

AJR *Information*

Volume LV No. 5
May 2000

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss . . .

Irving – skinhead in scholar's robes
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Way beyond his ken

Mayoral candidate Livingstone not only feels an obsessive need for making ludicrously inept comparisons, but also shares the late Alan Clark's unhealthy preoccupation with Hitler. He has described Anglo-Irish history as a slowed down version of the Holocaust, compared Tony Blair's constitutional plan for the London Mayoralty to Hitler's scheme for Vichy France, and bracketed capitalism with Nazism as a killer of millions. While each consecutive statement plumbs greater depths of illogicality than the last, all betray a blanket insensitivity to how such trivialisations may strike Hitler's chief victims □

The penitent pontiff

In Brecht's *Galileo* there is a scene which depicts the ceremonial dressing of a Pope in his robes of office. At the start of the scene the pontiff comes on stage as an ordinary individual; when it ends he stands before the audience as an institution. It is from the split perspective of a man who is also an institution that we must view John Paul the Second's pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Karel Woytila was reared in the matrix of Polish Catholicism where church and nation overlapped totally and Jews were viewed as enemy aliens. In the 1930s, while Germany was gearing up for war against his country, Cardinal Hlond preached an anti-Jewish boycott. An exemplary martyr figure of the Polish Church, Maximilian Kolbe, who died to save another prisoner in a Nazi camp, had edited a Jew-baiting Catholic tabloid newspaper before the war. Even during the postwar Kielce pogrom the local bishop refused to intervene on the grounds that Jews were agents of the Soviet takeover of the country.

This is the background from which the personal philosemitic outlook of the man who was Bishop of Cracow till 1978 stands out in stark relief. In that year he assumed leadership of a universal church many of whose national constituents – most notably in Slovakia, Croatia and Lithuania, but also in France and Germany – were tainted by wartime collaboration.

And this was only part of the picture. He was heir to a tradition stretching back two millennia to the Judeophobic gospel writers – a tradition which had spawned such lethal myths as Jewish deicide, desecration of the host (*Hostienschändung*) and the blood libel.

The Church had therefore entered the post-Holocaust era under a pressing moral obligation to examine, and atone for, its past. Astonishingly – or not so astonishingly, seeing that the pontificate of the culpably silent wartime Pope only ended in 1958 – nothing happened for seventeen years. In 1962 John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council (which absolved Jews of the charge of deicide) but his pontificate was too short to advance the process much further.

John Paul II has over the last twenty years taken a series of decisive steps towards Christian-Jewish

reconciliation. He visited Auschwitz, set foot inside a synagogue (a historical Papal first!), established diplomatic relations with Israel, stigmatised anti-semitism as a 'sin against God', dubbed Judaism 'Christianity's elder brother' and asked God's pardon for the Church's century long 'sins against the Jews'.

A truly inspiring record! However, it still leaves the divergence between the Pope as a person and as an institution unresolved. The Church's 'sins against the Jews' in living memory include the Pelottine Brothers' operation of an escape route for Nazi murderers to South America, French monasteries giving shelter to the fugitive war criminal Touvier, and Central American bishops procuring asylum for Baltic Fascists expelled from the USA.

The Church needs to unfrock the clerics involved, but above all it must acknowledge one fact: when Europe's Jewry underwent unprecedented suffering Pius XII, unlike the Good Samaritan, 'passed by on the other side'. His excuse for silence – namely that a public protest would only have intensified Nazi persecution – was sheer casuistry, since nothing could have been worse than what the Nazis were already doing □

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH REFUGEES

will be held at the
Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, 15 Cleve Road, NW6 3RL
at 3pm on

SUNDAY 25 JUNE 2000

AGENDA:
Annual report for 1999
Hon. Treasurer's Report
Discussion
Election of Committee
of Management

Guest Speaker: Dr Elisabeth Maxwell
Executive Chairman, Remembering For The Future 2000

All questions for the Chair should be submitted by 5 June
to the Head of Administration at:
1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognaal, London NW3 6AL

Profile

Holocaust ambassador

Born in 1921 in provincial France, Elisabeth Maxwell is one of two daughters of a Protestant father of long-established Huguenot descent and a Catholic mother. Her relatively privileged and protected family life ended after the economic crash in 1929, when her father's business went into liquidation. The family moved to Lyon in 1932 and Elisabeth was sent to join her sister at a convent school in Birmingham. In 1939 (her studies were interrupted by the outbreak of war) she attended the Sorbonne where she started studying law; concurrently she took a Cordon Bleu cookery course, a Red Cross first aid course and singing lessons. The ability to combine a number of differing activities became a characteristic of her way of life.

It was in Paris in 1944 that she had her first encounter with Robert Maxwell whom she married in March 1945. It proved to be a tempestuous marriage. Between 1946 and 1962, nine children were born to the Maxwells, seven of whom have survived to adulthood and two of whom worked in their father's publishing empire.

At the age of 50, bringing up a growing



Elisabeth Maxwell

family, running a large family home with little help and regularly playing hostess to her husband's many business contacts, Elisabeth Maxwell graduated from Oxford University with a BA in French. Ten years later, she gained a doctorate, again from the University of Oxford.

Elisabeth made her first visit to Auschwitz with her husband in 1959. She recalls that she felt very much an outsider and attributes this to the fact that she had yet to learn about the Holocaust. Her interest in the Holocaust dates back to

1981, the year in which she completed her doctoral thesis. In the period intervening between the completion of her thesis and its acceptance, she decided to research her husband's family tree and discovered the scale of the destruction of his family by the Nazis.

Sometimes accompanying her husband on his speaking engagements Dr Maxwell found herself, on occasion, finishing his speech for him when he broke down in tears while referring to his family's fate in the Holocaust.

In 1988, her organisation, RFTF (Remembering for the Future), arranged its first academic conference for Holocaust historians in London. A second conference, this time in Berlin, followed in 1994. The third conference, now in preparation, takes place in July this year (see separate item). Dr Maxwell literally lives with RFTF2000, of which she is the executive chairman. Her buzzing Belgravia flat is both her home and a busy office, where, assisted by a small team, E-mails, faxes and telephone calls arrive from all over the world.

Resident in London and in France, this energetic but unassuming lady travels extensively in Europe and America, meeting with scholars and schoolchildren in her drive to ensure that the Holocaust will not be forgotten.

□ Marion Koebner

OSHA and Jewish Care merger proposals

A merger between the Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA) and Jewish Care is under active consideration by the two organisations.

Following an agreement in principle, OSHA's Council and Jewish Care's Supervisory Board are engaged in detailed discussions aimed at bringing about a merger of the two organisations in order to secure the continuing welfare of residents in OSHA homes. In the meanwhile, Jewish Care has agreed to second staff to OSHA to assist with any transitional arrangements.

Ashley Mitchell, OSHA's Chairman, said: "I am absolutely delighted at the prospect of forging a strong partnership which will bring both organisations' professional expertise together for the good of our current and future residents. Jewish Care's organisational talents will supple-

ment OSHA's unique approach to our special residents, the majority of whom arrived in this country as victims of Nazi persecution".

Malcolm Dagul, Chairman of Jewish Care, commented: "I am looking forward to using Jewish Care's professional expertise to work with another caring organisation in the planning and managing of our community's future needs, thus reducing overheads and directing our communal resources to where they belong. The development of lay leaders across both organisations will also be highly beneficial".

The Trustees of the AJR Charitable Trust, having been informed of these proposals, are fully supportive of them and are looking forward to achieving close co-operation with the new management when it is established □

AJR

Tel: 020 7431 6161

Survivors' gathering

Providing a unique opportunity for international scholars to seek guidance from Holocaust survivors, the 'Remembering For the Future 2000' conference will take place in London and Oxford between 16 and 23 July this year. The conference opens with a gathering at the Imperial War Museum on Sunday 16 July at which the organisers hope to bring together survivors, their descendants and scholars. Throughout the following week, there will be a variety of cultural and educational events in London whilst, between 17 and 20 July, Oxford will be host to an academic conference at which a limited number of places for survivors has been reserved.

For further information or to register, contact Judy Trotter, RFTF2000, PO Box 2308, London W1A 5GQ. Tel. 020 7935 7395. Email: rftf@remembering.demon.co.uk. Website address: <http://www.rftf2000.org-uk> □

Irving – skinhead in scholar's robes

In Kafka's novella *In the Penal Colony* a monstrous machine inscribes each prisoner's crime on his skin. The nightmare vision proved prophetic. Within a few years of the publication of the story the Nazis reversed the process: skin scarred by the circumcision knife became automatic proof of a 'crime' carrying the death penalty.

The few who escaped felt ever after that they had been flayed and needed to grow new skin. This was a slow process further held back by a series of traumatic shocks: the halfhearted pursuit of their tormentors, the courts' leniency towards the latter, and, more recently, the burgeoning myth dubbed Holocaust denial.

Holocaust denial is tantamount to digging up the Shoah victims to drench their mortal remains in manure. For us it means having to live with the stench of neo-Nazi manure in our nostrils forever.

With The Hon. Justice Gray's dismissal of David Irving's libel suit on 11 April, the rag-taggle army of Holocaust deniers lost the one 'historian' who conferred bogus respectability on their crazy fabrications. The judge ruled that Irving had 'for his own ideological reasons persistently and deliberately misrepresented and manipulated historical evidence. For the same reason he had portrayed Hitler in an unwarrantedly favourable light prin-

cipally in relation... to the treatment of the Jews.'

Deprived of his nimbus of a historical scholar Irving stands revealed (in the judge's words) as 'an active Holocaust denier, an antisemitic racist associated with rightwing extremists who promote neo-Nazism.'

The importance of this judgment is not to be underestimated. It is part of an irreversible trend that has already led to countries like Germany and Switzerland making Holocaust denial a criminal offence.

This trend has, alas, not yet reached the Arab world. In recent weeks neither the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem nor the Damascus-based daily *Tishrin* have scrupled about charging Israel with inflating the number of Shoah victims for political purposes.

In the same vein of obdurate denial of the truth, Irving himself reacted to the court's judgment rather like Goering had done at Nuremberg. His totally unrepentant post-trial manner bespoke a confidence that wealthy backers in Germany (e.g. the publisher Gerhard Frey) and the USA will meet all his legal expenses. He also knows that the trial has given him an unprecedentedly high profile. Even so he, and similar Holocaust deniers, are the ultimate losers in this case, because henceforth no antisemite will be able to masquerade under the guise of disinterested scholarship.

□ Richard Grunberger

Swiss Consul's story

Twenty-five years after his death, a war-time Swiss consul has been remembered in an exhibition at the Swiss Embassy. Since the mid-sixties, when he was named a Righteous Gentile and when a street in Haifa was named after him, Carl Lutz disappeared from public consciousness despite his feat of saving more than 62,000 Hungarian Jews – about one half of all those who survived the war – from deportation to death camps. He also helped about 10,000 Jews of other nationalities to reach Palestine. He acted independently and without support from his own government in issuing 'protective letters' which were recognised by Nazi officials.

The travelling exhibition may dispel generalisations made about Swiss attitudes towards Jews during the Second World War.

□ MK

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Please contact Joan Altman,
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Telephone 020 7431 6161

Reviews

Deportations from Cologne

Dieter Corbach, 6.00 UHRAB MESSE KÖLN-DEUTZ, Scriba Verlag, Köln.

Obtainable from Karen Hunt, Simmons Public Relations, Britannic House, 18-20 Dunstable Road, Luton, Beds. LU1 1DY. Tel: 01582-459155. Price £29.50. + £3.50 postage.

The late Dieter Corbach was a Protestant pastor in Cologne. He and his wife Irene made it their lives' task to document and memorialise the fate of the Jews of Cologne during the Nazi period. This substantial book is only a part of the work that they have done and that Irene is still doing. Its production has been financed in large part by Rolf Schild, in honour of his parents who were among the victims.

A Cologne Nazi genealogist left behind, on his death in 1981, a card index meticulously listing 6,335 names of deportees (complete with the Nazi-imposed I for Israel and S for Sarah) from the city. The list takes up 304 pages of this book. It includes dates and place of birth, maiden names, last addresses in Cologne, profession, whether they had any kind of property (*Vermögen*) before their deportation, and the first destination of the transport that took them to the East.

That list is shattering enough. But the book contains much more material than this, in some 200 pages of German text and an English translation in the second part of the book. These describe the procedures preceding the departures of the trains; reproduce, among many other documents, the 16-page long *Vermögenserklärung* (property declaration) which deportees had to fill in beforehand; the instructions about when and with what minimal possessions they were to report at the *Messe* (Trade Fair Building); the requirement to hand in house keys in clearly labelled envelopes; descriptions of the scenes in the *Messe* and the efforts of the Jewish organisations to make them a little more bearable; reasonably optimistic postcards which the deportees were allowed to send to their friends and relations while they were en route; correspondence between the bureaucrats who had to report on how the train

journey had been accomplished; and, from the few survivors, what they had experienced in the camps. Very haunting also are the 142 portrait photographs which it was possible to assemble from friends or relatives of the deportees, taken during their years of well-being. It requires an enormous and painful effort to imagine them in the degrading and humiliating conditions of the *Messe* and the trains, let alone in what awaited them in the camps.

□ Ralph Blumenau

Ralph Blumenau's *A History of the Jews in Germany* (serialised in AJR *Information* in 1992 and 1993) now appears in a revised edition. The 72 page booklet is available from The University of the Third Age, 44 Crowndale Road, London NW1 1TR, tel. 020 7383 0323, price £4.50 inc postage and packing □

Out of the shadows

Henry Morris, THE AJEX CHRONICLES, A brief history, pub. AJEX 1999 £10 + £1.50. p&p.

Until I read the newly published *AJEX Chronicles*, I had learnt very little about AJEX in my 64 years in this country – and that in spite of four years in the RAF. I knew that AJEX held an annual Remembrance Parade, and that its members helped out in hospitals at Christmas to give the staff a break, but organising outings to the seaside for children and the under-privileged? Surely that was what London cabbies did; and helping with the rescue of victims of Nazism was a matter for the Jewish Refugees Committee. And now I learn the big role AJEX played in these activities and many other charity and welfare matters.

Similarly with Jewish Defence: the Board of Deputies was in charge of the Jewish Defence Committee, but AJEX was right there too, as they were the practical security in Jewish buildings and synagogues. A protest meeting in 1928 against Arab anti-Jewish riots in Palestine foreshadows its later creditable performance

in the support of Israel.

The names of hundreds of people associated with AJEX are scattered throughout this fascinating little volume. I found five members of staff from my past with Marks & Spencer – and one is simply bound to meet friends here, even if it is only the former Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor, a veteran member of the Newcastle Branch, or perhaps Major Joseph Weber, First World War Honourable Artillery Company, later commissioned in the Army Cyclist Corps, severely wounded in France in 1918, and in the last war commander of an East End company of the Home Guard.

There are also some wonderful "little known facts", which you can use for your next Quiz: Where are Jewish War Graves in London found? Answer: in Willesden and East Ham Cemeteries. Which Jewish Organisation has a Lodge at Freemasons' Hall? Answer: AJEX Lodge 8407. Where is the AJEX Charity shop? Answer: in Finchley Road. Where can you see an AJEX badge on Bar Kochba's helmet? Answer: On the Giant Menorah in the grounds of the K'nesset in Jerusalem, where AJEX sponsored the figures of Rabbi Akiva and Bar Kochba to the tune of £500.

I only had two small criticisms of the book; Is it really necessary to mention so many started projects which petered out? And why only little more than a page about "The Women of AJEX"? Surely they deserve better.

Unlike the AJR, AJEX seems to feel it has no future because they have no second generation. If they are right, then this book is a fitting epitaph.

□ Ken Ambrose



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Castle finds its portcullis

When Viennese speak of 'the castle' (*die Burg*) they don't mean Kafka's nightmare construction, but their National Theatre. The tradition-encrusted Burgtheater was held in such esteem in German-speaking lands that *Burgtheaterdeutsch* ranked as the equivalent of Oxford English.

In the manner of continental dynasties the Habsburgs lavished subsidies on the theatre while entangling it in interference and bureaucracy. Gustav Mahler's problems at the Court Opera were paralleled by those of his colleagues at the Burgtheater.

By the 1920s Vienna no longer shone as brightly on the theatrical firmament as Berlin – except for the fact that Max Reinhardt divided his time between the two capitals. However, neither he nor directorial assistants Otto Preminger and Ernst Lothar ever stepped through the hallowed portals of the Burgtheater.

But one didn't have to be Jewish to encounter problems with the Burgtheater (whose founder, incidentally, had been the converted Jew Josef von Sonnenfels, advisor to Emperor Josef II). Anton Wildgans, the only playwright of distinction ever to head the institution, experienced such difficulties that the directorship almost certainly shortened his life. None of this significantly impaired the Austrians' esteem for their National Theatre. In the mid-Thirties they even made a film entitled *Burgtheater*. This slice of ripe ham featured Werner Kraus (who fifteen years earlier had reputedly given the fledgling rabble-rouser Hitler elocution lessons) and Paula Wessely, a Reinhardt discovery whom the starstruck Viennese had elevated into a latterday Duse.

At the time cultural life was envenomed by politics. After the Nazi takeover in Germany the conductor Clemens Krauss led a minor exodus from the Staatsoper to Berlin, and soon after Stefan Zweig moved from Salzburg to London for diametrically opposite reasons. At the Burgtheater the semi-resident playwright Max Mell swung like a weathervane: having earlier on turned out edifying Catholic dramas with titles like *Das Apostelspiel* (the Play of the Apostles), he now confected *Das Spiel von den deut-*

schen Abnen (the Play of the German Ancestors).

On the day of the Anschluss the nazification of the Burgtheater was instantly carried out by actor Fred Hennings, whose duelling scars had long lent verisimilitude to his portrayal of stage villains. That night Nazi thugs tortured and murdered the Jewish director of the Scala Theatre, Rudolf Beer.

During the following days, Paula Wessely issued a statement denouncing Max Reinhardt to whom she owed her career, her actor colleague Egon Friedell threw himself off the top of a tall building, the playwright Jura Soyfer was caught trying to cross to Switzerland, and the comic Fritz Grünbaum was dragged off to Dachau.

Very soon Austria's non-Jewish intellectual elite was geographically dispersed, with the physicist Erwin Schrödinger in Dublin, the painter Oskar Kokoschka in London, the writer Franz Theodor Czokor in Belgrade and the playwright Ödon von Horvath in Paris. But a large number of others – exemplified by the zoologist Konrad Lorenz, the composer Anton Webern, the conductor Karl Böhm and the author Heimito von Doderer – not only stayed put, but positively welcomed the new dispensation. Some intellectual Nazi support continued to the bitter end. Feeling they could not live in a world bereft of the Führer, both the poet Josef Weinheber and the painter Carl Moll (Alma Mahler's stepfather) committed suicide in May 1945.

Impoverished postwar Austrian culture received ample Jewish blood transfusion. Schnitzler was performed at the Burgtheater and Hofmannsthal in Salzburg; Bernstein and Maazel conducted at the Staatsoper. For all that, the Nazi poison kept festering in the national consciousness. No-one saw this more clearly than (the non-Jew) Thomas Bernhard, who put a posthumous ban on the performance of his plays in Austria.

It is a pity that Bernhard didn't live long enough to see the antibodies created by the lingering Nazi poison at work. In early February the Burgtheater hosted a rally at which contemporary cultural icons – the actor Karl Maria Brandauer, the playwright Elfride Jelinek, the essayist Robert Menasse – mobilised a new generation of students and intellectuals to tame Brecht's 'bitch that's still on heat'.

□ Richard Grunberger

Election of Committee of Management

The following members will be proposed for election or re-election to the Committee at the AGM on **Sunday 25th June 2000**

Mr AC Kaufman, Chairman*
Mr WD Rothenberg, Vice-Chairman & Hon. Treasurer*
Mrs ES Angel, Secretary*
Mr P Dannenberg, Trustee
Mr CW Dunston, Trustee
Mrs J Field
Mrs D Franklin
Mrs GR Glassman
Mr D Jedwab
Mr A Spiro

*Committee members retiring by rotation and being proposed for re-election.

Retiring Committee Member: Mr M Durst

Anyone wishing to propose any other member for election as Hon. Officer, Trustee, or Committee member must submit to AJR's Head of Administration, such a proposal signed by ten members qualified to vote at the meeting and with the signed agreement of the person being proposed **no later than Thursday 18th May 2000**



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Letters to the Editor

AUSCHWITZ DISPUTE

Sir – When I visited Auschwitz last September the large cross was so hidden behind a tall wall that none of us would have seen it had the guide not pointed it out. In fact it can only be seen when you stand away from the wall within a small area. As non-Jews were prisoners there I found it not to be out of place.

Bradford

RO Leavor

SWISS GUILT RELATIVE

Sir – I have read Ms Nakowska's experiences at the Swiss frontier with bitter feelings. Just after the Anschluss the Swiss Government let some thousands of Jewish refugees enter the country, but once the German army controlled most of Europe they clamped down drastically, if only not to offend their Nazi clients.

Sadly the record of the western democracies was hardly better. Canada did not let in any Jewish refugees, while Australia was very 'economical' in granting entry permits. The USA only admitted affidavit holders and did not hesitate to turn away the refugee ship SS St. Louis.

Taking everything into consideration, maybe the Swiss don't appear quite so bad after all.

London NW2

A Dutch

VALUE OF THE EURO

Sir – Mr Weinberg (April issue) is wrong in thinking that HM government has any power to set the level of the pound. It is the speculators on the money markets who in their own interest, buy or sell currencies. Not only have they kept the pound high but also lowered the value of the euro. This, of course, leads to an unbalancing of trade relations. When the big crash comes we all will suffer for it.

Croydon

Ulrich Pick

BOUQUET

Sir – As a member of RoK, I have just received your January and February 2000 issues. I am intrigued by the correspondence about the proposed name change of your publication. As an immediate admirer, let me say you can name it anything you like, as long as you

continue to be so interesting, well written and stimulating.

Newtown, Connecticut

Guy Bishop

MAYORAL CONTEST

Sir – Unless my memory plays tricks on me the selection of Mr Livingstone to be Brent East's Labour Party candidate was far more of an unsavoury conspiracy than his failure to become his party's mayoral candidate. The then sitting MP who was elbowed out was Jewish and at the time the active members of the constituency were Catholic Irish. The charge brought was that he was a Zionist, i.e. anti-semitism in disguise. Why get excited about Haider in Vienna when one can have a Mayor with such background in London?

Ipswich

Frank Bright

TRANSLATORS WANTED

Sir – After the death of my mother, last year, I discovered some twenty letters sent from Germany to England via the USA in the period 1940-1942. They are all handwritten and contain messages from my grandparents and other Holocaust victims. Although I have had some assistance in briefly working out their contents, I would like to have all the letters translated into English, not just for myself but for historical research. Can any readers assist me in this matter?

6 Priory View,

Harry Hurst

Bushey Heath, Herts WD2 3QZ

Tel/Fax 020 8950 1862

QUERY

Sir – Regarding Mr Konrad's query (April issue) I wonder whether he had considered applying for a Bank Card from his Austrian bank, which would enable him to make withdrawals at bank terminals throughout Europe. Most banks seem to operate the Maestro system. The charge for withdrawals is in the region of 1½%, which might work out more cheaply than what he is doing at present. It has the added advantage that he avoids the irritating queues at European banks when trying to encash Eurocheques.

Ham, Richmond

Richard B Tait

RG's YIDDISH ABC

Sir – The examples given in the February issue made me think of Werner Weinberg's *Die Reste des Jüdisch-Deutschen* (Volume 12 of *Studia Delitzschiana* published in 1969 by Kohlhammer) and no longer in print. However, those interested in the riches of the Hebrew-German lexicon may find it in specialised libraries.

Weinberg's book is a study of the influence of Hebrew on colloquial German. The book showed me that many of the words I took for German as a child were, in reality, Hebrew assimilated into the German mother tongue. Words like *klafte*, *kowed*, *stuss*, *schmus* and *dafke* were used even in my assimilated Jewish-German home; it took Weinberg's wonderful book to show me how potent Hebrew had been in leavening our spoken German language.

I hope that you will continue to spice up future issues with samples of this wonderful and rich language.

Seattle

Stephen F Adler

BRICKBAT

Sir – In his piece 'Telegraph sends out wrong signals' (February issue) Richard Grunberger seems to have been carried away by his spleen and desire to score cheap points.

Ealing

Mrs A Rosney

★ ★ ★

RE-BRANDING: Continued debate

Sir – In the spirit of transition and new beginnings that currently surrounds us, the AJR too is contemplating a change, namely re-naming its journal which for many decades has carried the title *AJR Information*. Perhaps predictably, however, not everyone amongst its loyal readership is so ready to embrace change. To those diehard traditionalists out there, who throw up their hands in horror at the very idea, I would point out the following: A change of name need not mean an abandoning of everything that the publication has stood for and an embracing of the values of today's media which, as we are continually being told, is dumbing down. Rather, it would serve to illustrate that the AJR, though often concerned with the past, is not stuck in it, but is a forward looking organisation with a progressive attitude.

I doubt very much whether anyone will actually cancel their subscription in protest at the change and, who knows, a revamped journal with a new look and a

new name may just attract a new readership. A modest concession to those who have grown up on glossier fare may prove a small price to pay for the continued success and growth of the AJR journal which is so treasured by traditionalists and non-traditionalists alike.

London NW11

Raphael Abraham

Sir – In our opinion the letters AJR could be maintained; we are therefore submitting the following three suggestions: (1) Apt Jewish Relevant Information (2) All Jewish Relevant Information (3) Active Jewish Relevant Information.

Willowdale, Ontario

H & K Schafer

Sir – In the thirties some German Jewish communities gave the name *Concordia* to their cultural clubs or societies.

In updating our name, might we not call the *AJR Information Concordia*? For legal reasons you may well need to keep AJR, but please put it in small print! Very few of us think of ourselves as refugees these days.

BG

Sir – I would like *AJR Information* to stay. It is what it contains that attracts readers, not what it is called.

London SW16

Ruth Leggett

Sir – If Jews, Refugees or Information had disappeared, then the name *AJR Information* could be altered – until then, why change? If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Hove

Arthur Oppenheimer

Sir – I suggest that the journal be renamed *AJR Mercury* or *Echo*, this would upgrade it for the Millennium.

Dover, Kent

JH Ullmann

Sir – *Don't* change a successful brand name. *Don't* change a satisfactory format. Let us readers just be grateful for the erudition, relevance and high style of the 'house journal', and please do not alter the style or wording of readers' letters: it makes for blandness.

Congratulations on the good work, and good wishes.

London W1

Peter Zander

Sir – Just call the publication *AJR Magazine*.

London N21

Peter Sinclair

Sir – It is time to change the name. My suggestion is *AJR Journal*.

London NW3

Gary Leon

Austria from the front row

Karl Pfeifer, former editor of *Die Gemeinde*, the official newspaper of the Viennese Jewish community, spoke at the Wiener Library on antisemitism and racism in Austria against the background of the rise in popularity of Jörg Haider's Freedom Party.

Pfeifer showed a brief extract from a televised press conference at which he had challenged Haider to distance himself from the view that Holocaust denial was a "marginal issue". Haider's response, that Pfeifer should read his books and articles, was one frequently used by right-wing politicians when challenged. Indeed, Chancellor Schüssel had adopted a similar approach. As Schüssel's Conservative Party had "made themselves dirty" by governing in coalition with the Freedom Party – a political party with avowedly racist policies – they too could no longer be trusted with Austria's democratic future, said Pfeifer.

In contrast to Europe's failure to intervene in 1938, current events in Austria were of internal European concern. As an economic and a moral community, Europe should not withdraw its opposition to the present Austrian Government, but should avoid tarring all Austrians with the same brush. Whereas the majority of Austrians probably did not support anti-Haider demonstrations, young people certainly did. In addition, the million who voted for the Freedom Party believed that they were electing an opposition, not a government, and were demonstrating their dissatisfaction with a long-serving coalition.

When responding to questions, Pfeifer maintained that Austrian antisemitism was deeply rooted and inseparable from post-1945 Austrian politics, which had always held that Austria was the first victim of Nazism. "When you put dirt under the carpet, there comes a time when it stinks", he said, but change would only be achieved by pressure from abroad. Austria still retained attitudes which dated back to Metternich's authoritarian state and many Austrians lacked *Zivilcourage*.

An official of the Austrian Embassy suggested that far from marginalizing the Holocaust, successive Austrian Governments had included Holocaust teaching in the national curriculum. Holocaust denial was marginal and Austria had not

returned to its Nazi past. The present government coalition had resulted from a democratic election and the policies of an Austrian political party should not be confused with the beliefs of Austrian people as a whole. In his view, the harsh international reaction had been premature and had pre-empted any consultation with Austria's new government.

Pfeifer suggested that this view represented an ideal, rather than the actual situation. The "institutional racism", which he believed to pervade the country and society, was the root cause of Austria's woes, and the ascendancy of Haider and his party were symptomatic of this fact. In conclusion, he reminded his audience that other European countries should be taking steps to counter racism within their own borders.

□ Marion Koebner

ANOTHER COUNTRY? AUSTRIA FROM PAST TO PRESENT

11 June 2000 2 – 5.30 pm

Brunei Gallery, Thornhaugh
Street, London WC1

An afternoon seminar presented
by
Association of Jewish Refugees
Institute of Contemporary History
and Wiener Library
Second Generation Trust

With the support of the
Austrian Cultural Institute

Following Austria's recent elections, this seminar will examine the profound issues and challenges posed by the success of Jörg Haider's Freedom Party. The relationship of past and present in Austrian political life will be examined along with questions of postwar identity, and national and wider European contexts will be explored.

Speakers include the distinguished historian Robert Knight; Karl Fallend, lecturer in Psychology, Vienna; Glyn Ford, MEP. Further speakers to be announced.

Tickets from the Wiener Library,
4 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BH.

Tel. 020 7636 7247 – £15 (£12 AJR
members and Friends of the Wiener
Library)

Annual Report 1999

Membership

At the end of the year (1999) total membership of the AJR was 3,392, the deaths of 100 members and some 97 who allowed their membership to lapse, being partially offset by 148 new members joining. Among them were a significant number who, having little or no contact with Jewry in Britain, had no previous knowledge of the AJR or of the services it offered. Others were referred to the AJR by cooperating social service agencies for help and advice on pensions and matters of restitution, including funds distributed by the British Government.

Negotiations were successfully concluded with the Reunion of Kindertransport who, having organised their last major reunion in London in 1999, recommended their members (not already AJR members) to accept an invitation to join the AJR. The special identity and traditions of the Kinder were to be maintained by forming a special interest group within the AJR which would continue the publication of a Kindertransport newsletter.

Social Services

Demands on the services of AJR's Social Work Department continued to increase in relation to the average age of the membership. Many members are increasingly frail, dependent on others and yet often isolated in their own homes; there are also the problems brought by mental ill health, depression and dementia. Following referral, AJR social workers visit, assess and offer members appropriate advice and assistance.

The AJR set out to improve and enlarge its contacts with members living outside the Greater London area in order to offer them personal and financial support. For those living in outlying areas, with few if any contacts with other members of the Jewish community, an annual visit from an AJR social worker is much appreciated.

Welfare Rights Advisory Service

The Social Services Department continued its specialist advisory service on UK welfare benefits, foreign pensions, restitution, grants and

other compensation issues. Members' requests for help with a wide variety of problems were sympathetically dealt with at bi-weekly 'drop-in surgeries' organised at the Day Centre and at Head Office.

Substantial assistance was required by members completing application forms to obtain benefit from the Holocaust Assets Litigation Fund. More than 600 received AJR's help, a huge task which could only have been undertaken by the professional staff with the support of in-house-trained volunteers.

Computerisation

The AJR installed a new computer system in Head Office incorporating 13 workstations, using Windows software and providing a new membership database, as well as an e-mail facility enabling members to contact the AJR directly on enquiries@ajr.org.uk. Used increasingly by all departments, Social Services anticipate building a comprehensive record of those members who prefer the AJR to hold specific information on their behalf.

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

AJR's Day Centre continued to offer a full programme of activities and entertainment, high-quality catering and a meeting place for Jewish refugees from a European German-speaking cultural background, although the numbers availing themselves of these facilities have inevitably declined.

Musical entertainment was on the programme several times every week for the stimulation and enjoyment of the members. Monday's Kard & Games Klub retained regular support, and keep fit classes tailored to members' needs were held twice a week. The services of a chiropodist were available and there was a twice-yearly optical service. A minibus continued a weekly run carrying members to and from the Day Centre and a shopping trip was begun for residents of the sheltered flats in Cleve Road.

The monthly Luncheon Club entered its third successful year, each providing an excellent three-course lunch followed by an entertaining guest speaker. On the list of other successes were the Tea Dance,

with audience participation, and a Kaffee Klatsch afternoon (taking the place of the Open Day) at which a full tea was served and a wonderful atmosphere enhanced by the violinist playing at the tables, while artwork from weekday classes was on display.

For the first time the Centre celebrated the 100th birthday of one of its members, in the presence of her younger sister and brother from Vienna. The annual Bridge Evening, held in memory of Madeleine Brook, was enjoyed by all the players once again. In May and November the Centre organised popular holiday weeks for members at the Normandie Hotel in Bournemouth, with none-too-strenuous activities.

Catering and Meals-on-Wheels

The Catering Department at the DayCentre continued to prepare high-quality meals and buffets for the members to enjoy, as well as catering for special events. These included a tea for a meeting of ex-Breslauers, a second-night Seder at Passover, a residents' tea, the volunteers' brunch, a tea for 30 partially-sighted members, appropriate menus to mark the Jewish festivals and a tea at the AGM.

On average, some 200 frozen meals-on-wheels leave our kitchen every week, and some 30 meals a week are taken away by members themselves.

AJR Information

The journal welcomed a number of new contributors including Gloria Tessler (author of an acclaimed biography of Lady Jakobovits), who has brought zest to the Art Notes, and Professor Michael Spiro, who has pioneered Science Notebook.

Coverage of matters of special concern to association members was maintained, including restitution, welfare, Holocaust remembrance, world affairs, the Middle East, and AJR's diverse activities. The readership's continuing involvement with the journal was attested each month by what, given our size, could be described as a bulging postbag. The flow of Letters to the Editor was augmented by a debate on the possibility of renaming the journal.

Volunteers

The continued dedication of volunteers enabled the AJR to provide a wide range of services and assistance to members. By the year's end they numbered 175, including 41 recruited during 1999 of whom 32 provided direct help to individual members. Befrienders' support group meetings were arranged, and induction and effective listening skills training sessions were attended by volunteers throughout the year. AJR's Volunteer Services Co-ordinator recruited university student volunteers at fresher events in London.

A volunteers' thank you brunch was organised at the Day Centre, and Irene White organised a tea party for members who received AJR Information on cassette tape before she handed on this responsibility to Rita Rosenbaum.

Outreach Groups

As reported regularly in *AJR Information*, AJR's outreach groups in different parts of the country had an active year with the support of a part-time Co-ordinator from Head Office. South London, Leeds Holocaust Survivors Friendship Association, Manchester and Birmingham flourished, ably managed by long-serving organisers. AJR took over responsibility for the popular Sarid group in Brighton, while both Surrey and Wessex (Bournemouth) planned to meet more regularly. A group was initiated in Nottingham, and with the support of a sufficient number of members, others will be planned for Scotland and Northern England.

Self-Aid

The Self Aid fund, together with the related support from the AJR's Social Work Department, helped to improve the quality of life for many of our members living on low incomes. Regular monthly payments (which do not affect state benefits) were made to 177 members under the Self Aid umbrella. Following sympathetic assessment by our Social Work team, a report is made to the Trustees for decision. One-off payments are also made in response to unanticipated needs. A pilot care and cleaning service was introduced from which 13 members benefited in the first year.

Self Aid grants totalled £197,000 in 1999, an increase of 22% over 1998.

Events

The AJR's 51st Annual Concert, this year held in a new venue at Imperial College, Kensington, featured a chamber orchestra of the highest standard with internationally renowned cellist Raphael Wallfisch as soloist. The event proved a great musical success and, with an advertising brochure/programme, raised £5,000 for Self Aid. The serving of a full tea during an extended interval proved most popular with the concert-goers.

What has become AJR's annual outing to Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire was well supported with a coach from London being joined by other members travelling independently. Director Stephen Smith and his family once again showed warm hospitality and led an informative discussion.

Sheltered Accommodation

Following the decision of the Otto Schiff Housing Association to dispose of Eleanor Rathbone House in Highgate (co-owned by OSHA and AJR), the AJR undertook responsibility for rehousing AJR members in a new sheltered apartment block offering up-to-date accommodation and communal facilities (to include a new Day Centre) to be built on a site yet to be identified. Occupants of the eight sheltered flats at 15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, would also be provided with accommodation in the new building. (Otto Schiff House, OSHA's sheltered housing complex in Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead, is not affected by these developments). Our prime objective over the coming months will be to find a suitable site so that this project can begin to take shape.

Managerial Changes

In July the AJR's professional management was placed in the hands of three senior members of staff: Ronald Channing was appointed Head of Media, Development and Community Affairs, Gordon Greenfield Head of Finance, and Carol Rossen Head of Administration and Personnel.

On behalf of AJR members, the Chairman and members of the Management Committee would like to express their appreciation for the dedication and professionalism shown by members of staff during the past year, often in demanding circumstances.

□ Andrew Kaufman
Chairman

Treasurer's Report

This has been a year of significant change to our financial position. We have received an exceptional amount by way of legacies, so that in the short term our overall financial position is considerably improved over that for last year. On the other hand, we have taken on a major new financial commitment to build new sheltered housing, together with a new Community Centre and offices. These will replace our current facilities in Cleve Road and Eleanor Rathbone House as well as the rented premises in Hampstead Gate. The costs of acquiring and constructing suitable premises will stretch our resources to the full. Our vital welfare work is continuing to expand at the same time as we are continuing to fund the deficits on our Day Centre.

AJR

We are now welcoming new members from RoK. This was made easier because during the year we installed a much needed new computer system not only to manage our membership and accounting records, but also to track all our welfare activities. My thanks to Gordon Greenfield and all our staff for their enthusiastic co-operation in the changes, which also took us past the problems of the notorious 'millennium bug' without a hitch.

Day Centre

This represents a core part of our work, although sadly not as many members are taking advantage of its facilities as previously. Financially we continue to subsidise the Centre together with its kitchen and its Meals-on-Wheels services so ably run by Susie Kaufman and her team. The figures are exactly in line with our projections at the beginning of the year. We are delighted that the RoK are now going to be using these facilities for a monthly get together.

Self Aid

The numbers whom we are helping continue to rise. No amount of money would help the growing numbers of our more unfortunate brothers and sisters who turn to us every week without the dedicated work of all our staff and volunteers. Our thanks to all of them.

(Continued on page 10)

**AJR – Income and Expenditure Account
Year ended 31st December 1999**

Income:	1999	1998
Membership/Donations and Legacies	255,710	208,278
Grant from Self Aid		5,000
	<u>260,710</u>	<u>213,278</u>
Less:		
Overhead Expenses		
Salary Costs	103,964	85,935
AJR Information Administration/Depreciation	35,879	31,432
	<u>54,558</u>	<u>52,848</u>
	<u>194,401</u>	<u>170,215</u>
Surplus:	<u>66,309</u>	<u>43,063</u>

**Summary of Balance Sheet
at 31st December 1999**

	1999	1998
Fixed Assets		
(less depreciation)	38,221	7,403
Current Assets	271,887	242,560
Less: Current Liabilities	(30,911)	(37,075)
	<u>279,197</u>	<u>212,888</u>
Represented by:		
General Fund	212,888	169,825
Net surplus for year	66,309	43,063
	<u>279,197</u>	<u>212,888</u>

David Rothenberg, Hon. Treasurer 12 April 2000

**AJR CHARITABLE TRUST
PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE
Summary figure for the year ended
31st December 1999**

Income:	1999	1998
Takings – Day Centre and meals-on-wheels	89,197	80,360
Donations received	375	1,708
	<u>89,572</u>	<u>82,068</u>
Less outgoings:		
Premises expenditure (net)	2,204	1,940
Salaries	121,192	114,147
Catering costs	185,985	186,651
Sundry expenses	60,327	61,266
	<u>369,708</u>	<u>364,004</u>
Deficit Funded from Charitable Trust	<u>280,136</u>	<u>281,936</u>

**AJR CHARITABLE TRUST –
Summary Income and
Expenditure Accounts (based on final draft figures)
Year ended 31st December 1999**

	1999	1998
Income:		
Covenants/donations**	74,838	111,179
Investment income (including portfolio gains)	407,258	375,793
Sheltered housing	35,556	33,622
	<u>517,652</u>	<u>520,594</u>
Legacies	2,172,487	418,324
	<u>2,690,139</u>	<u>938,918</u>
Less outgoings:		
Day Centre	280,136	281,936
Self Aid	197,557	155,409
Other organisations Administration/Depreciation	18,900	18,900
	<u>331,618</u>	<u>316,242</u>
	<u>£828,211</u>	<u>£772,487</u>

** Includes contribution from World Jewish Relief towards welfare payments

AJR Reports

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

South London

After a short autobiographical introduction, Dr Anthony Grenville of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, spoke on the early years of the AJR as reflected in the first issues of *AJR Information*, tracing the story of German-speaking Jewish refugees from pre-war emigration to a loyal and prosperous community. Although the refugees were not always made welcome by the existing Anglo-Jewish population, many experienced warmth and magnanimity. The AJR provided a great deal of support □

The next meeting of the SLAJR will be on Thursday 11 May at South London Liberal Synagogue, Streatham. Subject: Nightingale House.

Brighton and Hove

The Rothschilds – a musical unfamiliar to those present – was the subject of a talk by SLAJR member Walter Woyda, who gave a fascinating insight into life in the Lew Grade entertainment empire. Hearing excerpts from the production score, many agreed there was a strong resemblance to 'Fiddler on the Roof', written by the same duo. The musical traces the lives of the famous family from the Frankfurt ghetto to international banking. Why it ran for some 600 performances in New York but never crossed the Atlantic was the subject of discussion, the consensus being that another musical with a Jewish theme would not have been commercially viable.

Rudi Simmonds thanked the speaker for an interesting and entertaining morning.

□ F Goldberg

The next meeting of Sarid will be on Monday 15 May, 10.45 a.m. at Ralli Hall, Denmark Villas, Hove. Cyril Jacobs will speak on 'The Life and Legacy of Mina Willis.' Contact Fausta Shelton for further information.

Pinner

Harry Hurst competently hosted a Desert Island Discs of Swiss Cottage, inviting Martha Macdonnell, Alf Keiles, Heidi Orchedusch, Ilse Rosen-duft and Paul Samet to nominate their selection of books, films, pictures, luxury

items and music before being rescued by their chosen hero. There was nostalgia and stimulation as the audience was treated to a wide variety of music from opera and jazz to Welsh male voice choral music □

The next meeting of Pinner AJR will be on Thursday 4 May. Ann Ebner will speak on 'Historical Jewish London.'

Leeds

The group's Secretary, John Chillag – a concentration camp survivor – spoke on 'How to find documentation of the Holocaust and Nazi Era', a topic of obvious interest given the size of the audience. John shared his expertise, gained from years of his own research, on how to go about establishing the fate of family and friends who became victims of Nazi persecution and murder. The key was the existence of detailed records kept by the Nazis, both in civic institutions and in camps, much of it now accessible to the families of victims. Many records contain not only addresses but also photographs.

The audience included a Makor Youth Group which assisted members in the completion of their *Page of Testimony* for the Yad Vashem Remembrance project.

□ Max Kingsley

At the next meeting of Leeds HFSA on 7 May, Bernice Shooman will speak on 'The Holocaust Education Forum.' Rabbi Ian Morris will speak on 'The Wisdom of War Crimes Trials' on 25 June (not on 7 May as previously advertised).

East Midlands

The next meeting of East Midlands AJR will take place on Sunday 7 May at 3pm at Nottingham Progressive Synagogue, Lloyd St., Sherwood, Nottingham when Michael Jaeckel will talk about the Anschluss and his experiences as a Kindertransportee. The talk will be followed by 'Kaffee, Kuchen and Klatsch' □

AUSTRIAN BANK HOLOCAUST LITIGATION

AJR has been informed that the closing date for submission of claims for the above is 31 May 2000.

Claim forms are obtainable from AJR Head Office – Tel 020 7431 6161

Third Great Season

AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

on Wednesday 17 May 2000
at 15 Cleve Road, NW6 3RL
11.45 for 12.15pm

Guest speaker:
Laszlo Ekstein-Easton
**'The fascination
of collecting antiques'**

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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:

Thursday	4	May
Tuesday	9	May
Thursday	18	May
Wednesday	24	May
Tuesday	30	May
Wednesday	7	June

and every Thursday from
10am to 12 noon at:

**AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Froggnal,
London NW3 6AL**

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

Accept our invitation to a

Kaffee Klatsch

with musical entertainment,
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on Sunday 2 July 2000
from 2.30-5pm

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

Entrance by ticket only £6
Please book with Sylvia, Renée & Susie
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... Viewpoint ...

The age revolution

If the latest bout of number crunching by the Government's demographers is worthy of credibility, those of us who are – or soon will be – of pensionable age stand on the threshold of a new golden era in which the elderly will reassert their primacy. By the year 2008 the number of pensioners will actually exceed the number of children under the age of 16!

For the entire postwar period, the experience, wisdom and accumulated knowledge of older and more mature employees has continually been devalued in the face of a culture of youth – young ideas being preferred to old, new lifestyles muscling aside the aspirational middle class values of the 1930s.

Nowadays, people are living much longer and remaining active and capable of enjoying life decades later than their parents' and grandparents' generations. Indeed, the government is already floating the idea that the official retirement age should be extended to 70. Only those in dull, boring or physically debilitating employment should be entitled to enjoy early retirement free of such toil, while the rest of us continue to contribute to the wealth-creating economy.

Television programmes by the dozen explain how current advances in repro-

ducing spare body parts, or the use of stem cells and genetic engineering, will slow, halt, or even reverse the hitherto anticipated decline in physical and mental capacities that are traditionally regarded as the penalties of surviving into 'old age'.

How long will it take before the authorities stop treating mature people as political eunuchs whose opinions and concerns are all too readily discounted? As an increasing component of the adult population, their political clout, ambition and need outweigh those of younger and less well deserving groups in society.

Voices need to be raised to ensure that pensioners not only secure a TV licence, free entry to museums and galleries, and a travel pass, but also the dignity and security of a guaranteed income placed not below, but well above the poverty level, as of right. Instead of a limping 75p increase in the basic state pension to £66.75 per week in line with inflation, with many erstwhile retirees remaining in employment, the pension should be brought back into line with general earnings, a link deliberately broken some two decades ago.

□ 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

MAY/JUNE 2000

Afternoon entertainment programme –

Mon 1	DAY CENTRE CLOSED –BANK HOLIDAY	Wed 17	LUNCHEON CLUB
Tue 2	Susan Travers & June Lewis accompanied by Michael Heaton, piano	Thur 18	Sue Kennett, soprano, accompanied by Gordon Weaver, piano
Wed 3	Nicola Smedley accompanied by Jan Cunningham, piano	Sun 21	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
Thurs 4	Jack & Rita Davis	Mon 22	KARD & GAMES KLUB
Sun 7	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT	Tue 23	Jack Davidoff
Mon 8	KARD & GAMES KLUB	Wed 24	Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton, violin, accompanied by Peter Gellhorn, piano
Tue 9	Judy Magnus & Gillian Sonin, piano duo	Thur 25	Dorothy Sayers, piano & accordion
Wed 10	Mark Rosen accompanied by Daphne Lewis	Sun 28	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
Thur 11	The Geoffrey Whitworth Duo with Deborah Fink, soprano	Mon 29	DAY CENTRE CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY
Sun 14	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT	Tue 30	Susan Wilde, soprano, with piano accompaniment
Mon 15	KARD & GAMES KLUB	Wed 31	Wendy Stiles & Helen Collyer, voice & piano
Tue 16	Caroline Salmon Trutz, soprano & David Rose accompanied by	Thur 1	Helen Blake, voice & piano
		Sun 4	DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birthday

Marx. The AJR would like to extend their very best wishes to former Chairman, Theo Marx, on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

Deaths

Francken. Hans Francken (born Aachen) died peacefully on 31 March aged 91. Beloved father and grandfather, admired by all who knew him. His loving family, children Barbara and John, daughter-in-law Dee and grandchildren James and Julia.

Keiler. Karolina Keiler born Leipzig 2 November 1902, died peacefully in London on 25 March 2000 at the age of 97. Widow of Lothar Keiler, sister of the late Irmgard Smurka and cousin of the Kiwi family in the USA. Sadly missed by all who knew and cared for her, particularly the Fuller family.

Salinger. Hilde Salinger died peacefully in Birmingham, 8 March aged 94. Sadly missed by relatives and friends.

Schaefer. Nora Schaefer (widow of Dr Ernst Schaefer of United Restitution Office, died London 1968) passed away on 10 April, aged 96. Deeply regretted by children Katya Sheppard, Gina MacKenzie, Andrew Sheppard, family and friends.

CLASSIFIED

For Sale: Signed lithograph of dancer (framed) by Jehuda Bacon, gobelin tablecloth edged with hand crocheted lace. Price to be agreed on viewing. Telephone 020 7586 0232 or Fax 020 7813 0689.

For Sale: 6-month-old wheelchair made by Beard Bros. Pneumatic tyres. Cost £700, now £300 o.n.o. Tel: 020 8952 5411.

Miscellaneous Services

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

Day Centre

Shirley Lever at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre. New clothes for sale, dresses, underwear, cardigans etc. Tuesday 2 and Wednesday 31 May 9.45-11.45am.

Societies

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

Lily Freeman invites all her friends to the opening of her exhibition
'HAPPY PAINTINGS'
at Hampstead Museum
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3
on **Thursday 4 May**
6.30-8.30pm
Exhibition continuing **5-21 May**
Wed-Sun inclusive 12-5pm

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Large bright bedsitting room, fully equipped kitchen, bathroom/WC, lift.
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1 Hampstead Gate,
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Are you keen to play
SCRABBLE, RUMMICUB, DOMINOES OR KALOOKI?
Do you live near Cricklewood?
Do you have one afternoon a week free?
If so, please contact **Amanda**
at AJR Head Office
Tel: 020 7431 6161
to find out more

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AJR GROUP CONTACTS
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(Birmingham) 0121 777 6537
North: Werner Lachs
(Manchester) 0161 773 4091
East Midlands: Bob Norton
(Nottingham) 01159 212 494
Pinner: Vera Gellman
(HA Postal District) 020 8866 4833
S. London: Ken Ambrose
020 8852 0262
Surrey: Ernest Simon
01737 643 900
Brighton & Hove: Fausta Shelton
(Sussex Region) 01273 688 226
Wessex: Ralph Dale
(Bournemouth) 01202 762 270

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MAY 2000

- Thur 4 **Lunchtime recital:**
Stephen Hadley (baritone) and Paul Bateman (piano).
Sternberg Centre. 1.15pm, £2.
- Sun 7 **Yom Ha'atzmaut 52:**
Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley. 12-8pm.
Lectures, films, MP panel debate and more. £5/£3 (advance & concessions).
Zionist Federation
020 8343 9756
The Knowledge:
Screenplay by Jack Rosenthal, starring Nigel Hawthorne. 3pm, Jewish Museum, Finchley. £3 (includes admission to Museum prior to film showing). **They were not Silent: The US Jewish Labour Movement & the Holocaust.** Lecture by Dr G Malmgreen, New York University. 7.30 pm, Jewish Museum, Finchley. £2.50.
- Mon 8 **Ralph Blumenau:**
Psychology and History.
Club 43, 7.30 pm.
- Wed 10 **Yom Ha'atzmaut 52:** Gala Show, Logan Hall, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1. 8-10pm. Tickets from £6. Zionist Federation 020 8343 9756
- Sun 14 **Textiles in Jewish Life:**
Lecture by Judith Weil.
Jewish Museum, Camden. 11am, £6 (or £7.50 with bagel lunch).
- Mon 15 **Mail from the Refugees of World War II** (with slides): William Kaczynski.
Club 43, 7.30pm.
- Tue 16 **'Martin Buber and the Question of Community':**
Dr David Groiser, University of Sussex, 5.15pm (To be repeated at a northwest London venue in June).
- Sun 21 **'Aftermath of the Holocaust':** Professor Mankovitch on rethinking the role of survivors in the aftermath of the Holocaust.
Spiro Institute. Reception 7.15 pm, lecture 8pm.
- Mon 22 **Vladimir Putin: How Russia makes its presidents.** Club 43, 7.30pm.
- Thur/Fri 25/26 **'Freud: Dreaming, Creativity and Therapy':**
University of London Union, Malet Street, WC1. Information from Sussex University Centre for German-Jewish Studies.
- 25 May - 1 July **Dreyfus:** Jean-Claude Grumberg (translated by Jack Rosenthal). Tricycle theatre. 020 7328 1000.
- Sun 28 **'SS in Britain':**
Documentary film by Julian Hendy. Harkness Hall, Birkbeck College, London WC1. 2-4.30 pm. £4 (£2 Friends) Tickets from administrative secretary, Wiener Library.

Art Notes

The National Gallery's current exhibition, **Seeing Salvation: The Image of Christ**, (until May 7) reflects the dual nature of the Christian saviour, from inspirational leader to man of sorrows.

The exhibits, from the 15th century onwards, range from the tragic luminescence of **Holbein's** dead Jesus through **Murillo's** 'family values' Christ to **Hieronymus Bosch's** goblins. The most Jewish painting – **Murillo's** *Circumcision* – a tremendous play of light, shadow and lustre, presents the baby Jesus in upright pose with clenched fists yet calm, unchildlike submission. In strong contrast to the downcast eyes of the High Priest and the others suggesting worldly acceptance, his are wide open, hinting at worldly knowledge.

The more contemporary desire to bring Christ home is reflected in **Stanley Spencer's** attempt to resurrect him in his local parish church at Cookham, amid pastoral irony and bucolic wonder. **Salvador Dali's** Christ looking down on the world from his cross does the opposite. In distancing Jesus from the humanity which so tortured him, it brings a sense of spiritual passion and grandeur and is regarded as an evocation of Hiroshima. But for me the subtlety and depth of **Rembrandt's** painting of Simeon holding the baby Christ, remains the ultimate image of beginning and endings.

This month's opening of **Tate Modern** at Bankside sees the **Tate Gallery** at Millbank reclaim its original role as the home of British art. Thematic galleries in the Tate under the collective title, **Representing Britain**, go back to the 15th century and the major exhibition is **Ruskin, Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites** (till May 29) marking the centenary of John Ruskin's death. The great art critic's influence on the pre-Raphaelite movement is demonstrated by his support for Turner's raw naturalism, in which he saw a return to certain artistic truths achieved through colour, detail and clarity. Ruskin's aim was to throw off the rigidity of academic correctness he perceived in art after Raphael.

Yet in Turner's painting of slaves thrown off a slave ship, Ruskin ignored the artist's humanistic message, evalu-



Slave Ship, Turner 1775-1851, currently at the Tate.

ating his skill, not his statement, at a time when Britain had passed legislation to ban the slave trade.

The champion of Millais, Holman Hunt, Rossetti and Burne-Jones, Ruskin was the son of a strict evangelical protestant mother, but his attraction to the free expressionism of the pre-Raphaelites may have stemmed from his fear that the Church was being seduced by Catholic ritualism of the Oxford Movement. His own self-portraits betray a darkness beneath their delicacy. Rejected by the parents of the girl he loved – she later died – his own life eventually disintegrated into morbidity and depression.

Chardin at *The Royal Academy* (till May 29) is full of studied significance; featuring the fruits of the hunt. In a typical still-life, a dead hare or rabbit is depicted beside a casserole and an orange. Often the hare appears in *rigor mortis*, legs upright; a powder flask beside him, but the real subject is the absent hunter. Chardin perceives objects through the innocence of children; his literalism is on the knife-edge of horror. Analogies with Proust have been drawn in the intensity of observation. In fact Chardin was ahead of his time, for in the physicality of the fruit is the tenderness and the crudeness of life and death beside a cooking pot – especially if you happen to be a rabbit. Often the split fruit evokes the spilt blood of the animal, a recurring theme in his work.

□ Gloria Tessler

SB's Column

Opera in Israel. After several unsuccessful attempts to establish a permanent base, the New Israeli Opera moved into its new home in Tel Aviv in 1994. It is currently operating a *stagione* system in conjunction with opera houses in Hamburg, Frankfurt and St Petersburg. Wagner is still 'off limits',

but Richard Strauss' *Salome* was successfully performed and *Elektra* will be staged this season at the Roman amphitheatre in Cesarea.

Boycott of Austria. The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra has cancelled its planned concert tour; Elie Wiesel will not attend the commemoration of the liberation of Mauthausen; Gerard Mortier, the Salzburg Festival supremo, is leaving before expiry of his contract; pianist Andras Schiff has cancelled his concert at the Washington Austrian embassy, George Tabori will no longer work at Austrian theatres and playwright Elfriede Jelinek has banned further productions of her works in Austria. *

Robert Stolz, the operetta composer, is being honoured in a special matinée at the Vienna State Opera arranged by Marcel Prawy. The proceeds will go to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

Munich. The travelling exhibition *Sag' beim Abschied* devoted to thirties' stars of stage and screen has generated great interest. It focuses on 'yesterday's greats', such as Bergner, Kortner, Roda Roda, Katscher, Farkas, Bressart and Franziska Gaal, every one of whom was uniformly reviled in the Nazi press □

Soho scene

The Soho Theatre, which has replaced the former Dean Street Synagogue, has been totally rebuilt and is now an impressive 200 seat modern theatre. It is to be the permanent home of the Soho Theatre Company, specialising in new plays.

The opening production was *Station*, a one-act play by Jonathan Lichtenstein, set in Berlin in 1938 and 1989. It deals with the difference in attitude of a young English Jew and his grandmother who survived the war in Germany. With much reluctance, she tells him of her traumatic experiences. A very moving play.

For those readers who venture South of the Thames, the Warehouse Theatre in East Croydon also specialises in new plays and very recently produced a play on the life history of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya. A mixture of biography and his music together with excellent casting made for a very enjoyable evening. □ Edward Levy

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
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KINDERTRANSPORT NEWS

Invitation to KT-AJR's first get-together at AJR Day Centre

AJR's Kindertransport special interest group is pleased to invite members to its first 'Luncheon and Get-together', to be held on Monday 22nd May, reception at 12 noon, at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, 15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6.

Following arrival and welcome, at 12.30pm members will be invited to enjoy a delicious three-course kosher luncheon prepared and cooked by the Centre's own specialist catering team. After lunch, members of AJR's senior staff, including the managers of the Day Centre, will be introduced and you may take this opportunity to let them know how frequently you would want to meet and what kind of entertainment, speakers, hobbies or outings you would prefer. Above all, it will be a social occasion which will allow us the opportunity to meet other Kinder and renew old acquaintances.

At long last the Kinder have a central meeting place – with the full support of the AJR – and you are urged to make good use of our new home. This first get-together will be a milestone in the nature and scope of Kindertransport activities. After last year's reunion, many people expected us to fold our tents and simply disappear. But we have much unfinished work to do: to bring into our ranks all Kinder who have not yet joined our community and to offer them a framework within which they can develop their memories and even reclaim lost identities. Together we shall build a platform on which we can all express our feelings and come to terms with our experiences, develop a group whose members share a common history and within which each one of us can feel 'at home.'

It is essential to telephone Sylvia, Susie or Renée on 020 7328 0208 to confirm your booking for 22nd May so please do so as soon as possible to secure your place.

AJR's Day Centre in Cleve Road is a short walk from West Hampstead Underground Station. Alternatively, bus 328 from Golders Green Station via West End Lane, stops at the top of Cleve Road, and bus C11 from Finchley Road Underground Station stops right outside the Day Centre. Looking forward to welcoming you. □ David Jedwab

Science Notebook

'Units are friends'

From the beginning of this year it became illegal in Britain to sell food and other loose goods in pounds instead of in kilograms – a further decisive shift from imperial to metric measurements. What are the origins of these two systems?

The English units of weights and measures came mainly from the Romans and Anglo-Saxons and were largely retained after the Norman conquest. The smallest Anglo-Saxon measure of length was the barleycorn, and three of these placed end-to-end defined the inch. The Roman pound (libra, hence 1b) weighed the same as 240 English silver pennies so the latter were also called a (monetary) pound. (Its symbol £ derives from Libra.) But, confusingly, by the Middle Ages at least four types of pound were in use: troy, tower, avoirdupois, and mercantile. For centuries the units of trade depended on the goods involved and also varied from region to region, despite attempts by monarchs to impose uniform standards. The pound avoirdupois

ultimately triumphed.

Liquid measures also differed: the beer gallon held 280 cubic inches and the wine gallon 231 cubic inches. The latter was abolished in the UK in 1824 but remained the only legal gallon in USA (that's why you need more gallons to fill up your car in America). Eventually, by Acts of Parliament in 1824, 1855 and 1878, British units (called imperial) became standardised throughout the country.

In other European countries, too, weights and measures used to be in a chaotic state. After the French revolution, the French Academy of Sciences decided to introduce an all-embracing decimal system. The basic length unit was called the metre (metron in Greek means measure): it was taken as one ten-millionth of the meridian arc from the North Pole to the equator. Its exact value was later fixed by a platinum bar and subsequently by the wavelength of light emitted by certain atoms. The kilogram, the basic mass unit, was defined as the weight of one cubic decimetre (1 litre) of distilled water at 4°C. The metric system gradually



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spread around the world because of its simplicity, all its units being interrelated by powers of ten. For example, 1 metric tonne = 1000 kg whereas 1 imperial ton = 2240 lb.

"Units are friends" I always told my students in stressing the importance of using the right units. Failure to do this was dramatically illustrated in October 1999 when the \$125 million Mars climate Orbiter spacecraft was lost because the force for the final thrusters' fittings was calculated by Lockheed in Colorado in imperial units and transmitted to the controlling NASA laboratory in California who assumed the figures were in metric units. A deplorable and expensive blunder!

□ Prof Michael Spiro

Jewish music – it's official

A seventeen-year dream has come to fruition with the launch of the Jewish Music Institute (JMI). With its academic base at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), the Institute will promote the study and performance of all aspects of Jewish music from traditional Yiddish folk music to contemporary Israeli compositions. As the Institute's Joint President, Lady Solti takes the place of the late and great Sir Yehudi Menuhin.

The audience at SOAS was treated to a flavour of the JMI's future work in the form of a Klezmer duet (with consummate clarinet playing by one of Klezmer's foremost proponents, Gregori Schechter), the nostalgia of a Yiddish folksong performed by youthful octogenarian folk-singer Majer Bogdanski, a Sephardi song for soprano and harp and – undoubtedly the highlight – a performance of Mendelssohn's Octet, opus 20 on Stradivari instruments loaned by the Royal Academy of Music. Amongst the speakers welcoming the new arrival were composer, Reith lecturer and Cambridge Emeritus Professor Alexander Goehr and Sir Tim Lankester, Director of SOAS.

The JMI has a full programme of Jewish music to be played throughout the year, including the London International Jewish Music Festival, between 11 June and 13 July, and a Jewish Culture Day at the South Bank on 26 November. The birth of the JMI puts Jewish music on the map and acknowledges a contribution to the world of music which extended from Biblical times to the present day.

Further information about the JMI and its activities can be obtained from: JMI Tel: 020 8909 2445 and from www.jmi.org.uk

□ Marion Koebner

Glorious Gershwin

The life, times and incomparable melodies of George Gershwin were put under the spotlight by his biographer, music guru and radio and television concert producer, Rodney Greenberg, during Jewish Book Week. With good humour, using audio-visual aids (unreliable) and playing electronic piano, Greenberg recalled Gershwin, born in 1898 Brooklyn to Russian immigrant parents, at 15 already a talented piano-playing song-plugger on Tin Pan Alley, with brother Ira, who wrote the words to George's music, and their young sister Frankie.

"He couldn't help writing marvellous tunes," said Greenberg, who regarded Gershwin as one of the twentieth century's greatest composers. Progressing through piano rolls, prohibition parties, orchestrated jazz, Broadway musicals, Hollywood films to concert scores and opera, he composed such eternal tunes as *The Man I Love*, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, *Embraceable You*, *Strike Up the Band*, not to mention *Rhapsody in Blue* and *Porgy and Bess*. *Our Love is Here to Stay*, written not long before George's life was ended tragically in 1937 by a tumour when he had not yet reached his 39th birthday, was immortalised by Gene Kelly in the evergreen film *An American in Paris*.

Rodney Greenberg believed that Gershwin was never a happy man, but he certainly left us a legacy of happiness in his compositions which unquestionably owed much to the Yiddish songs his and other Russian-Jewish families packed in their luggage when leaving for the New World.

□ Ronald Channing

WITH APPRECIATION

We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for the legacies received in 1999 by the AJR and the AJR Charitable Trust from the estates of the following:

Gerda Andrew	Senta Friedlander	Edith Loewy-Kiewe	Arnold Rosenstrauch
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50 YEARS AGO

HELP BEYOND THE CHANNEL

The Jewish Relief Unit from Great Britain recently terminated its activities in Germany. Trained in this country at a time when the end of the war was not yet in sight, Jewish volunteers left for the Continent and established Relief Centres in the Western Zone of Occupation and in Berlin after the end of hostilities.

The staff, which at the peak time in 1946 consisted of 100 volunteers, included a very high proportion of Jews from Germany and Austria, who considered it their duty to help those who had not had the good fortune of leaving the Continent in time.

□ AJR Information, May 1950



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NEWSROUND

Compensation fund agreement

The likelihood of payments from the German Government's DM10 billion slave labour compensation fund being made before the end of this year has increased following an agreement between claimant groups. 'Slave workers' will be entitled to up to DM15,000 each, while the remaining funds will be used to settle Jewish property claims and to support cultural programmes and Holocaust research.

Justice delayed?

Former Nazi doctor Heinrich Gross, whose conviction for manslaughter had been set aside on appeal in 1951, was deemed unfit to plead to new charges of murder. Following a television interview in which he claimed there was a lack of evidence against him, the trial judge brought forward an investigation into his 'incapacity'.

Out of tune

Israel Symphony Orchestra's inclusion of Wagner's *Stegfried Idyll* in this year's repertoire faced considerable opposition. Israel's Simon Wiesenthal Centre objected on the grounds that Holocaust survivors contributed to the orchestra's support through public funding.

Antisemitism in Switzerland

Two separate surveys of Swiss attitudes to Jews (reports the *Jewish Chronicle*) revealed continuing antisemitism and ignorance about the Holocaust. However, there was also support for restitution and evidence of greater tolerance among the young.

Holocaust denier jailed

Armand Amaudruz, 79, editor and publisher of a racist publication, was the first to be convicted in Switzerland under a five-year-old law against racism. He was prosecuted for publishing articles declaring the Holocaust to be a myth, an accusation he repeated in court.

Remembering Hugo Gryn

Known and admired for his contribution to religious understanding, Rabbi Hugo Gryn will be memorialised in an annual Fellowship in Religious Tolerance at the Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations in Cambridge.

Controversial art web site

The names of over 2,000 looted paintings, many of which were to hang in Hitler's art gallery in Linz, have been published on a German Government website. The list is alleged to include paintings whose provenance can in fact be substantiated. □ MK

Soup of the evening, beautiful soup

There have been two recent news items about chicken, so contradictory that, given the public's impressionable nature, it is quite possible that the people rushing into the shops in response actually collided with those rushing out.

In a scholarly article, two Israeli doctors argued that the World Health Organisation's List of Essential Drugs should henceforth be enhanced by the addition of chicken soup. Inclusion on the list depends on proving that a drug is as relevant now as it was 20 years ago. A blink of the eyelid. We are talking *millennia* here.

Lacey and Danziger, in their recent best-seller *The Year 1000*, say that chicken soup was well-known then for its soothing and restorative powers. But Abraham Ohry and Jenni Tsafir, writing in the December issue of the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, take it back even further, to Talmudic times, when it was known that broth of fowl could cure constipation, haemorrhoids, leprosy and the black humours.

Anyway, it certainly dates back to my grandmother, who made the best chicken soup in North London. (Don't argue, she did.) My mother, bless her, was a *very* close rival. My wife does extremely well, considering – the major problem being that chicken soup, *proper* chicken soup, should only be made with a boiling fowl, i.e. a hen which has lived long enough to acquire a bit of flavour, as opposed to one of the tiny innocents massacred in their millions by modern mass-agribusiness. These now appear to be unobtainable in Britain except from the handful of big-city kosher butchers.

The rabbis, obsessed by how animals die, don't seem bothered how they actually live. The rabbis, however, are right in believing that God did not intend us to be vegetarian. Why else was this benison conferred on humankind? And I need to be blessed with it at very regular intervals. The urge hits me hardest when travelling. I go down mean streets trying to score a bowl of chicken soup the way other men hunt out kinky sex. It is easy enough in New York, though Wolf's, just south of Central Park, has closed, as has its neighbour, the New York Deli, where they would throw an entire hen into the bowl if you wanted. But I have been disappointed in Tel Aviv (the soup was

cold), Moscow (too much dill), Chicago (too much carrot) and San Francisco (Shenson's slogan: Only a shnook would cook – turned out to be closed on Mondays). I have succeeded triumphantly in Antwerp (Hoffy's in the Diamond Quarter). In London, Bloom's in Golders Green and Harry Morgan in St John's Wood are the best I've found, though the Nosherie near Farringdon Station used to be Antwerp-class (complete with Jewish grandmas to serve you) until a terrible decline set in a few years back.

To be safe, it should be served at home. Boil the chicken – not too fast – in a giant saucepan of water. Then skim off the froth (with a wet tablespoon, I'm told) and throw in carrots, an onion or two and celery. My sister-in-law Liz, who is pretty ace, insists on a tomato and a touch of parsley. Season well. Simmer it imperceptibly for three or four hours at least. You must leave it overnight in the fridge, so next day you can skim the fat off; my mum was most insistent on that.

Then chuck out the chicken and the vegetables; it's a soup not a jungle. Serve with vermicelli or kreplach, a sort of ravioli, or – best of all – kneidlach, the dumplings otherwise known as matzo balls. (When Marilyn Monroe dined with her future in-laws, Arthur Miller's parents, three Friday nights running, she eventually asked: "Isn't there any other part of the matzo you can eat?"). The end result should be a translucent, far more gold than brown: the kneidlach should gleam like Carrara marble lit by the noonday sun. My grandmother always added a garnish of peas. In my view, the experience should not be spoiled by having to worry about leaving room for the next course.

Some would say that for true Jewish authenticity, one should be nagged gently through the meal. But believe me, it is the soup not the nagging that banishes black humours. As for leprosy, all I can say is that a lifetime of this medicine has kept me entirely leprosy-free. And flu bugs don't stand a chance.

The NHS should be distributing chicken soup in doctors' waiting rooms. It would save the country a fortune.

□ Matthew Engel

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