

Don't miss...

Scientist refugees p4

Israel under fire p14

The Judenplatz memorial p16

Obscene echo

Rich Jews largely control the US media' writes Jemima Khan (née Goldsmith) in *The Guardian*. She adds 'Jews form over half of Clinton's policy advisers, preventing the US from acting as an honest broker in the Middle East'.

Why is Jemima's voice listened to in the first place? Precisely because her daddy's dosh gave him influence. Which other rich man ever bought himself a brand new political party at a whim? This entity, the UK Independence Party, became notorious in 1997 for election rally calls to castrate Edward Heath (who had taken us into Europe).

Jemima's comments on US politics exude a similar whiff of obscenity. Her words replicate exactly those of Goebbels in 1940 when he explained why America was veering away from neutrality towards a pro-Allied stance □

Multicultural Britain

Two words – each capable of stirring up a separate controversy.

In recent weeks two news items have cast a revealing light on the problems that beset the evolution of a multicultural society in Britain. The first related to a Gallup poll showing a widespread belief that ethnic immigrants and asylum seekers have been flooding into the country at such a prodigious rate that they now constitute a quarter of all inhabitants. The true figure is around six per cent of the population, although it may well be true that in London – which is atypical – every fourth resident hails from outside the United Kingdom. The widely believed inflated figure feeds the paranoid delusion that the native Brits are about to be swamped and that the country will lose its traditional identity. Such a Doomsday scenario does not merely start out from the premise of a hugely exaggerated alien presence; it also leaves out of account the effect prolonged residence in this country will have on the immigrants' lifestyle in terms of more intermarriage, smaller families, etc.

Fears about the perceived loss of British identity are a different matter. Here, the old adage 'if it ain't broke don't fix it' seems to apply. Unlike their US counterparts, black British athletes have never jibbed at wrapping themselves in the national flag at Olympic award ceremonies. Indian cuisine and Afro-Caribbean music have made major contributions to contemporary British life. Although these exotic components have been quite smoothly subsumed into the concept of 'Britishness', the Runnymede Trust (composed of home-grown Liberals and ethnic spokespersons) has lately advocated dropping the term 'British' as redolent of the days of the Raj. The Trust's report warns that the retention of the word with its Imperial connotations could present an obstacle to the identification of coloured immigrants with their new country.

This 'project', however well-intentioned, strikes one as fundamentally ill-conceived. The very act of

emigrating from one's homeland involves a readiness to leave 'home-grown' values behind, and fit into a pre-established, different way of life. When our 'founding fathers' created *AJR Information* it didn't even cross their minds to make it a German language publication. We readily adopted the custom of 'trick or treat' and 'a penny for the guy' – especially since Guy Fawkes put us in mind of van der Lubbe, the arsonist in the Reichstag.

Admittedly, the Empire builders who set out to paint large parts of the globe pink were not driven by the ambition to replicate the parliament that had been saved from the Gunpowder Plot in all the capitals where the Union Jack flew. Even so, by the end of the Raj, Westminster-style parliaments were to be found in places as far apart as Delhi, Accra, Lagos and Nairobi. This transformation owed a lot to figures like Gandhi and Kenyatta – but also to such exemplary British personalities as Gladstone, Annie Besant, Arthur Creech-Jones and Fenner Brockway. Descendants of former colonial subjects are therefore hardly justified in looking upon the term 'British' as a barrier to identification with their new country of domicile □



Discussing the future of multi-ethnic Britain. From left: Antony Lerman, former JPR Director, Sarah Spencer from the IPPR and Lord Parekh who chaired the committee which produced the Runnymede Trust's report.

Photo: Sidney Harris

Der erste Zug nach Berlin arrives at last!

Gabriele Tergit (1894-1982) emigrated with her husband, the architect Heinrich Julius Reifenberg, from Berlin via Czechoslovakia (1933) and Tel Aviv (1935) to London (1938). She was a near-founder member of Club 1943 and Secretary of the PEN-Centre German Speaking Writers Abroad (1957-81).

Jens Brüning, a writer and journalist from Berlin, has re-edited Tergit's writings as well as unearthing some of her hitherto unpublished works and has previously presented her works at Club 1943: his 1996 edition of her experiences in pre-war Palestine *Im Schnellzug nach Haifa* and of her highly praised and often biting witty law court reports from the 1920s *Wer schießt aus Liebe* (1999). In October he presented his latest publication, the novella *Der erste Zug nach Berlin*. Maud, a somewhat naïve, spoilt and inexperienced upper-class young American woman, travels with a group of journalists to Berlin immediately after WW2, and encounters a confusion of political and social attitudes, often reflecting past prejudices and an unwillingness to learn from recent experience. The book overflows with characteristically acute and often sharply witty observations. It may not be a literary masterpiece, but it is a worthy and enjoyable testimony to its author and age.

Gabriele Tergit was a prolific and highly valued contributor to *AJR Information*. A selection from these essays would certainly deserve the attention of Mr Brüning's meticulous and praiseworthy efforts.

□ Hans Seelig

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Profile

Charles Peter Carter

Unintentional prophecy on the part of his father meant that Peter Carter took English lessons from the age of six with an Englishwoman who happened to live in Vienna and without whose intervention he might not have been able to leave Austria in 1938. To begin at the beginning:

Charles Peter Carter was born in Vienna, an only child of middle-class parents, in 1921. Until the age of fourteen, he attended the Stubenbastei Gymnasium (popularly known as "RGI") but, at his request, transferred to the *Handelsakademie* which he attended until he left Vienna in July 1938. What prompted his departure was being thrown down the stairs at school a week after the Anschluss when being a Jew in Vienna meant, among other things, experiencing the transformation of people's attitudes from friendliness to hostility. With an uncle and aunt in Swiss Cottage who acted as guarantors, a visa was duly applied for and granted. Collecting the visa was an altogether different matter as it meant running the gauntlet of Nazi thugs surrounding the British Embassy, achieved with the assistance of Peter's English tutor who fended off aggressive taunts by replying that she was English and Peter was her nephew!

After a few weeks living with his aunt and uncle in Swiss Cottage, Peter soon made himself independent, visiting Woburn House through whose offices he found work as a trainee exhibition designer, a job which appealed to him because of his love of art and drawing. On the outbreak of war, he was laid off and found work in a distant relation's toy factory painting dolls' faces. His mother was able to reach London in September 1938 as a domestic but his father only managed to leave Austria illegally by crossing into Switzerland via Basle. (He finally reached England in 1943 via France, Spain and Portugal).

Peter was interned in the summer of 1940, first in Kempton Park, then in Prees

Heath, Shropshire and finally – for six months – on the Isle of Man. When recruiting officers came round the camp in January 1941, he volunteered for the Pioneer Corps. He transferred to the Royal Armoured Corps in 1943 and participated in the Normandy campaign. The end of the war saw him posted on the Danish-German border near the Kiel Canal. Throughout his war service, Peter's postings were influenced by his linguistic abilities; the position was no different at the war's end when his commanding officer appointed him Administrator for the town of Iztahoe and the surrounding district until his discharge in December 1945. In this capacity, he was in charge of all administration, a baptism of fire for a 23-year-old. He remembers one occasion when he was required to give formal permission, to a Yugoslav in a nearby labour camp, to marry.

His 'reward' was an invitation to a noisy and 'boozy' wedding and an offer to exercise *droit de seigneur* with the bride. Faced with this tricky development, he decided his only option was, without delay, to make good his escape.

In December 1946, Peter married Irene, a Viennese refugee whom he first met at a Viennese skating rink in 1935 when she literally bumped into him. Sadly, she died nine years ago. They adopted their son when he was a year old.

After a series of jobs on his discharge from the army, Peter applied to the Central Office of Information's exhibition division where he worked for 27 years interrupted by a six-year stint at the Natural History Museum from 1964. The Insect Gallery, unchanged since the mid 1960s, is his handiwork. Prior to his retirement, he was in charge of project and design assistance to prison governors and chief constables.

Since his retirement in 1983, Peter's hobbies have been the study of philosophy and playing social bridge. He also still skis. He admits to being a technophobe and does all his writing on an 'old-fashioned typewriter'!

□ Marion Koebner



Charles Peter Carter

Children's crusades

Inhabitants of medieval Europe were accustomed to seeing vast throngs of people move across the countryside. By and large these tended to be pilgrims bound for Canterbury or Santiago de Compostella. Very intermittently they were Crusaders heading towards Palestine. In the year 1212 religious fervour produced a strange hybrid halfway between a crusade and a pilgrimage. This was the Children's Crusade in which fifty thousand hymn-singing children set off from Northern Europe for the Holy Land. They were never seen again: the fortunate ones who survived the rigours of the journey got sold into slavery once they reached the Mediterranean coast. This was the first recorded instance in history of masses of children being used in the service of a particular ideology.

The phenomenon was sufficiently unusual not to recur till the mid-twentieth century – when, however, it became almost commonplace. In 1944/45 the Nazis conscripted thousands of schoolboys into the *Volkssturm*, the auxiliary units mustered to beef up the depleted *Wehrmacht*. By the time of their call-up these fourteen-year-olds, having undergone lengthy brainwashing in the Hitler Youth, were quite disposed to throw their lives away for the Führer. The self-sacrificial mindset engendered among Hitler Youths was neatly encapsulated in this verse: *Wir steigen auf zu Kampfgewittern/ Der Heldentod ist unser Recht/ Der Erdball soll im Kern erzittern/ Wenn fällt sein edelstes Geschlecht*. (We ascend to storms of battle/ A hero's death is our right/ The earth will be shaken to its core/ When its

noblest race perishes).

A key point about Nazism was that it projected itself as a movement of the young. The brownshirted Hitler – forty-four when appointed Chancellor – cut a much more youthful figure than his Weimar predecessors in their stiff collars, starched shirt-fronts and tails. In the China of Mao's cultural revolution, the conflict between generations took on a more convoluted form. The 'supreme helmsman' acted out the role of the malign grandfather who incited the rising generation to revolt against their fathers (i.e. the bureaucrats). When students, instead of pursuing knowledge, literally pursued their teachers, academic standards inevitably plummeted and this had deleterious consequences for the country as a whole.

Right now, though, the most blatant manipulation of the impressionable young occurs daily in the West Bank and Gaza. The PLO has set in motion a children's crusade in which twelve-year-olds get themselves killed to provide emotive footage for worldwide transmission by the media. Their deaths – on camera – not only provide attention-grabbing footage for NBC, CNN and the BBC, but also invaluable publicity for the would-be instigators of all-out war against Israel. Is it not time that UNESCO reminded the Palestinian Authority of the conventional wisdom that in lesson time school children should be in the classroom and not a battle zone? As the toll of under-age Palestinian martyrs continues to mount it seems that Yasser Arafat is about to add another title to the whole string – Chairman, commander-in-chief, 'Father of the Struggle' etc. – he already has; the new title will be *Kindertoten* leader.

□ RG

NEWS EXTRA

Wagner première

The first scheduled performance in Israel of Wagner's music took place after an unsuccessful application by Holocaust survivors failed to persuade a judge to intervene.

Contentious bishop

Slovak Bishop Jan Vojtassak, who agreed to the deportation of his country's Jews during World War II, has been proposed for beatification by the Pope. Research carried out by Israeli historians led to their protesting against the nomination.

French honour

Serge Klarsfeld, French Nazi hunter, lawyer and Holocaust writer, has been honoured by President Chirac with the rank of Officer in the Legion of Honour.

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Reviews

Scientist refugees

Jean Medawar & David Pyke, *HITLER'S GIFT: SCIENTISTS WHO FLED NAZI GERMANY*, Richard Cohen Books, London, 2000.

Before Hitler, Germany was the foremost scientific nation in the world. Of the 100 Nobel Prizes awarded up to 1932, 33 were given to Germans or scientists working in Germany (18 to Britain, 6 to USA). About a quarter of the German laureates were of Jewish descent, although Jews made up only 1% of the German population. In the following 27 years (1933-1960), Germany won only eight. Britain, however, won 21 of which seven were to scientists driven out by the Nazis. America then became the leading scientific country, bolstered by 15 European Nobel Prize-winning refugees who made it their final destination. Just as important were the many younger refugee scientists who subsequently occupied senior posts throughout the world.

Jean Medawar, the widow of Nobel laureate Sir Peter Medawar, and David Pyke, a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, list these facts and then present a fascinating and extremely readable account of what happened to Jewish academic scientists in Germany after Hitler became Chancellor on 30 January 1933. Only ten weeks later, by a law of 7 April, most Jews were dismissed from state institutions which included all the German universities. The speed and intensity of the Nazi anti-Jewish measures took everyone by surprise; within the first year, some 2,600 scientists and scholars left the country. At Göttingen University, for example, out of 33 staff in the four physics and mathematics institutes, only eleven remained. Inferior Nazi-supporting academics were only too eager to fill the gaps. This scenario was repeated even more rapidly in Austria after the Anschluss in March 1938.

The book describes in graphic detail the plight, the hurried agonising decisions, the survival and subsequent fortunes of some forty scientists who were affected, including many eminent figures (such as Einstein) and others known and interviewed by the authors. It was Britain which led the rescue efforts. Sir William Beveridge, then Director of the London School of Economics, appalled

by what was happening in Germany, joined with other leading British figures to set up an Academic Assistance Council (AAC) as early as May 1933, to fund displaced scientists and find them work in scientific institutions. To ensure that their appeal would not look like a Jewish crusade they sensibly decided that none of the officers should be of Jewish origin. In its first three years the AAC helped 1,300 displaced university teachers. Another British rescuer was Professor Frederick Lindemann of Oxford who, with money from ICI, recruited several bright young German Jewish physicists who then transformed the Oxford Clarendon Laboratory into a leading research centre. In America, the Rockefeller Foundation set up a special fund for their universities to support academic refugees. As the Director of the New York Institute of Fine Arts said: "Hitler... shakes the tree and I collect the apples". The book concentrates on those who fled to Britain and USA but there are no accounts of scientists who found refuge in the southern hemisphere.

Later chapters vividly describe the internment (often only temporary) of many refugees in 1940 when France was being overrun, with a personal account by Dr Max Perutz (*August Science Notebook*). Another chapter deals with the dilemmas of notable non-Jewish scientists like Max Planck about staying in Nazi Germany, and the curious case of the Jewish physiologist Otto Warburg whom the Nazis left alone to continue his researches in Berlin. Finally, the authors relate the crucial contributions made by refugee scientists from Germany, Hungary and elsewhere to atomic energy research and their concern that the Allies should produce (but not use) an atomic bomb before Nazi Germany did (see the play *Copenhagen* still running in London).

Hitler's fanatical persecution of Jewish scientists and scholars unintentionally bestowed enormous talents on the rest of the world while depriving Germany itself of great expertise which contributed to its losing the war. This thoughtful, timely and well-documented book brings to life many of the human dramas involved and adds considerably to our knowledge of those momentous times. There is a lovely bilingual irony in the book's title: to the English, "gift" means a present but to Germans "gift" means poison.

□ Prof Michael Spiro

Hindsight and warning

Karl Otten, *DIE REISE NACH DEUTSCHLAND*, (ed) Richard Dove, Peter Lang AG, Berne, 2000.

Karl Otten, who was born in the Rhineland in 1889, spent twenty-two years in exile in Britain from 1936, dying in Locarno in 1963, is one of that highly talented generation of Expressionist writers whose achievements were swept from public consciousness by twelve years of Nazi rule. In the 1950s he distinguished himself with two anthologies, *Abnung und Aufbruch* (Expressionist prose) and *Schrei und Bekenntnis* (Expressionist drama). Professor Dove is to be congratulated for rescuing this previously unpublished anti-Nazi novel from oblivion. It depicts the experiences of a young Englishman, James Taylor, during a stay with the Eilershoven family in Cologne in 1938, and is designed to warn British readers about the warlike nature of Hitler's regime. Though this was more than timely in 1938, the outbreak of war the following year caused events to run ahead of the novel, and Otten's publishers lost interest.

Through the eyes of Otten's rather naïve and impressionable visitor to Germany, the reader is confronted with the systematic militarisation of German society and the indoctrination of the younger generation of Germans with the brutality and immorality of Nazism. The humane and civilised values of the older generation, as represented by Professor Eilershoven, are treated with contempt by his daughter Sybil, intoxicated with her pseudo-revolutionary 'new ideals'. Inevitably, James and Sybil fall in love, simultaneously discovering the ugly truth about the Nazi regime: James is himself imprisoned, though later released. He returns to England convinced that evil is rampant in Germany and must soon be unleashed on an unsuspecting Europe. In an introductory chapter, added in 1941, he is shot down as an RAF pilot during a raid on Cologne; he dies fighting what he knows must be fought.

The value of the novel for the modern reader is to some extent historical, evidence of the attempts by the refugees from Hitler to impress the truth about Germany on the reluctant British. *Die Reise nach Deutschland* is a journey into the past which should itself not be allowed to relapse into neglect.

□ Dr Anthony Grenville

Kinder story retold

INTO THE ARMS OF STRANGERS, Warner Bros Pictures, Odeon Leicester Square and selected cinemas.

Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport is an American-made film documentary recalling the remarkable rescue in 1938 and 1939 of 10,000 children from almost certain murder by the Nazis, and the operation's dramatic impact on the lives of the children who were saved by being found refuge in Britain.

The narrative is related in the words of child survivors, rescuers, parents and foster parents, who tell of the dedicated people who brought the children to our shores, and of the astonishing fortitude and courage of the children themselves who left their parents behind them, in most cases never to be reunited.

Producer and moving spirit behind the film, Deborah Oppenheimer, though aware that her own mother was a Kind, knew little detail of her flight, so she undertook a vast amount of research to uncover her mother's experiences. "My mother was of a generation in which you didn't air your problems; you kept your suffering private," said Oppenheimer. An outstanding creative team also included award-winning writer and director Mark Jonathan Harris, narration by celebrated actress Dame Judi Dench, and the splendid soundtrack music composed by Lee Holdridge and many other skilled filmmakers.

Featuring among the key witnesses is Bertha Leverton, who had conceived and organised reunions of the Kinder in 1989 and 1999 and is co-author of a collection of Kinder stories entitled *I Came Alone*. Bertha was the eldest of three children of a Polish-German family from Munich. After arriving in England and celebrating her sixteenth birthday at Dovercourt Camp, a family in Coventry took her in to be their maid. She related how, against the odds, she arranged for the family to take in her brother and younger sister as well.

A distinctive feature is the inclusion of rare archive film, researched by an authority on the sources of Holocaust related material, Corrine Colett, much of which had never previously been shown in public. Only the backing from a major film studio like Warner could provide the time and effort this necessitated.

Kindertransportee Zigi Faith, who left his home in Hamburg aged 10, found

Into the Arms of Strangers to be poignant and moving, but that it glossed over the depth of animosity shown towards Jewish families by the Germans, "ninety percent of whom were Nazis, and whose normal greeting was Heil Hitler", he recalled. Hermann Hirschberger, who unequivocally thanked England for having saved his life, praised the film for being "comprehensive and well done," and for recounting both the good and the bad experiences of the Kinder in their new-found homeland.

□ Ronald Channing

Subversive farce

Noel Coward, *FALLEN ANGELS*, Apollo Theatre

After fifteen years of marriage, now lacking in romance and passion, which one of us could be tempted if the love of our youth returned and asked to see us? This is what happens to Felicity Kendal and Frances de la Tour, playing two married women in their 40s, intimate friends who live in each other's pockets, the *Fallen Angels* who believe that the best way to overcome temptation is to succumb to it.

The women are unwittingly aided and abetted in their plot by their smug husbands who prefer games on the golf course to those in the bedroom; the scene with the two wives getting drunk on champagne while waiting for their mutual paramour's arrival, is a triumph of slapstick farce on one level and, on another, a razor-sharp examination of the marital relationships of Mayfair's 'smart set', people so bored with their lives that they have to quarrel over nothing to enliven them.

The play was nearly refused a licence in the 1920s; it was feared that the audience would be offended by "the women's obvious willingness to go wrong". The censors thought it "brightly written but extremely dubious" and they were of course right, but the play was passed by the short-sighted Lord Cromer who saw it only as "an unreal farcical comedy".

Human nature has not changed and the play is just as funny, just as relevant and just as subversive of conventional sexual mores now as it ever was. But don't be put off; the subversion is so delicate and witty that most people would not even notice it and the comic situations, the wit and the acting so wonderful that you will fall off your seat laughing.

□ Andrew Herskovits

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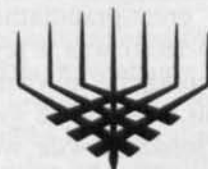
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Letters to the Editor

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Sir – The Nazis did not only murder 'strangers': the German Jews were an integral part of the German nation. (*November issue*) To call them strangers would mean the acceptance of Hitler's racial division between Aryans and Jews. Hitler did not stop at killing the 'stranger' Jews: he also killed his political adversaries, Communists, social democrats, even the SA. In this we have a parallel rather than a difference with Stalin who killed 'his own', but was driven by fear, real or imagined, of political opposition to his autocratic power.

Amongst the 'foreign' creators of the Austrian art form, you refer to Johann Strauss II as a Jew. Even the Nuremberg laws would not have done so with someone whose great-grandfather (Johann Michael 1720-1800) was a Jew, baptised in the Stephanskirche in Vienna in 1762, but neither his wife nor his son Franz nor Franz's son Johann's wife were Jewish. Johann II was Johann I's son and therefore one-eighth Jewish. Interestingly, in spite of this slender Jewish connection, the Nazis removed the relevant page from the official entries at the Stephanskirche; the original page is now on display again.

Franz von Suppé was not French. He was born in Split, at that time part of the Austrian Empire. His family originated in Belgium.

London NW3

Thomas Edmund Konrad

Sir – On a visit to Vienna, we stayed for the ninth time at an hotel with several 'Slav' staff, all very nice and content. No trace of your 'slavophobia' there nor anywhere else. Vienna now has a larger Slav population than in my youth and they appear a happy lot. Do stop baiting old *Oesterreich* as often as you do. Many things are better there than here: transport, traffic, rail, post, OAP pensions, opera etc.

Norwich

HP Anderson

AUSTRIAN MISNOMERS

Sir – My attention has been drawn to Mr Albert Sternfeld's letter (*November issue*) where he has chosen to 'warn' your

readers about the accuracy of my book *Guilty Victim*. He further alleges that I have become an apologist for Austria. As he has not pointed to any specific inaccuracy in my book, it is hard for me to judge whether there is any substance to his concerns. I can however assure your readers that my manuscript was carefully checked for accuracy by independent experts.

In any event I strongly object to Mr Sternfeld's aspersions on my professional integrity. I can assure you that I am in no sense trying to convey an 'official line' on Austria's record on restitution, or indeed on any of its policies. The views expressed in my book – many of them critical of Austria's record – are entirely my own. I consider that Mr Sternfeld owes me an apology.

London NW3

Hella Pick

Sir – The English title of Hella Pick's book is a misnomer. For the purposes of historical accuracy one must distinguish between pre-war Austria as a sovereign state on the one hand and its inhabitants on the other. Flawed as that state was owing to its clerical-authoritarian character, it was independent and its government tried to defend its independence – albeit not very efficiently. Its independence was abrogated by force. During the war the Allies had to promise the re-establishment of Austrian sovereignty and act accordingly. Had they not done so they would have underwritten the Anschluss by implication. On that point the state as such was a 'victim'. As to its inhabitants, or at least a considerable minority, the appellation 'guilt' is an apt description. Not only did they supply a disproportionate number of war criminals, but their post-war history is one of prevarication to admit their responsibility. Until recently their government showed an appalling disinclination to tackle the question of compensation.

Pinner, Mddx.

Frederick Hirsch

Sir – As I cannot claim to know all the facts about Dr Kreisky, I consider it unsafe and improper to join the ranks of his apologists or detractors. My only contri-

bution is somewhat marginal to the subject in the form of a joke I overheard in Vienna during Dr Kreisky's tenure of office: Q: *Was sagt man zu einem kleinen miesen Juden, wenn man ihn im Stadtpark begegnet?* A: *Guten Morgen, Herr Bundeskanzler!*

Richmond, Surrey

CP Carter

A GLARING OMISSION

Sir – Marianne Walter asks (*November letters*) about Eric Hobsbawm's perfunctory reference to the Holocaust. Hobsbawm is indeed neither a neo-Nazi nor an antisemite. He is, however, ideologically challenged. What pains him about the twentieth century is not mass killings like the Holocaust or the Stalinist terror, but the failure of Communism.

Christ Church, Oxford Peter M Oppenheimer

NOT AN ORDINARY JOE

Sir – The article about the selection of our Connecticut senator, Joe Lieberman, (*October 2000*), as US Vice-Presidential candidate correctly points out that Jews holding high political office is not such a novelty in European countries. When the Jewish roots of Barry Goldwater were disclosed during his presidential campaign in 1964, Harry Goldin quipped: "I always knew that the first Jewish President of the United States would be an Episcopalian."

Newtown, Connecticut

Guy Bishop

WORN OUT CASE

Sir – In reply to F Goldberg (*November letters*), perhaps we ex-camp inmates don't talk about it because we don't feel at all 'heroic'.

London NW6

Ezra Jurmann

Sir – On arrival in this country, many of us were dumped in hostels or institutions often run on 'juvenile offenders' lines and left to our own devices once the novelty of staring at refugee children had worn off. Wartime evacuation became a second trauma for us, dumped on non-Jewish and uncaring foster parents in places we had never seen. Abuse by paedophiles and exploitation as cheap labour were not uncommon. Of course we cannot compare our fate with those who endured the concentration camps, but this in no way excuses the lack of any loving

care by individuals in the community for what after all were de facto orphans and still less any concern about their future. I still harbour, to this day, the bitter memories of days long past.

Greenford, Mddx.

Ernest G Kolman

Sir – The recent televised showing of a film about the Kindertransport was particularly poignant to me as I actually saw myself arriving at Liverpool Street Station, the 17-year-old Erich Isenberg, tired, confused and not knowing the language.

We had been made to feel less than welcome even before we left the Hook of Holland; a British official assured us "You needn't have bothered – the Germans are human, they won't kill you." Nor were we made any more welcome when we arrived in London; we waited five or six hours before someone came from Bloomsbury House who then directed us to Rowton House (a shilling a night). We were told to go for meals at a communal place, but when we got there they had run out of food. Back at Rowton House, we found all our possessions had been stolen.

Wembley, Mddx.

Eric Berry

MIXED MARRIAGES

Sir – I have to take issue with Peter Prager's contention that Jewish wives of Christian husbands were exempt from the Star of David (*November issue*). I knew one such lady whose husband was, at the time, suffering from a chronic heart ailment. Had he failed to survive the war, there is no doubt she would have been transported to the East. The Yellow Star she had to wear has been passed to her son who is holding on to it so that his children and grandchildren should not forget.

Leatherhead, Surrey

Robert Miller

BEYOND HIS KEN

Sir – What is Frank Bright's evidence for accusing Ken Livingstone of 'unadulterated racism'? (*October letters*) Is it feasible that – as London Mayor – he would be happy to work with his Deputy Nicky Gavron, whose parents were Jewish refugees, if he were antisemitic? Ken was right to oppose the golliwog. Robertson's could have just removed it and kept all their 200 odd employees.

Cheam, Surrey

Inge Trott

Sir – A lot of us children in Vienna had black baby dolls and we loved them. Debussy's little daughter had a golliwog for which he wrote a piece in his 'Children's Corner': Golliwog's Cake Walk.

London NW4

Mrs A Saville

GERMAN PENSION

Sir – Members of Parliament have no say about German pensions (*October letters*); the only way to protest is to write to the German Ambassador.

Sutton, Surrey

H L Markan JP

LEARNING FROM HISTORY

Sir – On a return visit to Berlin I felt reassured to see, still permanently displayed on the Wittenberg Platz, the grim admonitory sign cataloguing the most infamous of the Camps. There are also additional entries: Trostenez and Flossenbürg. Full marks to the authorities.

At Libeskind's Jewish Museum, the visitors' book was illuminating. A Schleswig-Holstein visitor only recorded "extreme exhaustion". Was it physical or spiritual? Not revealed. Another entry, more articulate, read: One cannot change history but we must live with it and try to understand it. This museum helps greatly towards that goal. An Asian visitor wrote (in English): Dear Japanese visitors. Think about your past as well. Learn from the Germans.

London SW13

KG Heymann

PASSING ON THE BENEFIT

Sir – Among those of us who are about to receive our £150 (now £200) winter fuel allowance, there will be quite a few who have the good fortune not to need it. It was introduced to help pensioners on low incomes, but because of the difficulties associated with means testing, it is being paid to rich and poor alike – and tax free at that! May I suggest that those who, like me, are quite able to pay their fuel bills without assistance pass on their winter fuel allowance to the AJR where it will help those who really need help.

London NW8

Prof Walter Elkan

Nonsense rhyme

Many thanks to our many readers who wrote in droves in response to Irmgard Treuberz' cry for help. One reader asks: Who is the author? Ed.

Hearing AJR Information

The written words of *AJR Information* are brought to life on audiotape by a dedicated band of volunteer readers to make quite certain that visually impaired AJR members do not miss out on the Association's monthly magazine. The length of the recording has recently been increased from 60 to 90 minutes so that almost the whole of the magazine can be read without omissions or editing.

The service, begun by Irene White in



From left: Rita Rosenbaum, Prof Michael Spiro

1986, is now administered by another AJR volunteer, Rita Rosenbaum, with expert help from Jewish Care's Stamford Hill studio engineer Ben Goodman and their Head of Audio and Braille Resources, Jon Kaye.

For further information, contact Rita Rosenbaum c/o AJR Head Office, giving your name, address and telephone number □

Fraenkel Prize 2000

The Wiener Library has announced that the 2000 Fraenkel Prize in Contemporary History has been awarded jointly to **Professor John Horne & Dr Alan Kramer** for their book *German Atrocities in 1914: Meanings and Memories of War* and **Dr Mark Roseman** for his book *The Past in Hiding*. **Dr M Healy** (USA) received the prize for entrants who have yet to publish a major work for his book *Vienna Falling: Total War and Everyday Life*.

In the year 2001 there will again be two distinct Prize awards, both for unpublished works in the field of Contemporary European History: one of US \$5,000 open to all entrants and one for US \$3,000 open only to those who have yet to publish a major work. For more details please write to the Administrative Secretary, Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1W 5BH □

AJR Reports



Photo: Ronald Channing

Members enjoying tea, served during the extended interval, at the AJR's 52nd Annual Concert held at Imperial College, London. Richard Dickins conducted the London Concertino chamber orchestra and international piano soloist Noriko Ogawa charmed the audience with her interpretation of Mozart's piano concerto No 14 in E flat. The programme ended with a lively rendition of Grieg's Holberg Suite.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Pinner

Speaking on his 'Experiences as a Jewish Ambassador', Sir Horace Phillips ranged from his Glasgow boyhood before the war to his last appointment as Professor of International Relations at a Turkish university. Called up in 1939 as a private in the Dorsetshire Regiment, after Dunkirk he was sent to Iraq to guard oilfields and started learning Arabic, then to Burma and the Far East, finishing as a Major on Earl Mountbatten's staff. With his knowledge of languages, he went into the diplomatic service. Although much of his working life was spent in Muslim countries, he found no real difficulties, Indonesia and Turkey being very tolerant of other religions. His interest in, and care for, people clearly contributed and he seems not to have disappointed his mother's ambitions for him. □ Paul Samet

The Chanukah party, with Esther and Alf Keiles providing the entertainment, will be on Thursday 7 December.

Brighton and Hove

There was havoc in Sussex on the morning of 30 October with no trains in or out of Brighton and the roads through Eastbourne, Arundel,

Worthing and Lewes impassable. In the Hove area there were a few fallen trees, blocked drains and other signs of destruction. Radio and television were advising people to stay at home. Having cancelled the guest speaker, I took myself to Ralli Hall thinking that nobody would turn up for the monthly meeting. But by 10.30 five members had heroically appeared so we sat in the cosiness of the Pink Room, had coffee and biscuits and talked – as old friends do – about health issues, social services, Israeli politics and food. I must now circulate my recipe for vegetable lasagne. An unusual but most enjoyable meeting! □ Fausta Shelton

The next meeting is on Monday 18 December when Michael Robinson will speak on 'Food for Chanukah'. Come to the party.

West Midlands

There will be a Chanukah party at Central Synagogue on 10 December starting at 7.30 pm. Further information about tickets for the 3 course dinner followed by a cabaret, from Henry Rednall □

Manchester

There will be a pre-Chanukah musical presentation on Sunday 17 December □

Leeds

The next meeting will be on Sunday 10 December: David Fligg's 'Musical entertainment' □

KINDERTRANSPORT NEWS

From David Jedwab

Membership renewal

Let me help to dispel any confusion that may have existed among 'Kindertransport' members over the right annual subscription to be paid.

Former members of RoK who were already AJR members – but who mistakenly paid an *additional* £15 within the last 12 months in order to participate in the new KT-AJR Special Interest Group – are entitled either: (a) to be refunded the £15, or (b) to donate this amount towards the work of the AJR.

The annual renewal fee remains at £25 (£35 for overseas mailings) and entitles each and every member to enjoy in full the benefits and services offered by the Association □

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:

Tuesday 5 December
Wednesday 13 December

50 YEARS AGO

ALIENS AT THE BBC

A total of 318 aliens is in temporary employment by the BBC. The BBC personnel is under very close review. Asked by Mr John E. Haire whether it was not the fact that most of the aliens were employed by the BBC during the war and gave most loyal service, Mr Ness Edwards replied: "That is certainly so in the majority of cases."

□ AJR Information December 1950

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at 15 Cleve Road, NW6 3RL
11.45am for 12.15pm

Guest speaker:

Susannah Alexander who will talk about her work at The Jewish Museum with reference to Chanukah.

Reservations £7.50 for everyone!
from Sylvia, Renée and Susie
Tel: 020 7328 0208

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

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with

Jenny Kossew & Lawrence Jacobs

15 Cleve Road, London NW6

SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2000
3pm to 6pm

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Tel: 020 7328 0208

AJR VISIT TO

The Imperial War Museum Holocaust Exhibition

on Thursday 18 January 2001

£8 per person to include coach fare, guided tour of the exhibition, Day Centre lunch, lunch, tea & biscuits at the Museum

Midday lunch at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, 15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, London NW6

Coach departs AJR Day Centre 1.00pm, returning there approx. 4.30 - 5.00pm

Ticket numbers limited - walking involved

For booking application form, contact Joan Altman, AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1A Frogna, London NW3 6AL
Telephone 020 7431 6161

... Viewpoint ...

Stormy weather

Torrential rain has fallen continually over large swathes of Britain bringing the most widespread flooding for centuries along our riverbanks and inundating the traditional homes which line the narrow thoroughfares of our historic villages and towns. Ill-conceived building development on the flood plains has reduced their capacity to store water, while the ploughing of grasslands for cereal crops has meant faster run-off and soil erosion.

Natural disasters were comfortably labelled 'acts of God,' but following two centuries of unfettered industrialisation, blame for climatological change of this order should at least, in part, be placed on man-made atmospheric pollution. A decade has now passed since scientific opinion accepted that human activities were responsible for changing the world's climate and the Prince of Wales has dutifully blamed man's "arrogant disregard of the delicate balance of nature".

What causes this 'greenhouse effect'? Put succinctly, it is the production of carbon dioxide, methane and other gases from burning fossil fuels, deforestation, road traffic, industry and agricultural by-products. When these

rise into the atmosphere they trap and reflect back the heat that would otherwise radiate into space, effectively raising the earth's surface temperature.

Representatives of 160 countries recently gathered in The Netherlands in an attempt to reduce greenhouse gases by the 5% below 1990 levels agreed at the Kyoto conference in 1997. However, levels continue to rise while scientists tell us that cuts of 60-80% are required. Unfortunately, the United States, which alone accounts for more than 20% of gas emissions, procrastinates and George W Bush (in thrall to the oil companies) rejects the existence of global warming!

Weather forecast for the next 50 years: Warm, dry summers and more frequent droughts, wetter autumns and winters with flooding rivers. Coastal areas in danger of flooding from rivers and rising high tides. A storm surge across the Atlantic could threaten North Sea coasts. Mediterranean holiday resorts will lose their beaches as sea levels rise, temperatures will become too hot for comfort and Alpine glaciers will melt.

The longer governments delay the inevitable transition to the use of renewable sources of energy, the more catastrophic the consequences.

□ Ronald Channing

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6

Mon. & Weds. 9.30am-3.30pm. Tues. & Thurs. 9.30am-5.30pm. Suns. 2pm-6.30pm

DECEMBER 2000

Afternoon entertainment programme -

- | | | |
|------|----|---|
| Sun | 3 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - no entertainment |
| Mon | 4 | KARD & GAMES KLUB |
| Tues | 5 | Opera Pops - accompanied by Margaret Gibbs, piano |
| Wed | 6 | Guyatherine Peiris accompanied by William Patrick, piano |
| Thur | 7 | Robin Richards violin, and Peter Irvine baritone, accompanied by Gloria Moss, piano |
| Sun | 10 | DAY CENTRE OPEN - NO ENTERTAINMENT |
| Mon | 11 | KARD & GAMES KLUB |
| Tue | 12 | Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton |
| Wed | 13 | LUNCHEON CLUB |
| Thur | 14 | Jenny Kossew entertains on accordion |
| Sun | 17 | TEA DANCE - Live music by |

Jenny Kossew & Lawrence Jacobs

- | | | |
|------|----|---|
| Mon | 18 | KARD & GAMES KLUB |
| Tue | 19 | Ben & Paul at the piano |
| Wed | 20 | END OF YEAR CONCERT - Helen Blake, voice & piano |
| Thur | 21 | MUSICAL FIREWORKS FOR CHANUKAH - Caroline Salmon-Trutz, soprano & David Rose accompanied by Margaret Gibbs, piano |
| Sun | 24 | CLOSED |
| Mon | 25 | CLOSED |
| Tue | 26 | CLOSED |
| Wed | 27 | CLOSED |
| Thur | 28 | CLOSED |
| Sun | 31 | CLOSED |
| Mon | 1 | CLOSED - NEW YEAR'S DAY |
| Tue | 2 | NEW YEAR CONCERT - Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton |

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Brainin. Leo Brainin, born in Lyadi, Russia in 1904, emigrated to London from Vienna in 1938, died on 15 October 2000. A wonderful, witty and compassionate man, active to the end. Hugely missed by all his family and friends.

Jolley. Elisabeth Jolley, born Elisabeth Drey in Munich in 1917, died in Croston, Lancashire on 7 October. Sadly missed by children, grandchildren and friends.

King. Alice King, beloved wife of the late Dr LGT King died on 11 October aged 96, at Craigmount Nursing Home, St Andrews, Scotland.

Schreier. Fanny (Nita) Schreier, born 1911, died peacefully on 2 November. Nita was brought up in Vienna and came to live in England in 1939 where she lived with her beloved husband Willy until his sad death in 1980. Beloved mother of Ellen and Susan, mother-in-law of David Solomons and David Lewis, grandmother of Wendy, Jon, Duncan and Mathew, great-grandmother of Charlie and Ben. A charming, gracious, brave lady who will be remembered with love and affection by all who knew her.

Schrier. Helli Schrier died peacefully in her 89th year in Winchester, on 10 October. Wife of the late Jack Schrier, designer craftsman of London and Winchester. She will be dearly missed by son Steven and grandchildren, Gary, Jacqueline, Phillip and Kim.

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Day Centre

Amanda Goldring at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre will be selling small gifts and a selection of outerwear etc. **Wednesday 6 December 9.45-11.45am.**

Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. New clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans etc. **Thursday 14 December 9.45-11.45am.**

Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners and Ex-Breslauers. Please contact Peter Sinclair 020 8882 1638 for information.

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This meeting is in response to a wish expressed at previous meetings of three generations of the Kindertransport, and will continue to explore how the Kindertransport experience has affected them and their families. People who did not attend the previous meetings but would like to come to this meeting will also be welcome.

Further details from Ruth Barnett,
73 Fortune Green Road, London NW6 1DR
tel/fax 020 7431 0837
or Judith Elkan, 31 Coleridge Walk, London NW11 6AT
tel 020 8455 8845.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS DECEMBER 2000

- Until 3 **Alexandra Valavelska** in *Achtung Kabarett*, New End Theatre 9.30pm 020 7472 5800.
- Until 10 **The Last Goodbye.** The rescue of children from Nazi Europe. Etz Chayim Gallery, Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue. 01923 822592
- Sun 3 **Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith/ Deborah Schultz** Photographic Records of the Warsaw Ghetto/ Visual testimonies of Arnold Daghani. Yakar 3.30pm. 020 8202 5551
- Mon 4 **Robin Hanau.** Bismarck. Club 43. 7.45pm.
- Tues 5 **Judaica Antiques Road Show.** David Breuer-Weil. Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue, Norrjice Lea. 7.30pm. Spiro Ark.
- Tues **The Diary of Anne Frank.**
- 5 - Sat 9 European premiere at Richmond Theatre. 020 8940 0088.
- Wed 6 **Prof Hyam Maccoby.** 'Why are the Jews hated?' London Jewish Cultural Centre, Kidderpore Ave, London NW3. 8pm.
- Sun 10 **Human Rights Day** at Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St. John's Wood. Panel debates, workshops, arts, food etc.
- Mon 11 **Michael Faulkner** (Barnet College). John Heartfield's 1930s anti-Fascist photomontage (illustrated talk). Club 43. 7.45pm.
Hilary Pomeroy. Sephardi Ballads - Poetry & Song. Inst. of Jewish Studies, UCL, Gustave Tuck Theatre, Gower St., W.C1. 6.30pm.
- Mon 18 **End of year get-together** with recorded music & refreshments. Club 43. 7.45pm.
- Until 3 **'From Shteibl to City.** Two exhibitions at Ben Uri Art Gallery. 020 8349 5724
Meir Axelrod (1902-1970): Russian theatre designs. Ben Uri Gallery at The Manor House. 11am-4pm Sun-Thurs.
- Until 28 **Keeping the Light.** Photographic exhibition on the Jews of Cochin. Jewish Museum, Camden Town.
- Until **The Jewish East End**
April 2001 **Then & Now.** Photographic exhibition by Sam Tanner. Jewish Museum, Finchley.

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Art Notes

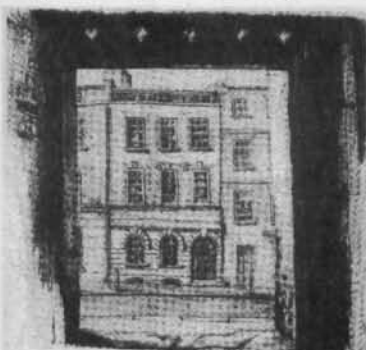
Nineteen Princelet Street resonates with memory. Next door is the house where Stepney's first woman mayor, Miriam Moses, was born. Bits of mosaic lino, still clinging to the dusty floorboards beneath a coloured glass roof, tell the history of the nineteenth century synagogue, built there when Jews fled to Britain from the pogroms of Eastern Europe. The Huguenots, who invented the word *refugie* occupied this house, which was built in 1719; the Irish, escaping the potato famine, the West Indians, Iranians, Iraqis, Somalis, Afghans, Kurds, Chinese, Bangladeshis, all brought an individual atmosphere to London's changing East End. Spitalfields, named after the twelfth-century Priory of St Mary Spital, whispers with the ghosts of refugees, but it takes children to breathe life into it again.

And that is exactly what happened this autumn, when *Friends of the Spitalfields Centre* invited local schoolchildren to project themselves into the lives of new immigrants through art, poetry, drapery, letters, anything in fact which evokes the anguish and excitement of reinventing oneself in a new place. The suitcase is the theme of the exhibition and it becomes a Pandora's Box of memory. Spools of coloured threads from the Jewish sweatshops, pastel labels on which children write what they would take with them from home in one bag. A teddy bear, writes one, my family, writes another; hope, faith, Shabbos candles, my rosary. Britain has been a melting pot since the Norman conquest of 1066. But you tend not to think of Celts, Danes and Norsemen in the same breath as Jews, Caribbeans and Asians. Britons certainly didn't during the Great Fire of London in 1666, when they blamed it all on the *foreigners*.

The participating schoolchildren learn that the Huguenots escaping persecution from the ruling French Catholics in the seventeenth century, were silversmiths, clockmakers, silk weavers and merchants and that the house was rented by Peter Abraham Ogier who brought up his fam-

ily here. They filled their suitcase with paper boats, wistful diaries and letters home, recalling French hills and school friends never to be seen again, but also the anticipation of a better life. As a poignant hint of eternal change, this front room with its synagogue was occupied 100 years ago by the Ogier children, then by Jewish barmitzvah boys. Today Bangladeshi women come here to learn English.

In 1869 the lease on the house and garden was bought by Polish Jews who raised money to build a synagogue. The Rothschilds, Montagus and Mocattas were the long-established families who helped them put down roots. Local schoolchildren, including many from immigrant families, were filmed on a video recording Jewish history. The presenter is a young Asian girl. Later the children are shown lustily singing *Hinei ma tov u manaitim*, and the following parable of a wise man's response to antisemitism is told by the group. The man offers ten roubles to anyone who calls him derogatively a Jew. Eventually he can only offer one rouble for his assailants, who then get the message.



Princelet Street Synagogue, Spitalfields, now a centre for the celebration of all immigrant life in London's East End.

Their suitcase is filled with threads, spools and needles of the rag trade. This was a time when the only escape for Jews from grinding poverty was boxing or show business. And the text on the wall tells us how English neighbours learned Yiddish to communicate as the words *nosh* and *schlepp* entered the English vocabulary. In the basement of the house, excavated in 1869, some of the earliest meetings of the Anti-Fascist movement were held.

In 1952 Britain looked to the Caribbean to help rebuild the shattered, war-torn country and advertisements were posted throughout the West Indies to attract people to start a new life here. A powerful picture is evoked of a colourful, exotic past abandoned for the hope of sanctuary in a cold country whose streets, it was thought, were paved with gold.

The Spitalfields Centre has a vision: to launch a museum – or celebration of immigrant life, in the words of spokesman Philip Black – and to produce more educational material to promote racial harmony. The children who created this exhibition have certainly got the message.

□ Gloria Tessler

SB's Column

Bayreuth. Preparations do not appear to be going smoothly for next year's Wagner Festival. Mezzo-soprano Waltraud Meier has cancelled her appearances and Placido Domingo is quoted as saying that he cannot agree on rehearsal dates with "Herr Wagner not being co-operative." He will therefore not be at Bayreuth in 2001.

Honours and birthdays. Austrian-born Hollywood legend Billy Wilder (95) has been made an honorary citizen of Vienna; German actor Gert Westphal, who achieved popularity through his readings and recitals, has celebrated his 80th birthday; Vienna's *Burg* actress Gusti Wolf, still active at 88, is now the oldest member of the ensemble.

Visions of fashion. Vienna-born Rudi Gernreich, who emigrated to the United States in 1938 and was a revolutionary fashion designer, staged a controversial show at the Künstlerhaus in Graz. It is described as a show of social trends with a glance into the future.

Vienna. A restaurant has been opened within the *Burgtheater* (corner of the Volksgarten side) which aims to combine elegance, comfort and tradition. This is the first time these historic rooms have catered for hungry theatre lovers.

Obituary. The death is announced of David Schallan, the Israeli conductor who was regular guest conductor of the Luxemburg Symphony Orchestra and who also conducted at San Francisco, Berlin and London. He lived in Germany.

Bass baritone Walter Berry, important in the opera world for nearly 50 years, has died aged 71. Apart from creating 20th century roles (including *Wozzeck*, and *Barak* in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*), he was a welcome visitor to all major opera houses from Salzburg to San Francisco, visiting Covent Garden from 1976 onwards. His wife is the mezzo soprano Christa Ludwig □

This is SB's final Column. He took over PEM's Column in September 1974 and has since contributed regularly over the last 26 years. Now nearly ninety, he has decided to retire and to enjoy reading AJR Information rather than contributing to it. We would like to record our gratitude to him for his unfailing contributions on the British and continental cultural scene and to wish him well for the future. – Ed.

Science Notebook

Laws of averages

In September, various news media carried stories about the increase in the number of pensioners living on low incomes – “below the poverty line”. How was this line defined? Some papers (*The Independent*, *The Times*) took it as 50% of the mean income of all pensioners, others (*Daily Mail*, *Daily Telegraph*) as 60% of the mean income, while Radio 4 on *Today* said poverty was defined as below 60% of median income. This agrees with the adoption of 60% of median income as the fairest threshold indicator of low incomes by European statisticians.

Just what sort of averages are mean and median? Consider as an example a group of five pensioners. Suppose one lucky pensioner get £33,000 a year while the others have annual incomes of £6,000, £5,000, £4,000 and £2,000, respectively. Their *mean* income (ie the arithmetic average) is £10,000, obtained by dividing the total income of the group by five. This is clearly an unfair representation of the group's incomes since it is greatly biased by the very high income of just one person. A fairer measure of the average is the *median* income, the figure in the middle when the group's incomes are ranked in order, in this case £5,000. Only one person in the group receives less than 60% of the median, ie less than £3,000.

The report of the Department of Social Security on which the media were commenting (*Opportunity for All. Second Annual Report 2000. Cm 4865*) gave the

following figures for the percentages of pensioners living on low incomes in 1998/99:

Below 50% of mean income 25% – Below 60% of mean income 42% – Below 50% of median income 12% – Below 60% of median income 23%. As in the example above, the mean incomes were larger than the median incomes. More pensioners therefore had incomes below 50% (or 60%) of the mean than of the fairer median income. The different thresholds selected by the media help us to see why the (pro-government) *Daily Mirror* could display the headline “100,000 more OAPs living on breadline” while the (anti-government) *Daily Mail* concluded from the same DSS report “an increase of 400,000 (pensioners in poverty) over three years”.

Manipulation of different ‘averages’ is quite common. Thus the management of a firm will quote the mean salary of their staff to show how well paid they are while the union will cite the median wage to illustrate the opposite. An arbitrator might well consider yet another average called the *mode*, the income earned by the largest number of employees. All sides will call their figures ‘the average’. Disraeli once wrote “There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics”. But statistics only mislead if the basis of the numbers has not been properly explained; an unqualified ‘average’, for example, is almost meaningless. And did you notice that this article did not define what was meant by ‘income’?

□ Prof Michael Spiro

Chancellor leads Berlin mass protest

On the anniversary of Kristallnacht, Germany's Chancellor Gerhard Schröder led more than 100,000 people in procession through the streets of Berlin in protest against racism and racist attacks by neo-Nazis in Germany which are reported to have victimised a hundred members of ethnic minorities in the last ten years, at least three having lost their lives in this past year alone. The Chancellor also attended a service at Berlin's main pre-war synagogue, the New Synagogue, commemorating Germany's Jewish Holocaust victims.

The organisers of the rally wanted to show that stories of racial hatred and

even racially motivated murder were untypical of today's humane and tolerant country which had accepted large immigrant populations. Tens of thousands of other people participated in similar demonstrations in many parts of the country.

Accompanied by President Johannes Rau, Parliamentary President Wolfgang Thierse, Berlin's Rabbi Ehrenberg, and other leading personalities from the worlds of politics, culture and sport, Chancellor Schröder headed the huge procession which wound its way from the New Synagogue through darkened streets to the Brandenburg Gate, symbol of Germany's militaristic past, where President Rau addressed the rally. As part of the commemoration, Berlin's Staatskapelle, gave a concert conducted by Daniel Barenboim.

□ Ronald Channing

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History rediscovered

An unusual sequence of events led to my acquisition of a slim volume of Jewish history, written in 1936 in German. Having had some success in finding old friends through the Berlin magazine *Aktuell*, I attempted to trace the son of our late Rabbi in the Grunewald Synagogue, Dr Emil Bernard-Cohn. Two replies from the Rabbi's daughters, now living in Los Angeles and San Francisco, told me that their brother had died in 1994, but one of them kindly sent me a history of the Jewish people called *Von Kanaan nach Israel*, written by their father prior to his emigration.



Rabbi Dr Emil Bernard-Cohn, author of a rediscovered Jewish history.

Jews in both biblical times and during Germany's Third Reich have been extensively chronicled, but comparatively little has been written about the intervening 4,000 years. Cohn's history covered the Jews in Greek and Roman civilisations, in Babylon and Spain until the expulsion, and in central Europe, in an eminently readable account, translated into English by Hayim Perelmuter and re-published in the USA in 1945. In 1985 Perelmuter wrote additional material about the Jewish people after 1936, including the foundation of the State of Israel.

I believe that no-one has conducted research into the Jewish people and their host cultures as Cohn has done. This little gem, last reprinted by Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich, in 1986, is now out of print, but may still be found in specialised libraries.

□ Rudi Leavor

Survivor of Kristallnacht

When, in the night of 9 November 1938, the synagogue in Lingen/Ems was set alight by the Nazis, the one-roomed Jewish school escaped that fate because of its proximity to dwellings occupied by non-Jewish families. The school had been used twice weekly for religious instruction although all the Jewish children were educated at the local *Volksschule*.

After the war, the school was used for some years as a stable and later for the storage of hay and straw. The then owner finally agreed, after several years, to sell the property and adjacent land to the

council which renovated the school and converted it into a museum in memory of the local Jewish families who had been deported and then murdered in the camps. I am one of the only three surviving children of those Jewish families. Of the other two, one lives in the USA and the other in London.

The museum and memorial garden are open to the public on the fourth Sunday of each month and are well visited. In the memorial garden are two stones, one in memory of the Jewish citizens and one on the site of the synagogue. In response to a request from Lingen, I made and donated a pair of wrought iron gates for the former school which were officially opened last September.

□ Bernard Grunberg

Hohenems Jewish Museum

In 1931, when Theodor Elkan, leader of the Jewish Culture Forum, said: "As you see, we are only a small Gemeinde, which lives from its memories", there were fewer than twenty men and women of the Jewish faith in Hohenems in the Austrian province of Vorarlberg. After the *Anschluss* in March 1938, all cultural activities of the Jewish community were dissolved by the Nazis. Some Jews escaped. Others, including Theodor Elkan and his wife Helene, were deported to concentration camps and killed.

The neutral street names such as Schweizer Strasse, changed in 1938, did not revert to their original Jewish names in 1945. The synagogue, which survived the war almost unscathed, was rebuilt as a fire station.

When the Villa Heimann-Rosenthal came into the possession of the town of Hohenems and a use was sought for the building, discussions soon gave rise to the foundation of a Jewish Museum. The Museum gives a full account of the historical and cultural life of Hohenems' Jews. The permanent exhibition stretches over many rooms. Visitors have access to over 1,500 books and many periodicals, videos and archives. Opening hours are from 10.00-17.00 (except Mondays), with guided tours by prior appointment. For further details contact Jewish Museum, Schweizer Strasse 5, Hohenems, Vorarlberg, Austria. Telephone: 0043 5576 3989.

□ Gerald Holm

Remembering Schottenbastei Jewish pupils

Organised by the history teacher of the Realgymnasium Schottenbastei (formerly the Realschule Schottenbastei), a memorial tribute in the form of a plaque has been unveiled at this Vienna school. The plaque commemorates the 436 Jewish pupils who, between 1933 and 1938, attended, or were assigned to, the school until finally expelled on 1 July 1938. Of the 62 former pupils in various parts of the world who responded to an invitation to attend the memorial event, eight former pupils did so, including two from the UK.

More plaques at similarly affected Vienna schools are planned □

(Reports from E Glaser, A Dutch and F Roxon)

Homegrown history

A new series about the Holocaust is being shown on German television (ZDF). Screened at peak time, the series' historical advisers include Yehuda Bauer, Christopher Browning and Eberhard Jäckel. Simon Wiesenthal is the 'patron'.

At the conclusion of the series, there will be a panel discussion. Diverging from the accepted spelling 'Holocaust' deriving from the Greek and adopted by the Anglophone world, the German series director has chosen the title *Holokaust*, "a symbolic act of appropriation of one's own history", according to Eberhard Jäckel.

□ MK

Israel under fire

I arrived in Israel a few days after Ariel Sharon's fateful visit to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. According to reports in the *Jerusalem Post* and *Haaretz* his visit had been agreed with the Palestinian authorities, but whatever the original motivation of either Mr Sharon or Mr Arafat, the latter chose to use the visit to exploit the Western media.

Though initially I empathised with the plight of the Palestinian and Israeli Arabs, after reading the press and discussion with locals, I appreciated the extent to which Arafat controls his people. Knowing very well that a death – particularly that of a child – captures the headlines of Western newscasts, he has chosen to sacrifice the lives of young men and boys in his desire to do so. His intention is to generate worldwide sympathy for the Palestinian cause aimed at placing an international army into Judea and Samaria, as happened in Kosovo. He also wants to involve the Arab world in a *Jihad* against Israel.

I firmly believe what Arafat is continually telling us: that his ultimate intention is not only to occupy the whole of the Palestinian area agreed at Camp David, with the whole of Jerusalem as its capital, but that this is but the first step towards occupation of the territory that is Israel and, by a *Jihad*, effect a genocide of the Israeli Jewish population. The Palestinian authorities, through their TV and radio newscasts and in the mosques, are inciting their people to riot. Stoning is the traditional means of putting people to death in the Middle East and is still used in some Arab states. Arms given to the Palestinian authorities to keep order are being fired at the Israel Defence Forces from amongst the stone-throwers. The fire returned by the IDF cannot be targeted. As sad as the injuries and deaths are in Western eyes, Arab families are quite willing to put their youngsters on the streets and make them into, as they put it, martyrs.

A report in the *Jerusalem Post* referred to the fact that the Palestinian authorities appear to be making payments to their

people of between \$200 for minor injuries up to \$2,000 for fatalities. These may be either payments for incitement to riot, or compensation, but they have the same effect. I spoke with two non-Jewish families, the men being employed by a European company providing technical services in Gaza, who had been evacuated out of Gaza the previous evening as things had got too 'hot'. During the riots they had witnessed men standing on street corners with wads of 100 shekel notes handing money out to Palestinian rioters.

The barbarity of the lynching of two Territorials in Ramallah should leave no one under any illusion as to the fate of Jewish Israelis should the Arab nations ever mobilise the *Jihad*. The strength of the IDF is the only guarantee for the Jews in Israel. From polls taken in Israel during the riots, it appears that over two thirds of ordinary Israelis still want the peace negotiations to succeed, as does much of the Western world. The main question is whether Arafat does too.

□ Simon Alexander

Love story or Stalin was my Cyrano

Work was tailoring, the calling of my 'foster parents' in the East End. In the early war years the rag trade had continued to be seasonal. For that reason, and also because workplaces occasionally burned down in the Blitz, I switched, as occasion arose, between making Home Guard uniforms, military greatcoats and fashionable ladies' wear. Then one day the war expanded its scope with Hitler's attack on Russia, which spelt the final abandonment of his plans for invading Britain. We YA cadres breathed a threefold sigh of relief. Firstly because London was out of the immediate firing line, secondly because Communists were now allies, and thirdly, because overnight Stalin had become everybody's 'Uncle Joe'. To me he became, in addition, my very own Cyrano. This occurred when my Roxane, looking for the company of teenagers who spoke her own language, fortuitously turned up at a meeting of my Young Austria group. She came for conversation – but stayed for conversion.

In Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac* the hero's awareness of his own bizarre appearance makes it psychologically im-

possible for him to declare his love for the heroine, Roxane. Instead he stands in the shadow below her balcony where, in a *Romeo and Juliet* style setting, his handsome but tongue-tied rival woos Roxane, and prompts him. Now Stalin was my prompter. In autumn 1941 I still looked quite unlike a Hollywood screen idol, but my life had acquired another dimension. I had become a cog – however small – in the wheel of Young Austria, which was attached to the motor of Communism. It was Stalin who gave my tongue wings. He enabled me to woo my Roxane not with the lyrical phrases Cyrano had whispered into his rival's ear, but with mind-bending Marxist mantras. I waxed eloquent, like a Catholic priest quoting Latin scripture to a vernacular-speaking communicant, about the 'labour theory of value', the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production', 'expropriating the expropriators', and 'the dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis'. I was able to explain with talmudic dexterity how the war had turned at 4am on June 22, ie the precise moment of Hitler's attack on Russia, from an Imperialist side-show of no consequence to the working class, into a fight-to-the-death between civilisation and barbarism.

From which it followed, I concluded,

that we had to enrol in the war effort. Soon afterwards I gave up making ladies' costumes in the East End – and Roxane stopped selling blouses in a smart West End shop – to retrain as 'dilutee engineers'.

It was the first of many things we did together.

(concluded)

□ Richard Grunberger

Holocaust Memorial Day

Britain will mark Holocaust Memorial Day for the first time on 27 January 2001. A national ceremony will take place in central London on the evening of Saturday 27 January (after Shabbath) which is expected to set the tone for other more local activities throughout the country. It is expected that a member of the Royal Family will attend as will leading political, religious and communal personalities. A limited number of invitations will be issued by the Home office. The AJR will forward names and addresses of those requesting an invitation (please mark envelope HMD). The ceremony will be broadcast on television.

□ MK

Two centuries of family history

A short drive south from Wroclaw is Ziebice (Münsterberg), birthplace of grandfather Max. It's six in the evening and the women of Ziebice are streaming into church; the men are sitting in the town square, walking their dogs or out of sight. The town can hardly have changed in its composition and structure. Here, I try to imagine our grandfather as a young boy, playing in the streets until, when only five years old, he lost his father Louis and the widowed Johanna moved west. As before, we search out the local priest to point us in the direction of Jewish traces. This time, the priest, when he emerges from the hour-long service, is unhelpful in his haste to get away. And the language barrier seems impenetrable. One of his helpers somehow communicates to us that there is indeed a Jewish cemetery outside the town and as the early evening turns sunless, we climb the hill and pass through the stone arch leading to the Münsterberg cemetery, packed close with headstones, some standing, some fallen, all bearing Hebrew inscriptions. Disappointingly, we don't find the grave of great-grandfather Louis, but there are many Münsterberg families buried and recorded here over the previous two centuries. To our astonishment, the most recent interment dates from 1972. How many of the inhabitants of Ziebice are even aware of this treasure-trove of Jewish history?

We have two more appointments with our grandparents' forefathers: in Cracow and Warsaw. Cracow seems to be experiencing a Jewish revival, almost as if to compensate for the obliteration elsewhere in Poland. Maybe this is partially due to the more tangible and commercial explanation of Spielbergia: for this is where

Schindler's List was filmed. In any event, Kasimierz, formerly the Jewish quarter until the Nazis forced the Jews into a ghetto on the other side of the river, is bubbling with Jewish-style restaurants, renovated synagogues converted to Jewish museums, hotels with Jewish or biblical names and even a (non-operational) *mikvah*. The oldest synagogue – the beau-



Entrance to Münsterberg Jewish cemetery

tifully simple Rama – still functions as a house of worship for the 150-strong Cracow Jewish community and has an old and well-kept cemetery. Amongst the several old graves is that of our great-grandfather eleven times removed, the seventeenth-century Tossafist rabbi Lippmann Heller, imprisoned for his views and subsequently released but banned from preaching in Cracow. His grave is covered in candles and other tributes, which makes me ever so slightly proud.

The Jewish Historical Institute and its archive is what draws us to Warsaw. It acts as the central archive for the erstwhile Jewish communities in pre-war Poland. Not all archives were saved from the Nazis' desire to eliminate every sign of Jewish existence but what has been saved is piled up in this Aladdin's cave, much of it uncatalogued through lack of financial resources. Amongst the many records of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Jewish community life are some of the Breslau community's records: death registers, notifications of marriages, bequests, minutes and financial records, none of them complete, but still the green shoots of information. From these pages, the Koebner/Köbner family grows and spreads through cholera epidemics which claim the lives of babies and young children, brothers and sisters, the old, frail and sick, to give us back a history we have taken so long to reclaim. It is a deeply moving moment.

David and I part company, he to explore his (paternal) West Prussian family history, I to return to Berlin to visit Daniel Libeskind's unforgettable Berlin Jewish Museum, a moving experience and a memorial in its own right. There are those who say that it should remain empty and communicate its power without the help of the clutter of pre- and postwar artefacts of Jewish life in Germany. Maybe that is what the architect himself secretly intended!

In a perverse way, it is a relief to be back in Germany: undoubtedly because I can communicate with those around me in a way I couldn't in Poland. But with the surfeit of experiences and impressions flooding in during the previous six days, I just want to go home and try to assimilate two centuries of family history.

(concluded)

□ Marion Koebner

SEARCH NOTICES

evacuated by ambulance after liberation from Bergen-Belsen on 15/4/1945. Sought by her sister Ester/Edzia in USA. Contact British Red Cross International Welfare Dept., 9 Grosvenor Cres., London SW1X 7EJ. Tel 020 7201 5109. BRCS ref. 75977/MCA.

Hermann Kempner. Engineer, born 1871, emigrated to London from Munich in 1939 to join his niece, a daughter of Luise Torsch (née Kempner). Kempner was guardian to Jakob van Hoddis, aka Hans Davidsohn, (German-Jewish poet) between 1922-1939. Information about Kempner's stay in the UK and any of his correspondence concerning van Hoddis are sought for an exhibition in the Centrum Judaicum, Berlin next year. Contact Nicholas Jacobs, 10 Burghley Rd., London NW5 1UE. Tel. 020 7482 2390. Fax 020 7485 4220.

Continental and British Jews. Researcher would welcome contact from anyone with personal experiences of relations between Jewish refugees from Hitler and British Jews. Dr Anthony Grenville, 29 Cholmley Gardens, London NW6 1AG. Email: a.grenville@cableinet.co.uk

Elisabeth Ullmann, née Anders, former Austrian actress (stage name Elisabeth Carroca), and **Trudi Binar,** former Miss Czechoslovakia in 1920s and 1930s. Historian seeks firsthand information, recollections about their lives and careers. Please contact Dr Dagmar Pöpping, Sophie-Charlotten -Str. 46, 14059 Berlin or email: dagmar.poepping@gmx.de

Liane Warren née Ehrlich, born 4.4.1929 in Vienna. Arrived England 22.2.1939 by Kindertransport. Information and whereabouts urgently sought by her niece Liane Fröhlich, Kurhausstr.9, 4283 Bad Zell, Austria. Tel 0043 7263 7566; Fax 0043 7263 6365 □

Hedwig Pollak. Born 3.3.1898, Vienna, unmarried, former historian and library assistant, emigrated from Vienna to London 7.4.1939. Anyone knowing her whereabouts please contact Prof Peter Voswinckel, University of Lübeck, Koenigsstr.42, D-23552 Lübeck. Fax 0049 45170 7998 99. Email: VOS@IMWG.mu-luebeck.de.

Malka Gronich. Thought to have moved from Jerusalem to Britain this year. Would she or any relative please contact Nora Gittins, AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, la Frogna, London NW3 6AL. Tel: 020 7431 6161

Orthodox hostel, Brondesbury, London. Would anyone who stayed here between January – September 1939 contact Helga Fox (née Hirschfeld), 5101 River Road, Bethesda, Maryland 20816, USA. Tel 001 301-652-2102. Email: OMAH@starpower.net.

Lola/Laye Jamnik. Born 25/12/1920, daughter of Berish/Berek & Ita née Jakobowicz. Last heard of

The Judenplatz Memorial

Vienna is an arch-conservative city in matters of art as Mozart, Mahler, Klimt and others found out to their cost. Even so, a century ago the Sezession group of painters coined the slogan *Der Zeit ihre Kunst* (every age has an art appropriate to it) which one cannot quarrel with. The Romanesque harked back across the barbarian void to Roman civilisation. The Gothic age built heavenward-soaring structures which articulated Faith. The Renaissance shifted the focus from the linear to the circular – the circle being seen as the symbol of perfection. Futurism claimed to be the art form of the machine age. And what is the art appropriate to the Age of Genocide? Certainly nothing literal or figurative along the lines of Alfred Hrdlicka's 'Monument to the Victims of War and Fascism' at the Albertina in Vienna. Here the sculpture of the pavement-scrubbing Jew has been known to serve as a



The Judenplatz, Vienna

seat for sightseers to rest their feet on and munch sandwiches.

The work of Daniel Libeskind and Rachel Whiteread exists in a different dimension. Libeskind designs buildings (like the Nussbaum Museum in Osnabrück) with jagged asymmetrical design and tapering corridors that lead nowhere. Rachel Whiteread has been described as "giving substance to the intangible, the air-filled spaces underneath or inside objects". She first shot to prominence with her inside-out house in Bethnal Green. Shortly afterwards she received the commission for designing Vienna's Holocaust Memorial (a project suggested by Simon Wiesenthal and implemented by the Socialist municipality). Last month, after five years' delay, the memorial was unveiled. It is a concrete single-storey windowless building with a sealed pair of doors at one end. The walls are covered from top to bottom with row upon row of books made of pale concrete. From a distance

the books are barely visible and the Silent Library appears to be made of a series of slabs. The bottom slabs are inscribed with the names of all the labour and death camps to which Austria's 65,000 Holocaust victims were sent.

Vienna's Inner City is still largely residential and the Judenplatz is no exception. It is a safe bet that the square's inhabitants who live in four-storey houses with imposing baroque façades – Mozart composed *Così fan tutte* at No 244 – are put out of countenance by the featureless bunker-like structure permanently in their field of vision. "What", one can imagine them

asking in the plangent whine of the Viennese, "has Mozart got to do with Minsk?" What indeed? The conjoining of beauty to horror was a characteristic hallmark of the Third Reich. And just as the Austrians wholeheartedly joined in all other aspects of Nazism – unless they themselves took the lead, as they did in Jew-baiting – so they did in this. In Germany Buchenwald concentration camp almost bordered Weimar, the city of Goethe whose favourite beech tree

allegedly formed the central point of the camp. In Austria, Mauthausen, a place of even greater horror, existed in close proximity to Melk monastery whose baroque splendours remain engraved on every visitor's retina.

Simon Wiesenthal said of the memorial "It shouldn't be beautiful – it must hurt!" The Viennese, while undoubtedly agreeing that it isn't beautiful, take strong exception to being hurt. Back in London three days after the unveiling, Rachel Whiteread testified to that sad truth when she told *The Observer*: "I felt quite frightened being there many times. I felt I had become a target. All the anger became directed at my memorial." In other words the country is still in denial. Varying the old adage *Austria Erit Im Orbe Ultima* I fear that the Austrians will be the last to take the axe to the frozen sea within themselves.

□ Richard Grunberger

NEWSROUND

Bundestag plea

Jews in Germany have been urged by German MPs not to leave the country because of the recent spate of antisemitic attacks. Politicians pledged to make Germany's Jews feel safe and wanted.

Fund's shortfall

Out of 220,000 German companies approached for a contribution to the slave labour fund finalised earlier in the year, only 4,200 have agreed to make a payment. Unless the target figure of £3.3 billion is reached, the pledge for immunity against litigation in the US courts may be withdrawn.

Disappearing compensation funds

Funds intended for slave labour survivors may have been embezzled or misapplied after transfer to the Ukrainian and Russian authorities for distribution. Count Otto von Lambsdorff, appointed to negotiate the fund, has ordered an audit.

Slovakian Jewish claims

Proceedings have been issued against Germany by Slovakia's Jewish community following Slovakia's exclusion from the recently concluded slave and forced labour agreement. The *Jewish Chronicle* reports that their claim for £2.75 million largely represents assets confiscated from Jews by the Nazi Slovak state.

Catholic church pays out

One thousand slave labour survivors, exploited by Germany's Roman Catholic Church during WWII, are to receive payments of £1,500 each, reports *The Daily Telegraph*. The money will come from the Church's own compensation fund.

Norway's tribute

A memorial to Norway's deported Jews has been unveiled as part of the Norwegian Government's reparations programme. Sited near the harbour of departure, the memorial has been designed by the British sculptor Anthony Gormley.

'Japanese Schindler' honoured

Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat posted in Lithuania in 1940, has been posthumously honoured on the 100th anniversary of his birth. A plaque has been unveiled commemorating Sugihara's issuing of transit permits to Japan for Jewish families fleeing Poland, saving 10,000 lives.

□ MK

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