Lowy worked on the railways. It amused him 'to think

that I, a cantor ... should be involved in such a vital task as ensuring the smooth transport of military personnel and supplies to the battle front. It served them right! Who ever heard of enlisting cantors to repair railways?'

One of the author's most telling observations touches upon his return to Munich in the 1950s. In place of the omnipresent badges, especially those bearing a swastika, worn by all and sundry in Hitler's Munich, many Germans now boasted about the number of Jews they had saved during the Nazi era: 'It led me to ask myself this question: "So where are the Germans who exterminated six million Jews? Have they all disappeared, together with their badges?"'

In materials relating to the Holocaust instances of humour amid descriptions of the indescribable are not unknown. Here, humour amidst tragedy is virtually an art form.

Howard Spier

Annely Juda Fine Art

23 Dering Street
(off New Bond Street)
Tel: 020 7629 7578
Fax: 020 7491 2139

CONTEMPORARY PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

WANTED TO BUY German and English Books

Established bookdealer
(AJR member)
always welcomes
invitations to view
and purchase
valuable books

For an immediate response,
please contact:
Robert Hornung
2 Mount View, Ealing,
London W5 1PR
Email: hornungbooks@aol.com
Tel: 020 8998 0546
(5pm to 9pm is best)



PROFILE

Ronald Channing

Eric Kaufman



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Eric Kaufman and his wife Gerda live in their comfortable home, tucked away in a northwest London suburb. He had just returned from a visit to Berlin to view an exhibition on the life and work of one of his relatives. Nothing remarkable about that, you might conclude, but this month Eric celebrates his 90th birthday. A sprightly man and dapper dresser, he appears all of 20 years younger, and maintains many interests and a zest for life.

Surprisingly, Eric reveals that he was born in West Hampstead on 24 March 1913. His father had quit his native Mannheim to see something of the world and joined relatives who had already established a business trading in cereals in England. While on a visit to Germany in 1912, he met and married a lady from Münster and returned to London with his bride. In 1915, following the torpedoing of the *Lusitania*, Eric's father was interned with other 'enemy aliens' on the Isle of Man. Before the war's end, Eric's mother was offered, and accepted, an opportunity, through the Quakers, to return to Germany with her son in exchange for British civilian prisoners of war, in the mistaken hope that it would hasten her husband's release.

As a five-year-old German boy speaking only English, Eric found himself "thrown out" of the hotel in which his grandmother lodged, by German officers on leave from the front - as a British spy! He was sent to an aunt in Berlin "bang in the middle of the 1918 German revolution". Eric also clearly remembers occupying French soldiers marching down the street to requisition accommodation for officers.

In 1919 Eric's father was finally released from internment and reunited with his wife and child. When he joined the family grain business in 1921, they moved to Düsseldorf. One of five Jewish children in his class, Eric recalls never experiencing antisemitism; he was *Barmitzvah*, and well aware of his Jewish identity.

The value of the mark plummeted in the hyperinflation of 1923. By 1930 the National Socialists had gained 107 seats in the Reichstag and Jews were increasingly aware of the Nazis' rising

influence. Now aged 17, Eric was apprenticed in an accounts department, a year later obtaining a transfer to a Netherlands branch where, unfortunately, his new boss became an enthusiastic Dutch Nazi!

Returning to Düsseldorf in 1932, he witnessed street battles between the Communists, Social Democrats and Nazis. Even venturing onto the street brought its dangers. "One lived and feared what was going to happen," he remembers. Having obtained his British passport, on 15 July 1933 he left for England. He was accompanied by his mother, who attempted to alert the British Government to what the Nazis meant for the fate of the Jews, by contacting a niece of Sir Herbert Samuel, the former Home Secretary, before returning to Germany.

Eric's father, whose passport had been taken from him by the Gestapo, secured its return only by the intervention of a sympathetic Nazi official. In 1934, dismissed from his business, with his possessions sold, he embarked for England with his wife and younger son,

and re-established his cereal trading business in London with Eric working for him.

Eric recalls the newspapers' poor understanding of Nazi Germany. Although *The Times* favoured appeasement, the *Morning Post* printed more accurate reports. Eric spoke at the League of Nations Youth Union and argued with fascist supporters at Hyde Park Corner and Tower Hill. Joining the 33 Club for Refugees at the West London Synagogue in 1936 proved a smart move as, in the following year, he met Gerda Philipp and they married in 1942.

Seeing the inevitability of war, Eric volunteered to join the Auxiliary Fire Service and was attached to stations in Hendon and Golders Green. In 1940 their firm's office in the City of London was destroyed in the Blitz, where Eric, serving as a fireman, discovered the destruction himself. The Blitz continued for 57 nights before the Luftwaffe turned its devastating attacks on the Coventrys and Plymouths. Eric became a full-time fire service administrator in Golders Green and then in Pinner.

After the war the Kaufmans kept their business, though in austerity Britain everything was either licensed or rationed. When his father died in 1962, Eric and his brother carried on until Eric retired in 1987 at the age of 74. But with his many interests - including philately, genealogy, art, theatre, travel and reading, especially twentieth-century political biography - Eric found he had "more to do than ever before." Having decided to research the history of his mother's family, the Flechtheims, Eric believes he can trace them back to 1648! An exhibition in Düsseldorf marking the 50th anniversary of the death of his mother's cousin, Alfred Flechtheim, a leading art dealer, only served to increase his interest.

Eric takes pride in their son Andrew (present Chairman of the AJR), his wife Susie, and their grandchildren. Eric and Gerda still count "quite a few other German-Jewish refugees" among their circle and correspond with German and Jewish friends in Europe and the United States.

INSIDE the AJR

Hull updated on AJR activities

Our meeting, attended by 19 members with three apologies for absence, was held at the home of Harold Rose. AJR's Northern Groups Co-ordinator Susanne Green gave us an update on AJR activities, including the Refugee Voices project and the appointment of Barbara Dorrity as Northern Region Social Worker. On learning of the 1 June annual get-together, to be held for the first time at Beth Shalom, and the availability of bus transportation, all expressed their intention of attending.

Bob Rosner

Pleasant afternoon in Harrogate

Our first meeting in 2003 was a most pleasant afternoon. Our 'mentor', Northern Groups Co-ordinator Susanne Green, brought us up to date with forthcoming events, not only in the North but also in London. We were joined by Ruth Simmonds - her first meeting - and Barbara Dorrity, the recently appointed Northern Region Social Worker, who told us about her role in the community.

Inge Little (née Steinweg)

Next meeting: Monday, 17 March, 2.30 pm at 1 Masham Close Harrogate. Existing friends and potential new ones will be very welcome.

Glasgow get-together

At a get-together 30 people enjoyed an interesting talk by Rabbi Pete Tobias and a delicious afternoon tea. At our next meeting, entitled 'Taste of the Past', on Sunday 30 March, members will be asked to bring along or think about their favourite food or recipe (vegetarian or dairy) remembered from the Continent, and hopefully a lively discussion will follow!

*Hilary Anson, Claire Singerman,
Angela Shapiro*

Meetings easier during the week for West Midlands

Rabbi Tann's talk on 'The Lighter Side of Judaism' was very amusing and enjoyed by all. The programme of forthcoming meetings was discussed. Something very different would for the next meeting in April - some would go to a concert at the Symphony Hall, while others would go to see *Fiddler on the Roof* at the theatre. That the concert and theatre outings are both on weekdays reflects the fact that having most of our meetings on Sundays makes travelling difficult as there are fewer buses. The May meeting, a tea party, will be in my house.

Henny Rednall

Essex: sinking of enemy vessel

We heard the amazing story of Sidney Graham, who joined the Haganah with two friends in 1947. Members of a group of 200 immigrants, and 30 volunteers, they crossed the treacherous waters to Palestine in an old fishing trawler in order to avoid the Royal Navy. On arrival in Palestine, Sidney, who had trained as a wireless operator for the Royal Navy, became an employee of the new state of Israel. He made his name when on one occasion he discovered the presence of an enemy vessel, which was subsequently sunk by the Israelis.

Julie Franks

Next meeting: Tuesday, 11 March, 10.30 am. Michael Rosen (Israel Embassy): 'Israel Update'

South London: behind the scenes at *Jewish Renaissance*

Janet Levin, editor of the quarterly magazine *Jewish Renaissance*, told us that neither she nor any contributors receive any payment; the income from readers and advertisers is used for printing and other expenses; committee meetings are held in her house; the computer is in her loft. We were given complimentary copies of the magazine, which contained, among many other things, fascinating articles on 'Judaism and Buddhism' and 'The Jews of India'. (Members' note: Our group meets every two months, but some members meet in the months in between for tea

and a chat in each other's houses, usually in Sutton or New Malden.)

Anne Poloway

Next meeting: Thursday, 13 March

Brighton & Hove *Sarid* in late celebration of Tu Bishvat

The theme of our meeting was a belated celebration of Tu Bishvat, the New Year for Trees. Members read out passages associated with the festival and a JNF video was shown. The high point of the morning was - as is usual at Jewish parties - the food. Fifteen types of nuts and fruits that are grown on trees or bushes in Israel were prepared and served by Myrna Glass and Fausta Shelton - a memorable selection indeed and enjoyed by all present.

Next meeting: Monday, 24 March: hosting Southern Region get-together

History of Council of Christians and Jews outlined in Pinner

Jonathan Gorsky, Education Officer of the Council of Christians and Jews, gave a most stimulating talk on the progress made by the Council since its foundation in the dark days of the Second World War. There were, for instance, the diplomatic difficulties of keeping both orthodox Jews and Roman Catholics on board. With leaders such as Sister Margaret Shepherd, the sympathetic education of young people offered the greatest success for an understanding future when they learned to listen to each other and engage in common projects.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: Thursday, 6 March, 2 pm. Daniel Finkelstein (Associate Editor of *The Times* and grandson of the founder of the Wiener Library): 'Voyages Around My Grandparents'

Leeds HSFA: 'Shema is for All'

Following the successful conclusion of the business part of the AGM, Rabbi Douglas Charing, of the Leeds Jewish Education Bureau, spoke on the subject 'Shema is for All'. He outlined the development of religious instruction from earlier indoctrination to comparative religion and discussed

multi-faith/world religion-teaching as it is now. Rabbi Charing's main occupation is promoting Judaism through lecturing and publishing illustrated books on Judaism. He visits schools throughout the country, informing them about Judaism and the Holocaust as part of the curriculum on different religions. In his experience, church schools are keen to teach about world religions while Jewish schools are less so. He stressed how important it was for schools to impart correct knowledge about religions in order to combat stereotyping.

Ruth Sterne

Next meeting: Sunday 23 March at the home of Bob Rosner. Dina LeBoutilier will play her reminiscences tape

North London in-house affair

Our speaker was Dr Anthony Grenville on the subject 'Researching the AJR and Further Plans' - very much an in-house affair. He explained how he became involved in the research project which led to the recent Continental Britons exhibition. It seems there were particular problems in that earlier files starting in 1941 had been lost. The main sources of current research were copies of *AJR Journal* going back to 1946. Dr Grenville, an enthralling speaker, is working on a project encompassing the social history of refugees.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thursday 27 March, 10.30 am. Annette Saville ARCM: 'Around the World by Piano'

East Midlands next meeting: Wednesday 19 March. For details, contact Bob Norton on 01159 212 494

Appointment of Northern Region Social Worker

In the February issue we gave an incorrect telephone/fax number for Barbara Dorrity. The correct number is 0161 440 9926.

AJR HOLIDAY FOR NORTHERN MEMBERS

Sunday 18 May 2003 -
Friday 23 May 2003

THE FERNLEA HOTEL
11/17 SOUTH PROMENADE
ST ANNES-ON-SEA, LANCS F18 1 LU
£250 per person (£13 supplement for sea view or deluxe room) to include dinner, bed, breakfast, outing and entertainment

Call Ruth Finestone on
020 7431 6161 as soon as possible as numbers are limited

THE LUNCHEON CLUB

Anthony Streatfeild (Christies)
will speak on
'Looted Art'

Wednesday 19 March 2003
11.45 am for 12.15 pm

The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road NW6 3RL

Early reservations please!
Lunch now only £5
Please telephone Sylvia or Susie
on 020 7328 0208

KT-AJR MONTHLY MEETINGS AT CLEVE ROAD

Monday 3 March 2003
11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Jerzy Landau
will speak on
'Saved by Myself - Lifestory'

Lunch £5
Reservations required
Please telephone
020 7328 0208

MEET OLD FRIENDS - MAKE NEW ONES

Come and join us for a fantastic 7 days holiday at the Cumberland Hotel in Bournemouth.

Monday 30 June - Monday 7 July
£410 plus £30 single room supplement including transport, sandwich lunch on outward journey, half board, outings and entertainment.

Call Carol Rossen or Joan Altman on 020 7431 6161 as soon as possible as numbers are limited and demand is high.

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre 15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6
Tel: 020 7328 0208

Monday - Thursday 9.30 am - 3.30 pm, Sunday 2 pm - 5.30 pm

MARCH		Afternoon Entertainment:
Mon	3	KT Lunch - Kards & Games Klub
Tue	4	Paul Coleman
Wed	5	Hounslow Community Opera
Thur	6	Jenny Kossew - Accordionist
Sun	9	DAY CENTRE CLOSED
Mon	10	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	11	Amanda Palmer
Wed	12	Katinka Seiner
Thur	13	Nicola Smedley
Sun	16	DAY CENTRE OPEN
Mon	17	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	18	Ronnie Goldberg
Wed	19	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur	20	Opdahl Trio
Sun	23	DAY CENTRE CLOSED
Mon	24	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	25	Ann Kenton-Barker - Spring Bouquet
Wed	26	Amanda Palmer
Thur	27	Mike Mirandi

PLEASE NOTE: THE DAY CENTRE IS OPEN ONLY ONE SUNDAY IN EVERY MONTH - PLEASE SEE PROGRAMME ABOVE.

Deaths

Huttrer. Felix Huttrer, cherished husband of Mary (Putzi), née Brainin. Born Vienna 16.12.25, died 10.1.03. The most wonderful father to Paul and Caroline, and grandfather to Adam, Alegra, Victoria and Chantal. Desperately missed by us all.

Rothenberg. The AJR regrets the passing of Helmut Rothenberg. A fuller tribute will appear in the next issue.

Miscellaneous Services

Manicure & Pedicure in the comfort of your own home. Tel: 020 8343 0976.

Day Centre

Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. New Clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans, etc. **Tuesday 11 March 9.45-11.45 am.**

AGM AND NATIONAL GET-TOGETHER

**WILL TAKE PLACE AT BETH SHALOM
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CENTRE,
NEWARK, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
ON SUNDAY 1 JUNE 2003**

ADVERTISEMENT RATES**FAMILY EVENTS**

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

CLASSIFIED, SEARCH NOTICES

£2.00 per 5 words.

BOX NUMBERS - £3.00 extra**DISPLAY ADVERTS**

per single column inch 65mm £12.00

COPY DATE - 5 weeks prior to publication

A HOME FROM HOME

If you are lonely, or your family are worried about you alone, consider moving into one of our three Progressive Jewish Abbeyfield Homes for able bodied pensioners

PEGGY LANG HOUSE

Walm Lane, Willesden

LILY MONTAGU HOUSE

Orchard Drive, Edgware

BELMONT LODGE

Belmont Road, Bushey

we have a few vacancies, both permanent and short-stay

COSTS ARE EXTREMELY REASONABLE

For information: check our website -
www.jewishabbeyfield.org.uk - or phone

ANN KIRK 01923 821923 for Peggy Lang House	DINA LECKER 020 8429 2317 for Belmont Lodge	FAY MARKS 020 8421 5002 for Lily Montagu House
--	---	--

'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE NEW ARRANGEMENTS

Members requiring
benefit advice
please telephone
Linda Kasmir on
020 7431 6161
to make an appointment at
AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate,
1a Frognal, NW3 6AL

ACACIA LODGE

Mrs Pringsheim, S.R.N. MATRON
For Elderly, Retired and Convalescent
(Licensed by Borough of Barnet)

- Single and Double Rooms.
- Ensuite facilities, CH in all rooms.
- Gardens, TV and reading rooms.
- Nurse on duty 24 hours.
- Long and short term and respite, including trial period if required.

From £350 per week
020 8445 1244/020 8446 2820 office hours
020 8455 1335 other times
37-39 Torrington Park, North Finchley,
London N12 9TB

Leo Baeck Housing Association Ltd Clara Nehab House Residential Care Home

All single rooms with en suite bath/shower
Short stays/Respite and 24 hour Permanent Care
Large attractive gardens
Ground Floor Lounge and Dining rooms
Lift access to all floors
Easy access to local shops and public transport

Enquiries and further information
please contact: The Manager
Clara Nehab House
13-19 Leaside Crescent
London NW11 0DA
Phone: 020 8455 2286

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household
electrical work
PHONE PAUL: 020 8200 3518

ALTERATIONS

OF ANY KIND TO LADIES' FASHIONS
I also design and make children's clothes
West Hampstead area
020 7328 6571

BELSIZE SQUARE APARTMENTS 24 BELSIZE SQUARE, NW3

Tel: 020 7794 4307 or 020 7435 2557
Modern Self-catering Holiday Rooms,
Resident Housekeeper, Moderate Terms
Near Swiss Cottage Station

AJR Seder Night

Second Night Seder Service
to be conducted by Rev. Fine
Thursday 17 April 2003

The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road,
London NW6

Please telephone
020 7328 0208 for reservations
£23 per person
Limited space available for
wheelchairs
6 pm for 6.30 pm prompt start

Caring Carers

The experts in live-in Home Care.
We can provide long or short term
assignments from our professional
and reliable care team.

Please call our Care Manager
for a no obligation chat on:
020 7372 9041
Fax: 020 7372 9038

BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square, NW3 4HX

We offer a traditional style of religious
service with Cantor Choir and organ
Further details can be obtained from
the synagogue secretary
Telephone 020 7794 3949

Minister: Rabbi Rodney J Mariner
Cantor: Rev Lawrence H Fine

Regular Services

Friday evenings at 6.45 pm
Saturday mornings at 10 am
Religion School: Sundays at 10 am to 1 pm
Nursery School: 9.15 am to 12.15 pm
Belsize under 3's: 9.30 am to 11.30 am
Space donated by Pafra Limited

BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square, London NW3
Our communal hall is available for
cultural and social functions
Tel: 020 7794 3949

The AJR does not accept
responsibility for the standard of
services offered by advertisers

Obituary - Lionel Simmons

Lionel Simmons, a journalist and musical connoisseur, who has died at the age of 80, had a distinguished career with the *Jewish Chronicle*. For several years he acted as honorary proof-reader for *AJR Information*, always ready to draw on his wide knowledge of Judaism, communal affairs and European history. Born in London's East End in 1922, the son of a Dutch Ashkenazi father and a Turkish Sephardi mother, he attended the Jews' Free School in Stepney, later moving to Hasmore School under Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld.

During the war he served in Bomber Command as a navigator and was mentioned in dispatches for one of many missions over Germany. Based

on his wartime experiences, he held strong views on proposals to bomb Auschwitz or the railway lines which led to it. The poor accuracy of aerial bombing at the time meant that it was virtually impossible to find the site, especially at night, and then to drop high explosives within miles of it, let alone on its gas chambers and incinerators.

After the war, he won a history scholarship to Magdalen College, Oxford, and in 1953 began writing for the *Jewish Chronicle* on post-war Anglo-Jewry. Appointed their first universities correspondent, in the mid-1970s he reviewed music and records, but retired as regional obituaries editor.

RDC

Arts and Events Diary - March

1-30 MARCH JEWISH ARTS FESTIVAL, INCLUDING JEWISH BOOK WEEK, 1-9 MARCH. EVENTS INCLUDE:

Thur 6, 7 pm. Professor Richard Evans, 'History on Trial'. The role trials from Nuremberg onwards have played in the writing of history, and the impact of legal and moral judgements on our understanding of the Shoah. Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1, telephone 020 8201 8206

Sunday 9, 1 pm. Josh Cohen, Jacqueline Rose, 'Interrupting Auschwitz'. Is it possible to write literature or make art today that can provide an ethics for the contemporary world? Royal National Hotel

Mon 10 'Berthold Goldschmidt 1903-1996, Refugee Composer in Britain'. Talk by Bernard Keffe. Wiener Library, 6.45 pm. Ticketweb 08700 600 100

Wed 12 'Holocaust and Rescue: Impotence or Indifference? Anglo-Jewry 1938-1945'. Pamela Shatzkes. Jewish Museum, Finchley. 8 pm. Tickets 020 8349 1143

Thur 27 'The British Jew Süß (1934)'. Lecture and film excerpts with Dr Susan Tegel. London Jewish Cultural Centre, 7.30 pm. Tickets 020 7431 0345

To 6 April 2003 'By the Rivers of Babylon: The Story of the Jews of Iraq'. Major new exhibition following the successful Continental Britons exhibition. Jewish Museum, Camden Town

To Yom Hashoah 'Am I My Brother's Keeper?' Rescue in the Holocaust.

Jewish Museum, Finchley

Mon 3 Dr Ian King, 'Kurt Tucholsky, Fighter against Fascism'. Club 43

Fri 7 Professor Ruth Klüger, author of *Weiter Leben*, will read from her autobiography *Landscape of Memory: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered*. Institute of Germanic Studies, 29 Russell Square. 6 pm

Mon 10 Charles Dreyfus MA, 'Year 1, AUC, AD'. Club 43

Mon 17 No lecture (hall not available). Club 43

Sun 23 Nicholas Winton: *The Power of Good*. Phoenix Cinema, East Finchley, London N2. 1.30 pm

Mon 24 Pastor Uwe Vetter (German Lutheran Church, London), 'Jewish Views of the Resurrection in the New Testament'. Club 43

Mon 31 Private Function: 60th Anniversary Event (for members and invited guests only). Club 43

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club 43 Belsize Square Synagogue. Meetings 7.45 pm. Contact Hans Seelig telephone 01442 254360

Jewish Museum, Camden Town, 129-131 Albert Street, London NW1 telephone 020 7284 1997

Jewish Museum, Finchley, Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road, London N3 telephone 8349 1143

Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street London W1 telephone 020 7636 7247

Central Office for Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

Urgent: Repayment of bank charges
It has been brought to the attention of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims that Holocaust survivors are being targeted and charged for receiving advice on the procedures involved in having bank charges returned. Members are reminded that the Central Office for Holocaust Claims provides this service *free of charge* and the reason that the banks have now offered to repay charges (which they are not required to do by law), is due to the efforts of this office. We strongly advise that there is no need to pay for money that is in fact owed to you.

Slovak Compensation Fund

A SKK 850 million (approximately £13.5 million) fund has been established by the government of the Slovak Republic to provide compensation to Holocaust victims and to 'finance projects concerning the social and cultural needs of the Jewish community in Slovakia.'

The Council for the Compensation of Holocaust Victims in the Slovak Republic will pay compensation to those Holocaust victims (or their heirs) whose properties were aryanised during the Second World War on the territory of the wartime Slovak state and that part of Slovakia that was 'awarded' to Hungary in 1938 by a German and Italian brokered settlement.

Application forms and further information are available by contacting the Council at: Kancelaria Rady, P.O. Box 115, 820 05 Bratislava 25, Slovak Republic. The Council's website is www.holocaustslovakia.sk and they can be reached by email at kancrada@stonline.sk. The deadline for applications is 31 August 2003.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Froggnal, London NW3 6AL. For assistance with the completion of application forms, please telephone 020 7431 6161 for an appointment.

Legacy of the Jews of Leipzig - Part 1

Andrea Lorz

Last September, I spent two weeks in London, Manchester and Hebden Bridge visiting former residents of Leipzig. The personal contacts were all the more important to me as these former citizens of Leipzig have been most helpful in my efforts to build up a Jewish Documentation Centre in Leipzig's Stadtgeschichtliches Museum. They have also helped by making my project more widely known. But no letters or telephone calls, however heartfelt, can replace personal contact. So I take this opportunity to thank most warmly those who contributed to the preparation and successful outcome of my visit.

I was very moved by the warm welcome I received everywhere, with the ensuing conversations taking me right back into the childhood and youth of my hosts. The closer the conversations came to the Nazi years in Leipzig, leading up to the enforced emigration, the more painful I found them.

We passed from uniformly loving memories of happy childhood years in Leipzig to the bitter experiences of discrimination, persecution and enforced emigration. This experience of marginalisation and exclusion was incomprehensible to the children for whom Leipzig had hitherto been their hometown.

I was also able to visit the editors of the *AJR Journal*, World Jewish Relief, the Wiener Library, and the Art Loss Register. My special thanks go to Richard Grunberger, Ronald Channing and Anthony Grenville, who gave generously of their time for detailed discussions with me, answered my questions patiently, and showed great interest in matters relating to Leipzig.

We discussed not only the strengthening of contacts with former citizens of Leipzig, but also the development of Leipzig's Jewish community after 1945 and the Museum's need for exhibits that document - to take just two examples - the achievements of Jewish doctors in

Leipzig and the organisation of the life-saving Kindertransports from Leipzig to London.

These are two areas in which we have as yet nothing in the Museum to show visitors. So there remains much to be done to create a complete historical representation of this chapter of events. Given that Leipzig's Jewish community was one of the most prominent in Germany, this is all the more important.

What are the principal landmarks in the development of the Jewish community in Leipzig, officially founded on 2 June 1847 as the Israelitische Religionsgemeinde zu Leipzig? The first written reference to a Jewish settlement in Leipzig and the existence of a synagogue dates to around 1230. The last mention of the Jewish community in medieval times occurs in the mid-fifteenth century. We do not know whether the Jews were then expelled from the city, as elsewhere.

Only in 1837 were the Jews of Leipzig and Dresden permitted by law to practise their religion in the Kingdom of Saxony. Full citizenship was granted them only after 1868. Once the residential restrictions on Jews were lifted, trade and industry in Leipzig flourished. Their industry and dedication caused the Jews to rise to prominence in many fields. They significantly influenced Leipzig's development as a university town and a centre of trade, music and culture, were active in its social life, and the imposing office buildings they erected graced the city's skyline.

One could cite innumerable names to represent the multiplicity of the achievements of Leipzig's Jews in art and culture, medicine, science and commerce, as in the city's society as a whole. Entrepreneurs, scientists, doctors, artists and businessmen all felt committed to the good of their city.

Dr Lorz is the Director of the Jewish Documentation Centre in the Leipzig City Museum. The article was translated from the German by Marianne Herz. The second and final part will appear in the April issue of AJR Journal.

Newsround

Israeli cosmonaut lost

Israel's first man in space, 48-year-old Colllan Ramon, the son of a Holocaust survivor, lost his life with six American fellow astronauts when the US space shuttle Columbia broke apart while returning to earth from a scientific space mission. Ramon, who carried with him a picture of an imaginary cosmos drawn by a young Auschwitz prisoner, leaves a wife and four young children.

German government and Jewish community open new chapter

The German government and the German Jewish community have reached a landmark agreement. The accord, signed on Holocaust Memorial Day, establishes the first legal partnership between the Jewish community and the government since the Second World War, in the spirit of similar agreements with the Catholic and Lutheran churches. Germany will financially support the German-Jewish cultural heritage and assist Jews in integrating politically and socially.

Wife of European Bank President causes uproar among Dutch Jews

Gretta Duizenberg, the wife of the President of the European Central Bank, has told a Dutch newspaper that 'The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories is worse than the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands'.

Germans honoured by Jewish community

Seven Germans have received awards from the Jewish community's history council in honour of their work to preserve Jewish history and heritage. The awards were presented on Holocaust Memorial Day. The seven are: Hans Eberhard-Berkemann, Heinrich Dittmar, Carla and Erika Pick, Irene Corbach, Gerhard Jochem and Susanne Rieger.

Anne Frank diaries to be exhibited in Washington

The diaries of Anne Frank are to leave the Netherlands for the first time. They will go on show at the US Holocaust Museum in Washington DC in June.

Holocaust denier refused visa to Australia

The Holocaust denier David Irving has been refused a visa to Australia for the third time. Irving said that he wanted to visit the country to promote his latest book.