

## False perceptions of reality by Poles, Germans, Serbs and Jews

### False consciousness

#### No light from the East

The (non-identical) twin monsters Hitler and Stalin were mutually reinforcing. Lithuanians rationalise their wartime antisemitic massacres by talking up the Jewish role in Sovietising the country. In Poland the daughter of a martyred patriot alleges a 'possibly genetic Jewish predisposition towards Communism'. In actual fact Stalin's antisemitism was only quantitatively different from Hitler's. While most Auschwitz prisoners were Jews, every type of Soviet citizen was a potential Gulag inmate. Nonetheless there are correspondences: scandalously few beneficiaries of Auschwitz - and *no* Gulag operatives whatsoever - have been brought to justice □

When a nation collectively fails to perceive reality it can have disastrous effects, as the twentieth century amply demonstrates. In interwar Poland - a state reinserted into the political map of Europe in 1918 under the Allied war aim of the self-determination of nations - over a third of the population were non-Poles. Compounding this flaw, the Warsaw Government contrived at the same time to be on bad terms with all its neighbours: Germany, Russia, Lithuania and Czechoslovakia.

Interwar Germany displayed even more blatant false consciousness. The Versailles Treaty left it in a state of outraged victimhood summed up in the phrase *Volk ohne Raum* (people without space). 'How can sixty-five millions' ran the unceasing complaint 'live packed together in a reduced territory?' Yet nowadays *eighty* million Bundesbürger exist quite comfortably within an area made much smaller still by ceding Silesia and most of Prussia to Poland in 1945.

In a manner of speaking Serbia is the Prussia of the Balkans. Just as the German Reich set up in 1871 was an enlargement of Prussia, so post-WWI Yugoslavia was Serbia writ large, with Belgrade riding roughshod over the interests of the minorities. Yugoslavia was, in fact, created twice, in 1918 and 1945 and also disintegrated twice: in 1940, at the behest of Hitler and Mussolini and in the 1990s to the advantage of Slovenes, Croats, Bosnians and Kosovars. Yet, even after the defeat of Milosevic some Serbs substitute romantic tribal memories of Serbdom as a bulwark of Christian orthodoxy against the Muslim Turks for harsh present-day reality.

Lastly, what about false consciousness among the Jews? Examples of the syndrome abound, ranging all the way from overly positive to grossly negative misconceptions. German

Jews paid more heed to Schiller's words on the printed page than to what was actually happening in the streets; Austrian Jews clung to comforting myths generated by Hugo Bettauer's *Die Stadt ohne Juden*; even Polish Jews harked back to General Ludendorff's reassuring World War One appeal to *Die Jiden fun Poilen*.

In the aftermath of the Shoah the opposite - i.e. negative - extreme of false consciousness gained ground, not least in Israel. Many Israelis viewed figures like Nasser and Arafat as mini-Hitlers and the Arabs as reincarnated Germans. And because the West had apparently connived at the wartime slaughter of Jewry, Western voices urging moderation on Israel in pursuit of the peace process tended to be disregarded.

Even in the Diaspora the mindset that sees all non-Jews as potential enemies still exists. But maybe that negative extreme of false consciousness carries a positive charge at a time when it is not persecution, but *acceptance*, that seems to threaten Jewish survival □



AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman, left, revealing plans to build flats and a new day centre, with Vice-Chairman and Treasurer David Rotenberg at the AGM (See back page for full details).

## Profile

## The triumph of hope

**F**reddie Knoller was born in 1921 into a middle-class Viennese family and grew up as the cello-playing youngest of three musical brothers who often performed together in public.

From early childhood he was conscious of incipient antisemitism. After the Anschluss Freddie escaped to Belgium where he received help from the Jewish community and joined a camp for young refugees. With the Nazi invasion of Belgium he fled to France where he was arrested as an 'enemy alien' and put into an interment camp near the Spanish border. Appalling conditions and an outbreak of typhus made Freddie escape to relatives in the unoccupied Vichy zone.

Disregarding sound advice, Freddie left this dull, but relatively secure, backwater for the excitement and danger of occupied Paris and the night-life of Pigalle. With false papers, he mingled with a wide strata of society, from German soldiers to tough prostitutes and made a living from German soldiers looking for brothels, night clubs and cabarets. Arrested by a Gestapo officer, he was warned off.

In May 1943 he joined the Maquis – the French Resistance – in unoccupied France. With him were a number of other Jews, French communists and young men dodging the draft to do forced labour in Germany. They talked more than they resisted, but were paid in kind for their work on the land. A broken *affaire* led to his betrayal and arrest by the French police. Confessing that he was a Jew from Vienna, Freddie was passed on to the Gestapo and held in the infamous transit camp at Drancy.

Transport No. 60 left Drancy on 6th October 1943 carrying 1,000 deportees, 100 crammed into each cattle wagon in appalling conditions and arrived at Auschwitz three days and nights later. Squeezed against a middle-aged Frenchman called Robert, who was a doctor, Freddie was not to know that this chance encounter was to save his life. He soon understood that one either gave up and was dead within two or three days, or fought to live. He determined to survive as a witness to German barbarity. At Auschwitz III's Buna rubber factory his task – day in and day out – was to carry 25kg bags of cement. Survival was not possible on the meagre rations provided,



Freddie Knoller

but he received extra food from his friend Robert in charge of the camp hospital.

In the depth of winter, as the Russian Army advanced, the whole camp was evacuated in a death march. Within a day, half the column had perished and more froze to death at night. Then, packed into cattle wagons for seven days, many more died. The survivors arrived at Dora-Nordhausen in the Harz Mountains where V1 flying bombs and V2 rockets were manufactured in underground caverns. Freddie's group pushed heavily laden rail wagons through the tunnels and were subjected to continual brutality and hangings.

With the approach of the American Army they were evacuated to Bergen-Belsen where the beating stopped, but among the stench of decomposing bodies many died through dysentery and lack of food. Belsen was liberated by British troops on 15th April 1945, but when they were fed hot milk and rice some died as they could no longer digest. Freddie volunteered to collect food from local farms and stabbed an obstreperous Jew-baiting farmer whose half-hidden picture of Hitler Freddie had slashed to pieces.

Advised not to return to *judenrein* Vienna, Freddie was reunited in France with his elder brother, a GI and heard that his oldest brother was now a doctor in New York! Their parents, however, had been deported and perished in Auschwitz. After a stay in the United States he came to Britain and married Freda; together they started a successful fashion retail business. As marketing director of Israel Bonds, an expert on Jewish philately, amateur musician and communal worker, Freddie can't find the time to age – he's just too busy!

□ Ronald Channing

AJR Charitable Trust in aid of  
Self Aid of Refugees  
presents the

## London Concertino

**Conductor Richard Dickins**  
**Leader David Juritz**

playing Mozart, Vivaldi & Holst  
with special guest appearance of  
**RAPHAEL WALLFISCH**  
performing Haydn's Cello  
Concerto in C

**Sunday 10 October 1999, 3pm**

The Great Hall, Imperial College,  
London SW7

**Concert tickets at £10, £15 & £20,**

including tea and cakes, from:

The Concert Secretary,  
1 Hampstead Gate, Froggnal,  
London NW3 6AL

*Early booking is advisable to avoid  
disappointment*



## BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

**51 BELSIZE SQUARE, NW3**

We offer a traditional style of  
religious service with Cantor,  
Choir and organ

*Further details can be obtained  
from our synagogue secretary*

**Telephone 0171-794 3949**

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

Regular services: Friday evenings at 6.45 pm,

Saturday mornings at 10 am

Religion school: Sundays at 10 am to 1 pm

*Space donated by Pafra Limited*

## MANAGEMENT CHANGES

Michael Radbil has decided to resign from  
his position as chief executive of the AJR  
in order to return to a career in the  
commercial sector.

The responsibilities of chief executive will  
be reassigned, as far as possible, within  
our existing organisation.

## Every myth a hit?

**C**redo quia absurdum (I believe it just because it's absurd) wrote the Roman philosopher Tertullian two whole millennia ago. So what is new?

It was only to be expected that myths would proliferate on the eve of this millennium. Likewise it was a safe bet that Israel and the Jews would figure prominently in these myths. Jerusalem is, by common consent, the central stage for enacting end-of-the world myths (which partly draw on the predictions of the Jewish apothecary and seer Nostradamus).

The Jews *per se* have figured prominently in our century's seminal myths such as the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and Ludendorff's post-1918 *Dolchstoß-egende*. Predictably they still figure among the archvillains in the end-of-the-century myths that ascribe the Gulf War and the Yugoslav tragedy to power-hungry America. Jews (black)listed in this context include US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defence William Cohen and, more peripherally, Georg Soros.

Just recently in perennially myth-prone Russia – think Rasputin, think Anastasia – Koestler's thesis, propounded in the *Thirteenth Tribe*, that Jewish missionaries converted the Khazars, was taken up by the antisemitic lobby. They see it as

proof that even twelve centuries ago the power-hungry Zionists were manoeuvring to bring Russia into their grasp.

A less localised myth bandied about for the last thirty years alleges that US policy is driven (no *double entendre* intended) by oil. US intervention in Iran, Lebanon and Somalia and US-military action in the Gulf (and the continuing 'encroachment' on Iraqi air space) are entirely ascribed to the greed for liquid gold, i.e. oil.

When NATO, under American leadership, committed itself to the Balkans conflict in February, the canard that Western human rights campaigns only mask naked economic self-interest lost all substance. There is no oil-field anywhere near Kosovo!

But, since nature abhors a vacuum, a substitute – if less plausible – myth soon made its appearance. The European trade in heroin from SE Asia, so the story runs, is largely controlled by Albanian gangs with KLA links. Serb military actions against the KLA were thus both counter-insurgency and drugbusting operations. The threatened loss of the profitable trade route through Kosovo province so alarmed the Albanian mafia that they enlisted the help of the top mafioso of them all, the US President.

It does not pack the same punch as 'blood for oil', but is still a possible runner in the vilification of America stakes.

□ RG

## Holocaust victims urged to claim compensation from \$1.25 billion Swiss bank fund

**A**n extensive worldwide campaign started on 6 July 1999 to alert victims of Nazi persecution that they can claim for compensation against a \$1.25 billion Swiss bank fund set up last year.

Individuals and their heirs or successors can apply even if they never had a bank account.

The settlement plan, approved by US District Judge Edward Korman, provides five categories of claimants:

Those with rights to assets, like bank accounts or investment funds, deposited in Switzerland before 9 May 1945.

Those who had any assets that were looted or removed by the Nazis.

Those who performed slave labour for companies that may have deposited rev-

enues gained from that labour in Swiss entities.

Those who performed slave labour at a work site, wherever located, owned or controlled by the Swiss Government or a Swiss bank or business.

Those who, in fleeing Nazi persecution, were turned away at Swiss borders or, after entering, were mistreated.

Individuals are urged to register their names by 22 October 1999 at the latest, either by telephoning in the UK **0800-917-4424**, accessing the Internet site at <http://www.swissbankclaims.com/> or writing to:- "INFORMATION" In re Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation, Notice Administrator, PO Box 8300, San Francisco, CA 94128-8300, USA □

## NEWTONS

Leading Hampstead Solicitors  
22 Fitzjohns Avenue,  
London NW3 5NB

- ★ All English legal work undertaken and German, Swiss & Austrian claims
- ★ German spoken
- ★ Home visits arranged
- ★ Associated offices in Hamburg, Los Angeles, Tel Aviv, Sydney, Zurich

Tel: 0171 435 5351  
Fax: 0171 435 8881

## PARTNER

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

**Henry Ebner**

Myers Ebner & Deaner  
103 Shepherds Bush Road  
London W6 7LP  
Telephone 0171 602 4631

ALL LEGAL WORK  
UNDERTAKEN

## AUSTRIAN and GERMAN PENSIONS

### PROPERTY RESTITUTION CLAIMS EAST GERMANY- BERLIN

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

For further information and appointment please contact:

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

Tel: 0171-328 7251 (Ext. 107)  
Fax: 0171-624 5002

## Reviews

## Strangers within the gate

Tony Kushner and Katharine Knox, *REFUGEES IN AN AGE OF GENOCIDE: GLOBAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES*. Frank Cass, 1999, £47.50, (paperback £22.50).

Rabbi Hugo Gryn memorably pointed out that this is the 'century of the refugee'. Right until the very last year it has continued to be so. This ambitious and wide-ranging book tells the story of the many different refugees who have come to Britain in the past hundred years. In their daunting project the authors have displayed both careful attention to detail and great sensitivity. The text ranges from describing the movement of Vietnamese Boat people, Ugandan Asians and Spanish Republicans, to the largest single influx of refugees which was the arrival of Belgians at the First World War – as well as, of course, devoting substantial space to recounting the different waves of Jewish refugees.

It is not a comfortable story – the book reflects upon the recurring meanspirited attitude of politicians like Herbert Morrison and Ernest Bevin. Yet this callousness was also punctuated by extraordinary acts of generosity and intense activity by local committees and concerned individuals. It is very unusual for historians to talk about their own times; this account is all the more significant because it takes the risk of including the refugee crisis we have just witnessed in Europe and on our television screens. There is an Afterword quoting contemporary newspaper accounts of the camps in Macedonia and commenting on the political battles over the latest Parliamentary legislation on asylum seekers – which was already superseded by the time the book appeared and will need to be amended in a future edition. Yet the authors indicate how the same pattern of official foot-dragging and widespread popular sympathy we saw during the Kosovo crisis has been a recurring feature of Britain's attitude towards refugees. They also place Kosovo in the context of the ever more restricting attitude towards allowing entry to those who are in need.

The recurring use of personal testimony and revealing interviews with refugees from all kinds of backgrounds brings the

book alive, so that it is much more than a conventional historical text. The authors also discuss in detail the whole identity of refugees in society. What is the definition of a refugee as opposed to an immigrant? What does it feel like to be forced into exile? At what stage does one stop being a refugee? Here again they compare and contrast the long-term experience of the different groups who have settled in Britain; from the welcome given to the Hungarians in 1956, to the growing hostility towards asylum seekers and the difficulties faced by groups such as the Kurds and Zairians arriving in the 1980s and 90s.

They single out Jews and the AJR as a group which has consciously sought to preserve its refugee identity – mentioning the venerable history of *AJR Information* – and pointing out how unusual it is that there is an identifiable 'second generation', in the case of Jewish refugees. In a period when there is substantial political resentment towards concepts of asylum and refugees, the book also provides a timely reminder of the enormous contribution that former refugees made to this country in so many fields of endeavour.

□ Suzanne Franks

## A life for others

Neil Belton, *THE GOOD LISTENER*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998, £18.99.

Helen Bamber, née Balmuth, was born in East London in 1925, to Russo-Polish parents who eventually separated. Her father's preoccupation at a distance with the rising tide of Nazism strongly influenced Helen.

After living as a young girl through the London Blitz, she went to Belsen at the age of 20, as a member of the Jewish Relief Unit, dressed in a British uniform with a Star of David. There her main task was listening to survivors, particularly the younger ones and quite particularly to children, ever her favourites.

The survivors of Nazi beastliness had to remain in the DP camps until 1947 when the British Government allowed some into Palestine. Meanwhile Helen helped to bring some boys to this country, to be trained for a civilised life. (They included Roman Halter, the subsequent author and stained-glass artist).

She married the German-Jewish refugee Rudi Bamber and had two children, but the marriage did not last. (She was probably always too busy to foster the relationship sufficiently.)

Helen always felt compelled to be busy in the world she had made her concern: first in hospital where she worked with Dr Maurice Pappworth, an opponent of unnecessarily harsh medical interference with patients. Together they pioneered the right of mothers to be with their hospitalised children. She continued work, unpaid, even after she quit her job.

This led to her passion for Amnesty International. She worked for this organisation from its inception in 1961, perforce outside the area of only Jewish suffering. After all, torture whether perpetrated by revolutionaries or counter-revolutionaries was endemic in countries like Algeria, Vietnam, Argentina – as we have recently been reminded – Colombia and Pinochet's Chile.

Helen Bamber split with Amnesty International in 1985 when she was appointed director of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture. Recently she has become something of a celebrity, as evidenced by this book and her appearance on *Desert Island Discs*.

In her seventies now she vows she will 'never retire'.

□ John Rossall

## Austrian exiles

Ursula Seeber, ed., *EIN NIEMANDSLAND, ABER WELCH EIN RUNDBLICK! Exilautoren über Nachkriegs – Wien*, Picus Verlag, Wien, 1998.

The Literaturhaus at Seidengasse 13 (Vienna VII) houses the Österreichische Exilbibliothek, which, under the able direction of Ursula Seeber, offers a friendly haven for readers and researchers into Austrian exile writings. Dr Seeber's latest publication is this moving selection of short texts by exile authors, describing their feelings and experiences on returning to Vienna after 1945.

The authors selected include many of the leading literary lights of Viennese Jewry in exile, Hilde Spiel and Erich Fried, Jakov Lind and Robert Neumann, Friedrich Torberg and Ernst Lothar, as well as the theatre critic Alfred Polgar, the poet Theodor Kramer and the journalist Willi Frischauer. Amidst this galaxy

continued on page 5

of talent, it is a pleasure to see names like George Clare and Martha Blend, well known to readers of this journal.

The first section, *Traumstadt Wien*, conveys the exiles' nostalgia for a partly imaginary pre-Anschluss Vienna, *der alte Zauber der Unwirklichkeit, der auch bis heute nicht von Wien geschwunden ist*, as the dramatist Franz Theodor Csokor put it in 1946. From the returning Csokor's first emotional glimpse of the Stephansdom to the first bite of *Apfelstrudel* that so delighted Ernst Benedikt, renowned editor of the *Neue Freie Presse*, an almost umbilical attachment to the city of the exiles' youth is everywhere in evidence. Nowhere more so than in the exiles' attempts to gain access to the family homes of their childhood, successfully in the case of George Clare, but not in those of Jakob Lind and Lore Segal, who met with hostile suspicion from those who had installed themselves in place of the deported parents.

The denial of guilt by the Viennese, their maudlin self-pity for alleged wartime sufferings – *Die Frau Doktor haben gut daran getan, dass sie fort sind*, Hilde Spiel was told – the cold-blooded expropriation of Jewish property and the resurgence of antisemitism led many exiles to leave, disillusioned. Those who stayed often shared Theodor Kramer's feelings of despair: *erst in der Heimat bin ich ewig fremd*. The incident where the lawyer Henry O Leichter confronted the Gestapo agent who had denounced his mother, only to learn that the spy regretted that his 'indiscretions' might have placed people in 'awkward situations', takes one's breath away. All the more reason for us to remember that there are also Viennese like Dr Seeber whose work painstakingly records and commemorates the vanished world of the exiles.

□ Anthony Grenville

## 50 YEARS AGO

### LORD PAKENHAM'S PRAISE

Since its inception, the AJR, time and again, advocated the idea that immigrants were not a burden, but an asset to a country.

In an address at the Dinner of the Anglo-Jewish Association, Lord Pakenham paid special tribute to the achievements of Central European Jews from whose experience this country has benefited. He mentioned in particular the important part played by refugee scientists in the development of atomic energy, Radar and penicillin, as well as the fact that the manufacturing skills of refugees and the techniques introduced by them had given employment to large numbers of British people.

□ AJR Information, August 1949

## Chamberlain's clones

In 1945 Victor Gollancz published a bestseller by Michael Foot entitled *Guilty Men*. It was a closely argued onslaught on appeasement-minded prewar politicians and opinion formers who by misrepresenting Hitler's intentions had helped him realise them. The book played a part in Labour's election triumph of that year.

History occurs first as tragedy, then as farce (K. Marx). Though the Kosovo conflict was hardly a farce, some opponents of Nato action advanced truly farcical arguments. *Times* columnist Simon Jenkins urged the UK to keep out of Kosovo on the grounds that no vital British interest was at stake and that the Balkans were, after all, the Balkans, i.e. the stamping ground of savage tribes given over to mutual destruction. (Substitute continental Europe for Balkans in Jenkins' argument and it becomes a rehash of Alan Clarke's critique of Churchill for having spurned Hitler's 'peace offer' in 1941).

However, not all the 'nay-sayers' took an undifferentiated view of the savage Balkans tribes. Tony Benn for one eulogised the Serbs as Britain's heroic allies in 1914 and again in 1940. Actually what happened in the latter year was that the appeasement-minded Regent Paul was overthrown by patriotic officers shortly before Hitler invaded and dismembered Yugoslavia. The Germans then set up a collaborationist Serb regime under Milan Nedic which, among other things, rounded up all the local Jews. Meanwhile the Royalist Serb general Mihailovic and the Comintern agent Josef Tito (son of a Croat father and Slovene mother) set up separate partisan forces who alternated between fighting each other and the Germans plus their collaborators. (The worst collaborators were, of course, the Croats who set up a Catholic Fascist state which massacred orthodox Serbs and Jews).

After victory Tito tried to curb Serb aggrandisement by dividing Federal Yugoslavia into six republics as well as by granting autonomy to Albanians (and Hungarians) in the Kosovo (and Vojvodina) regions of Serbia. After Tito's death his whole structure began to unravel – but Serbia tried to maintain its pre-eminent position by bloodily combatting independence aspirations on the part of first the Slovenes, then the Croats, then the Bosnians and lastly the Kosovars.

So much for Mr Benn's encomium on the Serbs. Another group of nay-sayers were the military experts who reiterated their bombing-can't-win-wars mantra for seventy long days, yet it had been precisely the heavy US air raids on the Japanese mainland in spring 1945 that convinced Emperor Hirohito of the need to capitulate even *before* the dropping of the atom-bomb.

The Kosovo conflict was, of course, minuscule by comparison with the Second World War. It would occur to no publisher even to contemplate bringing out a book that listed examples of the anti-Nato lobby's wrong headedness during the conflict. However, if there were such a project it should give pride of place to Harold Pinter's trivialisation of the Serb atrocities against Kosovo Albanians as 'counter-insurgency operations'. These weasel words breathe the same spirit of mendacity as Jörg Haider's description of Nazi concentration camps as penal institutions (*Strafanstalten*).

□ RG

## SEARCH NOTICES

**Alfred Keiles**, born 1927 in Wiesbaden, Germany, wishes to meet anyone originating from that city where he attended the Hebelschule and the Michelsberg Synagogue Hebrew classes before leaving for South Africa at the age of 8. Please contact A Keiles, 6 The Reddings, Red Road, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 4SS, or telephone 0181 207 1142.

**Dr Alfred Apfel**. Lawyer seeks information about this eminent German barrister. It is intended to translate his 1935 book *Behind the Scenes of German Justice* into German and some facts beyond those already known to the public will be gathered in order to introduce Dr Apfel adequately. Please contact Dr Mathias Hanten, Hoelderlinstrasse 16, D-60316 Frankfurt am Main, or tel: 0049 69 405 9727 (answering machine).

**Käthe Kobrack (Mrs)**. Born 1918. Abitur 1936 at the Auguste-Victoria School in Steglitz, Berlin. Member of the Ruderriege. Emigrated to England and worked as a teacher. Please contact Mrs Gisela Gaebel, Im Kleinen Felde 27, 37136 Bösinghausen, Germany □

# Letters to the Editor



## THANK YOU, BERTHA

Sir – Who ever had heard of the word *Kindertransport* before Bertha Leverton spelt it out for us ten years ago by organising our first big reunion?

I remember that heady first meeting in the Harrow Leisure Centre: the astonished reactions to the venue: "Oh, its just like our camp at Dovercourt!" The tearful embraces of long-separated companions and the poignant photos on the wall: the little girl with her doll, the boy in knickerbockers putting on a brave smile. That reunion was like a love affair, exciting and passionate – ten years on it was more like a marriage – a calmer affair. We were all older, some of us were infirm; some had lost partners, yet we were still eager to be present at this last big get-together. A taggering 1,200 people filled the Logg Hall!

Someone once described Bertha Leverton as "a little girl with big ideas". We have reason to be grateful to her for the big idea of the reunions.

London N10

Martha Blend

## WRONG ABOUT ROMMEL?

Sir – I fail to see why one should be protective about Rommel (Letters, June issue). I can attest that Zyklon B was used in Theresienstadt to deal with infestations of bed bugs (Wanzen). The process required the hermetic sealing of every nook and cranny, window and door of a solid house, a process quite unsuitable for an army moving about the desert and living in fabric tents. It was not suitable for fumigation in the simple DDT spray sense. Its only possible application by the Afrika Korps would have been in purpose-built airtight buildings constructed of concrete or brick, also known as gas chambers.

Rommel's victories were not just military achievements. They brought Gestapo rule and genocide in their wake.

Ipswich

Frank Bright

## AUSTRIA: SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

Sir – Haider should send a letter of thanks to AW Freud, confirming for him that 'the unforgiving attitude of former

Austrian Jews' helped win him election in Carinthia.

Whenever I receive an Austrian pension cheque, I have the faces of my murdered parents and most of my family before me. This cheque, this blood money, goes to Israel. Apart from this cash nexus I know of no specific Austrian endeavour to establish cordial relations with the former *Saujuden* of the AJR and consequently would find it repugnant more than twice yearly to acknowledge to the Austrians that I am still amongst the living.

As far as Haider is concerned it is immaterial to me if either he or somebody worse follows him. Austrians like other people deserve the government they elect. I do feel, however, that the present Austrian government should not hesitate to reward AW Freud with the *Bundesverdienstkreuz* (or equivalent) for attempting so valiantly to reconcile the irreconcilable.

London N6

H Fisher

Sir – AW Freud suffers from Jewish anaesthesia when describing Haider's Carinthian election success as partly due to Austrian Jewish emigrants' attitude towards present-day Austria. For elections there are decided by slogans, scapegoating and xenophobia, which is a patriotic necessity in Carinthia. It is said that the man who lives in the past is blind in one eye, but the man who forgets, is blind in both.

It is not because of the generosity of the Austrian taxpayer that they pay pensions to victims of their fathers' misdeeds (though one wishes the Germans would do the same), but an attempt to atone for unforgivable sins.

At the heart of Haider's ambitions lie prejudices and ambitions not too far different from Hitler's and certainly not motivated by belief in liberal values.

Hendon, London NW4

Samuel Geller

## OVERLOOKING THE BLEMISH

Sir – I had an experience similar to Ronald Stent's (July issue).

Having undergone the compulsory medical for the Austrian armed forces I was given a deferral as a medical student.

After the Anschluss I received a further summons to a medical. I had no choice but to comply, appeared before various medical examiners and finished standing stark naked facing a row of military persons, presided over by some elderly senior officer.

He looked me up and down and clearly did not realise the significance of the scarification down there. He enquired which arm of the service I would prefer, but an officer, clearly with better vision or general knowledge, whispered into the Colonel's ear. I was ordered to report to another desk where I was issued with a *Wehrpass*, assigning me to *Ersatzreserve II*. It stood me in good stead on those occasions when I was stopped in the street by uniformed hooligans, with the question: "Bist' a Jud?" I just showed my document, with the Wehrmacht insignia on the cover and was left alone. I still regret that I threw that document into the Channel on my way to England.

London N6

M Goldenberg

## OFFICERS' PLOT AND SHOAH

Sir – Had you asked the question "In view of the approaching defeat, was it really a genuine moral horror and not rather the fear of retribution that motivated the plotters", the answer would waver between the two extremes and incline more to fear than to genuine horror.

The discussion in *AJR Information* seems to me to disregard the horrifying historical consequences of the total Nazi mentality for the future not only of Jews but of all mankind. From this different and merely human point of view any opposition, however high or mean its motives, seems to me to deserve acclaim to precede any criticism.

At least from their contacts abroad the plotters knew of the hatred evoked by German atrocities and saw the need to give prime attention above all else to stopping them. Hence it is no pure speculation to say that a successful plot would have saved Jewish lives. Neither is it a defence of German attitudes. The Germans – Hitler or no Hitler, Jews or no Jews – might have started their war in pursuit of their long-standing missionary belief in the supremacy of German virtues. This dangerous belief has affected all Nazis and many plotters alike but in different ways. With the best will it was bound to end up in crimes. Have all Jews at all times been immune to such a temptation?

London SE21

ML Meyer

**DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE**

Sir – It is a well known fact that Friedrich Torberg had to have at least one Communist for breakfast or, better still, somebody whom in his pontifical wisdom he would accuse – usually falsely – of having Communist leanings.

Indeed, it may not be too far-fetched to describe Torberg as some sort of Austro-Jewish mini McCarthy. His outrageous backstabbing of Hilde Spiel was only the tip of the iceberg.

Having said this, I feel that the Editor's comments are irrelevant, since my reference to Torberg's lifelong involvement with Judaism has nothing to do with his anti-Communist paranoia.

Chigwell, Essex

Fred Rosner

*Postwar Austria failed to purge its Nazi past for a multiplicity of reasons, of which surviving antisemitism was a major one. By playing down their Jewishness returnees like Kreisler, Weigl etc. helped brush this hugely important issue under the carpet and retard the democratisation of the country. Torberg (who, unlike them, stressed his Jewishness) also damaged Austrian democracy, though in a different sphere. Ed.*

**THANK YOU BRITAIN FUND**

Sir – I am surprised that you published (June issue) Mrs Anne Pisker's disgraceful letter, where she states: 'I owe nothing to this country!!'

Well, she owes her life to this country and it has been and is a jolly good life, I know!!

London SW15

Mrs Z Greville

**GERMANY'S HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL**

Sir – In order to alleviate this problem (see July issue) one might use Norman Bentwich's *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars* listing the success of many, whose work might have been carried out in Germany had they not been forced to emigrate. Among them are distinguished scientists, lawyers, historians, philosophers, etc. We will never know what contributions to human life and happiness might have been made had others been allowed to live.

The memorial could surely be used to celebrate the achievements of those who emigrated and lived. This would impart a more cheerful note which would indeed not be out of place. Max Born, Albert Einstein, Dennis Gabor and others after

all gained Nobel prizes, while Ernst Gombrich and Nicholas Pevsner gained considerable fame as art historians.

Southampton

Professor T Landsberg

**MISPLACED GUILT**

Sir – In his review of *Das kurze Leben des Jakob Deutsch*, Francis Steiner expresses guilty embarrassment at having been spared the protagonist's suffering and considers himself undeservedly lucky.

It is quite irrational to feel guilt over events beyond one's control or influence. Why does he consider his survival as undeservedly lucky? The victims were undeservedly unlucky.

I, an only survivor of my family and all of us who escaped extermination, owe it to the memory of the millions who perished to celebrate our survival and not indulge in unwarranted guilt, thereby compounding the tragedy.

Uxbridge

Eric Fisher

**BELZEC RESEARCH**

Sir – I recently wrote to Mike Tregenza in Belzec, Poland, who has been carrying out research on the death camp there. To date I seem to be the only person who has contacted him because my family died there. Where are all the people who also lost relatives in Belzec? Belzec is the 'forgotten camp', but surely our loved ones should not be forgotten.

Mike Tregenza has written a thorough report about what he found there and he is still doing things to honour our dead. Later this year his book will be published. It is a matter of deep shame that he received little help in financing his research. No Jewish organisation assisted him and he received only a modest grant from the Polish Government.

If anyone would like to contact Mike Tregenza his address is Ul. Kiepurzy 11/29, 20-383 Lublin, Poland.

Southampton

Mrs M Fazackerly

**BELITTLING THE KINDER**

Sir – As always, I read my newly-arrived *AJR Information* today with great interest. Your provocative mini-editorial on the front page is what I usually read first and this time I feel I must respond.

The Sixtieth 'diamond' Anniversary Reunion of Kindertransportees was indeed a poignant event. A staggering 1200 people attended. But they were not all Kinder and not all septuagenarians. Many, who like myself were under ten

years old at the time, are well under seventy. Many of the Kinder brought their spouses and grown-up children. There were even some grandchildren there. For me, this was what made the event so moving. As well as remembering and honouring the murdered relatives and thanking their British rescuers, it was a time for sharing experiences, particularly in a dialogue between the generations.

Bertha Leverton's first 'golden anniversary' ROK reunion in 1989 brought us together and gave us an identity as Kinder which few of us had realised before that memorable event. This second event, ten years on, brought Kinder and Kinder's Kinder together and gave an impetus to the dialogue between generations that will inevitably continue.

Many people, including Bertha herself, were saying this was the last major ROK event. I think it deplorable if this were to be so. Another ROK Conference would, I think, be welcomed and should perhaps be in five rather than ten years time. Perhaps this could be organised by the second generation, the Kinder's Kinder, to bring as many of their Kinder-parents as possible to continue the dialogue. I hope ACJR, Second Generation, Voices and Second Generation Trust will rise to this and I look forward to it very much.

London NW6

Ruth Barnett

**WINDFALL**

Sir – I have a backfile of *AJR Information* dating back to October 1963. Any individual who wishes to have the set gratis should contact me. The recipient would be expected to bear the cost of transport by carrier, estimated at £6.

Pendle, Caemelyn,

William Dieneman

Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 2HA

**HEARTFELT THANKYOU**

Sir – Your Association deserves an immense amount of credit for your efforts in helping individuals like me to successfully procure both material and emotional restitution that should have been ours by right many years ago.

I wish you continued success in all of your endeavours. Please publish this letter to encourage those who have been refused, for whatever reason, in previous years.

Hallandale

Fred (Manfred) Naftalie

Florida

# AJR Reports



Ronald Channing

Comparing notes at the Annual General Meeting were AJR Trustees Max Kochmann, left, and Peter Dannenberg, with Council Member Rosemary Lewis of the Otto Schiff Housing Association.

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### Northern

Bill Williams, historian *extraordinaire* of Manchester Jewry, addressed AJR's Northern Group on the Holocaust Remembrance Centre which is planned to be built in our city within the next few years. Just three and a half years ago, when Bill Williams last spoke to the group, this venture was just a dream, but now it is very much a real project.

Williams stressed the imperative to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive; if it were to be ignored, he said, the lessons to be learned from the sacrifice would have been lost and forgotten.

The chosen site, at Trafford Wharf, was generously made available by Trafford Council and adjoins the proposed new Imperial War Museum North. It will also be close by the popular new Lowry Art Gallery and Manchester United Football Club's stadium.

Designs for the structure have been prepared by Daniel Libeskind, who has recently completed the remarkable Jew-

ish Museum in Berlin. The speaker displayed a model and artist's impressions of the proposed futuristic building which is both symbolic and meaningful.

The new centre, he stressed, would be conceptually different from those in Washington or Nottingham. It was intended to show Jewish experiences from the point of view of the individuals – both victims and survivors, pre-Holocaust as well as the post-Holocaust Renaissance. It would also present a balanced picture of European Jewry throughout the century.

Manchester's Holocaust Centre, anticipated to cost close on £8 million and which will require Lottery Fund support, would not be just another exhibition, said Bill Williams, but an educational project which also dealt with current problems of prejudice.

□ Werner Lachs

### Brighton & Hove

The Brighton and Hove group, which will continue to call itself 'Sarid', welcomed Andrew Herskovits, a survivor of several camps from

Auschwitz to Belsen, at its last meeting.

A founder member of the Holocaust Survivors' Centre in London andrew gave a most interesting talk about its work, especially of the creative writing group which he leads. The lively discussion which followed demonstrated the interest of all present. The Sarid group recently published a collection of short stories written by survivors.

□ MG

Sarid's next meeting is to be held on Monday 16th August. For further details please contact Myrna Glass on 0171 431 6161.

### Pinner

George Vulcan treated members of Pinner AJR to a wonderful trip through China, illustrated with a superb colour-slide show of beautifully annotated photographs taken by his wife Mary. Whether entering the Forbidden City by the Gate of Supreme Harmony, or taking in a wealth of magnificent mountain and river vistas, palaces and rock gardens, street scenes and curious customs, all were captured on camera to make an unforgettable afternoon.

□ Walter Weg

To book your place at Pinner AJR Party on 5th August, please phone Vera on 0181 886 4833 or Elizabeth on 0181 954 1224.

## Holiday times

*May I just tell you how much we all enjoyed our last holiday in Bournemouth. The Normandie's catering was excellent, the staff helpful and the atmosphere friendly.*

*The countryside around Bournemouth is a delight, in many ways England at its best and we were fortunate to join a most interesting tour to Wimbourne. The musical evening was full of fun – people were dancing and thoroughly enjoying themselves. On another evening we had a nail-biting quiz with prizes.*

*If Sylvia and Renée set out to make us happy, they certainly succeeded! One cannot cease to admire their ever-present devotion and care. With gratitude and many thanks for a wonderful week from*

□ Edith Fullon (Mrs)

### DAY CENTRE – CHANGE IN HOURS

Tuesday's extended hour sessions will be discontinued after Tuesday 28th September 1999. Sunday opening and extended hours on Thursdays are to remain the same. The Day Centre is always pleased to welcome you.

### BOURNEMOUTH WEEK

For details of the AJR's next Bournemouth Week please contact Sylvia or Renée on 0171 328 0208



Accept our invitation to a

## Kaffee Klatsch

with musical entertainment,  
tea, coffee and pastries

**on Sunday 22nd August**

from 3-5pm

at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre  
15 Cleve Road, NW6

Entrance by ticket only £6

Please book with Sylvia, Renée & Susie  
Tel: 0171 328 0208

## Third Great Season

Enjoy

- \* Excellent food
- \* Stimulating talk
- \* Enlivening discussion
- \* Meeting new friends

### AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

on Wednesday 8th September 1999  
at 15 Cleve Road, NW6 3RL  
11.45 for 12.15pm

Guest speaker: **John Marshall**  
'Looking back at Westminster'

Reservations £7.50 for everyone!  
from Sylvia, Renée and Susie  
Tel: 0171 328 0208

### 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:

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>August</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>August</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>August</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>August</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>September</b>

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.

## ... Viewpoint ...

### Time machines

The invention of the motor car in the latter years of the last century hardly impinged on the lives of either city or country dwellers. Modes of road transportation were all horse-drawn – coaches, carts and near-revolutionary omnibuses. Many alive today spent their formative years in such a milieu, echos of which remain preserved only by royalty and the landed aristocracy.

With the open road beckoning between the wars, the well-heeled classes took to the highways – preferably chauffeured – and entered a golden age of saluting AA and RAC patrolmen, beautifully crafted touring sedans and low low petrol prices. World War II took all private cars off the road and the age ended abruptly.

In the immediate post-war rush to export, pre-war car designs were brightened up and launched down the production lines, but home buyers were corralled onto waiting lists for even the most basic models. When purchasing restrictions were eventually lifted and

popular economical cars arrived, motor-ing was brought to the masses. Everyone wanted to have their own Tardis and travel through space in just hours and minutes. The freedom conferred on the individual by the possession of this time machine lies at the heart of the twentieth century's life-style revolution.

With today's 27 million licence holders, inevitably the numbers of vehicles vying for the available road space has revealed its incapacity to carry them. Anyone can venture onto the Queen's highway at anytime, irrespective of the priorities of other road users. Unsurprisingly, the system is grinding to a halt.

The century of the car is drawing to its close. In the next, people increasingly will communicate electronically, commute irregularly in superbuses running on dedicated highways and cross cities in pollution-free trams and buses, suburb-hop in taxis, travel inter-city by supertrains and reach the further parts of the globe in hours on air liners. Who will need a car? □ Ronald Channing

## PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

Afternoon entertainment programme –  
**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1999**

Sun	1	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT	Tue	17	THE MUSIC MAKERS
Mon	2	KARD & GAMES KLUB	Wed	18	THE GEOFFREY STRUM & HELEN BLAKE DUO
Tue	3	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton accompanied by Peter Gellhorn, piano	Thur	19	THE GEOFFREY WHITWORTH DUO
Wed	4	Jeanette Wainwright, soprano, accompanied by Yeu-Meng Chan, piano	Sun	22	KAFFEE KLATCH – With Jack Davidoff & Jules Rubin
Thur	5	Katie Ward, soprano, accompanied by Kathryn Courtney, piano	Mon	23	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Sun	8	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT	Tue	24	Michelle Wright, soprano, accompanied by Angus Cunningham, piano
Mon	9	KARD & GAMES KLUB	Wed	25	Olga Baron, violin, Nicky Baron, trumpet, accompanied by Stephen Baron, piano
Tue	10	Sergeo Lopez-Gomez, violin, accompanied by John Knight, piano	Thur	26	The Helen Blake & Kathryn Jenkin duo
Wed	11	Katie Bingham-Best, mezzo, accompanied by Mark Packwood, piano	Sun	29	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
Thur	12	Amanda Palmer, soprano	Mon	30	CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY
Sun	15	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT	Tue	31	Susanna Bird, soprano, accompanied by Phil Ley, piano
Mon	16	KARD & GAMES KLUB	Wed	1	THE GEOFFREY WHITWORTH DUO
			Thur	2	Tricia Dibb, soprano & Wayland Holford, baritone, accompanied by Michael Heaton, piano

## FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Birthdays

**Hirsch.** Paul Hirsch born 2 August 1909 of 11042 Park View South, Seattle, WA 98178 formerly of Kempen/Nieder-rhein, Dublin and London. Mazeltov on your 90th birthday, wife Lore, children Susan, Edith, Roger, Paul, Elaine and families.

### Deaths

**Fisher.** Herbert Felix Fisher, always cheerful despite his progressive disability. He will be deeply missed by his wife Alice, children Ruth and Norman, grandchildren Steven, Jane and Peter. We will remember him for his abiding love of his family and keen sense of humour.

**Hellendall.** Fritz Hellendall, born in Düsseldorf, passed away on 22 June 1999. Will be very much missed by his step-son Frank, his daughter-in-law Marian, his three grandchildren, Stephanie, Julia and Paul and their respective families; also Albert, George and Matilde, the children of his late sister, Mathilde and his many friends and acquaintances.

**Kaufmann.** Kaethe (Kitty) beloved wife of the late Prof. Phillip Kaufmann passed away after prolonged illness on June 19. Greatly missed by her nieces Kitty Schafer, husband Hans, of Toronto, Helen Kaufmann of New York, Susan, Mark, Steven, Debra Walsh of Toronto and all other many friends.

**Knopf.** Ilse Knopf. We deeply regret to announce the passing of Ilse on 27 June. A hard-working volunteer in the Editorial Department for many years, she will be greatly missed by her friends at the AJR office.

**Lissner.** Arno Lissner, born Breslau, passed away June 22 in San Francisco, aged 89. Deeply mourned by his wife Gretel and in London by sister Inge Strauss and brother-in-law Charles and by grandchildren and great-grandchildren in San Francisco.

**Treitel.** Edith Treitel, widow of Imre, born in Posen in 1910, passed away on 2 July after an illness bravely borne. Deeply mourned and missed by her loving daughter Carole.

**Walters.** Eric Walters. It is with deep regret that the AJR announce the passing of Eric Walters at the age of 92. He will be sadly missed.

## CLASSIFIED

### Miscellaneous Services

**Reflexology** treatments in the comfort of your home by ITEC qualified practitioner (AJR member). Call Stefan on 0171 624 0734.

**Manicure & Pedicure** in the comfort of your own home. Telephone 0181 343 0976.

### Day Centre

**Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.** New Clothes for Sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans etc. Tuesday 3 August, Wednesday 18 August and Thursday 26 August, 9.45-11.45am.

### Societies

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

## AJR INFORMATION is available on tape

If anyone would like to take advantage of this service please contact  
**Amanda Clark**  
at AJR 0171-431-6161  
Mon-Thur 9.30am - 5pm

## LINK Psychotherapy Centre

- a service for the Jewish Community  
The Centre offers groups for the 2nd and 3rd generation and psychotherapy, counselling and consultation for individuals, families and organisations.  
Fees are negotiable.  
Enquiries to 0181 349 0111

## WHY NOT ADVERTISE IN AJR INFORMATION?

Please telephone the Advertisement Dept  
**0171-431 6161**

**AJR**  
Tel: 0171-431 6161

## Academics Researching Austrian Centre in London 1939 -1947

need expert assistance with chapter on Centre's musical activities

Please contact:  
Dr Anthony Grenville  
29 Cholmley Gardens  
London NW6 1AG  
Tel: 0171 419 0139

## Optician

Dr Howard Solomons BSc FBCO

## Dental Surgeon

Dr H Alan Shields

&

## Chiropodist

Trevor Goldman SRC

by appointment at  
**The Paul Balint AJR Day Centre**  
15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6  
Please make appointments with  
**Sylvia Matus, Tel: 0171 328 0208**

## SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

Rewires and all household electrical work.

PHONE PAUL: 0181-200 3518

## ALTERATIONS

OF ANY KIND TO  
LADIES' FASHIONS  
I also design and make  
children's clothes  
West Hampstead area  
0171-328 6571

## AJR GROUP CONTACTS

Leeds HSFA:	Heinz Skyte 0113 268 5739
West Midlands: (Birmingham)	Edgar Glaser 0121 777 6537
North: (Manchester)	Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091
East Midlands (Nottingham)	Bob Norton 01159 212 494
Pinner: (HA Postal District)	Vera Gellman 0181 866 4833
S. London:	Ken Ambrose 0181 852 0262
Surrey:	Ernest Simon 01737 643 900
Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)	Fausta Shelton 01273 688 226
Wessex: (Bournemouth)	Ralph Dale 01202 762 270

## TORRINGTON HOMES

Mrs. Pringsheim, S.R.N.  
MATRON  
For Elderly, Retired and Convalescent  
(Licensed by Borough of Barnet)  
♦ Single and Double Rooms.  
♦ H/C Basins and CH in all rooms.  
♦ Gardens, TV and reading rooms.  
♦ Nurse on duty 24 hours.  
♦ Long and short term, including trial period if required.

From £300 per week  
0181-445 1171 Office hours  
0181-455 1335 other times  
NORTH FINCHLEY

## BELSIZE SQUARE APARTMENTS

24 BELSIZE SQUARE, NW3  
Tel: 0171-794 4307 or  
0171-435 2557

MODERN SELF-CATERING HOLIDAY ROOMS, RESIDENT HOUSEKEEPER MODERATE TERMS NEAR SWISS COTTAGE STATION

## Residential Home Clara Nehab House

(Leo Baeck Housing Association Ltd.)  
13-19 Leaside Crescent NW11

All rooms with Shower W.C. and H/C Basins en-suite  
Spacious Garden - Lounge & Dining Room - Lift  
Near Shops and Public Transport  
24 Hour Care - Physiotherapy  
Long & short Term - Respite Care - Trial Periods

Enquiries: Josephine Woolf  
Otto Schiff Housing Association  
The Bishops Avenue N2 0BG  
Phone: 0181-209 0022

## AJR MEALS ON WHEELS

A wide variety of high quality kosher frozen food is available, ready made and delivered to your door via the AJR meals on wheels service. The food is cooked in our own kitchens in Cleve Road, NW6, by our experienced staff.

If you live in North or North West London and wish to take advantage of this service, phone Susie Kaufman on 0171-328 0208 for details and an assessment interview.

## ADVERTISEMENT RATES

**FAMILY EVENTS**  
First 15 words free of charge, £2.00 per 5 words thereafter.  
**CLASSIFIED, SEARCH NOTICES** - £2.00 per five words.  
**BOX NUMBERS** - £3.00 extra.  
**DISPLAY ADVERTS**  
per single column inch  
65 mm (3 column page) £12.00  
48mm (4 column page) £10.00  
**COPYDATE** 5 weeks prior to publication

The AJR does not accept responsibility for the standard of service rendered by advertisers

## Art Notes

The overall look of the **Royal Academy Summer Exhibition 99** has changed for the better, as there are some 200 fewer works in this year's show compared to last. Innovations include a gallery given entirely to David Hockney's vast panoramic views of the Grand Canyon and there are memorial displays paying tribute to the work of Morris Kestelman and Arnold Machin. Among the well-known foreign artists exhibiting are Anselm Kiefer, Jasper Johns and Cy Twombly. The usual mixture of works by both professional and amateur artists offers no surprises. Until August 15.

Studies for **David Hockney's** Grand Canyon paintings at the Royal Academy are included in a pleasurable show of pastels, watercolours and drawings at Annelly Juda Fine Art until September 18. There are still lifes, set designs, a portrait of Andy Warhol and studies of Hockney's mother and father – all reflecting his creative imagination and his consummate draughtsmanship.

**Bridget Riley: Paintings from the 1960s & 1970s**, at the Serpentine Gallery until August 30, focuses on Riley's paintings which were dubbed Op Art. Her most dazzling images are the black and white paintings of the early 1960s which create a constantly shifting optical experience. Her later colour paintings are also optically disconcerting and a certain warmth is apparent in her stripe paintings.

At the Sternberg Centre until October 7 is an exhibition of lithographs by **Chagall**, including designs for the Jerusalem Windows and the ceiling of the Paris Opera. Also on show are works by Jewish artists who worked in Paris at the same time as Chagall, notably Modigliani, Kisling and Sonia Delaunay.

**Abacadabra: International Contemporary Art**, at the Tate Gallery until September 26, is an international group exhibition which brings together fifteen young artists whose work is promoted as representing a new spirit in contemporary art. The exhibition includes paintings, sculptures, drawings, installations, photography and video by artists from the UK and overseas. A wide varia-



Rebecca Driffield, 'Boyish Boo', National Portrait Gallery.

tion in approach is evident; it seems that anything – however bizarre – passes as art.

Finally, the **BP Portrait Award 1999**, at the National Portrait Gallery until October 3, is a hugely enjoyable show. Paintings from the estate of **Francis Bacon** are on view at Faggionato Fine Arts until August 25 and a small, but welcome exhibition of still lifes by **Giorgio Morandi** can be seen at the Estorick Collection until September 19.

□ Barry Fealdman

## SB's Column

**B**regenz. The capital of the Austrian province of Vorarlberg was the first after World War II to arrange a summer season of opera and drama, two years ahead of Rudolf Bing's establishment of the Edinburgh Festival. Both have become traditional ever since, with Bregenz adding opera performances on the specially-built lakeside stage in 1956. This year, Verdi's *Masked Ball* is given a 'First' and the Martinu opera *Greek Passion* has its Austrian première.

**Yefim Bronfman** who was born in Tashkent and emigrated to Israel in 1973, earned himself a great reputation as a pianist and chamber music player. He recently appeared at the Vienna Mozart-

saal in a programme of Schumann, Chopin and Beethoven's *Pathétique*.

**Titbits.** *The Queen of Sheba* by Goldmark, much performed on German opera stages before 1933 and neglected thereafter, is being revived at the Wexford festival in Ireland. Johanna Liebeneiner, the German soap opera star, is the daughter of the late Wolfgang Liebeneiner and Hilde Krahl, whose career started in 1930s Vienna. The autumn season at the London Coliseum will feature two German operas, *Rosenkavalier* and *Freischütz*. Both productions will open in early September.

**Birthday.** Italian tenor Carlo Bergonzi is 75. A specialist in Verdi rôles he was also a brilliant Canio, Rodolfo and Don José and sang at the New York Met for over 25 years. In London in the sixties he earned acclaim as Radames and Cavaradossi. Thanks to his musical expertise he recently served as a juror at Cardiff's 'Singer of the World' competition.

**Obituary.** The doyen of light music in Austria, Eduard Macku, veteran conductor of the Bad Ischl Kurorchester, has died, aged 91 □

### Annely Juda Fine Art

23 Dering Street (off New Bond Street)  
Tel: 0171-629 7578 Fax: 0171-491 2139

CONTEMPORARY PAINTING  
AND SCULPTURE

### GERMAN and ENGLISH BOOKS BOUGHT

Antiquarian, secondhand and  
modern books of quality  
always wanted.

We're long-standing advertisers  
here and leading buyers of books  
from AJR members.

Immediate response to your letter  
or phone call.

We pay good prices and  
come to collect.

Please contact:  
Robert Hornung MA(Oxon)  
2 Mount View, Ealing,  
London W5 1PR  
Telephone 0181-998 0546  
(5pm to 9pm is best)



## HOUSE DOCTOR

### Diabetes

A disease known since antiquity, diabetes is characterised by the body's inability to deal with carbohydrate metabolism and the subsequent build-up of glucose within the blood. If untreated, it can cause dehydration and be life-threatening.

There are two discernable types. Diabetes usually found among the young – an insufficient production of Insulin (which controls the body's glucose levels) – can generally be controlled with Insulin injections. The more common type which tends to affect people as they age – where enough Insulin is produced but the glucose level is insufficiently controlled – often runs in families. Patients frequently show no symptoms at all, but abnormal amounts of glucose are revealed by routine testing of blood or urine samples. The

main treatment is to take tablets and/or to diet.

The major concern is not the direct effect of diabetes, but the side effects of a long term build-up of glucose which can damage the back of the eye, small blood vessels, the kidneys and peripheral nerves. Further complications can include loss of sensation in the feet and fingers and diminished peripheral circulation. Consequently, the care of patients with diabetes has to include regular checkups and eye tests.

If you have not had your urine tested by a doctor or nurse in the last few years it is probably advisable to attend your doctor's surgery with a sample to obtain reassurance that abnormal amounts of glucose, which indicate diabetes, are not present.

□ Dr Max Bayer

*Regretfully, the Doctor cannot enter into personal correspondence*

## THE WIENER LIBRARY Memorial Plaques

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Wiener Library in London. As part of our commemoration it has been decided to issue a limited number of 50 memorial plaques for mounting in the Reading Room and Memorial Hall. Users of the Library have often remarked that the existing plaques are among the most moving features of the Wiener Library.

We hope that you will wish to join us in commemorating those who perished in the Holocaust as well as those members of the refugee community who have given so much to Britain. Each plaque will be accompanied by a certificate, one copy of which will be preserved permanently at the Library.

The Library offers two plaques to bear your personalised inscription:

- a rectangular brass plaque (125mm x 95mm) mounted on one of our bookcases at £250,
- a circular plaque (130mm diameter) mounted in a more prominent position at £1,000.

For more information please contact Ben Barkow, Deputy Director, at:  
4, Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BH Tel: 0171 636 7247

### BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE 51 Belsize Square, London N.W.3

Our communal hall is available for cultural and social functions.

**Tel: 0171-794 3949**

### AJR MEALS ON WHEELS

If you live in London or North West London and wish to take advantage of this service, phone Susie Kaufman 0171-328 0208 for details and an assessment interview.

## HOMECARE SERVICE

This new service is specifically for members needing care at home but requiring some financial assistance.

Applications will be assessed by the Social Services team and a financial contribution is expected from each recipient.

For further information please apply to the Social Services team on 0171 431 6161 or by letter to AJR Social Services, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal, London NW3 6AL

## Companions of London

Incorporating  
Hampstead Home Care

A long established company providing care in your home

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

**'OUR CARE IS YOUR CARE'**

0171 483 0212/0213



## SPRING GROVE

214 Finchley Road  
London NW3

London's Most Luxurious  
RETIREMENT HOME

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

Call for more information  
or a personal tour

**0181-446 2117**

or **0171-794 4455**

Simon P. Rhodes M.Ch.S.  
STATE REGISTERED CHIROPODIST  
Surgeries at:  
67 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (opp M&S)  
Telephone 0171-624 1576

3 Queens Close (off Green Lane)  
Edgware, Middx HA8 7PU  
Telephone 0181-905 3264

Visiting chiropody service available

## Kinder's vibrant 60th anniversary reunion

The third Reunion of Kindertransport took place in London on the 60th anniversary of the children's arrival with 1200 participants from many parts of the world, including the United States, Canada, Israel, Australia, France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Hungary, Venezuela, Nepal and the United Kingdom.

In his address of welcome at the opening ceremony, conference chairman David Jedwab referred to the previous day's unveiling of a plaque in the House of Commons by the Speaker, recording the Kinder's gratitude and spoke of their indebtedness to all who helped them sixty years previously.

The packed house of enthusiastic Kinder, some with their children and grandchildren, responded warmly to the emotional greeting from Bertha Leverton, who both inspired and organised the original Reunion of Kindertransport and the conference in Jerusalem in 1994. This reunion was a team effort.

Chief Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks recalled that Kristallnacht on 9th November 1938 had proved to be the beginning of the end. One of the world's oldest peoples had "no place on earth to call home". Britain, however, had accepted 10,000



Ronald Channing

children and for them at least this was literally a *petach tikvah*, a gateway of hope.

Lord Janner, Chairman of the Holocaust Educational Trust, who, as a young man, had worked as a war crimes investigator in Bergen-Belsen and remained a leading advocate of the rights of refugees and survivors, introduced Lord Williams of Mostyn, Minister of State at the Home Office. Lord Williams recalled that the late Phillip Noel Baker MP was the first to draw the attention of the House of Commons to the burning of synagogues, beatings and rounding up of men between 16 and 60 for the concentration camps, though at the time his listeners



Ronald Channing

Bertha Leverton is greeted by the Kinder.

found it almost impossible to believe him. It was sad to reflect that even today some regarded refugees as undeserving of help. "The country had benefited so enormously", said Lord Williams, from the energy and innovation of its immigrant population.

Introduced by Bea Green as one of the world's most admired film producers, Lord Attenborough recounted his parents' concern and practical help for refugee children fleeing Nazi Europe. "The house always seemed to have children living with us", he recalled. He and his two brothers were asked by their parents to accept two German-Jewish refugee girls into the household as adopted 'sisters' where they remained a loved and integral part of the Attenborough family for eight years. Declaring himself to be "grateful for the chance of a lasting relationship with the Jewish people", both Lord Attenborough and the audience found his story of common humanity stirring deep emotions.

At the first of a series of lectures and workshops Bea Green chaired a distinguished panel: Dr Amy Gottlieb, author of a much acclaimed history of Jewish refugee immigration to the UK in the 1930s, Stephen Smith, founder-director of the Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre and Nicholas Winton, saviour of more than 600 Prague children. Dr Gottlieb described how the archive records of the Central British Fund, which assumed overall responsibility for the ten thousand children of the Kindertransport, had been re-discovered. Her work on them had provided the opportunity to record the roles played by Anglo-Jewry's leading families and other lesser known heroes whose efforts saved many lives.

Nicholas Winton, who was celebrating

his 90th birthday, had worked in Prague saving children when it was evident that Hitler's armies were shortly to invade Czechoslovakia. He recalled showing the doughty campaigning MP, Dame Eleanor Rathbone, around concentration camps. Stephen Smith delivered a rousing and thought-provoking address as a non-Jew and member of the post-war generation attempting to understand what the Kinder had gone through. His message was succinct: "You were the future".

A panel chaired by Ernst Fraenkel introduced Lady Jakobovits, Nicole David and Dr Elisabeth Maxwell. Lady Jakobovits, whose family fled Nazi Germany and survived in the South of France, spoke of the importance of faith after the Holocaust. "Everyone here is a miracle" she said. Nicole David recollected her own survival as a hidden child in Belgium. Separated from her family, she often felt abandoned and in constant fear of discovery.

Elisabeth Maxwell remembered her attempts to trace Kinder saved from Prague by Nicholas Winton to enable them to participate in the UK's first international survivors' meeting in 1988. Committed to the memory of those who perished in the Shoah, she is actively involved in organising a second conference to be held in London and Oxford in July 2000 dedicated to 'Remembering for the Future'.

At the reunion concert a packed audience thoroughly enjoyed internationally acclaimed pianists, the Golabek sisters, who were taught by their mother Lisa who was a Kind and 12-year-old soloist Michele Golabek, Vivienne Bellos and the Zemel Choir and the Klezmer Swingers. This emotion-packed evening was followed the next day with a picnic in Stanmore for 500 Kinder who *shmoozed together*, updated their contacts and were addressed by local MP Tony McNulty.

The 60th anniversary book, compiled by RoK and published at the reunion, gave Bertha Leverton especial pleasure with its recollections, stories, in memoriam section and contact list of participants.

Bertha found herself overjoyed at the exceptional warmth and camaraderie engendered at the reunion. "Kinder came from all over the world, often overcoming great difficulties, to renew old friendships and make new ones – sadly, the last time such a meeting will take place".

□ Ronald Channing

## The development of community identity

### (Part II)

An essential precondition of the integration of the Jewish refugees from Hitler into British society and their establishment of a new communal identity in their adopted homeland was their separation from their former identity in their countries of origin. That had largely been achieved by the Nazis, who had driven them from their homes, stripped them of their citizenship and destroyed their communities. The separation was cemented for the great majority by the failure of Germans and Austrians to confront the crimes of the Nazi past and to assume moral responsibility for what had been done in the name of the German people – which is reflected in great and frequently depressing detail in the *AJR Information's* many reports from Germany and Austria. The consequent impossibility of re-adopting a sense of German or Austrian identity left the refugees with little option but to become British citizens, for all their distinctive Central European culture.

An early letter to the editor, published in April 1947, asks bluntly: 'Who can expect that a self-conscious Jew would or should return to a country which has inflicted upon him and his community sufferings unparalleled in history ... He is bound to meet people in Germany who either have taken part in the atrocities or have profited by them and with whom he naturally would not have any contact. But he will also meet people who had not the courage and strength ... to make a stand against the disgraceful actions and who now ought to blush with shame and penitence. Every Jew who wants to be respected must avoid such encounters for psychological or ideological reasons. All the more so as the poison of Nazism has not been eliminated and may become effective at any time.'

Many refugees would have taken to heart the warning expressed by a former welfare worker for the Jewish Relief Unit from Britain about conditions in Vienna, in an article extending over the first two pages of the journal in November 1948: 'Jews are coming back – and bitterly regretting it.' His condemnation of those who returned is unambiguous: 'To me it is simply impossible to understand the

mentality of young persons who willingly come back to a city where their families underwent every humiliation and insult a bare few years ago and which sent amidst the plaudits of the Viennese many thousands of their own parents, relatives and friends to a nameless end in the death camps.'

In March 1949, CC Aronsfeld, one of the journal's intellectual stars, expertly analysed the strange phenomenon whereby Jews had returned time and again over the centuries to the places where persecution had been visited upon them. Counselling insistently against repeating this historical pattern, Aronsfeld nevertheless saw the reasons behind it, quoting the Jewish historian Adolph Kohut: 'It is almost impossible to understand and only to be explained by the Jews' deep-felt attachment to their homesteads, that in spite of the sad experiences and terrible catastrophes, they yet again returned to the old places.'

Unable to return to the physical environment of their native towns and cities after the Holocaust, the Jewish refugees from Central Europe were yet deeply attached to the culture, customs and spiritual values in which they had grown up and it was above all through the German-language culture they had brought with them that they created and retained a sense of their own distinct identity in their adopted country. A poem entitled *Der Flüchtling*, published in January 1948 under the pseudonym *Inquit*, catches exactly this combination of rejection and attachment, the painful pairing of an abhorrence of the Nazi past of Germany and Austria with a continued longing for what was valued in the lost *Heimat*. The refugees were mostly able to salvage enough of their intellectual, cultural and social heritage to build from it a new identity and existence that would draw both on the lost homeland and on the new country of refuge.

The countries of origin were now alien territory, separated by a psychological chasm that could not be bridged by the postwar resumption of transport and communications. Returning to Berlin after a gap of eight years, as Adolf Schoyer, Chairman of the Association, told readers in a front-page article in November 1946, had been like 'travelling into an unknown and uncannily foreign land'. Reflecting in the same month on his disappointment on seeing the German film *Maskerade* again after an interval of seven years, 'Narrator' conveys a similar

sense of the gulf between his German-Jewish past and the present; 'Sometimes it is as if the films, books, streets, towns and people we remember existed only in our memory'.

The German-speaking Jewish refugees had suffered not only the material loss of their homes and familiar surrounds in the war; by destroying the entire communities in which they had lived, the Holocaust had also robbed them of the possibility of re-establishing emotional and spiritual contact with the past. The refugees' prewar lives had been irreparably severed from the postwar present and the realisation of this was often traumatic, as in the case of Werner Rosenstock, who received 'the shock of my life' on returning in 1950 to his native district of Berlin, the badly bombed Hansa-Viertel:

'Before 1933 there was hardly a house in which one did not know at least one family. Jews in the Hansa-Viertel formed a closely knit community. First, when Hitler came, the Jews had to go, partly to strange countries, partly to the extermination camps. Now their dwellings have also ceased to exist. A centre of Jewish life has been erased entirely. What is left is the memory of the happy days which many of us once spent in Berlin's Hampstead.'

The positive note on which this piece closes, implying that the refugees had perhaps found an alternative to the Tiergarten in Hampstead Heath, is not maintained in its sequel, where Rosenstock describes his visit to the Jewish cemetery at Weissensee: 'The cemetery is again as peaceful and dignified as it was before the war ... There is only one difference: you do not meet a single person when wandering around. What struck me most were the tombstones whose inscriptions were unfinished. Half of the space had been left blank for the husband or wife until his or her turn would have come. Now we know that this space will remain blank for ever.'

Small wonder that refugees like Rosenstock preferred to live out their lives in North-West London rather than amidst the ghosts of their vanished native communities.

In June 1950 a major front-page article, tellingly entitled *Beginning or End?*, discussed the future if any, of the Jewish community in postwar Germany. The survey reaches the sombre conclusion that German Jewry, once one of the jewels in the crown of Judaism, has disappeared:

'Community life cannot be compared

with that in the former Jewish communities ... There are no central institutions, no teachers and theological seminaries and it is not to be expected that such institutions will be established. All this cannot be taken as a continuation of the history of German Jewry, which has come to an end once and for all.'

But the spirit of German Jewry, though extinguished in Germany and Austria, was not dead. Indeed, a frequent theme in the *AJR Information* is the survival of precious parts of the German-Jewish heritage in the alien, but not entirely unwelcoming environment of Britain. A front-page article in September 1947 by a leader of Berlin's Jews, Hans-Erich Fabian, makes this point powerfully; it is the more convincing as it is written by an outsider with no interest in lauding the settled conditions enjoyed by the Jewish refugees in Britain. Fabian foresaw a transplantation of German-Jewish culture to Britain, a combination of the heritage of the past with the demands of the present, which meant both that the refugees must 'remain conscious of their origin' and that they must 'take root' in their new homeland, becoming 'integrated into the world around them' as 'British citizens in the full meaning of the term'. But this is not a straightforward statement of the old assimilationist agenda, modified into a demand for total integration into British society. Fabian exhorts the refugees to preserve those parts of their communal identity which had historically given German Jewry its lustre, to carry their culture on into the future:

'Such a policy does obviously not mean that the refugees should deny their origin or write off their past. On the contrary, German Jewry can be proud of its history. It can, indeed it *should* build on its meritorious achievements. Yet we must not be content with retrospection.'

Thus a leader of Germany's principal surviving Jewish community entrusted the continuation of the traditions and values particular to the German-speaking Jews of Central Europe in considerable measure to those of them who had settled in Britain, where they would preserve their own heritage, at least for the lifetime of the German-speaking generations. The *AJR Information* itself bears eloquent testimony to the level of culture maintained by the refugees, a key constituent element of the identity that they created for themselves in their new homeland.

(To be continued)

□ Anthony Grenville

## Unsung heroine

She numbered George Bernard Shaw, Winston Churchill, Jacob Epstein, Fred Astaire, Noel Coward and Eleanor Roosevelt among her acquaintances. Lady Astor threw a party for her. Russia's Royal Family were represented by her in the famous 'Rasputin' case. She was also known by King George V, the Kents and the Yorks, not least by their seven-year-old daughter Princess Elizabeth. Yet who today remembers Fanny Holtzmann?

Few recall the behind-the-scenes efforts of this sympathetic American lawyer during the birthpangs of the modern State of



Israel's unsung heroine, Fanny Holtzmann.

Israel. According to Martin Birken, in a lecture delivered to the Spiro Ark, Fanny Holtzmann played a key role in securing the necessary UN vote in 1947 which legitimised the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. David Ben-Gurion and the other *Yishuv* leaders accepted the plan, but the Arabs (with the exception of King Abdullah of Transjordan) opposed it and precipitated the need for Israel to fight for its independence when British mandated troops withdrew on 14th/15th May 1948.

Fanny was born in the USA in 1902 to Jewish parents from Galicia. After qualifying as a lawyer at night school, she found work in the expanding motion picture industry where she specialised in contracts for the stars.

In 1937, while Joseph Kennedy – who had called her a 'Jew girl' some years earlier – was appointed Ambassador to the

Court of St James's, Fanny was also in Europe, helping emigrants. Kennedy's two eldest sons, who did not see eye-to-eye with their father, were engaged by Fanny to assist refugees complete visa applications at American embassies in Paris and Warsaw. Before the outbreak of war Fanny also helped in Eleanor Roosevelt's attempt to rescue 10,000 European children, but even after appealing to Jewish Chief Justice Felix Frankfurter, not one additional visa was issued.

From the spring of 1945, as counsel to the Chinese Republic, Fanny was included in the Chinese delegation to the newly-formed United Nations in San Francisco. As she enjoyed excellent relations with Russia, China and western countries, it was not surprising that her hotel suite became a centre of confidential negotiations at the time of the crucial 1947 UN vote, with leading luminaries such as Francis Williams and Adlai Stevenson having fallen within her ambience. With a two-thirds majority required of the 56 member states and twelve mainly Muslim countries implacably opposed, China, despite having a large Muslim population and no Jews, abstained and turned the vote in Israel's favour.

Martin Birken produced evidence to show that Fanny had flown to Berlin on August 30th and that his parents took her to Tempelhof airport for her return flight to London on 1st September, the very day Germany invaded Poland. The nature and intent of her mission remains shrouded in mystery to this day.

Quoting from her biography by Edward O Berkman, Birken also suggested that it was Fanny's influence which brought the UN to New York, Rockefeller having been asked to donate \$8 million for its site on Manhattan's East River.

□ Ronald Channing

**JACKMAN SILVERMAN**

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

26 Conduit Street, London W1R 9TA  
Telephone: 0171 409 0771 Fax: 0171 493 8017

## NEWSROUND

**Berlin memorial approved**

Plans to erect a memorial to Jewish victims of the Holocaust have been approved by the Bundestag. The design, by New York architect Peter Eisenman, features a labyrinth of 2,700 concrete blocks on a five-acre site close to the Brandenburg Gate. It will also incorporate a museum and information centre.

**Black sheep**

At the recent European elections the entire de Gaulle family publicly disassociated itself from the General's grandson. The latter, also named Charles de Gaulle, contested the election on behalf of Le Pen's National Front whom the family branded as "Petainist, revisionist, racist and antisemitic."

**Hitler's hand**

A rare example of Hitler's signature is appended to the original 'Nuremberg Law' edict, recently unearthed in an American archive. Drafted in 1935 at the Nazi party rally in the Reichstag, the Nuremberg Laws banned Jews from marrying or cohabiting with Aryans and deprived them of German citizenship.

**Viennese memorials**

On 24th September next memorial plaques are to be unveiled on some municipal housing estates in Vienna's 11th District. The plaques will record and honour the names of former Jewish residents who perished in the concentration camps.

**A Holocaust Memorial Day**

Prime Minister Tony Blair, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*, favours an annual remembrance day for the victims of the Holocaust, and has asked Home Office Minister Mike O'Brien to consult representative organisations. MP Andrew Dismore's private member's bill recommends January 27th, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, as an appropriate date.

**Expression of remorse**

A group of 2,000 latter-day Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem wish to apologise for their forebears' massacres of tens of thousands of Jews and Muslims 900 years previously. In response to Pope Urban II's call for the liberation of the holy places from the 'infidels' in 1095, waves of crusaders murdered and plundered their way down the Rhine and, in 1099, sacked Jerusalem, slaughtering thousands of Jews and Muslims.

□ RDC

## AJR Annual General Meeting: CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCES PLAN FOR SHELTERED FLATS AND A NEW DAY CENTRE

**Project for radical change**

**A**t the organisation's Annual General Meeting in London, AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman announced a radical and ambitious plan to build sheltered flats together with an entirely new AJR Day Centre to meet the changing needs of AJR members.

Although a definite site has yet to be identified and acquired, this will be within the area of northwest London in which many AJR members are still congregated and will certainly have to be within easy reach of public transport as well as offer an appropriate number of parking spaces.

The new building will be purpose-built to provide a minimum of 40 sheltered flats, a fully equipped day centre with separate milk and meat kitchens capable of supplying hot meals-on-wheels and, if the economics allow, new head office accommodation. Although much preparatory work remains to be carried out, it is hoped that the project will be up and running within a two-year timescale.

The flats will replace those in Eleanor Rathbone House, Highgate, and the eight flats in Cleve Road, West Hampstead, whose residents will be offered considerably superior accommodation in the new building. Both Eleanor Rathbone House and 15 Cleve Road are to be sold after the completion of transfers. The Chairman assured all existing residents that no one will be asked to move before the new flats are ready for occupation and that every assistance will be given to ensure the minimum of inconvenience and disruption.

A series of discussions between the AJR and the Otto Schiff Housing Association, which had been exploring the most effective way in which to provide high-quality residential and nursing care in the future, have been concluded with positive outcomes for both organisations. It was agreed that it would neither be advantageous for the two organisations to merge, nor appropriate to work together on a new joint project. Rather, each should continue to specialise in providing those services in which it had experience and expertise. Consequently, OSHA would concentrate on the provision of residential care homes and be

solely responsible for the re-provision of Heinrich Stahl House (see *AJR Information*, March 1999). Similarly, the provision of sheltered accommodation would become the responsibility of the AJR.

In the light of these decisions, the AJR Charitable Trust had agreed in principle to advance a substantial interest-free loan up to a maximum of £1.3 million over the next three years, to enable OSHA to accelerate the maintenance and improvement programme in its residential homes for the benefit of its residents. The loan is to be repayable as a first charge on the sale of Heinrich Stahl and Eleanor Rathbone Houses.

The Chairman was pleased to report that Osmond House, for the renovation of which AJR had previously granted OSHA a loan of £850,000, would shortly be re-opened and fully occupied once again.

David Rothenberg, AJR Vice-Chairman and Hon. Treasurer, in presenting the annual accounts, said that the new understanding with OSHA should provide homes of the highest possible order.

Ashley Mitchell, pro tem Chairman of OSHA following Allan Blacher's decision to step down after four years' service, was invited to address the meeting. In line with his belief that working relationships should move forward, he confirmed that OSHA would concentrate on its main strength, the provision of residential care. The sale of Heinrich Stahl House and Eleanor Rathbone House would provide OSHA with a financial reserve sufficient for the foreseeable future.

OSHA remained committed to the establishment of purpose-built accommodation on a new site within a two-to-three-year timeframe. Together with Osmond House, recently upgraded, and Leo Baeck House, shortly to commence a similar refurbishment, OSHA would provide very high standards of accommodation and care and continue to maintain the Continental ambience of the homes as far as was possible.

Those members proposed for re-election to serve on the AJR Committee of Management were approved by the meeting. No new nominations were received.

□ Ronald Channing