

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Europe v USA: continental rift

Our mid-2004 editorial 'The Fourth and Fourteenth of July' traced the connection between the American War of Independence and the French Revolution. Today, after George Bush's election victory and President Chirac's call for a stronger Europe as a counterweight to America, we see the relations between the two more in terms of disconnection than connection.

To understand how this dysfunction came about, we have to appreciate that the United States, as befits a relatively young country, is still evolving. Viewed in the light of certain criteria, this evolution almost amounts to a revolution. Let us cast our minds back to the period between the wars. In those days the watchword in US foreign policy was isolationism, in trade policy it was protectionism, and in race relations it was segregation.

Today, America, far from being isolationist, is endeavouring to play the role of the world's policeman, and its formerly protectionist stance towards its neighbours has given way to 'common market' arrangements with Canada and Mexico. In race relations, finally, Afro-Americans have been helped by positive discrimination, while Hispanics, previously suffering discrimination, exert real influence in California, Florida and elsewhere.

These developments have to some extent eroded the natural constituency of the Democrats. In the past the party had been a coalition of liberal-minded patricians - like the Roosevelt and Kennedy clans - and the underprivileged urban masses, drawn from such ethnic minorities as Poles, Irish, Italians, Jews and Blacks.

In contrast, the Republicans used to be all-white WASPS (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) with a different sociological profile: new money, such as oil barons,



farmers, small-town dwellers and suburbanites.

The reasons for the Republicans' majority in November were partly economic and partly cultural: rising prosperity has triggered a steady drift from the big cities into the suburbs, and - more importantly - religion has risen to the top of the agenda for millions of voters.

The Democrats, with their traditional base of Irish, Italian, Polish and Hispanic voters, might have been expected to garner the massive Catholic vote, but the exact opposite happened. Many natural Democrat constituents from the ethnic minorities viewed the party as secularist and voted Republican because they gave higher priority to banning same-sex marriages and abortion than to bread-and-butter issues like job creation. So the issue was no longer Catholic ethnics versus Anglo-Saxon Protestants, but both of them versus perceived secularists.

The fact that the so-called Religious Right is a key component of the Republican Party has a bearing on US policy in the Middle East. Fundamentalist Christians look upon Israelis admiringly as the People of the Book, and have a view of Jews as historical precursors of Christianity - even though they dropped by the wayside before their 'God-given' task had been accomplished.

This is, alas, in stark contrast to European attitudes to the Jewish state. Europe is, not to mince words, the traditional heartland of Christian antisemitism, deeply rooted in the identification of Jews with the killers of Christ. In the post-Holocaust era no responsible European opinion-former would do anything other than disavow such atavistic sentiments, but nonetheless a residue of millennial Judeophobia lingers on, and contributes to the EU perspective which views Sharon as a baddie and the late Arafat as a - lavishly subsidised - goodie.

The prime European exponent of this 'bifocal' take on the Palestinian imbroglio - and simultaneously the strongest anti-American voice in the West - is France.

To set this in a wider context, we have again to go back to the 1920s. After the First World War France saw itself as the lynch-pin of Europe, from whose affairs America had largely - and Britain partly - withdrawn. The treaties of Versailles, St Germain, Trianon and Sèvres bore a French imprint and Paris had built up a system of alliances with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia (the 'Little Entente') to uphold the peace settlement.

The humiliating collapse of 1940 and the subsequent four years of widespread accommodation with the Nazi occupiers shattered France's self-image as a great power. However, postwar conditions enabled her to bestride the international stage again. In order to block the Communists, who made a bid for power in post-liberation Paris, the Anglo-Americans boosted the reputation of de Gaulle and the Free French, while France became a permanent member of the Security Council and eventually a nuclear power. Her ascent to great-power status proceeded in stages. Firstly, she took

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guilt-laden Germany under her wing, secondly, she projected herself as prime mover of the European project, and thirdly, de Gaulle adroitly acted the maverick, constantly oscillating between Moscow and Washington in the Cold War.

The collapse of the Soviet empire left the US as the only global superpower and France redefined her role as the nucleus of a European counterweight to a preponderant America. Backed by Germany, Spain, Belgium and others, she censured the United States' bullying unilateralism and insisted that the West should act only through the UN.

In America, however, the prevailing view of the UN is that of an ineffectual talking shop. This defect, Washington currently believes, can be traced back to the fact that from its very inception the United Nations gave equal weight to countries under a brutal dictatorship and to those practising democracy.

France, for its part, advocates 'constructive engagement' with undemocratic regimes like Syria or Iran, and accuses the US of violently imposing democracy on countries like Iraq. Washington counters the charge with the argument that a world imperilled by terrorism can be kept safe only by the spread of democracy. It could argue, furthermore, that just as in 1792 the French army stood ready to bestow the Rights of Man on the subjects of feudal overlords beyond the Rhine, Alps and the Pyrenees, so now American (and Coalition) troops are in the process of bringing democratic elections to Afghanistan and Iraq. President Chirac could riposte that at the time neither the Germans nor the Spaniards were overly keen on the Declaration of the Rights of Man carried on the bayonets of soldiers of an occupying army.

All this leaves the British government in a most awkward position. While it is an unwritten law of history that Britain has a 'special relationship' with the USA, Downing Street must be mindful that the forthcoming general election will be followed by a referendum on Europe - hardly the time to emphasise differences with France! It will require the most consummate statesmanship to reconcile these conflicting pressures.

Truly, 2005 promises a bumpy ride - or, as optimists would say, fresh challenges to be met and overcome.

AJR appoints new Head of Media and Public Relations



Michael Newman

The Association of Jewish Refugees is delighted to announce the appointment of Michael Newman as our new Head of Media and Public Relations. He will co-ordinate our efforts to identify potential new members and produce information to advise them of the extensive welfare, social and financial services from which they can benefit.

He will also be responsible for our Outreach Programme, which has already developed more than 30 regional groups across the country, and for ensuring the AJR is well represented at national and international events.

Known to many of our members, he will also continue in his role as Director of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims, assisting Holocaust survivors and their heirs with restitution and compensation enquiries.

After several years heading the AJR's Media, Development and Community Relations Departments, Ronald Channing has been appointed - to work part-time - as the AJR's Special Representative for Educational and Cultural Projects. He will continue to give organisational support to the Kindertransport (KT) special interest group of the AJR and to write feature articles and reports for the *AJR Journal*.

AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman said: 'We are delighted to have made these appointments and look forward to continuing to provide an invaluable service to our membership. We also hope to offer our expert assistance to new members.'

Rolf Weinberg



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Much decorated AJR member Rolf Weinberg has been awarded the Veteran's Badge for his service in the Allied Forces during the Second World War (see profile of Rolf in *AJR Journal*, October 2002)

KT child honoured

Former Kindertransport child Rosa Jacobs, now in her 80s, has been given an award for her care for sick or needy refugees, neighbours and friends. The award, made at a fundraising dinner in aid of the charity Norwood, was presented by TV personality Esther Rantzen.

**JACKMAN ■
SILVERMAN**

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The lesser and the greater Johnson

Richard Grunberger

The Boris Johnson and David Blunkett 'scandals' have re-ignited the debate about how private the private life of public figures should be. Opinion seems to be split down the middle. Extreme libertarians say what politicians get up to in the privacy of their own - or their mistresses' - homes should be a taboo subject. Old-fashioned moralists argue that MPs who frame the laws that govern our lives ought themselves to live up to certain moral standards.

I tend to agree with the latter. I cannot accept that because society at large contains, say, 20 per cent of husbands who cheat on their wives, for Parliament to be really representative a fifth of all MPs should be adulterers. If Parliament were merely a sample of the public, hanging would still be on the statute book.

No, the House of Commons should be an elite - not of birth or wealth, but of character. I know this is a counsel of perfection, and that we are all subject to the ills that mortal flesh is heir to. Even so, someone who is not merely an MP, but a minister-in-waiting, can surely be expected to curb his addiction to the triple-headed bitch-goddess of wealth, power and sex.

But my proposal for a self-denying ordinance extends beyond politics to the media. I find it ludicrous that highly paid editors and journalists should be in a position to hound MPs over their expense accounts (or housing loans - as happened with Peter Mandelson) while they remain immune to public scrutiny. In any case, the media are now virtually an estate of the realm, as was proven by the BBC filling the oppositional vacuum over war in Iraq when the Conservatives supported Labour.

By happy coincidence, Boris Johnson straddles the narrowing gap between politics and the media - being both an MP and editor of *The Spectator*, guest columnist on the *Sunday Telegraph*,

novelist and TV personality. With so many irons in the fire, he had to spread himself rather thinly and farm out some jobs to others. Thus it came about that the contentious editorial about Liverpool being hooked on self-pity - for which Boris Johnson had to apologise in public - wasn't actually penned by the *Spectator* editor.

Now *The Spectator* is one of the glories of English journalism, with roots going back to the accession of the Hannoverian dynasty and the age of Samuel Johnson. (Editing the *AJR Journal*, a mere 60-year-old stripling, I am understandably envious of this venerable rival publication.)

However, there is a downside to being intimately associated with a magazine of such antiquity - namely that one's own outlook becomes antiquated, and one still regrets the outcome of the American War of Independence (1776-83). From the lofty vantage point of the *Spectator* office, Boris Johnson and his political editor, Peter Osborne, view the 'Yanks' as a bunch of rough-hewn, gun-toting hillbillies and colonials, bereft of the refinement of public school-bred Englishmen.

The Conservative Party, with which *The Spectator* was traditionally as closely associated as *The Statesman* was with Labour, is an almost schizophrenic political animal. On the one hand, it had a Jewish leader two generations before any other party in Europe; on the other hand, it is so wedded to the past that 30 years ago a Tory MP was criticised by colleagues for wearing hush-puppies in the division lobby, and Michael Heseltine was looked at askance because he had bought his own furniture (instead of inheriting it from his patrician forebears).

I hope this explains why - sexual peccadilloes apart - Boris Johnson could be a reincarnation of his great namesake and fellow Tory, Samuel.

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South London AJR celebrates 10th anniversary

Ronald Channing



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

In party mood: Ken Ambrose, left, with Lore Robinson, Ludwig Meyer, Walter Woyda, Helen Arenson, Herbert Woolf and Lotte May

AJR's very first local group, South London, celebrated its 10th birthday with a party and a quiz on members' memories of those years.

The quiz was set by the group's founding chairman, the indefatigable Ken Ambrose, who has led the group's activities for the entire decade, with the knowledgeable support of Walter Woyda. Where was the first meeting held? In Streatham Liberal Synagogue. Who was our highest-ranking speaker? Lord Moser. Who was our oldest speaker? Ludwig Spiro. Which wartime experience paralleled that of the Kinder? Evacuation. And many more.

The celebration party was planned and catered by AJR Southern Region's organiser Myrna Glass and her assistant Karen Benardout.

Ronald Channing, AJR's retiring Head of Media, Development and Community Relations, complimented this pioneering group on having led the way to what are now some 35 groups serving AJR members throughout the country. Ronald congratulated Ken on his enrolment on an MA course in Jewish history being organised by the Leo Baeck Institute and Sussex University's Centre for German Jewish Studies, while warning him against indulging student temptations such as propping up the bar and chatting up the girls! He wished South London's members much enjoyment in the years ahead. On behalf of the members, appropriately, Myrna presented Ken with a book token in gratitude for the great pleasure he has brought into the lives of many fellow refugees.

Kindertransport prime mover receives Jewish Care award



PHOTO: JUSTIN GRAINGE

Bertha Leverton, pictured here with Conservative leader Michael Howard and his mother Hilda, has become the recipient of the Jewish Care Minerva Business Award. On receiving the award from Lord Levy at a fundraising lunch at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London, Bertha, who set up the Reunion of Kindertransport in 1988, said that 'Although we never forget and we will never forgive, we have become citizens of Great Britain and we will always be very, very grateful to the country that gave us refuge. The Kinder all deserve awards.' Michael Howard, guest speaker at the lunch, said that Bertha's work in reuniting the remainder of the Kindertransport children reminded him of the Talmudic words 'One who saves a single soul of Israel, the scriptures consider as one who saves a whole world.'

Eastbourne venture

In November a small but well assorted AJR group left for a week's adventure in Eastbourne. The weather was miserable and we weren't sure we had packed enough warm clothes and various protective items.

But we woke up to a glorious blue sky and sunshine. Our hotel was just across the road from the beach - perfect for sunbathing. The weather remained

absolutely glorious and I acquired a suntan. We had a wonderful week. May I express a very special thanks to our three guardian angels, Sylvia, Carol and Annie, who watched over us with loving care, arranging splendid evening entertainment and coach outings and contributing so much to making our week so enjoyable.

Karin Lawson

Frank Foley - the paper trail

Ruth Rothenberg

The unveiling of a plaque to Frank Foley in the British embassy in Berlin in November 2004 was a remarkable about-turn in the British Government's view of its recent past. Foley was, after all, only a minor civil servant in the Passport Control Office, albeit using that as a cover for his real work of reporting to Britain's Special Intelligence service on unfolding events in pre-Second World War Germany.

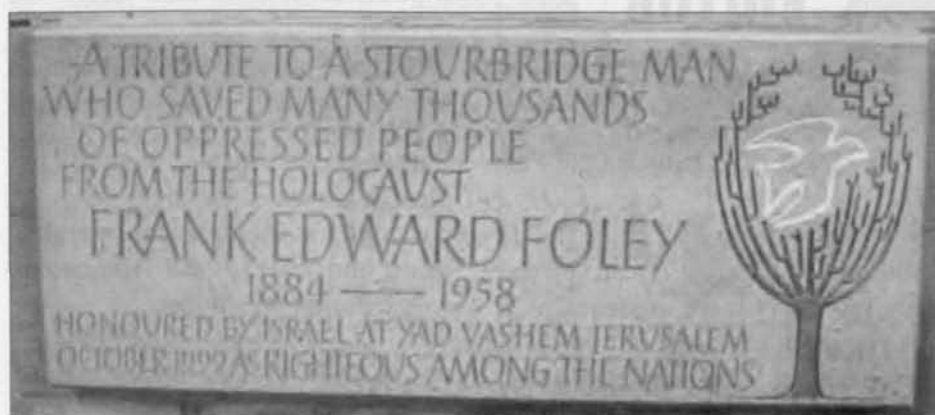
In addition to those two jobs, he took on a third, unofficial and highly risky task, that of helping hundreds of thousands of Jews to get out of Germany through the liberal issuing of visas. (The full story is told by *Daily Telegraph* journalist Mike Smith in *Foley: The Spy Who Saved 10,000 Jews*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1999.)

Considering how much Frank Foley's dissident views and independent actions were at odds with official policy and opinion, the honouring of his memory in the very heart of the establishment which he defied is truly mind-boggling.

It is worth reminding ourselves, 70 years later, with the benefit not only of hindsight but the introduction of Holocaust education in the school history syllabus and the establishment of Holocaust Memorial Day in 1999, just how entrenched and hostile were both official and unofficial attitudes.

Documents released by the National Archives (the former Public Record Office), some in advance of their official release date in order to fill out the background of these events, shed a fascinating light on the relations and interaction between the men on the ground and their superiors at head office in that tense period.

In the aftermath of Hitler's taking up the office of Chancellor in January 1933, Frank Foley informed the embassy's Chancery section of a dramatic increase



Plaque recognises the 'Stourbridge Schindler'

in caseload. His letter of 29 March was forwarded to the Foreign Office central department two days later:

This office is overwhelmed with applications from Jews to proceed to Palestine, to England, to anywhere in the British Empire.

Professional men of the highest standing, including some who were wounded on the German side during the war [1914-18], have consulted me with regard to emigration...

I have received no special instructions with regard to England.

The Cabinet met in Downing Street on 12 April to discuss the 'proposals made to the Home Secretary on behalf of the Jewish Community, for dealing with the problem of the influx of Jews from Germany in consequence of recent events in that country.'

The minutes of that meeting, which discussed the report presented by a special committee, drew 'attention to the grave objections involved in the adoption at the moment, either of a policy of making the present restrictions more severe, or of relaxing those restrictions in the direction desired by the British Jewish Community.'

The special committee recommended maintaining existing arrangements, while keeping a watching brief, and tightening checks on the duration of refugees' stay and their condition of 'non-employment', together with the introduction of police registration. But

the key point was

That the answer to the British Jewish authorities should be to the effect that there can be no question at the present time of relaxing the restrictions on the entry of aliens to the United Kingdom for the benefit of German Jewish refugees.

In cases where such refugees had been given permission to land for a temporary stay, and desired to extend it, the Government would be prepared to consider a further extension provided that the Jewish Community were prepared to guarantee, so far as might be necessary, adequate means of maintenance for the refugees concerned.

The Cabinet heard proposals

that it would be in the public interest to try and secure for this country prominent Jews who were being expelled from Germany and who had achieved distinction whether in pure science, applied science, such as medicine or technical industry, music or art.

This would not only obtain for this country the advantage of their knowledge and experience, but would also create a very favourable impression in the world, particularly if our hospitality were offered with some warmth...

While fully realising the importance of not allowing this country to be flooded with foreign refugees who would before long either become a burden to the community or replace other workers who would become a burden, the Cabinet were anxious to avoid the danger of creating an atmosphere in Europe critical to this country.

The concluding part of this article will appear in the February issue of AJR Journal.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

A FAR FROM NEGLIGIBLE ONE PER CENT

Sir - I fear you may be doing Teddy Kollek an injustice. His role in the early years of Israel's existence as a state was that of chief fundraiser and arms procurer. I would argue that his role at that crucial time was probably more important than those of a lot of his contemporaries.

Herbert Haberberg
Barnet, Herts

MISNOMER

Sir - A good example of paradox is the man who murders his parents and asks the court for clemency on the grounds of being an orphan. Time and again during several recent visits to Germany I have been alarmed by the word *Befreiung* (liberation), suggesting that the Allies gave of their all to liberate the German people from their Nazi overlords.

What about the unprovoked blood-letting perpetrated by German military might? Is the word *Blitzkrieg* to be eliminated from German dictionaries? Television does not fail to remind us how the pitiful, demoralised remnants of the British Expeditionary Force were miraculously 'collected' from the Dunkirk beaches, while the German High Command busied itself with every meticulous detail for the conquest of the British Isles (Operation Sea Lion). Authenticated records leave us in no doubt that the *Einsatztruppen* of the SS would not have been far behind. Had *Seelöwe* been enacted, it would have been a matter of only days until London would have been compelled to capitulate. It seems unlikely that with the fall of the last bastion, the German nation would have craved

'liberation', but instead would have proudly goose-stepped in front of Buckingham Palace with swastikas flying and *Pauken und Trompetenmusik. Befreiung?* My foot!

Werner E Abraham
Sutton Coldfield

GOLIATH AUSTRIA

Sir - Several years ago, Magister K. Ramsmaier and I began corresponding after he read a letter I wrote to *Der Standard*, Vienna, thanking Austrians for the first lot of restitution we Austrian Jews received, and saying I had given half of it to a human rights organisation helping Bulgarian gypsies and half to Medical Aid for Palestinians. Karl Ramsmaier, in his 40s, is a Catholic layman who teaches religious studies at a secondary school in Steyr, Upper Austria, where I grew up. He and a friend have written a book about the history of the Jews in Steyr, from earliest times to the present. With friends, he arranged a visit by a group of Jewish refugees who used to live there. On a visit to Steyr he showed my wife and me various other projects to keep the memory of the Jews of Steyr alive. For example, the Jewish cemetery has been restored and there are plaques commemorating the former synagogue and the death march of Hungarian Jews through the area. AJR members from that area may like to help with information or donations.

George Landers
Crete

PROFILE POINTS

Sir - Having got to know Ruth Barnett through my Kindertransport

dissertation project, I was not quite happy with the way you described the outcome of her parents' natural desire to resume life with their daughter and Ruth's inability and unwillingness to comply (September issue).

I am sure that calling her parents' permission to let her go back to England a 'battle she won' would be too simplistic a formula for Ruth's liking too, as she has been painfully aware that the other side of her 'victory' was no less than her parents' painful loss of a daughter just reclaimed. Accordingly, heated discussions with her brother Martin, who resettled in Germany only after finishing his studies in Cambridge, have her ponder questions of the what-if variety even today. Would, for instance, things have worked out for the family if Martin had been repatriated with her, if there had not been that wall of silence between the generations, if family therapy had been available at the time? In the ensuing years, however, some sort of understanding was finally arrived at between mother and daughter, and, through her visits to Mainz, Ruth was also able to make a kind of peace with Germany.

For many second- and third-generation Germans, who have been fortunate enough to attend one of the countless seminars, workshops and lectures given by her in Frankfurt, Berlin or Munich, that has certainly proved to be a great boon - and a challenge. For Ruth's strength to rise above personal suffering and turn it into an instrument of mobilising young people to take a stand against injustice - wherever it may occur - is formidable.

Iris Guske
Ofterschwang, Germany

Sir - It was good of you to publish a profile of me (November issue). There is one point I would like to clarify. It is not correct to say that Sir Peter Medawar made use of some of my findings in the work that led to the award of his Nobel Prize in 1960. The work on immunological tolerance

was carried out by a closely-knit team of which he was the senior scientist and leader and I its junior member. (The third was Rupert Billingham, who died in 2003.) It is, however, true that the salient features of immunological tolerance, which was to have a galvanising effect on the field of immunology and organ transplantation, were embedded in my PhD thesis in 1954.

*Leslie Baruch Brent
London N19*

WUNSIEDEL

Sir - Let me counter your troubling article about Hess's burial place with a more cheerful note. Wunsiedel is the birthplace of that delightful author Jean Paul Friedrich Richter (1763-1825). In a world full of trouble, it is important to draw attention to those features that are good and beautiful.

*Hans Hammerschmidt
Oxford*

LIVERPOOL STREET MEMORIAL

The letter from Linda Rosenblatt of World Jewish Relief calls for a comment. The Liverpool Street Station memorial is a wonderful idea but its design is neither pioneering nor groundbreaking. Any competent architect or designer could and should have foreseen excessive sun exposure and unworthy use of the plinth, as now revealed. To be sure, permits for changes will have to be requested, but hardly 'innumerable' ones. As for the canopy, her letter simply anticipates opposition to the idea but does not say that it was actually asked for and turned down.

*Eric Mark
Brussels*

ESTONIA

Sir - Before the Second World War 4,566 Jews lived in Estonia. At the time of the Wannsee Conference (20 January 1942), Estonia was already *judenrein*. In Poland, not known for love of her Jewish population, 5,264 'Righteous Gentiles' were found to

have helped Jews to survive. In Estonia, just one earned this distinction. In 1943 Estonians provided a Waffen-SS Grenadier Division. Two months ago a memorial to those Estonians who fought alongside the Nazis was unveiled in Lihula, Estonia, showing a soldier in German uniform. Two thousand people, including about 100 veterans from that period, attended. If that is the enlarged Europe, I'll vote for the UKIP.

*Frank Bright
Ipswich*

RETURN TO BERLIN

Sir - I was quite touched by George Vulcan's report on revisiting his native city after 60 years. On his next visit he might be interested to go and see the very moving memorial at Bahnhof Grunewald, which has wrought iron work all along the edge of the platform with lettering indicating so many to such and such a destination, on such and such a date. It's very much out of the way of casual visitors and tourists, but that's where something terrible happened and is commemorated.

*Peter Zander
London W1*

MOVING IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS

Sir - You are so right about Mr Gott (December issue), but unfortunately you slipped up about the author's name! Professor Richard Overly wrote this splendid and commendable opus. Thanks for yet another most readable issue of *AJR Journal*.

*Eric Kaufman
Harrow, Middx*

CAN LEVY'S LEVITATE AS WELL

Sir - Two corrections to your article in the September issue: (1) Andrea (not Sandra) Levy's grandfather was a Sephardic Jamaican who converted to Christianity. (2) Yves Montand's birthname was Livi, not Levi, and he was not Jewish (though his name almost got him killed).

*Dave Fridman
London*

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler



Raphael, *Pope Julius II*, 1511-12
London, The National Gallery

There's still time to visit the Raphael exhibition at the **National Gallery** - it ends on 16 January. **Raphael: From Urbino to Rome** is as much the story of a gifted artist as of an ambitious opportunist who absorbed the techniques of his great contemporaries, and ended up at the age of 25 as a rival to Michaelangelo in the papal court of Rome.

Raphael studied art with his father, Giovanni Santi, on whose death the 11-year-old Raphael inherited his workshop and became influenced by the Urbino artistic luminaries of his time, Perugino and Pintoricchio. Later, he travelled to Florence, where he met his two great mentors, Michaelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. His admiration for the former was not reciprocated, however, and the great artist of the High Renaissance viewed the younger man with suspicion. The Italian Renaissance was a dangerous time for anyone involved with artistic patronage. The sixteenth-century proto-mafiosi busied themselves with inter-family rivalry and death feuds and Raphael himself could not totally avoid their patronage.

This exhibition, sponsored by Credit

Suisse First Boston, charts Raphael's journey, paying perhaps too much attention to the great Masters he first imitates, and then sometimes surpasses. Take, for instance, the fearless and rigorous honesty of his portrait of his patron, Pope Julius II, *Il Papa Terribile*, or the intense warmth and sweetness of the beautiful women he loved to portray. His *La Donna Velata* was considered his Mona Lisa for its beauty and mystery. Raphael's art is softer, less muscular than Michaelangelo's, less spiritual than Leonardo's.

In the Vatican, he added a mystery figure to his fresco, the *School of Athens*, a line-up of Greek philosophers encouraged by the enlightened Pope. Some academics believe this figure to be Michaelangelo, a tribute paid by Raphael to that artist's magnificent Sistine Chapel ceiling painting. But inconceivably Pope Julius, who promoted Raphael above his contemporaries, invited him to destroy their work in favour of his own. Fortunately, the ceiling was left intact. Raphael died at the early age of 37, possibly through a sexually transmitted disease, and his name became synonymous with the debauched lifestyle he indulged. The womanising artist was engaged to a cardinal's niece but never married her. Instead, he fell in love with a young woman called Margheretta, who, some experts consider, inspired many of his most beautiful paintings, including the *Madonna della Sedia*. One art expert believes that many of Raphael's most brilliant and erotic drawings, in fact, remain hidden in the Vatican.

While the National Gallery is proud of its recent purchase, the *Madonna of the Pinks*, it is the drawings, described as cartoons, which tell the story of Raphael's influences and development during one of the most exciting periods of the art world. Raphael is also known for more negative reasons: for the group of nineteenth-century revisionist artists who - inexplicably - felt his art had become too pure and perfectionist and wanted to revert to the artistic status-quo-ante. They spearheaded the Pre-Raphaelite movement.

RG's INTERFACE

Primo Sir Anthony Sher's adaptation of Primo Levi's Auschwitz memoir *If This Is a Man* has been playing to full houses at the Cottesloe Theatre. The versatile actor recently announced that due to the negative attitude of literary critics he had stopped writing fiction. However, he has just been commissioned by a publishing house to write a book about the decade-long gestation of *Primo*.

The Sorrow and the Pity Marcel Ophuls's Oscar-nominated documentary about the widespread wartime collaboration of the French with their German occupiers (shot in 1972) has been reissued on DVD. A similar theme is touched on in the Goncourt-nominated *Suite française*, by Auschwitz victim Irène Némirovsky. She had completed the manuscript just before deportation, and it took her daughter, Denise Epstein, years to reassemble the scattered fragments of the MS.

Berlin steals march on London Thanks to the enthusiasm of director Dan Lahav, the patronage of the Berlin municipality, and subsidies from the Lottostiftung, Berlin now has a permanent Jewish theatre on the Steinplatz, Charlottenburg. The opening production was *Wien auf dem Meer* by the Israeli dramatist Edna Mazya.

Birthdays The Hungarian Nobel Prize Winner for Literature and Buchenwald survivor Imre Kerlesz has turned seventy-five. His work, with titles like *Diary of a Galley Slave* and *Kaddish for an Unborn Child*, only achieved prominence in his native country after it had appeared in German translations. Another Hungarian, the Berlin-resident dramatist-director-actor George Tabori has celebrated his 90th birthday by publishing a sequel to his autobiography *Autodafe* entitled *Exodus*.

Rightful place in history restored

ELEANOR RATHBONE AND THE POLITICS OF CONSCIENCE

By Susan Pedersen

New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004, 469pp.

Do not, whatever else you fail to read this year, miss this absorbing, readable, scholarly, entertaining biography of Eleanor Rathbone. It is not only because her story, and the last decade of her life, intermingles so closely with the lives of so many refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria. That would be reason enough to start reading Pedersen's huge work. But it is because Pedersen achieves a full picture of Rathbone, warts and all, shy, grand, overawed by her father, beloved by some of her siblings, the public person as well as the private one. Though Rathbone's companion for most of her adult life, Elizabeth Macadam, destroyed almost all the papers, which suggests a desire for privacy, Pedersen's researches give us the feel of Eleanor's family, the strong Quaker background - though Unitarian and Anglican in practice by the time of Eleanor's childhood, the wealth, the privilege, the sense of being trapped by family. A complex, passionate, independent, proud woman emerges most powerfully.

Many regarded Eleanor Rathbone as her father's true heir - rather than her brothers. The 'seventh William Rathbone', as she was perceived, was independent in spirit and an independent in politics, first on Liverpool City Council, and later in Parliament. From 1929 on, her life changed. Her earlier campaigns for an income for women, for family allowances, for recognising the poverty of women, remained. But, suffragist, feminist, campaigner for women that she was, the Nazi seizure of power in 1933 and the Abyssinian crisis of 1935 made peace her key issue. Her attention turned to sanctions against Italy, and the unified - as she saw it - Fascist threat from Italy and Germany. After Kristallnacht, her real organising and inspirational

REVIEWS

powers emerged. With three others, she set up the Parliamentary Committee on Refugees, and she fought and fought. If ministers or officials did not listen, or disagreed, she broadcast their views widely. If she found a modicum of sympathy, as she did with a young Foreign Office official, Montague-Pollock, she would inundate them with letters daily. She was determined; she had no party machinery to keep her quiet, and she had strong beliefs. 'She knew that Jews were being subjected to terrible privation and brutality simply on the grounds of their Jewishness.' And, after April 1939, she condemned the British government's policy of 'selfish isolationism' and urged Britain to take responsibility 'for populations not tied to it by political obligation or control'. Why?

Presumably, her strong religious background played a part. With government failing to act, she drew their attention increasingly to the horrors experienced by Jews in Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, and began to condemn: 'A Cabinet is a collective entity, and such an entity has proverbially neither a body to be kicked nor a soul to be damned. Yet sometimes as I gaze across the House at the serried rows of rather uninspiring personalities on the Treasury bench, I am tempted to wish that they had indeed a collective soul, which could be condemned to spend eternity in seeing and feeling the torments which their policy has caused others to continue enduring, whilst their individual souls reposed in some insipid Paradise, listening to music played upon antiquated instruments.' As the House adjourned on 4 August 1939, she told them they should spare a thought for 'those hundreds of thousands of men and women who are wandering about in utmost destitution, many of them hiding by day, many of them already in the hands of the Gestapo.'

Her later work for refugees, and in securing the release of Jews from internment on the Isle of Man and elsewhere, is well known. But she passed out of the limelight. Despite her verve, passion and sheer effectiveness, she was largely forgotten, whilst less able and effective women politicians were remembered and celebrated. Yet her work lives on, not only in what she did for refugees, but in the recognition that family poverty matters. This is a biography that restores its subject to her rightful place in history. It makes compelling reading.

Julia Neuberger

THEATRE

Emotional earthquakes

KINDERTRANSPORT

by Diane Samuels

Burton Taylor Theatre, Oxford

To save her from the Nazis, nine-year-old Eva is sent to England alone and assimilates so well to her new family and country that after seven years she denies her Jewishness. Later, she has a daughter, Faith (Serena Martin), who discovers her mother's origins from old letters and books hidden in the attic and blames her for having deprived her of her true identity.

One of the most harrowing scenes of this play, first performed in 1993, is the confrontation between the adult Eva (Helen Winton) and Helga, her biological mother (Caroline Green), who comes to England after the war to claim her child. The daughter refuses and blames the mother for her

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**CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
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damaged psyche, suggesting that the child Eva might have been better off staying in Germany and facing the risk of being killed together with her parents rather than suffer the traumas of a child alone.

Helen Pritchard gave an amazingly varied portrayal of the nine-year-old German Jewish girl - saying goodbye to her mother, then alone in a train, in a strange family, in a foreign land whose language she could not speak, and with such pathos that it brought tears to my eyes.

The director, Melanie Frost, made the best of the limitations of space, lighting and sound effects in this studio venue, and succeeded in arranging the transitions from place to place to flow with ease, from short scenes of mother and child in Germany to the attic in a Manchester semi, from the train out of Germany to the station in London, from the child and her real mother to the child with her adoptive mother, and from one self of the adolescent Eva to her other, divided self. All was guided by a sure touch that would have done credit to a professional director.

This project was co-ordinated by Laura Tomes, a student of Jewish studies at Mansfield College who gathered together the cast - all undergraduates - and ensured that, despite there being little or no awareness in Oxford of the fate of the Jews under Nazi rule, the play would function, in addition to its artistic value, as an educational channel for young and old.

It was clear that these young people were in closer contact with the emotional earthquakes which shook the characters in the play than mature actors could be, and it was perhaps their intimacy with the problems of a child alone that inspired their acting with such power to move.

After the show there was a stimulating discussion between cast and audience and I only wish some of our Kinder could have been there to speak from their own experiences. The production of this play was sponsored by the AJR. The money was well spent.

Andrew Herskovits

Ideal read for KT grandchildren

MEMORIES OF A CHILDHOOD

by Ruth Jackson

2004, 88pp. paperback

It is very easy to sympathise with the author of this appealing memoir when, as a young child, she is obliged to abandon her evidently close family life and home comforts - though, as the years pass, we see a picture of a teenager more and more fully occupied, and at peace, with her life in England. Moreover, despite the numerous difficulties she encountered, it seems that Ruth Jackson not only coped well with her plight but became involved in all manner of activities which prevented her from thinking too much about what was going on in Germany.

Throughout, the author refers to events taking place simultaneously in England and Germany. This approach, though, sometimes leaves the reader wanting to know a little more. Why, for instance, did Ruth's father end up in hospital, and what happened to the fiancé of her sister Leoni, even though she came to London with her mother and two children?

This highly readable volume, self-published, is available from the author. It contains many finely reproduced pictures and copies of documents and would make an ideal read for grandchildren of Kindertransportees.

Andrea Goodmaker

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Letter from Israel

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Jewish festivals in Israel differ from the way they are marked in the diaspora. Although Israel is a Jewish country, it is largely secular. Consequently, although Jewish practice provides a basis for society, it is more a fact of life than an expression of faith.

The festivals are part of the rhythm of life and leave their mark on society as a whole, whether observed religiously or not. Children learn about them at kindergarten and school, and no one is unaware of their occurrence.

Most singular of all, however, is the way Israelis mark Yom Kippur. It is, of course, the most sacred day in the Jewish calendar. As in the diaspora, some secular Israelis fast and go to synagogue. But in Israel all traffic comes to a stop, and for 36 hours it is as if life itself has been put on hold.

It is a longstanding tradition in Israel to use that traffic-free day to stroll on the road. Today, however, no self-respecting Israeli child is without a bicycle, scooter, skateboard or rollerblades, so that throughout the land Yom Kippur has become a festival of wheels.

In the largely secular dormitory suburb of Jerusalem where I live the evening of Kol Nidrei has become a happening. The streets are lit and bright. The weather is pleasant. The roads are clear of cars, and the conclusion of the Kol Nidrei service signals the start of the evening's festivities.

Young and old, but especially young, are out and about on wheels or on foot. Proud young parents throng the pavement, watching their offspring toddle around. Teenagers strut about in groups, enjoying themselves. Many people are dressed in white, and there is a general feeling of elation. For once, religious and secular Israelis are united in the fellowship of the holiday.

Julia Pascal hails from Northern England and, by courtesy of her grandparents, from Eastern Europe. Her Blackpool-resident GP father and valetudinarian mother were content to entrust her upbringing to her Manchester-based Romanian grandparents, who acted as her conduit to the Yiddish cultural heritage. (It needs to be borne in mind that after the suppression of Yiddish theatre in Tsarist Russia Abraham Goldfaden created *the* seminal Yiddish theatrical troupe in Bucharest.)

Small wonder therefore that after grammar school 17-year-old Julia set her heart on studying acting. By the time she went on to read English at university, she was 24, an age at which, in her father's opinion, she ought already to have been a wife with two children.

She, however, found fulfilment outside the domestic sphere, doing a stint at the National Theatre, where she understudied Sarah Kestelman in Robert Bolt's *State of Revolution*. In the best showbiz tradition, she 'went on' several nights, but by this time her interest had switched from acting to directing. She managed to become the first woman director at the National Theatre, responsible for a platform performance of *Men Seldom Make Passes*.

Subsequent way stations in her career were an associate directorship at the Orange Tree, Richmond and the writing of a TV drama documentary about Charlotte Brontë, which garnered a Bafta award. She then formed her own company, focused on a repertoire of Irish, Black and women's plays.

In 1990 she touched a raw nerve by writing and staging *Theresa*, a fact-based play about a young Jewish refugee whom British officialdom in the German-occupied Channel Islands had handed over to the Gestapo. *Theresa* made waves and performances were banned on Guernsey.

PROFILE

Richard Grunberger

Julia the Indefatigable



The play was the first of three to appear under the generic title of *The Holocaust Trilogy*. Its sequel, *A Dead Woman on Holiday*, was about a French interpreter at the Nuremberg Trial who (like the playwright herself) had experienced the Holocaust at second hand. The trilogy ended with a reworking of An-ski's Yiddish classic *The Dybbuk*.

Not content with staging these plays at different venues in the UK, she has also toured them on the Continent, particularly in Germany. But there is also a French dimension to her work. In the 1990s she spent some time in Maubeuge, whose then mayor is her husband. While there she wrote two plays - one about Marshal Pétain and the other with a Black-Jewish St Joan as protagonist.

By the late 1990s, Julia Pascal was targeted by British neo-Nazis. The

notorious Combat 18 (so-called because the first and eighth letter of the alphabet form Hitler's initials) posted her name and address on its website and she received death threats, prompting police surveillance.

In 2000 she wrote and produced *Woman in the Moon*, a play, staged at the Arcola Theatre, Dalston, about slave labourers 'employed' in the manufacture of V2 rockets with which Hitler still hoped to win the war in 1944.

The following year saw her switch from the Holocaust-haunted Jewish past to the *intifada*-haunted Israeli present with *Crossing Jerusalem*. This play, with a mixed cast of Palestinian and Israeli characters, was staged at the Tricycle, Kilburn and received favourable press notices.

The cast for *Crossing Jerusalem* was not only mixed but large - and this brings me to another aspect of Julia's work with the Pascal Theatre Company. She doesn't merely have to act as playwright, director and publicist but also as producer - in other words, fundraiser. In this connection, she complains that the Jewish community, while lavish in its support of welfare and education, is niggardly in its attitude to the arts.

But financial stringency has not sapped her creative energies. Just before Christmas she staged a musical version of *The Golem* at the Purcell Rooms. This was ostensibly a children's play - but adults construe it as a morality tale in which the Israeli Army is a modern Golem.

Julia is currently preoccupied with three projects in varying degrees of gestation. One is a play about the Irgun during Israel's birth pangs, another concerns the split identity of a Muslim teenager growing up in Rochdale, and the third is the dramatised life story of Ruth Posner, a child escapee from the Warsaw Ghetto who for years has been the lynchpin of the Pascal Theatre Company. It occurs to me that if she were to cast Ruth as the lead in that play, it would be a literal instance of 'art imitating life'.

INSIDE the AJR

East Midlands appeal to 'Continental Brits'

Some 20 of us from Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire met for a convivial lunch in a member's house. The lack of space in a relatively small home seemed unimportant in view of the enjoyment members obviously derived from the meeting. For a number of more elderly, single and sometimes infirm members, it was an opportunity for an afternoon out. If there are any 'Continental Brits' out there in the East Midlands who are not on our members' list, do come to our next meeting in Nottingham, which will be held at lunchtime. *Bob Norton*

Next meeting: Tuesday 22 February

Fourth annual social in Manchester

We held our fourth annual social - a pre-Chanukah afternoon tea - at the Nicky Alliance Day Centre, with some 50 members and friends enjoying delightful musical entertainment by local musicians (Sandra Friedman at the piano and Debra Finlay a most accomplished soprano). Northern Groups Co-ordinator Susanne Green reminded us of the services available from AJR; Northern Social Worker Barbara Dorrity also attended.

Werner Lachs

North London: minister's colourful career

The title of Bernd Koschland's talk, 'From Fürth to Hendon and Places in Between', certainly lived up to its name. He spoke of his early years in Fürth, his journey to the UK in style on the ship *Manhattan*, his stay in various hostels, and opting to become a minister in two North London synagogues, followed by 20 years' teaching at JFS and then at a girls' school. Quite a career!

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thursday 27 January

Surrey chat

Anthony Portner and Janet Clark, our hosts for the autumn social in their home, Tree Tops, offered wonderful politically correct hospitality ranging from mince pies to Stollen. We tried to put the world to rights but were brought down to earth by Myrna Glass, who reported on the latest changes at the AJR's far-off Jubilee House offices and listed some of the services available to members. *Vernon Saunders*

HGS and the story of the Leitz family

We welcomed Rabbi Frank Dabba-Smith and listened to a fascinating talk and slide show about the Leitz family, who invented the famous Leica camera. The name meant little to most of us until we were told the story of this paternalistic family of manufacturers who helped many Jews and anti-fascists in Germany in the 1930s.

Marianne Hasseck

Next meeting: Monday 10 January, 10.30 am: 'Members' Contributions to This Country'. Monday 24 January: visit to Disraeli exhibition at Jewish Museum - for further details call Myrna Glass on 020 8385 3070.

Weald of Kent and the Rothschilds musical

Walter Woyda told us the story of the musical *The Rothschilds* with the aid of a CD. It was enjoyable, interesting and informative and much appreciated by all 17 of us present.

Inge Ball

Next meeting: Tuesday 1 February

Ilford members keen to visit Disraeli exhibition

Jennifer Marin, Curator of the Jewish Museum, gave us a succinct but fascinating resume of the history of the Jews in England and outlined the museum's next exhibition, on Benjamin Disraeli. As great interest was expressed, it may be possible for some members to attend the exhibition as a group.

Meta Roseneil

Next meeting: Wednesday 5 January

Essex change of mood

Listening to a report by our chairman, Otto Deutsch, who recently visited Auschwitz, we were reminded once again of the

cruelty of man to man. However, our mournful mood vanished quickly when David Bell played some lively old tunes on his keyboard. Encouraged by Otto, who seemed to know all the words of our songs, we were singing, clapping hands and having a lot of fun.

Julie Franks

Next meeting: Tuesday 11 January

West Midlands (Birmingham) re-organisation

At a meeting, attended by 22 members, to discuss the future of the group, Myrna Glass reported that Henny Rednall, to whom we owed a great debt of gratitude for looking after the group for the past four years, no longer wished to be responsible for this task. It was agreed that there should be four main meetings a year with an interesting, informative speaker, including the annual garden party. Various members offered to assist with the organisation of the group and some offered to host tea parties or coffee mornings to enable members to get to know each other better. Sonja Shindler suggested that members from various areas might share the cost of taxis. Ken Shindler pointed out that Edgar Glazer had been responsible for starting the Birmingham group in 1995 and this should be acknowledged.

Paul Oppenheimer

Next meeting: Wednesday 5 January

Harrogate: a pleasant afternoon once again

Once again we spent a pleasant afternoon together, this time including Hilde and Eric Studley, AJR members from Leeds, who joined us for the first time. Susanne Green provided information on future events in Leeds and Bradford and, formalities concluded, we had a very enjoyable time just socialising and enjoying the wonderful goodies brought by the ladies. To the lady with whom I tried to recall the epic poem 'Dunkel war's, der Mond schien helle ...', when we met in St Annes, I now have the complete version. Please contact me on 01423 886254 and I will happily send you a copy. *Inge Little*

Next meeting: Wednesday 26 January at Masham Close

Leeds HSFA's illuminating afternoon

Thirty members were addressed by a number of extremely interesting speakers. First, Researcher Bernice Shooman and Archivist Brett Harrison gave a progress report on the project 'Making a New Life: Holocaust Survivors in Yorkshire'. Then Margaret Kagan, Martin Kapel and Michael Barrie spoke about their recent visit to Auschwitz in a UJIA group comprising 150 people with a wide range of backgrounds. They agreed that the visit had left an unforgettable impression on all who took part. A busy and illuminating afternoon.

Josephine Jackson

Ambulance talk at Brighton & Hove Sarid

Magen David Adom director Eli Benson said that, contrary to the general perception, his organisation was non-governmental and non-religious but was funded through voluntary organisations with help from a number of governments. It had 700 ambulances in Israel and received a half-million calls in a year. More people in Israel were killed in road accidents than through the *intifada*, we were told.

Rudi Simmonds

Next meeting: Monday 17 January

Good fellowship in Hull

Good fellowship, exchange of Kinder experience and afternoon tea were enjoyed. Susanne updated us on recent AJR events and all agreed that the Leeds get-together in September had been very successful. We are currently encouraging Fred Barschak, who was at our meeting on a visit back to Hull, his Kinder hometown, to remount his Anschluss exhibition for future display. We also exchanged difficulties with regard to appointments at the Austrian embassy for claims issues. *Bob Rosner*

Next meeting: Sunday 13 February

Pinner: A new dimension for Israel

An unusually large audience could not fail to be impressed by political and social analyst Abbie Ben Ari. Speaking fluently without notes, he touched on the effect of the 25-year peace with Egypt, terrorism and the 640-Km fence. There was almost peace with Syria and the Gaza problem was being actively addressed. Israel must remain strong for the sake of world Jewry, he said.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: Thursday 6 January. Well-known BBC TV News Face Jo Coburn, 'Trust Me ... I'm a Journalist'

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Wed 12 Margaret Opdahl

Thur 13 Lev Lewis

Sun 16 DAY CENTRE OPEN

Mon 17 Kards & Games Klub

Tue 18 Michael Heaton

Wed 19 LUNCHEON CLUB
Speaker: Michael Smith
(Journalist)

Thur 20 Paul Coleman

Sun 23 CLOSED

Mon 24 Kards & Games Klub

Tue 25 Rita & Jack Davis

Wed 26 Mike Marandi

Thur 27 Sheila Games

Sun 30 CLOSED

Mon 31 Kards & Games Klub

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FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Reiner Hans. Bernard Adler and family extend their heartfelt condolences to Hedy on the sudden loss of Hans. We will always cherish his memory as a remarkable man and good friend.

Reiner Hans. He was a wonderful friend who will be deeply missed. Margot and Joe Allan.

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Sun 16 'Homage to Szymon Laks, 1902-1983'. Jacqueline Cole plays works by Laks, Chopin and others in anticipation and commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day. Wigmore Hall, 5.00 pm. Tel 020 7935 2141

Mon 17 Ralph Blumenau, 'The Buddha and His Teachings'. Club 43

Sun-Thur 23-27 Northwood Holocaust Memorial Day, an annual event organised by Northwood United Synagogue and Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue. Will be attended by over 2,000 students from Harrow, Hertfordshire and Hillingdon. It is hoped to bring over to the UK for the event the exhibition 'Less Than Slaves', on the Holocaust of Hungarian Jewry. All survivors, particularly those from Hungary, invited. Tel Lynne Misner on 0845 644 8006

Mon 24 Dr Ian King, 'Ernst Toller: A Good German in Troubled Times'. Club 43

Wed 26 Professor Richard Overy (King's College, London), 'Making a Killing: The Economics of the Holocaust', University of Glasgow, Bute Hall, Main Building, 6 pm

Wed 26 *Hard Love*, Tikshoret Theatre Company presents a play by renowned Israeli playwright Motti Lerner. Play-

reading and post-reading discussion organised by Spiro Ark, with panel including the author. The play describes the relationship between an ultra-orthodox Jewish woman and her ex-husband, now an atheist. Tel 020 7723 9991

Thur 27 Professor Anson Rabinbach (Princeton University), 'Raphael Lemkin and the Notion of Genocide', Wiener Library/Centre for German Jewish Studies/Leo Baeck Institute Joint Lectures Series, 7.00 pm at Wiener Library. Tel 020 7580 3493

Thur 27 Holocaust Memorial Day Concert *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. Poems written by children in Terezin and read by Czech children (world premiere) and set to music by Julian Dawes; and *Songs of Ashes* Holocaust poems by the Polish poet Jerzy Ficowski. By invitation only. Contact Spiro Ark tel 020 7723 9991

Mon 31 Dr Anthony Grenville talks about his forthcoming book on Jewish refugees from Hitler in Britain, *'Aliens' and After*. Club 43

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

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

Wiener Library 4 Devonshire Street London W1 tel 020 7636 7247

Search Notices

Jacob Goldman, wife and family. Possibly from Kovno, Lithuania. Son Lewis or Nathan Goldman born 1871, died Liverpool 1950. He was married to Sarah Abelovitch or Aberlovitz. There was a daughter, Rebecca, and a son, Abe, born 1897 in Leeds. A second daughter, Cissy, was born 1900 in Leeds. Jacob and Nathan were caretakers of a Liverpool synagogue. Any information please to Mrs S. J. Richardson, 9 Wellington Street, Lindley, Huddersfield HD3 3HA tel 01484 644466

Leon Rosenschein, b. April 1932 in Duisburg, Kindertransportee to UK via Holland. Any information please to David Finkelstein, Flat 7, Albany Court, 38 Alexandra Grove, Finchley, London, tel 020 7888 1385

Ruth Frank, b. Prague 10.03.39, emigrated to UK 30.06.39 with parents Erich and Klothilde Frank (Raudnitz). Erich was born in Cardiff in 1906 (?) and taught

in Birmingham. Any information please to Amira Kohn-Trattner at amira.kt@verizon.net

Egon Nabel (or Nagel) came to Britain on Kindertransport from Breslau. Any information please to Ben Brettler, New Barn, Bollin Hill, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 4AN, tel 01625 522555

Harry and Irma Mayer and daughter Jacqueline, who was born around 1955. Harry and Irma met in North Finchley, London after arriving here from Germany. They were friendly with my grandmother Eileen Head/Steele. Any information please to Sharon Gray at Sharonronron@yahoo.com

Regina Kohn, née Silberstein, b. 14.12.06, arrived in UK September 1939. She had a Certificate of Registration issued by Metropolitan Police Office at Bow Street, London. Last address known (from 1948) 126 Hartherley Court, London W2. Any information please to Françoise Max, at francoisemax@att.net

Central Office for Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

Signing of Austrian life certificates

As reported in last month's *Journal*, the AJR is now able to notarise the *Lebensbescheinigungen* (life certificates) for Austrian pensioners. Life certificates will be issued at the beginning of January and AJR members are invited to visit the AJR offices in Stanmore or the Day Centre in West Hampstead. Members unable to reach either of these locations will be able to have their certificates signed at an AJR regional group meeting or during a home visit by an AJR social worker.

Where an AJR representative receives a request to legalise a pension life certificate, an object of official identification, such as a passport or driving licence, must be presented.

German life certificates

As with the above, the AJR can also sign life certificates for recipients of German compensation pensions (BEG) from either the Hesse or Düsseldorf authorities, as well as the Landesversicherungsanstalt (LVA) social security office in Hamburg. Regrettably, at this time, the AJR cannot legalise pensions from any other German authority.

Compensation hoaxes

It has been brought to our attention that a series of scams is in circulation with the aim of convincing people they have entitlement to dormant Swiss bank accounts. Information regarding applications for unpaid Swiss accounts should be accessed strictly from the two designated websites www.swissbankclaims.com and www.crt-ii.org.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL, by fax to 020 8385 3075, or by email to michael@ajr.org.uk. Assistance can be provided strictly by appointment at the Holocaust Survivors Centre in Hendon, north London. For an appointment, please ring 020 8385 3074.

Trojan horse in wartime Britain

Martin Page

The extent of pro-Nazi sympathy in Britain during the Second World War has recently become much clearer following the release of hitherto secret security files at the National Archives in Kew.

These files provide details of hundreds of people with pro-German sympathies living in Britain during the Second World War. A table dated 30 November 1942 in the available files indicates a grand total of 1,639 suspects to be arrested in the event of invasion. These people, who had been or still were fascists or pro-Nazis, were to be arrested immediately in the event of an invasion.

Nearly all the suspects had been members of Mosley's British Union of Fascists (BUF) until it was banned in 1940. In addition to the BUF, there were about half a dozen pro-Nazi organisations in Britain during the 1930s.

Though suspects came from every social class, a striking proportion had aristocratic, upper middle class or professional backgrounds. Quite a few were teachers, clergymen, doctors, pharmacists and civil servants or workers in armaments and defence-related industries. A number were agricultural workers and labourers.

Fascism appears to have run in families, with husband and wife, father and son, expressing similar views. Very few were members of trade unions. Of those working in private industry, many seem to have been self-employed. Some suspect Post Office employees were dismissed as perceived security risks. A few appear to have been attracted by the possibility of wielding political power under a fascist regime in Britain. Some expressed fanatical devotion to Mosley personally.

Some had been interned on the Isle of Man. None complained of being tortured, or beaten up, while in custody. Many who openly expressed their pro-fascist views became unpopular with their workmates or members of the public, but few were threatened with violence. Some were subject to orders restricting their movements, and requiring them to report to the local police.

A minority seem to have modified their fascist sentiments and, in consequence, to have been called up into the armed forces.

Most of the suspects would have been well placed to assist the enemy in the event of an invasion. Some were found to have gathered information thought useful to the Germans, for instance noting gun emplacements along the coastline. Others may have been more effective through their defeatist talk in public.

Quite a high proportion of suspects were of Italian origin and seemed pro-fascist rather than pro-Nazi. Many of this group lived in Glasgow and Edinburgh. A striking proportion of the remaining suspects were of German origin or background, particularly German women married to Englishmen. A large number of pro-Nazis in Britain visited Germany for a 'holiday' in the run-up to the war, with some having also visited Nazi Germany in previous years.

The police reports seem uniformly measured and non-hysterical in tone. They often refer to pro-fascist views being expressed by suspects to workmates, neighbours or relatives at different times. The suspects' homes were often searched by the police, with pro-fascist literature, emblems, uniforms, photos of Hitler and suchlike being found. What may now seem surprising is how openly these people expressed themselves, with few denying in interview the sentiments attributed to them. Quite a few were described by the police as 'rabid'.

Most of the pro-Nazi suspects expressed confidence that Germany would win the war and praised Hitler, some regarding him as the saviour of Europe from 'Jewish Bolshevism'. They indicated that Britain would be much 'better off' under the Nazis. Many expressed strongly anti-Jewish sentiments. The files do not record their comments at the end of the war.

Martin Page is a specialist on racism. If readers have any further information on Nazis in wartime Britain, could they please contact him via the AJR offices.

Newsround

Many UK adults ignorant of Auschwitz

A BBC survey has found that 45 per cent of Britain's adults have never heard of Auschwitz. The poll, which questioned 4,000 people, found that even among those who had heard of Auschwitz, 74 per cent did not know that Jews were not the only victims. *Auschwitz - the Nazis and the 'Final Solution'* is to be shown on BBC2 in January.

Racism on rise in Germany, report claims

According to German Situation 2004, 60 per cent of Germans agree that there are too many 'foreigners' in Germany - up from 55 per cent in the previous year. Of the 2,600 interviewed for the study, almost 70 per cent agreed that Muslim culture did not fit with Western mores. In the previous year, 66 per cent held that view.

Berlin centre given community's backing

It appears likely that the Central Council of Jews in Germany will give its backing to a project initiated by the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation - a Talmud centre to be built next to the Beit Zion synagogue, which opened in Berlin in 1910. The centre, due to be completed at the end of 2005, will provide a traditional Jewish education with the possibility of rabbinical ordination.

'Belarussian Van Gogh'

Richard Grusha, a 42-year-old artist and sculptor from Lida in Belarus, has been dubbed the 'Belarussian Van Gogh' by a local newspaper. In 2003 he created and erected with his own money a monument to Holocaust victims on the site of a massacre in Lida. In recent years, he has created monuments to Belarussian and Polish historical figures who lived in Belarus, earning him a UNESCO medal.

Hitler paintings to stay in USA

Four watercolours painted by Hitler and seized by the US Army after the Second World War are to remain the property of the American Government. The US Supreme Court let stand a ruling by a lower court in 2003 that allows the US Army to keep the paintings, ending a 20-year fight by the family of Heinrich Hoffman, Hitler's friend and personal photographer.