

# Journal of the '45 Aid Society

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**WE WISH ALL OUR MEMBERS PEACE AND  
PROSPERITY IN THIS SEASON OF FREEDOM**

## HERE & NOW

I was at work when I received a phone call some 4 years ago. Hello - is that Mr. Greenberg? I said yes. Are you from Czechoslovakia? Yes, it's going back a while... Are you from Majdan? By that time I was somewhat intrigued and said yes, who are you? You will never guess, this is Dudi your childhood friend and neighbour. It was a total surprise to me. Dudi and I went to school, cheder and spent our childhood in Majdan. I had lost contact with him in 1945.

Majdan was one of a cluster of shtetels in Ruthenia or perhaps better known as the Carpathians. It was ruled by the Czechs before the outbreak of World War II. Its population was 42 Jewish families and approximately double that of Catholic Ukrainians. Mostly farmers living from the produce of the land. The only real industry there was timber ( Fiddler on the Roof type of environment) with which many of us are familiar. Most people were struggling to feed their families, it was certainly no paradise. Some were occupied in the timber industry, the rest were providing services i.e. grocers, butchers, bakers, shoemakers and transportation (by horse and cart) for distributing commodities as well as travelling to neighbouring places. The farmers would sell their produce - often exchange them for household commodities. There was a reasonable co-existence between the two communities. Each however, had their own school and culture. That was, until the Hungarians occupied that area in 1939 and amalgamated the schools. That was when the hostilities began.

Most of the Jewish population of the entire area were rounded up in 1941 and taken to Poland where they were massacred. The remainder met their fate in Auschwitz in May 1944.

Back to Dudi; He settled in Tiberias, married a local girl and rose to the position of Headmaster of a school. He also became a noted historian on Tiberias, he speaks fluent English and Spanish. This is no mean achievement considering that his education was interrupted at the age of eleven. Dudi is now retired and leads youth groups to Poland to visit the concentration camp sites.

Dudi and his wife Levanona came to England on a sabbatical. Knowing that I was in England, they made numerous enquiries and were advised to contact Ben Helfgott, who informed them of my whereabouts. I met Dudi and immediately renewed our close friendship. I had forgotten, but soon rediscovered that Dudi and I went through Auschwitz, Mauthausen and other camps together; we even made our way back to Majdan to find survivors. Dudi found a brother and I a sister. Out of all the Jewish population in our shtetel, only one man survived of the adult generation and a few between the age of 14-25.

Dudi and I meet at regular intervals. Every time I go to Israel, we sit and revive memories of old. He seems to remember most vividly much more than I. He is reminded by his brother who is three years older. We sit for hours in their beautiful garden in Tiberias high up overlooking the sea of Galilee (Yam Kinneret), we talk and laugh about the characters and peculiarities of the people of old Majdan.

Some may feel that it is unkind to laugh about those who suffered so tragically. Not so, we laugh about their behaviour and characteristics when they were alive. Although they appear in my vision like a blurred film with unclear faces, we are nevertheless reviving with love and affection the memory of them and, in a sense reliving that time with them.

Dudi Jakubovic is now David Sarid, his Levanona is preoccupied with assisting immigrants facing problems. They are well known and respected in Tiberias.

Victor Greenberg (Kushy)

In the last issue of our Journal I told you how I became a Master Swimmer at the age of 62+, which meant not only swimming regularly, which I did anyway, but also competing against others who were in the same five year age band. As Ben mentioned in the last issue, I suddenly came up against problems with my knee, which was pronounced arthritic. I had great pain walking, going up and down stairs. Swimming in a competitive way seemed to have come to an end.

I should like to share with you now something that reversed the process, and perhaps it could be of help to some of you, or someone you know.

Last September I decided to swim in Barking in the Southern Counties short course championships despite my knee problem, in order to find out whether it would be worth while just swimming arms only. I only entered for the 50m. free and backstroke, as I knew it wasn't good stretching it. In fact, it was a try out for the coming Nationals at Sheffield. Someone I knew for the last 40 years, asked me why I wasn't swimming in the 100 and 200 races. I told him that I have knee problems and there is a possibility of some operation since nothing seems to help. He told me that he cured his hip by following a diet and he would lend me the book, which would explain it all. He told me that in short I shall have to cut out tea, coffee, sugar and follow a gluten free diet (no wheat in any form - i.e. bread, pasta, biscuits and cakes).

The book is called: A DOCTOR'S PROVEN NEW HOME CURE FOR ARTHRITIS by Giraud Campbell.

Since the first day of the prescribed cure is one day without food, it was most convenient to start on Yom Kippur. I followed the diet by the letter and was most encouraged when the pain was gone after 10 days.

I am still following the diet and I must confess it isn't easy. Just picture yourself in one of the hotels in Israel at breakfast or dinner, tempted by the fantastic cakes and when the coffee is being brought round "would you like some more coffee?" and all you have is herbal tea, which you take with you wherever you go, having to pay attention all the time not to fall into the trap.

Five months later, I feel good, lost weight ( this I could never do for vanity's sake. When I swim I feel a certain weakness in my legs, but I try to remedy it by gentle thigh exercises ( I am scared to overdo it). No, instead of being content having got rid of the pain, I am once again timing myself for the coming Southern Counties Long Course Championships next week at Crystal Palace and looking forward to the Masters Pacific Championships at Auckland, New Zealand.

I do hope that some of you will be helped by the book, in which case it was well worth telling you of it. You will need strength and determination .

Susie Halter

*We are delighted to learn about Susie's miraculous recovery. She is an inspiration to us all. Since writing this article Susie won the 50m - 100m free style. Congratulations!*

*Reflections on our Society by a member who 'Married In' by Maurice Tribich*

IT OCCURS TO ME.....

.....that makers of inhalants are the same as snuff merchants. They make their living by poking their business into other peoples noses.

.....that had I not married a survivor (of the holocaust) life would have been much less enjoyable and certainly less exciting.

I married a Helfgott, God help me ( and he did).

When I was young, in my ignorance and innocence, I thought that the only times extant in the British Isles were Greenwich Mean Time, British Summer Time and sometimes Double Summer Time.

Those "in the know" will no doubt agree with me that after l.o.n.g. years of experience we are certain of the existence of "British Helfgott Time".

The basis of the theory of BHT is that there is always tomorrow, or "the meeting ran late" and anyway can I help it if a friend telephoned just as I was leaving?

It is better to be late than never to have loved at all. I think something went wrong with that last sentence, but who cares?

Recently we, the '45 Aid Society, celebrated the 80th birthday of Yogi Mayer and we sincerely hope that in three years' time we will celebrate his Barmitzvah when we can present him with a fountain pen.

When he was the youth leader of the Primrose Club it was named after the local telephone exchange. Today one can imagine that on the same basis now it would possibly be the 081-774 Club!

That figures, don't it?

We all wish him and his wife health and happiness in what we hope will be a very long retirement. How he has retained his sanity is a puzzle to me!

Ben tells us in the last edition of the Journal of the '45 Aid Society that we should write as we speak because, if wrong, it will be corrected by the Editor after a 'Kurt' examination.

The way to win at Rugby is to Try, Try and Try again!

One of my friends bought a new camera last week even though he already had a perfectly good one. I asked him why. He said that he didn't know. It was a snap decision!

We '45ers are a very unusual group. We who, if fate had been different, would have been total strangers, living in different lands. We have welded ourselves into an "extended family", yet we regard it as quite natural, if we think about it at all.

I married into this extended family and have been better for it.



*A personal report from one of our members in the U.S.A. - Rosalyn Gross-Haber*

This past summer, my brother Alex Gross and I had the pleasure of visiting with Ben Helfgott and his wife Arza in Atlanta, GA (USA). Ben told us how much he is involved in the '45 Aid Society. He also sent Alex and me the No. 15 Journal, which I thoroughly enjoyed reading. Ben truly impresses me and it was a real joy to see him again.

I am living in Atlanta, GA along with several members of my family including my brother Alex and one of my daughters. Here in Atlanta I work as an Interior Designer for a major retail company and enjoy it very much. My other daughter lives in Tampa, FL and thankfully we were all able to get together to celebrate Thanksgiving. This December I am taking a trip to see my son, his wife and child who live in South Africa. During the trip I'll be making a sentimental stop-over in London to see my dear friend Rivie Glassman and her family. Hopefully, I will also get a chance to visit with some friends like Ben and his sister Mala with whom I lived in London.

My life has had its share of both hard and happy times. The USA brought lots of changes, children and 3 grandchildren. I lost two beautiful sisters-in-law who were in their 40's. One died of a heart attack and the other was savagely murdered in Atlanta. Needless to say, that left us all shattered. I also endured the pain of a divorce but fortunately, I have a large family and lots of friends who help make difficult times pass a little easier. Life goes on and we must take both the good and the bad in our stride.

For the people who might know me, my name was Roza Gross. I went to Montford Hall in Scotland (near Edinburgh) and lived there for six months before moving to London. I lived in the Maida Vale area and in Croydon until I came to the USA in 1948. My memories of England after the war are ones of great camaraderie among our boys and girls. We all needed each other desperately. I do try to stay in touch with and visit many of my old friends.

Soon we will be in the year 1993 and hopefully some of you will come to Washington DC for the Holocaust Museum opening. It would be wonderful to see you there. For now, a Happy Chanukah to all of you. If you wish to get in touch with me I would love to hear from you.

My address is: 3207 Henderson Mill 5 - 8, Atlanta, GA 30341, USA.

*Letter received from Alex Gross*

Dear Ben and Arza,

You and the many friends might wish to know what some of the American '45 Aid Society people are doing. Enclosed please find a copy of a write-up in the Emory University Study of the Holocaust, and other write-ups and quotes, as well as other information, such as my involvement as General Chairman of Israel Bonds for the metro Atlanta area. I was President for seven years of HEMSHECH, the organisation for survivors in the Atlanta area, and on the board of our Orthodox Beth Jacob Synagogue, and for several years on the board of the Atlanta Jewish Federation, equivalent to the United British Jewish Appeal. I am on the ORT board, a member of B'nai Brith and the Jewish War Veterans, as I served honorably in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. I am also active in the local community chamber, homebuilders, and other associations. However, I have spent a great deal of time speaking to churches, Rotaries, Kiwanis, Lions Clubs, many schools and universities throughout the southeast U.S.A. I am enclosing a couple of letters of the hundreds I get yearly.

It is rather unfortunate that I have not been able to maintain better contact with the '45 Aid Society

and the wonderful friends we have gotten to know through our hostels and the Primrose Club.

The only ones I have regular contact with are Jerry Hornstein, Gene Spiegel in California, and Abe Grabia here in Georgia, who has been working with our company for the last thirty years. At one time, we had at least ten boys who were with us in England working with me in business.

However, we were so busy that unfortunately we did not keep in touch and now as we get older we lose a lot of our former friends whom we should really care for. I am happy to let my friends at the '45 Aid Society know that my sister, Rosalyn, and brother, Sam (left England to fight for Israel independence), who were with us in England are doing all right, even though Sam has Parkinsons disease. He lives in Tampa, Florida, and Rosalyn lives here in Atlanta; she is on her way to visit her son in South Africa. Yes, I am still actively playing soccer on a team because I still think and act like a 21 year old boy, not realizing that I am strapped in a 64 year old body, and I have also been ranked in racquet ball no. 3 in the entire state for my age group.

Now that I am through bragging, I want you to know how much I appreciate every time you or any one of our friends from the Primrose Club call and keep me abreast of the many friends whom I miss so much. Unfortunately, I have only been able to see some of our people when I stopped in London on my way to visit my brother in Russia when he was still there, and at the World Gathering of Holocaust Survivors in Jerusalem.

I do hope to be able to come to the 1995 reunion, or if anyone of the '45 Aid Society people will be in America for the opening of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, I would love to meet them and spend some time with them. What I would really like would be for anyone visiting America, especially the Atlanta, Georgia, or Miami, Florida, area to call me at (404) 483-4719 - work, or at home (404) 321-4483. I would love to spend some time with them and show them southern hospitality.

I will always be grateful for you staying in touch with me, and will look forward to spending more time with you and any other of our many friends from England and the States that get a chance to visit Atlanta, Georgia.

Best wishes to each and every one for a Happy Pesach.

Sincerely,

Alex Gross.

*We are pleased that Alex has responded to our appeal and has written about his activities in the USA. He is certainly not 'bragging'. Alex has a formidable record of achievement both as a successful real estate developer and an extremely active member in his community. He is an ardent supporter of Israel and has been speaking indefatigably about his Holocaust experience to numerous groups for well over a decade. However, he is not without his share of misfortune. He lost his only son, age 14, in a horrific accident and nine years later his wife was murdered under the most tragic circumstances. Despite this double tragedy Alex has continued to be resilient, his zest for life remains undiminished and his commitment to the community has never faltered. We salute his indomitable spirit.*

*How I (Roman Halter) was helped by Mr. & Mrs. Fuchs during the months March and April, 1945.*

Between November 1944 and February 1945, I was a part of a team of forced labour in an ammunition factory in Dresden. The factory was hit and irreparably damaged in the bombing. The SS decided to march our entire group of 500 Jewish slave metal workers away from Dresden in a southerly direction. After two days of very slow marching many of us wondered whether we would eventually be led to some ravine and shot.

On the third night of our march, a few of us escaped. I was amongst the few. Three of us escapees ended up in a small place on the outskirts of Dresden and were taken on there as labourers.

I worked there for a Mr. & Mrs. Fuchs. A German couple who had no children. They were then in their mid-thirties. Mr. Fuchs was in the ambulance service: on grounds of ill-health he was not in the armed forces.

The Fuchs' put me to work in their vegetable garden. I slept in a shed next to the greenhouse and all through March and April 1945, I, calling myself ROMAN PODLAWSKI - a 17 year-old Roman Catholic Pole - lived, ate and worked in the back garden of their house, digging, planting, weeding and pruning.

My two companions who escaped with me also lived with the Fuchs' but worked for a nearby farmer in the same village.

On May 5th 1945, the Russians liberated the area. That night I had a strong and vivid dream that I must return immediately to my town of Chodecz. I got up at night and began to dress when I realized that it was a dream. But the inner compulsion to return persisted. So, two days later, on the 7th May, I left for Chodecz to see which of my family or my relatives had survived and to be united with them.

I said goodbye to my two companions, Abramek SZTAJER and Josef SZWAJCER. They both thought me impetuous to leave so quickly after our liberation... And of course I thanked Mr. & Mrs. Fuchs and told them that my real name was Halter, not Podlawski and that I was not a Roman Catholic Pole but a Jew. They both laughed and Mr. Fuchs replied that he had news for me too. He said: "And I am not a Nazi although I am German."

Mrs. Herta Fuchs added: "We knew that you were Jewish from the very beginning as we also knew that Abramek Sztajer and Josef Szwajcer were Jewish too." They patted me on the back and then shook hands with me.

They then both wished me a good journey and hoped that I would find some members of my family awaiting me when I got back to my town. (Chodecz, in N.W. Poland.)

Mr. Fuchs gave me his bicycle, a map, a compass and a thin blanket with a rubber underside.

Mrs. Fuchs made me some sandwiches for the journey. "Come back and visit us," she said. I told her that I would, and was off.

Some seven weeks later I travelled mostly on top of trains from Czechoslovakia back to the Fuchs' with gifts of soap, coffee, sugar and smoked meat - the profits from my black-market transactions - I thought I would surprise them with this gift of a few items in appreciation and thanks for having taken me in and hidden me during the months of March and April.

When I arrived I found Mrs. Herta Fuchs all in black. Her face had aged by years in those few weeks. She screamed when she saw me and refused to speak to me. Her neighbour told me that a

few days after I had left, the Nazis in the village had found out that the Fuchs sheltered Jews in their home, so they brought over some drunken Russian officers, and pointed out Mr. Fuchs and Szwajcer - Sztajer was out somewhere at the time - and said that they, Fuchs and Szwajcer - had murdered Russian prisoners of war.

The drunken Russian officers took Mr. Fuchs and Szwajcer off outside the house and shot them. Mrs. Herta Fuchs dragged her husband back to the garden and buried him under a tree.

When I heard this, I left the provisions which I brought for Mrs. Herta Fuchs with the neighbour, and returned to Czechoslovakia.

Five years ago, when East Germany was still the GDR, I went to Dresden to look for Mrs. Fuchs, but I could not find her. A few weeks ago a Dr. Irene RUNGE from Berlin found her for me, together with the help of Dr. ELKA PREUSSER-FRANKE from Dresden, and this letter, enclosed herewith, is the first which I received about Mrs. Herta Fuchs, and has her signature. P.S. I have never found out what happened to Abramek Sztajer, who would now be 78 years of age.

*Below is the letter Roman refers to.*

3 Feb/1993

Dear Mr. Roman Halter,

Many thanks for your letter from 1/Feb/1993, which I got today.

Mrs. Herta Fuchs has me commission, to write you, because she cannot see.

Herta Fuchs (born 21/May/1908) lives in very poor proportion.

I am on friendly terms with Herta many years back, and I go to Herta every week, to make all difficult things for magistracy, authorities and other people.

Now Herta have a great problem:

This house, where you worked in the little vegetable garden at the back Of house, and where you and your Jewish colleagues live in March and April of 1945, was confiscate in 1975 year from a very bad men. He was set pressure Herta, because he had many power in the communistic East-Germany (GDR).

Therefore he lives now in this house from Herta Fuchs.

She lives now in a very small, old dwelling with 2 little, cold rooms.

The husband from Herta was shoot (dead) on 13/May/1945 from Sowjet-army, together with Josef Schweizer.

Herta not got money as widow, because Kurt Fuchs was dead by the communism, a not by the faschism..!?

Now, as we are a United Germany (without communists!) also Herta gets her income. A for 40 years she not got money, and she must work as a washerwoman, and she lives from the little washing-money, till she was 80 years.

Now Herta is 84 years, and she thinks many on you and on Abram Sztajer (he was born 10.7.1914).

Do you know, where lives Abram? He is now 78 years.

Herta also knows your birthday: 7.7.1927 in Poland.

Herta asks you, where you was going from Dresden.

Since 1990 we ask in Israel, if you and Abram live in Israel.

A Jewish colleague of me, Dr. Irene Runge from Berlin, was going to Israel in Juli/August 1992.

Therefore I had the favour to ask, if a man with name Roman Halter from age 65 year was going to

Israel in 1945 (May or June...).

Rabbiner Weinman helps us with this address, then we not know, that you are living in England.

The joy about your letter was very, very great by Herta, and also by Irene and me.

Herta can not read your letter (eyes), and she cans not the English language. Therefore you write to me, please. I am a doctor pedagogica an the University in Dresden. I am 51 years and I am a Jewess. My mother was dead 1943 in "lager"/KZ and Herta was friend-girl from my mother and my grandmother.

Excuse me my very bad English, please and write quick us.

With many greetings and all best wishes, your

Elke Preusser-Franke and Herta Fuchs.

*In the last issue I listed and commented on those of our members who either originated or lived in the Ghetto of Piotrkow. I also indicated that the next issue will contain the names of our members who were in the Lodz Ghetto. However, as this issue coincides with the 50th Anniversary of the Uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto I thought it would be more appropriate to publish the names of those who originally came from Warsaw or who lived for a certain period in the Warsaw Ghetto. What is interesting to note is that a number of those listed (like Chaim Aizen, Sam Dresner, Abie Elkienbaum, Jacob Melzer, Sam Freiman, Charles Shane and no doubt some others) left the Ghetto before the commencement of the deportations in July 22nd 1942. It is sad to see how few of our members actually survived the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto when one considers that there were originally nearly 500,000 Jews there.*

*There is always a possibility that I have left out some names as was the case in the last issue when I omitted Josh Segel who now lives in Canada and for which I apologise.*

|            |                       |                  |
|------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| AIZEN      | CHAIM                 | ISRAEL           |
| BINENSZTOK | BENEK                 | ?                |
| DRESNER    | SAM                   | LONDON           |
| ELKIENBAUM | ABIE                  | FLORIDA          |
| FALINOWER  | SALEK (STANLEY FAULL) | BRIGHTON         |
| HOLCKIENER | SAMUEL                | U.S.A.           |
| KAMIONKA   | MOSHE                 | LONDON           |
| KLAJMAN    | JANKIEL               | CANADA           |
| KNOBIL     | MARIA                 | ?                |
| LASKIER    | SAM                   | MANCHESTER       |
| LIEBERMAN  | SIMCHA                | LONDON/JERUSALEM |
| MELZER     | JACOB                 | LONDON           |
| NISENBAUM  | BRONISLAW             | U.S.A.           |
| ROSENBLATT | ZELIG                 | DECEASED         |
| ROZAGURA   | HENRY (ROSE)          | GLASGOW          |
| SOSNOWICZ  | MAJER (NOVICE)        | U.S.A.           |
| WIERZBICKI | MEYER                 | ISRAEL           |
| WAJCENBLIT | SEVEK                 | CANADA           |
| WARSLAWSKA | ESTERA                | ?                |
| FREIMAN    | SAM                   | LONDON           |
| SZAUMBERG  | CHARLES (SHANE)       | LONDON           |



THE STORY OF FATHER DANIEL

BY BEN HELFGOTT

In our last issue we published a speech which was delivered in Mir by Israel Shifron, one of our members from Israel, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the escape into the forest by a large number of Jews from Mir. In his speech he referred to Father Daniel who was largely responsible for this escape.

Who was Father Daniel? There are many heroic tales from the Holocaust but the story of Father Daniel excites the imagination and leaves one in awe at the enduring qualities of noble human beings.

Samuel Rufhajsen, for that was his name, was born near Krakow in 1920. In 1940-41 he was a member of Kibbutz 'Akiva' in Vilno and when the Germans entered Vilno on June 24th 1941 he changed his name in his passport from Shmuel to Oswald and Jew to Pole but did not change his surname. He went to live and work in Turec, near Mir, where he became acquainted with the Commander of the Police, a Belorussian with the name of Sarfinowicz. Sarfinowicz was very impressed with 'Oswald' and accepted him like his own son and took him into his confidence. It was at this stage that 'Oswald' resolved that his mission in life was not to save himself but to help as many of his brethren as possible. The young and inexperienced Zionist idealist, wearing a German uniform, decided to exploit his position and influence by gaining the confidence of his superiors, achieving promotion in order to be more effective in his service to those who were at risk from the Germans.

His first impulse was to organise resistance, to fight and die with honour. However, he soon realised that he would achieve a great deal more by deceiving the enemy as long as possible and thus be of help to a larger number of threatened people. Whenever possible he informed the Jews about the impending round ups and in particular warned those whose arrest was imminent. He not only helped Jews; he was a frequent visitor of the Priest through whom he passed on useful information to the Polish community and gave advice on how to avoid giving the Germans pretexts for repression. This stood him in good stead when later, his life threatened, he sought refuge in a monastery. When the opportunity arose, he also helped Russian prisoners of war to escape.

In May 1942 'Oswald' became the Chief of the Region and although the Jews were ordered to stay in the Ghetto those who ventured to move in the town were left unmolested. When the liquidation of the Ghetto became imminent he warned his friends and brought into the Ghetto ten rifles, ten grenades and a few thousand rounds of ammunition. He then made it possible for 210 Jews to leave the Ghetto and make contact with the partisans in the forest. 'Oswald' was betrayed by a Jew, Stanistawski, who worked in the office of the military police. When confronted by his astonished boss, the latter said "I know you have a good heart, you had compassion for the Jews, that you warned them and that you advised them to run to the forest, but why did you give them arms knowing that they will be used against you?" When 'Oswald' heard that he was betrayed by a Jew he answered with tears in his eyes. "I fulfilled my duty because I am a Jew." His boss, hardly believing what he just heard, turned to him and said 'Why did you tell me this? Why did you not deny it? I would have believed you rather than that Jew.' He ordered him to write a report and left him with a guard. Later on in the evening 'Oswald' jumped from the window and managed to escape. He was given shelter in a monastery where he led a life of seclusion for sixteen months. He spent days and nights meditating and studying the Holy Scriptures, underwent a transformation which brought about a turning point in his life. When he could no longer stay in

the monastery he joined the partisans where he assumed a modest profile. He did not show any bravery or desire to fight or take revenge. Neither did he accept any clothing or shoes in spite of the fact that he wore torn trousers and walked mostly barefooted.

After the liberation 'Oswald' went to Israel as a Carmelite monk. Regarding himself a Jew under Halacha he applied for naturalisation under the Law of Return. His application was refused and the issue was taken to the Supreme Court. The case became a cause célèbre but this another story. 'Oswald' now lives in a Carmelite monastery in Haifa and is known as Father Daniel.

## SECOND GENERATION

### *Congratulations to:-*

Victor Poznanski who obtained his Ph.D in Computational Linguistics at Cambridge University. After a two year research contract at the Free University of Brussels, he is now senior research scientist in the Machine Translation Group of Sharp Laboratories of Europe Ltd. in Oxford. A keen amateur musician, he specialises in piano and organ.

*The Manchester Second Generation has been active for some time and have established themselves firmly on the Manchester Jewish Scene.*

*We are pleased to publish a general resume of their activities.*

The Second Generation Group has been in existence for approximately four years. Its instigation was due to the inspiration of my father, Mendel Beale, co-founder of the Manchester '45 Aid Society and Vice-President of the '45 Aid Society. He believed that following the untimely passing of survivors such as, the much loved David Sommers and Elizabeth Maxwell's conference "Remembering for the Future", the time was appropriate for the children of survivors to respond to the survivors legacy. The latter was inaugurated at their Gathering in Jerusalem in 1981 and in so doing ensure the perpetuation of the memory of our grandparents and the Holocaust in general. The framework and objectives of the group were established following the first International Conference of the Second Generation in Jerusalem in December 1988. One of our members, who was sponsored by the '45 Aid Society in Manchester attended and established contact with other groups and in particular with Dr. Shimon Samuels, the European Director of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre. In February 1989 he attended one of our meetings and through his influence we availed ourselves of the opportunity to present the British Premiere of 'Murderers Amongst Us', Simon Wiesenthal's life story. It was an extremely successful event which gave the group its credibility and cohesiveness. At this point in time, due to the generosity of one of Manchester's Jewish Philanthropists, we purchased The Simon Wiesenthal Exhibition, "The Courage to Remember" which depicts the Holocaust Years (1933-1945) in 40 Panels. This was on display at the Manchester Jewish Museum for four months during which time we presented several appropriate and pertinent events.

It was through the (A.C.J.R.) Association of Children of Jewish Refugees, that we established contact with the "All Party War Crimes Committee" and in November 1989 formed a pressure group which served to lobby M.P's in preparation for the introduction of War Crimes Legislation. Within a matter of days we swamped schools, synagogues, social/cultural organisations and local people with postcards publicising the significance of the legislation. More than 2,500 cards were

posted to M.P's and we are very proud that, according to the War Crimes Committee, our activities were influential among ambivalent M.Ps. As an acknowledgement of our efforts key members of the campaign were invited to a reception at the House of Commons to celebrate the introduction of the legislation. As a consequence of our involvement, we became well known amongst local and wider media and participated in interviews on Radio Piccadilly, GMR (BBC Manchester ) Radio 4, Radio City, Radio Wrexham and Sunset Radio. Since then contact with the media have been maintained and we along with survivors are regularly called upon to contribute to radio discussions appertaining to the Holocaust.

Like our contemporary group in Israel, we continue to act as a pressure group in respect of the prosecution of war criminals and more recently in relation to the heightened and disturbing Neo-Nazi activities in Europe.

The remainder of our work can be categorised as social and largely educational. Social involves raising funds through a variety of events to finance our activities. Our 'educational' role has become more significant and prominent, influenced by the introduction of Key Stage 4 and shortly that of Key Stage 3 of the National Curriculum which now incorporates the Holocaust period in the World War 2 History syllabus. We have addressed Jewish primary schools, grammar school Jewish assemblies and during the past eighteen months have conducted presentations at Educational establishments in a wider geographical area. Survivors and Second Generation participate in this presentation which involves a resume of our work, a question and answer session relating to respective survivor's testimonies, which along with our 'teaching tool "The Courage to Remember"' has previously been studied by teachers and students. We conclude our session by addressing the implications of the Holocaust and presenting a challenge to students in the form of confronting all forms of prejudice and discrimination, perceived as the seeds of the Shoah. Thus we endeavour to present not only a personally orientated seminar but a constructive learning experience for all age groups.

Other aspects of our 'educational' role are the collation of relevant Holocaust related material and the production of a "Teachers Resource Training Pack" which will be a major teaching tool at a future seminar we hope to organise with relevant personnel (teachers, survivors, etc.) in preparation for the introduction of Key Stage 3.

Along with this Project for 1993, we have others planned, now in their preliminary stages, one of which involves a documentary by 'Independant Television' who recently approached us expressing substantial interest in our work in schools. Naturally, we are delighted with this prospect.

Like all organisations, the number of committed members has dwindled since our inception for a variety of reasons. However, the few individuals who continue to recognise the importance of our work and maintain their commitment will ensure the work requested and expected of us, will be perpetuated. In this way, we will sustain the high profile of Manchester's Second Generation and our motto:-

"Their last will was. 'Do not forget us, do not forget our murderers'" will be honoured.

For further information contact:- Tania Nelson 061-795-0731

*In the last issue we reported that Julia Herman, youngest daughter of Olive and David Herman will take part in the Biblical Charity Bike Ride in Israel. Below is her report about this event - Congratulations.*

### BIBLICAL CHARITY BIKE RIDE

I first heard about the Biblical Charity Bike Ride from my father - he had read about it in the J.C. Five days on a mountain bike cycling the length of Israel sounded like an amazing adventure in aid of a worthy cause and, liking the unusual as I do, it didn't take me long to make up my mind to go. With very little previous cycling experience behind me and only 10 weeks to raise the £1,500 in sponsorship I needed to get me there, I was in for a very busy time. Unexpectedly it was the sponsorship that proved easier to achieve than the cycling training. All my friends, family and practically everybody I asked agreed to sponsor me and I am really proud to say that with everybody's help including that of the '45 Aid Society I was able to raise over £1,800. The total sum raised by all cyclists - after expenses - is an incredible £320,000 which has gone towards improving the conditions and quality of life of the handicapped residents at the Ravenswood village in Crowthorne, Berkshire.

For cycling practice I got in touch with other cyclists on the ride and together we would spend hours on end during our weekends cycling round Hyde Park, Richmond Park and from Camden to Totteridge and back, plus the odd short cycle in the week. But all the cycling in the world (or at least in London) could not have prepared me for what I was about to embark on in Israel.

By November 14, 1992 my enthusiasm was high and along with 250 people, including six residents and their carers from Ravenswood, I left Heathrow to spend five long, gruelling days on a bicycle saddle travelling the 150 mile distance between Dan to Beer Sheva. When we arrived the weather conditions were not what had been expected, needless to say for the middle of November it was incredibly hot.

The whole trip had been excellently organised, which couldn't have been easy with so many people and so many different stop-overs involved. Everybody was given a mountain bike and put into groups according to cycling ability. There were bike mechanics on call all day every day helping with punctures and servicing the bikes, there was even a coach for the very weary cyclist, although there were next to none of those. The accommodation varied from kibbutzim to sleeping bags under the stars or in bedouin tents with communal washing facilities. The food was excellent and there was plenty of it especially at lunch time to refuel us for the afternoon cycle ahead. Much needed drinking water was provided in vast quantities and even though it was warm and drunk from plastic bottles, it still managed to taste delicious.

The cycling routes were long and exhausting, anything between 50 to 70 kilometres a day, but the places we saw on the way - Dan Nature Reserve, Tiberias, Beit Shean, the Dead Sea and Masada - and the extraordinary effort of the Ravenswood residents made it all worthwhile. Every evening a different event had been organised (if one had the energy) - from Kibbutz K'far Rupim we had a slide show and lecture on the dead Sea Scrolls, in K'far Hanokdim we joined in a bedouin tea ceremony and later listened to speakers on the flora and fauna of the Negev.

After five days cycling we finally reached the outskirts of Beer Sheva and all five groups joined up and cycled in together through all the red lights causing absolute chaos. It was quite something to see the Ravenswood residents leading the group of 250 cyclists through the streets of Beer Sheva with crowds of people cheering us on. On arrival at Bet Yatsiv, our final destination, everybody

was both physically and emotionally exhausted. I couldn't believe that we wouldn't have to get up at 6 a.m. the next day to get on the bikes AGAIN, yet when the next day came we all missed the cycling!

It was definitely the most exciting and rewarding trip I have ever taken although I can't deny that it was hard. Very hard, but very enjoyable. In between the saddle sore, sun burn, lack of sleep and mosquito bites there was a definite spirit of camaraderie and enthusiasm. We all made friends and were able to laugh at the difficulties encountered (especially the hills!). Months later I still can't believe that I did it, but I've got videos and photographs to prove it! I haven't done much cycling since I've been back but I guess that's because cycling in London doesn't have quite the same appeal as cycling in the desert or along the Sea of Galilee.

Due to the outstanding success of this event I hear they're already planning this year's route, so if anybody's planning on giving up a week of their time for Ravenswood, my advice would be to start training now, dedicate a lot of time to organising ways of raising money, don't expect a holiday when you get to Israel, and invest in something to avoid saddle sore!

Many thanks to all my sponsors from myself and everyone at Ravenswood.

P.S. ALWAYS wear a crash helmet when you cycle.

Julie Herman.

*Reprinted by kind permission of the Jerusalem Post*

#### Calligraphic Contracts

Ketuba means, literally, "document" but anyone who's seen Ardyn Halter's intricately illuminated ceremonial wedding certificates, glowing with gold leaf, lapis, green and vermilion, would hardly describe them as anything less than works of art.

Flowers and vines, representing the Tree of Life, trail tendrils around traditional calligraphic texts. Doorways, another frequently used symbol, mark the passage from single to double, from individual to communal life, while cypress trees, which represent the gates of paradise and the threshold of marriage in Eastern tradition, bloom and flourish in an explosion of color. Legal documents these ketubot may be, but they are also joyous, rich works of Jewish art.

Though many tend to assume a ketuba is strictly a ceremonial document, its actual purpose is to record the financial obligations a husband undertakes towards his wife. But the ketuba has come to mean much more in Jewish tradition.

"A ketuba is a four-way declaration," says Ardyn. "It marks the new connection between bride and groom; the two families, the couple and the community; and on a profound level, the couple and the people of Israel.

"It's a way to affirm Jewishness without necessarily categorizing the form of belief. It's also a lovely art form, which is flourishing as people become more and more open to the beauty of the past and as the nation becomes more confident.

"One reason I've been so attracted to this form of art," he adds, "is that the history of the ketuba is in effect the history of Jewish communities around the world. It reflects the community's taste, style and architecture. Many people are surprised to find them so dense, so full. One reason is legalistic; the idea is that there should be no room to add anything to a complete legal document. The other is the traditional horror of an aesthetic vacuum. In the Israel Museum, there are huge ketubot without a single centimeter of space left."

"I personally like denseness and my ketubot are usually very full. A ketuba should be a blaze of



color - a happy document."

Ketuba design may be an esoteric branch of art, but it was one that Ardyn, gravitated to naturally. The son of Holocaust survivors who settled in England after the war, he is heir to a long line of Torah scribes, engravers and rabbis. His father, Roman, is an artist who designed the main gate for Yad Vashem and the stained glass windows at Lochemei Hagetot; his sister Aloma, a Jerusalem poet.

"I was attracted to words and to illumination from childhood," says Ardyn, a thoughtful man who chooses his words with care. He recalls that he was considered a wunderkind after his first art exhibition, when he was only nine, was featured on Pathe News.

"From the age of six, I took art with as much seriousness as I do today. I loved color, and I was especially attracted to medieval Persian manuscripts. I used to steal off from school, at 13, to look at them in the British Museum. Later, as a university student, I spent months in Iran and Afghanistan studying wall mosaics."

At the same time, Ardyn developed a deep sense of Jewish identity. Both his parents had orthodox backgrounds, though they had become less observant after the dislocation of the war.

"I grew up in a quietly Zionist family, with religious lessons, a bar mitzva, shul on Saturdays. Consequently I don't feel alienated from any branch of Judaism, whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform."

As a teenager, Ardyn spent time in Israel as a volunteer and though in manner and speech he seems as English as the Royal Family, he says he always felt more at home here.

"It's peculiar," he muses. "I never felt in England the way I feel at home here, even though I was never treated differently." Shortly after completing a degree in English at Cambridge University, he leaped into Israeli life by joining the army.

"My Hebrew was nothing but a facade," he recalls, "though I managed to make a reasonable impression." Shortly before completing his army service he married his wife Asnat, a potter from Kibbutz Maagen Michael. The couple now have three daughters and live in an unpretentious airy home in Pardes Hanna.

"Artistically, Israel is the natural place to create Judaica. We have the unusual phenomenon here of an ingathering of people and styles from Germany, Afghanistan, Austria, Iraq, North Africa, India and many other places - with their own traditions of ketubot. Despite the cultural levelling which occurs, fortunately people have begun to realise that these differences are assets which should thrive."

The first ketuba Ardyn designed was his own. His next was for a friend who was getting married. "I made six and let him choose." Word of his ketubot spread and soon he was selling. "I never get tired of creating new ones," he adds.

Every year, he designs a new ketuba as an anniversary present for his wife, each exploring different possibilities of the ketuba as a design medium. His sixth, called Feast of Life, depicts six Indian elephants cavorting around a Tree of Life, with moon, sun, flowers and birds in a multicolored profusion. Another uses a dense, rich flowery design in blue to frame text set against a sky-blue and white open window.

Imbued with a sense of tradition, his ketubot are often inspired by historical examples from, for instance, Mantua, Isfahan or Jerusalem, but they are never copied. In 10 years, he has never run out of fresh idea, and seems astonished at the thought. "The more you enter into a subject, the

more you're alert to subtleties and color. I love designing new ketubot."

As well as ketubot, Ardyn designs certificates marking a birth, bar/bat mitzva, Mizrahs, Birkot HaCohanim, megillot, family trees, the Rambam Oath for doctors, and an eighteenth century Jewish code of ethics for lawyers.

Each ketuba tells its own story. Some are individually designed to suit a particular family or occasion. For the Gottfried (Gottex) family, for example, he created a 50th anniversary ketuba which included the names of everyone in the family together with a vignette of Jerusalem. A New York family wanted the family history, which had roots in Iraq, Persia, Sweden, Russia, France and the United States, telescoped pictorially into one document.

Such personally created works cost in the region of \$600 or more; limited edition hand printed serigraphs, which can also be personalized with added names or dates, run around \$200.

Today Ardyn's work is found in public and private collections all over the world, including the Jewish Museum in New York, Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem and Woburn House in London. Some have been presented as gifts to notables like Mayor Teddy Kollek from the Jerusalem Foundation, former Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits from B'nei Brith, Zubin Mehta from IPO and Margaret Thatcher from the Weizmann Institute.

His work has become known internationally - something he is sure would not have happened if he had not made aliya.

"I think my work has to do with being here and celebrating being Jewish in an open way. In England, I wouldn't feel as open and free."

Ardyn Halter: Tel: 06-373508

The Experts are curious about the neuroses and psychoses of The Second Generation, but I prefer to think of us as The Miracle Generation, because in all probability we might never have been. We are a living, breathing affirmation of the survival of our parents and our people.

The strange legacy shared by all children of survivors demands that we should continue our parents' efforts to bear witness to the senseless murder of their families and the destruction of European Jewry. A new Haggada is emerging, drawing from the many attempts to represent the horrors of the Holocaust - in literature, cinema and art - which will tell unto every generation the story of the latter-day Pharoah and his wicked cohorts.

I felt compelled to fulfil my historic mandate and to offer some contribution to this enterprise - I spent two years making a film about my father's childhood and the world that had disappeared into the Dark Side. I wanted to get to know those people whose absence I could feel so intensely and to touch the pain that always clouds the eyes of my father and all who were there. I scoured newspaper libraries and film archives; I memorised faces in fading photographs and absorbed as many stories from those dark days as my head and heart could hold. On the brink of the thaw from the long Cold War and as the Iron Curtain began to melt, I travelled throughout East and Central Europe collecting impressions and looking for clues.

My mission was to seek out the hiding place of the Nazi Monster and to slay him so that we could live happily and without fear ever after. Instead I discovered that the evil monster had already escaped his secret lair and even now is free to roam the streets of Bosnia, Belfast and Bombay and, unless we maintain our strict vigil, at any moment he could break loose in Bavaria or Birmingham too. And as I gazed into the terrible eyes of the monster, I got a glimpse of the dark side of my

own soul.

The interview reprinted below accompanied a feature by Elizabeth Winkler (A NEVER ENDING STORY, Options - June 1992) about the psychological struggles of children of survivors, the transmission of trauma and our inheritance of grief. It is culled from many hours of conversation between us and was such a cathartic experience that I decided to chuck in a course of psychotherapy and Elizabeth is now writing a piece on the 45-Aid Society itself.

Naomi Gryn

Naomi Gryn's rabbi father, Hugo, was deported to Auschwitz in 1944 with his family and the entire Jewish population of his hometown in Carpathia. Naomi, the second of four children, was born 16 years later.

"I have mixed feelings about identifying myself as the child of a Holocaust survivor. One part of me thinks it's phoney - I had no direct experience of the camps, it's not my pain. Yet somehow I've grown up mourning a world I never knew. I feel as if a part of me died in Auschwitz.

"I had a normal, noisy childhood but we were always aware that something terrible had happened to my father. But he never spoke of it - he didn't want to put that ugliness in front of us. Because it seemed hidden, I wanted to learn as much as I could about the Holocaust. When I was younger my head was full of grotesque fantasies about the terrible, secret place he and his family had been taken to.

"When I was 13, he took me to Yad Vashem, the museum of the Holocaust in Jerusalem.

Stopping at a model of Auschwitz he pointed out the barracks where he had shared a lice-infested bunk with his father. I finally felt able to ask him about his horrific experiences. On that day we started a conversation that we've continued ever since.

"Like many survivors, he's very protective towards his children - perhaps because he couldn't protect his little brother when it mattered most. I feel a profound sadness about his pain. I want to carry it for him, help share his load.

"Perhaps I identify too much with him. Any brush with authority, especially if it's in uniform, brings out a lot of irrational rage. Then I feel guilty about my reaction because I don't want to be damaged or dragged down by the Shoah. I want my father to feel he's succeeded in raising a fantastic family. We can't make up for the world he lost but we can help make sense of his continued existence.

"That's one hell of a responsibility. I don't ever want to add to his pain by letting him down. It's important, for instance, that I raise Jewish children - which is tricky because you can't always choose who you fall in love with. But I really feel that to assimilate would be to grant Hitler a posthumous victory.

"That's why it's so important that I have children - yet in my darkest nightmares I see my baby being ripped from my arms. When my sister's son was born, I could feel the horror of the women who saw their children being killed in front of them.

"I have an image of a box inside me full of poisonous vapour: it is the essence of Nazi evil. If something shakes me, the padlock is forced open and the vapours seep out. Then I have to use all my psychic muscle to keep them in or they might destroy me.

"On the night Saddam's first Scud missiles were launched against Israel, I heard of the threat of gas bombs with tears streaming down my face and a mounting sense of panic. I ended up ringing my parents and spending the night at their place. I was afraid for the security of friends and family

but I also felt scared, like a child.

'Sometimes I fantasise that the child within me is Gaby, my father's little brother, who was bright and funny - and only 11 when he walked with his grandfather Jacob into a gas chamber filled with thousands of people. I often feel Gaby with me.

'Chasing Shadows', the film I made for Channel 4 about my father's return to his childhood home, was my way of reclaiming my lost heritage. I was able to say Kaddish (the prayer for the dead) for my father's family. I thought that this would lighten some of my Holocaust burden but I can't seem to escape my legacy. Perhaps I'm never meant to. I feel compelled to bear witness to something we should never forget.'

*Dr. G.C. Kaye MD MRCP, Consultant Cardiologist is the son of Sala and Henry Kaye from Luton. This article is reprinted from the Hull Daily News. It is exciting to learn about the contribution our Second Generation members are making towards the welfare of society. The advice he gives, if heeded, would certainly improve the quality of life for our members.*

Many people worry about becoming the next statistic in the growing toll of heart disease victims but few know what to do about it.

So believes consultant cardiologist Dr. Gerald Kaye at Castle Hill hospital. And with Yorkshire and Humberside having one of the highest rates of heart disease in the country, the message certainly needs to be put across.

But until it is wiped out the Cottingham Hospital is well prepared to cope with those who need a little help to tell them what is wrong with probably the most vital organ in the body.

Thousands of pounds have been spent on machinery designed to combat heart disease such as an echocardiogram which has made detection so much easier. Using ultra-high frequency sound waves the £120,000 machine can tell such things as the speed of blood, if there are any leaking valves and the direction that the blood is flowing in.

All this information can indicate to the cardiologist what is wrong with the patient's heart and if they need to be operated on. Dr. Kaye, one of three cardiologists on the north bank, said "The reflection from the sound waves is picked up by a computer which transfers the information onto the screen showing the patient's heart.

"It is a similar type of instrument to the one that scans pregnant women." And for overweight patients or those with lung disease which the sound waves cannot penetrate the cardiologist can fall back on another piece of modern technology.

The transoesophageal probe is unique to Castle Hill. This rather ghastly looking long plastic tubing with wires inside is swallowed by the drowsy patient and with its steerable head, the probe can look at the heart from the wind pipe which is directly behind the organ and get a much clearer picture.

Another new addition to the hospital's cardiology unit is a portable x-ray machine which allows doctors to insert temporary pacemakers in people whose heart suddenly starts to slow down.

The unit has also recently acquired a treadmill which gives an accurate reading of a patient's heart rate and how much oxygen is getting to it.

All this new machinery is helping Castle Hill to keep up with modern heart technology.

Dr. Kaye (37) explains, "It brings us up to date with what's in the rest of the country.

"Now, for people who live on the north-west side of Hull, they can come here instead of making a

longer journey to Hull and it is easier for their relatives to visit them."

Although Castle Hill has all this new technology at its finger tips Dr. Kaye would prefer it if the numbers needing to use it would fall. Heart disease in Britain is steadily on the rise despite the increase in awareness campaigns - including using television advertisements - telling people to take more care of their heart.

Dr. Kaye said: "We have some of the worst figures for heart disease in the world. The Scottish are the worst in Britain but Yorkshire and Humberside are not far behind.

"People know the dangers of heart disease but they don't know what to do about it. The thing about heart disease is that it doesn't go away. If you have got it, you've got it for life."

But Dr. Kaye says that just because you don't smoke or you eat healthily doesn't mean you won't die of a heart attack, but what it might do is put it off for 10 years.

According to Dr. Kaye there are five ways in which you can influence heart disease.

1. Eat a balanced diet including vegetables, fruit and fish.  
Don't eat lots of fatty foods.
2. Don't smoke.
3. Get your blood pressure monitored regularly to check for problems.
4. Take regular exercise.
5. Drinking too much alcohol can also damage your heart.

#### LESSONS IN FAITH by David N. Goldberg

*The author is the son of Fay and Moniek Goldberg who now live in Florida. Moniek came to England with the Windermere Group and lived in the Loughton Hostel and has been a contributor to our Journal.*

The Holocaust has always been with me. It was a cloud of tragedy in our house when I was a boy and it remains deeply imbedded in my soul today.

When we were young we knew the basic facts: My father had a tattooed number on his arm. He had been in concentration camps. His entire immediate family and virtually all of his extended family had been killed with millions of others. All of this because they were Jews.

The subject was not dwelt upon. We were spared all details. My father protected us from his visions and horrors. He tried to contain the bitterness felt by his losses. It was at the Yeshiva we attended for our primary education where films taken at liberation of the death camps were shown. These films produced the images of survivors reduced to skeletal forms and bodies reduced to piles of bones. We knew that my father and his family had lived and died in those black and white films. As a result, we knew not to approach the subject with him. We learned to protect him from questions that would stir painful memories.

My parents had a number of friends who were also survivors and the same rules applied to them. They would not discuss the ghetto or camp years in our presence and we would not dare to ask them any questions. We knew there was too much pain there for us to be probing.

As a youngster, however, I was intrigued by the subject. I tried to read books about it and often wondered about what it had been like for my father. He had literally lived in another world that now existed only in his mind. It seemed that there was little written and little interest in the Holocaust back then. My friends and their families might have been aware of my father's history



but rarely inquired, either out of politeness or disinterest. I suspect it was the latter.

Over the years the seals of protection eased a bit. My father would occasionally talk about his family and always seemed to reveal his longing for them around Pesach. Our questions would be carefully posed and answered. By the time I reached my teens we had a household where current events and Jewish issues were often discussed (more often argued) as a form of family recreation. The Holocaust and its meaning in the context of history was sometimes the subject and my father would occasionally pepper his arguments with limited accounts of his experiences. We came to understand the events against a backdrop of European/Christian anti-Semitism (as opposed to the idea that it was simply the work of German Nazis or the madman Hitler alone - an idea prevalent among most of my American friends, Jewish and non-Jewish alike.)

Positive lessons were drawn. The moral fiber of the Jewish communities with its belief in the dignity of man held strong. In the ghettos collective efforts to care for the sick and feeble continued throughout the worsening days as did education and other long-established societal institutions. The Jews who survived, and those who didn't maintained their humanity while barbarity abounded. Another lesson was that Europe's Jews were virtually abandoned and alone in the face of extermination. The lesson being that no state can be trusted to protect Jews except a Jewish state and that all Diaspora Jews live, in varying degrees, in a precarious condition.

Now I am 40 years old with 3 daughters. My wife and I share a strong obligation to provide them with a Jewish identity; a sense of history, ethical values and a knowledge of our traditions. I feel my own Jewish identity as solidly rooted. Not a day passes when I don't think of myself as a Jew. And these roots are inextricably woven with the Holocaust.

But while the lessons and the strength I draw from my father will assist me in instructing myself and my children it has also had an undermining effect. I can't help but share his view that it was not only the people of the world that abandoned the Jews but God as well. My birthright, like so many, is a mixed blessing. I take great pride and find strength in the wisdom of our heritage and teachings but struggle with the question of faith in God. Can I praise God during our prayer services? I go to synagogue and truly enjoy singing in Hebrew with my brethren but the meaning of the words of praise or supplication leave me wanting. Where was the God of Justice, of Mercy, of Compassion during the Shoah? Did he bringeth the haughty low and raiseth the meek? I know that these are age-old questions and are not unique to those of us who live in the wake of the Shoah. I cannot say that my struggle with faith in God is due solely to the fact that my father is a survivor. I might be lacking in faith even if he were American-born (plenty fit into this category), and I'm certain that some of the Journal's readership and their children have great faith in God and praise Him with conviction. Unfortunately, I can not. It disturbs me to be out of touch with my fellow Jews on this vital tenet but I have learned that there is a great deal more to Judaism. Faith in the Jewish people, in Israel, in our laws and unparalleled traditions of justice and humanity is not dampened but reinforced as a result of my particular background.

As I continue to oversee the education of my children I know that I will continue to come to grips with the Holocaust/Shoah and I expect that this will be a life-long struggle. I suppose that I'll remain quiet about my inherited "loss" of faith and emphasize to my children that even so tragic a cloud as the Shoah has its proverbial silver lining. A rich lining enabling me to affirm faith in the Jewish people, our traditions, and irrepressible humanity. This is what my father has done before me and this is what I hope my children will do after me.

*The 17th LEONARD G. MONTEFIORE LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE STERN HALL ON THURSDAY, 4TH MARCH, 1993.*  
*'THE LAW'S DELAY, THE STATE OF WAR CRIMES PROSECUTION IN G.B.' by DAVID CESARANI, PhD. DIRECTOR OF THE WIENER LIBRARY.*

It is a great honour to be able to give the 17th Leonard G. Montefiore Lecture this evening. As Director of the Wiener Library I have learned how much the Library, and through it the whole community, owes to him.

Leonard Montefiore first made contact with Dr Alfred Wiener in 1934 when the forerunner of the Library, the Jewish Central Information Office, was based in Amsterdam. At that time Leonard Montefiore was struggling to make people in Britain aware of what was happening in Germany under the Nazis and seized on the material which Dr. Wiener was collecting.

After the war the Library, now in London, came to depend upon Leonard Montefiore's generous support. The connection with the Montefiore family is maintained to this day through our President, Alan Montefiore, who I am delighted is my chairman this evening.

# I

Were I to stick rigidly to the title of my lecture, 'The State of War Crimes Prosecutions in Great Britain', I would not detain you for any length of time. It will come as no great surprise to most of you to learn that there are few dramatic developments, indeed barely any developments at all, to report on this score alone.

Indeed, as long ago as November 1991, His Honour Israel Finestein, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews inquired with some concern of Sir Peter Imbert, the then Metropolitan Police Commissioner, and also Sir Patrick Mayhew, then Attorney General, what progress had been made. He was assured that investigations were under way and that

the matter was being pursued with serious intent. This position was subsequently restated following a communication with Sir Nicholas Lyell, the current Attorney General.<sup>1</sup>

However that was some time ago, and since then concern has grown. According to Neville Nagler, the chief executive of the Board. There is "growing restiveness at the absence of activity" and I understand another meeting with the police and judicial authorities is being planned.<sup>2</sup>

But this begs an interesting question. Why, in the intervening period since the 10 May 1991, when the War Crimes Act became law, have there been no prosecutions? Why has there been so little apparent activity by the police units in England and Wales, and Scotland set up to investigate alleged war crimes, or their legal associates in the Crown Prosecution Service and the Crown Office? Is there ever likely to be a prosecution in England and Wales or in Scotland?

The answers to these questions are by no means straightforward. They lead us into complex and fascinating issues to do with events abroad, current affairs, history and culture. In this evening's lecture I intend to tell you what I know of the state of war crimes investigations and the chances of a prosecution. But what I will disclose may come as something of a revelation to you. It was certainly a surprise to me and exposed a gap in my previous research on the subject.

Some of you may be familiar with my book Justice Delayed, a study of how Britain became a refuge for Nazi war criminals. That book was the result of research which I undertook for the All Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group and subsequently. I have recently learned that in that work I missed one of the most important entry routes for war criminals coming to the UK between 1945-1948. So, what I

will say tonight will form a sort of epilogue to Justice Delayed, bringing it up to date and adding new material.

I will begin with a reprise of events following the passing of the War Crimes Act which had a peculiar bearing on the conduct of the police and the judiciary, as well as the political environment in which their work was carried out. The Demjanjuk case and the parallel war crimes investigations in Australia and Canada, in particular, had an important influence on what was happening in England and Scotland. I will also look at the Gecas libel case in Scotland and its significance.

Legal events by themselves cannot explain the curious state of affairs today: much depends on nebulous factors such as 'public mood'. This has been greatly affected by a number of historical controversies, in Europe and in this country, surrounding the Second World War. It is necessary to understand these in order to contextualise the current state of play.

Finally, it is impossible to under-estimate the extent to which the terrible events in the former Yugoslavia since last summer have transformed attitudes towards war crimes, including those committed fifty years ago. Last week's announcement that the United Nations is to set up a war crimes tribunal has enhanced the entire project of investigation and prosecution and infused it with a fresh relevance.

## II

The final stages of the parliamentary debate on the War Crimes Bill were overshadowed by ominous signs that the Demjanjuk Case in Israel had run into serious trouble.

In December 1991, Yoram Sheftel, Demjanjuk's lawyer submitted fresh evidence that his client had been misidentified. Worse, he revealed that crucial information

which would have cleared Demjanjuk of the crimes for which had been found guilty, and sentenced to death in April 1988, had been withheld. Israel's supreme court did not deliver its final verdict on Demjanjuk's appeal until June 1992, but it was clear that the prosecution case had been fatally damaged.<sup>3</sup>

This discord was sweet music to all those in the British Parliament and the judiciary who had argued that identifications and safe convictions in war crimes trials fifty years after the alleged acts had taken place would be impossible. The entire handling of the Demjanjuk case also supported their claims that such prosecutions were intended for educational purposes, at best, or were show trials, at worst.

As the Demjanjuk case slowly and dramatically crumbled, war crimes prosecutions in Canada and Australia were in almost equal disarray. The Australian Special Investigations Unit had mounted three cases by September 1991: against Heinrich Wagner, 67, Mikolay Beresowsky, 78, and Ivan Polyukhovitch, 75. The case against Polyukhovitch came to trial first, but was then suspended for 15 months due to procedural wrangles. It is only now about to resume. The case against Beresowsky was dismissed in July 1992, although it was proven that he had been a member of a collaborationist police unit.<sup>4</sup>

The first prosecution brought by the Canadian Justice Department in 1990, against a Hungarian, Imre Finta, resulted in an acquittal. After 15 months, the Ontario Court of Appeal confirmed this verdict. In March 1992, the department dropped its prime case against Michael Pawlowski, 74, after the use of video taped evidence was barred. A short time afterwards, the Canadian Government announced that no further investigations would take place after March 1994.<sup>5</sup>



By May 1992, the Canadians and Australians had effectively wound up their war crimes investigations. Only six cases had even reached the stage of prosecutions and, of these, one had been dropped. Although the delays and failures could be explained by the inexperience of the investigators and the prosecution teams, the effect was the same. During the British campaign for the War Crimes Act, the Canadians and Australians has been an inspiration and example; now they had become a liability.

Every setback to the prosecution of war crimes in countries around the world was siezed upon by an unresting and unrepentent opposition in the British Parliament. From the moment the House of Commons resumed business after the summer break in 1991, the Government faced hostile and often caustic questions about the conduct and cost of the war crimes units. The response of Government spokesmen was hardly robust.

On 9 December 1991, Peter Bottomley, a Conservative MP, drew the attention of the Attorney General to an early day motion referring to an Evening Standard article on the fast unravelling Demjanjuk case. He disingenously expressed the hope that no such errors would occur in the UK. His attack was supported by Sir John Stokes, another Tory, who asked if it was wise to press on with prosecutions. 'Will not the whole matter cause nothing but trouble and tears to him, his Department and the Government?'. In reply, the Attorney General stated rather lamely that 'I have to be loyal to the decision of Parliament'. This was hardly a ringing endorsement of the Act or an inspiration to the war crimes units in London and Edinburgh.<sup>6</sup>

The right-wing Conservative MP, Cyril Townsend, appeared to have assumed the mantle of the former Member of Parliament and doughty opponent of the War Crimes Bill, Ivor Stanbrook. Townsend harried the Government for details of the cost of the investigations and repeatedly challenged the diversion of police resources to this end. He told John

Patten, the Home Office Minister, on 28 February 1992 that it was nothing more than a 'spiteful vendetta'.<sup>7</sup>

Townsend returned to the attack in June, dubbing the process 'disgraceful' and a 'stupid business'. Britain, he said, would follow Israel and the USSR (an interesting coupling) in mounting show trials against three 'elderly Balts'.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, on the evening of 9 July 1992, Townsend secured an adjournment debate on the subject of the war crimes legislation. He protested that the measure was partial, first, because it was aimed at a specific group and, second, because it excluded war crimes committed in the USSR, Cambodia, Iraq and, of course, Palestine. The Act was retrospective, a form of legislation which, he maintained, was only favoured in places such as Israel and the Soviet Union which required show trials. He cited the calibre of the opposition to the bill in the House of Lords to underline its judicial and constitutional weaknesses, and doubted the possibility of fair trials or safe convictions. The entire process was costly and was absorbing scarce resources. As soon as someone was charged, the press would go haywire and there would be no chance of finding an unprejudiced jury.

Townsend declaimed that 'The whole sorry saga has been brought about by a tiny, highly financed overseas pressure group, which, I believe, is seeking not justice but revenge and retribution. It has effectively activated the Jewish voters in the constituencies. I believe that many honorable Members found it prudent to go along with the legislation rather than be thought to be soft on Nazi criminals. It is a deplorable case of the tail wagging the dog.' He wanted the debate 'to warn the Government that this matter will blow up in their face'. It looked increasingly like a 'spiteful vendetta against a group of pathetic old people'. In short, 'it stinks'.

Responding, Charles Wardle, Under Secretary for the Home Department, reminded the House of the history of the legislation and the progress made so far. There were eleven police officers assigned to the task, which had cost £2.5 million to date. This represented no diversion of resources from the police force since the task was paid for by the Government. The investigations were taking a long time because they were 'unusually challenging'. Moreover, the Demjanjuk case had highlighted the importance of accurate identifications and the Attorney General was, as in all cases, demanding the highest standards of evidence. Finally, he reminded the honorable Members that the Act had received the 'overwhelming support' of the House.<sup>9</sup>

The members of the All Party War Crimes Group did not take this sort of attack lying down. Greville Janner, Labour MP, intervened to counter Bottomley's question in December 1991 and Townsend's assault on the Attorney General in the following June; David Winnick, a Labour colleague, rebutted the attacks by Townsend and Sir John Farr in February 1991 and persistently asked questions himself to elicit information on progress from the Home Office.<sup>10</sup> John Marshall, a Conservative member of the group, added his authoritative voice.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, the mood in Parliament was hardly one of enthusiasm for war crimes trials. The sense of torpor or outright reluctance was greatly fostered by the continuous sniping from the House of Lords. The Government's business managers there suffered at least one serious setback which could be attributed directly to the anti-war crimes trial lobby.

Lord Mayhew, as before, led the opposition to the Act. In a debate in December 1991 on the Government's legislative performance, during which peers selected bad pieces of legislation for criticism, he fastened onto the War Crimes Act as 'the worst'. He noted that the House of Commons had stressed the need for speed, yet three and a half years had

passed since the Hetherington-Chalmers Report and there were still no prosecutions. Of course, he did not allude to the fact that he and his allies had been largely responsible for this abysmal delay. Mayhew recited the customary arguments that the defence would need masses of time to prepare an adequate defence, especially if such blunders as the Demjanjuk case were to be avoided. Why didn't the government save the money and just have the men tried in their own countries?

Later in the debate, Lord Waddington chastised Mayhew, reminding him that the Hetherington-Chalmers inquiry had not been up to the necessary legal standards for a criminal prosecution. And he reiterated the size of the majorities in the House of Commons and maintained that the Government had to press on.<sup>12</sup>

In the ensuing months, Lord Houghton of Sowerby and Lord Boyd-Carpenter chipped away at the Government's resolve.<sup>13</sup> Then, on 4 June 1992, the Government was ambushed during the passage through the Lords of the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings Bill. Lord Campbell of Alloway succeeded in moving an amendment to the bill which would have the effect of excluding the use of live television in war crimes trials. After a debate covering all the familiar arguments concerning memory, evidence and identification, the Government was defeated by 121-80 votes. The bill had to go back to the House of Commons for the amendment to be struck out.<sup>14</sup>

On the very day that Lord Merlyn-Rees was introduced to the House of Lords, Viscount Caldecote and Lord Stoddart of Swindon had a go at the cost and efficacy of the Act which Merlyn Rees, as an MP, had done so much to help pass.<sup>15</sup> As recently as 20 January 1993, Lord Stoddart and others berated the Lord Chancellor for persisting with the Act. In particular, they latched onto the expense of the investigations. By this time, the Government's estimate for

the necessary expenditure had soared to £36 million, which generated a good deal of unease on all sides.

Lord Stoddart questioned when prosecutions might be expected and why it was costing so much to achieve so little. Attempting to present the other point of view, Lord Mackie of Benshie asked whether 'the cost of the proceedings and the amount of time which they take should not excuse the appalling crimes which were committed during the Second World War?' However, the Government response was distinctly cool. Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, responded that 'cost may well be a relevant consideration to take into account in deciding whether a particular investigation should be pursued'.<sup>16</sup>

### III

Clearly, the political climate for the prosecution of suspected war criminals has been chilly. It does not take much imagination to figure out how the police units, the CPS and the Crown Office may be decoding the signals emanating from Parliament and from the Government. However, there have been some notable countervailing forces.

On 17 July 1992, Lord Milligan gave his ruling in the case of Antony Gecas v. Scottish Television. It is not necessary to recite the details of this case which will probably be familiar to many of you. In short, Mr Gecas a retired mining engineer originally from Lithuania, claimed that he had been defamed by Scottish TV in a 1987 documentary, 'Crimes of War', which alleged that he was a war criminal.

Gecas had arrived in England in 1946 in Polish uniform after defecting to the allies in Italy in 1944. His testimony to the US authorities in the case of a Lithuanian war criminal in 1982 triggered research by the Los Angeles Wiesenthal Centre which disclosed his presence in the UK. Bob Tomlinson, producer of the programme, tracked down former members of Gecas's wartime unit and recorded their

statements that Gecas had not only taken part in massacres of Jews but personally shot many of the victims.

The hearing lasted for four months and cost STV up to £650,000. At stake were not only damages on the same scale claimed by Gecas, but the viability of proving charges of war criminality under the 1991 War Crimes Act. Although a civil case is different from a criminal prosecution, STV set out to defend its charges by effectively proving that Gecas was a war criminal. The outcome of the case was consequently of supreme importance to the future of war crimes investigations in Britain. It was, in effect, a dress rehearsal for any such proceedings and would show definitively if such trials were practicable in the United Kingdom or not.<sup>17</sup>

Lord Milligan's ruling was harsher and firmer than anyone expected. He was 'clearly satisfied' that Gecas had 'participated in many operations involving the killing of innocent Soviet citizens including Jews in particular' in Belarus in Autumn 1941. Milligan concluded that as a platoon commander in the 12 Lithuanian Police Battalion it 'inevitably follows' that Gecas was guilty of war crimes. Even though Milligan was at pains to point out that the burden of proof in a civil case and that in a criminal case was quite different, the result was nevertheless decisive.<sup>18</sup>

It proved that it was possible to marshall the documents, the eye witnesses and the experts to mount a war crimes trial. Even if the evidence might not suffice for a conviction in a criminal case, the machinery had effectively been tried out and shown to work.

History was also coming to the rescue of war crimes trials. On the first bank holiday weekend in May 1992, Madeleine Bunting, a Guardian journalist, broke the story that Kurt Klebeck, 86, the SS officer who commanded a brutal slave labour camp on Alderney in 1943-44, was alive and living in

Hamburg. She also showed that post-war investigations into the labour camps on Alderney had been less than rigorous and alleged that a cover-up had taken place. In a second article, Bunting used neglected MI19 files to demonstrate that collaboration between the Channel Islanders and the Germans had been more extensive than previously thought.

An accompanying editorial in the Guardian called for the prosecution of Klebeck specifically for his actions on Alderney in 1943-44. It warned that on the evidence of these documents, the British public had no grounds for conceit about the country's wartime record. The time had come to face up to the past and admit that Britain was not essentially, necessarily different for European countries that had the misfortune to fall under Nazi domination.<sup>19</sup>

Members of the All-Party War Crimes Group took up the demand for Klebeck to be tried for alleged crimes committed on Alderney. David Winnick, in particular, began a long campaign for the release of dozens of Home Office files, closed till the year 2020, which might shed light on the occupation of the Channel Islands. Other MPs, including Greville Janner, probed the Ministry of Defence to see whether it too was withholding files that contained information relevant to war crimes on the islands. They also asked if the Government would take action against Klebeck or certain islanders under the 1991 War Crimes Act.<sup>20</sup>

Suddenly, the Act had an immediacy which it had hitherto lacked. Commentators such as Seumas Milne and David Marquand argued that the British could no longer believe themselves aloof from the dirty business of anti-semitism or collaboration. Moreover, with the surge of extreme right wing violence in Germany and the eruption of brutal racism all over Europe, it was vital to remind ourselves of that past.<sup>21</sup>



At the end of the year, the Home Office capitulated to the systematic agitation of David Winnick and his allies and released 27 files on the Channel Islands, prompting another wave of dramatic revelations. The new documents, many of them intelligence reports, brought to light the level of voluntary work for the German occupiers and the extent of fraternisation by British subjects. This only underlined the mysteriousness of the silence which descended over the islands after 1945 and the absence of any prosecutions.<sup>22</sup>

But the most far-reaching and stunning material was unearthed on Guernsey itself when, in an effort to clear up the controversy, the island authorities allowed the public to view 2,500 files pertaining to the war years. These records provided shocking proof that the men who ran Guernsey during the war not only rubber stamped Nazi-inspired edicts against the Jews, but actively co-operated in the registration and rounding up of the few Jews on the Channel Islands.

Inspector William Sculpher, the police chief, Victor Carey, the bailiff, and Rev. John Leale, a president of the wartime control committee, had all assisted in the deportation of at least three Jews, without so much as a murmur of protest. They had also presided over a system of informing and betrayal as a result of which several islanders were arrested and deported to concentration camps in Germany. Yet Carey and Leale had been knighted after the war and remained in the same positions of authority until their voluntary departure.<sup>23</sup>

The Guardian editorialised that it was now high time to confront this disturbing chapter. The victims had to be comforted; those guilty of collaboration should, if only posthumously, be condemned and their honours withdrawn. And again, it reminded readers that these documents showed that but for the grace of God, or the strength and determination of Winston Churchill, Britain might have descended the same slope of ignominy as Vichy France.<sup>24</sup>

The last of the current round of documents to be released came under scrutiny in January of this year. According to Madeleine Bunting they indicated that far more people had died in the labour camp on Alderney than previously suspected. They also revealed that fifty per cent of the islanders had served the Germans in various capacities, and hundreds had been associated with the running of the labour camps on Alderney or the building of the fortifications there. She concluded that the documents showed 'meticulous and courteous co-operation on both sides.'<sup>25</sup>

As a result of the campaign by the MPs and Madeleine Bunting's sedulous research, we now know a great deal more about the pattern and scope of collaboration between British people and the Germans. The German authorities are now investigating Herr Klebeck and the British Goevernment is supplying them with all the necessary documentation, which, it is hoped, will soon also be made available to the public.<sup>26</sup>

The Guardian's reference to unwarranted British conceit about the country's wartime record, and the path which might have been taken in 1940, was an allusion to another historical debate that was raging. On 3 January 1993, Alan Clarke, the former Tory MP and Minister of Defence, reviewed a new political biography of Winston Churchill by the young historian John Charmley. In his article Clarke took to greater lengths Charmley's assertion that Churchill was unhealthily preoccupied with Hitler and deliberately failed to make use of two opportunities to make peace with Germany or, at least, disengage from active hostilities. Clarke asserted that Churchill had consequently lost the Empire, sacrificed the country's ruling and propertied elite to the rigours of the welfare state, and delivered Eastern Europe into the hands of Joseph Stalin.<sup>27</sup>

Clarke's review, more than Charmley's mediocre book, caused enormous controversy. Two strands are relevant to this

discussion of the war crimes issue. First of all, as the Guardian argued, the Channel Islands episode implied that, had it not been for Churchill, mainland Britain might also have permitted the deportation of Jews to Nazi death camps. The notion that war crimes were somehow foreign to the British temperament was unsustainable. The British were not inoculated against anti-semitism or collaboration: only good fortune and courage had saved them from the sort of compromises played out on the Channel Islands. However, Charmley retorted that it was pointless to use this as a reason for praising Churchill. This led to the second point.

In an interview with Valerie Groves in The Times on 8 January 1993, Charmley said 'And people like Martin Gilbert say "what about the Jews?" Well, why just the Jews? What about the liberals and trades unionists who were in the concentration camps? When critics say I'm using hindsight, nobody in 1939 was saying we should go to war for the Jews. The real Holocaust only really got under way in 1943-44 when the Germans were loosing. And while we're on the moral high ground, what about the people in Stalin's concentration camps. Were they not worth dying for?'<sup>28</sup>

This extraordinary statement reveals either an astounding ignorance for someone who is a lecturer in history at the University of East Anglia, or the willful incorporation of historical revisionism into an account of the Second World War. It is probably a bit of both, since revisionism and Holocaust Denial rely on lack of knowledge. But why is this relevant to the war crimes process?

The revelations about the Channel Islands and the Clarke-Charmley-Churchill controversy focussed attention on the history of the war, the persecution of the Jews and British complacency. The line that 'It was nothing to do with us' had always stood in the way of campaigners for the Act. Its lack of relevance subsequently denied it any urgency. Yet here were the very issues with which it was concerned, war

crimes against Jews and collaboration, coming to the fore in public debate. The mood was changing. This process was to be accelerated by the events in the Balkans.

#### IV

At the end of June 1992, President Mitterand flew into Sarajevo, the besieged capital of Bosnia. His self appointed mission was to catalyse international efforts to succour the inhabitants and find a political solution to the war raging there. One publicly stated reason for his surprising gesture was that, in a message to Mitterand, conveyed by Bernard Henri-Levy, the French-Jewish philosopher, the Bosnian President had compared his city's plight to the Warsaw Ghetto. Mitterand was deeply touched by this analogy and felt that he could not stand idly by while history repeated itself.<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, the present seemed to collapse into the past on our television screens nightly. In July, the West was staggered by the pictures of emaciated Bosnian Muslim captives lining the barbed wire fence in Omerska camp. The media and the press immediately drew parallels with Belsen and Auschwitz. These comparisons were powerful aides to arousing Western outrage, even if they were bad history.<sup>30</sup>

In the autumn, there were more and more demands for a war crimes tribunal to investigate the atrocities being perpetrated in Bosnia. A UN investigative committee was actually set up and it was hoped that its existence would militate against the commission of further outrages.<sup>31</sup> It did not. At the start of this year the evidence of mass killings and mass rapes, as instruments of Serb and possibly also Croat and Bosnian, policy, were added to the well-established practice of 'ethnic cleansing'.<sup>32</sup>

The election of Bill Clinton as US President made the creation of a UN war crimes tribunal almost certain. The idea even received support amongst peers in the House of

Lords who had not previously been noted for their enthusiasm towards war crimes trials.<sup>33</sup> Finally, on 21 February, the UN Security Council voted to establish a war crimes tribunal, modelled on that which sat at Nuremberg in 1945-6.<sup>34</sup>

Whereas from May 1991 to May 1992, war crimes investigations were the target of vicious attacks by critics in Parliament and in the press, they were now coming into fashion. The tragedy is that the first year after the passing of the Act in Britain, when the government lacked any stomach for prosecutions and the public cared less, was wasted time. Now that interest has returned to the subject the war crimes units are struggling to catch up with a mass of documents and interviews. But it is possible to report that progress has been made and a substantial breakthrough can be anticipated.

## V

When this breakthrough occurs, it may take an unexpected form. Until now, it was widely held that the most likely war crimes suspects in the UK were from the Baltic States or the Ukraine. This is no longer the case. For a variety of reasons White Russia must now be regarded as amongst the most fertile soil for alleged war criminals in Britain.

At the time when I wrote Justice Delayed I was aware of the participation of White Russians in the Waffen-SS and the implication of the collaborationist regime in the 'Final Solution'. This was documented in The Belarus Secret by former US war crimes investigator John Loftus. He established that substantial numbers of White Russians, possibly an entire Waffen-SS Brigade, had been shipped to America by the CIA after the war for use in anti-Soviet espionage activity.<sup>35</sup>

However, I found no evidence that White Russians, other than some former adherents of the turncoat Red Army General

Vlasov, had made their way to this country and did not probe in this direction. Nor did I explore the extent to which the Polish Armed Forces provided a cover under which Nazi collaborators could have entered the UK. It is now clear that these were two gaps in my research. I realised my error concerning the Poles some time ago, but the White Russian connection has come to light only very recently.

In the course of assisting Scottish TV's investigations into the case of Antanas Gecas, I stumbled across the role of the Polish Army and the Polish Resettlement Corps in the entry of alleged war criminals to Britain. Gecas supplied information to the court on his war time service in the allied armed forces. This showed that he had served as an officer in a company of Lithuanians attached to the Polish Army in Italy. On closer examination, it turned out that a large proportion of the men in this unit had served in the very same 12th Lithuanian Police Battalion as Gecas, although not all had been in exactly the same company as him.

Subsequently, at least 14 other members of the 12th Lithuanian Police Battalion were traced in the UK. This raised the question: how had Gecas, and his comrades got into the allied armies? And how did they subsequently arrive in Britain?

The Lithuanians came from a 160-strong unit which defected to the allies in northern Italy, probably in late 1944. The company was subsequently attached to the 2nd Polish Commando Battalion serving in 2nd Polish Corps.

At this time it was common for the Polish Forces to accept Poles and other East Europeans captured in German uniforms as replacements for its own losses. Deserters and 'turned' POWs were usually examined by a tribunal comprising Polish and British or American officers before being permitted to enter the Polish Armed Forces (PAF). However, the Poles, with no natural reservoir of manpower, were desperate for

personnel and there was enormous pressure to take what was offered. If the Lithuanian unit had been screened, the process was obviously totally ineffectual.

Because it was composed of Lithuanians rather than Poles the company was employed by the PAF on a 'contract' basis and kept distinct from the rest of 2nd Polish Commando. However, as a part of the PAF, the Lithuanian Company shared the fate of the Poles in general and became part of the Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC) which ended up in the UK.

By the end of the war 250,000 Poles were serving in the allied armies in the West. After the Red Army occupied Poland there was little question of the mass of Polish soldiers opting to return home. When Britain recognised the Soviet-inspired Warsaw regime in July 1945, it accepted a moral and political responsibility for the Polish Armed Forces. But what was to be done with them?

Britain's parlous economic situation provided the answer. In February 1946, Prime Minister Attlee set up a Cabinet Foreign Labour Committee to look at ways of drafting foreign workers into essential industries. Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was placed in charge of a Cabinet Polish Forces Committee charged with planning a way of utilising the Poles.

In May 1946, Ernest Bevin, announced the formation of the Polish Resettlement Corps 'to effect as speedily as possible the orderly disbandment of the Polish Armed Forces in this country and to facilitate their repatriation to Poland, emigration to other countries, or resettlement in civilian life here, according to the individual wishes of the members of those forces.'

The PRC operated like a military formation, but supplied its members with instruction in English and employment training with a view to settling in Britain. Just over



114,000 Poles opted to join the scheme. Although the government made great efforts to allay the fears of British trades unionists that the Poles would take their jobs, there was little effort at political screening or any attempt to find out whether the men had chequered war histories.

It should have been clear at the time that there were chronic weaknesses in the selection system. In 1946, the Polish Government demanded the extradition of Dr Wladyslaw Dering who was accused of experimenting on the inmates of Auschwitz. Dr Dering had become a medical officer in the Polish Armed Forces and come to England in August 1946. Although he was on a UN list of known war criminals, he was not detected at any stage of his admission into the army or on his entry into Britain. His case was considered by the Home Secretary, the Foreign Secretary and the Lord Chancellor, but despite this there was no concerted screening of men in the PAF or PRC.

By Spring 1948, 96,000 Poles had been found work and in September 1949 the PRC was wound up. Several years later in 'Operation Post Report', East European immigrants who had arrived between 1946 and 1950 were subjected to a screening process. But the Home Office personnel were looking for left-wing subversives and either did not inquire after or ignored evidence of wartime collaboration with the Nazis. The men of the Lithuanian Police Battalion once again escaped detection.<sup>36</sup>

They were not the only ones. It now appears that large numbers of White Russians entered the country by the same route. These men had served in a variety of collaborationist units raised as far back as the summer of 1941.

Within a few weeks of the launch of 'Operation Barbarossa' in June 1941, the Germans had occupied a huge slice of the western USSR. White Russian nationalists based in Poland,

who had been in contact with the Nazis in the 1930s, were then imported to form a collaborationist regime. Radislaw Ostrowsky, for example, took over the running of Minsk, while Franz Kushel organised the city's police for the Germans. Other White Russians acted as local administrators for the Nazis in Borisow, Kletzk and Baranovici.

During the initial onslaught by Einsatzgruppen A, White Russian policemen, auxiliaries and volunteers assisted the Germans in the mass-shooting of Jews. Then in October-November, they were ordered to assist in reducing the numbers of Jews in the largest ghettos of White Russia so as to make room for Jews deported from Western Europe as part of the 'Final Solution'.

On 20 October 1941, 7,000 Jews were murdered in Borisow with the connivance of the White Russian collaborator Stanislaw Stankievich. On 15 November 1941, 20-30,000 Jews in the Minsk ghetto were shot to death, mainly by Kushel's White Russian policemen. Similar massacres took place in all the lesser ghettos. By the end of 1943, 250,000 White Russian Jews had been killed - two thirds of the entire pre-war Jewish population.<sup>37</sup>

However, as the number of Jews to guard and then murder diminished and the tide of war turned, the Germans increasingly utilised these police and militia formations as front-line or anti-partisan combat units. In the spring of 1942, 55,000 White Russians were serving in the White Russian Self-Defence Corps (BNS). The Germans also raised 11 battalions of Schutzmannschaften or schumas. In addition a thug called Bronislaw Kaminsky ran a 20,000 strong 'Russian Liberation Army' in the Lokot region.<sup>38</sup>

Late in 1942, an SS colonel in the Security Police, Oberst Siegling, was charged with forming 6 full-time combat battalions from existing White Russian puppet formations. The following year, Ostrowsky assumed control of the White Russian quisling regime and began recruiting a major

fighting force. By March 1944, the BNS had expanded to 60 battalions alongside a White Russian Security Corps of brigade strength commanded by Siegling.<sup>39</sup>

With the collapse of the front in June 1944, the White Russian collaborators fled along with the remnant of German Army Group Centre. Desperate for manpower, the Germans reorganised the displaced schuma battalions into four regular combat regiments, with cavalry and artillery elements. The 2nd regiment included former policemen from the Lida and Glebokie districts; the 3rd regiment, men who had operated in Slutsk, Baranovici and Wileika police districts; the 4th was formed from the police departments of Slonim and Pripyet. In other words, men who had collaborated in the 'cleansing' of an area in the USSR with a dense Jewish population.<sup>40</sup>

Why is this relevant to us, here, today? These regiments of former policemen and militia were combined with Kaminsky's homicidal brigands to form the 30th Waffen-Grenadier Division of the SS. It was equipped and trained as a Waffen-SS division and sent to France where it was at first deployed to fight the Maquis in southern Alsace, around Belfort and Mülhausen.

In November 1944, the 30th Waffen-SS Division was attached to the 63rd Army Corps, German 19th Army of Army-Group G, deployed along the Upper Rhine. It had suffered heavy losses in battles with the French partisans, but as the German defences buckled under attacks from Patton's US Third Army it was thrown into the front line. The White Russians ran up against a Free French armoured division in the Belfort Gap and were ripped apart. The survivors were withdrawn across the Rhine and the division was effectively disbanded.<sup>41</sup>

In the course of the fighting in France, large numbers of White Russians were captured or deserted. Many had enthusiastically believed that they would be employed

against the Red Army and were unwilling to fight the western allies. Others changed sides because they saw which way the wind was blowing. In any case, hundreds of those who were captured or who deserted later offered to serve in the allied forces.

As White Russians it was easy for them to persuade the allied soldiers that they were Poles. They were then enrolled in the Free Polish Army, under General Anders, and transferred to Italy where they fought with the Polish Second Corps. After the war, they were embraced by the PRC and came to Britain.<sup>42</sup>

Amongst them were high-ranking police officials of the brutal, pro-Nazi collaborationist regime in White Russia which presided over the annihilation of the Minsk ghetto and hundreds of other Jewish communities in what had been the heartland of the Pale.

I can reveal that one of the men currently under investigation in England is a former collaborationist police chief in White Russia. Survivors of ghettos in White Russia, such as Novogrodek, have been interviewed by the police. The war crimes unit has been collecting evidence from German army files in Cologne and Freiburg which hold the rosters of many militia and police units as well as details on the White Russian Waffen-SS. teams of police officers have visited sites in White Russia such as Kletzk and Koslowschtschina where, I hazard to suggest, atrocities were committed by these White Russian units.

#### IV

I would like to conclude by speculating on what may happen next. I have been reassured by a source in the Metropolitan Police War Crimes Unit that they are doing all that they can to bring about a prosecution. They have been extremely active in collecting evidence, but they have faced tremendous obstacles.

They have been hamstrung because of the time wasted since the Hetherington-Chalmers Inquiry. The Demjanjuk debacle and the problems in Australia and Canada have obliged them to be especially rigorous. In fact, anything connected with the legal system in Britain today is bedevilled by difficulties: the CPS cannot afford to take a weak case to court and jeopardise future investigations. My informant also said that 'the Government could be more committed'.

It is not only the attitude of the British government which is an issue. Clearly, the attitude of newly established East European governments in the territory of the former USSR is an important element in determining which cases may come to light first. The Lithuanian and Latvian judicial authorities were initially helpful to Western war crimes investigators. But that has now changed. In September 1991, Lithuania began to honour former members of the Waffen-SS and anti-Soviet partisans, some of whom had been inserted into Lithuania by the CIA after the war. It was naturally hostile to any idea that collaborating with Germans against the Red Army was a war crime, but the authorities also began to blur the significance of units and individuals who had also collaborated in the massacre of Jews.<sup>43</sup>

This pattern was soon followed in Latvia and Estonia. In December 1992, it was reported that former members of the Latvian Waffen-SS and precursor units, such as the Aizsargi militia, were now assembling for training exercises as part of the new Latvian armed forces. In fact, Latvian Waffen-SS members had been regularly meeting at the Riga War Museum for at least a year, openly discussing their role in the volunteer police units responsible for herding Jews to the killing sites in the Bikernicki forest and murdering them.<sup>44</sup>

There is little hope of obtaining documentary evidence or eye witness testimony from Lithuania or Latvia under these circumstances. By comparison, the Ukrainian authorities

have made a pronounced effort to recognise the tragic history of Jews in the Ukraine during the war.<sup>45</sup> And, according to my information, the White Russian government has been most helpful. For this and other contributory reasons, there may well be a prosecution this year against a senior White Russian collaborator.

Will it have been worthwhile? I think so. This is a time to remember, not to forget. The forces with a vested interest in white washing the past are marshalling their strength: historical revisionism, Holocaust Denial and the Far Right, which they serve, are stronger and more pervasive than ever before. All over Europe, people are choosing which past to confront and what from that past to recall, honour or condemn.

In Slovakia they now honour Father Josef Tiso, the head of the puppet regime which collaborated in the deportation of tens of thousands of Slovakian Jews.<sup>46</sup> In Austria, the conflict over Waldheim's wartime record caused a debate about the country's past which is by no means resolved.<sup>47</sup> By contrast, in Germany, the Bitburg controversy, the Historikerstreit, and debates on German identity since reunification shows a determination to engage in Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung - confronting the past.<sup>48</sup> Similar struggles are being waged in France. It is significant that, just a few days ago, President Mitterand announced that 16 July, the anniversary of the Vel d'Hiv round-up of Paris Jews, would become an official day of mourning for the deportation of Jews from France.<sup>49</sup>

In France, Klaus Barbie's Gestapo headquarters in Lyon is now a museum, a Centre of the History of the Resistance and Deportations. After much agonising and contradictory gestures, Paul Touvier and Rene Bosquet will stand trial for crimes against humanity and collaboration.<sup>50</sup>

Will we in Britain allow the museums on the Channel Islands which celebrate their endurance of occupation remain silent

on the fate of the Jews or the slave labourers on Alderney? Will Victor Carey remain an honoured local figure, whose services to his country are signified by a knighthood? Will the suspected war criminals, the Nazi collaborators who found refuge in this country, stand trial?

What events in Europe are telling us is clear. This is a time to remember, not to forget. If you do not chose to face the past on your terms, it will come face to face with you, on its terms and with potentially dreadful consequences.

- <sup>1</sup> Information from His Hon. Israel Finestein, 4 March 1993.
- <sup>2</sup> Information from Neville Nagler, 25 February 1993.
- <sup>3</sup> David Cesarani, Justice Delayed (London, 1992), p. 252. See the important article by Gitta Sereny, Sunday Times, 7 December 1991, which presaged the collapse of the prosecution case and her judicious summation of the case up to September 1992, New York Review of Books, 8 October 1992. For examples of the use made of the flaws in the prosecution, see editorials in Daily Telegraph, 11 and 23 June 1992.
- <sup>4</sup> Independent, 9 September 1991; 29 October 1991; Response, 12:6 (Fall, 1992), 15.
- <sup>5</sup> Jewish Echo, 14 February 1992; 20 March 1992; Observer, 17 May 1992; Response, 12:5 (Summer 1992), 14.
- <sup>6</sup> Peter Bottomley to Attorney General and intervention by Sir John Stokes, Hansard, 9 December 1991, cols. 603-4. See also, Tam Dayell MP, to Peter Lloyd, Home Office Minister, Hansard, 14 October 1991, col. 16; Cyril Townsend to Home Office Minister, Hansard, 20 February 1992, col. 447; Cyril Townsend to Peter Lloyd, Home Office Minister, Hansard, 25 February 1992, col. 423.
- <sup>7</sup> Jewish Chronicle, 2 February 1992.
- <sup>8</sup> Cyril Townsend to Attorney General, Hansard, 15 June 1992, col. 645.
- <sup>9</sup> Hansard, 9 July 1992, cols. 705-712.
- <sup>10</sup> Hansard, 4 May 1992, written answer, col. 200 and Hansard, 16 November 1992, cols. 14-15.
- <sup>11</sup> Hansard, 18 June 1992, written answer, col. 614.
- <sup>12</sup> Lord Mayhew to Lord Waddington, Hansard, 11 December 1991, cols. 753-5, 766-7.
- <sup>13</sup> Lord Houghton to Lord Chancellor, Hansard, 16 December 1991, written answer 43; Lord Boyd-Carpenter to Earl Ferrers, Hansard, 24 February 1992, cols. 1-2.
- <sup>14</sup> Hansard, 4 June 1992, cols. 1034-56.
- <sup>15</sup> Hasard, 7 July 1992, cols. 1051-2. See also, Lord Stoddart to Earl Ferrers, Hansard, 8 December 1992, written answer 5.
- <sup>16</sup> Hansard, 20 January 1993, cols. 885-7.
- <sup>17</sup> For the full history of the case see The Scotsman, 18 July 1992.
- <sup>18</sup> Opinion of Lord Milligan in causa Antony Gecas Persuer against Scottish Television PLC Defenders, 17 July 1992.
- <sup>19</sup> Guardian, 4 and 5 May 1992.
- <sup>20</sup> Winnick to Attorney General, Hansard, 11 May 1992, written answer, cols. 33-34; Winnick to Prime Minister, Hansard, 11 May 1992, written



answer, cols 21-2; Winnick to Prime Minister, Hansard, 13 May 1992, written answer, cols 105-6; Alex Carlile to Home Secretary, Hansard, 13 May 1992, written answer, col. 118; Carlile to Prime Minister, Hansard, 13 May 1992, written answer, cols 109; Greville Janner to Prime Minister, Hansard, 29 June 1992, written answer, col. 376; Janner to Foreign Secretary, Hansard, 29 June 1992, written answer, col. 407; Janner to Defence Minister, Hansard, 1 July 1992, written answer col. 654; Janner to Prime Minister, Hansard, 2 July 1992, written answer, col. 683; Janner to Lord Chancellor's Department, Hansard, 15 July 1992, col. 691; Winnick to Defence Minister, Hansard, 8 December 1992, written answer, col. 614; Winnick to Defence Minister, Hansard, 8 December 1992, col. 614;

- 21 Guardian, 7 and 9 May 1992.
- 22 Guardian, 2 December 1992.
- 23 Guardian, 6 January 1993.
- 24 Guardian, 7 January 1993.
- 25 Guardian, 11 January 1993.
- 26 Independent, 9 February 1993.
- 27 John Charmley, Churchill. The End of Glory (London, 1993). Alan Clarke, The Times, 3 January 1993. For other views see, Sunday Telegraph, 2 January 1993; Daily Telegraph, 4 January 1993; Guardian, 5 January 1993; The Times, 7 January 1993; Times Literary Supplement, 8 January 1993; Sunday Times, 10 January 1993; Independent of Sunday, 10 January 1993; Independent, 16 January 1993; Observer, 17 January 1993.
- 28 The Times, 8 January 1993.
- 29 Independent, 29 June 1992.
- 30 Independent of Sunday, 9 August 1992.
- 31 Independent, 13 August and 10 October 1992.
- 32 Independent on Sunday, 6 December 1993; Independent, 6 January 1993; 8 February 1993; Guardian, 26 January 1993; Guardian, 3 February 1993.
- 33 Guardian, 15 January 1993. Hansard, 19 January 1993, cols. 810-12.
- 34 Independent, 19 and 22 February 1993.
- 35 John Loftus, The Belarus Secret (New York, 1982; London, 1983).
- 36 The Independent, 6 July 1992.
- 37 Loftus, The Belarus Secret, pp. 20-50.
- 38 J. Lee Ready, The Forgotten Axis (Jefferson, NC, 1987), pp. 160, 162, 216-19, 258-9.
- 39 Hans Werner Neulen, An deutscher seite. Internationale Freiwillige von Wehrmacht und Waffen-SS (Munich, 1982), pp. 303-6.
- 40 K.-G. Klietmann, Die Waffen-SS eine Dokumentation (Osnabrück, 1965), pp. 271-2.
- 41 Neulen, An deutscher seite, pp. 305-6.
- 42 According to Loftus, The Belarus Secret, p. 50, General Anders welcomed White Russian recruits and was instrumental in saving the men of the 30th Waffen-SS Division. Loftus maintains that Ostrowsky and Kushel both knew Anders before 1940.
- 43 Independent, 9 September 1991 and 9 October 1991; Jerusalem Report, 28 November 1991.
- 44 Jerusalem Post, 24 December 1992; Guardian Europe, 12 February 1993. On Estonia, see Jewish Echo, 3 January 1992.
- 45 Independent, 20 September 1991 and 7 October 1991; Jerusalem Report, 10 October 1991.

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<sup>46</sup> Independent, 13 March 1991.

<sup>47</sup> Richard Mitten, The Politics of Antisemitic Prejudice. The Waldheim Phenomenon in Austria (Boulder, CO, 1993).

<sup>48</sup> Geoffrey Hartman (ed.) Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective (Bloomington, IN, 1986); Peter Baldwin (ed.), Reworking the Past. Hitler, the Holocaust and the Historians' Debate (Boston, 1990)

<sup>49</sup> Independent, 30 November 1992; Guardian, 30 November 1992 and 5 February 1993. Henry Rousso, The Vichy Syndrome. History and Memory in France Since 1944 (Cambridge, Mass., 1991).

<sup>50</sup> Independent, 14 April 1992; Daily Telegraph, 15 October 1992; Independent, 30 November 1992.

## RECENT EVENTS

The Barnet and District Affiliated Synagogue published A Haggadah of Life and the Pesach Story from a New Perspective. The book was launched on 27th February 1993 at the Barnet Synagogue with the help and guidance of the Balfour Diamond Jubilee Trust. Unlike ordinary Haggadahs the present one interprets the Seder Service "as part of a wider historical lesson for the reader". What is of particular interest to us is that two of our members, Mark Goldfinger and Mala Tribich, contributed articles to this Haggadah based on their war time experience. The Haggadah is obtainable from the Secretary, Barnet Synagogue, Eversleigh Road, New Barnet, Herts. EN5 1NE, price £14.95 plus £1.50 p.&p.

Our Society's Chanukah Party took place on 20th December 1992 and was attended by over 90 members and was most successful, but unfortunately at least 20 members who graced us with their presence had <sup>not</sup> replied to the invitations sent to them, which made it impossible for the organisers to provide the appropriate amount of food. We must expect that, in future, those who attend our functions will inform the organisers in advance of their intention to attend.

Our Purim Party took place on the 7th March, 1993 and saw many members assemble and instead of turning up in fancy dress, enjoyed their card games. Our Social Committee once again took very good care of the party guests and we are most grateful for its dedication.

### Recent Activities of our Members

Jeannette Shipper has always been interested in deserving causes. In 1992 she founded a small group of ladies to support Breakthrough Breast Cancer. They do not set the Thames on fire, but have already raised in excess of £1,000 simply by selling "cakes, muffins, florentines, jams, curds and chutney, all home made with the finest ingredients". Please support this group by placing your orders with Jeannette on 'phone number 0923 85 5450.

We would like to hear from any of our members who are involved in similar activities.

*Our membrs have for the past few years been relating their experiences in schools and institutions. Below we publish two of many of the letters of thanks they receive.*

Dear Sirs,

Words cannot convey how moving, informative and vivid I, and all those involved, found Mr. Zylbrszac and Mr. Zwirek's visit to be, and I would like to express my gratitude for their time and patience. Their visit provided a unique opportunity for myself and other students to gain an understanding of the Holocaust that no history book or television documentary could ever entirely encapsulate.

They related their experiences to us in an intensely personal way, and I know that everyone present was deeply moved by what they heard. Mr. Zylberszac and Mr. Zwirek's patience was without limit, and they answered all questions with lucid recollection.

On a personal level the experience has aided my research enormously. Whilst exposing new areas of inquiry, it provided an impetus for my project on Jewish resistance to Nazi persecution.

It was for me a very traumatic and distressing experience and yet one that I found immensely valuable. I feel privileged to have met Mr. Zylberszac and Mr. Zwirek, who showed both courage and strength in talking to us. Although we will never be able to fully comprehend the suffering that these men both witnessed and endured, their talk was both enlightening and incredibly emotive.

With the increasing threat of 'revisionist' historians such as David Irving, who claim that the genocide is nothing but a fictional myth, Mr. Zylberszac and Mr. Zwirek's visit has made us aware of the need to ensure that the occurrence of the Holocaust is never questioned or forgotten. Their visit will be remembered by our school, and I along with my colleagues will remain eternally grateful to Mr. Zylberszac and Mr. Zwirek.

Yours in friendship,

Rebecca Cresswell.

*The following was sent to Alec Ward from a Claremont High School sixth former.*

Dear Alec,

Thank you very much for coming to our Upper Sixth A-level History group. I cannot pretend to understand what you went through during the war, although I am sure that coming to talk to us about your experience was quite distressing and I thank you for that sacrifice.

The discussion particularly brought home to me the reality of the events which took place during the war. Up until that time the events of the war were, for me, like a bad dream. However, speaking to you and listening to your story, as one who was actually there, made me realise that these things happened to real people with real families. I feel that I can now appreciate more of what happened during the war.

Thanking you once again for your time and effort.

Yours sincerely,

Janelle Johnston

## MEMBERS NEWS

### '45 Aid Society - Manchester

#### 1992

- July Bat Chayil of Emily granddaughter of Alice and the late Joe Rubinstein (the daughter of Harold and Joan Rubinstein)
- Sept. Ruby Wedding of Marion and Jack Cygelman
- Oct. The very sad death of our dear friend Joe Rubinstein after a very brave and courageous fight to stay with us.
- Nov. Another grandson to Hynda Sommer to her son Antony and daughter in law Maxine.
- Dec. Another grandson for Pinky and Susan Kurnedz. A son for their daughter Danielle.

#### 1993

Debby, daughter of Jack & Rhona Aizenberg has become engaged.

Tania Nelson, the daughter of Marie and Mendel Beale has had another baby daughter.

Karl & Estelle Kleiman's youngest son has attained the age of 18.

*Mazel tov to all!*

Births

Mazeltov to the proud grandparents.

Miriam & Emil Stein - a grandson Howard Samuel born to Rosalynd & Richard

Sheila & Gary Wino - a granddaughter Elana Ruth born to Karen & Robert.

Moric Friedman - a grandson Alexander born to Mirielle & Brent.

Pauline & Harry Spiro - a granddaughter Rachel born to Rosalynd & Leslie and

Declan Karl a grandson born to Liannis & Gary

Esther & Maurice Frenkel - a grandson Jordan Reece born to Rochelle & Phillip

Margaret & Harry Olmer - a granddaughter Gabrielle born to Pauline & Jonathan

Stefa & Moishe Rosenberg - twin grandsons.

Helen & Jerry Wegier - a granddaughter Leital Bellarose born to Ruth & Jamie

Claire & Aby Elkienbaum - a granddaughter Nicola born to Michelle & Eric

Steve & Esther Lesniak (from Montreal) a second grandson.

Israel & Dvora Shifron - a grandson

A special and hearty mazeltov to Rabbi Simcha Lieberman and his wife Chava.

Their daughter, Toby Ethel Weinberg, who has seven daughters and one son, gave birth to another son, Mordchai Menachem Mendl. About the same time one of Toby Ethel's daughters, Sara Zierel Lipshitz, gave birth to a son Moshe. Thus Rabbi Simcha and his wife Chava have become proud great grandparents. Surely this must be the first great grandson amongst the members of our Society.

Bat-Mitzvah

Mazeltov to:

Marie & Bob Obuchowski on the Bat-Chayil of their granddaughter, Louise Bermange, daughter of Susan & David.

Sheila & Saul (from Florida) on the Bat-Chayil of their granddaughter Lory.

Engagements

Mazeltov to:

Betty & Charlie Lewkowicz on the engagement of Jack to Karen

Arza & Ben Helfgott on the engagement of Maurice to Danielle

Helen & Jerry Wegier on the engagement of Michael to Daniela

Jeff Frydman on the engagement of Robyn to Mark

Marriages

Mazeltov to:

Harry Fox on his marriage to Annie Fairbairn

Estelle & Jack Schwimmer on the marriage of Keith to Ginette

Betty & Charlie Lewkowicz on the marriage of Jack to Karen

Pat & Icky Stein on the marriage of Avril to Clive

Jerry Posnanski on the marriage of Yossi to Rochelle

Thea & Israel Rudzinski on the marriage of their granddaughter Yitty to Itzhak

Vivienne & Kopel Kendall on the marriage of Jeffrey to Tania

Roman & Susie Halter on the marriage of their daughter Aloma to Eli

*(Eli comes from the USA and both live in Jerusalem and work for the Jerusalem Post)*

On a recent visit to the States Ben Helfgott heard the very sad news about one of our members, Herman Rosenblatt, who lives in New York. Herman and his 31 year old son were in the electrical contracting business. Early one Friday morning in December 1992, before the staff arrived in the office, the front door bell rang. Herman's son, expecting a member of the staff to arrive, went to open the door and was greeted by a man with a revolver, demanding the money earmarked for the staff's wages. On the way to get the wages the son was shot in the back by the intruder. When Herman heard the shot he rushed out and, in turn, was shot in the stomach. As a result of this attack Herman's son is now paralysed from the waist down. Herman, T.G., is slowly recovering, but was forced to close down his business. Herman's son has been married two years and has a small baby.

## OBITUARIES

### Freddie Goldman

Freddie came to England with the Kindertransport from Austria in 1939 and married one of our girls Rose (Ruzka) Kalman.

He was a very respected member of our Society and unbeknown to many of us he supported many charitable organisations.

He and Rose had two sons one of whom died tragically at the age of 12. Their second son lives on the Isle of Wight.

Through his religious upbringing Freddie was a Ba'al Tefila and a respected member of Kingsbury Synagogue community. He was very artistic which showed itself in his profession as a curtain maker. He took great pride in his appearance and always looked immaculate.

One of his many humanitarian deeds was to arrange marriages at no personal gain to himself.

Freddie was also a member of the new Holocaust Survivor Centre in Hendon, London, where he derived a great amount of pleasure meeting people with similar experiences.

For many years we met socially in our respective homes where Freddie always enjoyed a game of Kalooki.

He is sorely missed by all of us.

Alec Ward.

### Joe Rubinstein

Joe Rubinstein died on 19th October, 1992 after a long illness, endured with courage, at the age of 67.

After Joe got married to Alice, their home was always open to his friends, (the boys) day or night. Joe had a large circle of friends, both Jewish and non-Jewish. He was admired and loved by them all for his tolerance, help and humour. His integrity and principles were very important to him.

Joe was dedicated to Israel. He campaigned with 'Achdur' (JIA) to raise money. A member of the Cheetham Aid Committee, a greatly respected member of the Prestwich Hebrew Congregation and a very worthy and able Worshipful Master of his Masonic Lodge.

He has left a void in the lives of all of us who knew and loved him.

He had a loving and caring wife, children and grandchildren, who were a great comfort to him.

We mourn the loss of a true friend and a highly respected member of the Manchester Community.

Mendel Beale

Heini Goldberg - Chaim Golan.

It is with great sorrow that we recently learnt about the death of Heini Goldberg. Heini was the Madrich of the group that lived in the Loughton Hostel in 1946 and beginning of 1947. In this very short span of time he exerted a tremendous influence and made a great impact on many of the 'boys' in the hostel. Heini was born in Breslau and came to England before the war with his parents. He became very active in the Hehalutz movement and worked closely with the leaders of the labour Zionist. Although most of us were Zionists in the sense that we ardently believed in a Jewish State we knew very little about the history and ideology of Zionism. It was he who filled this vacuum. He did this with subtlety and sensitivity. He was a clear thinker and whenever he spoke we devoured voraciously his words. He introduced us to an exciting world both on an intellectual level and a practical level. It was through him that we became involved with Habonim where we established warm and lasting friendships. He brought to our hostel Reuma Weizman, the wife of the newly elected President of Israel, Ezer Weizman, from whom we learned a great deal about life in Palestine. He invited such prominent people as the late Moshe (Shertok) Sharett later Foreign Minister and Prime Minister of Israel, Berl Locker the head of the Jewish Agency in London and later chairman of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem. The Loughton hostel was a hive of activity and this was brought about by Heini's drive and imagination.

Heini not only encouraged us to attend Zionist meetings which were then very frequent but he also stimulated our interest in music and theatre. It was indeed a very exciting period in our lives.

True to his belief when the State of Israel was born Heini went on Aliyah and settled on a kibbutz. He married Hilda Solomon, also one of our Madrichim who died shortly afterwards. He had a son with Hilda. He left the kibbutz and set up in business. He remarried, to a South African, with whom he had a daughter Dafna. He was widowed a few years ago. Many of us kept in touch with him and he will be remembered with warm affection.

B.H.

Jacqueline Devorah Poznanski

On the 6th May 1992 illness claimed the life of Jacqueline Devorah Poznanski, wife of Jerzy Poznanski of Ashgrove Terrace, Gateshead.

Jacqueline, a devoted mother of six, was always willing to help anyone in need and even during her painful illness showed great concern for others. Her hospitality was well known and yeshiva students far from home were always made welcome.

Deeply mourned and missed by her husband, family, friends and all who knew her, she will be remembered for her cheerful disposition and for all her good deeds - a true Eshet Chayil.



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### 50th Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

In the last issue we announced that the above Anniversary will be commemorated in Warsaw under the auspices of the President of Israel, Mr. Chaim Herzog and the President of Poland, Mr. Lech Walesa. We have since learnt that the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Itzhak Rabin with a contingent of members of the IDF, will also participate in the proceedings in Poland. So far the U.K. delegation consists of about seventy people, among whom there are a number of our members.

An Exhibition to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising will be held at Imperial War Museum between 15th April to 30th June 1993. Our Society is one of the sponsors of this Exhibition.

Yom Hashoah this year will take place on Sunday, 18th April. As usual there will be a gathering at the Holocaust Memorial at the Dell in Hyde Park at 11.30a.m., at which the new Chief Rabbi, Dr. J. Sachs, will officiate. Members are reminded to light a Jahrzeit candle in memory of the six million as well as to urge others to do so and attend the commemoration in Hyde Park and in their synagogues.

The 1993 Reunion will take place on Sunday, 2nd May at the King David Suite, 32 Cumberland Place, W.1. An appeal has already been made to you to try to obtain advertisements for the Brochure and to inform Mick Zwirek at your earliest that you will attend the Reunion. Tel:081-550-9426

GUEST OF HONOUR: Judge Israel Finestein.Q.C. President of The Board of Deputies of British Jews.

### THE 'FORTY-FIVE' AID SOCIETY

## *Annual Reunion Dinner*

*to celebrate*

*The 47th Anniversary of our Liberation*

*will be held at*

*King David Suite*

*Great Cumberland Place London W1*

*on Sunday 2nd May 1993*

*Reception 4.30 p.m. Dinner 5.45 p.m. Buffet & Ball 8 - 11.30 p.m.*

*Ticket £35.00*

*Black Tie*

PLEASE SEND ANY CORRESPONDENCE, MEMBERS NEWS etc to our Secretary:

Mrs. Ruby Dreihorn. 37 Salmon St. Kingsbury London.NW9 8PP tel: 081 205 6878