

# JOURNAL

## '45

### OF THE AID SOCIETY

No. 13

MAY 1989

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SECTION I  
THE '45 AID SOCIETY

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JOURNAL OF THE '45 AID SOCIETY

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EDITOR: KURT KLAPPHOLZ

All submissions for publication in the next issue (including letters to the Editor and Members' News items) should be sent to:

Kurt Klappholz, Rosebery Avenue Hall,  
90 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4TY  
Tel: 01-278 3251  
(until 31st July 1989)  
Thereafter:  
16 Glenmore Road, London, NW3 4DB  
Tel: 01-722 5757

They should be typed in double spacing and reach the Editor not later than the end of October 1989.

## SECTION II

There may be some Members of our Society who read the Editorials of its Journal; there are likely to be even fewer who remember for any length of time what they read. And who remembers when the last issue of our Journal was published? However few belong to each of these three categories, it may not come amiss to mention that our Journal was last published in March 1985. Now that the Editor has had bestowed on him the utterly undeserved honour of being elected to the Committee of our Society, he receives more feed-back about Members' reactions to the Journal than he did before. He is therefore aware that at least some, apparently vociferous, Members regret the fact that the Journal has not appeared for such a long time. However, it is much less clear precisely what those Members regret about the non-appearance of the Journal. Some, perhaps most, mainly or only regret not receiving the contents of our Members' News Section. Yet, if rumour is to be believed, some also regret not receiving the contents of the other Sections of the Journal. These rumours take us back to what was said about the future of our Journal in the Editorial of the last issue. Just to remind you: in view of the paucity of Members' submissions of contributions a promise was made to propose motions to the Committee which, if passed, would have meant that the Journal ceased publication.

In the event, because of irresistible political pressure against these motions, they were not put. Nevertheless, the Committee did consider whether to publish Members' News only, or whether to try to continue with the Journal in its present form. The Editor, lacking a flexible mind, thought that a decision between these two alternatives had to be made there and then. Harry Fox, with his nimble mind, pointed out that no decision needed to be made on this by the Committee; if the Editor receives enough submissions to fill a Journal, then we publish them. If we only receive Members' News, which we always do receive, then we shall publish it, presumably in the form of the Newsletter which the Journal was meant to supercede. This issue has now been resolved. It remains to be seen how often the Journal will appear. For more about the collection of Members' News, see the Section by that name.

Those who like writing and have something to say should send their contributions to the Editor, at the addresses given on page 1; those who know of others who like writing and have something to say, should encourage the latter to send their contributions to the Editor.

We turn now to our usual comments on the contents of this issue.

Section III was intended to consist exclusively of contributions by our Members, concerning their experiences just before and during the War. In the past it contained such contributions. In this issue it consists of reports about us after the War. Sections IV and VI require no comment as they contain the kind of contributions for which they were intended. This time we are once again able to include Section V, a fact for which we should be duly grateful. It is a particularly good section, which should give its readers food for thought.

In our last issue we published the 7th and 8th Leonard G Montefiore Memorial Lectures. On 23rd March of this year the 13th Lecture in this series was delivered and this issues contains the 12th Lecture. The latter does deserve noting here as it was the first one to be delivered by one of

our Members. Moreover, for the first time, Section VII contains a comment on the Lecture. For the record, the 9th Lecture, "The Effects of the Holocaust on Jewish-Christian Relations", by the Reverend Isaac Levy, OBE, TD, PhD, was delivered on 1st April 1985; the 10th, "Jews and Anti-Semites in 19th Century Germany", by Professor P Pulzer, was delivered on 10th March 1986; the 11th, "Jewish Sport and Nazi Politics", by one of our Vice Presidents, Yogi Meier, was delivered on 23rd February 1987.

The Journal has always contained a Section entitled Forthcoming Events. As long as the Journal appeared once a year that Section could keep track of our Society's major events. In view of the long lapse of time since the appearance of our last issue it seems appropriate to include an account of some recent events in which our Members participated. This explains the change in the title of the Section, as well as in its style, which has become a mixture of that of an editorial and of a diary. Forthcoming Events could be included in a Newsletter, which suggests that the present form of this Section will not be repeated. Collectors of rarities, please note.

We last published lists of our Members in 1978. In this issue we publish an Appendix containing a revised list of those who live in London and the London area.

Notice should be given of a change in editorial policy. Hitherto, the Editor made purely stylistic changes when he thought it appropriate to do so, usually, but not always, with contributors' consent. It has been brought to the Editor's attention that his efforts in this respect were not always welcomed by contributors. Since the Editor wishes to please not only the readers of this Journal, but also the contributors to it, he has abandoned his previous policy. From now on, contributions which the Editor altered stylistically will be marked with an # after the title. Stylistic alterations will be made only with the contributor's consent or when the Editor has good reason to suppose that the contributor will be pleased to see them made. This would seem to be a change in policy to which even among our Members no one could object.

Finally, please note a slight change in the form of presentation in the Journal. The titles of our various Sections are given only on the cover, each with a Roman numeral. Inside the Journal the Sections are referred to only by their numerals. This avoids redundant repetition of words.

### SECTION III

#### THEY FIND REFUGE IN THE LAKE DISTRICT EUROPEAN CHILDREN FLOWN TO CROSBY

The anonymous correspondent in The Carlisle Journal was Joseph Finkelstone, then a young reporter not much older than many of us were at the time. He is now foreign editor of The Jewish Chronicle. Ever since 1945 he has been interested in us, has attended our reunions whenever possible and is Honorary Member of our Society.

(Ed)

Reproduced from the Carlisle Journal,  
August 17th 1945

Jewish children from concentration camps, convalescent homes, and the streets of towns in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Germany have found a temporary home in the Cumberland Lake District. They have passed through horrors that can hardly be described. One of them, a boy of fifteen, actually fought in several battles and was awarded a medal.

The children were flown direct from the Continent to Crosby aerodrome near Carlisle, in ten RAF Stirlings, and they landed on Tuesday afternoon. There were 337 of them, one a stowaway, and as they stepped from the planes, clutching in their hands small suitcases, bundles and souvenirs, they smiled at the prospect of their new life.

These little mites have known what it is to be separated from their parents, some of whom have been murdered in German concentration camps, and to wander the streets homeless and hungry.

Buses were ready for them and they were quickly taken to a hostel at Ambleside, which is to be their home for some time.

The children were accompanied by a few adults, an Unrra woman official and a British Army Captain who had rescued his wife from a concentration camp after being separated from her for six years.

#### A Stowaway

The preparations for the journey at Prague and at Crosby were thorough. Some weeks ago the children were medically examined and secluded to make sure that none of them were suffering from any disease. Precautions were taken to prevent any unauthorised person from joining the party, but the daring and resource of a Polish boy of 13½, Icek Korotnicki, overcame all obstacles.

While working in the Polish town of Czestochova he heard a rumour that there was going to be an evacuation of children to Britain from Prague, and arrived there four days before the children were due to leave.

He was told that he could not be taken, and officials heard nothing more of him until on the plane's arrival at Crosby it was discovered that he was amongst the passengers.

The boy was immediately put in a room by himself. When seen by a "Journal" reporter he was apparently oblivious of the stir he had caused

and was quietly munching a piece of cake. He was later conveyed to an isolation hospital for observation.

### Reception Organisation

The arrival of the first plane late in the afternoon set in motion the carefully prepared reception organisation. As they stepped from the plane the children were taken to a hut on the aerodrome, where refreshments had been prepared for them under the supervision of Mrs Mark Fraser and Mrs Honeyman, Carlisle Women's Voluntary Services. Officials of the Central British Fund for Jewish Relief and Rehabilitation were very helpful in sorting out the youngsters. A doctor examined them, and customs officials from Liverpool inspected the luggage. Mr J E Etchells and Miss E S Thompson, Ministry of Health, were also present.

The children looked fit, and with a few exceptions, quite cheerful. Surprise was expressed at their good physique but the doctor said afterwards that most of them were anaemic.

There were many touching scenes as the children arrived. A little boy presented one of the women officials with a bouquet of beautiful roses which he had brought all the way from Prague.

Later in the evening another child presented a second bouquet. There were expressions of appreciation from RAF personnel when a boy arrived with a small Union Jack in his lapel.

### Terrible Stories

Before leaving, the children readily told their stories, and never before in human history had anything so terrible been heard from the lips of young children. One boy said that when the Germans evacuated the inmates of a camp before the arrival of the Allies they shot anyone who could not walk fast enough. For seven weeks they got hardly any food and the children had to eat grass. He himself had eaten a snake. Another boy told proudly of his having been a Russian partisan.

Perhaps the most remarkable story and one that fascinated all those present came from a boy of 15, who was dressed in a miniature United States Army uniform. He explained in hesitating English, that he was in Buchenwald when the Third American Army arrived and became attached to a tank destroyer company. An American captain became so interested in him that he took him to other fronts and the boy actually fought in several battles and was awarded a medal.

When the two, now close friends, had to separate the officer gave the boy a letter addressed to the American authorities. In it he stated that when conditions permitted and the boy could go to the States he would guarantee his schooling and work.

Nobody present could fail to be affected by the sight of the orphaned toddlers sitting by themselves on the grass and quietly sipping milk. They quickly became the favourites of RAF officers.

## SECTION IV

### MY "MUST" JOURNEY TO POLAND#

By Menachem Silberstein

The author came to England with the Windermere Group and lived in the Stamford Hill hostel. In 1948 he went to Israel to participate in the War of Independence, as did many of our Members. He has lived in Israel ever since. (Ed)

For many years I kept to myself all the sad memories about all that happened to me and to my dear family. It was very difficult for me to tell the terrible disaster that came on us and on Polish Jewry and on Jews all over Europe. There was no question that the Germans wanted to destroy all the Jews, but the Poles, they were the ones to help them fulfil their aim, as the Poles had such a strong hatred of us Jews.

Yet, I wished to gain the courage to be able to go back to the country, town and places in which I lived with my dear family, to see all those places at least once more in my life; to stand there and remind myself how they looked; to pay tribute to my loved ones. I felt that only then would I have peace of mind and only then would I be able to pour out my feelings.

One day that courage came. I felt I was ready to go through it, but not alone; my family was ready to join me, to be with me and share those hard moments, to participate and ease the pain. So, my wife, daughter and son came with me. Personally I think this was the right way to do it. I felt a lot better and safer, and went through that experience much more easily than I could have done alone.

We visited my home town, Lodz. The house we used to live in stands - it has not even been repainted. We went to see the schools I went to, the streets I played on, the Market. They all looked to me as they did 43 years ago, the same, but much older and poorer. Seeing these sights brought back to me so many memories. In my mind all these places were much bigger than when I saw them again. I suppose this usually happens with memories based only on experiences from childhood.

Now, we met people who remembered my whole family very well. This was a very moving experience.

In Krakow - to see all those streets with Jewish names on them, as "Esterka" "Josefa" and so on. The houses, the Synagogue, the neglected cemeteries, all empty. They look real monuments reminding us of what became of all that used to be there. It was a very sad sight.

We passed by Skarzysko - the camp I stayed in for two years. My father died there.

Auschwitz and Birkenau, these frightening places and names. There the Germans invent so many ways to destroy people. Now the Poles keep Auschwitz as a Museum.

Then, Treblinka where I lost my dear mother and two sisters. I could still see their faces vividly and I stood helplessly and cried. I could not contain my feelings. We lit a candle and we all felt as if, at last, we had closed the circle, by having come to pay our respects to the dear and holy memory of my family who had perished here.

In my opinion each one of us has to "close the circle" and go at least once to pay that respect to our dearest. Go with your family, not by yourself, as it is too painful to be there alone. Let your family see what it was like. Now, after having been there, my children tell their friends: "Unless you see it with your own eyes, it is impossible to understand the real meaning of the Holocaust and what really did happen to the Jewish people - men, women and children." Who, if not we, the lucky ones to survive, knows it so well.

For me this journey to Poland took a very heavy burden off my heart. I also had some satisfaction from seeing how Poland looks and how the Poles now live. Before the war the Poles were so sure that all their problems were caused by the Jews and if only the Jews did not exist, all Poland's problems would have been solved. Now, we still do exist, but not there. Have all of Poland's problems been solved? I wonder.

#### A TIME TO REMEMBER

By Muriel Friedman

The author is the wife of the late Norman Friedman, who was a member of the Editorial Board of this Journal.  
(Ed)

"How do you fancy coming to Poland?" asked Hazel. My non-Jewish school friend was at my house for her regular weekly visit. Many thoughts passed through my mind. I had previously visited Poland with Norman O.S. on a coach trip through the low countries, Germany, Poland, Russia, Finland and Scandinavia. Although it had been Norman's dearest wish to show me his home town of Zdunska-Wola we were unable to visit it on this trip as we were not allowed to divert from the coach itinerary. No return visit to Poland was possible later as he became too ill to travel.

Hazel had been to Poland the previous year with a church group and had come to know Jerzy Szotmiller, the Bishop of Czestochowa. On her return, she had sent him medicines and other goods which he needed. Now he had written with the offer of a flat in which she could stay free of charge while on holiday.

Within minutes I was fired with enthusiasm and with a Polish map spread before us, and Hazel's promise that we could visit Zdunska-Wola, I had made up my mind to go. Essie Burgerman and Gertie Wolreich were instrumental in providing me with details of addresses in Zdunska-Wola as they had lived in the same block of flats as Norman's family. Monty Graham (Motek Grzmot) was also helpful, acquiring medical supplies for the Bishop, translating the Polish letters and writing on our behalf to accept the invitation.

Our departure from Heathrow by Lot airways was delayed as the plane was still in Warsaw at the time it should have been leaving London, but at last we boarded, our bags full of food and my top priority being my Blooms worscht and Tomor.

When we arrived we took a taxi to the Forum Hotel and were happily surprised to find out how reasonable the fare was. Leaving our suitcases, we made straight for the Old Town where the narrow streets were vibrant with life. The Market Square was covered in scaffolding while the Burgers' houses were being regilded but this did not spoil the beauty of the surroundings. We treated ourselves to a delicious ice cream after joining a long queue.

The following morning after breakfast, Israeli style but much more plentiful, we left the hotel on foot to try and find the Warsaw Ghetto memorial. The wide streets were quite empty, being occupied mainly by clanging trams and the occasional horse-drawn vehicle but few private cars. We passed a street cleaner using a besom and ash pan to do his work and was thrilled to be asked to have his picture taken. Shops that were open for food had long queues. Later in our travels we saw a double chest freezer with just one packet of frozen beans in it. We were directed to the memorial by showing people a sketch of a Magen David. The area was not well kept and graffiti was visible.

The Bishop arrived in Warsaw that afternoon, very proud that he owned a car and had managed to obtain some petrol coupons. On the journey to Czestochowa conversation was limited. The Bishop spoke only Polish, German and a little English, but with the help of sign language and a smattering of Yiddish we managed to make ourselves understood.

The flat we were to stay in had four rooms only; a kitchen, bathroom, dining room and bedroom. In the kitchen they had kindly left us little packets of their precious supplies of food. The Bishop was devoting a complete week of his time to us and had arranged for his housekeeper's family to feed us with a meal at around 4 pm each day.

Here was my first problem; I only eat kosher. I started to explain that I was Jewish but before I could continue he drew his finger across his throat to indicate that he understood the shochet's role. No problem! he said; his favourite expression. Every day special vegetarian meals were prepared for me and the ingredients were shown to me for my approval.

As soon as he knew the reason for my journey to Poland the Bishop said that he personally would take me to Zdunska-Wola. True to his word, one morning he arrived accompanied by two women, a mother and daughter, to take me to the town. The younger woman was a school inspector for the area in which Zdunska-Wola lay.

During the drive, the Bishop amazed me by reciting the Shema in fluent Hebrew. The countryside was lush and there was no machinery to be seen. In fact during the whole nine days we spent in Poland we only once saw a tractor. All the farmwork seemed to be done by hand or with the use of horses.

Imagine if you can how I felt when in the distance I saw a wrought iron sign saying Zdunska-Wola. My mission was complete. At the tiny building where records were kept, they found the family names of the Frydman

family. Norman's name had been changed from this spelling to Friedman by the Germans in the camps. I now have a list of family names, amongst which are my children's names: Dena, Eliahu and Tevye. Later we visited the tiny tourist office and the Museum where the curator again took details of the Frydman family and promised to write if he had any further information. Just recently I received a letter from a gentleman in Zdunska-Wola which contained further interesting details about the family together with the names of other families in the town for whom he has found records.

We took many photos of the town, snapping away at all the important looking buildings, and by chance (as Essie and Gertie told me when they saw the photos on my return) included amongst them was one of the Jewish school they had attended along with Norman.

We went on to the Jewish cemetery with Cmentarz Wyznania Mojzeszowego written on the wooden gates. I shall never forget the scene that met my eyes. The whole area was desecrated; tombs smashed, human bones visible, and young saplings growing between the graves, giving the place an eerie feeling. I decided to take photos to show what the Nazis had done.

The Bishop informed us that we had to visit Oswiecim-Auschwitz. That night I tossed and turned and, if I am honest, felt a coward. How could I go knowing that Norman had been there and was on one of the few transports allowed to leave? But as a Jew how could I refuse? I will not describe what I saw as I feel that each one of us has a duty to go for himself and when I return to Poland next year with my children they have all expressed a wish to visit the camp too. I will only add that I was heartened to see all the coach parties of young Poles taken round by their teachers.

Before we had left England, I had promised Monty to do my utmost to find his home in Sosnowiec. He had drawn us a plan so that we could locate his street; Ulica Towarowa 13 was near the railway station, opposite the prison! The Bishop again insisted on taking us as he had a "special feeling" for Monty the Interpreter. Sosnowiec is a very large city which has now spread out into the surrounding countryside and has hundreds of newly built blocks of flats.

In the centre stands a magnificent railway station and naturally we reached for the cameras. The Bishop went white! Taking photographs of railways, bridges, trains, army and police can land you in stuch.

We found the prison, but with a sinking heart I noticed that all around were new flats and a half-built supermarket. The area had changed out of all recognition in the fifty years since Monty was last there. But, incredibly, we discovered that two streets remained from the old town and one of them was Ulica Towarowa! There was number 13, out came the cameras and we snapped it from all angles, including the courtyard at the back. When Monty later saw the photos, he was overcome with emotion.

I do have one funny story to relate. We were in Katowice to view a factory, the proceeds of which go to the Polish Church. An interpreter was brought in and at last the reason for the Bishop's mirth at the mention of Monty's name was explained. 'Motek' means 'ball of string' and 'Grzmot' means 'thunder'! When we left the factory we were given a set of bath towels.

During the rest of the trip we saw many fascinating sights, like the Black Madonna in the monastery of Jasna Gora in Czestochowa. All the churches were packed every Sunday, with standing room only. The overall impression of the country was of a way of life similar to that of England over thirty years ago. The grass was cut by men wielding scythes and in the main streets young doctors had little tables set up where for 15p you could have your blood pressure taken. In this way they boosted their poor incomes. In one half empty store I saw a woman using a hand machine to repair ladders in nylons.

We had one bad experience when we went to Krakow by train on our own. The town has the most precious complex of historical buildings. We visited the Market Place and Cloth Hall where we were able to buy some souvenirs, including beautiful and very inexpensive wooden toys. We did not have time to visit the Jewish quarter as we had to catch our return train to Czestochowa. We went back to Krakow-Plaszow station and after three quarters of an hour being sent up and down Perons (platforms) 1, 2 and 3, we thought we were stuck for the night! Luckily, a Polish student told us that the return journey to Czestochowa had to be made from a different station; Krakow-Glowny, which was many miles away. He took us to the front of a long taxi queue and commandeered a taxi already occupied by a mother and young daughter. A few hurried words later and we were driven off at high speed along with the two startled occupants. We arrived at the station with only a few minutes to spare. One of our new companions actually spoke English and did not seem to mind being highjacked! When we arrived, she told us to go on and she would pay our fare. Our mazel.

My most embarrassing moment came after the Bishop, who had been so wonderful, invited us to a Corpus Christi service at one of his churches in the country at a little place called Politno Szlacheckie. How could I refuse? I decided to stand at the very back trying to look like a pillar. We had only been inside for a few minutes when the parish priest came towards us and ushered us up to the front, turfing out two locals! What to do? I decided to exaggerate my back trouble and also developed a bad leg. This enabled me to remain seated whilst people knelt in prayer. I could make out the Bishop welcoming his English visitors and smiled thankfully at the right moment. After the service we looked around the village. There were wells for drinking water and free-range hens everywhere.

When we left Poland, we were given crystal vases and tea towels and were begged to return. I left behind the heavy-duty frying pan I had bought there for 46p (for my worscht and eggs). We returned home with our 100 proof vodka purchased for 80p and a complete set of untouched travellers' cheques.

I have already made plans to return next year with my children Dena, Ellis and Trevor. Unfortunately we cannot accompany the tour planned by Ben Helfgott as the children are not free on those dates. But can I urge you all to go on this trip; I am sure you will find it the memorable experience that I did.

## A TRIBUTE TO MRS ELAINE BLOND

By Ben Helfgott

On Thursday 24th November 1988 many of our members gathered to pay tribute to Mrs Elaine Blond OBE on the occasion of the publication of her biography "Marks of Distinction".

Her daughter, Dame Simone Prendergast, Barry Turner, who produced the biography, and Joan Stibel spoke about Mrs Blond's rich and variegated life. We were particularly impressed by Simone's candid account of her relationship with her mother, a relationship which had its stormy patches, especially in the early stages of her life, but improved over the years as she gained maturity and a greater understanding and appreciation of her mother's sense of purpose and commitment to everything she undertook.

Elaine Blond, the youngest daughter of Michael Marks, the founder of Marks & Spencer, was one of the triumvirate, the other two being L G Montefiore and Lola Hahn-Warburg, who set up the Committee for the Care of Children from the Concentration Camps. Her involvement with us constituted only a small but very important part in her lifelong dedication of service to Britain and to the Jewish people. Her sense of purpose whether it was in her pursuit of the Zionist ideal or the saving or helping refugee children or helping the war effort or the desire to help Israel in the field of Arab-Jewish understanding was always of total commitment. She had a strong social conscience and a sense of duty and obligation for the underdog which she pursued with relentless determination. She was awarded the OBE for her contribution to the arts and medicine.

Norman Bentwich, in his book "They Found Refuge", singled out Elaine Blond and Lola Hahn-Warburg for the part they played in saving 9000 refugee children: "to both devoted workers Jewry is deeply indebted. These two ladies received nothing whatsoever but the appreciation, admiration and gratitude of all those who knew what their work had meant and the countless hours given up to it. But neither had worked for any reward."

When we came to England Elaine Blond was very much involved in our welfare and in all our activities. She continued to take a keen interest in our Society and always referred to us endearingly as her 'boys'. Over two years ago we honoured her by donating £5000 for the purchase of sports equipment to be used by Falashu children at a Jerusalem school which was named after her. How much she would have appreciated the significance of our gesture!

Those of us who participated in the gathering shared an evening of reminiscences and indulged in a touch of nostalgia recalling the life of a lady who made a great impression on many of us as well as the Jewish and non-Jewish community.

## FIRST INTERNATIONAL JERUSALEM CONFERENCE OF CHILDREN OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

By a contributor who wishes to remain anonymous. More is written about this Conference in Sections V and X.

An International Conference on a subject as important as this, taking place in the land of Israel has to serve many needs. The opening ceremony with the speech by Prime Minister Mr Shamir, made a clear statement about its importance to Israel today, both political and historical. The inclusion in this opening ceremony of the Israeli army string quartet as well as the singer, Hava Alberstein, singing a mixture of traditional Israeli and Yiddish songs, was an important counterbalance. There is a special poignancy to the idea of men who fight and defend the Country who are also gifted and sensitive musicians making wonderful music and giving great joy. The contrast is a reminder that strength can also live side by side with gentleness and beauty within the same people. The choice of Hava Alberstein was a good one particularly with her singing Eli Eli and Raisins and Almonds. The audience joined in, not in a competitive way. Quietly at first, humming in unison like a well trained choir, never too loud, never out of tune. Music, like Yiddish, is an international language and the combination of both, particularly with that wonderful lullaby that must be deeply ingrained in the memories of most Jewish children, had a very special unifying effect.

However, this is not how the Conference started. There was at first a very special trip to the excavations of the Wailing Wall, followed the next morning by a visit to Yad Vashem with a special service. Whatever the political, historical and philosophical meaning of the Holocaust to Israel, there was an immediate reminder of the personal emotional meanings of the loss of loved ones when Kaddish was said here in the Hall of Memories at Yad Vashem. This was shortly followed by the singing of Hatikvah. I think it has never meant so much to so many of those present who were having this experience for the first time.

As with any International Conference it attempted to serve many needs, educational, historical, political, philosophical and psychological. There were a number of films shown, which perhaps produced some of the most moving and eloquent moments in the Conference. There is rarely as uplifting and emotional an experience as hearing of the great bravery as well as the great suffering in some of those special survivors, although what seemed to emerge from the Conference was that all survivors were very special.

For the children, both child survivors and children of survivors, a clear statement was made and understood of how the problems generated by the Holocaust continue in them and perhaps in their children and their children's children. There was the great and invaluable experience of finding each other, fellow child survivors and children of survivors. Recognising that there were many things that we shared and how enormously grateful that we had had the opportunity to meet and share these things and to feel no longer alone.

As a child survivor, I went to the Conference with a clear idea that what I wanted was something for myself, to help me with my struggle, with the problems that the experience of the Holocaust and my survival with my family had left me with. It was quite clear that what was the most

valuable to me was the contact with the other child survivors and children of survivors. There would be a natural gathering at coffee, lunch times and evenings where that affinity that we had for each other would become increasingly apparent and where we would just gravitate together, drawn by our mutual needs and shared feelings. It was a very special experience to be with people who understood, who had also shared similar experiences and who listened with such sensitivity. The group session on the psychological aspects and implications was run as a large group therapy session. There was a universal feeling that this had been the most important and valuable experience. Those of us who came from the UK and even one child survivor who came from Holland were so moved and helped by this experience that we started to discuss the possibility of continuing by meeting on a regular basis. Let us hope that this Conference is just the beginning and that there will be a revival of the second generation group in the UK. I cannot speak for the others but I feel that I echo many of their sentiments when I say that the Conference was a unique and invaluable experience and perhaps for many of us a watershed in our lives.

#### VICIOUS ISRAELIS#

Below we reproduce a letter which appeared in the Barnet Times on March 3rd 1988 and a comment on it by one of our well known Members, Victor (Kushy) Greenberg. The views expressed here are a part of the current discussion about Israel, which is of interest and concern to our Members. (Ed)

Here's some more anti-semitic literature. The way the Israelis are behaving towards the Palestinians is abominable, vile, vicious and every bit as bad as the way the Nazis behaved towards the Jews in 1940.

Every civilised human being will join me in condemning the Jews of Israel for their utterly unspeakable behaviour towards the subject peoples of that tortured land. The camps containing the Palestinians are concentration camps pure and simple. The troops are treating the inmates with the utmost fascistic repression and cruelty.

G A Taylor, Chandos Road, East Finchley.

The likening of Israel's behaviour to that of the Nazis fills me with revulsion. Israel's detractors, who use Zionism to shield their anti-semitic feelings, find it difficult to swallow Israel's humanitarian record. That record includes having gathered and rehabilitated the homeless surviving remnants of the Holocaust and hundreds of thousands of Jews expelled from Arab lands. Israel achieved this under the constant pressure of war and threats of war from her neighbouring states and the continual threats and acts of terror. This record could not have been achieved without loving care and sacrifice by the people of Israel. Some expect Israel to be a model state of immaculate behaviour, which is not an expectation easily satisfied. Despite all Israel's endeavours, someone somewhere commits an error which is very quickly brought to the attention of the world.

I have great love and admiration for Israel. As a survivor of the Holocaust I know full well the meaning of having a Jewish state, where the doors are open to those who suffer persecution.

Israel has restored the dignity and pride of the Jewish people. We no longer have the image of being merchants and money lenders. Israel has shown that Jews can do anything as well as others.

As for the current riots and disturbances, can history show examples of riots of this magnitude which passed without casualties? The answer is no, yet Israel is expected to provide just such an example.

I witnessed, in the course of one day, the brutal murder by the Nazis, in the Auschwitz gas chambers, of almost my entire family together with thousands of Jews from our area. The claim that the government of Israel behaves like the Nazis induces in me feelings of outrage and astonishment.

By Michael Etkind

LODZ 1979  
(THE OLD GHETTO AREA)

The Jews are gone  
That ancient race  
is here no more -  
replaced by Poles  
whose land it is  
and was  
The guest, unwanted,  
uninvited guest,  
has flown; -  
dispersed and vanished  
without trace  
The host has managed  
to forget his stay

Here, where the Ghetto stood  
with its barbed wire, guards,  
Ghetto police -  
Here, where fear  
with Rumkowski ruled,  
where children starved,  
now stand grey,  
high-rise flats

Here, where hell arrived  
and pitched its tents  
and with its tentacles  
gripped all - within its reach  
Here, where dead men dragged  
their swollen feet,  
now Polish children play,  
uncaring, unaware  
of how we bled,  
while men perform  
their daily tasks -  
eat, drink and fornicate  
and sleep; -  
their feet now tread these streets,  
these paths we used to tread

Here and there a monument  
erected to the Poles  
and Russian troops that fell

But us, about the Jews,  
there's not a word  
No truth, no trace,  
no lies, no sign As if  
we never did exist

Except - the cemetery  
which remains neglected,  
overgrown -  
and ghosts  
which will forever roam  
and haunt  
this  
desecrated place  
and mourn  
that strange,  
obliterated race

LODZ 1979  
THE JEWISH CEMETERY

I walk between old graves  
A dreamlike scene  
Past rows of crumbling stones  
With names I know  
Poznanski Berger Fuks

A million souls have passed  
To lay their bones  
Beneath these heavy  
Dislocated stones  
To turn to dust  
To mingle with the clay

A million dreams  
Lie buried  
Fast asleep  
And dream a dreamless dream

A million dreams  
I walk upon

I - like a disembodied ghost  
Whom Death forgot to lay  
Between  
Beneath these rows  
Of broken crumbling  
Dislocated stones

Dr Henryk-Gutt, Consultant Psychiatrist, wife of Witold Gutt, was good enough to send us the item reproduced below, which was published in the British Medical Journal, 21 May 1988. While we must hope that none of our Members or their children have difficulties of the kind to which Dr Henryk-Gutt refers, it is better to have information just in case it might be needed.

Dr Henryk-Gutt's communication deals with a subject that was also among the topics considered at the Jerusalem Conference (see also Section X), namely in the words of its organisers "...how to deal with the psychological problems confronting survivors' children". We are grateful to Dr Henryk-Gutt for sending us this item. Moreover, Dr Henryk-Gutt would be glad to make contact, via the Editor, with any parents and/or children whose family has experienced second generation difficulties. Anyone wishing to be put in touch with her should phone, or write to, the Editor, giving name, address and/or phone numbers. All such communications will be treated as confidential. (Ed)

Dr Rita Henryk-Gutt (Shenley Hospital, Radlett, Hertfordshire, WD7 9HB) writes: Professor Beverley Raphael and Dr Warwick Middleton (23 April, p1142) draw attention to the difficulty that sometimes occurs in diagnosing post-traumatic stress as a cause of psychological distress. There is now evidence that the effects of such trauma may extend to the children of the victims, and this needs to be recognised when they experience psychological problems in adult life. The work on this relates in particular to the children of survivors of the Holocaust (1,2). Some of the problems relate to disturbed family relationships resulting directly from the psychological symptoms of the parent. There is also the difficulty the second generation experiences in accepting the victim as "a good enough parent". (3) This seems to produce a feeling of the world as dangerous and life as insecure, leading to depression and anxiety requiring treatment. This problem of the second generation is not generally recognised by doctors in Britain, and this may preclude correct diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

(1) Bergmann MS, Jucovy ME, eds. Generations of the Holocaust New York: 1982

(2) Barocas HA, Barocas CB. Wounds of the fathers; the next generation of the holocaust victims. International Review of Psychoanalysis 1979; 6:331

(3) Bettelheim B. A good enough parent London: Thames and Hudson, 1987

SECTION V

By Aloma Halter

IN SOME SENSE  
(for my father)

There's the gate to the place  
and the platform  
for Selektion

A face in the crowd,  
you stood there once  
among those anxious, weary people  
telling their families and themselves  
they'd meet later,  
after the showers.

Aged 13, there you are  
without your parents, starving, cold.  
You hear the "cry inside a shunting train"  
and no, again, escape  
to a place unreachable  
inside yourself.

Because  
in some sense,  
you did not return.

With Liberation,  
tractors to move the corpses  
in piling slow, slow-motion.  
Mere circumstances reprieved you from their end  
while I, your child, with disbelief  
read books, see films.

This is the generation gap  
I have to make sense of.

Written on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht,  
November 1988.

## LIFE AFTER DEATH - A SURVIVOR'S DAUGHTER

By Mindy Ebrahimoff

Daughter of Salek Orenstein who lived  
in the Stamford Hill and Finchley  
Road Hostels. (Ed)

I was born in Poland in a little village  
the village was not mine it was any Jew's village  
I was any Jew.  
A pair of eyes scaling a high wall that  
restricted all the Jews  
Or was it my eyes penetrating that wall - I was  
so close to another perhaps the eyes were his  
And the cold  
In my hands, my feet, an icicle  
piercing my heart or was it my heart  
or any Jew's heart  
Every Jew's cold felt by another  
Cold in our soul.

A woeful wave of misery possessing pessimistic  
the wheels rolled on  
On monotonous tracks of stench and  
darkness - groping to poke one's  
nostrils through a crack above the stench  
or was it my nose. Arms and legs so entwined  
a wreath of raw hearts  
Which stricken stub was I.

Only my mother was mine  
She who gave me life  
or was it death?  
I wrote to her in Yiddish and stuffed  
the hopeful words into a bottle  
which I buried in the ground. You see  
she could read it there - All the Jews could  
feel the weight of years or was it earth crushing  
my bottle  
a wailing bottle of vacant sounds.

I must have died unknowingly lying on  
the wooden bunk I had become  
a part of that wood  
or had the wood become a part of my  
soul splintered fragmented yet  
curiously Jewish  
Perhaps that is our essence if not our  
self-respect  
Because I remember an old woman selling  
sweets on a bench near home  
she sat beneath a yellow umbrella and my  
trousers were always too large for me  
"to last" Mamma said "for a while".  
Where are they now?

My pulse continues without pleasure in air  
thick with ash, powerless I breath it in.  
So many teeth and rings and dead hair  
or are they claws and paws and fur of humans turned animal  
by mockery  
Cold and powerless  
Powerless and cold the wheels press on  
My silent struggle in sleep  
or was the sleep his  
Not even death can steal the innocent  
light of morning.

Herr Nazi's garb grafts madness to the skin  
evil to the soul and I grieve, I mourn, I bleed  
or is it my inmate who  
gives way to despair?  
Oh weary cry - what shame to utter  
words of prayer that taunt  
my varnished tongue.

It rained a lot in those days  
Black distorted drops that fell from hell to the sodden  
earth red from the blood of beetles  
crushed and blinded though some moles  
survived for a while - like my trousers.

I recovered from my illness though  
life was no more clear or precious but  
like a dough yielding, bending then  
mashed, squashed - pulp.

I stare out of a glass window at the rain  
falling neat and round from a cloud above London  
and wonder which life was it  
or was it mine  
that gave birth to four children  
my children  
who were not there to comfort me  
or could they have? Still not even now

but Wife  
my Wife, my Love, my completion  
mine as Mother was mine  
Tireless she darns and patches  
polishes and purifies  
the poison  
Call it hate  
that gnaws at my skin from inside.

## THE YAD VASHEM SUMMER INSTITUTE 1985

By Jeffrey Tribich

### Preamble

During the summer of 1975, whilst still a student, I visited Iran. I travelled by air to Istanbul and from there, overland, through wild and beautiful country to Tehran.

The route took me East, through Trebizond on the Black Sea, then south-east through Erzurum and thence, north of Lake Van to the Iranian border, passing close to Mount Ararat, Biblical resting place of Noah's Ark.

I had travelled through Armenia, which 60 years before had been the scene of a terrible tragedy: the genocide of the Armenian people by the young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire. This genocide, the first of the 20th century, started on 24 April 1915 (although there were 'deportations' before this date) with the round up of 650 Armenian intellectuals and notables. They were gaoled, then deported and murdered in the succeeding months. Throughout the Armenian provinces violence was unleashed against Armenian communities. This violence was widespread and assumed a distinct and recognisable pattern; there is no doubt that it was an intentional and systematic extermination. Firstly, Armenian able-bodied men (those serving in the army - were first disarmed and formed into labour battalions), were taken into remote areas outside the towns where they were murdered. This destroyed effective resistance. The women, children and old people were deported. These deportations amounted to slow and cruel murder and there is no doubt that this was the intention of the Authorities. Deportees were deprived of food, water and even clothing and were forced to march in the blistering sun. Many died. Many more were violated and murdered along the way by Kurds and Turkish irregulars encouraged and even organised by the Ottoman authorities. The eventual destination of those who survived was the desert waste of Northern Syria where they were concentrated in camps under appalling conditions. Most of these were either directly murdered or perished through criminal neglect during further death marches in 1916. The number of Armenians exterminated is probably in excess of one million.

The deportations and massacres were witnessed by many foreign nationals: consular and embassy officials, missionaries and charity workers. The USA Ambassador Morgenthau was particularly vociferous. There was widespread publicity in the West including much coverage in the western press. Of particular interest are the German eye witness accounts which form a large portion of our present knowledge of the massacres. Germany and Turkey were allies during the first World War and thus any accounts of Turkish atrocities against Armenians were subject to censorship in Germany during the war. A regulation of the German War Press Office emphasises the need to keep silent about "this Turkish internal administrative affair" and indeed "about all aspects of the Armenian question". It ends however with: "The behaviour of the people in power in Turkey in this matter can really not be praised". (1)

The German army also had a presence in Turkey at this time and its soldiers and officers were well aware of what was happening. To his

credit, the German commander General Liman von Sanders even interceded on behalf of the Armenians of Smyrna and prevented their deportation. The junior officers serving in the German army in Turkey during the First World War would have been the senior officers of the Second World War. Just 23 years after the Armenian Genocide, in 1939, some of these very men may have been present at an address given by Hitler to his commanding officers just before the invasion of Poland, in which he made the following statement:

"Our strength is in our quickness and brutality. Genghis Khan had millions of women and children killed by his own will and with a gay heart. History sees in him only a great state builder. What weak western European civilisation thinks about me does not matter.... I have sent to the east only my 'Death Head Units', with the order to kill without mercy all men, women and children of Polish race or language. Only in such a way will we win the vital space that we need. Who still talks nowadays of the extermination of the Armenians?" (2)

### Introduction

In the summer of 1985 I attended the Summer Institute at Yad Vashem, together with two others from England. Our trip was made possible by generous scholarships from the '45 Aid Society and many thanks are due to them for affording us this invaluable opportunity: the course turned out to be not only fascinating and absorbing, but also a most enjoyable experience, despite the gravity and sadness of the subject.

The course, which took place from 4th to 31st July, was organised by Yad Vashem and was held mainly at their complex in Jerusalem. Its subject was the Holocaust and Antisemitism.

It was run in conjunction with the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism. Most readers will probably be aware of the work of Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, which is the official Israeli body dealing with the study, teaching and remembrance of the Holocaust; but they may be unaware of the Centre for the study of Antisemitism and its purpose. The Centre, which is part of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, was only recently established, as a result in the rise of antisemitism in the late 1960's. It was realised that too little was known about these insidious activities - we have to know about antisemitism in order to fight it - and a permanent institution was required for study. Thus, the Centre, which is interdisciplinary, interfaith and international in character, promotes the ordered study of Antisemitic movements, both past and present, and the countries in which they occur.

### The Course

The course started on Thursday 4 July 1985. I met the others, Madeline and Sharon, at Yad Vashem, at 9 o'clock that day, for registration. We were each given a large file full of background reading material and were told that more would be handed out as the course progressed.

There was then an introductory talk to outline the structure of the course and its philosophy. The course, it was explained, had a strongly historical base: substantiated and documented historical facts are

important. Elly Dlin, the course organiser, said that he had taught people who had previously studied on courses where the most rigorously historical material used was Elie Wiesel's "Night"! The talk was followed by a tour of Yad Vashem's library, lecture rooms, offices and archives.

Those attending the course were very varied. A large number were non-Jews. There were many high school and university teachers, most of whom were already involved in teaching the Holocaust. There was also a non-Jewish Norwegian teacher whose hobby is collecting antisemitic stamps (he is looking for a publisher for a book he has written on the subject!). There was an Armenian, a Black, Californians, New Yorkers, South Africans, Canadians, an Australian, a Channel Islander, survivors, children of survivors, students, rabbis, psychiatrists and one architect! ("Why an architect?" many asked. "Why the bicycle riders?" I replied).(3).

A tour of Jerusalem was organised for the next day, Friday, for those who were visiting Israel for the first time. It was a chance to see the new developments in Jerusalem and to get to know the others on the course.

Lectures proper started on Sunday and Professor Yehuda Bauer gave the opening address: an introduction which, amongst other things, explained Unique and Universal aspects of the Holocaust, a recurring and major theme, especially with regard to education. Mass murder, he said, is not a new phenomenon: it has occurred throughout recorded history; it assumed a repetitive pattern and can be traced through to modern times. But, he continued, we have now seen a fundamental change: previously there had been no attempts at planned total annihilation. The Holocaust was the most extreme case of genocide. The Armenian massacres, said Bauer, were the nearest precedent. This lecture was followed by Professor Richard Hovanisian of the University of California who spoke about the Armenian Genocide.

The Lectures in the ensuing weeks were of a very high standard and were given by major academic figures with immense knowledge, all leaders in their respective fields. Lecturers included Emil Fackenheim, Yisrael Gutman, Robert Wistrich, Shammai Davidson, Yitzhak Arad and Yehoshafat Harkabi, amongst many others. Harkabi's lecture produced an amusing incident: I thought he was excellent, but there was much controversy and excitement; tempers flared. Heated discussion, mutterings and even complaints carried on long after he had left. The next lecturer was totally non-plussed: if we hadn't liked Harkabi what on earth were we going to make of him?

### Films

Early on in the course we saw the film "Der Ewige Jude" ("The Eternal Jew"), a film made by the Nazis in the early 40's. There is very little in the film which can actually be described as factually incorrect - there is a particularly grisly section near the end purporting to show ritual slaughter, but which is in fact inaccurate - but nevertheless the film portrays Jews in a very unfavourable light. For example, Jewish migration is compared to the migration of rats and a world map is shown with Jewish communities spreading over it like a disease, a cancer. The film is brilliantly executed and was technically very advanced for its time, but it is an odious piece of anti-Jewish propaganda. It is an excellent example of the way in which facts can be manipulated and distorted to

produce any desired effect. The film, by the way, was a flop when it went on general release in Germany, but played to packed houses in France. We were also shown many other films which were interesting both for their factual content and for their potential for use in an educational setting.

### Trips

We were taken on a number of day trips. Our first visit was to Bet Hatefutsot, the Diaspora museum. We ended our tour of the museum with a visit to the 'Chronosphere', a Planetarium-type all round sound/light experience which portrayed the history of the Jews in 25 minutes! Its depiction of the migration of the Jews was in marked contrast to that in "Der Ewige Jude": there as darkness and one was aware only of the stars; the dawn came, spreading light, to illumine a world on which the stars were revealed as Jewish communities.

I had met Menachem Rosensaft, founding Chairman of the International Network of the Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, at Yad Vashem. He was there from the USA together with members of the World Federation of Bergen-Belsen survivors in order to dedicate the 'Josef Rosensaft Archive of Bergen-Belsen'. The late Josef Rosensaft, Menachem's father, was a leading light amongst the prisoners of Bergen-Belsen both before and after the liberation and since, in the survivors' organisation. Their programme of events included a dinner at Bet Hatefutsot, to which I, and the other 'Second Generation' people and survivors on the course were invited. The dinner started with speeches in Hebrew, English and Yiddish, including one by Professor Bauer (a powerful and inspiring delivery, as always) and was followed by an excellent meal. As chance would have it, I sat next to a man who turned out to be from my mother's home town of Piotrkow in central Poland! It was an enjoyable evening.

Another trip took us north of Haifa, to Lochamei Hagettaot, the Ghetto Fighters' Kibbutz. This was particularly interesting, since it allowed us to compare the approach there with that of Yad Vashem. Lochamei Hagettaot prides itself on its independence: it does not receive Government funding. Therefore, it feels that it has the freedom to present itself and its own interpretation of the Holocaust, without interference from outside.(4) Lochamei's museum is organised in a completely way from that at Yad Vashem and puts a far greater emphasis on resistance.(5) Lochamei's approach is no less valid for all this. However, the view at Yad Vashem is that, although the subject of resistance is very important - the instances of resistance are widespread and remarkable, especially considering the prevailing circumstances - it should be appreciated in its correct perspective. This was the subject of lively discussion during the visit. Another subject of interest at Lochamei was their collection of material about the Gypsies: they had set out to collect everything in print. The collection was laid out on two small tables, and, sadly, these few books and articles seem to be the sum total of existing publications on the extermination of the Gypsies.

### Teaching

The Holocaust is a very difficult subject to teach and therefore the methodology of teaching assumed a high profile. Many aspects were considered in detail and seminars and extra curricula discussions were used as a forum for the exchange of ideas by teachers who already had

experience in teaching the subject. Advantage was also taken of the considerable experience gained by the 'Facing History and Ourselves' project, an educational organisation in the States. Their material was incorporated to a significant degree and one of their staff acted as a course tutor. Many of the teachers taking part were already using the 'Facing History' syllabus and materials as part of their own teaching programmes.

Talking to the teachers, it was evident that they were very enthusiastic about teaching the Holocaust: the results in educational terms were outstanding! Essentially, they said, it had taught students more about themselves and society, about the need to think and not to abrogate responsibility. Students became more responsible, more mature human beings.

There are many problems in teaching the Holocaust. There are also dangers, if the subject is not taught correctly. Firstly, it is important for the teacher to differentiate between commemoration and study. These are, of course, linked; but whereas commemoration involves ceremony and spiritual exaltation differentiated from everyday experience, study involves rational thematic methods. It is therefore important not to confuse them.

The Unique/Universal issue can be a problematic one: the Holocaust is unique; but if the Holocaust is unique, then what can we learn from it, since it cannot relate to any other human experience?

There is also the problem of how to teach the horrors. This is a concern of many parents and can lead to their resistance to allowing their children to learn about the Holocaust. It is a legitimate concern. The use of film depicting masses of emaciated corpses can cause distress and traumatisation. Not only is this bad in itself, but is also counterproductive in purely educational terms. No one should be subjected to this against their will. The approach adopted by 'Facing History' is to show this kind of visual material only at the end of a course, when the student is aware of its context; and also to give students the option of not having to watch.

There are many other aspects to teaching, but it is not possible to cover them all here. There is, however, an important conclusion that one draws from having taken part in the course: Holocaust education must be in the form of a balanced and organised programme of study; it cannot be taught in the form of a 'one-off' lecture, as is so often attempted.

So, what is the state of Holocaust education today? As far as I am able to ascertain, it is well advanced in the USA and Israel. For example, in Israel it is a requirement that a teacher studies a course on the Holocaust prior to receiving a teaching certificate. There is a similar requirement in the State of New Jersey. There are now teaching materials available in both countries, but there seems to be some way to go with regard to adoption of effective teaching methods. In Britain there were no teaching materials available until recently, when a pack of materials was produced for the East London Auschwitz Exhibition. This is a good beginning. It is important that these materials now be extended and that teachers are given more instruction on how to teach this important subject. Efforts must be continued and increased, to incorporate it into the mainstream of our educational system.

## Conclusion

The Yad Vashem Summer Institute course ended with a ceremony conducted by the participants in the Hall of Remembrance. There were readings, Kaddish was recited and a candle was lit by one of the survivors. The following was then read:

"As we complete our studies at Yad Vashem and prepare to return home, may we be successful in teaching and fulfilling these commandments:

Thou shalt not be a perpetrator  
Thou shalt not be a victim  
Thou shalt not be a bystander" (6)

There is a danger if education is devoid of humanity and ethics. This is conveyed in a letter written to an educator by a concerned parent:

"Dear Teacher:

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness. Gas chambers built by LEARNED engineers. Children poisoned by EDUCATED physicians. Infants killed by TRAINED nurses. Women and babies shot and burned by HIGH SCHOOL and COLLEGE GRADUATES. So I am suspicious of education. My request is: Help your students become more human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more humane." (7)

## Notes and Sources

Sources used for the 'Preamble' were as follows:-

Hovanissian, RG "The Armenian Genocide", lecture delivered at Summer Institute 1985, Yad Vashem.

Parsons, WS & M Stern Strom "Facing History and Ourselves. Holocaust & Human Behaviour" International Educations, Massachusetts 1982.

Permanent Peoples' Tribunal A Crime of Silence: The Armenian Genocide (A record of the Session on the Genocide of the Armenians 13-16 April 1984, Paris) Zed Books, London 1985.

1. Quoted in Permanent Peoples' Tribunal p.87.
2. Quoted in Parsons, Strom pp.10 and 319.
3. This reference is to an account given by Yehuda Bauer during one of his lectures at the Summer Institute 1985: The scene is Germany in the 1930's and two people are having a conversation. One, a Nazi, says that all the Jews should be thrown out of Germany. The other agrees and adds "and the bicycle riders." The Nazi, perplexed, asks "Why the bicycle riders?" "Why the Jews?" the other retorts. Professor Bauer did not quote a source for this account.
4. Incidentally, members of Lochamei Hagettaot who are survivors, will not accept reparations from the German Government, as a matter of principle.
5. Also, display material in the museum at Lochamei Hagettaot did not appear to be as well researched as that of Yad Vashem. For example I noticed that a picture which was described as Bergen-Belsen after the liberation, clearly depicted soldiers wearing American helmets. Since Bergen-Belsen was liberated by the British Army, this at least needs some explanation.
6. I first heard Yehuda Bauer stating these 'commandments' at a session of the International Second Generation Conference in New York (Session on Sunday 27th May 1984 "Studying the Past. Historians of the Holocaust"; others who spoke at this session were Randolph Braham, Henry Feingold and Raul Hilberg).
7. Quoted in Furman, H (ed) "The Holocaust and Genocide: A Search for Conscience". Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, New York, 1983, p.216 (Note: all words in upper case appear as written by the Survivor).

## DIARY OF A VISIT TO ISRAEL

By Anne Karpf

This article appeared in The Listener and is reprinted here with the author's permission. References to "the Conference" should be read in conjunction with the article in Section IV and the brief report in Section X. (Ed)

Coming from a country where Jews are thought of primarily as intellectuals, dentists, or tailors, to one where they're also manifestly policemen, prostitutes and supermarket check-out staff is intriguing. I am in Israel for the second time, 17 years after my first trip. Then, I helped irrigate the nation with a caseful of Boots moisturising cream for relatives (my mother insisted there was a pressing national shortage); this time, a modest half dozen cannisters of Earl Grey tea will have to do. Then, I was on holiday; now, I've come to a conference for children of survivors of the Holocaust, the subject of the book I'm writing, while my partner gathers material for a radio programme on the Israeli peace movement. Then, I had distinctly mixed feelings about Zionism. I still do.

The conference takes place in the glitzy Ramada Renaissance Hotel in Jerusalem. At the opening reception we go round exchanging information: where were your parents, and yours? Over the canapes and mulled wine, the answers are Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, and the other concentration camps. Curious for one to feel so ordinary.

Already in Tel-Aviv before the conference, I'm immersed in Holocaust recollections as we visit my mother's cousin, whose husband was 17 and weighed 56lbs when he left Auschwitz, and later was imprisoned by the British after attempting to land illegally. The ironies escape him: he talks both of the liberation of Auschwitz and the liberation of Jaffa; the camp in which the British interned him is now used to intern Palestinians. Indeed, for many Israelis the Palestinians have become confused with the Nazis; in reality, they seem more like the new Jews.

Again and again the slippage becomes evident. We try to buy the English version of Al-Fajr, a Palestinian paper. A Tel-Aviv newsagent won't stock it because it reminds him of the Nazi paper Der Sturmer. A relative derides foreign promises of Israeli security, insisting that - post Holocaust - no other countries can be trusted to safeguard Jews' existence. An eloquent professor at the conference makes another analogy: the Nazis wanted Germany Juden-free; the rabid Israeli group advocating 'transfer' of the Palestinians out of the country wants Israel Arab-free.

The struggle over the meaning of the Holocaust continues as PM Shamir arrives to address us. He serves his propaganda neat, talking of Arafat's Satanic intent and the need to avoid another Holocaust. He makes it into the nine o'clock news.

By now I'm feeling palpably exploited: I didn't come to the conference as an anti-Palestinian recruit or to hear anti-Diaspora diatribes, and to boot, we're being snapped and filmed at every turn like prize exhibits.

We go to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, where an exhibition commemorates Kristallnacht, showing what's happened to former German synagogues: most are now bars, banks, restaurants, and discos. I visit the Archive in search of information about disappeared relatives, primarily my grandfather, Isidor Weissman, and an uncle. I find an Isidor Weissman on the microfiche, and then another, and another: I hadn't realised it was such a common name, but none has the right birthplace or date. Shocking to see them aggregated like this so that they lose all their specificity and become a mass or category: the Jew.

I don't find the names I'm looking for, but to my amazement come across my mother (who's healthily ensconced in London), with the dates of her arrival in the ghettos and camps carefully logged. It gives a curious objective reality to stories I first heard as a child.

The conference starts to improve with a stimulating paper by Yehuda Bauer, Professor at the Hebrew University, who attacks the profligate use made of the Holocaust by politicians to advance their own political programme. I'm also starting to meet peaceniks. A poll is published, showing that 54% of Israelis want talks with the PLO, for the first time the majority. My partner, gathering riveting material on the peace movement, remarks how little western media coverage it's received: unyielding settlers make better copy. The peace activists we meet urge us to publicise the huge swell of two-state advocates in Israel, and exhort Diaspora Jews not to feel constrained through loyalty from criticising Israeli government policy. I'm heartened, since for years I've felt uncomfortable with the polarisation of debate in Britain: pro-Zionist or anti.

We go on an extraordinary, moving solidarity trip with an Israeli group to the West Bank to meet Palestinians, my partner - with their permission - recording it all, secreting his mike and Marantz whenever the army appears. They harrass us all the way back to Jerusalem, but we've seen the kind of Israeli-Palestinian accord which can exist, based on mutual belief in a two-state solution, and even hitherto hawkish relatives are talking peace.

It isn't all life and death stuff: cultural tourism being our passion, we chuckle at the priority of religion over health in the hotel restaurant sign reading 'Please refrain from smoking on Saturday'; at the Jerusalem burger joint called MacDavids, not McDonalds; at the kosher Mexican restaurants and very kosher Chinese takeaway. I see sick joke t-shirts reading 'I was stoned in Gaza', and a gem of a game called 'Mitzvah Monopoly' with Matza Street and King Solomon Way instead of Old Kent Road and Park Lane, and in place of going to jail, you go (I love this - it's so Jewish) to hospital.

We finally get to watch television - Jordanian TV, which shows 'Falcon's Crest', 'Paul Daniels', and 'Some Mothers Do Have 'Em', blanks out the Israeli contestant during the Eurovision Song Contest and, since King Hussein's renunciation of claims to the West Bank, no longer gives the West Bank weather. The Israeli Channel Two on Monday informs us that "Due to financial difficulties, only music will be broadcast tonight" - augury of the BBC to come?

It's time to leave. I've fallen in love with Jerusalem's pale pink indigenous Palestinian architecture and other creamy stone buildings (one benign legacy of the British - their building regulations stipulated the use of local stone). After an intense bout of visiting, I've also become a professional relative, so my eye is drawn to the jeweller's sign in the airport departure lounge demanding 'Did You Remember Your.... Mother, Father, Son, Daughter, Brother, Sister, Wife, Husband, Boyfriend, Girlfriend?'

## SECTION VI

### KRISTALLNACHT - FIFTY YEARS LATER

By P Yogi Meier

When Hitler usurped power in 1933, only a very few of us put the question "Where shall we go?" Apart from political opponents to the new regime, only a few people left Germany, acting on an exceptional foresight. Most of us believed that Nazism was only a passing phase and that things would calm down. They didn't. On the contrary, slowly but surely the screw turned and the number of those crying out "Where shall we go?" increased rapidly. Some went to Palestine, on Hachscharah, left on a so-called "Capitalist Certificate", some went illegally and others with Youth Aliyah. In addition, some were able to cross over a European border, still able to take most of their possessions and belongings. Finally, after the Olympic Games in 1936, the screw turned faster and tighter and life became more frightening. German Jews rushed to Embassies and Consulates, pleading for permits, paying high fees, even bribes to corrupt officials for visas to obtain permissions from the Nazi regime to leave Germany. Even after the outbreak of war, Jews managed to travel by Trans-Siberian railway to find refuge in Shanghai.

As the appeasement policies of Chamberlain had broken down, public opinion in England changed: special permits were granted for trainees under the condition, that they would "leave the country on completion of their training". Women could obtain a domestic permit where a position was offered to them and the first children transports arrived, similar to those after the war. Many of those children were placed with families, some directed to hostels and to a few schools. Most important, England offered to those suffering in Concentration Camps a place at the Kitchener Camp nr Richborough, so that they could obtain freedom to leave Germany. Most of those had affidavits to immigrate into the United States, but their numerous clauses limited their number to 25,000 per annum. If your number did not come up within a year or two, there was no chance to be freed. It is to the honour of Britain, that they offered a few thousand places to obtain their release from imprisonment and that altogether approximately 70,000 Jewish Refugees of Nazi Oppression found a haven in these isles.

With the outbreak of war, thousands of those refugees joined HM Forces, many directly at the Kitchener Camp together with other volunteers from other parts of England. The same happened in the USA, in Canada, Australia as well as in Palestine.

When the war was over, one could say that whilst millions of Jews were murdered by the Nazis, over a million Jews were fighting in the allied forces as well in large numbers as Russian soldiers and as Partisans or were involved in an uprising and underground activities against Hitlerism. Soon millions of displaced persons took up the cry "Where shall we go?" and dragged themselves from the West to the East and from the East to the West. Their cry for living space was heard all over the world, but numerical restrictions had not been removed. We all remember the tragic events which were the result of these limitations, this sad story of the aftermath of World War II.

Many years later, thousands of former German Jews began to respond to invitations from their former hometowns for a reunion with others of their old Jewish community, now dispersed all over the globe. There were also a few, who had survived the Holocaust, hidden by non-Jews or had survived the horrors of the camps. They were met by people in their former hometowns with whom they went to school or work and with those of the younger generation who never had met a Jew before.

I myself did not attend any of these reunions but agreed to come to Germany together with some colleagues to advise on educational matters or to take English students for an international exchange. I also travelled with my family across Germany by car to visit the graves of my parents and other members of my family. The cemetery was maintained by the town and was in a better condition than when the Jewish Community had looked after it. There was a tablet on the wall with the names of all those German Jews, who had died "A Hero's Death" in the First World War, names of men whose names were familiar to me from my childhood days. Now, next to it, there was another tablet in the same style, honouring the names of all those who had perished through Nazi terror. Parking our car in the town, we found a large stone inset into an old wall, proclaiming that "at this place stood the synagogue of our fellow citizens, which was destroyed in the Kristallnacht". Words to that effect, formulated by the town council.

A few weeks ago I returned again to Germany, now invited by the Second German Television Service (Zweites Deutsche Fernsehen) to participate in a Documentary "Als die Synagogen brannten", a special programme for the anniversary of the November programmes. We worked for four days but when I watched on the night, I realised that only a part of my contribution had been used, that they were replaced with vivid reports from Jews and non-Jews who lived beyond the Berlin Wall. This, I did not mind. A joint production with the DDR (East Berlin) was much more important. The end result really mattered, the fact that this documentary was seen all over Central Europe, East and West of the Iron Curtain.

I saw this film, when I attended - on invitation - a conference on "Jewish Sport in Germany". The main speakers were young, non-Jewish German historians, who know more about Jewish Sport than some of the Jewish Zeitzeugen, who had been invited from other countries, mainly Israel.

The conference was Akademv Gespräch on a selected topic of special interest to sport historians. Still, the German media brought an extensive coverage. I shall always remember when the members of the conference, most of them non-Jewish, walked from the former Sportplatz der Juedischen Gemeinde Berlin to the nearby, derelict and desolate shed on a railway siding, from where thousands of Berlin Jews were sent to their death. Now, fifty years later, the Deutsche Sportbund placed a wreath in their honour.

Later in the evening, I walked in silence with many thousands of Germans and some Jews from the Synagogue Pestalozzi Strasse to the Jewish Centre in the Fasanenstrasse. Among others, Diepken, Berlins Conservative Mayor and Willy Brandt spoke. The mayor was heckled by left wing groups as 'Heuchler, Heuchler' but Brandt created a wave of enthusiasm among all of us.

On the next evening, I witnessed a torchlight procession of Berlin's Church Communities. The night after, the red flags and banners of the anti-fascists replaced the torches. There were over twenty exhibitions, numerous TV and Radio Programmes with interviews, documentaries and films like "Shoah", the "Lagerstrasse Auschwitz", the dramatised life stories of Jewish families as "Geschwister Oppenian", "Wir Waren so beliebt", "Meui Vater", "Brutalitoten Hein", and many more, all unknown to me. Hundreds of synagogues had been destroyed in the so called Kristallnacht in 1938. Now fifty years later, in hundreds of towns and villages where Jews had lived, special memorial gatherings took place.

There live only perhaps 26,000 Jews in Germany today, 6-7000 in West and approximately 400 in East Berlin. It is for various reasons difficult to ascertain a correct number when one includes those living in mixed marriages who have, because of it, survived the war. When I wanted to see an exhibition about 9th of November, 1938 in East Berlin at the Ephraim Palais (built over 200 years ago by Heine Veit Ephraim, Financier and Court Jeweller to Frederic the Great of Prussia), the queues were so long, that it would have taken me over two hours to gain entry. Many who waited outside other exhibitions in the West received a free 16 page issue of the lagesspiegel, a special issue dedicated to the events fifty years ago and their assessment today.

Heinz Galinski, the leader of the Jewish community in Germany, said some time ago, that the question of being a Jew residing in Germany today, to be a German Jew or a German of Jewish persuasion, this decision must be left to the individual. This is a personal problem for many so called Rueckwanderer from the camps, formerly Displaced Persons. There are others who returned from Israel and other parts of the world. Their children and grandchildren had to decide on their status, many having been to university and now being firmly established in the towns where they live. For some, the question "where shall we go?" remains in the back of their minds. Others are like the first young Jews who started to serve in the Bundeswehr as any other German citizen. I was told that there is already a very high-ranking Jewish officer in Germany's army.

Before I left Germany, I was asked as so often before, how I myself felt about a return to Germany. I explained that German remained my muttersprache but that English was my father-language, which I spoke with my children and grand-children as well as with my students. I had served for five years in the British Army in England and abroad, finally with the SOE, the Special Operations Executive. England was my home. There was for me no more the question "where to go?" My feelings towards Germans of my own generation? I share the mistrust of the younger generation in their elders. This shared mistrust linked me with them and encouraged me to make sure, that this younger generation really was aware what had happened fifty years ago.

At the end, all of us are confronted with the question "where to go?" in another context. In spite of their mistrust, many feel now, that they would like to return to the place they came from, to tell the tale and to trace the roots from which they stem.

We have now met the third, maybe even the fourth generation. The ten commandments tell us about the sins of the fathers linked with the third or even fourth generation, but not beyond that. This generation will ask "where did you go?" and understand that we cannot come back for good, that we belong to another place.

The Deutsche Bundespost issued on the 9th of November a special stamp, which shows a burning synagogue and the old Jewish saying as quoted by Richard von Weizsacker, Germany's esteemed president: "Das Geheimnis der Erloesung ist Erinnerung". It was with this in mind, that the German Bundestag called its members for a special Memorial Sitting. That the unfortunate delivery of a misconceived address by the Speaker caused a worldwide reaction proved, that not only Germany but the whole civilised world is united in the declaration "we must remain vigilant that this can never happen again."

## SECTION VII

THE 12TH LEONARD G MONTEFIORE MEMORIAL LECTURE  
Delivered at the Stern Hall on Wednesday 23rd March 1988

"THINKING ALOUD ON THE BIG H (SHOAH HOLOCAUST)"

By Felix Berger

Over 42 years have passed since we, of the 45 Society, started our normal life. For most of us, because we arrived in England young, our physical and mental energies and dynamism carried us over from Hades into paradise with comparative ease. Studying, building a career, raising a family, living and loving, have been marvellous ingredients for neutralising deep seated traumas. Our contribution to society, we hope, has on the whole been a useful one. And contrary to what some clinical psychologists may say, we are quite normal. There are amongst us rabbis, doctors, lawyers, business men, architects, even veterinary surgeons. But now that the distance of time has worn away some of the emotional trauma, I would like to think aloud on the most tragic period of our history. For a long time I held on to a belief which I encapsulated in a little prayer. It ran like this:

My dear fellow survivors  
I implore you  
Tell it not in Gath  
Publish it not in Ashkelon  
Let not your stories and features  
Sully the graves of unsanctified creatures  
Let us all observe silence.

I am breaking this silence tonight, because some elements in our society point to us and say that we are exhibiting a "Survival Syndrome". This is a pseudo-medical label stuck on survivors, near survivors, and associate survivors. I need not specify whom they have in mind when they speak of near survivors and association survivors. Our symptoms, they say, manifest themselves in harbouring suspicion and a chronic desire to rake up the past. In general English terms, this does not conjure up nice guys, and it is not true. We have definite views about Mengele and Eichman and the others, but we do not carry revenge in our hearts, nor do we carry a nihilistic view in our mind with regard to man, but as witnesses of "That Place", and as serious tasters of the menu called "Western Civilisation", we cannot but feel great unease when we see the distorted view some people hold of that universal tragedy I call the Big H.

The word Holocaust has been devalued. It is now used to describe any tragedy or misfortune that occurs in the world, thus robbing it of its real meaning, and which by its very cataclysmic nature defies definition. The Oxford English dictionary says of Holocaust: sacrifice wholly consumed by fire, complete destruction of a large number of persons, a great slaughter or massacre. We know that English is one of the richest languages but Hebrew, not rich in number of words, rich of course otherwise, fails us with the words "Churban, Shoah ....". And since we cannot define it or circumscribe it, I shall let the late Jacob Talmon give the historian's tale:

"This was not an explosion of religious fanaticism, not a wave of pogroms, the work of incited mobs running amok or led by a

ringleader; not the riots of a soldiery gone wild or drunk with victory and wine; not the fear-wrought psychosis of revolution or civil war that rises and subsides like a whirlwind. It was none of these. An entire nation was handed over by a 'legitimate government' to murderers organised by the authorities and trained to hunt and kill, with one single provision, that everyone; the entire nation, be murdered - men and women, old and young, healthy and sick and paralysed, everyone, without any chance of even one of those condemned to extermination escaping his fate. After they had suffered hunger, torture, degradation and the humiliation inflicted on them by their tormentors to break them down, to rob them of the last shred of human dignity, and to deprive them of any strength to resist and perhaps of any desire to live, the victims were seized by the agencies of the state and brought from the four corners of Hitlerite Europe to the death camps, to be killed, individually or in groups, by the murderers' bullets over graves dug by the victims themselves, or in slaughterhouses constructed especially for human beings. For the condemned there was no judge to whom to appeal for a redress of injustice; no government from which to ask protection and punishment for the murderers; no neighbours on whose gate to knock and ask for shelter; no God to whom to pray for mercy."

All this happened between 1941-1945, when in Great Britain and the United States, politicians, diplomats, generals and important civil servants received information about those events; and in the Nazi occupied countries, every Sunday a lot of people went to church. In England, until the television series appeared, the subject of the Holocaust was still informally taboo to many people.

The mood of the creative artists immediately after the war has been rightly expressed by T W Adorno's declaration; "There can be no poetry after Auschwitz". It reflected the general feeling of helplessness of most sensitive human beings. Indeed, except for the diaries and journals of the survivors, there was a paralysis of creativity which was expressed in the dictum:

"The Holocaust defies art, in so far as it represents the annihilation of meaning."

The reticence to communicate on the subject of the Big H was also shown by Jews themselves. As recently as March 1977, Alan Montefiore, delivering this memorial lecture, said:

"What right, then, has one whose knowledge of the Holocaust is all at second-hand to speak of it to those who have known it in their own hearts, in their own flesh and in those of their families and lovers and friends?"

To whom shall we speak about the Big H? Why indeed should we speak about it at all? Silence would be a natural response. And yet, the events of the last ten years have convinced me more than ever that one has to "speak of it" in the true biblical sense. It is the right and duty of every Jew and non-Jew to speak of it to their own children and to anyone who sees the Big H as an apocalyptic event which discredited Western culture and civilisation; an event which transcends human fantasy and defies traditional perception and recording. And if, by talking, writing,

confessing and atoning, Western society finds a scintilla of redemption, or hears a faint echo of forgiveness from the wandering souls of Auschwitz, some part of its human image may yet be restored.

In fact, it is the duty of non-Jews to talk to us survivors.

We are now ready to listen.

The Big H is so deeply ingrained in the Jewish identity, and submerged in its sub-consciousness that there is no flight from it; but it ought to be ingrained just as deeply in the sub-consciousness of the non-Jew in Western society. This would not just be for the sake of having a better understanding of the nature of racism or anti-semitism, it would bring him nearer to the source of the greatest evil committed in the history of man. This is not a hurdle that can be easily jumped or by-passed. Measured in historical time this happened yesterday. It took place only a short distance from London. As Eli Wiesel wrote:

"Every occupied nation, every underground movement received help from London, Washington or Moscow. Not the Jews; they were the loneliest victims of the most inhuman of wars. A simple airdrop, a single rescue mission, would have proven to them, and to the enemy, that they were not forgotten. But the truth is that they were forgotten. The evidence is before us; the world knew and kept silent."

I am afraid, we survivors carry with us this innate suspicion that we were deliberately forgotten, and it should not surprise our fellow human beings, Jewish and non-Jewish, that we have a strong desire to express a specific point of view, for the sake of the truth, for humanity's sake, and in a cause which is vital to every Jew and his history.

No, I cannot let you off the hook easily - I witnessed young children being thrown down a fourth floor window into a lorry to be taken to Auschwitz. To this day, when I pass a building, where a roof is being repaired and old slates are being thrown down into a lorry I stop and shudder....

No one expresses the anguish of this deliberate silence better than the Hebrew poet Natan Alterman in his poem "From All Peoples".

When our children cried in the shadow of the gallows,  
We never heard the world's anger;  
For thou didst chose us from all people,  
Thou didst love us and favour us.

For Thou didst choose us from all people,  
Norwegians, Czechs and Britons;  
And when our children are marched to the gallows,  
Jewish children, wise Jewish children,  
They know that their blood is not counted in the bloodshed;  
They only call back to their mother: "Mother, don't look!"

How great the concern for paintings and sculptures,  
Treasures of art, lest they be bombed;  
While the art treasures of baby skulls  
Are dashed against walls and pavements.  
Their eyes only speak: "Don't look, Mother,  
Veterans we are, soldiers renowned -  
Only undersized!"

Their eyes speak yet other things;  
God of the Patriarchs! We know  
That Thou didst chose us from all children  
That Thou didst love us, and favour us,  
That Thou didst chose us from all children  
To be slaughtered before the Throne of Glory  
And Thou dost gather our blood in buckets  
For there is none else to gather it.

And thou dost scent it like perfume of flowers,  
And dost sponge it up in a kerchief;  
And Thou wilt seek it from the hands of them that murdered,  
And from the hands of those that kept silent.

A noble heritage has been destroyed with the loss of European Jewry. I have not been back to Poland where I was born. I can smell its emptiness in London. Polish grass and trees have no meaning after Auschwitz and Treblinka, buildings have no shape after the Warsaw Ghetto. And yet, I want to go there one day, to see, to see what? - I don't know. This is the survivor's dilemma. There is no shedding of the burden.

For in my mind's eye I see my sister, Polish Jewry, a poor and beautiful maiden, modest in appearance, yet aristocratic in behaviour. With limited means, she climbed the highest steps in every corner of the world to gain knowledge and dispense love. When nails were put on the benches in Cracow and Warsaw universities, Oxford, Cambridge, the Sorbonne and Bologna welcomed her with open arms. Her brothers who stayed behind went to the Yeshivot, places that gave us Bialik and Brenner.

A child did not have to be unhappy when his family was poor - he could always spend his spare time and holidays with a better off uncle or aunt, who invariably did not live far away, and where cousins of a similar age were like brothers and sisters.

Love was not rationed.

The Synagogue was not a place of pilgrimage - the intimate conversations by the congregants after the service lasted longer than the service itself. Life was unhurried and permanent. The Jews had been in Poland for a long time and, though they constantly prayed for the Messiah, they planned their marriages and their houses to last a thousand years. The ferment of ideas was in the yiddish newspapers, in the Socialist and Zionist movements; but the Jews in Poland were generally preoccupied in eking out a meagre living and caring for their children. Enlightenment and emancipation did not have to acquire a special meaning for them. Religious anti-semitism though chronic was bearable, pogroms, commercial boycott and beatings though unpleasant did not cause despair yet. Nothing would shake the cardinal belief held by the Jew, intellectual or otherwise, he could not kill anybody, not even his enemy. Wickedness was not popular.

The Nazis took his home away and sent him into the Ghetto. The Polish Jew felt he was going into some sort of captivity, not Babylonian, of course; but he still hoped for a minor Yavneh, with life at the end of the road.

I was in the Lodz Ghetto, and I recollect emaciated bodies harnessed to a enormous container carrying human excreta - their reward was extra soup. I also recollect Friday night.

My mother lit the Shabbat candles and we both intoned 'Shalom Aleichem Malachei Hashalom' - welcome angels of peace. By then, I felt the Divine Presence in our house. The meal was, of course, marvellous - Jewish mothers in the Ghetto had perfected the art of making gefilte fish out of potato peelings.

This was the essence of the Nazi evil, for it was in this spiritual and physical frame of mind that we were carted off to Auschwitz. The inventors of that evil knew a lot about the gentleness of the human spirit, and everything about the Jewish spirit. Until the end of time, we shall be constantly be asking why, why, why? And till the end of time we shall not comprehend the autobiography of Hoess, the commander of Auschwitz, who would destroy seven thousand and sometimes ten thousand human creatures a day during 'working hours', and afterwards would go back to his home outside the electrified barbed wire fence and contemplate family life, the obligations of a father to his sons, and a husband to his wife, and his own appreciation of music and poetry.

How could he reconcile the job he did during working hours and his preoccupations during leisure hours? asks Gideon Hausner, the prosecutor of Eichmann. Unto the end of time, and even with the expert help of psychologists, we shall remain in the deepest of darkneses when we consider a simple little fact: Simon Dubnov, the aged and gentle Jewish historian, was murdered by a former student. It is true that the senses of the Jews have been dulled in the 20th century. Although the anticipated Hitlerian earthquake could be heard in neighbouring Poland before the war, they still deluded themselves. It is the Jews' misfortune that they are rational beings by nature and could not believe that wild irrationality could take over and rule the 20th century. Even the survivors who went through the "Auschwitz Baptism" still hoped for some neighbourly sympathy and friendship when they returned to their towns and villages in Poland; instead they were greeted with a culture grown out of the Big H, as we saw in the Kielce Pogroms. Alongside this rationality, the European Jew, in 1939, carried in his culture make-up a terrible innocence which led him to a most disastrous political and historical assessment of his status as an equal in the human family in the world, and his status vis-a-vis his non-Jewish neighbour. A practical example might help.

In a small market town in Poland two neighbours live amicably for over sixty years, the good relationship having been transmitted from father to son. The son of the non-Jewish neighbour is by now an established pharmacist in the tow, the Jewish son is in charge of his father's textile factory. Being tall and fair, the Jew succeeds in hiding under Aryan papers, and so escapes the gas chambers, but being young he succumbs to the temptation of attending a New Year ball shortly before his town is liberated. His neighbour the pharmacist, greets him in a brotherly fashion during that ball, but later denounces him to the Gestapo. It leaves us with this great dilemma.

Why?

We have no help from the Jew. He is dead. So we enter the world of speculation. Was it the jewellery which the Jewish family deposited with the pharmacist for safe keeping that prompted a civilised human being to denounce his friend?

Were the sixty years of neighbourliness real?

We have no choice but to put Big H as a crossroads in our history. For two hundred years, before that era, European Jewry was in the forefront of all the progressive movements - German Jewry took its emancipation and enlightenment more seriously than the Sinai Commandments, Russian Jewry showed a Sinaitic devotion to radical ideas and social justice, Polish Jewry did certainly not tarnish the human image by its warmth and wholesomeness; its contribution to the human ideal was not minimal, yet its fate was not a happy one.

Why?

Research into Holocaust studies is now in full swing: Oxford scholars are invited to Poland to delve into the archives, the Polish press has started to print articles acknowledging serious faults in the behaviour of Poles towards the Jews; Jaruzelski is willing to admit his mistakes. All very welcome signs, but I am here to remind you that in Poland all that is left of that noble heritage is five thousand old age pensioners. For the rest I am here to say Kaddish.

What is most painful to a survivor is the false interpretation of the Big H, both inside and outside the Jewish community.

Hannah Arendt, a woman of extraordinary intellect, whose "Origins of Totalitarianism" threw such bright light on the genesis of those dark days, yet had this to say in her essays on the Eichman trial:

"This role of the Jewish leaders in the destruction of their own people is undoubtedly the darkest chapter of the whole dark story."

I am not here to defend Chaim Rumkowski, the leader of the Jews in the Lodz Ghetto - he was quite an unpleasant character; but there is a real possibility that half a dozen members of the 45 society would have been in the bowels of Treblinka, had he not kept the Ghetto going till August 1944; and nearly a thousand Jews were saved in the Lodz Ghetto, after Rumkowski himself had been taken to Auschwitz.

We discern a terrible weakness in the ideas of some Jewish intellectual 'outsiders', who have no true understanding of Jewish history and have therefore taken a false reading of the Big H events. Perhaps the fact that Hannah Arendt was out of tune with Ben Gurion's thinking is enough to consider her somewhat unreliable in her judgement on this issue.

It is a great disservice to the Jewish people when the center of gravity is shifted from the primary and only source of that indescribable evil.

It is just as insensitive of some ultra-orthodox Jews to remark that "Auschwitz happened because of our sins". I am not sure if they are

capable of realising the damage they are causing to Jewish youth. This is a lot more serious than throwing stones on passers by on a Shabbat in Jerusalem. Of course, liberal orthodox Jews strongly repudiate this monstrous idea.

The "Grey Zones" of acquiescence, acceptance, and active collaboration are legitimate ground for serious research, but hints formulated in some Holocaust writings that the Jews did not revolt out of cowardice are absurd and brutal. The gas chambers in Auschwitz were tested on a group of Russian prisoners of war, young, army trained, politically indoctrinated, and not hampered by the presence of women and children, and they did not revolt.

The Nazis managed to find willing assistants in the performance of their evil deeds, in various active Jew haters, who blessed the day of the Big H; some Ukrainians exhibited exceptional zeal and skill in the murder of young children.

As for the weaknesses of certain Jews who bought their life at certain moral costs - we were there; we know the circumstances. Even when we cannot forgive their lapses, and most times we cannot, we must not forget the original cause of the evil, which made the Jew inhuman and made him lose his heritage. I have heard of the son of a well known Rabbi who became a cruel Kapo - that reflects more on the power of the progenitor of the Big H evil - it does not exemplify the natural propensity of an orthodox Jew.

We speak of moral dilemmas, the stakes were much higher, the fields of play much narrower. The only thing which was certain was death, its sting was the uncertainty of its method.

It is important for the witness to speak out on the most painful subject which most sensitive humans find baffling. It is the terrible activities of the special squads of prisoners given the job of "servicing" the crematoria, among whom were many Jews, as we have seen in Claude Lanzman's film Shoah.

We can all remember the havoc and confusion caused to youngsters like ourselves by the "privileged Canada commandos" when we arrived in Auschwitz totally disoriented; the constant cruel beatings were the first introduction to the Big H hell and for a long time I carried with me a feeling toward them which was not much different to that which I felt towards the SS. And clearly there were amongst them sadists, but now that we are capable of more reflective thinking we become aware of the specific "Grey Zone" which that monstrous system created, and of which the organising of that specialised privileged group was the most demonic crime.

We must be eternally grateful to Claude Lanzman for showing us the interviews of the survivors of that squad.

We must be eternally grateful to the powers, celestial and otherwise, who let those survivors survive. The Tel-Aviv barber's interview will stay with me till I draw my last breath - his slow measured speech, culminating in that traumatic and emotional breakdown, encapsulates the beginning of the end of the Big H.

The indulgence by some "Holocaustians" in the comfortable game of blaming the victim is most deplorable. It shows a lack of understanding of the true nature of the Big H. It gives currency to the monstrous ideas which the oppressor had preached with some success:

The victim was sub-human

That the victim was meek and submissive - He was human.  
That he was credulous and unsuspecting - He was human.  
That he wanted to survive - He was human.

That the spirit of Massada and Bar Kochba still flowed in his veins, the Jewish victim in the Warsaw Ghetto and in the partisans showed himself to be more than human.

The survivor needs intellectual strength, moral purpose, and above all an ideal, to counteract his ambivalent feelings, when he considers the cynicism the major democratic countries in the West displayed when dealing with the perpetrators of the Big H.

Of course, we had the Nuremberg Trials, but after that the pillars of democracies vied with each other for the services of such 'noble creatures' as Claus Barbie. No, the survivor does not carry in his heart revenge, he wishes to save the human image as part of the tale that he wants to transmit to his children and as an important item which has been saved from the ashes.

We beg to differ from Gerge Steiner and Hannah Arendt:

There is more banality in the thought that time and the great excesses of the evil deed transcend natural justice. There is more than banality in the question I have often heard put to a survivor:

"Why can he not find in his his heart the Christian feeling of forgiveness?"

How should a Jew, the sole survivor of his family burned in the Auschwitz gas chambers, reply?

Nearer home, I have some misgivings in the way some of our spiritual leaders see Big H. About a year ago, I was asked to participate in a Holocaust seminar given for the benefit of all Rabbis under United Synagogue jurisdiction. The them was:

#### Teaching the Holocaust

The Chief Rabbi delivered the main lecture. And although I agree with part of his thesis that we must not breed despondency and that there is more to Jewish education than Holocaust studies, de-emphasising the uniqueness of Big H, weakens a central pillar in Jewish education and Jewish history. He drew an analogy with the Churban, the destruction of the Temple; the Talmud, he said, did not produce a tractate dedicated to the event - no "Masechet Churban". Well, at the risk of being accused of uttering profane thoughts, I shall have to declare earnestly that, compared to the Big H, the destruction of the Temples, both the first and the second, were just unpleasant picnics. For how can losing sovereignty, going into captivity, even with the loss of many lives, compare with the

happenings and Auschwitz and Treblinka, where practically all of European Jewry were offered no alternative to a death, which neither sanctified God's name, nor gave hope of ever restoring the image of man.

The unique nature of the Big H was the denying of the possibility of conversion, or assimilation.

It was not like the time of Antiochus, or Hadrian, if Jews agreed to share a Hellenistic identity, they would be saved.

It was not like in the Rhineland massacres of the Crusader period.

It was not like the Chmielniski massacres of 1648.

It was not like any previous Holocaust, which never went beyond Plehve's concept - Plehve who was the minister in charge of Jewish affairs in the reign of Alexander III and Nicholas II, said: "One third of the Jews will be killed, one third will convert, one third will emigrate."

In Big H emigration and conversion were out.

In the Big H there was total genocidal intent, and this is what made it unique in our Jewish history.

I was painfully aware at the seminar that some of our spiritual leaders have no true understanding of the Big H.

They assert:

"It is a truly amazing phenomenon that very few survivors lost their faith in the crucible of their unspeakable torture."

Where do they get their:

"Ample documentary and eyewitness evidence?"

This ought to be a serious subject for study and debate. I have spoken to many members of the 45 Society and others on this painful theme. We go to the synagogue and we pray - the invincible faith, however, eludes us. We do, of course, hang on to hope.

Some entrenched orthodox authorities enlist the Talmudic dictum:

Ein Ed Naasah Dayan (A witness does not become a Judge).

We witnesses do not want to become judges - through our experiences we want to help to relate and to ask questions.

Any Jew who takes his history seriously has to pause at the Big H crossroads and take a long deep breath. Sophistication and traditional thinking will not be of much help. Philosophical and theological tools will entrap him in a deep mire. Perhaps his only hope of gaining some insight would be to enrol the experiences of genuine witnesses.

We the survivors ought to come to the rescue, before the shadows of the mortal coil start visibly dangling before our eyes.

We survivors are sitting on a two-culture fence; bound to Western culture by flesh and blood, and by time; yet, essentially residing in the desert island of Big H memories; eager now to relate some of our experiences to our sons and daughters, but fearful of cracking that father-son bond; above all, fearful to transmit an unbearable burden. At first, we had no way of addressing ourselves to our loved ones and even if we had, we doubted that the human ear was capable to pass it on to the heart and brain.

It is ironic that in our Egyptian experience, which in human and historical terms can hardly bear comparison with that of the Big H, we are asked to teach our children that this is one of the main pivots of our Jewish heritage. Holocaust Remembrance day practically intertwines with Passover. I should hate to see the Seder in which I have always rejoiced with my sons, despoiled by adding a personal commentary on the Shoah, yet, if we are to honour our true History, this story must be told. Perhaps it will be more bearable under the influence of large helpings of Israeli wine. I personally will tell mine when dead drunk.

A deep sadness grips me when I consider the Jewish student in British universities and polytechnics. The onslaught on Zionism by the militant left is such that the Jewish student is left stunned. Many of the students are not equipped with adequate knowledge of Zionism or Jewish history; and, if he is not fully aware of his Jewish identity; or if he has not taken on board the events of the Shoah-Holocaust, he is at a great disadvantage. This pathetic onslaught by the radical left is unwarranted; and it is tragic to see the radical left display the barbed tentacles which remind Jews of the unpleasant and unmentionable activities of the extreme right before the onset of the Big H.

The survivors must be in the forefront in the fight against unjust and unfair attacks on Israel, not only because many survivors live there, though this is good enough reason, but mainly because we have experienced the greatest of all miseries, seen the greatest of all injustices, that man has perpetrated against man.

We are experts on what constitutes evil.

Israel has made many political mistakes, which have regretfully resulted in the loss of many precious lives. I suffer a thousand deaths when I think of the seriousness of the present situation there. But this outrageous cry that it is a Nazi state sounds the shrill note of a familiar trumpet, which in the pre-Big H days caused, first, the devaluation of the Jew, before darker forces asserted themselves. The unsympathetic treatment Israel receives in the media, the unsavoury hints and inuendoes, the deliberate omission to point to the root causes of the conflict, is a most worrying aspect. This climate of opinion, where attacks on Zionism and Zionist leaders have assumed the mantle of respectability, is unhealthy. It reminds us only too well where it has led in Jewish history. We know from our history which ideas truly sustained us and which failed us; we know from our bloody history who of our leaders suffered with us and gave us hope.

If anyone symbolised the sane, civilised pre-Holocaust, Holocaust and post-Holocaust Jew, it was Chaim Weizmann. No Jewish leader expressed more aptly and more vividly the tragic loss of that irreplaceable segment of Jewry than Chaim Weizmann, when the first news reached him from Poland:

"It is as if lightening has struck an ancient tree, cleaving it in half, one half of the tree is burned away. Such happenings profoundly affect the root of the tree and hence its life."

The most fruitful branch of that ancient tree is now in Israel, we the remnant of that lost segment of Jewry can never give up that special relationship with Israel. We cannot be passive to the vagaries of the post-Holocaust era, whether they come from the media, press, or from the Jim Allens of Perdition fame, who have no difficulties in securing a hearing in this country, albeit not on the stage, whereby the Zionist leadership is named as collaborators of the Nazis. Of course, Zionist leaders and others bribed the Gestapo to save lives. I consider it the Aguda's finest hour when they managed to bribe the Gestapo and saved about twenty lives in the Warsaw Ghetto.

We survivors have our suspicions and we cannot blame Israel, whose population contains a large number of survivors, occasionally tune in to the thoughts of the survivor poet Abba Kovner:

"But what are we do do, if in our sick souls, we bear not only the vision of the past, but also that of the future. And we feel with all our senses the breath of the approaching slaughtering knife .... The new knife which was born on the fields of Maidanek, Ponar and Treblinka, where millions of the tends of nations saw how it was done so easily, so simply, so quietly."

Where and when does the survivor drive away the occasional despair and despondency?

When and where does he taste the meat of hope?

By now, you may have guessed that Israel plays no small part in it. I go there often, to see the new Jew - I try to understand him and forgive many of his faults. I watch the orthodox Jew praying at the Western Wall. I am there, just to make sure that he has risen from the ashes of Treblinka; I caress his beard to ward off the unholy hands of the brutal SS, who mutilated it in Warsaw, or was it Lodz, or Vienna. I walk over to the Avenue of the Righteous Gentiles, to smell the ground consecrated by man. I touch the tablets with their strange Gentile names, which radiate the brightest light in the darkest and coldest tunnel of human misery. I think of Primo Levi's Lorenzo:

"In concrete terms it amounts to little: an Italian civilian worker brought me a piece of bread and the remainder of his ration every day for six months; he gave me a vest of his, full of patches; he wrote a postcard on my behalf to Italy and brought me the reply. For all this, he neither asked nor accepted any reward, because he was good and simple and did not think that one did good for a reward. His humanity was pure and uncontaminated, he was outside the world of negation. Thanks to Lorenzo, I managed to forget that I myself was a man."

I stretch on the grass, close my eyes, and see the young and noble face of Mordechai Anilewicz. I see Jewish history in a new way. I see the distorted face of the SS, when surprised by the resistance at the Treblinka and Birkenau gas chambers, and wonder, if even at that moment, did this archangel of evil show any contrition, or felt a scintilla

of doubt in his full-proof system. I think of Kiddush Hashem - sanctifying the Name. The struggle to remain true to one's Heritage, one's destiny, and God.

I think of the noble and defiant face of Janusz Korczak, who did not carry God's name on his lips, but the love of orphaned children in his heart.

I think of the saintly Hillel Zeitlin, who paraded his frail body on the Umschlagplatz in Warsaw, wrapped up in Tallit and Tefilin, gently mocking the bloated blond body of the German whose chest contained two hearts.

I think of Rabbi Mendel and his Hasidim, standing surrounded by a German firing squad, while other Jewish prisoners, arrayed in long rows, dug the common grave for the condemned Rabbi and his adherents. It inspired Shin Shalom, the Hebrew poet, to write this touchingly simple ballad:

Rabbi Mendel observes them:  
Despair, destitution, the shadow of death,  
Have completely quenched the light in their eyes -  
Their only awareness is death.  
Is there still room for the uplifting of their souls?

Then suddenly he cries out, as if swooning with thirst -  
"A glass of water, O Jews, a glass of water!  
Half my portion in the world to come  
to anyone that takes his life in his hands."  
But none stirs, not a man responds -  
Doom and hopelessness in all eyes.

"A glass of water" Rabbi Mendel cries. "Isn't there anyone?"  
And ashamed he is to have broken with speech,  
that silence of desperation and misery,  
Forever stamped upon them by enslavement.  
But look! A prisoner there has broken forth,  
Hobbling through the rows of trained gun-barrels.

A mere Jewish tailor he was, a simple pious man,  
Running in his chains to the well.  
A glass of water he brought, paying in blood.  
Rabbi Mendel performed the oblation,  
And began the confession to the creator of all worlds;  
"Amen", the endless spaces responded.

And when the cruel lieutenant gave the order to fire,  
Rabbi Mendel smiled to the Highest -  
For in the realm of ultimate despair there still was,  
A Jew sanctifying the name of the Deity,  
A Jew loving his fellow, and triumphant,  
Even in death, over viciousness and evil.

But, the instant manufacture of stories of Kiddush Hashem and miracles having been performed during the Days of Awe, does Jewry no credit. This was not so. Yet, in the rare moments, when it did appear, it had in it more than a mere religious spirit; it expressed what the Hebrew poet Halkin called the Jewish folk mind. I see in it a physical resistance.

And I look for faith, the sort of faith present in the innocent writings of Anne Frank's diary, where she affirms her belief that it will all come right and that she must uphold her ideals; the faith of Ilona Karmel, in the novel "An Estate of Memories", where the child born in the concentration camp symbolises rebirth and human hope; or the faith of Tania in Zdena Burger's novel "Tell me Another Morning", when the strangers rob her of her home, after returning from the camps, she leaves her home and her memories behind.

I go the National Library in Jerusalem to look for everyone's memories, including my own. There, the miles of shelves openly defy Himmler's expectation that the "extermination of the Jewish people", which he termed "this glorious chapter of the Reich history", should never be told.

There we find the important contribution by the historians. We must be grateful to Lucy Dawidowicz and Martin Gilbert for gathering the story of the Big H from testimonies of those who survived. I sympathise with their difficulties when gathering the material - traumatised survivors are reluctant to talk, and yet one could not wait too long. Survivors have a nasty habit of dying without giving prior notice. The painstakingly written accounts of Emanuel Ringelblum are monuments to the indestructibility of the Jewish spirit. The Ghetto and the camps were the twin ingredients that fuelled the evil of Big H. Ringelblum, with a trained historian's eye and a strong pulsating Jewish heart, conveys to us the Big H tragedy with heart-rending intimacy and urgency; he regarded his task of imparting invaluable information on the inner life and the death throes of the Ghetto as sacred.

The most valuable contribution to the Holocaust literature has come from the survivor novelists Primo Levi and Eli Wiesel. In Wiesel's writing, however, one senses some flaws. The mythical and religious elements, though perhaps individually true, were not, on the whole, representative of camp life. For here lies the rub of the Nazi evil. They drowned human dignity, and the religious spirit in such a vast sea of nothingness, a pre-Genesis Tohu Vavohu, where the only reality was the infinity of time. You entered the Auschwitz selection, becoming slowly aware of the meaninglessness of the universe, and once you survived the selection, you entered a universe where the meanest creatures reigned supreme.

My personal recollection is:

Memory, feelings, and spirit departed. At first, one was totally dazed, and when one had the good luck to recover, the best one could hope for was for the human state which would be worthy of Primo Levi's description of his friend Leonardo in 'The Truce':

"Besides good fortune, he also possessed another virtue essential for those places; an unlimited capacity for endurance, a silent carriage, not innate, not religious, not transcendent, but deliberate and willed hour by hour, a virile patience which sustained him miraculously to the very edge of collapse."

Like Eli Wiesel, I was also raised in an intensely orthodox and Hasidic environment, yet, on looking back on my camp experience, I am aware that I and many others of similar background survived primarily because of a grain of luck and because the spirit of Leonardo resided in us.

I am not quarrelling with the Almighty - I forgive Him His imperfections, as I hope He forgives me mine; and I have not discarded anything which I carried with me before I entered the Auschwitz gates. I sympathise with the agony of Jewish religious thinkers and philosophers, when confronted with the Big H. If only we had with us the saintly Rabbi Abraham Isaac Cook - his wonderful mind and great love for his fellow Jew and fellow man, are needed to give us inspiration and guidance. In these intolerant days, the spirit of Rabbi Cook is sorely needed to discard archaisms, and drive away sophistry, when evaluating the tragic events of the Shoah Holocaust.

It will do us no harm to discuss freely the question:

Can the religious spirit survive in a dehumanised creature, when the dehumanisation has lasted a long time?

Can any spirit survive?

It is a much better question than the one often quoted:

Where was God at Auschwitz?

In our spiritual and intellectual history, the Big H events will always pose very serious questions.

Eliezer Berkowitz, a highly intelligent and interesting writer bypasses the vexed question: "Where was God at Auschwitz?", with the sophisticated idea of Hester Panim - a view that at times God mysteriously and explicable and without any obvious human cause, hides his face from man. This occultation of God is required for man to be a moral creature. God regularly absents Himself from history. If at Auschwitz we have witnessed the hiding face of God, in the rebirth of Israel, and its success, we have seen a smile on the face of God. Emil Fackenheim, a foremost thinker, who briefly tasted camp life, hears the commanding word from Auschwitz thus: Jews are forbidden to hand Hitler posthumous victories; Jews are under a sacred obligation to survive after the death camps. Jewish existence itself is a holy act - forbidden to despair, to become cynical of man and the world. This view is not much different from that I once heard from a Tel-Aviv taxi driver. His words were: "I don't know what the world tells you. I am telling you: you had not survived Auschwitz for nothing." This secular holiness is becoming manifest in contemporary Jewish existence, and nowhere is this more obvious than in Israel. In Fackenheim's words: "Israel is eclectically what every survivor is individually, a not to the demons of Auschwitz, a yes to Jewish survival and security, and thus, a testimony to life against death on behalf of all mankind."

Another interesting thinker is Richard Rubinstein. He is shocked by the well-meaning protestant clergyman; "God used the Nazis as an instrument of His will" - a view, not dissimilar from that expressed by the ignorant Polish peasant woman in Lanzman's Shoah.

Stephen Katz - 'Post Holocaust and Dialogues', summarises Rubinstein's ideas;

"He is with the Talmudic heretic, Elisha ben Abuyah;  
'Let Din Velet Dayan'  
(There is neither judgement nor judge)

The only honest response to the death camps is the rejection of God. Man must turn away from the transcendental myths and face his actual existential situation. In the face of the world's nihilism man must assert value. The Jew after Auschwitz is still a Jew, and as such carries within him the shared vicissitudes of history, culture and psychological perspective. Jews, like all men, are rooted in concrete life situations, and as such, only Jewish experience can be satisfying and authentic.

Rubinstein redefines classical Jewish values for the post Holocaust Jew. He marries atheism with a religious and ritual symbolism; he advocates the return to the cosmic rhythms of natural existence, priorities of nature, return to primal origins, renewal of Zion, rebuilding the land with the return to the soil. There, he says, lies Jewish renewal and spiritual reintegration.

The late professor Ben Sasson, in a symposium on the Shoah in the 70s in Jerusalem had this to say:

"The Jewish people had always known how to turn their misfortunes into creative acts, and though it seems to hard to think in these terms with regard to Big H, we must try and absorb it into our culture, turning the negative faces into creative aspects."

We have started to ascend the Big H mountain. Serious research is being promoted in many higher institutions of learning. Slowly the barriers are being removed; and contrary to the views expressed by some thinkers that the Big H events are so extraordinary - hence wishing to place them outside the normal historical process, those who have been there have found Big H so extraordinarily terrible that we feel it is vital that we place it firmly in our history.

Our talented and creative Jewish writers have for a long time found the theme of Big H so senseless that they chose to remain silent. Saul Bellow failed in his "Mr Sammler's Planet"; Agnon and Bashevis Singer remained silent - though they have contributed to the Holocaust literature in an indirect manner - by painting for us the wide panorama of pre-Holocaust Jewry, and distilling into their prose the immense riches of its culture, thus highlighting the tragic loss.

Creative writers in Israel have begun to find a way into the theme of Big H. A B Yehoshuah, one of the most talented Israeli writers, touches on some very fundamental problems with regard to Jewish thinking in the post-Holocaust era, in a collection of five essays published in 1980. It is significant that he calls his collection of essays: 'Bizchut Hanormaliyut' (The Privilege of Normality). There is a strong symbolism in this title. The normalisation of the Jewish situation among the other nations, the strong ambivalence that arises when the Jew considers the metaphysical and religious questions, the total impossibility to use reason in understanding Big H, are some of the salient points in his essay on the Big H.

These are not, of course, new grounds.

Yehoshua argues that the yellow star which the Jew had to wear was only a physical demonstration of what we always knew - that we were different. On the one hand, he argues, we have the Zionist concept which demands

the definite normalisation of our existence; on the other, we have those who claim our unique existence in the world as expressed by the Midrash:

'Tzedakah Asah Lanu Hakadosh-Baruch-Who Shepizarnu Bein Haomot' (The Almighty Has Done Us A Great Favour By Dispersing Us Amongst The Nations)

For, had we not been dispersed, total destruction would be our lot. You could not escape your Jewish identity. The religious, despite Big H, have no problems; the doubters, because of Big H, pushed religion aside. Yehoshuah, no doubt, echoes the remarks by the Hasidic Rebbe:

"To the faithful there are no problems, to the sceptical there are no answers."

Yehoshuah continues:

"the Big H showed us the great jungle in the big wide world - one cannot rely on anyone except oneself. On the other hand, because of the Big H, we Jews must embrace the opposite concept, that is, we must be in the forefront of the fight for a better world, and only by guarding the ethical values which were secured at the defeat of the Nazis, can we guarantee our own existence."

And, of course, this is eminently true.

Finally, if I have hinted at some human imperfections in this country; perhaps, it points to a survivor's sensitivity to an adopted country; perhaps, it points to a general Jewish dilemma.

I don't want to minimise my deep feelings of gratitude to England, for giving me the comfort of a home and the joy of family life - the joy of bringing up four wonderful sons. I can well remember the early days, when I sailed the winds of grief in an uneasy manner, tightlipped, and carrying in my mantle a sellotaped soul, till at last, in a Sussex lane, I began to shed real tears. I am here to speak of it. For that much and more has already been saved from the ashes.

As for the my feelings about the European Jewish experience, I can only say this, with the greatest of humility:

German Jewry's contribution to its full emancipation, to its own cultural, religious and philosophical growth - Mendelssohn, Samson Rafael Hirsch, Herman Cohen, Wissenschaft des Judentums: Its tremendous contribution to German culture, world literature and science ended in myself witnessing in the Lodz Ghetto a disoriented Mischling (someone, whose grandfather may have been half Jewish) and who, in some generous moments, would find it in his heart to forgive his Teutonic forebears his own misfortune, yet, could not find in his heart enough compassion for his fellow creatures in the Ghetto to make his own fate a little more tolerable.

Here, we see the working of the unique genocidal mania of the Nazis, their full intent of complete physical destruction of the individual; not even allowing him any dissociation of his own identity.

Germany has now the best record for promoting Yiddish and Holocaust studies at their universities.

We have become an interesting people.

Hungarian Jewry is left with a synagogue, a restaurant, and a place where one is training a single communist - a sponsored Rabbi from Moscow, to serve the needs of Soviet Jewry.

Czech Jewry is left with the Maharal's Golem.

The total obliteration of Polish Jewry has now brought a tugging of conscience and nostalgia amongst the Poles. They miss us, not, of course, the majority of Poles represented in Lanzman's Shoah, whose glee in residing in our former homes reflected their activities in the Big H; and whose articulate answer about the Jewish contribution to the life of pre-war Poland was expressed in two words: "The Jews stank". Well, Jews in Poland had many shortcomings, but their life practically revolved around the ritual bath - Mikveh. They were poor, but they were certainly clean.

I want to be more generous, more forgiving, but the story of the neighbours keeps performing a Mephistophelian dance, and drive my memories, like powerful sea waves against cruel rocks.

Perhaps it is the sensitive, cultured and artistic Poles who miss us. It is the humane Poles, the righteous Gentiles, who miss us. They miss our humour. There were over three and a half million of us there.

We are flattered by their desire to share with us our past be it in international conferences, in the museums of Poland where our parents are their archives, and where the great riches of our culture are invisible.

In Poland there can be no tangible monument to Polish Jewry - its apotheosis was its spirit - derived from the warm, close family feeling, from the inherent joy and optimism created and inspired by the Hasidic movement and from its long sufferings, which made them share willingly their only bed with their persecuted fellow Jews.

Russian Jewry, no mean contributor to the ideas of Socialism and Zionism, has undergone a remarkable change. The cruel behaviour of some Ukrainians during the Big H, the "Doctor's Plot", and the constant phenomenon of anti-semitism in ordinary life, has shaken their belief in a system which claimed that it had successfully solved the Jewish problem.

Natan Scharansky and the other refuseniks are clear signs of Jewish spiritual regeneration.

It is with the spirit of Scharansky that the Big H survivor strongly identifies.

It is a spirit which makes us face the future with hope and renewal.

It is the spirit of Isaiah - I do not want to quote him, for fear of being misunderstood, but please, share with me the spirit of the secular Hebrew poet Leah Goldberg, who, in a rare lyric, filled with wistfulness and childlike wonder, expresses that hope of renewal:

Will days, indeed, yet come in forgivingness and grace,  
When you will walk in the field,

You will walk like a simple hearted wayfarer,

With clover leaves stroking your bare feet,  
With the stubble sweetly stinging?

Or rain overtake you, with its throng of drops,  
Beating upon your shoulders, chest, neck and fragrant head;

And you will walk in the wet field, quietude expanding in you,  
Like light in the skirts of a cloud?

And you will breathe in the smell of the furrow,  
Breathe and be calmed,

And you will see the sun in the golden mirror of the puddle -  
All things simple, and alive, and you may touch them,

And you may, you may love?

You will walk in the fields alone,  
Unscorched by the heat of the blazing fires,

On roads that bristled with horror and blood;  
And in purity once again be meek, and submissive,

As is a blade of grass, as is mere man?

OPEN LETTER TO FELIX BERGER  
in response to his L G Montefiore Memorial Lecture

By Arthur Pozmanski

Dear Felix

May I congratulate you on the sincerity and courage with which you bared your soul in order to analyse and summarise how what you choose to call "The Big H" affected us and most other survivors.

Your thought provoking lecture made compulsive listening. By avoidance of scientific jargon, you made us feel that on the whole you were speaking for all of us, and not just to the "converted" but to the world at large. May I, therefore, thank you for saying all you did on our behalf and allowing us to identify with you emotionally. I aver with the typical modesty attributable to anyone of our group : "I could not have said it better myself". In my opinion this lecture should be published not just in our Journal, but in a periodical with a much wider Jewish and Gentile readership as a permanent record for posterity.

Now for the few points with which I did differ:

It is true that some members of the '45 Aid Society managed to pursue academic careers, acquired university degrees and distinguished themselves in their chosen fields. Most of us, however, had no aptitude, aspirations or opportunity to climb Parnassus and reach for laurels in the Arts of Sciences, and found it an arduous enough task to gain the basic skills and knowledge essential to securing a fair standard of living. Yet, most of us kept up a quest for some explanation or rationalisation of the lapse in civilised behaviour which caused "The Big H" and justification of the seeming lack of divine intervention which we may have hoped for. Some of us eventually found solace in submergence in strict religious observance and acceptance of the inscrutability of Divine Decree. Many others realised that even the world's greatest thinkers could not find any rational explanation for this evil.

To call our genus "homo sapiens" makes me almost despair.

Furthermore, like yourself, I have also suffered recurrent nightmares and I suspect many of us did likewise. I do not know how "normal" it makes us.

I looked for understanding and guidance in the Torah, Zohar, Tania, the Gospels, Gita, the Vedas, writings of Prophets, sages, mystics and philosophers. It took your lecture, which must have acted as a catalyst, to make me think again and for a glimmer of an answer to emerge. It occurred to me that we had been brought up in the tradition of thinking of the Deity as a patriarchal, regal figure - in anthropomorphic terms. We tend to visualise Him somewhere in Heaven dispensing individual and summary judgements, sending a few plagues on recalcitrant Egyptians, revealing Himself to Moses and bestowing on him a magic wand or stick with which to bypass or bend established laws of nature. Thus we tend to think in spite of the teaching of the Prophets and sages that the Creator of the Universe is a Spiritual Entity.

Maybe we look for Him in the wrong places.

Focus your mind back (again) on the time of the "Big H", the ghettos and camps. You may recall and acknowledge that there were those few (all of us - I hope) who, in the midst of the prevailing brutality and carnage, could not be completely corrupted. They evaded the advances of perverted Kapos and Blockaelteste and resisted the temptation to steal a crust of bread from under the pillow of a weaker or unwary neighbour to still their hunger, or someone's lice-ridden but warm blanket to keep themselves from freezing. Starving beyond endurance, they would share with a companion a scrounged extra potato, carrot or few raw grains of corn and the last few drops of water in a locked train wagon. Think of those, who, on the point of exhaustion, helped to lift from the mud someone who fell and dragged him for miles, risking blows from the guards' rifle-butts during the "death marches". Then think of the people like Korczak, who sacrificed their own lives to help little children "on their last journey" and those few righteous Gentiles who risked their lives to help or hide a Jew.

What spiritual power impelled these individuals to act the way they did? Was it senseless bravado, heroism or a manifestation of the Divine Spark of Loving Kindness which prevented them from succumbing to evil?

Now, look around you at the human jungle pervaded by strife, hate and little concern for anyone but that indicated by political expediency. Even here you may find those few who really care for their fellow-men.

As for our little group, note the eagerness with which many rush to improve their knowledge and display keen interest in the welfare of others. They willingly share, donate, sacrifice their time and money and forego personal leisure to counsel and help those less fortunate than themselves in the best way they can.

According to our tradition, we human beings have a choice between good and evil.

It may be just one subjective individual and naive thought; but perhaps the many complex rituals of various creeds and religions, having lost their primal symbolic and admonitory significance, transmuted into cults of their own. This malevolent form of present day "golden calf", by generating intolerance and hatred among men for the sake of their own dogmas, deflects and alienates our intellects from the true meaning of religion, the Ultimate Reality, the Divine Spiritual Spark.

Should not Spiritual Power manifest itself from within ourselves? The Cabbalists seem to think so.

Maybe we do misunderstand the nature of God and look for Him in the wrong places.

Sincerely yours

Arthur Pozmanski

## SECTION VIII

### HENRY ABISCH

"Every time you say Goodbye I Die a Little"; these lyrics apply to all of us when one of our friends passes away, especially at so young an age.

Henry Abisch died, on his 60th birthday, as he had lived, quietly and peacefully, having spent the day doing when he loved so much, skiing on the slopes of Davos. I feel his loss particularly keenly, as we went to school and cheder together for a few years, from when we both were 7 years old I knew him well, as I knew his dear late Parents and all his family; his late Brothers all perished in the Holocaust and I know of his great love for them and what a vacuum all their deaths left in his heart. His sister, now living in America, was the only other survivor.

Henry had many attributes; he was a quiet person, kind and helpful. He was honest and trustworthy and had a charitable heart, as I personally know: some years ago, I was collecting for a charitable cause not well known in English Jewish society, that of UCHNUSAT KALAH. When I asked Henry to contribute he unhesitatingly gave me a donation for a person unknown to him and unnamed by me. He said: "if Michael (Bandel) asked it had to be a good cause", and he left it at that.

He supported our '45 Aid Society, attending the Reunions whenever he could, and we shall all miss his smiling face. So too will all his friends and colleagues with whom he played golf, his other passion. He was a good golf player.

We send our sincere condolences to Nadia, who will miss him so very much, and we wish her and all the family long life.

Michael Bandel.

### JACOB BANACH

Jacob Banach died suddenly on 14th July 1988. He came to this country with the Windermere Group, but, because of chest complaints, was soon transferred to Ashford Sanatorium. From Ashford he moved to Quare Meade where he showed his academic abilities and where his association with Moniek Reichkind, now Michael Preston, started. From Quare Meade he moved to the Freshwater hostel in Finchley Road as part of a group of five Windermere 'boys'. In Finchley Road he continued his studies and then worked jointly with Michael Preston for some time. Thereafter he established himself successfully in his own accountancy practice.

Jacob Banach was one of the more colourful members of our Society and was widely known. He was the only member of our Society to become a JP. In the fifties he married Rita, with whom he had four daughters. His death is mourned by his friends and his family and, to the latter, our Society extends its most sincere condolences.

Kurt Klappholz.

## EDITH FRYDMAN

I am sure that all those reading this Journal will be very sad to learn of the death of Edith Frydman (nee Buxbaum). I was asked to write her obituary as I probably knew her better than most and our friendship spanned some 40 years. Edith was born in Germany in 1925 and came to this country as a refugee from Nazi Oppression in 1939. Her parents perished in the Holocaust, although her two brothers managed to escape. One brother lived in London and died at the very early age of 32; the other brother lived in New York where he, too, died a very young man. The late Moshe Korn, Chazan of the Hendon Synagogue, was her first cousin.

I met Edith in 1947 at the Primrose Club. My first memory of her was watching her swim for the Club and some many memories since then were connected with Edith's many sporting activities. I always had the greatest admiration for her as she excelled at everything she undertook. In view of the fact that I was not athletic and built for comfort rather than for speed I stood in awe of this lovely girl who acquitted herself so marvellously and who was greatly admired by all for her sporting prowess. I often thought of her as one of 'the boys' as she could outrun and outperform many of them. Only last year I watched her bowl for a team that was very proud to have her on its side.

She emigrated to America in 1953, but not before she had attended our wedding that year. We corresponded sporadically over the course of the years but always kept in touch, however tenuously. Great was the joy when we met again in New York in 1970. She later moved to Florida with her husband, Jeff Frydman, and their children, Robyn and Kerry. It gave us great pleasure when we were in Florida one year to help them celebrate their Silver Wedding. Seeing the Frydmans was of course always one of the highlights of our visits to Florida and Edith was sorely missed on our most recent visit.

She was honest and truthful and never scared to speak her mind. She was a good friend and I am sure we will always think of her with great affection.

Evelyn Zylberszac.

## HENRY OSCAR JOSEPH OBE

It is with the greatest regret that we mourn the passing of Mr H Oscar Joseph OBE who died on April 20th 1988 at the age of 87. He was associated with our members for many years, long before our Society was formed. In fact his association with us dates back to the time of our arrival in this country in 1945/6.

When the lease expired on the building of the Primrose Jewish Youth Club in Belsize Park our activities continued in a church hall situated opposite the old club premises. These premises proved inadequate and our hitherto meteoric rise on the firmament of the London Youth Clubs quickly moved into sharp reverse. It was at this critical juncture that Mr Joseph stepped in and, with the help of the Jewish Youth Fund, of which he was chairman from 1954 until 1987, secured the building at Finchley Road. Thus he made it possible for many of us to have once again a second home, in addition to a social, cultural and sports club.

When the Club was disbanded and we later formed our Society in 1963 he became our President and continued to take a paternal interest in our affairs. He was a paragon of good manners, unobtrusive, easily approachable and ready to proffer wise and practical Counsel. He took immense pride in our achievements and derived great pleasure from attending all our functions.

On 26th May 1987 as a token of our appreciation and to show our gratitude for his concern for us our Society donated £5000 to the Wiener Library to help to inaugurate an Audio-Visual Centre which was to bear his name. It was a wonderful occasion, well attended by many of his admirers and well wishers, including members of our Society. Although his health was already poor, he was visibly moved that our tribute to him took the form it did; what the Wiener Library represents is a cause to which Oscar Joseph was deeply committed. Through the CBF, of which he was chairman for many years, he devoted himself with unflagging energy to the rescue of refugees and to the rehabilitation of survivors from the concentration camps.

His involvements also extended into other fields. His crucial role in the Conference of Jewish Material Claims against Germany and its offshoot, the Memorial Foundation, enabled both these organisations to make a great contribution to Jewish life in the Diaspora as well as in Israel.

His influence in promoting harmony between the European Jewish Community Services and the International Social Welfare Services was also widely felt. So was his lifelong involvement in the cause of Jewish Youth. But his most endearing feature was that he had given a lifetime of service "without seeking publicity, reward or recognition". He was a man of great humility, totally unbiased, self effacing with a wry sense of humour and a strong sense of justice and fair play, as well as a man of old time courtesy.

We have lost not only a rare and wonderful President but also a friend whom we will most certainly greatly miss.

Ben Helfgott.

#### MRS MURIEL MONTEFIORE

As members of the '45 Aid Society, we were saddened in early October by the death of Muriel Montefiore. Indeed many of us were present at the funeral as we accompanied her to her final resting place in a grave adjacent to that of her husband, Leonard, and as they were so close in this life so they now rest together in eternity.

In my eulogy I spoke about two sets of emotions that were present in our hearts: one of sadness because with her death a chapter concluded in the Montefiore family's history. But there was also a profound sense of gratitude because she died very much as she lived - quietly, indeed gently - in her own home - at peace with herself and with her dignity unimpaired.

Her life also had all the right dimensions. She had length of days and having reached 97 years she witnessed all the major events of this turbulent century. She had breadth of interests and experiences. Over

the years man of us were fascinated by her accounts of a Victorian education. Through her marriage she enjoyed the influence of two very special men - her own husband, Leonard, and that of her father-in-law, Claude Montefiore. They brought her into the world of philanthropy and scholarship. She was a sensitive partner in so many life-serving and life-saving activities. They ranged all the way from pioneering the Froebel Institute with its fresh accent on education to the tasks of rescue and rehabilitation of refugees through the CBF. She was active, literally, to the end of her life in working with the Wiener Library and thus safeguarding truthful history. For many years she was honoured and greatly loved by the '45 Aid Committee - sharing as she did with Oscar Joseph the roles of mother and father figures which we thrust upon them.

Her life had depths - of sympathies and of loyalties. They included great appreciation for beauty, especially beauty in nature and a talent for exquisite miniature paintings which flowered relatively late in her life. The many small paintings which dotted her home spoke of harmonies as well as considerable skill.

She also had the great satisfaction of watching her sons - Alan and David - become distinguished academics who, at the same time, also carry on the great traditions of intellectual and humane service. To Alan and his family and to David we extend our sympathy and together with them will always and affectionately remember this lovely, noble lady.

Hugo Gryn.

## SECTION IX

The news given below refers mainly, though happily not exclusively, to our Members in the UK. Since we have Members in many parts of the world this is not a satisfactory situation and Aaron Sylberszac has made arrangements to change it. At Aaron's initiative people have volunteered to collect news for this Section in the areas in which they live. Their addresses are given below. Members may send news to the 'Collectors' in their area, or they may send it directly to the Editor. It would be helpful if the news for any year reached the Editor not later than the end of January after that year's end. Given what is said in Section II about the publication of Member's News, we should then avoid a repetition of the situation in which we find ourselves now, when we publish "news" which is more than two years old. Meanwhile, let us thank Aaron and all of his volunteers.

### Florida

Moniek Goldberg  
c/o (Gold Rose) Inc  
2175 West 8th Court  
Florida 33010  
Tel: (305) 885 0188

### New York

Lucille & Victor Breitburg  
15 Spoke Lane  
Levittown  
Long Island  
NY 11756  
Tel: (516) 796 1254

No doubt Moniek Goldberg and Victor and Lucille Breitburg will also be willing to receive and transmit news of Members who live in other parts of the USA.

### Canada

Sam & Ray Goldberg  
3 Steeles Valley Road  
Thorn Hill  
Ontario  
Tel: (416) 881 1893

### Israel

Menachem Silberstein  
6 Rehov Burla  
Tel-Aviv  
Tel: 42 7404

Below is the Member's News we have received. The Society wishes a most sincere Mazeltov to all whose particular Simches are recorded below. At the same time we must apologise for any possible errors and omissions without, however, being able to accept responsibility for them. (Ed)

1987

MARCH

RUBY WEDDING of MR & MRS I FINKLESTEIN

JUNE

BARMITZVAH of MRS A WIERNIK's grandson.

AUGUST

BARMITZVAH of MR & MRS L TEPPER's son.

WEDDING of MR & MRS D KUTNER's daughter.

WEDDING of MR & MRS A POSNANSKI's daughter.

WEDDING of MR & MRS K DESSAU's son.

SEPTEMBER

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS ZYLBERSZAC.

WEDDING of FLORENCE to HARRY SUSKIN.

NOVEMBER

ENGAGEMENT of MRS M ROZENBLATT's son.

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS B POLLAK (Israel).

ENGAGEMENT of MR S IRVING's daughter.

DECEMBER

Grand-daughter for MR & MRS M GOLDFINGER.

Sometime in 1987 there was the BARMITZVAH of MR & MRS FINKLESTEIN's grandson and the WEDDING of MR & MRS E STEIN's daughter.

1988

JANUARY

BARMITZVAH of MR & MRS B NEWTON's grand-daughter (France).

ENGAGEMENT of MR & MRS MOSKOWICZ's son.

BIRTH of a grandchild for MR & MRS LIGHT (Canada).

FEBRUARY

BIRTH of a grandson to MR & MRS I WILDER.

1988 (cont)

APRIL

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS AYZEN (Israel).

WEDDING of MR & MRS ELKENBAUM's daughter (USA).

WEDDING of MR & MRS ZYLBERSZAC's son.

WEDDING of MR & MRS J KAGAN's son (Israel).

MAY

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS STEIN.

BIRTH of a grandson for MR & MRS B NEWTON.

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS OBUCHOWSKI.

WEDDING of MR & MRS WINOGRADSKI's daughter.

WEDDING of MR & MRS WERTMAN's daughter (Canada).

JUNE

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS H SPIRO.

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS D HERMAN.

BIRTH of a grand-daughter for MR & MRS K DESSAU.

WEDDING of MR & MRS C SHANE's son.

RUBY WEDDING of MR & MRS B POLLAK.

JULY

VALERIE & LEO GEDDY's daughter was married.

SEPTEMBER

DARREN, son of SAM and ELAINE WALSHAW became engaged (Manchester).

The marriage took place of ESTHER, daughter of CECILIA & HIRSCH ZAMEL (Brazil).

MAYER STERN's son DAVID got married to LELIA.

MR & MRS MALINICKI'S grandson was BARMITZVAH.

OCTOBER

JOHNNY GUTMAN got married to CAROL.

HARRY & MARGARET OLMER's daughter got married.

1988 (cont)

OCTOBER (cont)

Grandson to REGINKA & MARK FRUMAN (Manchester).

A grandson was born to MR & MRS J BAJER.

MRS S IRVING's daughter was married.

DECEMBER

SIMONE, daughter of SUSAN & PINKY KURMEDZ, was married (Manchester).

BRIAN, son of LILY & MAYER BOMSZTYK, was married (Manchester).

A grandson was born to MR & MRS EISEN (Israel).

A grand-daughter was born to JASMINE & MICHAEL BANDEL.

A grand-daughter, JESSICA SARA, was born to OLIVE & DAVID HERMAN.

ASHELY, son of ARNOLD & COLLETTE FULTON, was married.

A grandson was born to BARBARA & JACK KAGAN.

Sometime in 1988 a grand-daughter was born for MR & MRS LEWENSTEIN (Israel).

1989

JANUARY

A grandson, ELLIOTT, was born to JEANNETTE & SIGI SHIPPER.

SALA & HENRY KAYE had their RUBY WEDDING and so did ANNE & DAVID TUREK.

MARCH

KITTY & KOPEL DESSAU had their RUBY WEDDING.

A grand-daughter was born to MARION & MAYER STERN.

A grandson was born to our new Vice President HARRY BALSAM and his wife.

TAUBA & MAYER CORNELL had a grandson.

A grand-daughter was born to ANITA & CHARLIE SHANE.

BARBARA & JACK KAGAN had a grandson

ROSALIE & JOHNNY GOLDMAN had a grandson.

1989 (cont)

APRIL

The son of MR & MRS J VAN DER VELD was married.

It is understood that the son of HARRY & MARGARET OLMER is about to be married.

## SECTION X

### RECENT AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Written by the Editor on the basis of information provided by the Chairman. See also Section II.

During recent years our Society has been active in attempts to foster the maintenance of the Yiddish language and of Yiddish culture. Examples include the conference on Yiddish which took place in London, 6th - 9th July 1988. Many of our members attended that conference and entertained in their homes conference participants from abroad. The Yiddish Comedy Theatre from Tel Aviv performed to a full house at the Stern Hall on 13th November 1988. Similar activities are to follow and will be announced by the Society in what seems the most effective manner at the time.

From 13th - 17th November 1988 the "Heart of Israel" exhibition took place at Alexandra Palace. Our members manned, or personned, the Yad Vashem stand at that exhibition.

From 18th - 23rd December 1988 there took place THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL JERUSALEM CONFERENCE OF CHILDREN OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS. It was planned for 1988 in order to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the 45th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and the 40th anniversary of the declaration of independence of the State of Israel. Its intellectual scope was most, indeed, perhaps over, ambitious: according to the organisers it embraced "... three main themes: the Holocaust; Jewish existence; and human dignity". In this issue we have an article in Section IV devoted exclusively to this Conference, and an article partly devoted to it in Section V. Brenda Wertheim attended the Conference as a representative of the Second Generation in Manchester.

The article about the Jerusalem Conference in Section IV touches on two other recent events. One was the Survivors' Gathering on 17th July 1988 at the Sternberg Centre, which had been preceded by a more academic conference at Oxford. For some inexplicable reason we have no reports on these events in this issue. There is only one person who can be rightly blamed for this omission and that, of course, is our Chairman. He can be rightly blamed on the "bicycle rider" principle, which his nephew, Jeffrey Tribich, explains. The second event was the Second Survivor Gathering, which took place at the Sternberg Centre on 1st May 1989.

The participants at the Jerusalem Conference were children of Holocaust survivors, i.e., those whom we call the Second Generation; but the theme of the conference, as noted, did not only concern them. Similarly, the activities of our Society are not bounded by purely sectarian concerns. Thus, over the past few years, our members have given talks in schools and colleges and invariably have been enthusiastically received. A notable example was provided at Fareham Tertiary College which hosted the Anne Frank Exhibition from 10th February - 13th March 1989 and wished "to provide the opportunity for small groups of children and their teachers to speak with survivors" (quotation from a letter of the Head of Humanities of Fareham College to our Chairman). Several of our members responded to this invitation and, perhaps to their own surprise, found the experience gratifying.

Indeed some who thought that they could not possibly engage in public speaking found that they could do so quite easily and indeed were good at this particular art. Moreover, when teachers say they would like their pupils to have the opportunity to speak to survivors, they presumably have good reasons for saying it. It seems that speaking to survivors conveys something to school children which they do not get from other sources. It must be left to others to speculate on precisely what that "something" is. The fruits of such speculation, on to paper, would make a suitable contribution to this Journal. At any rate, the demand from schools and colleges for the services of survivors as speakers will continue. Schools usually address their requests to our Chairman who, as everyone knows, would like to be able to reply positively. Anyone willing to help disseminate information about our experience during the War, which we all say should be disseminated as widely as possible, should inform our Chairman accordingly. His address and phone number are given in the list of Members' addresses in the Appendix of this issue.

In Manchester members of our Society have been giving interviews to an historical researcher. These interviews have been taped and the tapes will be deposited with the Jewish Museum. It might be noted that, while the publication of the Journal was in abeyance, our members in London gave similar interviews to the Imperial War Museum. The tapes containing the interviews are available to researchers. Both in this way and with our visits to schools we can reasonably claim to have been doing something for the preservation of historical knowledge.

Talking of our experience during the War brings to mind another recent event, a TV programme. The programme, in a series on BBC2 called Timewatch, was transmitted on 11th January 1989 at 8 p.m. under the title "The Sewers of Lvov". It revealed that, when the ghetto in Lwow (the name by which we knew that city before the war) was about to be liquidated in 1943, a group of twenty Jews hid in the sewers. Before long they were discovered by a Polish sewer worker who turned out to be one of the "righteous Gentiles" and provided them with food at his own expense. Of the twenty people who hid in the sewers ten survived until the arrival of the Russians. Of those ten four are alive now, of whom two live in London. If this story of "The Sewers of Lvov" is new to you, as it certainly was to the writer you might like to know that the two from "The Sewers of Lvov" who now live in London are none other than Mr and Mrs Margulies, who have often provided the catering at our Reunions and at many of our Members' Simches.

By the time this Journal reaches you Yom Hashoa is likely to have passed, since this year it falls on Tuesday, 2nd May. However, the commemorative meeting at Hyde Park will have taken place at 11.30 on Sunday, April 30th.

If you look at p.1 of this Journal you will see that changes have taken place among the officers of our Society. The reason for some of the changes emerges from our Section VIII. It is appropriate to make a few remarks here about each of our new officers.

MARTIN GILBERT, our new President, is a well known historian, the official biographer of Churchill, author of many books on the history of the Holocaust, prominently involved with the struggles of refuseniks and a committed supporter of our Society.

Our new Vice-Presidents:

For the first time we have Vice-Presidents who are also 'ordinary' members of our Society, if that does not sound like a contradiction. As it happens, they come first in alphabetical listing.

HARRY BALSAM - is widely known among our Members and needs no introduction. However, it would be ungracious not to mention the time and effort he has spent for the Society, to say nothing of the more tangible benefits he has provided.

HUGO GRYN - is not only widely known among members but also in the wider world. Despite the fact that he seems to have barely enough time to breathe he seems always to have time for the business of our Society.

ALAN MONTEFIORE - son of Leonard G. and Muriel Montefiore, gave the first Leonard G. Montefiore Memorial Lecture. He is Chairman of the Wiener Library Endowment Appeal and in his efforts on behalf of the Wiener Library and the Friebe Institute nobly follows in the footsteps of his father, the memory of whom is so dear to our members.

DAME SIMONE PRENDERGAST, O.B.E. - daughter of Elaine Neville Blond, is Chairperson of the Jewish Refugees Committee, which brought us to this country; an active member of the CBF; our only new officer who has a proclaimed political commitment, in her case to the Conservative Party.

We take this opportunity to renew our Society's thanks to all of the above for having agreed to accept these offices.

The forthcoming event which must now be mentioned is our Reunion, which will take place on 14th May 1989 at the

Kinloss Suite  
Kinloss Gardens  
London N3 3DU

A circular announcing the Reunion has been sent to members.

Another planned forthcoming event, the importance of which is emphasised in Menachem Silberstein's article in Section IV, is a trip to Poland. It is intended for our members and their families and is meant to take place in early autumn of this year. Those interested should phone or write to, Ben Helgott, 46 Amery Rd, Harrow, Middx HA1 3UQ, phone 01-422 1512.

#### THE '45 AID SOCIETY'S ANNUAL HOLOCAUST AWARD

Please take note of the following announcement and draw it to the attention of people you regard as suitable applicants for this award. Applicants will find it useful to read the article by Jeffrey Tribich in Section V of this issue.

#### SUMMER INSTITUTE, YAD VASHEM JERUSALEM

1. Up to three awards of £600 each are to be made to enable the recipients to participate in the Summer Institute on Modern Jewish Life and History to be held in Jerusalem 5th - 28th July, 1989.

2. The Institute will be held under the Auspices of the Yad Vashem, Hebrew University and W.Z.O.
3. The Subjects for study will include Jewish Life in Europe on the Eve of the Second World War; The "Final Solution"; Jewish Resistance; Holocaust Life and the theological responses to the Holocaust; The Birth of Israel and Modern Anti-Zionism.
4. Applications for the awards are invited from young men and women under the age of 35 with a strong interest in Holocaust studies and with a record of communal involvement.
5. The overall cost of the course is likely to be between £800 and £1,000.
6. Successful candidates will be expected, on their return, to take an active role in educational and youth work with a view to conveying to others their experience, perceptions and understanding.

For further details and an application form please write to: Mr Ben Helfgott, 4th Floor Woburn House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 0EP.

7. Application forms should be returned to this address not later than 15th May 1989.
8. In early June there will be Personal Interviews and it is hoped that the successful candidates will be notified by 15th June.

#### YOUR CASE FILE FROM THE JEWISH REFUGEES COMMITTEE

Have you ever wondered what impression you made on the people responsible for looking after us when we arrived in this country and a little later, when we were assigned to hostels? If you haven't you are a little unusual; if you have, you can now find out by applying for a copy of your "case file", as it is called. All you need do is cut out and complete the questionnaire below and send it to:

The Jewish Refugees Committee  
Woburn House  
Tavistock Square  
London WC1H 0EP

enclosing a cheque for the nominal sum of £20.00 made payable to the Jewish Refugees Committee.

JEWISH REFUGEES COMMITTEE

ARCHIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name.....  
(Present Family Name) (First Name) (Maiden Name)

Address.....  
.....  
.....

Name at Birth\* .....  
(Family) (First Name) (Other Names)

Date of Birth\* .....

City and Country of Birth\* .....

Other Names used (eg post-adoption)\* .....

Members of family*	Relationship	Date & Place of Birth
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....

Other information which would assist in tracing your file .....

.....

.....

\* If known.

## SECTION XI

### APPENDIX

List of members mainly in London and the London Area.

On this occasion we publish only the above list. However, as in 1978, we hope to be able to publish a list of our members worldwide at a later date.

The list published now may not be complete. Any reader who knows of members in London or the London area whose names do not appear on the list should inform the Editor. Those on the list should receive this Journal.

The Membership Fee of our Society is £10.00 per annum, which every member is expected to pay. Cheques should be sent to the Treasurer, I. Wilder, 15 Lodge Avenue, Elstree, Herts WD6 3NA and be made payable to "The '45 Aid Society". While £10.00 is the required fee, the Society will appreciate receiving cheques in excess of that sum. Members who have not yet paid their Membership Fee for 1989 are urged to do so at once.

N.B. A name preceded by Mrs refers to a female member understood not to have a husband at the time of publication. In the case of all other names no indication is intended of the marital status of the person.

#### (AUGUST 1988) LIST OF '45 AID SOCIETY MEMBERS - LONDON

Mrs	S Abisch	19 Thatcham Gdns, Whetstone, N20 9GE	
	D Adler	35 Greville St, EC1	445-1846
	R Aron	24 Allington Rd, NW4	202-6915
	J Bajer	112 Castleview Gdns, Ilford, Essex	554-6594
	H Balsam	40 Marsh Lane, NW7	959-6517
	M Bandel	8 Fairfield Ave, Edgware, Middx	952-4952
Ms	B Barnett	31 Upton Rd, N1 5BN	249-9240
	B Becher	46 Auriol Rd, W14 OSR	602-1524
	S Benedict	2 Merryfields Gdns, Marsh Lane, Stanmore	954-1446
	M Bennett	2a Wilton Grove, New Malden, Surrey	942-5910
	F Berger	31 Wellesley Rd, W4	995-0026
Mrs	M Bloom	22 Hayfield Rd, Moseley, Birmingham 13	012449-2798
	H Brafman	4 Burylands Flat 2, Surbiton, Surrey	399-7069
	P Brandstein	Flat 41, 29 Abercorn Place, NW8	624- <del>3884</del> 3A50
	E Brunstein	27 Mornington Ave, Cranbrook, Ilford	554-2673
	M Burgerman	9 Dover House, Whitchurch Gdns, Edgware	952-3206
	M Cliffe	14 Kinloss Court, North Circular Rd, N3	349-1565
Mrs	V Cooper	42 Freston Gdns, Cockfosters, Herts	449-8716
	M Cornell	23 Elmwood Ave, Kenton, Harrow, Middx	997-4728
	M Dessau	22 Oaks Lane, Newbury Pk, Ilford	599-1013
	A Dichter	9 Flambard Rd, Harrow, Middx HA1 2NB	907-8292
	B Dreihorn	37 Salmon St, London NW9	205-6878
	S Dresner	90 Parkfield Ave, Harrow, NA2 6NP	421-1296
Mrs	E Eisen	25 Oakdene Pk, Finchley, N3	
	M Etkind	58 The Avenue, Watford, Herts	0923-223649
	F Farkas	46 Sherwood Rd, Hendon, NW4	203-2662
	S Fauli	The Penthouse, Courtenay Gate, Kingsway, Hove, Sussex	0273-731401
	I Finkelstein	30 Oak Lodge Close, Dennis Ln, Stanmore	954-0373
	I Finkelstone	9 Beulah Close, Edgware, Middx	958 5257
	J Fischer	58 Ford Hook Ave, NW5	992-4577
	E Fish	14a Church Crescent, E9	985-4565

(AUGUST 1988) LIST OF '45 AID SOCIETY MEMBERS - LONDON cont.

071

	H Fox	4 Harman Close, NW2	452-5698	5861014
	M Frei	24 Shirehall Gdns, Golders Green, NW11		
	S Freiman	62a Hampton Rd, Teddington, Middx	977-9817	
	M Friedman	18 Anthonne Close, Little Heath, Potter's Bar, Herts EN6 1RW	0707-42313	242/758
	L Frischman	7 Adams Close, Salmon St, NW9	205-6389	
Dr	L Frydman	8 College Court, College Cres, NW3 5LD		
	A Garwood	74 Monkams Ave, Woodford Green, Redbridge, Essex 168 OET	504-0216	
	L Geddy	72 The Downage, Hendon, NW4	203-1647	
	M Geldman	27 Sunningdale Gdns, Old Kenton Lane, Kingsbury, London NW9 9NB	206-0530	
Mrs	C Geller	102 Franklyn Gdns, Edgware, Middx	958-5870	
Mrs	B Glasner	174 Gladstone Pk Gdns, NW2 (Godleib)		
	J Goldberger	25 Heber Rd, London NW2	450-4204	
	M Goldfinger	14 Beaumont Pl, Hadley, Highstone, Herts	449-8222	9875677
	F Goldman	37 Mallard Way, London NW9	205-9232	
	J Goldman	39 Franklyn Gdns, Edgware, Middx	958-5870	
	L Goldman	58 Cheyne Ct, Royal Hospital Rd, SW5	352-9101	
	M Graham	"Ridgemount", Austell Gdns, NW7	959-5476	
	H Green	Meadowcroft, Bargate Ln, Dedham, Essex	0206-323357	
	V Greenberg	8 Links Drive, Elstree, Herts	953-3865	
	A Gross	4 St Kildas Rd, London N16		
Rabbi	H Gryn	4 York Ho, Upper Montague St, W1	262-9062	
Mrs	V Guterman	4 Collingwood Ct, Queens Rd, Hendon NW4	202-8293	
	W Gutman		550-3763	
	W Gutt	79 West Heath Rd, NW3	455-2282	YTH
	I Haber	109 Finchley Lane, NW4		
	I Hahn	108 Roll Gdns, Ilford, Essex	550-9505	
	R Halter	30 Dickenson Rd, N8 9ET		
	M Hayman	12 Grosvenor Cres, NW9		
	J Hecht	20 Mill Ridge, Edgware, Middx	958-5013	
	M Hecht	198 Castellan Rd, W9	286-4261	
	E Heimler	100a Gloucester Rd, Mew Barnet, Herts	440-8826	
	B Helfgott	46 Amery Rd, Harrow, Middx HA1 3UQ	422-1512	
	<del>A Herman</del>	<del>51 The Downage, Hendon, NW4</del>	<del>203-1137</del>	
Dr	J Herzberg	3 Tudor Ct, Alexandra Rd, N10 2ER	883-3991	
	D Herszkowicz	62 Howberry Rd, Canons Pk, Edgware	952-6888	
	J Hochhauser	69 Manor Rd, N16		
	M Hoffman	91 St Marks Rd, W10	960-3295	
	M Honey	45A Woodstock Rd, NW11 8ES	458 2928	
	A Huberman	7 Milcote Ave, Hove, Sussex	0273-735191	
	H Huberman	69 Manor Road, N16		
Mrs	N Huberman	14 St Peters Ct, Queens Rd, NW4	202-0377	
Miss	Z Husserl	<del>25 Decoy Ave, Temple Fortune, NW11</del>		
	S Irving	42 Greyhound Hill, Hendon, NW4	202-1765	
	A Isaaksohn	34 Shannon Wy, Southend Rd, Beckenham, BR3 1Wg	658-9801	
	P Jay	28 Heathcroft, Hampstead, NW11	458-7946	
	R Jayson	13 Crespigny Rd, Hendon, N4	202-0243	
	J Kagan	5 Hocroft Ave, Nw2	435-4677	
	J Kahn	2 Limes Ave, NW11	455-7061	
	Kamionka	36 Ravensdale Rd, N16	800-8503	
	R Katz	8 Doverdale Rd, W. Bridgford, Nottingham		

DSC. PH.D.  
C. CHEM, FRSC

(AUGUST 1988) LIST OF '45 AID SOCIETY MEMBERS - LONDON cont.

16 QUEENS GDNS  
HENDON N.W4  
2 TR

	H Kaye	38 Fairford Ave, Luton, Beds	0582-32321
	V Kelly	<del>8 Grendon Gdns, Wembley, Middx</del>	081 202 7235
	K Kendall	61b Canfield Gdns, NW6	624-0582
	J Kiersz	18 Hoop Lane, Golders Green, NW11	209-0809
	A Kirschberg	9 Cottesmore Ave, Clayhall, Ilford	550-2299
	K Klappholz	Rosebery Halls, 90 Rosebery Ave, EC1 4RL	
	C Kohn	39 The Ridgeway, NW11	455-8995
	H Kohn	1 Headley Dr, Gants Hill, Ilford	554-5818
	F Knoller	6 Badgers Croft, Totteridge Lane, N20	445-5922
	F Knopf	6 Acorn Ct, Acol Rd, NW6	634-0088
	M Kusmierski	37 Woodstock Rd, NW11	
	D Kutner	22 Winton Lodge, Imperial Ave, Westcliffe on Sea, Essex	0702-341903
	M Lampert	7 Preston Wy, Preston Rd, Wembley, Middx	
	M Lee	28 Hartswood Rd, W12 9NF	743-5236
	R Levy	11 Deepdene Ct, Kingswood Rd, Shortlands, Bromley, Kent	460-3916
	C Lewkowicz	79 Ossidge Lane, N14	368-7407
	Lieberman	59 Finchley Lane, NW4	203-2638
	O Lister	39 Chandos Ave, N14	882-0222
	L Manders	126 Powys Lane, Palmers Green, N13	882-1706
	M Markovic	49 West Heath Drive, NW11	458-4112
	J Meltzner	12 The Woodlands, NW11	453-0777
	J Mendelsohn	8 Park Way, NW11	
Mrs	B Modiano	7 Mulberry Walk, SW3	352-5885
	J Moskowitz	62 St Georges Rd, NW11	458-3495
	J Moss	76 Elm Park Ave, N15	800-3363
	D Munch	2a Turnham Green Terr, Chiswick, W4	995 5536
	B Newton	6 Sheraton Cl, Elstree, Borehamwood Herts WD6	207 1172
	M Nurtman	10 Conberton, Eureka Rd, Kingston	541-5569
	B Obuchowski	75 Clayhall Ave, Ilford, Essex	550-7501
	H Olmer	50 Tretawn Gdns, NW7	959-7632
Miss	Oppenheimer	23 Shepherds Hill, Highgate, N6 5QJ	348-3449
	S Orenstein	3 Goodyears Gdns, NW4	
	C Orzech	43 Moundfield Rd, N16	800-9307
	R Orzech	5 Clifton Gdns, N15	802-4478
	S Pearl	104 Park Rd, New Barnet, Herts	441-6600
	I Perl	3 Vista Drive, Redbridge, Ilford	550-6293
	N Pivnic	2 Hampstead Gdns, NW11	
	Pivnic	2 Hampstead Gdns, NW11	458-2790
	B Pollack	5 Nichol Ho, Woodberry Down Est, N4	800-5927
	A Poznanski	1 Wanstead Lane, Ilford, Essex	554-2404
	J Poznanski	9 Ash Grove Terr, Gateshead, Newcastle	
	M Preston	7 Albert Mansions, Crouch Hill, N8	348-1299
Mrs	I Reichmann	23 Oakwood Rd, Hampstead Gdn Sub, NW11	455-4880
	J Rents	53 Hove Park Rd, Hove, Sussex	
	A Riseman	15 Amhurst Parade, N16	800-4595
	W Robertson	38 Langton Gr, Sydenham SE26 6RD	778-9642
	L Robeson	14 Jesmond Way, Stanmore, Middx	958-9902
	K Roman	80 Bidwell Gdns, N11 2AL	888-9393
	L Rosenberg	151 Ordnance Rd, Enfield, Middx	9-718337
Mrs	M Rosenblatt	56 Knoll Dr, Southgate, N14	368-8688
	B Rolzstajn	45 Moundfield Rd, N16	
	I Rudzinski	36 Chradmore Rd, N16	806-3534
	Salp	82 Kings Cl, Hendon, NW4 2JC	203-0958

(AUGUST 1988) LIST OF '45 AID SOCIETY MEMBERS - LONDON cont.

	S Schwimmer	2 Morley Crescent West, Stanmore	207-5416
	C Shane	44 Shamrock Wy, Southgate, N14	368-8688
	Z Shipper	12 Williams Wy, Radlett, Herts	779-5450
	E Simmonds	298 Panfield Ave, Braintree, Essex	
	M Singer	31 Rusper Close, Stanmore, Middx	954-9008
	H Spiro	9 Brinsdale Rd, Tenterden Gr, NW4	203-4836
	E Stein	161 Stradbroke Gr, Ilford, Essex	550-0823
	I Stein	17a Grove Park, Wanstead E11 2DN	530-6222
	M Stern	11 Acol Rd, NW6	624-9637
	H Suskin	207 Golders Green Rd, NW11	458-4046
	M Tabacznik	10 Chardmore Rd, N16	806-3615
	M Teichman	4 Median Rd, E5	985-4347
	L Tepper	10 Churchill Ave, Kenton, Middx	907-9991
	A M Tribich	7 Oakleigh Park South, N20	445-2819
	D Turek	48 Stoneyfield Lane, Edgware	959-3083
	H Wajchandler	134 Gants Hill Cres, Ilford	550-8550
	A Walters	Seafield Stores, 93 Fforddtalar Goch Meliden Clywd, Prestatyn, N.Wales LL1	98NT
	A Ward	27 Lodge Ave, Elstree, Herts	953-5007
	J Weger	1 Old Park Rd, Palmers Green, N13	886-3058
Mrs	A Wiernik	2 Box Elder Cl, Stoneyfield Lane, Edg.	959-2965
	I Wilder	15 Lodge Ave, Elstree, Herts, WD6 3NA	953-1822
Mrs	F Wineman	33 James Close, Woodlands, NW11	456-5103
	R Winogrodzki	34 Denham Drive, Ilford	554-3986
	I Zawaski	26 Glebe Crescent, NW4	
	A Zwirek	55 Hatley Ave, Barkingside, Ilford	550-9426
	A Zylberszac	64 Chalgrove Cres, Clayhall, Ilford	550-3340

JOSEF PERL 6 WILFRED RD.  
BOSCOMBE BOURNEMOUTH BH5 1NB 0202 395300