

AJR journal

The Association of Jewish Refugees

Judith Kerr and the British

Like her many readers in Britain and worldwide, AJR members who heard Judith Kerr speak about her work at the London Jewish Cultural Centre on 29 June 2014 were enchanted by the sheer charm of her writing. Kerr is best known for her children's books, *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* and the Mog the Cat stories, but *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*, her semi-autobiographical account of her family's flight from Nazi Germany in March 1933 and their arrival in Britain some years later, will always be dear to the hearts of the refugees from Hitler.

Judith Kerr was born in Berlin in 1923, the daughter of Alfred Kerr, Germany's foremost drama critic, and his wife Julia. Her elder brother was Sir Michael Kerr, a brilliant barrister who became the first non-British-born Lord Justice of Appeal since the twelfth century. Kerr's three books about her experiences of emigration and life in Britain were republished in a single volume in 1994

under the title *Out of the Hitler Time: One Family's Story*. The first part of the trilogy, *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*, has long been an international bestseller and the third part, *A Small Person Far Away*, an account of Kerr's first return visit, in 1956, to Berlin, where her mother had attempted suicide, has also attracted considerable interest. But the second volume, *The Other Way Round*, which depicts the often difficult process of the family's acclimatisation to life in Britain and the gradual passing of responsibility from the parents, unable to come to terms with their new life and status, to the more adaptable and energetic children, arguably merits more attention than it has received. (Its recent reissuing under the misbegotten title *Bombs on Aunt Dainty* will hardly have helped.)

The Other Way Round begins in March 1940, when Anna, Judith Kerr's fictional self, is struggling to cope with her situation as a teenage refugee in wartime Britain. The interaction between the refugees from Nazism and the British is reflected in the portrayal of the latter through the eyes of an intelligent and sensitive, but naïve and impressionable, young girl. Anna is lodging with American friends in Kensington since her parents cannot afford a room for her even at the shabby-genteel Hotel Continental in Bloomsbury, where they live surrounded by an array of bewildered, anxious and impoverished refugees. Anna is uncomfortably aware of the contrast between the wealth of her hosts, the Bartholomews, and her own family's poverty – a drastic change from the prosperity and standing they had enjoyed in Germany, and the material counterpart to the marginal status to which they have been reduced as 'alien' refugees in an insular Britain ignorant of, and indifferent to,



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SPECIAL EVENT

The Last Train to Tomorrow

Sunday 9 November 2014, 3 pm
at The Roundhouse, London NW1

We are delighted to announce that a VIP will be the guest of honour at the AJR's London premiere of *The Last Train to Tomorrow* at The Roundhouse on Sunday 9 November 2014 and that Natasha Kaplinsky, the newsreader and television presenter, and member of Prime Minister David Cameron's Holocaust Commission, will be introducing the event.

Commissioned by the Halle Orchestra and composed and conducted by the internationally acclaimed artist Carl Davis CBE, *The Last Train to Tomorrow* tells the extraordinary story of the Kindertransport through a series of songs written by the children's author Hiawyn Oram.

The music will be performed by the Finchley Children's Music Group and the concert programme will also feature *The Marriage of Figaro Overture* by Mozart and Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto* performed by the City of London Sinfonia together with an outstanding young violin soloist from the Yehudi Menuhin School.

This special and historic one-off occasion will begin with a commemoration of the anniversary of Kristallnacht and, as the event takes place on a Sunday afternoon, we particularly encourage members to bring along their children and grandchildren. The symbolism that the Roundhouse was formerly a turning point for trains and is located near Swiss Cottage, where many of the escaping refugees settled, should help make the concert memorable and historic.

Further information is on the flyer enclosed with this month's Journal.

Tickets can be purchased strictly through The Roundhouse Box Office – visit www.roundhouse.org.uk or telephone 0300 6789 222.

Judith Kerr and the British *continued*

the hardships experienced by those forced to flee the Nazi dictatorship.

Anna's first impressions of Britain, conveyed in the final pages of *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*, are predominantly favourable: after the open hostility displayed by their Parisian concierge towards the family both as refugees and as Jews, Britain appears reassuring, if unfamiliar. The weather that greets them on their crossing from France may be appalling but in Newhaven a 'kind but incomprehensible' porter puts them on the right train to London. The English passengers may sit bolt upright behind their newspapers, barely exchanging a word, but on alighting from the train they form an orderly queue to leave the platform, with none of the pushing and jostling customary in Continental countries. The language may at first be incomprehensible: the children are puzzled that every station appears to be called 'Bovril', until their mother informs them that this is 'some kind of English food', eaten, she thinks, with stewed fruit. And though at Victoria Station Anna and her brother Max are initially baffled by a porter's enquiry 'Itla?', they rapidly understand his meaning when he places his fingers moustache-like under his nose, mimes a Nazi salute, then spits forcefully (and to them reassuringly) onto the platform.

When *The Other Way Round* begins, in 1940, Anna has experienced life in Britain, with its attendant hardships and humiliations, as a refugee for some four years. Since her parents can no longer pay for her hotel room she has 'become like a parcel, to be tossed about, handed from one person to another, without knowing who would be holding her next', a metaphor that strikingly conveys the insecurity of the child refugee's life. She had first been taken in at the Metcalfe Boarding School for Girls, where she, 'the clever little refugee girl', had not fitted in

among the beefy, hockey-playing English pupils. As the opening paragraphs of the book show, life with the Bartholomews is more pleasant, but no less demeaning, in that she is constantly conscious of living on her hosts' charity: she is reduced to wearing the slightly shabby clothes handed down to her by the Bartholomews' daughters and her handbag is a cast-off of her mother's from Berlin.

But, apart from these signs of poverty, Anna has become almost indistinguishable from other middle-class English girls after four years of life and schooling in Britain. She and Max have come to feel themselves in large measure British, or at least the equals of their British counterparts, and are intensely resentful and indignant when they are considered inferior on account of their status as 'alien' refugees or are singled out for treatment different to that accorded their British peers. Travelling to Cambridge to spend a weekend with Max, who is studying there, Anna's external appearance is that of a British girl of her age but in matters other than clothing the sense of otherness persists, most importantly in the way that she is perceived as different, both by others and by herself.

On the train to Cambridge, she encounters a 'tweedy woman', the archetypal middle-class English lady. At first, the lady takes Anna for an English girl going to Cambridge for social purposes befitting someone of her class and befriends her. But she is disconcerted to learn that Anna comes from Berlin: 'I should never have thought it. You haven't got a trace of an accent. I could have sworn that you were just a nice, ordinary English girl.' The idea that Anna is from Germany but opposed to her native country in time of war is too much for the tweedy lady, who, offended by what she considers a deception practised on her, buries herself reproachfully in *Country Life*. Only a slow process of immersion in British life during the war leads Anna to feel, by the time of the VE Day celebrations in May 1945, that she belongs in her adopted homeland.

Even more than Anna, Max is desperate to be taken for English. He adapts with astonishing speed to the British educational system; his academic gifts rapidly gain him a scholarship to Cambridge, where his sister is amazed to see him behaving exactly like an English undergraduate, and being treated as such by his English friends. Hence his fury and dismay when, a short time later, he is interned as an 'enemy alien'. Max suffers

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no particular ill treatment and is indeed released from internment unusually early: 'But he clearly hated it. He hated being imprisoned and he hated being treated as an enemy, and most of all he hated being forced back into some kind of German identity which he had long discarded.'

After his release, Max is determined to prove his Britishness to the British: overcoming all obstacles, he succeeds in joining the RAF and, when Bomber Command and Fighter Command refuse to allow him to fly on operations on the grounds that he cannot be allowed to fly over German territory, he persuades Coastal Command to accept him, arguing that no rule prevents him from flying over the sea. By the end of the book, as he walks through the London crowds on VE Day in RAF uniform, the salutes he receives signal his acceptance as a respected member of the national community.

The image of Britain as a country of refuge also changes markedly in the course of the narrative. At first, much of the emphasis is on the failure of the British to understand the position of the Jews driven out of Germany by the Nazis, on the shabby poverty they endure and on the frustration of successful and educated people forced into inactivity or, at best, into menial jobs. However, the Kerrs come to admire the behaviour of the British in wartime, the tenacity of their resistance to the Nazi juggernaut and their stolid resilience during the Blitz. The spirit of solidarity that unites the civilian population embraces even the refugees at the Hotel Continental as they listen exultantly to the BBC radio news announcing the losses suffered by the Luftwaffe on 15 September 1940, the crucial day in the Battle of Britain. By the end of the book, in 1945, the Kerrs also feel a modest pride in being part of the community that has won so hard-fought a victory.

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Views expressed in the *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

An emotional journey down Tea Garden Lane

In June this year the *AJR Journal* published my article 'Memories from childhood', which mentioned my stay as a small child in the Beacon Hostel for refugee children in Tunbridge Wells in the mid-1940s. This led to three of the other Beacon 'children' contacting me, including my best friend, Susi Hauser (now Pepper), whom I had not seen for 67 years. I described these contacts in a 'letter to the editor' of the *Journal* which was included in the August edition.

Readers of the *Journal* might like to know the next chapter in this incredible story. The Beacon Hostel is now the Beacon Hotel and on 6 August 2014, along with my husband and one of my granddaughters, I took another journey down Tea Garden Lane in Tunbridge Wells. As I parked my car I found myself looking up at the building which, during and after the war, had housed refugee children like myself. Some had arrived in this country via the Kindertransport, others with a parent; all had fled from the Nazis.

I didn't know if I could control my tears. Emotion welled up inside



'Beacon girls', 1942 Erica Prean (second row, fourth from right), Lilly Lampert and Mella Segal (behind second and third Brownies) were present at August 2014 reunion. Also pictured are matrons Herlitz, Stark and Friederich (first names unknown)

me. Here I was in the place that had been my home nearly 70 years earlier, which I had left in 1947, and where I had been so happy as a child. This was the place I had shared with other children, who had become my family. I had already met two of them for the first time in 67 years; now I was going to meet others thanks to Erica Prean. Erica had been one of the older girls when I was a small child. Now she had generously organised a reunion, which she had done in the past though I had known nothing about it. This time, my childhood friend Susi would be there. I had had no contact with her since 1947 but, thanks to the *Journal*, we had made contact again. Then we had been little girls; now we were in our mid-seventies. How marvellous is that – and how unbelievable a story!

So there I was entering that lovely old arts and crafts house. I was seeing again the beautiful gardens and the spectacular views across the Kentish countryside. I was walking along paths I had last walked along when I was nine. How different it all must have been from the devastation of London. I saw the bedroom, with its original floorboards, which had been the little girls' dormitory. How huge it had seemed to me then – how modest in size it looked now! I saw the small bedroom Mrs Hauser, my friend Susi's mother, a

refugee herself as well as a member of staff, had shared. Mrs Hauser was so kind and loving.

We went into the small room, now a bar, which had been our dining room, and then into the hotel restaurant, once the children's general work and play room. Fifteen of us sat down to a lovely meal during which we talked non-stop about the old days. Afterwards, we pored over old photos of ourselves as children in the 1940s. I learned that the older girls had had to scrub the floors. All our clothes were cast-offs and hand-me-downs. Things hadn't been easy. In the winter the house was always cold – no central heating *then*. We girls often dressed underneath our bed covers because it was the warmest place. Chilblains were commonplace. Everyone agreed, though, that we had been very happy there. We always said that 'we have each other' and so we did.

We had all survived and were pleased to take this wonderful opportunity to revisit a place which had loomed large in all our memories for 60 or 70 years. We were all so grateful to Erica Prean for her generosity and the time she had taken in arranging it all and to the present owners of the Beacon, Mr and Mrs Cullen, for their fantastic hospitality.

This was a very special event in my life and a day I will never forget.

Susie Barnett (née Frankenberg)

MONDAY MORNING AT THE MOVIES

Monday 27 October 2014
10.30 am for 11.00 am start (prompt)

'The Hundred-Foot Journey'



Starring Dame Helen Mirren

When Hassan Kadam and his family move to a quaint village in the South of France with the grand plan of opening an Indian restaurant, they are undeterred by the fact that only 100 feet opposite stands a Michelin-starred classical French eatery. However, on encountering the icy proprietress, Madame Mallory (played by Dame Helen), the family realise they may have bitten off more than they can chew....

A feel-good movie to brighten up
a winter morning

For further details, please contact Susan Harrod
at susan@ajr.org.uk or tel 020 8385 3070

WHO CAN YOU TRUST? CONFESSIONS OF A GRAMMAR FREAK

Whom indeed? Not journalists, not authors of otherwise well-written fiction, not even the BBC News: 'Who will you marry?' 'The wedding of X who police want to question' 'Y has been sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering a grandfather who he stabbed to death.'

Whom, I'm afraid, is on its way out except in sentences such as: 'Z, whom I believe is a bachelor' Ouch! According to Google, it has been on a steady decline since 1826. As an editor of the *Guardian* put it, 'Correctness is significantly less appealing when the price is the appearance of being a "pompous twerp".'

I know what he means. At the bridge club, rather than asking 'Who are you playing with today?', as everyone else would, I rephrase: 'Who is your partner today?'

I have written about grammar before and ended the article telling myself sternly that the time had come for me to thoroughly chill out and I do manage to split the odd infinitive – with gritted teeth.

Well, I'm at it again and my latest hobby-horse is the use of *who* and *whom*. Once again I consulted Fowler's *Modern English Usage*. This book has a history. It was given to me by a fellow boarder at Miss Bull's in Maidenhead during the war. His inscription reads: 'To Edith from Little Hibby [his nickname for himself] 26/3/43.'

I was 23 years old. Rather like Mary's little lamb, the book was sure to go wherever I went. It followed me to Germany, Paris, Sydney and, finally, London. It takes pride of place on my favourite shelf alongside my concise Oxford and Chambers dictionaries, my *Roget's Thesaurus*, my *Chambers's Biographical Dictionary*, my *Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms*, my *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* and my German, French and Italian dictionaries. Most of these reference books are very old and I fully realise that Google has made them all redundant but I wouldn't part with any of them.

So what has Henry Watson Fowler (1856-1933) to say on the subject? My edition of the book was first published in 1926 and reprinted (with corrections) in 1940: 'The interrogative *who* is often used in talk where grammar demands *whom* as in "Who did you hear that from?" No further defence than "colloquial" is needed for this, & in the sort of questions that occur in printed matter other than dialogue the liberty is seldom taken.'

Is it really? What would Fowler say if he were to return to earth now? My guess is that he would be fairly relaxed. Although passionate about language and grammar, he was far more tolerant than I am. 'Language changes,' he might observe, as indeed it does. My problem is that I can't change with it.

Yes, I plead guilty to being a grammar freak! But there are extenuating

circumstances. As you all know, my mother tongue is German. Every German noun has one of three genders and there are four case forms – nominative, genitive, dative and accusative. (Latin, the second language I learned, has two more: the ablative and vocative.) But let's stick to German.

In German, it takes six words to express the modest definite article *the*, as it does for the even more modest indefinite article *a*. It would be impossible, even for a semi-literate person, to confuse a subject with an object.

I have to confess that I was as finicky about German grammar as I am about English grammar. There was a popular saying in Austria: 'Bescheidenheit ist eine Zier, doch weiter kommst du ohne ihr' (Modesty is a virtue but you'll get further without it). Now the problem here is that 'Bescheidenheit' is a feminine noun and the preposition 'ohne' takes the accusative. Therefore, the pronoun should be *sie* but *sie* doesn't rhyme with 'Zier'. Since I couldn't bring myself to cite the saying with the wrong pronoun, I changed the second line to 'doch weiter kommst du nicht mit ihr' (but you won't get far with it). That's me!

I'm very much afraid that very soon I – a b***** foreigner – will be the only person left in Britain to use *who* and *whom* correctly. Serves me right for being a pompous twerp.

Edith Argy

Outline Agreement on Compensation to Child Survivors Reached

The Claims Conference has reached an outline agreement with the German Finance Ministry to provide compensation to Jewish child survivors of the Holocaust, defined as Nazi victims born on or after 1 January 1928. As full details of the fund have yet to be confirmed, the programme will not start until 1 January 2015.

Specifically, the reparation covers those who were in concentration camps and/or ghettos or were for at least 6 months in Nazi-occupied territory or 12 months in Axis countries, in hiding or living under a false identity. Those eligible will receive a one-time payment of €2,500 (approximately £2,000).

Unlike the Claims Conference-operated Article II Fund, there are no

income or savings criteria but recipients of the Article II Fund can also receive this lump sum award. Similarly, there is no restriction if a person receives the German Government compensation known as BEG.

In negotiating the establishment of the fund with the German Government, the Claims Conference delegation emphasised the trauma Jewish children suffered during the Holocaust, which has in many cases overshadowed the rest of their lives. Their experiences include devastating separation from parents, witnessing unimaginable atrocities, malnutrition and a range of physically abusive situations. These early traumas are resulting in physical and psychological problems that are appearing only now as concrete symptoms in their

old age.

The agreement follows the first-ever symposium of Jewish child survivors. The symposium, entitled 'Lost Childhood: Jewish Childhood Survivors' and held on 27 August at the Centrum Judaicum in Berlin, was organised by the Claims Conference in co-operation with the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust and Descendants (WFJCSJ) and the Centre of Organisations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel.

The fund is expected to become operational on 1 January 2015, after which application forms will be circulated. To register your interest in receiving an application form, please email rosemary@ajr.org.uk

IN BETWEEN TWO LANGUAGES

Although my father eventually spoke fluent English, he never lost his Berlin accent. His speech was peppered with Yorkshire expressions and his verbs invariably landed at the end of his sentences. Inside our home he lapsed into German; also Yiddish words were embedded in his stories, connecting him with his grandparents' lives. He immediately became more vivid, more humorous, more himself.

We were raised between two languages. We accessed two cultures. Our parents inhabited an in-between world – tales and troubles, joy and sorrow – in both languages. We heard our parents moving from a phrase in one language to a sentence in another. As a child I never knew which language was which. My syntax still betrays my German background. We slipped from one language to the other effortlessly; it didn't matter if it came out wrong. Our endeavour was encouraged and applauded. Mistakes were overlooked on the tacit understanding that we would eventually absorb a correct way. We heard it around us and understood. Eventually we spoke.

There was no careful puzzling over verb conjugation or learning lists of vocabulary. My brother Johnny and I picked out words that sounded funny and turned them into nonsense language, a code between the two of us.

German is the language of my nursery rhymes. It has seeped through my skin. I speak it with an English accent; I soften the harsh guttural sounds; I lose the diminutives; I keep the cadences and the phrases. This second language has made me more attentive to my first. I search for words with different nuances. I notice the space between words. It's a different quality of listening.

We had often been amazed when one word could mean two entirely different things. *Zug* means train but it also means draught. 'I'm sitting in the train,' my father would remark if he wanted me to close the door.

I discovered that we could be having a conversation entirely meaning the opposite to each other. We could both be right and be making a mistake at the same time. There's no clear right or wrong way, I learned as a little girl - turn the kaleidoscope and there are infinite ways of looking at the world.

We were driven through Europe, where we realised there were other languages – not just English, German and Hebrew in prayer books. French, Italian, Spanish ... where should we start?

My dad kept saying 'You must have at least one more language.'

'Why?'

'You never know when you might

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart'
Nelson Mandela

need it. You don't know when you might have to go, to settle somewhere else, you need to earn your living wherever you are.'

So we learned French in school, properly structured, reciting prepositions and negatives. But we never spoke it the same: it came from our head, neatly packaged and ordered somewhere inside our brains. German rested in our hearts, absorbed through our pores, through cuddles and smiles, through shouting, through sorrow and happiness.

I had another language to play with as a child, wrapped around me like a blanket: the language of favourite stories, the language used to lift me up to hug and kiss me, the diminutive reminding me I was the littlest, the sweetest and the hope of the next generation. I still carry that language inside me, a jewel which suddenly sparkles as words and phrases learnt



Carry Gorney with brother Johnny, c 1948-49

long ago jump into the light, illuminating my way through Europe.

My parents patiently explained the meaning of words, phrases, puns. My brother and I were weaving their stories of a German life together with our own English stories. The Continental characters of our childhood used language theatrically and we turned them into cartoon characters. We mimicked their exaggerated expressions: *entzückend* (enchancing), *grossartig* (brilliant), *grausam* (grotesque).

They often implored and exclaimed to God: *Ach du lieber Gott, Gott im Himmel, Mein Gott*, echoing a more fervent religious past when blessings of gratitude were constantly being uttered. Then they had been part of

a community, their individual dreams and desires subsumed in the rules and rituals of orthodox Jewish life. They had escaped Nazi Germany; each individual had a separate story of survival. Here they found themselves without their old ties and community, a random collection of lost souls from somewhere east of Calais, in the direction of Mitteleuropa.

Johnny and I copied these exclamations in loud theatrical voices in our shared conversations. We were the threads that tied them all together; our existence gave them a future. We teased them whilst they struggled with the idiosyncrasies of English and the impossibility of pronouncing words correctly. Aunty Frieda talked of 'pluffing a field', bemused at our hysterical laughter. My father talked of finding a 'sheep pension'.

From the back of the car one of our voices would call out: 'Daddy, will there be sheep staying at the pension?'

The other voice: 'Do EWE know when we'll get there?'

Their mistakes in English, their pronunciation, my father looking for a 'sheep pension', would evoke jokes and more helpless giggling.

We'd snort and chuckle at German signs as we were driven through Europe: *Ausfahrt, Einfahrt, Überfahrt, Unterfahrt* and, above all, *Himmelfahrt* – farting all the way up to heaven!

Our relationship to German words was a secret language, a melange of these exclamations. Our own brand of foreignness bubbled over as it curled round the edges of our emerging English selves.

We lived in no man's land, England outside and somewhere else inside, partly Germany, partly an idiosyncratic émigré country invented in our own heads through listening to our parents' descriptions of life before. I projected myself into their European world through the images and anecdotes they gave me, through the furniture they brought with them, the music they danced to, the 1930s paste jewellery they pinned to their clothes. Everything from the thirties became exotic and unattainable to me. It became the focus of my aspirations.

Carry Gorney

This article is an extract from Send Me a Parcel – with a Hundred Lovely Things, a memoir by Carry Gorney. The book will be published in November 2014 at £11.99 plus £3.00 p&p.

To pre-order, please visit <http://www.carry-gorney.co.uk/sendmeaparcels/> Alternatively, please send a cheque to Carry Gorney at Ragged Clown Publishers, c/o 1 Ferdinand Place, London NW1 8EE.



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

THE NIGHTMARE OF SHALOM HOUSE

Sir – Like Bernice Cohen (August, Letters), I too was captive at 'The Chestnuts' Jewish Children's Home in Hemel Hempstead – for six years, around 1940-46. The other name of this home for refugees and English children was Shalom House – a misnomer if ever there was one. It was more like something out of Dotheboys Hall in *Nicholas Nickleby!*

Run by a matron, Mrs Davies, who had no sympathy for, or understanding of, the children in her care, many of them refugees like myself, it was not a happy place. I saw children humiliated and punished for the smallest offence – sent to bed without supper, hit on the knuckles with a wooden spoon, etc. I was several times sent into the garden late at night in the winter darkness for talking in bed.

Three of us older girls – Doreen Goldberg, Bela Hilsum and I – were assigned to much of the domestic work before and after school. Several times I was kept up quite late – after peeling potatoes for about 60 people – washing up after the matron and her boyfriend (she was separated from her husband) had had supper together.

Visiting was once a month. Here the matron discriminated between the well-off English parents and the refugees' relatives, who were ignored. It was a treat to be taken by my poor aunt to the Red Tiles café for tea.

There were two beings who made life more of a joy for me. A particularly kind and sensitive member of staff befriended me. For instance, on my birthday I would wake up to find her childhood poetry books on my bed because she knew I loved poetry. The other delight was Tinker the dog. I loved him. He would come up on to my bed and, if caught, we were both punished.

In 1965-66 I stayed on a kibbutz in Israel. There I met one of the resident members who had heard of Shalom House. It had been closed some time before but I doubt whether the practices

had been exposed. Had there been an inspection, everything would have been found to be in order: we were clean, adequately fed and looked after. But the stories behind the scenes were different

I am glad to have the opportunity at last to expose something of the miserable lives we suffered.

*Hannah Wurzburger (née Gibianski),
Worcester Park, Surrey*

Sir – I too 'did time' at 'The Chestnuts' in Hemel Hempstead. This children's home was originally located in North Finchley when Bloomsbury House dumped me there in August 1939. It was not a home for refugees but housed English children of varying (I use the word advisedly) backgrounds. We were evacuated to Hemel Hempstead and it was there that I heard the first sirens at the outbreak of the war.

During my stay (one year approximately) I too became traumatised and started to wet my bed at nine and a half years of age. There was just one other refugee girl, Anna Segal. Mrs Davies, the matron, resented us because she was paid higher fees for the English children. Her staff were scared of her.

This was the unhappiest time of my life in England. It ended with interviews at Bloomsbury House and a session at the Tavistock Clinic. Bloomsbury House was made aware of what went on at 'The Chestnuts' and I am appalled to discover that other refugee children were sent there after Anna's and my departure.

Erica Prean, Isle of Wight

'KITCHENER CAMP' PHOTO NOT KITCHENER CAMP

Sir – The photo on the front page of the September issue of the *AJR Journal* was not taken in Kitchener Camp but later on, at the Garrison Theatre in Ilfracombe. It is, in fact, the Pioneer Corps Orchestra – 8 of the 12 players were definitely not in the

Camp. Of the remaining four I am sure three were; about the fourth, the pianist Herbert Kruh, I'm not certain.

I myself am in the photo (the younger of the two cellists facing the camera) and am therefore quite sure of the facts. The leader (turning his head away) was Cecil Aronowitz, who was South African, transferred to the Intelligence Corps in 1941 or 1942, and became a well-known professional viola player (and professor at the Royal College of Music) after the war. Behind him is Hans Geiger, who became a professional orchestral violinist and a member of one of the big London orchestras (I can't remember which). The two wind players on the right (clarinet and trombone) were both British. The other non-Kitchener Camp players were all German or Austrian refugees but joined the Pioneer Corps later than the dissolution of Kitchener Camp.

I could name them all, but that would be of no interest. Jonas and Phineas May (mentioned in the article) both joined the Pioneer Corps as officers: Jonas was the first Adjutant at the Training Centre, Phineas the Entertainment Officer and therefore our 'boss'. The article does not mention one (to my mind) important fact about Kitchener Camp: the very first 'Alien' Pioneer Corps companies were formed from volunteers in the Camp.

Fritz Lustig, London N10

Sir – 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will.' These words from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* were on my mind recently when I was at the Wiener Library in Russell Square to see an exhibition on a subject of great interest to me – the Kitchener Refugee Camp near Sandwich. As I entered I was amazed to see a large picture taken



At the Wiener Library exhibition on Kitchener Camp. The photo of Stella Curzon and her father can be seen in the background

there 75 years ago of me and my father, Schulim Schatzberg. When I told the curator I was the ten-year-old in the picture he took a photo of it together with a new photo of me standing in front of it.

To my surprise, Clare Ungerson, who had recently published *Four Thousand Lives: The Rescue of German Jewish Men to Britain, 1939*, a fascinating book on the Camp, was at the exhibition with a party from Sandwich. Clare, her husband and I had lunch in the Square. When we got back to the exhibition, I was greeted with applause by people who must have been told of my part in the story. In the remaining time, they told me how Sandwich was now.

I had expected my visit to be moving but not so amazing!

Stella Curzon, Ruislip

'WE WON'T FORGET OUR HISTORY'

Sir – Thank you for publishing the very interesting letter from Gavriel Cohn, grandson of the late Norbert and Miriam Cohn. What a moving and wonderful experience to identify those precious places his forefathers had occupied, lived in and loved before fleeing for their lives – if able to!

I personally have only written down addresses but have never ventured to the birthplaces or homes of my family. Talking about 'those times' was always avoided. Nevertheless, we won't forget our history. Thank you, Gavriel!

Helen Grunberg, London NW10

AN ENCOUNTER WITH LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

Sir – As always, I read with awe and admiration the scholarship and research informing Anthony Grenville's articles. Particularly his recent article, 'Jews in the First World War', which concerns most of us. The experience of my father, Robert Loebel, as the Kaiser's foot soldier is well documented in my book *Don't Ask Me Where I Come From: How a Refugee from Nazi Germany Became a UN Correspondent* (2011). But I am taking the liberty of relating the role of a young Lithuanian Jew, my husband's great-uncle David Todes, in events which have resonance even now.

To rescue their young son David from the unrelenting assaults by Cossacks in their *shtetl*, my husband's family sent him to the gymnasium in Tel Aviv, where he became fluent in Arabic, English and, of course, Hebrew. Since nothing had changed on his return after graduation he was despatched at the age of 16 on the Trans-Siberian railway to Vladivostok and thence to New York. He then joined the Jewish Brigade in Canada and volunteered for service in the Middle East.

Severely wounded in battle, he was befriended by a titled Scottish nurse in a

hospital in Alexandria who persuaded his surgeons not to amputate his leg. One day, so he related to us, she came excitedly to his bed and told him to dress in his best fatigues and come to the hall, where someone wanted to meet him.

It was, of course, T. E. Lawrence. Lawrence did not tell him then why he needed his services. He took him under his wing, taught him how to ride camels and horses and how to speak the tribal languages, and, in the end, entrusted him with the task of taking gold to the sheiks in Aqaba, a bribe for their support in the fight against the Turks for the great prize of Damascus. Which David accomplished with many horrendous events on the way and final success.

Afterwards, Allenby didn't know what to do with this young Jew, who had distinguished himself in the desert. In the end, he was offered a commission in the Indian army, which he turned down to return to the USA, marry his sweetheart and become a Hebrew teacher in Rochester.

David told this tale one snowy day in New York at the Biltmore Hotel to his great-grandnephew, my late husband and me.

Lili Loebel-Todes, London NW8

NEW BOOK ON KAFKA

Sir – Your readers may be interested to know that the German author Marie Vachenaer, who previously published a fascinating, harrowing, and incidentally very scholarly book, *Der Fall Simon Abeles* (The Case of Simon Abeles) about 17th-century Prague Jewry, has now published a book on Kafka: *Kafka's Roman 'Der Prozess' als Spiegelung historischer Ereignisse in der Stadt Prag* (Kafka's Novel 'The Trial' as a Reflection of Historical Events in the City of Prague).

Gerda Mayer, Chingford

A GOOD AND SWEET NEW YEAR

Sir – I have only recently become a member of the AJR as I used to get all your news from, first, my parents and, after they passed away, from my brother. When he died last year I decided to join.

I would like to wish everyone in the Association, and especially those who edit and collate the *AJR Journal*, a good and sweet New Year. Despite the fact that many of us who suffered from the Holocaust are getting very old or are no longer with us, I hope you will continue writing and sending out your *Journal*, which almost always brings interesting articles and news.

Gerda Oblath, London NW4

'BORSCHT BELT' MEMORIES

Sir – At last Peter Phillips and I have found common ground!

I am referring to his article 'London's "Borscht Belt" – Jewish Hotels in

Bournemouth' in your August issue. Not that I am, or ever have been, one of their patrons, but my parents were. They first met in 1907 at some afternoon dance – not in Bournemouth, mind you, but in far-away Franconia.

It was the 'Vienna Walk' they both loved and excelled in that brought them together. Decades later, in their late sixties and early seventies, they were once more to find a place in which to show off their skills on the dance floor - this time at the Cumberland Hotel in Bournemouth, where they proved to be a hit and won prizes and where my mother must have felt like the belle of the ball.

I have a picture taken in September 1958 of my mother aged 69 and my father 70. Just like Peter Phillips, they had tried out all the hotels mentioned by him, but in this case it was the Cumberland that won – so to speak – hands down!

Margarete Stern, London NW3

'THE BOOKKEEPER FROM AUSCHWITZ'

Sir – I am a German-Hungarian lawyer who has been practising in both Hungary and Germany for a long time, in particular in the field of criminal law. I was contacted last year by a German colleague, Thomas Walther, who seeks to bring former Nazi criminals to justice. One of his greatest achievements is the trial of John Demjanjuk.

The trial of Oskar Gröning, whom *Der Spiegel* has referred to as 'the book-keeper from Auschwitz', is about to begin. A group of lawyers – Thomas Walther, Professor Dr Cornelius Nestler and myself - have gathered around a dozen potential co-plaintiffs from Hungary, Germany, the USA, Australia and Canada whose rights and voices we will represent in the trial.

Central to the case against Oskar Gröning are the deportation and murder of Hungarian Jews in 1944 – 434,402 victims in the period 10 May to 16 July 1944. Only those who survived or have close relatives – parents, brothers, sisters or half-brothers and sisters – who became victims may be represented in the case.

Do readers of the *Journal* know of any individuals who may wish to be represented at the trial?

I would be glad to provide further information about the case and, if need be, about the lawyers involved. Perhaps it would be best if I did this in a telephone conversation. As I am presently in Kosovo and spend a lot of time travelling, I would suggest that you provide me with a phone number and I will offer several times when I might phone.

*Dr Donat Ebert, Budapest
tel 00-36-1-787-89-95
donat.ebert@ebert.hu*

continued on page 16 ➔

ART NOTES

GLORIA TESSLER

The Tower of London is dwarfed by the glassy modernism of the Shard, the Gherkin, the oblong rotunda of City Hall, and a steely cityscape that grew around it after both World Wars became a mere memory. It sits low and threatening behind its 11th-century dry moat with its horrible histories, its medieval menace. Who can look at it and not shudder? It was here that over 1,600 men swore an oath to the Crown after enlisting for war. And here that German spies were shot.

Poppies have a fragile beauty. But, like the Tower, they bear the image of death. So how fitting for ceramicist



Chaim Soutine, *La Soubrette (Waiting Maid)*, 1933, acquired by Ben Uri in 2012

Paul Cummins and stage designer Tom Piper to create an ongoing installation of 888,246 poppies there to represent each British and Colonial soldier killed during that war. The last poppy will be 'planted' on Armistice Day, 11 November. The installation, **Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red**, was inspired by the will of a Derbyshire serviceman killed in Flanders, and each poppy has been hand-made by Cummins and his team, appropriately in Derby.

Unveiled on 5 August 2014, the centenary of the first day of the First World War, the poppies skim the moat and rise from a wire base, evoking the

soldiers' death-defying spirits. On the railings that surround the Tower, two roses have been pinned, each with a simple message flapping in the breeze. One commemorates William John Hamilton from the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Regiment, killed at the Somme. The second is in memory of E. N. Hubbard and J. Meads. From this distance, the poppies are a sea of red and it's hard to make out their individuality. But after Armistice Day you can buy one of your own, at £25 each.

On 1 July 2015 the Ben Uri celebrates its 100th birthday with the exhibition **Art, Identity, Migration** (to December 2015), supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Long an integral part of the community's cultural and social life, the Gallery was launched in London's East End as an art society by and for Jewish artists. For some years it was accommodated in spacious premises above the former West End Synagogue at 21 Dean Street, often backed by cultural events hosted by the Israeli Embassy.

The Ben Uri's research has been long and exhaustive. It has catalogued the ancient archive from which it built its national gallery and museum. Excavating the past has unravelled stories which span the length of the 20th century. Although its early minutes in Yiddish had been lost for over 70 years, they were recently rediscovered in New York with the help of the Rothschild Foundation Europe.

This will be a reflective moment for the Ben Uri, settled for the past few years in limited premises in London's Boundary Road. It has also launched a new blog: 'Centenary Stories'. These highlight the hidden artistic, political and academic history of the Gallery, which flourished in the crowded East End, despite early 20th-century poverty, from the First World War up to the contemporary debates on finance, exhibitions and location which challenge the Gallery in today's world.

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CONTEMPORARY
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

REVIEWS

Memorial to a lost world

VIENNA STORIES: VIENNESE JEWS
REMEMBER THE 20TH CENTURY IN
WORDS AND PICTURES

by Tanja Eckstein and Edward Serotta

Centropa, 2013, 254 pp. paperback,
\$19.95 (obtainable from
amazon.com)

Centropa is a Jewish historical institute based in Vienna which spent ten years interviewing, and recording the experiences of, the city's oldest Jews. A total of 22,000 photographs and documents belonging to survivors were digitised and, as far as possible, the subjects shown were identified. Every picture tells a story – that is the basis for this book of memories and reminiscences covering the greater part of the 20th century. The opening pages show gatherings of people in Café Centropa, a monthly gathering of survivors, many of whom contributed the photographs and stories included in the book.

Before the war there were over 180,000 Jews in Vienna. The photos record happy times with family celebrations, holidays, outings to the countryside, school, work and cultural life. There are many portraits dating back to the beginning of the century. The collection also includes photos taken during the Great War, when Jewish soldiers, as loyal citizens, fought for the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There are usually one or two photographs per page accompanied by a summary of the interview relating to these. It is not only ex-citizens of Vienna who are likely to find that these bring back nostalgic memories based either on their own experiences or what they were told by parents.

Inevitably, the *Shoah* casts a shadow throughout the book as the fates of many of those portrayed are recorded. On the positive side, there are many illustrated accounts of escapes from the Nazis, and of the subsequent lives of refugees living in many different countries, including of course Israel. In contrast to the earlier pictures of Jews in the Austro-Hungarian army, there are some of ex-refugees in the Allied forces and in the Haganah. Sadly, some of the survivors in Vienna had received photos of relatives living in the ghettos, and

these, together with pre-war pictures of victims of the *Shoah*, form a tragic element of the book.

An encouragingly large part of the book is entitled 'A World Rebuilt' and covers the period after 1945 both in Vienna and in the many countries where ex-refugees rebuilt their lives.

Vienna Stories is not a history book. More importantly, it portrays the lives of ordinary people, unsuspecting of the terrible effect history will have on them and their descendants.

Centropa is to be congratulated on producing this excellent record and memorial to a lost world. The work of Centropa could perhaps be an incentive for a similar project in this country. Many ex-refugees living in the UK have collections of photographs and documents relating to their families and, before these are lost, there is still time to start a project to have them digitised and incorporated in a publication. This would act not only as a memorial to the victims but also as a reminder of the vibrant life of a once thriving Jewish community in Europe. However, don't leave it too late!

George Vulkan

Not exactly an easy read

GOD LAUGHED: SOURCES OF JEWISH HUMOR

by Hershey H. Friedman and Linda Weiser Friedman

Transaction (New Brunswick, USA and London, 2014, 305 pp.; ISBN 978-1-4128-5376-7; obtainable from eurospanbookstore.com @ £27.63

This book is not a collection of Jewish jokes, although there are quite a few sprinkled among its pages (in fact, there is an Index of about 120 jokes, arranged by punch lines): it is a scholarly examination of the Hebrew Bible, the Talmud and the Midrash as to their humorous content. The authors believe that all three are 'replete with humor and wit'.

In an introduction of 32 pages and in the Conclusion, subtitled 'Is There a "Jewish" Sense of Humor?', the authors discuss this question at length and come to a positive conclusion.

They subdivide 'Humor' into the following categories: Irony, Sarcasm, Wordplay, Satire, Allegories, Parables, Fables, Exaggeration, Humorous Sayings and Remarks, Self-deprecating Humor. Each of the three sources mentioned

above is examined in detail as to which kinds of humour it contains and several examples of each are quoted and interpreted, with their exact place always given in the Notes as in any scholarly work.

This should serve as an example of the thoroughness of the examination. Chapter 7, 'Recurring Characters and Themes', contains the following subheadings: Alcohol and Alcoholics; Heretics and Other Sinners; Idolaters; When Bad Things Happen to Bad People; Scholarship and Pedagogy; Patience; Scholars and Scholarship; When the Leadership Is Criticized; Outsmarted in Jerusalem. The entire chapter is 22 pages.

The category 'Wordplay' presents some problems – how can you render the play on words in one language (Hebrew or Aramaic) in another language (English)? Lengthy explanations of the meaning and sound of the words in the original language are required, which make that section a little tedious to read.

In addition to the Index of Jokes already mentioned, the book includes a Bibliography (5 pages), a general Index (5 pages) and the following Appendices: Important Dates in Jewish History; The Time Periods of the Talmudic Sages; The Sages and Their Generations; Classic Commentators.

I did not consider all the examples quoted humorous (they are always printed in italics and are therefore easily distinguished from the authors' text) – in many cases they seemed to be just extracts from the Bible, Talmud or Midrash, with extensive explanations and comments. In my view, this book is not exactly an 'easy read': only somebody particularly interested in the subject would want to read it from cover to cover. Even its discounted price quoted above would not tempt a casual reader.

Fritz Lustig

www.fishburnbooks.com

Jonathan Fishburn

buys and sells Jewish and Hebrew books, ephemera and items of Jewish interest.

He is a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association.

Contact Jonathan on
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for more information

KINDERTRANSPORT LUNCH

Wednesday 8 October

at 12.30 pm

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Dame Stephanie Shirley
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please phone Andrea Goodmaker
on 020 8385 3070

Kindertransport Reunion DVD

We are delighted to announce that a special commemorative DVD with footage of the Kindertransport Reunion at JFS and the reception with His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales at St James's Palace is now available for purchase.

Filmed and produced by Alan Reich, the DVD will serve as a poignant memorial to the two historic gatherings of Kinder and their families that took place in June 2013 as part of the events the AJR organised to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport.

To receive your copy, please send a cheque for £5 made payable to the AJR to: AJR, Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL.

LATIMER PLACE

Tuesday 7 October 2014

Afternoon Visit



Latimer Place is now an exclusive upmarket hotel but during the Second World War many German POWs were held captive there and bugged by 'secret listeners' who were themselves German refugees, working for the British. Historian Helen Fry will join us on our tour and explain how the prisoners were lulled into divulging secrets of the Nazi war machine.

Following the tour, we will have a delicious full cream tea, during which we will have the opportunity to ask Helen any questions.

Coach will pick up at both Stanmore and Finchley Road

Cost, including travel, £40.00 per person

For further details, please contact
Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070
or at susan@ajr.org.uk

Keep the memory alive – Holocaust Memorial Day 2015

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is the charity funded by the UK government to promote and support Holocaust Memorial Day in the UK.

January 27 – Holocaust Memorial Day – provides an opportunity for everyone living in the UK to remember the millions of people killed during the Holocaust and under Nazi persecution. The Holocaust was an event that shook the very foundations of humanity. We said ‘Never again’ yet genocide continues to take place today. On Holocaust Memorial Day we also remember all those who have been killed in the genocides which have taken place since the Holocaust – in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and in the ongoing genocide in Darfur.

On Holocaust Memorial Day we honour those who survived and whose lives have been irreversibly changed by the Holocaust and genocide. We highlight their experiences to champion the fight against hatred and discrimination in today’s society. We feature the experience of refugees and celebrate the contributions that you have made to communities throughout the UK.

Holocaust Memorial Day is a living memorial to the Holocaust and subsequent genocides. January 27 is now marked at over 2,400 commemorative activities across the UK. HMD brings together hundreds of thousands of people across ages, faiths and backgrounds to learn about the Holocaust and its lessons for humanity. Memorial activities take place



in workplaces, civic halls, libraries, public spaces and schools and universities, to name but a few. We offer people the opportunity to engage with HMD through diverse means – including education, arts and sports. HMDT’s Youth Champion project ensures that young people are the driving force behind HMD, carrying memory forward to the next generation.

Holocaust Memorial Day is also marked online and in the media, ensuring that its important messages are embedded in our collective consciousness. HMD Trust works to ensure that the messages of Holocaust Memorial Day resonate throughout the year.

January 27 2015 will be the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. On 15 September we launched our resources for this anniversary year, to the theme of ‘Keep the memory alive’. The theme reminds everyone of their personal responsibility to champion the memory of the Holocaust into the future and, as the logo suggests, keeping the candle of remembrance lit.

The voices and experiences of survivors, refugees and those whose lives have been irreversibly changed by the Holocaust

and genocide are central to the work of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. If you would like to find out more, we would be delighted to discuss the opportunities available for you to work with us to raise awareness of your personal story. If you are interested in assisting Holocaust Memorial Day in this way, please contact **Communications Officer Alice Owen** at alice.owen@hmd.org.uk or call 020 7785 7029.

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is inviting refugees and survivors to attend the UK Commemorative Event, which will be held on the afternoon of Tuesday January 27 2015 in central London.

There will be transport to and from the event from various locations in North London. Refreshments will be provided.

To apply for tickets, please contact Anna Miller by November 15. Please call 020 7785 7029, email rsvp@hmd.org.uk, or write to Anna Miller, HMDT, PO BOX 61074, London SE1P 5BX. Please note that the number of tickets is limited.

We are also involved in organising the national events in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Please get in touch if attending any of these events is more appropriate for you.

Alice Owen

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE REINVENTION OF FREEDOM

I am the very grateful recipient of the Thank-Offering to Britain Fellowship originally funded by the Association of Jewish Refugees. The fellowship will grant me sabbatical leave from my post as Reader in Cultural Sociology at the University of Nottingham for the calendar year 2015.

During this period I intend to write a book that has been commissioned by Routledge for the international series in Global and Transnational Politics. My topic is the relationship between ideas of freedom and human rights in the global age. The research will focus on how, since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, ideas of human rights have swept the world as never before. One of the key contradictions of our increasingly globally integrated societies is how national ideas of belonging and security co-exist with more cosmopolitan ideas of global solidarity and consciousness. Border-crossing ideas of freedom can be found in the faces of contemporary global

icons like Nelson Mandela or Martin Luther King, within globally orientated music, education and art work, and in 24-hour news and the rise of documentary cinema among other sources.

Despite the prominence of nationalist parties and movements within the European setting, more cross-cultural ideas of freedom are never far from the surface. More recently, the Alter Globalisation and the Occupy movements have sought to reinterpret ideas of human rights and freedom for the 21st century. Here the focus has been on seeking to reconnect human rights to the idea of the global commons. If nation-states and powerful conglomerates seek to turn the world into a form of private property, then the commons seeks to highlight not only our responsibilities to the globe’s citizens irrespective



Dr Nick Stevenson

of borders (for example refugees) but also that we learn to protect nature, languages and cultures for the rest of humanity.

The reinterpretation of human rights in the 21st century may yet lead to the global reinvention of freedom that promises a more sustainable, just and ethical future for humanity that avoids the nationalist barbarism of the 20th century. The idea of the commons puts greater stress on ideas of human bonding, interconnection

and sharing than it does on competitive forms of individualism. Undoubtedly, these ideas are still in the incubation stage but I am hopeful that over the course of the sabbatical I will be able to develop them further.

Dr Nick Stevenson
University of Nottingham

Israel: We need to talk

Do you remember that in one episode of the *Fawlty Towers* series Basil kept murmuring 'Don't mention the war' when referring to the Germans? We have a similar concern nowadays – except that it's called 'Don't mention the war' when referring to Israel!

I have noticed that with my Jewish and non-Jewish friends alike, the subject of Israel is skirted around if not actually avoided. We Jews are embarrassed. The non-Jews are embarrassed. It seems that even sex, politics and religion are less controversial topics. There were only two letters in the September issue of the *AJR Journal* that went anywhere near the subject. Victor Ross defended the disproportionate retaliation of the Israelis in their bombing of Gaza. Fair enough. It was no more disproportionate than the British bombing of Dresden following the bombing of Coventry. Fred Stern too defended the Israeli action and explained how the Palestinians were used as human shields in hospitals, schools, mosques and homes. I agree with him. Hamas made it impossible for women and children not to be killed. He said 'The survival of Israel must be assured by every means'. Again, I agree.

But at what price – *that* is the question. Hamas and, for that matter, most Arab states want Israel wiped off the face of the earth. Is this not worth fighting against with all one's might and power? Hamas kept sending rockets over Israel to bombard the country. But for Israel's brilliant Iron Dome defence system, thousands of Israelis would have been killed. Should these rocket attacks not have been stopped? Hamas was building tunnels from Gaza into Israel to infiltrate the country. A tunnel might have ended up in an Israeli family's garden. Were these horrendous dangers not to be stopped? So again I ask – at what price did Israel attack Gaza with such force?

Israel did it to survive and I make no excuses whatsoever for its action. However, I do ask whether Benjamin Netanyahu's government has treated the Palestinians fairly and whether some of his recent policies, in particular the continued building of the controversial settlements, were not the direct cause of Hamas's taking up arms again. As agreed at Camp David, a two-state solution is the only answer to Israel's problems. Gaza should be part of a new Palestine – so should a large part of the West Bank. Further, Jerusalem should become an international city –

the West belonging to Israel and the East to Palestine. Building settlements on the West Bank must stop and some even taken down. Sack Naftali Bennett and his religious zealots from the government. Ignore the settlers and the other religious zealots like Shas who believe that biblical land once called Judea and Samaria must have its location inside Israel. We are in the 21st century now. The land is no longer 'Jewish' land – it is land that at the moment is shared by Israelis and Palestinians alike.

In return, the Palestinians and their Arab neighbours must recognise the right of Israel to exist in peace (as Jordan tacitly does) and realise that there cannot be any 'right of return' for the 1948 Palestinian refugees. Most should be re-settled in Jordan, the land from which they came. Netanyahu must dissociate himself from Avigdor Lieberman and, instead, form a workable alliance in the Knesset with Yair Lapid, Tzipi Livni, Isaac Herzog and all those seeking peace.

The current situation cannot continue. Surely everyone knows that the new ceasefire will only hold for, at the most, a year or two. Surely everyone knows that the current bout of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism can only be ended by peace. Surely none of us want to give the left-wing press like the *Guardian* or the left-leaning BBC more ammunition to attack Israel. Let us wipe Jeremy Bowen and Orla Guerin off our screens for ever. Let's silence George Galloway for good.

Israel must make itself liked again. During the Six-Day War we were not shy to have stickers in our cars saying 'We support Israel.' It is vital that Israel's image be restored to what it was. Let's be proud of her again – as proud as we were in 1967, and particularly as proud as we were in 1948 when she was born.

Peter Phillips

Claims Conference Improvements for Applicants to Article II Fund

In the latest round of negotiations with the German government, the Claims Conference secured significant improvements for applicants to the Article II Fund, most notably the raising of an applicant's net annual income.

The compensation programme makes a monthly payment of €320 to Holocaust survivors who do not receive other reparations and who were deported, incarcerated in concentration camps or ghettos, or lived in hiding or under a false identity.

Information about the programme is to be found at www.claimscon.org/article2

With effect from 1 January 2013, the minimum time period a persecuted person who lived in hiding or under a false identity under Nazi occupation is reduced from 12 to 6 months. This change will make an additional 5,000 survivors eligible for monthly pensions of €300.

Additionally, from 1 November 2012, and for the first time, some 80,000 Jewish victims of Nazism living primarily in the former Soviet Union will benefit from the one-time payment of €2,556 from the Hardship Fund.

Further, the special pensions currently being paid to survivors aged 75 or older who were in a ghetto for 3 to 11 months can now be paid to any eligible ghetto survivor, regardless of age. This change also comes into effect from 1 November 2012.

Income limit raised

Jews who lived in certain 'open ghettos' for at least 3 months may now be eligible for Article II Fund payments. To receive payments, applicants must meet Article II programme criteria. For information about legibility and to make an application, visit www.claimscon.org/article2

Michael Newman
Chief Executive,
The Association of Jewish
Refugees

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Glasgow 'Intergenerational Question Time on Scottish Independence'

Members turned out in force to question a panel consisting of Ken Mackintosh MSP ('No' vote), Stewart Maxwell MSP ('Yes' vote), 1st-Generation Henry Wuga and 2nd-Generation Frank Angell. In the chair was Edward Isaacs. Among the questions were 'Given the recent flying of the Palestinian flag by Glasgow City Council, would we as Jews be comfortable in an independent Scotland?' Later, everyone joined in singing 'Happy Birthday' to Alice Malcolm on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

Agnes Isaacs

Marlow CF World's Problems to Wait Another Day

We met at Alan Kaye's home and enjoyed an excellent lunch prepared by Hazel. Many topics of current interest were discussed but, as usual, because of time constraints we weren't able to sort out the world's problems.

Arthur Mayer

Bradford CF Finest Salt Beef in the Western Hemisphere

We were pleased to welcome Chris Tweddle, our new social worker. We reminisced about the food of our youth from grandmothers' kitchens: home-made spekulaas and waffles with vanilla, chicken soup from Tesco's everyday value to Fortnum & Mason Gold Star quality. On the question of salt beef, Wendy declared that hers was the finest in the Western hemisphere and she was leant on to bring salt beef sandwiches on a future occasion to embellish her already legendary 'delicious teas'.
Stephen Tendlow

Ilford Sentimental Return to Years Gone By

Alf Keiles gave us a well-researched history of jazz,

highlighting the most popular song for almost every year since 1908. It was fascinating to hear so many of our well-loved melodies once again. A very sentimental return to years gone by.

Meta Roseneil

Edinburgh Delightful Lunch and Concert

A delightful time was had by all at the annual lunch and concert at the Royal Overseas League.

Agnes Isaacs

Pinner Enjoying English Social Life

The highlight of Pinner AJR's year was, as usual, the annual tea party, held in the lovely home of Vera and Robert Gellman. Home-made scones and cakes and strawberries and cream showed that we Continentals have fully adopted an important aspect of English social life! Conversation flowed and many reminisced about the recent enjoyable AJR week in Eastbourne.

George Vulkan

HGS Helping Those in Need

Six Point Foundation's Renata McDonnell enlightened us on the funds available from the selling of the Otto Schiff properties. There's a limited amount of time left to distribute the money to survivors and refugees who are in need. This evoked a huge debate.

Hazel Beiny

Essex (Westcliff) Visit to Porters



(from left) Esther Rinkoff; David and Susie Barnett; Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs Walker; Otto Deutsch; Miriam and Leslie Kleinman

On a beautiful August morning, we visited Porters, a magnificent early Tudor building which is now the Civic House and Mayor's Parlour of the Borough of Southend-on-Sea. In the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs Walker, we were shown around the house by the official Mace Bearer.

David Barnett

St John's Wood Looking Back with Enthusiasm

Leslie Sommer talked about his varied career at the Home Office: probation office, fire department, and passport and emigration departments. Lovely to hear someone look back on their working life with such enthusiasm!

Hazel Beiny

Newcastle Various Ways of Helping Members

Susan Cohen of the Six Point Foundation told us about the various ways in which they have been able to help members. We were further delighted to welcome some of our Gateshead members, who came along for the first time to hear Susan's talk. A very interesting and informative meeting.

Agnes Isaacs

Cambridge 'We Must Save the Children'

The wonderful work done by the Cambridge Refugee Committee between 1938 and 1947 in guiding the progress of the large number of children who had arrived on the Kindertransport and were living in the area was the subject of an admirable talk by Mike Levy of Keystone Arts & Heritage. One can only reflect with gratitude on the personal interest shown by Greta Burkill and her team in those difficult years.

Keith Lawson

Surrey A Convivial Morning

The Surrey and Kingston groups joined forces once again in Edmee's home to enjoy a convivial morning's coffee and chat. As always, we were all made to feel welcome by our hostess.

Eva Gold Young

Brighton-Sarid (Sussex) Brighton and the Hanoverians

Godfrey Gould gave an amusing and well-attended talk about the Hanoverians and their connection to Brighton. He introduced his talk with a brief history of the British monarchy and their foreign family ties.

Ceska Abrahams

Edgware A Jewish Boxing Champion

David Barnett spoke most interestingly about Daniel Mendoza, a Jewish boxer from London's East End. Few of us knew much about boxing but we all listened most carefully to David's talk.

Felix Winkler

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Child Survivors Association-AJR
Henri Obstfeld
020 8954 5298 h.obstfeld@talk21.com

Cafe Imperial Demob Time

Conversation was about the price of demob suits and when members were demobbed. With regard to giving up their guns, one member said he would like his gun back to shoot Theresa May!

Hazel Beiny

Kent 'Public Sector on the Brink'

Jenny Salaman focused on the changing role of the civil service, health service, education and police in the face of relentless government reform. Members really appreciated Jenny's erudite overview of the pressures now encountered by official workers.

Janet Weston

Manchester Unique Creation of Holocaust Memorials

Antonia Stowe, a most gifted artist, spoke to us about her unique creation of Holocaust memorials constructed with six million + buttons. The project is still in its early stages; eventually the memorials will be housed at Huddersfield University. Substantial funds for the project still have to be raised.

Werner Lachs

Oxford Fantastic Hospitality

We had lunch at the home of Susie and John Bates. As ever, the food was delicious. We also had a wonderful tour of their garden, seeing all the ripening fruit and vegetables. Thank you to Susie and John for their fantastic hospitality.

Kathryn Prevezer

OCTOBER GROUP EVENTS

Pinner	2 Oct	Alf Keiles: 'Hit Songs of Five Decades' (at Northwood Synagogue)
Didsbury	8 Oct	Social
Glasgow	12 Oct	Lynn Wolfson: 'The Challenge of a Sculpture'
HGS	13 Oct	Alan Bilgora: 'Great Opera Stars Sing Popular Music'
Radlett	14 Oct	Tea at West Lodge
Welwyn GC	14 Oct	Tea at West Lodge
Dundee	19 Oct	Details to follow
Brighton-Sarid (Sussex)	20 Oct	Rabbi Pesach Efune, Lubavitch in Brighton
Bradford	21 Oct	Neil Solden: 'Israel and the Middle East'
Edgware	21 Oct	Stewart Morris: 'My Trip to India' (Powerpoint presentation)
Kent	21 Oct	John and Daphne Fleetcroft: 'Operation Exodus - Returning to Live in Israel'
Oxford	21 Oct	Leslie Sommer: 'Life in the Home Office'
Book Club	22 Oct	Discussion
East Midlands (Nottingham)	22 Oct	Lunch at the Nortons
Wembley	22 Oct	Alf Keiles: 'The Jewish Influence on Jazz'
Cambridge	23 Oct	Tim Pike, The Bank of England: 'Economy Update'
Edinburgh	23 Oct	Details to follow
Leeds HSFA	26 Oct	Sima Raw: 'The Jews of Iran'
Bath/Bristol	28 Oct	Jane Hewison: 'The Art of Embroidery'
North West London	28 Oct	Carol Hart (at Alyth)
North London	30 Oct	Jenny Rossiter: 'Octavia Hill - Social Reformer and Founder of National Trust'

Radlett A Rare Phenomenon

Daniel Mendoza, David Barnett told us, was a rare phenomenon - a Jewish boxing champion. Born in 1764 into a Sephardic family, he became famous in the highest circles of the land and even met King George III. He accumulated great wealth, which, unfortunately, he lost in later life.

Fritz Starer

Welwyn GC Social and Slap-up Meal

We enjoyed a catered lunch at the Synagogue to celebrate nine years of our existence as an AJR group. Lively discussion, lots of food and a really pleasant change to have a social with a slap-up meal!

Hazel Beiny

Book Club Laughter and Chatter

We discussed Roman Halter's book about his life journey, which we found very thought-provoking. A very lively afternoon, on which laughter and chatter filled the air.

Gerda Torrence

Wembley All England Champion

Daniel Mendoza

We met to hear David Barnett's fascinating talk on the 18th-century Jewish boxing champion Daniel Mendoza, of whom members said they had never heard before.

Kathryn Prevezer

North London A Touch of Nostalgia

We celebrated our 13th birthday with a most pleasant lunch. This was followed by Valerie and Stanley Clingman's presentation of 'The Great American Song Book, 1920-1950' to add a touch of nostalgia. A most wonderful afternoon. A big thanks to all who helped.

Herbert Haberberg

SWITCH ON ELECTRICS

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BELSIZE HAS GONE LIVE – FOR A YEAR ALREADY

Last year Belsize Square Synagogue started a quiet revolution, bringing our services into the homes of elderly members no longer able to move outside. The project began with a handful of people already familiar with computers, sound systems and modern technology. Now, some 50-100 people enjoy this possibility every Shabbat.

Belsize Live was explained at a well-attended Community Lunch in June last year by Sandra Burke, first chair of the newly formed BelsizeLIVE committee. The other members of the committee are Sandra's brother David Pollins, immediate past chairman of the Youth Committee and the project's technician from the outset; Dorothy White, our Welfare Officer; Juliette Alexander; Annette Nathan, who recently took over as committee chair; and our former synagogue chairman, Paul Burger, whose inspiration this all was.

Paul had, in fact, discussed the idea with Rabbi Rodney Mariner some years before the latter's retirement and, as one might expect, Rodney was a very enthusiastic supporter. Paul, who is professionally involved in the music business with his own agency after managing Sony's music divisions in Canada, the UK and Ireland, and later all of EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa), saw the convergence of two important factors. One was the potential

of the enormous improvements in computer technology, enabling events to be communicated instantaneously ('in real time') and smoothly (no breaks and jerkiness in transmission – hopefully). The other was the availability of funds from the recently established Six Point Foundation to help the Holocaust refugees and survivors among our older generation.

He discovered this new source of financial help though talking to one of our members, Ashley Mitchell, chairman of the Otto Schiff Housing Association, which was pivotal in this development. Belsize Square Synagogue approached the Six Point Foundation in early 2013 and submitted an application for a grant to help our elderly Continental-born members. The Foundation's rules are tightly drawn and a means test is applied. Visits were made to the synagogue and critical conversations ensued. The application was approved in time for last year's High Holy Days services.

As Sandra explained at the summer lunch, you are only a click away. Key in (or, for older readers, type) www.synagogue.org.uk into your computer or laptop to access the Belsize web page, then click on BelsizeLIVE (currently highlighted in yellow at the right-hand edge of the top margin) and follow the service. Services are archived

for one month but special events, like the 75th Anniversary Service, are being stored indefinitely. Archiving policy has yet to be developed.

There have been teething problems, such as the sound balance between *bimah* and choir loft, and people on the *bimah* wandering out of sight. 'This is still a work in progress,' a committee member said. But it has proved its worth as a means of staying connected to the congregation at prayer. For Gerald Hellman, for instance, who watched last year's *Kol Nidre* service from home, it opened up 'a new chapter' for him and others like him.

Sandra and her team demonstrated to luncheon guests the sequence of moves to get into the system. But the plan is for some of the older *cheder* pupils (today's experts in the field) to visit the elderly and teach them in their own homes. So please contact the committee through the synagogue office if you would like help in getting started.

If you know anyone who may not be able to attend services for any reason whatsoever, please let them know that they can follow our services as they are held through BelsizeLIVE. Also, as the aim of the Six Point Foundation is to improve the lives of survivors and refugees, please let anyone you know who may be interested that it is easy to follow our services, regardless of whether or not they are Belsize Square Synagogue members.

Annette Nathan

HONOURING A LOVED ONE'S MEMORY: THE DRIEBERGEN JOODS MONUMENT

Several weeks ago, needing to create a new password, I decided I would use the first name of my father's mother, who perished in Sobibor. I required the correct spelling of her name as it can be spelled in two ways. I typed both versions into Google. The Joods Monument (Jewish Monument), unveiled in the Dutch town of Driebergen in 2013, came up on my screen. I clicked on the site and was overcome with emotion: the names of both my grandmother and my great-grandmother were inscribed on it, together of course with many other names.

I sent an email seeking further information. Dr Rinse van der Lee, whose idea the monument was, replied that about ten years ago he had been asked what had become of the Jews who had remained in Driebergen during the war. He had been unable to answer this as he was not born there. He therefore carried out research,



speaking with a war-time resistance combatant and contacting the Red Cross and the administrations of a number of camps such as Auschwitz, Sobibor and Westerbork.

About three years ago, Dr van der Lee felt something had to be done to commemorate the horrific fate of the Jews. A Jewish artist friend came up with the design of the monument and a foundation was created with about 25,000 euros. The actual builder of the monument had himself apparently provided shelter to Jews during the war. Educational projects have now been initiated in schools.

My family feels an incredible contribution has been made to one tragic part of our family history. Just possibly one of the many names inscribed on the monument will be recognised by one of your readers so that they too can know that a loved one's memory has been honoured in this way.

Carole Felce



Visit to British Airways Heritage Centre

Thursday 13 November 2014

The British Airways Heritage collection has existed since the formation of British Airways. It was formed to preserve the records and artefacts of British Airways' predecessor companies BOAC, BEA, BSAA and the pre-war Imperial Airways and British Airways Ltd.

Stretch out in a first-class seat and enjoy your visit with a guided tour by Paul Lang, from British Aviation Tours and Experiences

We will follow the visit with a sandwich lunch and refreshments

Coach travel will be provided

For further details, please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

An Island of Tranquillity

The Chelsea Physic Garden, created in 1673 by Sir Hans Sloane, is now an island of tranquillity in the hubbub of fashionable west London. The garden is laid out in sections such as herbs, edible and toxic plants and medicinal plants. It also specialises in plants which are now endangered in their natural environment.

We had a most enjoyable and informative guided tour, followed by an excellent lunch. Inevitably the visit couldn't be long enough to cover everything of interest but it must have whetted the appetite for a return visit in many members of the group. Once again, our thanks are due to the AJR staff who arranged this stimulating outing.

Fritz Starer



WHY NOT TRY AJR'S MEALS ON WHEELS SERVICE?

The AJR offers a kosher Meals on Wheels service delivered to your door once a week.

The meals are freshly cooked every week by Kosher to Go. They are then frozen prior to delivery.

The cost is **£7.00 for a three-course meal (soup, main course, desert) plus a £1 delivery fee.**

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'FORCED WALKS' 15 April 2015



'Forced Walks' is a participatory walking art project led by artists Lorna Brunstein and Richard White.

On 15 April 2015, the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Belsen, Lorna and Richard will make a walk based on the testimony of a survivor of the Nazi Death Marches. Using the original route as a guide, the walk will take place in the UK through a familiar landscape in an area close to their home.

Lorna and Richard are inviting others to join them on foot or online or to make their own walk in their area.

Documentation of the project and creative responses to the experience will form the basis of an exhibition later in the year.

For further information, please see
<http://forcedwalks.wordpress.com/>
If interested, please contact Lorna and
Richard on forcedwalks@gmail.com

BEN URI MEMORIES

Next year is our
100th birthday

Please share with us all your memories of Ben Uri and tell us about any photographs, catalogues or historical items from 1915-1970 you may have.

Please contact Laura Jones at Ben Uri,
108a Boundary Rd, St John's Wood,
London NW8 0RH,
tel 020 7604 3991
email lauraj@benuri.org.uk

Émigré Artists, Graphic Designers, Curators, Art Historians, Conservators

Any recollections of wartime émigré artists, graphic designers, curators, art historians, conservators etc working in the UK from 1933 onwards sought by curators at Ben Uri/The London Jewish Museum of Art, who are compiling a database of such information.

Please contact Rachel Rotrand on
020 7604 3991
or email émigré@benuri.org.uk
or write to Ben Uri,
108a Boundary Road, London NW8 0RH,
marking the envelope ÉMIGRÉ

ARTS AND EVENTS OCTOBER DIARY

Wed 1 Roger Moorhouse: 'The Devil's Alliance: Hitler's Pact with Stalin, 1939-1941' At Wiener Library. Lecture marking 75 years since the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. 6.30-8 pm. Admission free but booking advised. Tel 020 7636 7247

To Wed 8 'The Kaiser's Jewish Soldiers: Loyalty, Identity, Betrayal' Exhibition at the Wiener Library. Admission free

Tue 14 Diane Samuels will participate in readings, a talk and discussion about the creative process behind her play *Kindertransport*. Exploring the play with her will be actresses Paula Wilcox, Sarah Shanson and Ruth Mitchell and former *Kind* Ruth Barnett. Evening event at JW3. For details, tel 020 7433 8988/9

Tue 14 Professor Thomas Weber: 'Hitler's First War: Adolf Hitler and the First World War' At Wiener Library, 6.30-8 pm. Tel 020 7636 7247

To Fri 24 'Germans in Britain' Exhibition at German Historical Institute London, 17 Bloomsbury Square, WC1A 2NJ. Tel 020 7309 2036

CLASSIFIED

Joseph Pereira (ex-AJR caretaker over 22 years) is now available for DIY repairs and general maintenance. No job too small, very reasonable rates. Please telephone 07966 887 485.



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

Templers, Zionists and Nazis

The German Templers were part of the 'Christian Zionism' movement whereby the European powers sought to establish their presence in the Holy Land after 1840. Following their charismatic leader, Christian Hoffman, these adherents of the German Lutheran Church, primarily in Württemberg, established settlements in Jerusalem, Haifa, Galilee and what is now Tel Aviv in an attempt to bring salvation to the Jewish and Muslim denizens of the region.

They combined their calling as emissaries of the true faith with the practical need to support themselves in their new home. As they had been farmers in their country of origin they engaged primarily in agriculture, building houses according to the German rural pattern, cultivating the land and creating a pleasant and aesthetic environment. They served as a model for the Jewish pioneers who came to the country, and in many cases provided instruction and guidance for the newcomers.

The first group of 72 people settled in Haifa at the foot of Mount Carmel in 1868, preceding the first wave of modern Jewish immigration by 14 years. But that influx, largely sponsored and funded by Lord Rothschild, consisted of thousands of people and soon became the predominant element in the population. The Templers built seven small settlements in various

parts of the country and one of them, just outside the walls of Jerusalem, is known to this day as the German Colony. As well as engaging in agricultural activity, the Templers participated in the modernisation of Palestine, introducing mechanised farming machinery, paved roads and the use of electricity in their homes.

In 1987 the late Professor Alex Carmel established a Chair for Research into the Christian Contribution to the Development of Palestine at the University of Haifa, as well as the Gottlieb Schumacher Institute, paying tribute to one of the Templers who engaged in exploring the Holy Land. It was Professor Carmel who insisted on spelling the name of these Templers with two 'e's' to distinguish them from the mediaeval Templars, on whom they modelled themselves. This I learned when I translated his fascinating doctoral thesis on the Templers well before he became a professor.

In the 1930s a number of the Templers in Palestine joined the Nazi Party and one of them, a certain Cornelius Schwartz, was appointed head of the Templer community. They made no secret of their allegiance and even ventured to march through the streets of Jerusalem, occasionally in Nazi uniform, bearing aloft the flag of the Third Reich.

It was at this point that the Templers switched from religious messianism to political messianism, according to Professor Yossi Ben-Artzi, Rector of the University of

Haifa, although less than 20 per cent of the Templers were members of the Nazi Party in 1938. Some of them returned to Europe to fight in the German army and in 1942 a young Jew, Noah Klieger, was summoned to Gestapo headquarters in Brussels and was stunned when he was addressed in Hebrew by the German officer there, Joachim Erdman. He was told later that Erdman had grown up in a Templer village in Samaria.

Following the outbreak of the Second World War the British authorities in Palestine interned the Templers in camps, deported approximately 600 Templers to Australia, and returned about 1,000 of them to Germany in exchange for some 550 Jews who had been in concentration camps. This unprecedented move brought those thus saved to British-controlled Palestine.

Among those rescued were relatives of mine, who regarded their release from the concentration camp as little short of miraculous – as indeed it was. The family's subsequent ordeal in enduring the siege of Jerusalem led them eventually to leave Israel and settle in London, though subsequently some of their children did return to this country.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *cont. from p.7*

DEGREES OF DEMOCRACY

Sir – Michael Levin (your September issue) is correct. The British electoral system is undemocratic because of our lack of proportional representation. Another factor is our lack of a constitution, which would require more than a simple majority in the House of Commons for some of the dreadful measures the country has been exposed to, e.g. the sale of our railways and the criminal damage to our health service. A proportional system ensures that no one's vote is wasted.

Mr Levin asks me to name countries that do better. Here are a few, with voters'

turnout in their last four elections: Austria 74-84 per cent; Denmark 84-87 per cent; Germany 70-79 per cent; Netherlands 74-80 per cent; Sweden 80-86 per cent; Australia (compulsory vote) 93-94 per cent.

I don't believe that Israel's voting system is the cause of its parliamentary instability. Having been under attack – under threat to its very existence since its inception – must surely influence all aspects of Israeli life.

In reply to Janos Fisher, I did write in my 'half-olive branch' (August) that Israel is certainly more of a democracy than most of the Arab states. I consider

my criticism of the Israeli government's policies to be in the interests of the Israeli people. Building Jewish settlements on Arab land gives moral sustenance to anti-Israel propaganda. It is one action I cannot defend in my struggles to defend Israel.

There is nothing 'friendly', as Mr Fisher puts it, about the hugely rich Qatar, which has provided Hamas with the necessary funds to purchase weaponry from Iran. Qatar is also known to support ISIS. The US is now providing arms to Qatar. Big business is amoral.

Eric Sanders, London W12

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