

AJR *Information*

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Don't miss . . .

Dr Wiener's monument

Anthony Grenville p.4

New Holocaust Research Project

Ronald Channing p.13

(Para)normal life

Paranormal – dictionary definition ‘beyond normal explanation’ – is the appropriate term for describing the fact (see p.16) that the *Allianz Versicherungsgesellschaft* insured the contents of Nazi concentration camps. It was already known that instruments of torture and gas chamber installations used in the selfsame camps bore manufacturers' names and logos. One can only conclude that to respectable German society it seemed the most natural thing in the world to integrate Nazi barbarism into its daily business routine. The malady lingered on. In the 1950s apartments whose Jewish occupants had been deported were popularly referred to by the cryptic term *Judenwohnungen* □

Is it possible to be equidistant from good and evil?

Culpable neutrality

What is the moral worth of a neutrality based on equidistance from the combatants in a struggle of good versus evil? For an answer to this question one need look no further than Switzerland which, thanks to the pressure of world opinion, is daily made more aware of how reprehensible its wartime conduct had been.

But for all the tumbling of skeletons out of the cupboards of the wartime neutrals – the Swiss, the Swedes, the Spaniards, the Portuguese, the Vatican – indifference to moral issues has by no means vanished from the contemporary world.

A case in point is the high esteem in which Ernst Jünger is held on both sides of the Rhine. Jünger had, after distinguished service in the Great War, written the martial epic *In Storms of Steel* which abounds in observations like ‘The lust of blood lowers over war like a red sail above a black galley; in its boundless ardour it is akin only to love’.

In Weimar days this coldblooded aesthete of Armageddon had kept an equal distance from unheroic democracy and plebeian Nazism. World War Two saw him as a Wehrmacht officer in Paris providing a cultural veneer for the occupation by contacts with French literati.

Nonetheless, earlier this year Chancellor Kohl and President Chirac concluded a Franco-German summit with a pilgrimage of homage to the rural retreat of the centenarian Jünger – a less than happy augury for the spirit of the new Europe.

In Britain the notion of equidistance was cited by Peregrine Worsthorpe in one of his last pieces before retiring from the *Daily Telegraph*. Apropos of a memorial service for the late Jessica Mitford, Worsthorpe asked rhetorically if the same number of mourners would have turned out for the Communist Jessica's Fascist sister Diana, Lady Mosley. Answering his own question in the negative, he chided the mourners for their failure to remain equidistant from the twin evils of Communism and Fascism.

Worsthorpe's polemic rested on crude over-simplification; the fact is that although both isms shed oceans of blood, Communism was the – admittedly bastard – offspring of the humanist Enlightenment, whereas Fascism had inhumanity stamped through-

out its entire being like a stick of seaside rock. Besides, it requires less effort of the imagination to envisage the Mosleys making Britain *judenrein* than to see Jessica Mitford as a Madame Ceausescu clone.

In Nazi-occupied Britain deportations would have been the task of the SS, dubbed the ‘black corps’ on account of their fear-inspiring uniforms. *Das Schwarze Korps* was the organ of the SS and like *Der Stürmer*, reached millions of readers via display cases up and down the country.

Unlike *Der Stürmer's* Julius Streicher, who was hanged at Nuremberg, *Schwarze Korps* editor Günther d'Alquen now lives in comfortable retirement in the Bundesrepublik. His readiness to supply academic researchers with information shows Alquen's ability to distance himself from his pre-1945 incarnation when his typewriter was a lethal weapon on a par with *Einsatzkommando* rifles.

In the current issue of *History Today* Prof William Combs of Western Illinois University shows his own equidistant approach to moral absolutes and to d'Alquen's *amour propre*: he commends the ex-operative in Goebbels' lie factory for his ‘graciousness’ in agreeing to be interviewed for an article. Thus does culpable neutrality live on □



The newly unveiled Innsbruck memorial. (See page 3)

Profile

The epic of indefatigable Eric

Eric Sanders was born Ignaz Schwarz into a Jewish family eking out a living from a grocer's shop on a Viennese council estate. At Realschule his classmates called him 'Nazi' – a diminutive of Ignaz – while routinely beating him up as a Jewboy; eventually he learnt to hit back. He compensated for indifferent progress at school by honing his rudimentary pianistic skills, fondly envisaging a future in Tin Pan Alley. He also spent much time at the Maccabi club house, while his younger brother joined Betar.

After the Anschluss the latter escaped – illegally – to Palestine; the rest of the family came to England. Here Eric worked first as a messenger boy at Bloomsbury House, then as a farm labourer. Early in 1940 he joined the Pioneer Corps, and within months found himself in France. After the German breakthrough his company was the last to be evacuated from St. Malo.

Back in England news of his father's internment awaited him. More dramatically, he and his unit had to dig trenches for troops preparing to repel the apparently imminent invasion. Only weeks later, they were billeted in an East End school, assigned to clearing debris from



Eric Sanders

the incessantly bombed London Docks. Their subsequent chores comprised somewhat less dangerous manual labour: tree felling, road building and the construction of nissen huts on army camps.

Halfway through the war Eric volunteered for the Austrian special unit engendered by the SOE in pursuance of Churchill's directive 'Set Europe Ablaze'. He underwent Commando-style training, received instruction as a radio operator and was flown to Italy.

By coincidence his brother, a volunteer in the Jewish Brigade, was also in Italy. The two arranged to meet – but, en route to the meeting place, the brother died in a car crash.

For Eric this trauma was followed by a

period of intense frustration. Although some Special Force colleagues – see Walter Freud's article in *AJR Information*, June 1994 – were being dropped behind enemy lines, his own turn hadn't come when the Austrian front collapsed.

After VE Day he was posted back to Blighty, where he acted as interpreter and editor of the camp newspaper at a POW camp. Finally, still in uniform, he spent a year in Vienna as a translator attached to the British-Austrian Legal Unit.

Demobbed, he went to an Emergency Teachers' Training College (where he met his wife). Over the years he rose through the ranks of the profession to become First Master at a large Comprehensive school. He retired at the age of sixty-one. Proud of the fitness acquired in the army, even as a retiree he would go back to his last school for weekly football games with ex-colleagues half his age. Hubris provoked nemesis: a bare year into his retirement a footballing accident robbed him of the sight in his left eye.

However, this impairment has not cramped Eric's style. Busy both in politics and the arts, he has been short-listed for a Euro MP candidacy, has composed a school musical, translated some of Grillparzer's plays, written war memoirs (one for this journal), and read short stories on LBC radio. He has even scripted a part-Arabic TV documentary about President Nasser which awaits transmission. Rising 78, he's looking for fresh challenges.

□ RG

Closing a 50-year gap

One day early in the war – I was about 12 at the time – my father was walking home from work and came across two young girls in the company of two anxious-looking ladies. Sensing that they had a problem, he enquired if he could be of help. Told that the ladies had been allocating accommodation to young evacuees and were left with the girls, who being cousins would not be split, he invited them home, where he consulted my mother. As a result, our already large family grew by two additional girls. After a year or more they eventually returned to London.

The older of the two girls was a refugee from Germany of about my age who occasionally wrote to let me know how they were getting on. I even remember visiting them at an apartment in London. The oc-

casional letters continued during my service in the Royal Navy, and then in 1947 I was demobbed and an airmail letter arrived informing me that my friend had emigrated to North America. Fate then played a nasty trick: her return address, on the flap of the envelope, was accidentally destroyed and I could not write a return letter. This had been on my mind for many years, particularly lately and I decided to try and find her. I started by ringing the synagogue at Northampton where a helpful gentleman suggested several addresses, including that of *AJR Information*. I tried this first and at the Editor's suggestion put an advertisement in *Missing Persons*. Hearing nothing for several weeks, I thought my efforts wasted. Then one evening the telephone rang and it was the lady herself calling me from Canada. She married, like me, and we both have two children of similar

ages. After a long conversation we exchanged addresses. I have already written that letter I owed her.

It just shows that it never does to give up on tracing past friends and I am, of course, extremely indebted for the help I received from the kind persons I contacted in the Jewish community and the relative in London who saw my advert and sent it on to Canada.

Wellingborough, Northants

□ Peter Bland

AJR MEALS ON WHEELS

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Grand mother tongue

Or grandmother tongue: everybody likes to pun. (You will recall Mrs Thatcher's 'The Lady is not for Turning', not to mention the Saatchis' election clincher 'Labour isn't working'.)

The number one problem for any punster is that the audience may not share his language. I, for instance, imagined that English Jews, many of whom had a background in Yiddish, would understand the Yiddishisms I had grown up with – yet, time after time, my *aperçus* met with blank incomprehension. In the early 1950s, when John Foster Dulles first burst upon the world scene, my rhetorical question 'could John foster *dalles* without intending to?' went down like a lead balloon.

Lack of appreciation owed less to politics than to linguistics: unaccountably my listeners didn't know that *dalles* – the most frequently uttered word in 1930s Vienna – meant penury.

Similar disappointment awaited me when, driving past a synagogue one Sunday afternoon just as some overdressed wedding guests were spilling out, I commented 'an embarrassment of *rishes*'. This *double entendre* went unappreciated because my companions had no inkling that *rishes* – derived from *rosche*, evildoer – means antisemitism. (A *rishesmacher* is, by extension, a Jew who engenders antisemitism).

Don't get me wrong. I don't fear for

the survival of 'general' Yiddish – didn't Barbara Amiel, aka Mrs Conrad Black, publicly admonish pro-Europe Tories to keep *shtoom?* – but I mourn the demise of Middle European Yiddish. Take the term *orl*, ie non-Jew, a great favourite of my Slovak-born grandfather's. What is the use of asking for *Der Orlkönig* at a Lieder recital, when the singer only knows Goethe's original title? Or of telling a fellow Verdi enthusiast that, at the Vienna State Opera – where German was *de rigueur* – one made the acquaintance of *La Forza del Destino* under the title of *Die Macht des Schicksals* (*Schicksal*, a diminutive of *shiksa* being a pun on *Schicksal*, fate).

What about the wonderful piece of kitchen-Yiddish *alte neveires*, leftovers? (The Viennese streetname Novaragasse, commemorating an Austrian victory in Italy, entered local folklore as *Neveiresgasse*). Or the delightfully euphonious term *machlojkes*, which I recently re-encountered in the pages of E.E. Kisch?

My plea for the preservation of Mid-European Yiddish is not simply motivated by monocultural nostalgia. Austrian Jews showed their affection for Grillparzer by giving his two best known plays Yiddish titles: *Melech Ottokars mazel ünd soff* and *Ejn chulem, ejn lebn*. May my modest plea send out ripples, and thereby hasten the day when, during intervals at the Globe Theatre, the groundlings will debate the finer points of *A sach gevult fün gurnisht*, preferably in the vernacular!

□ Richard Grunberger

Innsbruck commemoration

A memorial to the victims of Kristallnacht has been consecrated in Innsbruck by Austria's Chief Rabbi Paul Eisenberg. The ceremony was attended by Regional Governor Weingartner, Roman Catholic Bishop Reinhold Steicher, Israel Ambassador Yoel Sher and other dignitaries, as well as by forty former Jewish residents and their descendants.

During Kristallnacht, in November 1938, four prominent members of the town's Jewish community were murdered, other people injured, property destroyed and the synagogue burned down.

One of the most encouraging aspects of the event was that the initiative for erecting the memorial had come from

Austrian schoolchildren and students represented in the *Tyrol Jugendparlament*. The students enacted dramatic sketches relating how the idea came to fruition.

The memorial, which was designed by 18-year-old competition winner Mario Jorg, shows a tall seven-branched menorah rising from a glass-filled base inscribed with the names of the four victims. Former Jewish inhabitants and relatives of the victims, who came from Israel, the United States and Britain to participate in the ceremonies, renewed old friendships with those not seen for up to sixty years.

□ HH

'Blood Money'

Author Tom Bower told a JIA gathering in the City, that by the war's end the Germans had deposited vast amounts of gold in Switzerland, much of it stolen from Jews or removed from Holocaust victims □

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Reviews

Dr Wiener's monument

Ben Barkow, *ALFRED WIENER AND THE MAKING OF THE HOLOCAUST LIBRARY*, Vallentine Mitchell, 1997, £16.50.

This book tells the story of Dr Wiener and the library that he founded, one of the most prominent living monuments to the contribution made by the German-speaking refugees from Hitler to British life; in doing so, it also outlines a chapter in the history of the refugee community itself.

Barkow begins by telling the life story of Alfred Wiener, from his birth in Potsdam to his death in Golders Green, because it is impossible to separate the library from Wiener's powerful personality. Standing proudly in Devonshire Street the library is a unique institution, internationally renowned as a resource for scholars, the product of the farsightedness, devotion and determination of Wiener and the small team around him. Barkow rightly accords recognition to figures like C C Aronsfeld and Werner Rosenstock, whose contribution to scholarship has been undervalued by British academics.

From its origins in the Weimar Republic, the library moved to Amsterdam in 1933, then to London in 1939, where its collection of documents about Nazi Germany crucially assisted the British Government's campaign of economic and psychological warfare; the government repaid this assistance by withdrawing financial support in 1945. Consequently, although the Library provided vital documentary evidence for the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials, it remained in permanent financial difficulties, under Wiener and his successor, Walter Laqueur. Only a fund-raising drive in the 1980s secured the future of this exceptional centre of expertise about Nazi Germany and the Holocaust.

As Barkow emphasises, the Wiener Library is quintessentially the product of liberal, assimilated German-speaking Jewry in exile. But that has not endeared it to the groups with Eastern European origins or Zionist beliefs that have dominated post-war Jewry. Barkow details the battles that the Library has fought to preserve its distinct identity in face of such conflicts, insisting that it would be tragic if it lost touch with its German-Jewish background, or ceased to

serve as a memorial to German Jewry.

The Library is fortunate indeed in the energy and high academic standing of its present director, David Cesarani. But one can perhaps discern in Cesarani's publications (with Tony Kushner) a tendency to assail the myth, as they see it, of British liberality towards the refugees from Hitler; and hence to undermine the consensus of British and German-Jewish liberalism underpinning the – all things considered – not unsuccessful integration of those refugees into British society. 'Dr Wiener's Library' surely represents the values that its founders shared with the host community that took them in.

□ Anthony Grenville

'Privileged' survivor's story

Abel J Herzberg, *BETWEEN TWO STREAMS*, Tauris, 1997, £16.95.

Whereas other Holocaust survivors' accounts were often written after prolonged contemplation, Herzberg recorded his raw impressions day by day in a special camp at Bergen-Belsen in which some Jews from Holland were kept for possible exchange with German civilians in Allied hands. When Herzberg and his wife arrived there they were in early middle age, their two children hidden in Holland. This diary, first published in *De Groene Amsterdammer*, in 1950, has been translated into English by Jack Santcross who was in that same lager as a child of nine.

The whole enterprise was probably an attempt by Himmler to go behind Hitler's back and establish his own credibility as the war began to go badly for the Nazis.

Of course, it did not work. The awful bellowing, beating and bullying never stopped. People on the point of collapse had to stand for hours at roll calls and were then marched off to unbelievable hours of work. But there was no extermination as such, with the crematorium restricted for cases of 'natural' death from hunger, exhaustion T.B. and typhus. New burdens, which make the Pharaonic slavery look like child's play, were constantly heaped upon the vermin-infested survivors who counted the days to exchange or liberation with sickening swings from hope to despair and back again.

On the other hand, families were kept

together and there was an old-age home and a hospital. Herzberg concedes that the SS doctor in charge tried to act like a human being (and was promptly sabotaged by his colleagues).

Inmates were allowed a certain amount of internal democracy. A Jewish leader (*Judenältester*) and a council (*Ältestenrat*) were appointed, while a judicial commission dealt with minor offences such as thefts and disputes about food; Herzberg who had legal training acted as judge-cum-prosecutor. Such Jewish 'institutions', are sometimes accused of doing the Nazis' work for them, but Herzberg firmly believes that they prevented worse.

Herzberg's diary shows a strong philosophical tendency, juxtaposing the Nazi *Weltanschauung* with the Jewish respect for justice – the two opposing streams – even under conditions that turn humans into animals.

From Bergen-Belsen the diarist was sent to Theresienstadt, where the Russians liberated him. At this point the diary ends.

In postwar Holland Herzberg was active as a lawyer and writer, dying in 1989.

□ John Rossall

Three-in-one

Caryl Phillips, *THE NATURE OF BLOOD*, Faber, £15.99 (1997)

This is an unusual book. The author is Afro-Caribbean-born, an English novelist of high quality and a friend of the Jews even unto Israel.

One might say there are three novels here: one about the aftermath of the Holocaust, another about Renaissance Venice and a third about racial and social travails in Israel.

Theme One describes the experiences of a Belsen survivor. All but destroyed by her experiences, she has her tenuous hold on life restored by a young English soldier who, however, finally adds to her grief by being already married.

The past is another country. In Portobuffole, under Venetian rule the Shylock-like Servadio, and his associates render the State great service. They are the capitalists who wreak for the Doge what the church forbids Christians to do and maintain Venice's financial standing in the world. Popular hatred leads to their destruction for, in the end, the rulers feel obliged to burn the Jews to maintain peace in the Veneto.

Enter the Black protagonist, the African warrior who has left his people to defend the Venetian Empire against the Turks.

The Venetians need Othello, but do not like him. Again the Doge and his government try to ignore popular sentiment in the service of higher interest. The author does not spell out the end; he leaves that to Shakespeare.

The third pillar of this novel is the Falasha Malka, transported by 'Magic Carpet' from Ethiopia to Israel, where she is as alienated, mainly because of her colour and seeming primitiveness.

Readers must decide whether the author has managed to weld his disparate themes together. I for one, think he has largely succeeded.

□ JR

Roots in scorched earth

Susan Stern (ed.), *SPEAKING OUT: JEWISH VOICES FROM UNITED GERMANY*. Illinois, USA.

Some 50,000 Jews (not counting 10,000 Israeli temporary residents) have now settled in Germany to form a new community of about one-tenth the size of that which existed in pre-Nazi years.

Most of them are prepared to acknowledge the emotional and historical significance of Jews opting for that country as a permanent home; but they do not see their choice as an act of either folly or betrayal.

Nevertheless, they have done a good deal of soul-searching. As Susan Stern points out, they have been forced on the defensive in two ways: by criticism from fellow-Jews and by their own feelings of guilt for having made their decision voluntarily and in full knowledge of its potential implications.

Particularly controversial is the view expressed by the historian Michael Wolffsohn. Although he was born in 1947 in Israel and did his military service there, he owes, he declares, allegiance not to the country of his birth but to that which he regards as his beloved fatherland. His parents' and grandparents' move to Israel was, in his opinion, a "kind of transplantation. Germany was my native soil, my nature - my nation".

Not surprisingly, this attitude has caused a degree of outrage on the part of other German Jews; nor has it stopped him receiving antisemitic hate mail. Yet he insists that he can cope with neo-Nazis and their "unnatural nationalism" without having

to modify his own "inwardly directed" German patriotism.

Diametrically opposed to this esoteric stance are two German-born TV journalists and authors. Ralph Giordano states that he has remained in Germany despite the double burden of his own painful memories and the exoneration of far too many Holocaust perpetrators.

What made him stay on was the feeling that his ties with the country were stronger than the damage it had inflicted on him, his gratitude to Germans who helped him and his parents to survive in hiding, his feelings for his native city of Hamburg, his love for the language and a sense of belonging. The much younger Richard Schneider has stayed on in spite of his conviction that Jews should not be living in Germany. But, for good or ill, they are there now. He desperately hopes (against all hope?) that they will not slip back into a false sense of security, of "belonging" in a "host country", only to finish up in a "perverted form of Jewishness" which "would mean once again allowing the Germans to tell us who and what a Jew is".

Another contributor argues that exaggerated philosemitism serves no purpose, indeed defeats its purpose. The Jewish function in German society is "to sound the alarm whenever there is a need to make people aware of dangers at hand - which is the case at the moment".

Reactions to this book will differ. Some will respond to it with sympathy, others with regret. And some will take it for what it ultimately is - a cry for help.

□ David Maier

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Letters to the Editor

MAY DAY CALL BY XENOPHOBES

Sir - To equate vigorous resistance to further integration of Britain in the EU with vulgar xenophobia is itself vulgar misrepresentation of the case made by Eurosceptic politicians, Michael Portillo (Spaniard), Howard (Romanian Jew), Sir James Goldsmith (German part-Jew) and quite a few others.

The issue is whether more sovereignty should be ceded by Britain - which as we, of all people, ought to know has less reason than most European countries to disown her political and institutional past - to federal councils in which totally different political traditions predominate. How much control is to be surrendered over monetary policy, social and foreign policy (including control over immigration), laws and justice, for no great social (as distinct from sectional private) gain?

A bit more attention to what your personal *bêtes noires* have actually been arguing, and perhaps a moment's reflection on the lessons to be learnt from, say, Yugoslavia or Russia (or even Belgium or Canada) on the conditions that give rise to xenophobia might have spared me the embarrassment of your latest editorial.

Clarence Gate Gardens
London NW1
Esra Bennathan

Sir - I have just joined the AJR many years too late. The first copy I received was of the June issue which I found extremely interesting and informative. I was, however, horrified at the editorial.

First of all I really do believe that an organisation like AJR must remain non-political. If it becomes political, it loses some of its influence and divides its membership.

The article itself was certainly political and I totally reject some of your comments.

Teresa Gorman lost the Whip because of her position on the European Union. She is absolutely right having been involved in this since 1992. It is my personal view that a very large number of voters are concerned about the European Union.

You describe three members of Parlia-

ment as antisemites which may or may not be the case. Certainly if they were, then it is better not to have them in Parliament. However, I take exception to your calling Michael Portillo the xenophobe of the 90s. I have held discussions with him at political meetings and at no time did I ever notice that he was 'a person unduly fearful or contemptuous of that which is foreign, especially of strangers or foreign people' (the dictionary description of a xenophobe).

I then take the strongest objection to you yourself, apparently being very disturbed about individuals' foreign birth. Michael Portillo is the son of a Spanish migrant and Michael Howard is the son of a Jewish refugee from Romania. So what? Does it matter who their fathers were? The way you wrote this was deeply offensive.

Is your next step to call me a xenophobe because I want to protect, as a British Jew, the independence and sovereignty of this country? I hope that in your future editorials, which I am now obliged to read having become a member, you will stay away from politics and personal insults. In my opinion it only degrades a great organisation.

Limpfield Common
Surrey
Peter Frankel

Sir - I was very sorry to read RJ Jaray's so called 'Non-Xenophobe's Maastricht Critique'. Use of evocative words like 'surrender' and 'gold hoard' completely misrepresent the real situation. We cannot use the Bank of England's Reserves to build hospitals and double the pension. The gold is basically there to back every pound printed by the Royal Mint. The money in your wallet is not just expensively printed paper. If it was, it would crash the same way the old Deutschmark did. Obviously, if we exchange our Pounds for Euros, the Reserve will still be needed to back the money, and hence a percentage of our 'gold hoard' must sit in an agreed European bank, controlled by a representative committee.

Britain is one of the world's greatest exporters, with almost half going to

France and Germany. Two thousand lorries a day pass through Dover Docks alone. Last month my wife and I visited East Germany for the first time. I was happy to fill my car with British Petroleum petrol on the Autobahn and see boldly sign-written on Berlin's Reichstag that a certain Sir Norman Foster was in charge of the reconstruction of the new German Parliament building.

A large number of us agree with Helmut Kohl's view that the closer European ties are, the less likely is conflict in the future. God forbid that we should force a politically independent Germany to prove yet again what it is capable of!

Hayling Island
Hampshire
Steven Schrier

AUSCHWITZ - THE VIEW FROM ON HIGH

Sir - According to the *Sunday Telegraph* of 25th May the British Government knew from August 1941 of the systematic annihilation of Jews. In 1942, Gerhart Riegner of the World Jewish Congress, tried to convince both the British and Americans that the massacres were taking place, but without success.

The RAF bombed the IG Farben synthetic rubber factory, next to the Auschwitz camp, but alleged that the latter could not be attacked, as it was 'outside the bombers' range'.

The Americans are equally guilty. Even as far back as 1939, Roosevelt played with the lives of 1000 Jews on the ill-fated 'St. Louis', pressurising the corrupt Batista regime in Cuba not to let them land although they possessed perfectly legitimate visas, nor permitted them to land in the USA.

John McCloy, incumbent US Secretary of War, said in 1945: 'This is actually all just Jewish propaganda, isn't it?' Furthermore, the State Department never allowed the quotas on the immigration of Jews to America to be filled, sustaining a belief that no transport facilities were available, whereas the troopships returned empty.

Finally, according to the *Sunday Telegraph*, Riegner's campaign resulted in Henry Morgenthau's Department at the US Treasury producing a paper that dealt with the acquiescence of his Government in the murder of Jews.

Wembley
Middx
A Goldsmith

(Continued on page 7)

DEPRIVE THEM OF SCAPEGOATS

Sir - Coming from a Conservative Bavarian politician, the proposal to limit Jewish immigration into Germany is hardly surprising and deserves censure.

On reflection, I do not consider that to be such a bad thing - as is proved by most of us having decided to stay put rather than return. I personally would caution any Jew against moving to Germany. Whoever gets the blame for their present ills, such as over three million unemployed, at least it cannot be the traditional scapegoat, the Jews.

Robert Miller

THE MEN IN BLACK

Sir - This morning I was moved to tears, to think that after fifty years from Israel there came the news that Jews have been attacking Jews.

A hundred Jews, that came to pray at the Kotel on Shavuot day. They were attacked by men in black, using stones in their attack.

Wearing their distinctive hat, threw excrement and also spat. Is this how learned men behave if it's their faith they want to save?

It seems to me to be a shame that such things happen in His name. If Masorti prayers are a sin? Leave the punishment to Him.

I'm certain that, if He looked down, he had no smile but a sad frown. Some sixty years ago I guess, the men in black were called SS.

Wembley, Middx

El Sabielak

BOUQUET

Sir - Thank you for giving me a birthday present by publishing my poem *Mutteraugen* in the June edition. It is sixty(!) years since I wrote it for a dear old lady who had suffered great heartache at the time and she took much comfort from it. Ever since I wanted to see it in print. After all this time I had my wish fulfilled. It shows again *wenn man lebt, erlebt man alles*. Many thanks again.

Debora Kadisch

SEARCH NOTICED

Sir - Having put a Search Notice in your May issue for descendants of Viktor Jabkowski, the Jewish friend of my non-Jewish grandfather, I was delighted to receive a prompt response.

With the help of an AJR member, I traced Viktor's son. After the war his father sent us food parcels and I received a lovely pair of shoes in which I trotted off to school.

Such kindness to non-Jewish Germans stands out like a beacon of light to comfort me when memories of the other side of my family's history threaten to overwhelm me.

Thank you, AJR. You have won a place in my heart.

Farleigh Road
London N16

Ingrid Numa

OY VEH'S MIR

Sir - As the Russian cosmonaut said to the American astronaut.

Upminster

Canaveral Cohen

SEARCH NOTICES

Peter Frankel would be delighted to hear from anyone who worked with him between 1938 and 1940 in the Refugee Organisation located at Woburn House under the direction of Captain Davidson. Tel: 0188 373 0524 Fax: 0188 371 7116.

Dittmar Suss (Suess) of Lampertheim. Family survivor (Holocaust) desires contacting you or your family. Box 1235.

Derrick Andrew Sinclair, formerly of Jenkinson House, London. USA relative seeks letter contact. Box 1235.

Dora Bernstein, former journalist in Vienna who arrived in England 1940. Information about her is being sought by Prof Jean Leventhal, German Department, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA, USA 02181. Email: jleventhal@wellesley.edu. Fax: (617) 283-3671.

Werner Daniels, evacuated to the Stanbrooks, Breakspear Road, Abbots Langley, from St Paul's School, Swiss Cottage, with Gunter Loebel on 1 Sept. '39, is requested to contact him on 0191 285 2547.

Ernst (Muky) Schreker. Born Prague 1930, lived in Jewish boys' orphanage in London, counsellor at 1950 summer camp near Pevensey, graduated from Woolwich Polytechnic 1951, but tragically was killed in a motorcycle accident later that year. John B Moore of 43 Aldwych Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4J 1X4, whose sister was his fiancée, is seeking a cousin in Switzerland or any other information □

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The AJR at Work



AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman addressing the AGM. (See Page 13 report).

Berlin memories

At a luncheon meeting of AJR's Midlands Group, four members recalled their personal memories of Berlin.

Henry Aron remembered his primary school being run largely by antisemites and told how, in 1927, his father set up a successful plumbing business although he was a butcher from Hamburg! Henry attended the 1936 Olympic Games and saw Hitler walk out when Jesse Owen won a gold medal. Between 1956 and 1989 he had returned to Berlin several times, but found bureaucratic obstacles put in the way of his visiting the East.

Bert Kornhauser recalled the Reform Synagogue and its school's headmaster, Rabbi Prinz. When his family's work permits were withdrawn, he established a small raincoat manufacturing business, working with the unions under Nazi rules to employ machinists. When his family were arrested in 1938, he sold the business to pay for a 'return' fare to England.

Though a child of only 10 to 13 years of age, Joe Folger remembered his parents working long hours in the family's shops, his singing in the synagogue choir, and Rabbi Jacobowitz Snr., father of the present Lord Jacobowitz. In 1933, when a teacher refused to mark his classwork and former friends shunned him, he was non-plussed!

He spoke of his growing awareness of danger and marching men in uniform. He left on a Kindertransport and at only 14

years of age found himself alone and working in the tough Gorbals district of Glasgow.

Paul Oppenheimer, a survivor of Belsen, who returned to Berlin in 1994, was impressed by the 167 places of Jewish interest advertised for tourists. Incongruously, at the Wannsee Conference Centre, where the 'Final Solution' was initiated, rolls of yellow star fabric were on display.

□ Sonja Shindler

'Never forget'

Dr James Smith, Co-Director of Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre, began his address to members of AJR's Northern Group by reading a poem by Holocaust survivor and writer Elie Wiesel. While most people, he emphasized, had learned about the wickedness of the Nazi regime, he asked to what extent were the German people, as well as the religious, medical, legal and teaching professions also complicit? How could the veneer of civilisation have been so thoroughly stripped away?

Despite recent events in Bosnia and Rwanda, however, Dr Smith remained an optimist and continued to believe in humanity's basic decency. It pleased him too that, at long last, Holocaust studies had become part of the school curriculum. He reminded his audience that "How we remember the past fashions our future." □ WL

Getting together

South London AJR have begun a series of 'Get-together' meetings held in a pleasant suite at Streatham's Prentis Road Synagogue. The twenty-two members who arrived for the first meeting in June found plenty to talk about and particularly enjoyed Herbert Wolff's enthusiastic and moving account of a visit to his birthplace, Frankfurt.

The next 'Get-together' is to be held on Thursday 14th August when, from 1.30pm, Margaret Goldstein will talk on the Rothschild Family and Walter Woyda will play 'Rothschild music'. Further Thursdays are set for 23rd October and 11th December. Call in at any time between 10.30am and 3.30pm, bring sandwiches (no meat please) for lunch, but tea, coffee and biscuits are included in the nominal charge of £1 □

PINNER DISTRICT GROUP

Do you live in the Pinner/Hatch End area?

Would it interest you to meet fellow AJR members in your district?

Some members are planning the formation of an AJR social & special interests group.

If you would like to be involved, please phone AJR Volunteers Co-ordinator **Debbie Picker on 0171 431 6161**

AJR 'Drop in' Advice Centre at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
between 10am and 12 noon on the following dates:

Wednesday	2 July
Thursday	10 July
Monday	14 July
Tuesday	22 July
Wednesday	30 July

and every Thursday from 10am to 12 noon at:

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

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

It occurs to me...

Some of you have, in the past, criticised the stand I have taken on certain issues. Others have supported my views. Today I am going to share my pet hate with you, and I believe most of you will empathize with me.

But first, try to imagine a possible scenario. America's defence radar has just picked up the launch of nuclear missiles and the President picks up his hot line telephone, and what does he hear? "If you have a star button on your telephone key pad, please press it now," followed by "if you want China, press 1; if you want Russia, press 2; *und so weiter*."

While perhaps our own phone calls are not so urgent, how often are we being met by this spread of computerised voices leading us through trails of digital dexterity, to the final message that "all our agents are busy - try again later". Even more annoying, this, like the cost saving exercise by companies who keep us on hold while having to listen to canned music, is at our expense.

"Nation shall speak peace unto nation", but nations, these days, do not welcome the idea of your communicating with them. If you want to ring an embassy to inquire about visa or other arrangements, you will very likely be met by the latest form of telephone rip off - the premium rate number. At one time this was confined to sex chat lines. Now this money grabbing disease has spread to other more respectable organisations.

The alternative to the premium rate line, is the 'always busy' line. How often have you tried to make a reservation or enquire about a service, and been frustrated by the inability to get through. It seems to be one of the immutable laws of communications, that if you want to call a number, everyone else also wants to do so, at the same time.

Unfortunately, organisations are no longer content to stick to their principal business or objectives, but, looking for ways to 'make a fast buck', are treating us, the customers, with contempt. This is one of the diseases of the decade. We should take every opportunity to protest.

□ Ernest David

CONCERT BROCHURE

Don't forget to inscribe your children's and grandchildren's names, at £2 per name, by 10th August.

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Afternoon entertainment -

AUGUST 1997

- | | | |
|-----------|----|---|
| Sunday | 3 | RONNIE GOLDBERG
ON GUITAR |
| Monday | 4 | IMMORTAL PIANO
PLAYING - Lawrence
Estrey |
| Tuesday | 5 | THE GEOFFREY
STRUM & HELEN
BLAKE DUO |
| Wednesday | 6 | VOCE CAMERATA -
Rachel Taite (Soprano)
& John Taylor
(Baritone) accompanied
by Charlotte Ellis
(Piano) |
| Thursday | 7 | SONGS THAT LEAVE
THEIR MARK - Mark
Rosen (Tenor)
accompanied by
Daphne Lewis (Piano) |
| Sunday | 10 | DAY CENTRE OPEN -
NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Monday | 11 | TWO VOICES & A
PIANO - Eddy
Simmons & Helen Blake |
| Tuesday | 12 | CLOSED - Tish'ah
B'av |
| Wednesday | 13 | SHOW-STOPPER -
Nikki van der Zyl
accompanied by
Daphne Lewis (Piano) |
| Thursday | 14 | SHOWTIME AT THE
AJR - Amanda Palmer |
| Sunday | 17 | DAY CENTRE OPEN -
NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Monday | 18 | AN AFTERNOON OF
YOUR FAVOURITE
SONGS - Suzanna
Marks (Soprano)
accompanied by Janet
Beale (Piano &
Accordion) |
| Tuesday | 19 | WELL-LOVED SONGS
- Carol-Anne Grainger
(Soprano & Flute)
accompanied by |

- | | | |
|-----------|----|---|
| Wednesday | 20 | CHANSON d'AOUT
- Sally Triconnet
(Soprano) accompanied
by Geoffrey Whitworth
(Piano) |
| Thursday | 21 | SONGS MY MOTHER
TAUGHT ME - Sylvia
Hartman (Soprano) &
Sergei Bezkorvany
(Violin) accompanied by
Hermione Goldsmith
(Piano) |
| Sunday | 24 | DAY CENTRE OPEN -
NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Monday | 25 | C L O S E D - BANK
HOLIDAY |
| Tuesday | 26 | THE DELPHIC DUO
- Elspeth Wilks (Piano)
& Clare Wase (Violin) |
| Wednesday | 27 | ROYAL WOMEN -
IN WORDS -
COSTUMES & MUSIC
- Presented by Carolyn
James |
| Thursday | 28 | KISSIN-TIME - Henry
Kissin accompanied by
Gilmuir Mcleod (Piano) |
| Sunday | 31 | DAY CENTRE OPEN -
NO ENTERTAINMENT |

SEPTEMBER

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| Monday | 1 | THE MUSIC MAKERS
- Elizabeth Winton &
Ray Parfrey (Piano) |
| Tuesday | 2 | THE ORFORD DUO
- Julie Partridge
(Soprano) accompanied
by Elspeth Wilks
(Piano) |
| Wednesday | 3 | MY SONG OF LOVE
- Katinka Seiner
accompanied by Leslie
Barnes (Piano) with
Guest Artist Laszlo
Easton (Violin) |
| Thursday | 4 | THE GEOFFREY
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FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birthday

Hans Nathan Feibusch, painter and sculptor, born Frankfurt 15 August 1898. Best wishes on your 99th Birthday from AJR.

Barmitzvah

Nicholas Rosenthal, younger grandson of Lewis and Marion Smith of Kingsbury, was Barmitzvah on Saturday 5 July.

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Societies

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

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Midlands: Edgar Glazer
0121 777 6537
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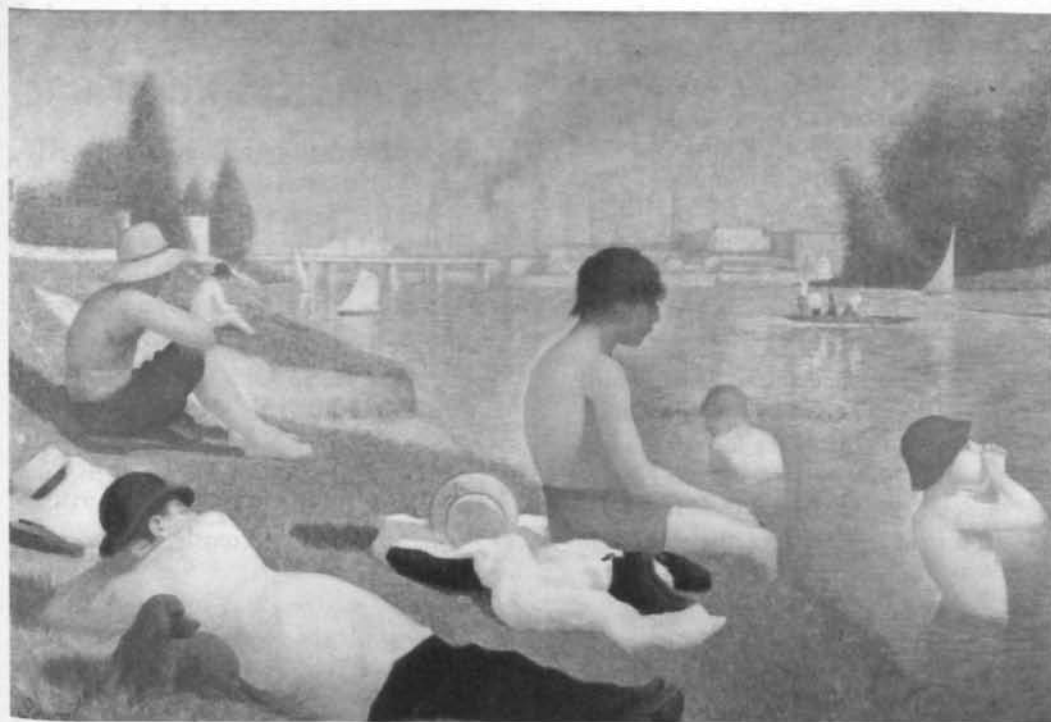
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Bathers at Asnières by Seurat, at The National Gallery

Alice Schwab

Art Notes

The Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery hosts a *Seurat and the Bathers* Exhibition throughout the summer months. Seurat's *Bathers at Asnières* is one of the greatest paintings of the 19th century. This major exhibition is the first to place the 25-year-old Seurat's 'masterpiece' in the context of his early work. It will include over 50 other works by the artist himself, as well as some 30 related works by Monet, Manet, Caillebotte and Van Gogh, and by masters of the past like Poussin who influenced the young Seurat.

At the same time the Museum of Mankind is staging a *Pottery in the Making (World Ceramic Traditions)* exhibition. This compares the skill and artistry of potters from around the world, from the crafting of the first clay vessels, through to industrial mass production. Based entirely on the Museum's superb collections, it consists of thirty-one case studies, each prepared by a specialist curator. It displays some very unexpected objects, such as Sasanian ceramic coffins from Persia and pre-Hispanic Peruvian whistling pots.

The Hayward Gallery shows *Rhapsodies in Black (Art of the Harlem Renaissance)*

in tandem with *Tatsuo Miyajima: Big Time* until August 17.

Simultaneously the Barbican Art Gallery stages an exhibition of photographs entitled *Marc Riboud in China*.

Finally, on the Fifth Floor of Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge an *Art Supermarket* open all summer has original contemporary paintings on sale for prices ranging from £125 to £295 □

SB's Column

Gustav Mahler, one of the century's great musicians, became director of the Vienna Court Opera (now State Opera) 100 years ago. In addition to high artistry as composer and conductor he had an infallible instinct for detecting talent, attracting an illustrious ensemble – Erich Schmedes, Leo Slezak, Selma Kurz, Richard Mayr – which remained dominant for more than a generation. Mahler's efficiency, brusquely dictatorial manner and Jewish origins made him many enemies during his decade as director. The Austrian Theatremuseum is at present mounting a special exhibition recalling Mahler's work.

Salzburg. At this year's Festival the usual Mozart offerings – *Seraglio*, *Clemenza di Tito* and *Zauberflöte* – figure prominently, with *Wozzeck* (under Abbado) and *Boris Godunov* joining the

repertoire. In the drama section Grillparzer's *Libussa* attempts to portray the mythical founder of Prague as a visionary fighter for women's emancipation.

Ninety years after its premiere Leo Fall's tuneful *Der fidele Bauer*, whose original cast included Louis Treumann, Max Pallenberg and Hubert Marischka, is being revived at the Vienna Volksoper in September. The title role will be sung by the ever-young veteran Peter Minich.

Austrian-born musicologist Professor Kurt Pahlen, who spent many years in South America and now lives in Zurich, celebrated his 90th birthday. An expert on musical history, he compiled an extensive work about the lives of musicians in all countries, entitled *Musikgeschichte der Welt* □

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Cross-eyed justice

The four young Americans (researchers and camera crew) who had come to see me about a forthcoming documentary on the Third Reich were outraged. In the process of interviewing *Zeitzeugen* they had found the former adjutant of Himmler's deputy Walter Schellenberg enjoying the forest-girt luxury of a Tyrolean villa, and showing no scintilla of remorse over the heinous crimes he had been party to.

At about the same time Austrian papers reported a 22-year-old Neo-Nazi receiving a four year jail term for vandalising the Jewish cemetery at Eisenstadt.

In the past the Austrian legal administration had been scandalously lax in its treatment of Nazi mass murderers – with a jury acquitting Riga ghetto commandant Murer, and officialdom granting asylum to the Belgian war criminal Verbelen. These outrageous miscarriages of justice conformed to the Austrian postwar Establishment's scheme for re-

integrating the ex-Nazi segment of the electorate, which was proportionately larger than in Germany. For 40-odd years the Second Republic espoused the motto "Let's all pretend that nothing has happened."

This policy, legitimised by the "Jew" Kreisky, helped bring about the Waldheim presidency and the evolution of the outsider Haider into a potential government coalition partner.

Meanwhile less Machiavellian politicians – like Vranitzky and Klima – have, happily, come to the fore in the government. Confronted with Neo-Nazism the judicial establishment seems latterly disposed towards heeding the injunction *principiis obsta (resist the beginnings)*. Such new-found determination comes half a century too late – but is to be welcomed, none the less. (Or is it, since it runs the risk of generating public sympathy for Neo-Nazi tombstone desecrators who have to serve longer jail terms than rapists?)

□ Richard Grunberger

Triumph or disaster?

Readers of the more light-hearted contributions to *AJR Information* may recall *Natural Break*, the writer's recent low-key arrival on television's audience participation shows. Undaunted by the experience, on receiving a call from Jane Sigaloff of the BBC, granddaughter of AJR member Mrs Edith Arie, and her invitation to participate in Esther Rantzen's programme on television soap operas – I took my chance.

On arrival at Television Centre Jane greeted me by name! Soon her colleague Simon was giving me the once-over before I was whisked off to their victims' gathering area, then into the studio. "Esther Rantzen would like to meet you!" Recognition at last. "How do you do," we exchanged. She advises me to "go for it" and as I sit down a makeup artist puts pancake on my face ready for action.

Several actors and actresses from the 'soaps' are on duty and Esther handles them with professional aplomb. *Eastenders*, *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale*, *Brookside* – even *Crossroads* – are represented, but I recognise only Wendy Richards from her *Are You Being Served?* days. Am I the only Briton who just can't stand watching the genre?

Wendy goes into action, stressing the value soaps have in putting across real

social issues to the semi-literate and intellectually challenged. Esther lunges at me. Forgetting momentarily how close I am to royalty, I fail to rise. A quick prompt and apology and I launch into condemning the boredom and misery which is the staple fare of these shows, advocate the off switch as a suitable antidote, and add, "My Dad was a real Eastender and so were you Esther." Esther retreats, for indeed she was a native, one of the immigrant community's many nice Jewish girls who made good. Nevertheless, she returned to me twice for elucidation.

A recording of the show was edited for transmission, but most of my contribution was left in when transmitted some weeks later.

□ Ronald Channing



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The areas in which he can help with claims are as follows:

1. People in receipt of a German ill health pension under the BEG (Restitution Law), whose condition has deteriorated, and/or required medical treatment and/or attention.
2. People who are currently not receiving an ill health pension from Germany, but who had applied in the 1950s/60s and who had been refused for medical reasons. It may be possible to reopen such files.
3. Where people had made a claim for some form of restitution, but not on the grounds of ill health, in the 1950s/60s, the lawyer can access old government files and support Article 2 Fund Claims to the Claims Conference where appropriate.
4. If you have a potential claim within one of the above categories only and require further information, please phone one of the following:
Agi Alexander, AJR, 0171 431 6161.
Judith Hassan, Jewish Care, 0181 203 9033.
Lieselotte Montague, World Jewish Relief, 0171 387 4747 □

Prisoners of conscience

Edward Levy, guest speaker at AJR's monthly Luncheon Club, described the origins and activities of Amnesty International. Throughout the world, Amnesty researches and publicises the cases of people who are victims of persecution for their beliefs and acts of conscience.

Allegations that Amnesty International is biased against Israel were firmly rejected by Edward Levy, who quoted statistical analyses which showed that many other governments were the subject of criticism in respect of abuses of human rights.

As a Trustee of the AJR Charitable Trust and a member of the AJR Management Committee, Edward Levy, invited AJR members with an interest in helping to send letters in support of individuals or by forming Amnesty groups. They can write to him c/o the AJR office □

New Holocaust Research Project

AJR Annual General Meeting

AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman announced the establishment of an AJR Research Centre for the collection of Holocaust-related materials, to be situated at Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre in Nottinghamshire, at the Annual General Meeting in London.

Guest of Honour Stephen Smith, Director of Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre, gave a thought-provoking and

stored as part of the Centre's archive.

Commenting on the new project, Andrew Kaufman, who presented Stephen Smith with the first of the AJR's three annual grants towards the new joint AJR/Beth Shalom £44,000 research project, said: "I am convinced that the AJR Research Centre at Beth Shalom will make a significant contribution to teaching children, undergraduates and post-graduate students an understanding of the tragedy of the Holocaust and an appreciation of its wider significance".

In his Annual Report, Andrew Kaufman praised the success of the recently-launched Luncheon Club which met

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

New role

Agi Alexander, former head of the AJR's Social Work Department, is establishing a new post as AJR Welfare Rights Advisor and will continue to answer members' enquiries on social security, pensions and other benefit entitlements at both the Day Centre and Head Office □

Birthday Honours

Tim Angel, head of Angel & Bermans, the theatrical costumiers, was awarded the OBE for services to the theatre, film and television. Mr Angel is the fifth generation of the Angel family which has been designing and making magnificent costumes for dramatic productions for 157 years.

Königsberg-born Margot Sreberny, who for many years taught at the American School in London, has been appointed MBE for services to the community. She is chair of a working party concerned with nursery provision, a street drinking initiative and other social issues in the Finsbury Park area □

Lucas Prizewinner

This year's recipient of the Dr Leopold Lucas Prize (awarded annually at Tübingen University) is Archbishop Henryk Muscynski. The award is given in recognition of his endeavours to improve relations between Catholics and Jews in Poland □



Chairman Andrew Kaufman, left, presents the first AJR grant for the establishment of an AJR Research Project at Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre to its Director, Stephen Smith. Behind them are photographs of Holocaust sites taken earlier this year in Poland by AJR reporter Ronald Channing and displayed at the AGM.

original address on 'Forgotten Places - The Holocaust, Memorials, Memory & Meaning'. He went on to describe the new project as a readily accessible source of Holocaust materials available to students and researchers of the Holocaust period. The Centre is collecting hitherto unpublished documents - including letters, diaries, photographs and personal memorabilia. It will also contain survivor manuscripts and testimonies, books and pamphlets of the period, students' theses and information from concentration camps and Holocaust sites.

He invited members to consider contributing their own memorabilia to the project. If given on loan, documents will be copied and returned; if donated or bequeathed, they will be catalogued and

monthly to hear a succession of stimulating guest speakers. With the advance in the average age of AJR members, the Social Work Department's services were found increasingly to be in demand, leading to the recruitment of a new professional Head of Social Services. He praised the work of volunteers without whom the AJR could not continue to function.

The Chairman announced that the AJR would be contributing an interest-free loan of £850,000 for the redevelopment of Osmond House, a residential care home in North London run by the Otto Schiff Housing Association. Both he and Frank Harding are Hon. Officers of the OSHA Council.

□ Ronald Channing



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Cooking with Gretel Beer



Spiced Chicken Salad

The perfect dish for a summer evening which takes very little time – or effort – to prepare.

2 oranges
 ½lb (225g) cooked chicken (without skin or bones)
 6oz (160g) mayonnaise
 a handful blanched almonds
 good dash of brandy
 salt and white pepper

Rinse the oranges in hot water and dry them well, then grate some of the rind until you have about two heaped teaspoons. Peel the oranges, divide into segments, then remove all the skin and pith (this is the only troublesome part of the recipe). If the segments are very large, cut into halves. Cut the chicken meat into thin strips, mix the grated orange rind into the mayonnaise, add a good dash of brandy. Cut almonds into halves. Fold orange pieces, almonds and sliced chicken into the mayonnaise, taste and adjust seasoning if necessary by adding salt and white pepper. Sometimes I add the merest touch of curry powder, but be careful not to overdo it. Crunchy endive leaves go particularly well with

this salad – you can serve the salad on a bed of endive leaves and also line the salad bowl with them so that the ends stick out for decoration □

Just a thought

Have you ever cleared out a cupboard and found forgotten presents? Bubble baths, powder, soap and perfume, little vases, plates and handkerchiefs – one would have to live 200 years to enjoy them!

As a special birthday approached I asked my friends, not for presents, but for similar articles to sell for charity. At the party everybody enjoyed the kosher buffet and entertainment from a string quartet; even the sun shone. It all worked like a charm and £1,500 was raised for good causes and others might well wish to do the same. My thanks to all the friends who made the day so successful.

□ Irene White

EURO BABBLE SOLUTION

1. *Commis* (apprentice waiter) sounds like *Commie*, or *Communist*. *Gauche* means clumsy, left-handed or simply Left.
2. *Mistvieh* sounds like missed fee.
3. *Capelli* is Italian for hair.
4. *Fraise* is French for strawberries. A phrasemonger is *ein Phrasendrescher*.
5. *Er und Sie* rescue is a self evident pun on Air and Sea rescue.
6. *Cherie Orchard*, a pun on Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*, refers to the wife of the PM.



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The story of another postcard

My parents were very friendly with the director of the National Theatre in Mannheim, Karl Marx, whom I called Opa (grandpa) Marx. The National Theatre, completely destroyed in the war, was a Baroque jewel. It was famous for the premiere of Schiller's *Die Räuber* in 1782. My last visit was to see the *Snow Queen* in the winter of 1932, unbeknown to my parents. Although the Nazis were not yet officially in power, it was not a good idea for Jews to visit public buildings.

Opa Marx's birthday was on the same day as my own, September 14th. It was the custom until I was nine, for dignitaries from the town council and the chamber of commerce to pay a morning visit to the *Herr Regisseur* on his birthday, with gifts of flowers. I sat next to him, and graciously accepted their good wishes.

I shall never forget the shock when I heard that Opa had thrown himself from the theatre's gallery into the pit. There were many suicides in the summer of 1933, one was Rabbiner Dr Kälbermann, whose entry to the USA had been refused. He left a wife and five children.

In 1987 I wrote to the Stadtarchiv in Mannheim to ask what had happened to the Marx family, and had the following answer:

...*Der Regisseur Karl Michael Marx hat sich am 8.7.1933 in Mannheim das Leben genommen. Seine Frau und seine beiden Töchter wurden am 20.10.1940 nach Gurs deportiert, wo seine Frau am 5.12.1940 gestorben ist. Die beiden Töchter wurden im Sommer 1942 nach dem Osten verschleppt, wo sie unter unbekanntem Umständen umgekommen sind. Überlebt hat nur der Sohn, Dr Kurt Marx geb. 9.5.1891.*

My father kept postcards from all over the world, which had a special significance for him. In 1988 I found one such, dated 16.10.1934. It was addressed to my brother, then aged eight, and signed by Onkel Kurt Marx. There were good wishes for his birthday, and greetings to our parents. It did not mention his mother or sisters. I wonder if this was in fact a birthday greeting to his mother. It is possible that the postman had been ordered not to deliver mail from foreign countries to the Marx address. Perhaps this was a longed-for message from Kurt to tell his family that he had escaped from Germany and that he was well and safe in Madras.

□ Dorothea M Potten

Full houses

In its first six months the AJR Luncheon Club has enjoyed excellent speakers, exceptional three-course meals with wine and full houses. The organising committee set out both to maximise use of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre and to encourage existing and potential members to increase their involvement with the AJR. The degree of success achieved on both counts is due also to the excellent support of volunteers and staff at the Day Centre.

New members will be most welcome to join for the new season which opens on 17 September with Kurt Shapira speaking on Van Gogh, followed by Ralph Blumenau on 'The Value of History' (October 15), Jeffrey Perry on 'How Gairmany Calling Stopped' (November 19), and Rabbi William Wolff on 'The Friendly Face of Jewry' (December 17). Suggestions for future speakers are welcomed, including a speaker on a musical topic for next year.

□ Pat Finlay

Swiss Bank Accounts

The Swiss Bankers Association have released to the World Jewish Congress the names of 53 Polish Jews who held Bank accounts with Swiss Banks in 1939.

Although the Swiss took possession of these accounts in 1975 and gave the proceeds to the Polish Government, it may still be worth while for relatives of any of the people named to put in a claim to the Swiss Banking Ombudsman, Hanspeter Hani, POB 519, 8027 Zurich, Switzerland. In English law, there is a principle that "what one does not own, one cannot give away".

The names are listed below:

Emil Adorjan, Pradla; Charlotte Amsterdam, Warsaw; Harry Balieu, Danzig; Ascher Bank, Tarnow; Leysor Berenbaum; Leib Selig Blech, Memel; Bruno Blumenfield, Lvov; Lewin Blumenthal, Warsaw; Marcell Buber, Lvov; Wigdor Bychowski, Warsaw; Ernst Epstein, Cracow; Oswei Epstein, Warsaw; Carl Freudenthal, Warsaw; Michael Friedberg, Warsaw; Ilse Friedlander, Danzig;

Herman Friedlander, Danzig; Salomca Gartenberg, Warsaw; Andreas Gawlik, Katowitz; Andeiji Gdowski, Warsaw; Moschek Gliksman, Parl; Stanislaw Goldstein, Warsaw; Henri Grohman-hole, Lodz; Camilla Hitner, Cieszyn; Adolf Kozerski, Warsaw; J Krepel, Warsaw; Fanny Landau; Paula Lazarus, Danzig; Ludwika Leiner, Lvov; Filip Liebermann, Stanislavov; Mendel Loscher; Ian Watuszewski, Warsaw; Dr R May, Poznan; Herta Mayer-Thiel, Lvov; Helena Nasfeter, Wolomin; Helena Pulsaka, Warsaw; Samuel Rabinow, Parl; Salomon Ramer; Andre Rotwand, Warsaw; David Salinger-Casper, Pammem; Michael Sapeter, Lvov; Elisabeth Schulz, Konitz; Nachum Schartwald, Lvov; Helena Silberzweig, Cracow; Shopic Skowrenska, Warsaw; Max Sperber, Lvov; Marie Strasburger; Plachas Swiski; Zygmunt Teebang, Warsaw; Elsie Trenkler, Warsaw; Isaac Weizman, Konigsberg; Rudolf OA Weitzel, Danzig; Emma (Ernstine) Zionel Achslrad, Warsaw.

We would be interested to be advised of any response □

Wiener Library Lectures & Seminars

Reinterpreting the Holocaust

special lecture by
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Thurs 11th September
Wiener Library at 6.30pm

Women in Exile from Nazi Germany

half-day seminar
Sunday 28th September
Birkbeck College, London

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NEWSROUND

Opening up

The German-based insurance company Allianz has commissioned a history of its wartime record. *Der Spiegel* magazine revealed that the company had insured the contents of concentration camps including Dachau, Buchenwald and Auschwitz.

Slow payers

The Italian insurance company Generali has established a \$12 million fund in Israel for the heirs of Holocaust victims who held company life insurance policies, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*, to be paid out over the next 12 years.

Clash of interest

Professor Jacques Bergier, head of the commission enquiring into Switzerland's wartime connections with Nazi Germany, is to stand down in November as he receives a fee for serving a charitable arm of the Union Bank of Switzerland.

Gold tracings

Holocaust Education Trust Chairman Greville Janner has approached Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Norway and Brazil in an attempt to discover the fate of gold looted by the Nazis. An international conference is planned to be held in London in November to which 30 countries will be invited.

Bronfman heads fund

World Jewish Congress President Edgar Bronfman has been appointed head of the Swiss Government's fund for needy Holocaust victims.

French cabinet

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, a leader of France's Jewish community, joined the new Socialist Cabinet as Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry. Before being elected to the National Assembly in 1986 he was a university lecturer in law and economics.

Rabin remembered

Israel's Knesset unanimously supported a Bill to establish an annual memorial day to its slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Brighton's backing

A memorial to the victims of the Holocaust is to be erected in Brighton and Hove by the local Jewish communities with the co-operation of the local authority.

□ RDC

Berlin Weissensee

We walked up the Herbert-Baum-Strasse, a bleak street, flanked by grey, neglected houses, some even gutted, towards the open gates of Weissensee, the Jewish cemetery in East Berlin,

The Holocaust memorial at the entrance, all the more eloquent for its simplicity, stands as a grim reminder of man's inhumanity to man.

Marble mausoleums, sculptured grave-stones, intricate iron ornaments, bear witness to Berlin's thriving Jewish community of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Among rows of abandoned, overgrown graves several restored gravestones catch the eye – inscriptions Auschwitz, Theresienstadt penetrate the consciousness.

As we move on through the symmetrically laid out lanes, a marked plan our guide, I recall my first visit; then I was eight years old. Two adults, maternal aunts, led me along these very paths to Albert's, my grandfather's grave; he had passed away the previous year. I had met him as a four-year-old, the bald, bright-eyed *Opa*, his wife ever at his beck and call. To me, in his mid-sixties, he seemed ancient. My immature mind tried in vain to connect the grandfather in the rocking chair who lifted me gently on his lap with the slab of stone which, I was told, guarded his soul. No-one had deemed it important enough to prepare me for this, or to provide some intelligible answers about this place – in a young child's perception a sea of stone.

Close to a grainy white wall, at the farthest distance, Albert rests in peace. He died a natural death in 1930, surrounded by his family. A stonemason had been instructed to carve a sizeable stone. Thus space was allowed for the names of his wife and unmarried children who hoped to be eternally joined in death.

This was not to be. Two sons and two daughters, uprooted in early middle age, struck roots in alien soil. No safe haven could be found for their mother and two sisters.

Sixty-six years on, I faced this grave-stone a second time. Commissioned by our daughter, the third generation – as a generous gift to *her* mother – four names had been added: Eva, his wife, who died – so we were told – after her eightieth birthday in Theresienstadt, Johanna, her unmarried child, Margot, my mother, and Richard, my father. All three perished in



The Holocaust Memorial which stands at the entrance to Berlin's Weissensee Jewish cemetery.

Auschwitz.

We retraced our steps. New plots were marked out in the centre of the cemetery. Brand new stones had been erected. We stopped to read the inscriptions, the Russian and Polish names. During the Third Reich the last Jew had been buried here in the autumn of 1942. Hardly a decade after the Final Solution a burgeoning Jewish community had begun to establish itself.

What thought-provoking dialogue would ensue, if the victims' ashes embedded in the earth of Auschwitz could communicate with the spirit of the departed interred in the consecrated ground at Weissensee.

□ Helga Wolff

50 YEARS AGO**UNO AND PALESTINE**

The fact-finding Committee of the United Nations has, after an extensive tour of the country and intensive study of the problem on the spot, left Palestine to draft its report.

Jewish circles all over the world are disappointed that the Committee did not find it necessary to visit the D.P. Camps in Cyprus and on the Continent. Much as they may have heard about conditions there, the personal experience of talking to D.P.s and witnessing their frustration and despair would no doubt have left a mark on its findings.

The United Nations will certainly base their decisions on a report which is likely to be a suggestion for the partition of Palestine. It is hoped that once such a decision is taken, the three parties concerned will accept the verdict and that a new epoch of constructive achievements and tranquility will commence in Palestine □

AJR Information, August 1947