

JOURNAL

'45

OF THE AID SOCIETY

No. 10

APRIL 1983

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JOURNAL OF THE '45 AID SOCIETY

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EDITOR: KURT KLAPPHOLZ

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

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They should be typed in double-spacing and reach the Editor not later than the end of October 1983.

EDITORIAL

The first issue of our Journal was published almost precisely seven years ago, in April 1976. Between that time and December 1981 - when our last issue appeared - we published nine numbers, which gives an average of approximately 1.6 issues per year. The point of these arithmetic-historical observations is to draw attention to the fact that never before has there been such a long gap between the appearance of two issues as that between the last issue and the present one. You may well ask: "why draw attention to this? If members did not notice that the Journal did not appear for such a long time, then its long absence is obviously of no consequence to anyone. If they did notice it, and its absence did matter to them, drawing attention to it is wholly redundant." As the Rabbi would say, "You have a point there!" Is there a plausible answer to it?

The problem is one of 'imperfect information', as economists like to put it nowadays. In the Editorial of issue no.8 (March 1981) there was a reference to "...rumours... that some members were actually impatient for the next issue!" On this occasion rumours have reached us of rather more strident reactions to the long delay in the appearance of this issue. The Editor finds it difficult to appraise the truth of these rumours, which perhaps suggests the need for a different Editor, who would have no such difficulty. However, assuming that there is some truth in these rumours, then our members deserve apologies.

The Editor, for one, is quite prepared to confess mea culpa (or in a rather older and more appropriate tongue, Hutussi!), although he would not wish to confess to mea maxima culpa. While the Editor must bear a large share of the responsibility for putting the Journal together, it is well known that he does not do it alone. So it came about that, when the Editor had free time, the material was not ready, and when the material was ready the Editor did not have the time to edit it. (There is, of course, the well known Yiddish saying to describe such situations: "Hob ich a Bett..."). After an interval of 16 months, the Journal is being 'put to bed' at the very last minute, on the eve of the Editor's departure abroad! Wits among the Chevra will not fail to wonder why, given the hurry, the Editorial is not shorter, or better still, omitted altogether. Alright, alright! There will be no more than a few brief comments on the contents of this issue.

On this occasion we have had most submissions for the Section "Youth" Remembered, which will not please S Kanitz and others who share his views on this matter. Perhaps there is a misunderstanding here. Kanitz complains that, when one reads our Journal, one might be led to think that nothing matters to us "...except the trauma of those days..." while from experience we know that we are not "...obsessed with the past only..." but with everyday matters which concern everybody, be they survivors or not. Kanitz is obviously right, but perhaps overlooks the difference between chatting with the Chevra and sitting down to write something for publication. One meets, and chats with, the Chevra quite often - one does not often put pen to paper to write seriously. Is it really surprising that our writing - as against our everyday 'Schmuses' - should reflect the fact that, unlike others, we are remnants of the Holocaust?

Incidentally, the Journal owes Kanitz not only gratitude for his submissions, but also apologies for the Editor's failure to thank him for the letter which accompanied his article. It is to be hoped that he will accept this public expression, not only of thanks, but also of contrition. At any rate he should be pleased that this issue contains several contributions by members from outside the UK.

It is a pity that Lillian Silberstein's piece on the World Gathering of Holocaust Survivors could not have been published earlier. Yet, this was an important event for members of our Society, which could hardly have been covered adequately in one issue which was not even devoted exclusively to it.

Observant readers may notice that the News of Members from Israel appears in Marion Stern's article, rather than in its usual place. Let us hope that Marion Stern will continue to send us regular "Letter(s) from Israel", thus pleasing not only Kanitz - the Editor's chaver from the far-off days of Kloster Indersdorf - but also the Editor himself, not to mention other readers.

The same observant readers will also notice that the Section "From our Sons and Daughters" has been re-named "From the Second Generation". This has been done to take account of the formation of the "Second Generation Group", which was announced on p.48 of our last issue, and with the hope that, from now on, members of this Group will provide regular contributions to our Journal (perhaps even including an Assistant Editor who might become Editor in due course).

Yet another change is that the Section "Forthcoming Events" is called "Past and Forthcoming Events". We hope this change will prove to be a once-and-for-all aberration, explained by the delay in the appearance of this issue.

No Letters to the Editor were received, which helps to explain why none are published. The relative infrequency of these letters was - how should we put it? - yes, was deplored in earlier Editorials but, as usual, without any noticeable effect. In our issue No. 3 (April 1977) we announced the intention "... to expand the Section 'Members Views' by including a part containing news of what might be called our Members' public or social achievements". We managed to carry out that intention in two successive issues (April 1977 and March 1978) after which the Section "Members News" reverted to its previous format. However, chaver Krulik sent us clippings from some German newspapers, whose contents would have fitted admirably in the part of "Members News" which has disappeared. The clippings concern Shmuel Dresner, one of the Windermere boys, who spent some years in hospitals and sanatoria in this country. He studies in London and Paris, is a painter and continues to live in London. He had many exhibitions in London from 1955-1975, and in November/December 1980 some of his paintings were exhibited in Germany, and the clippings from German papers contain very favourable reviews of that exhibition. I wonder whether Shmuel gets the Journal. What a pity there is no systematic way to ensure that the Journal is informed of such events, and that the Editorial is now the only place in which to report such news if and when we get it.

In the last Editorial thanks were expressed to Romek Halter for the way in which he had improved the appearance of the Journal. As Romek is otherwise engaged, and without his help we cannot produce the Journal in the same way, it has had to revert to its previous format. We must thank Romek once again for showing us what a journal can look like when an artist takes a hand in its production. Of course, we must be pleased for Romek's sake that he is so busy, but what a pity that the Journal is deprived of his services.

It is to be hoped that, if anyone read this Editorial, he/she did not find it too much of a strain!

"YOUTH" REMEMBERED

WHEN FLOWERS BLOOM

by
Michael Etkind

The author wishes to thank Aloma Halter for
her help in 'polishing' this poem. (Ed.)

We'll sit and watch you
as you eat your bread,
and lie beside you
when you lie in bed.

You'll see our bodies
lying in the snow,
you'll smell them rotting
in the summer heat;
and hear the flies that fat
upon our meat, our flesh.

You'll see the fires
 leaping
on all sides -
you'll smell the smell
of our burnt flesh;
you'll choke
 on smoke
 'though
there be none in sight.

You'll smell our fear
 each time
you brush your teeth;
you'll taste our tears
 each time
you wash your face...

We are the dead
 you shot
 you hanged
 you trampled
underneath your feet.

Our screams will echo
in your dreams at night,
and so you shall fear sleep
 as we feared death.
You'll pray for rest,
yet dread to close your eyes.

We'll wait
till death will bring you
to our side.

We are the dead you killed.
Your crime has bound us
for all time.

And when the sun
stands high at noon,
and flowers bloom
beneath a cloudless sky -
you'll see us
waiting
in your children's eyes.

A NARROW ESCAPE

by Victor (Kushy) Greenberg

The author was one of the Finchley Road (Freshwater) Hostel boys. As in the case of Alec Ward's story, published in our last issue, the Editor had never heard the story Kushy now tells. (Ed.)

Not many came out of Auschwitz-Birkenau without a number tattooed on their arm, and yet I did. This is how it came about.

In autumn, 1944, the Soviet forces were advancing; consequently the Germans decided to evacuate those inmates who were still strong enough to be useful for work. So as to liquidate the camp the Germans decided to kill all those who remained behind. The two days before the evacuation offered an experience never to be forgotten.

My father was in the neighbouring camp, partitioned off by precisely constructed rows of electrified barbed wires. He received reliable information that the next selection of a work force to be transported out of my camp was, in all probability, to be the last. He told me this and stressed that the remainder, all those left, were doomed and that I must find some way to leave with the next transport. This would have been simple had volunteers been called for, but this was not to be the case. Instead, the process of selection was carried out. We were made to stand naked for an Appell (roll-call), so that they could assess our physical strength.

The selection took place the next day. In order to appear taller and older, I stood anxiously on a lump of concrete in the fifth row, apprehensive of the outcome lest I be discovered.

High-ranking camp officers arrived and began to select, just as they had done when we first arrived in Auschwitz. One group was to be transported, the rest, the majority, were to be locked in an isolated barrack awaiting orders for delivery to the gas chambers. My hopes were shattered when I was discovered standing on the concrete. They pulled me out and asked me my age, to which I replied that I was eighteen, when in fact I was an undergrown fifteen year old. The S.S. officers' faces showed sneering, sadistic grins, as if to say: 'we are going to have some fun here'. They did. I provided them with the day's best entertainment as they formed a circle and started throwing me to and fro as if I were a ball, asking me at intervals 'How old are you?' I had to maintain that I was eighteen. One of them remarked: 'Eighteen, eh? You don't even have hair on your privates!' This remark enlivened and sharpened their game. They punched me about till I was in a state of collapse. At the end of all this I found myself selected with rejects, the majority of the youngsters. We were locked in a barracks and two armed guards were posted outside.

I fail to remember my attempted and eventually successful escape. I imagine that, being so exhausted, I acted instinctively. I know that I made an effort to free myself in the night and was caught, took another beating and was thrown back. My second attempt, however, was successful.

The procedure for those leaving Auschwitz on the work force transport was to have a number tattooed on the arm which was then recorded, as each man was taken from the camp. By the time I had escaped from the detention barracks the work force had already been tattooed.

When the time came to leave the camp I lined up with the others at the camp gates. Several S.S.-men were sitting there at tables, checking the numbers. Why I chose to place my life in the hands of one in particular, I do not really know; he appeared older than the others, and that might have swayed my decision to be checked by him. I stood there trembling, looking bruised and dejected, hardly able to stand. He asked for my number: I made no reply. He lifted his head and looked at me standing in silence with sad pleading eyes staring at him, my arms stretched out and my hands opened, as if to say, 'it is up to you to let me live or die.' That was the issue with which I confronted him. He deliberated and waved me on. Thus, ironically, I was saved by an S.S.-man.

As we passed through the gates we received provisions for the journey and we marched alongside the camp in which my father was, along the road leading to the railways. There were many people waiting to see who was leaving, anxious relatives, and amongst them stood my father. I noticed him first, and then his eyes caught me. He stopped in his tracks, motionless; he stood there paralysed. I tried to talk to him, but he could not open his mouth; - the tortured mixture of feelings that must have passed through him - it pains me every time I remember that moment. This was undoubtedly the most emotional experience that I have ever felt or witnessed. How can one describe the thoughts going through a parent's mind, how can one imagine his feelings when he faces separation from the last remaining member of his family, when he knows that they are unlikely to meet again, and yet when at the same time he feels joy, deep joy, that his son has managed to survive? These conflicting emotions seemed to paralyse him. He stood there, gazing at me, speechless. I watched as tears began to flow down his face, but he could not bear me to see him in this condition, so he turned away. By the time he looked back I had advanced a little. I could hear him shout:

"Look after yourself, take care"

We boarded the cargo train, packed like sardines, destined for another concentration camp called Mathausen.

I learned later that there was an uprising in Auschwitz and I believe that it was then that my father met his death.

MY WELCOME TO POLAND AFTER THE WAR

by
Ben Helfgott

Who, one wonders, is the author of this
article?! (Ed.)

When I recall the nightmares of the holocaust years, there is none that fills me with a greater dread and horror than the one I experienced on my return to Poland soon after my liberation. Like so many of the flotsam and jetsam that was traversing Europe in overcrowded trains, returning to their respective homelands, I was travelling with my cousin to our hometown, Piotrków.

I was 15 years old and my cousin 12. Both of us still looked emaciated and our hair was still conspicuously short. To the Czechs, we seemed more like an apparition than real people and they showered us with food, warmth and sympathy. We were greatly encouraged by this spontaneous reaction of brotherhood and friendship. Our faith in humanity, which, strangely enough, although bruised, we never lost, was being restored in a very manifest and palpable way.

We crossed the Polish-Czech border with bated breath, full of excitement and expectation for a brave new world. The train stopped in Czystochowa, well known for its pilgrimages to Jasna Góra the most sacred of shrines in Poland. At the station, we were waiting for the train that would take us to our hometown. Hundreds of people were milling around, talking and gesticulating excitedly, when suddenly two Polish officers accosted us: "Who are you? What are you doing here?" Somewhat taken aback and surprised we replied "Can't you see? We are survivors from the concentration camp and we are returning to our hometown." To our amazement, they asked for some proof which we immediately produced in the form of an identity card which had been issued to us in Theresienstadt, the place of our liberation. They were still not satisfied and ordered us to come with them to the police station for a routine check. It seemed rather strange to us, but we had nothing to fear. Fortified by our experience in Czechoslovakia and believing in a better world, now that the monster that had tried to destroy the people of Europe was vanquished, we walked along with the two officers chatting animatedly about the great future that was in store for the people of Poland.

The streets were deserted in the prevailing darkness as there was still a curfew after midnight and street lighting had not been restored yet. My cousin and I were getting tired as we carried our cases which contained clothing we had received from the Red Cross. Casually I asked "where is the Police Station? It seems so far." The reply was devastating and shattering "shut your f.... mouth you f.... Jew"!!!!!! I was stunned, hardly believing what I had just heard. How could I have been so naive; so gullible? The Nazi cancer was removed but its tentacles were widespread and deeply rooted. How I had

lulled myself into a false sense of security. I believed what I wanted to believe. I had experienced and witnessed so much cruelty and bestiality, yet I refused to accept that men can be wicked. I was grown up in so many ways, yet I was still a child dreaming of a beautiful world. I was suddenly brought back to reality and began to fear the worst. Here I was in the middle of nowhere, no one to turn to for help. My thoughts were racing, my heart was throbbing faster and faster. On the one hand, I was castigating myself for allowing myself to be lured into this seemingly hopeless situation, on the other hand, I was scheming about how to extricate ourselves from a clearly dangerous situation. The Russians were still well in control and I was hoping against hope that if I were to see a Russian sentry, I would shout for help. Alas! there was no Russian to be seen!

At last we stopped at a house where one of the officers knocked at a gate which was opened by a young Polish woman. We entered a room which was dimly lit by a paraffin lamp, and we were ordered to open our suitcases. They took most of the clothing and announced that they would now take us to the Police Station. It seemed inconceivable to me that this was their real intention, but we had no choice and we had to follow events as they unfolded. As we walked in the dark deserted streets, I tried desperately to renew conversation so as to restore the personal and human touch, but it was to no avail. I tried hard to conceal and ignore my true feelings and innermost thoughts, pretending to believe that they were acting in the name of the law, but they became strangely uncommunicative. After what seemed an eternity, we arrived at a place which looked frighteningly foreboding. The buildings were derelict and abandoned; there was no sign of human habitation; all one could hear was the howling of the wind, the barking of the dogs and the mating calls of the cats.

The two officers menacingly extracted the pistols from their holsters, ordered us to walk to the nearest wall.

Both my cousin and I felt rooted to the ground, unable to move.

When at last I recovered my composure, I emitted a torrent of desperate appeals and entreaties. I pleaded with them "Haven't we suffered enough? Haven't the Nazis caused enough destruction and devastation to all of us? Our common enemy is destroyed and the future is ours. We have survived against all odds and why are you intent on promoting the heinous crimes that the Nazis have unleashed. Don't we speak the same language as you?" I went on in the same vein speaking agitatedly for some time. Eventually one of the officers succumbed to my pleas and said "Let's leave them. They are, after all, still young boys." As they put away their pistols, they made a remark which still rings loud in my ears..."You can consider yourselves very lucky. We have killed many of your kind. You are the first ones we have left alive." With this comment they disappeared into the night.

My cousin and I looked at each other unable to comprehend what had transpired. We were trembling and completely shattered by this experience. Racing through our minds was the realisation that we had been nearer death in a free and liberated Poland than at any time during the ordeals of the 5 years under Nazi tyranny.

We were indeed fortunate to have escaped this fate at the hands of the Poles. However, I cannot help thinking of the many survivors who returned to Poland after the war and who were killed by the Poles. Since my liberation it has been my abiding preoccupation and a tremendous source of joy and pleasure to renew contact with all those with whom I shared similar experiences. I am fortunate in having had the opportunity of travelling all over the world, thus being able to renew and maintain contact with them. There are some, however, with whom I was liberated and who like I, had returned to Poland after the war, and of whom there is no trace.

I often wonder what happened to them. Were they the unlucky ones whose appeal to the misguided Poles went unheeded and whose bodies lie strewn like dogs in unknown and forsaken places?

IN THE GHETTO

by
Michael Etkind

This is the third instalment of the author's recollections of events during the early part of the war. Two instalments were published in preceding issues. (Ed.)

Podrzeczna Street, where my aunt Fania with her husband and two children found a room, was a short street at the very edge of the Ghetto. There was a cast iron stove in the middle of the room with a metal flue pipe that rose vertically to the ceiling, and then ran across it to disappear into the wall. A sink with a cold water tap completed the "amenities". The toilets were outside at the far end of the yard. Some fifty families lived in this block of flats; half of them were newcomers and half were residents from before the war. We seemed to have had enough food in those early days and at first you felt safer inside the Ghetto than you did outside it. In addition to the Jewish police there was the fire brigade, the post office and all the administrative departments one would expect in a town of some quarter of a million inhabitants. My mother began to teach and a month later we moved into a building allocated for teachers and their families. Our new place used to be a monastery and a Roman Catholic school; there was a large walled garden and some play areas. An assembly room was divided by curtains into a number of cubicles. There was just enough space for our four beds and a cupboard in our cubicle. Cooking facilities were at one end and there was always a queue waiting to boil a kettle of water, some milk, or other food. Before long I was spending nearly all my time outside playing table tennis or volley ball with other boys and girls and I did some gardening also. Underneath a part of the building there were catacombs where we found some ancient skulls. The relative peace of those summer days was frequently interrupted by distant rifle shots. Each time we heard that sound we knew that someone had been shot near the wires. Once a month we would get a postcard from my father and Jacob, from Kielce ghetto. How they ended up there, instead of Warsaw, will forever remain a mystery to me. My brother was working in a stone quarry, but apart from that their postcards contained little information. The summer was coming to an end, when suddenly there was an outbreak of typhoid fever. My younger brother Lolek, who was twelve, contracted the disease and died three weeks later in my uncle's room, where my mother took him to be nursed. When my younger sister Henka became ill, she was also taken to my aunt's room where she managed to recover. No sooner did she feel better than my aunt's daughter, Fredka, became ill. She was taken to hospital where she died a week later. In December I fell ill. When I recovered we moved to another dwelling in Lagiewnicka Street. By now there was more vacant accommodation in the ghetto.

With the colder weather the typhoid epidemic came to an end. Tuberculosis of the lungs and starvation became the two major killers. My uncle Szolym together with my aunt Fania would come to see us every afternoon to bring some food. My mother became progressively weaker, and could not go on with her teaching; she would not eat and seemed to have lost all desire to live. After my recovery from typhoid I was constantly hungry and could not comprehend my mother's loss of appetite. A doctor, an old friend of the family, suggested that she should go to the hospital, but she would not hear of it. She would lie in bed and talk to us about her childhood, and her parents who died before we were born. On one occasion she said that she would die as soon as the weather would get a little warmer. She died a day after my sixteenth birthday, the 10th March 1941. As it was a Saturday, the funeral took place the following day. My uncle made all the arrangements. There was a long queue at the cemetery. Some people were bringing their deceased in handcarts, as the horse-drawn black vans could not cope. The grave diggers would refuse to dig sufficiently deep pits unless they were given bread by the mourners. The "Hazan" was singing his heart-rending lament and yet there were no tears in my eyes. "Why am I not crying?", this thought passed through my mind again and again. I loved my mother and admired her selflessness for as long as I could remember.

Before the war there were so many people she used to help. So many beggars would come to our flat and would never go away empty handed; she would sit down with some of the illiterate ones to fill in forms, so that they could obtain free milk for their illegitimate children. When the German Jews arrived, who could not speak Polish, she would give them food and money. She gave them jobs to do in our flat, such as sewing, which we did not really need. Every evening at 10 p.m. she would listen to radio Moscow, which was forbidden in pre-war Poland.

I wrote a letter to my father. Two weeks later came an answer telling me to go and see his pre-war friend Podlaski, who was the head of a tailoring establishment. Podlaski offered me a job as a messenger and the opportunity to learn tailoring. A week later I had a message to go and see Gierszowski. Gierszowski gave me a letter to Miss Walfisz, who was Rumkowski's secretary, as a result of which Henka, my fourteen year old sister, was taken into an orphanage, and I was told that I could have any suitable job. For a while I became a personal messenger to a woman who was in charge of a large workshop making leather gloves, woollen scarves, painted vases and other artistic creations, which were sent out to the Germans. As there were few telephones in the ghetto, I was constantly on my feet taking and bringing back messages. I soon realised that half of these messages were love letters sent to and from my employer to various dignitaries, notably Jakubowicz, who had a very high position on "Balucki Rynek", the place where the Germans came into contact with the ghetto administration. A few months later I again approached Gierszowski and asked him if he could help me get a job at the post office.

(to be continued)

HERE AND NOW

REFLECTIONS

by
Steve (Istvan) Kanitz

The author came to the UK with the
Southampton group. See also the
Editorial. (Ed.)

Having been a recipient of the journal for the past couple of years, noting its journalistic standard, which is most commendable, I nevertheless have to note the lack of contributions from our friends from Israel, America and wherever they may be, which I am sure K.K. had in mind in his editorial (Dec. 1981).

Apart from commiserating with K.K. about his predicament, I have done nothing constructive to date. However, two news items in the last issue and the general trend of the journal started me thinking that:

- a) The journal is a good way of keeping in touch with the Chevra
- b) The journal, whilst we should never forget those terrible days, is inclined to dwell a little too much on the Holocaust and too little on the lessons we might learn from it.

One of the two news items about our members gave me great pleasure to read, that Alice and Joe (Rubinstein) in Manchester became grandparents for the second time. It was only yesterday, or so it seems, that Alice, after some visible hesitation, agreed to dance with me at their wedding. Also, I well remember all those jokes we played on them on their wedding day..... What, with having three children themselves, I wish them many more simchot like this.

I also read, but this time with great sadness, of the untimely death of Moshe Besserman. We lived in the Manchester Hostel first, and later in London. Yes, Moshe was a rascal, but one could not be angry with him for long. Our ways soon parted after he borrowed (without my permission) my best (Shabbat) suit to go to work.....Of all things, in those days he was a butcher! How he never made my suit dirty I never knew and was not in the mood to find out. From time to time, I looked for him, but he seemed to have disappeared, now alas for ever.

I should like to comment on what can be termed an unhealthy preoccupation with Holocaust related subjects in the Journal. One does not have to be a psychiatrist to realise that one's attitude and behaviour patterns depend on preceding experiences and such likes. Hence, what passed during the holocaust made a great impression on us all. But surely that was not the only experience we had, whether before or after those tragic events, to shape our lives today.

Reading the journal 36 years later, it seems as if there are no other matters for us worthy of discussion, except the trauma of those days. When I meet the Chevra, we talk about the family, the children, politics....We don't seem to be obsessed with the past only. Could not the journal reflect this attitude a little more? I can almost hear K.K. "It is up to us". Of course, he is right. That does not mean that we have forgotten our past and our duties to make sure that such things will not happen again.

Now I would like to commend Ardyn Halter for his article "Second Generation" (Dec. 1981) and especially his conclusion regarding "Alya" which brings me to the question, have we learned our lessons? From the evidence so far I would say NO! Apart from a few of the "boys and girls" who came to Israel in its day of re-emergence as an independent country, how many more have joined them, or aided their second generation to do so? In my opinion the lessons have not been learned merely by establishing a chair in Holocaust Studies, or supporting charitable institutions in Israel, or organising study workshops on the Holocaust generation. It is merely business as usual, except that we exchanged our Central European Passports for Western European ones or North American ones.

In my opinion, the lesson to be learned is that we should come to Israel, to populate the country with farmers, workers and other useful citizens. It is indeed commendable, and members of the Chevra deserve all praise for the way they re-established themselves in new and strange countries after those terrible years, and achieved great heights in their academic and other pursuits. However, the really successful ones are those who make the phone calls, even late at night, to the "harassed tourist" to Israel and who are not ripped off when buying a cheese sandwich or coca cola, like Michael Elkind was. Also those who do not attempt, on flying visits here, futile "bridge building" exercises with the Arabs, a subject which bedevilled the experienced professionals for decades.....but come here themselves or their second generation at least, to build with us OUR country and a better tomorrow which will in turn take care of "building bridges" as well as proving that our Chevra learned the right lesson.

Below we print a letter which Steve Kanitz wrote to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the reply he received on her behalf. It is at best encouraging to read the denial made on behalf of the Prime Minister. The repeated allegations that "Israel treats the Arabs the way the Nazis treated the Jews" was admirably dealt with by Connor Cruise O'Brien in a recent article in The Observer. These allegations are part of a prevailing intellectual perversion according to which policies are to be viewed as either "just" or "unjust", and one may not, and should not, distinguish among different degrees of "injustice". This view can lead only to the conclusion that, with the questionable exceptions of some saints, all people and all governments are equally evil. What an idiotic conclusion this is! (Ed.)

S Kanitz
Bilu 68
Tel-Aviv
Israel

Tel-Aviv, 21st October, 1981

Madame Prime Minister,

It has been reported in the Jerusalem Post, 15th October 1981, that your Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington has compared Israel's treatment of Arabs in the West Bank to Nazi's treatment of Jews in occupied Europe.

I am writing this letter to protest to you to express my abhorrence at such dastardly statement by one of your Ministers.

I find it incomprehensible that such a statement can be made by a person in the Foreign Secretary's position, who should be properly acquainted with the facts.

I, for one, who lost his parents and spent a year in Nazi Concentration Camps, was shot at by Nazis and who in later years crisscrossed the West Bank and Gaza under Israeli Rule, I never found anything minutely comparable. The behaviour of the Israeli troops are no worse than the British troops in Northern Ireland, who have to carry out a thankless task.

To my knowledge nobody can accuse Israel of having extermination camps, and for somebody to compare Israel to the Nazis, he must be at best a despicable person or at worst sick in mind.

Yours faithfully,
S Kanitz

Mrs M Thatcher
10 Downing Street
Whitehall
London
England



Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01-

S Kanitz Esq
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Israel

Your reference

Our reference

Date

2 November 1981

Dear Mr. Kanitz,

Thank you for your letter of 21 October to the Prime Minister. I have been asked to reply.

I can categorically deny that Lord Carrington made the remarks quoted in The Jerusalem Post, or said anything similar.

Yours sincerely

G N Loten
Near East and North Africa
Department

REFLECTIONS ON THE WORLD GATHERING
OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS - JUNE 15-18, 1981

by
Lillian Silberstein

The author is the wife of Mike Silberstein who was at the Belsize Park Hostel and who now lives in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Over five thousand attended the World Gathering of Holocaust Survivors which was held in Jerusalem June 15th-18th 1981. The idea for this Gathering was conceived many years ago by a group of survivors. Two years ago Ernest Michel, a survivor of Auschwitz and Chairman of the World Gathering, together with dozens of other prominent Jewish leaders throughout the world, began planning and organising this unprecedented event. It was felt it could not have been held much sooner as wounds had to heal, survivors had to re-establish their lives and start new families. Yet, it could not be delayed as it might have been the last opportunity for many to participate - time was running out. And so - 36 years after their liberation, coincidentally double Chai, the time was ripe for the World Gathering to take place in Israel, the land created out of the ashes of the Holocaust.

We came to remember our Six Million, to pass on a legacy to our children and to future generations, to serve notice on the world, particularly to those who try to rewrite history and deny that the Holocaust ever happened, that we have witnesses who were there. We reaffirmed the continuity of Jewish life and the State of Israel. The Gathering was a celebration of survival and life.

The activities and programmes were planned with great sensitivity and dignity, and for me it was a memorable occasion that seems to gain more meaning as time passes.

My participation was as the wife of a survivor. When I met my husband, Mike, in 1955, we talked about his life in the Łódź Ghetto and in Auschwitz. I learned first hand about the terror, starvation and dehumanising conditions that he and our people in Europe had endured. I found it hard to conceive that anyone who had lived through six years of that nightmare could resume a normal life - could laugh, and love. Yet the desire to rebuild and to live meaningful lives was stronger than those who tried to steal life from them.

Our sons, now in their early twenties, became familiar with the words 'Holocaust' and 'Nazis' when they were quite young. They wanted to know about their grandparents, what it was like in the Łódź Ghetto and in Auschwitz. My husband always answered their questions in a way with which they could cope and understand. They read books and saw films on this period in our history. They participated in our Temple's High School course on the Holocaust which Lillie Zimet developed over six years ago and still teaches. One day last year our sons asked my husband to record his experiences during his war years so they could have a living document from their father to be passed on to their children. The survivors at the World Gathering also handed down a living testament for all future generations.

On the first day of the World Gathering we registered at Jerusalem's Convention Centre, the Binyanei HaOoma, which served as the central meeting place for information, services and workshops. It even had a computer hookup where survivors might locate old friends from among the participants. There was an air of excitement and anticipation as people searched for familiar faces, or someone from their home country in Poland, Germany, France. It seemed incredible to watch this scene actually taking place.

The following day we arrived at Yad Vashem, the symbolic resting place for our Six Million, where my husband, Mike, deposited an inscribed stone which he made in Poughkeepsie, in memory of his parents. This stone will be combined with thousands of others and built into a special monument to commemorate those who perished in the Holocaust.

We sang "The Hatikva" and, though Mike and I have sung it many times before, it had an electrifying effect on us that evening as we joined voices with over five thousand survivors and their children in front of the flag of Israel.

"My name is Ernest Michel", the Chairman of the World Gathering said to the largest number of survivors ever assembled in one place since their liberation. "If we succeed in stirring the conscience of mankind, if only that, then our Gathering will have been worthwhile". His concluding words echoed what so many were feeling. "Touched by the madness of our nightmare, we have tried to live normal lives, scarred by the acid of barbarous hatred, we've tried to give love to our children. Forgotten by a violent world, we tried to avoid despair. Despite all we have known, we affirm life despite the most ferocious efforts to steal it from us. While we shall never forget, we will not live with hate. We assert faith and we can hug our children".

After Michel's speech, we saw a sound and light show on a giant screen perched above the podium in the shape of a huge butterfly. As we watched scenes of starving children, deportations, burning synagogues, a chorus and soloist sang Yiddish songs reminiscent of Jewish life in Europe before 1939. Before our tears had a chance to dry, we were all standing and singing "The Partisan's" song which was written for and about the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and which became the anthem for all Jewish resistance and hope during the Holocaust years. Jews who kept their faith alive during this time through study and prayer had also demonstrated resistance to the Nazis. Mike and I have sung this song each year at the Jewish Community Centre when we attend the Memorial service commemorating this event. But that evening, again, joining with thousands in Israel, this song had a profound effect on us.

The next day, just before our bus entered Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, three children came aboard and presented all of us with red carnations. This kibbutz had been founded by the survivors of Buchenwald, and today is one of the most prosperous kibbutzim in Israel. Earlier this year 4800 photographs of Polish Jews taken between 1942-1944 were released to this Kibbutz. Though Mike could not identify anyone from his past, we looked up and recognised four familiar faces from Poughkeepsie - Helen and Kuba Beck and Miriam and Morris Krakinowski. Each of us did not know the other had chosen this kibbutz to visit. We embraced as we do on Friday after services - only this time we hugged a little harder.

After welcoming speeches and entertainment by young children, I met a young Roman Catholic Seminary student from Los Angeles. I asked what brought him to this World Gathering. He told me that Anne Frank's diary had a profound effect on him. He was deeply moved by her faith in humanity in spite of her suffering at the hands of the Nazis. This inspired him to learn more about the Holocaust and to speak out about it. In fact he had become a close friend of her father, Otto Frank, until the latter's death a few years ago.

We left for Jerusalem late that evening with feelings of warmth and pride in the achievements of Netzer Sereni. Netzer is a Hebrew word symbolising a branch sprouting from a tree trunk of a cut down tree, and I understood how deep are the roots of our people.

On the third day of the World Gathering we assembled in the plaza of the Knesset to remember over one million of our children who perished in the Holocaust while an unconcerned world turned deaf ears to their cries. Their only crime was being Jewish.

I thought about a story Mike told me, the same one repeated by his two sisters on separate occasions. One night in the Lodz Ghetto the family heard screams outside their apartment building. His mother looked through the window and saw babies being thrown onto trucks and brutally treated by the SS. Through her sobs, she said she would gladly give up her life if her children would be spared. Miraculously, all four children survived - she did not.

At the closing of this memorial service, while reciting the Kaddish, I thought about my own two sons back home - and then, I thought about myself. Would I be here today if my parents had not emigrated from Poland to America in 1928? It suddenly became clear to me that I, too, was a survivor. It was only through fate, a geographical twist of fate, that I was born in America and spared the agony of the European Jews. I thought about my two grandmothers, my aunts, uncles, cousins who had remained in Poland - none of whom survived, and I felt my being in Jerusalem was for them too.

We arrived early at the Western Wall for the closing ceremonies of this four day World Gathering. The sun was just setting and it cast golden shadows on the Wall. Mike and I went to our own section of the Kotel to pray and meditate. People started to trickle in and within a couple of hours, survivors, their children, Jerusalemites filled the Plaza in front of the Wall - 10,000 it was estimated - to pay tribute once more to the memory of our six million. Mike and I each lit a Jahrzeit candle, as did the others, and placed it on one of six tables set in front of the podium.

Prime Minister Begin pleaded with us to come to Israel with our children to help preserve our heritage. We heard Eli Wiesel express his profound gratitude to Israel for her very existence. "We thank you for being here when we need you", he said, "and we shall always need you".

A declaration was then read in six languages by survivors, and the response delivered by those of the second generation. The following are excerpts from these documents.

The Testament

In the name of dead parents and children.....we shall never let the sacred memory of our perished Six Million be scorned or erased.....We take this oath.....to be handed down from father to son, from mother to daughter, from generation to generationRemember what an indifferent world did to us....Remember the deeds of the Righteous Gentiles.....We shall also remember the miracle of the Jewish rebirth in the land of our ancestors, in the independent State of Israel.

The Response

We are the first generation born after the darkness. Through our parent's memories, words, silences, we are linked....We shall tell the world of the depths to which humanity can sink and the heights which were attained.....We pledge ourselves to the Jewish people... ..We are your children.

LETTER FROM ISRAEL

by
Marion Stern

The author is the wife of Meyer Stern who
was at Quare Mead Sanitorium

It's been an eventful year here one way and another. "Never a dull moment" is a saying that certainly applies to Israel.

There were a record number of weddings in Israel this year and several more grandchildren born. Jack Hecht's son celebrated his Barmitzvah in Israel and "The Chevra" were invited and helped make it a very merry occasion.

But of course the biggest event of the year, if you can call it that, was the "Peace for Galilee" operation. For me, personally, it was a very nerve-wracking summer with my son David in Lebanon from the first day. I found myself comparing June 1982 with June 1981. In June 1981 I was busy with preparations for the Reunion which was in Israel that year and busy with preparations for my daughter's wedding, and in June 1982 I was full of fear and anxiety for the safety of my son. Thank God he came through it OK but we grieve for those who didn't. He was supposed to finish his 3-year service in August but had to do an additional 3 months due to the situation. For the duration of the four and a half months he spent on the Lebanon/Syria border, he slept either in his tank or on top of it. He only got home once every 3 or 4 weeks and there was no contact in between. It was very hard for all those who were called upon to fight and it was very hard for their families at home waiting for news. It is even harder for all the bereaved families whose sons, fathers and husbands won't come home. We hope and pray that it will end well - that it will not have been in vain.

For Menachem Fraikorn it was also a hard summer but for a different reason. He underwent Open-Heart surgery in August. He had five by-passes done plus 2 more arteries unblocked. The operation was successful but it was "touch and go" for the first few days. He made a slow recovery and then discovered that the problem of blood circulation through his legs had not been solved. The hospital made more intensive tests and found the problem, and so, just two and a half months after he had this massive heart surgery, he was back on the operating table again for major surgery. This time they replaced with plastic tubes two damaged arteries leading from his stomach and now the blood should flow through his legs unhindered. I must say that he's got more guts than anyone I know and we all hope that he will now enjoy life to the full at least till he is 120!

March:	Wedding of Ofer, son of Zwi and Rina Brand
April:	Another Grand-daughter for Yochevet and Peretz Lev
May:	Another Grand-daughter for Dvora and Yisrael Shifron
June:	Wedding of Helik, son of Rachel and Mordcai Levinstein
	Wedding of Jack Glickson's son
August:	Wedding of Yuval, son of Yael and Naftalie Rosenzweig
	Wedding of Avraham, son of Pnina and David Hirshfeld
September:	Wedding of Semadar, daughter of Dvora and Yisrael Shifron
	Wedding of Oded, son of Stefa and Moshe Rosenberg

FROM THE SECOND GENERATION

The following is taken from the Chairman's address to the first Annual General Meeting of the Second Generation which took place on Sunday 9th January 1983:

Dear members and friends, I welcome and thank you all for attending this meeting.

I would like to say I am most honoured to chair this first annual general meeting of the 'Second Generation' which I now pronounce open.

My first words of thanks go to our guest speaker Mr. Yogi Mayer: Sir, we thank you for giving up your time this Sunday afternoon to be with us at our AGM and for agreeing to speak and both enlighten and educate us about your experiences and achievements. We also extend our thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Tribich for their hospitality in offering their home to host this meeting.

My report is in five parts, as follows:-

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| <u>Part one</u> | concerns who <u>we</u> , the Second Generation are |
| <u>Part two</u> | deals with what we as a group aim to achieve |
| <u>Part three</u> | describes how we work |
| <u>Part four</u> | is a statement of what we have achieved in the past seven or eight months |
| <u>Part five</u> | represents, what, in my view, are reasonable goals for us to pursue and achieve during the course of this year, 1983. |

1. Returning to part one - we the 'Second Generation' are the children of the survivors of the Holocaust. Our membership also includes husbands and wives.
2. Turning now to part two and what we as a group hope to achieve. The aim of the 'Second Generation' is :
"The propagation of the truth about, and the lessons of, the Holocaust".

This aim is achieved through four objectives:

- i) Education
- ii) Social
- iii) Fundraising
- iv) Welfare

Education

The Education Objective director is Jeffrey Tribich whom I thank for his work in this field. This has helped towards our own education and thus we can more correctly pass on the truths of Jewish history and the Holocaust. I must add that Mr Mayer's talk today is the first of a series of educational talks that are planned over the next few months.

It is my strong view that this objective is most important, especially as there is an ever growing flood of Nazi propaganda which is seeking to deny the tragedy of our parents and families. I maintain that it is our duty and conviction, as the 'Second Generation' and as the direct link to the survivors, to educate themselves and uphold the truth about the Holocaust and thus cast discredit upon current Nazi tactics which are purposely aimed to take maximum effect now and in years to come, when the survivors are seeking a rest from their tragedy.

I take the view that the lesson of the Holocaust is one Jewish people must never forget. It is our important role as the 'Second Generation' to ensure that the lessons are passed on to our children and our children's children.

I believe that only by educating our fellow Jews can we prevent a similar tragedy befalling our people in the future. History records our suffering as far back as the Pharaohs and I believe that only through the lessons of our history and our unity will we be led towards a secure and peaceful future.

Fund raising: The aim and mission of the 'Second Generation' is somewhat special. Because of this it was the decision of the Executive that we should be an autonomous, self-supporting group, as only in this way could we guarantee a total commitment to the fulfillment of our Aim, free from the influence of others. The group therefore raises funds through social events and annual subscriptions. It is my pleasure to report that this objective has more than met its target: we end our first year with a secure surplus and, further, are proud to announce that we have been able to donate the sum of £100 to a children's hospital in Israel. I must emphasise that our financial achievements in charitable donations would not have been possible without tight control of costs and generous gifts and subsidies from parents. I particularly thank our secretary Lorraine and Vogue Printers and our treasurer Marcus Richman who has donated much of his valuable time to our work. This has greatly contributed to the success of our first year.

Welfare: Our objective directors are Michelle Richman and Lyla Ward. I have previously mentioned that I regard the 'Second Generation' as One Big Family - and surely one important characteristic of a family is to care for one another. Basically the goal of this objective is that we do care and we do aim to help one another.

Social: Our Objective Director is my dear wife Gillian. It is most gratifying to report that the social committee has organised some highly successful events including a trip to Brighton, a Barbecue Party, a "Pizza and Video" evening and most recently a Guy Fawkes Party.

At a meeting earlier this year the group voted that this objective should receive precedence with respect to resources, both human and financial, and it is true that only by socialising can we be a real group. I like to view the 'Second Generation' as one family of friendship, and it is these factors of family and friendship that are essential if we are to attempt in any way to remedy the sad and tragic fact that we are members of unusually small families. Our social objective is a bid to mitigate the effects of this tragedy.

3. How we work as a group: the structure of our group is a typical, hierarchical one: Chairman and Vice-Chairman and a 'leader' for each of the four Objectives. These people in the main constitute our Executive committee, which meets once monthly to report the progress with respect of each objective. These monthly Executive meetings also effectively control our efforts and ensure that they are being channelled and co-ordinated efficiently towards the fulfilment of our Aim. This, basically, describes how the 'Second Generation' operates and, even if I say so myself, operates most effectively.

4. Part 4 of my report is a statement of what has been achieved by the Group since its formal organisation about eight months ago.

- i) We have achieved substantial growth in numbers since our committee was formed last summer.
- ii) We have achieved a tremendous commitment and motivation from our Executive which has resulted in our finishing our first year as a very strong and effective group.
- iii) Our financial situation last summer was, frankly, poor. However, less than one year later, we can boast a substantial surplus of funds which is currently growing and earning interest; this represents our position after our donations to charity.
- iv) Also, with regard to finance, I am pleased to report that our resources are sufficiently strong to guarantee the carrying out of our programme of expansion for 1983.

- v) Finally I would like to mention our most recent social event. The Guy Fawkes Party was so successful that attendance reached well over our maximum limit of 100 people and we were left in the embarrassing yet confident situation of having, finally, to withdraw further tickets from sale. I must congratulate the committee for this incredible achievement which is in total contrast to our earlier meetings this year.

5. I now turn to part five, the final section of my report.

This represents my view of our objectives for this year, 1983.

- i) To achieve continual growth in our membership within our existing geographical representation.
- ii) To set up a semi-autonomous group in the Manchester area, working towards the common Aim and objectives.
- iii) To establish firm and effective links with Second Generation groups in other countries, especially Israel and the U.S.A.

In conclusion I am proud to report that your organisation is in a strong, active position and fully charged to tackle the commitments of the coming year. This concludes my report of our Group's first year; we look forward to even greater successes in the second.

Howard Hamilton - Outgoing Chairman.

9th January, 1983.

THE 6TH LEONARD G MONTEFIORE LECTURE

THE FRENCH, THE GERMANS AND THE JEWS

IN WARTIME PARIS

by David Pryce-Jones

Delivered at the Stern Hall on 24th March 1982

Fleeing from Poland, one among tens of thousands, Gustav Herling found himself in the summer of 1940 in the Soviet Union, not in a refugee camp as he had hoped, but in prison. One June day, as he tells in his memoirs, A World Apart, a man was brought into the crowded cells, where red-eyed he burst out with the news that the Germans had captured Paris, and not a shot had been fired. The prisoners wept.

It was indeed as if hope were dying in the world. Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité, the great French inspirations to the universal heart and the universal mind, had come to this - Hitler's army, impassive and disciplined, was marching unchallenged past the Arc de Triomphe and down the Champs Elysées. So might was right, and there would be no more justice. This was not a conquest like any other between comparable states. Expressed in political and historical terms, an advanced industrial democracy had been matched for the first time against a totalitarian state. A verdict of an absolutely humiliating kind had been given against the democracy.

The question was then, and is now: was a democracy such as France a social organisation suitable only to the nineteenth century in which it had been evolved? If so, this was a momentous turning-point, and a quite new concept of progress would be required. The Mass-Age had begun. Stalin, for one, certainly concluded so. The messages of congratulation which he conveyed to Hitler on the capture of Paris were genuine. In the logic of the Hitler-Stalin pact, Nazism and Communism were two halves of an arch, theoretically in tension, actually mutually supportive in crushing societies built upon respect for the individual.

The disintegration of France has been subsequently analysed in a variety of perspectives, political, military, institutional, and all of them contain their element of truth. From them, a generalisation emerges: in all walks of life Frenchmen at the outbreak of war had been ignorant of the real nature of totalitarianism, and specifically, what the Thousand Year Reich implied for them. Hitler's threat to the French way of life had been represented as a repeat of Bismarck's threat, of Kaiser Wilhelms threat.

The Boches were always the same; the past remained the guide to the future. By the time this fundamental misconception was apparent, it was too late for remedy.

Realisation of the leadership's inadequacy in the crisis of June 1940 was at once translated into general panic, into a military and civilian rout. The government, and with it official Paris, packed up at the approach of the German army, and fled southwards during the night of June 10. Following after them, three million of the five million inhabitants of the city and the surrounding Seine department took to the roads in an uncontrollable exodus. According to some estimates, forty thousand civilians may have died, or in other words the casualties were equivalent to perhaps as many as half the number of soldiers killed in the actual fighting. Physical abandonment of home brought with it unprecedented abandonment of spiritual values, sometimes of civilised behaviour altogether. Here, some nurses about to evacuate their hospital, administered lethal injections to patients who could not be moved; there, a brave tank commander, preparing to defend a bridge across the Loire, was killed by the local inhabitants in the hope of propitiating the incoming Germans. For weeks afterwards, newspapers carried advertisements for babies who had been lost, or found without means of identification.

The distinguished historian Henri Michel remarks upon a profound desire in the population at the time not to experience the horror of war. Goebbels's Ministry of Propaganda sensed as much, putting up throughout the occupied zone a poster showing a child cradling safely in the arms of a smiling and obviously aryan German soldier. This projection of childish dependency as the basis of the new relation of the conquered to their conquerors proved a clever psychological stroke. The caption rubbed in the point, "Abandoned people, have confidence in the German soldier."

In a matter of weeks, dependency was complete. France was where Hitler wanted it; two fifths of the country under direct military rule, Alsace and Lorraine governed by gauleiters for the Reich, the eighty year old Marshal Pétain head of the government in the southern remainder of the country, the so-called Vichy Zone, declaring that he was entering upon the course of collaboration. On October 24 Hitler and Petain met, and photographs of the two men shaking hands appeared everywhere.

The prewar Third Republic had simply been turned inside out like an old coat, and the New Order fitted straight into it. Of course the overwhelming sensation was relief. By the autumn Paris was superficially itself once more; the theatres had re-opened, and the schools, the Bourse, the museums and offices and factories. Unemployment was temporary. Policemen were back on duty. Over the Assemblée Nationale, however, converted to German administrative offices, floated a banner "Deutschland siegt an allen Fronten." And still not a shot had been fired. The military governor, the Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich, reported to Berlin such incidents as random cutting of telephone wires, brawls in bars and angry exchanges about women, but nothing which he considered to be outright sabotage. Maintenance of discipline among the German garrison in so pleasure-loving and lax a city exercised him more than potential disobedience among the French. Only on November 11 1940, some students paraded in commemoration of the previous, and quite different, Armistice Day of 1918. Over a hundred of them were arrested. During the four years in which Paris was occupied, this was the one and only public demonstration of its kind. Rarely in its history has Paris been so little turbulent as when it lay at Hitler's mercy. During the first eighteen months of the occupation, no Germans were purposely killed by anyone French, and one single Frenchman was wrongly accused of jostling Germans on the street, and summarily shot.

What the French role in Europe had been, and what it ought to be over the coming thousand years, was frequently and closely discussed in Hitler's circle. It was agreed in principle that the standing and influence of this hereditary enemy had to be eradicated once and for all. What distinguished Hitler from his predecessors Bismarck and Kaiser Wilhelms, was that satisfaction of national claims could never be sufficient. Nazi ends were the permanent and irreversible aggrandisement of power for its own totalitarian sake, and the practice of racialism. French Jews were suspected of having played a particularly powerful part in building up their society, and to have been successful at assimilation, which in the context meant sinister concealment. Significantly, early S.S. estimates put the Jewish population in France at 800,000 or more, at least twice the actual numbers. The resources of France and its labour force primarily attracted Hitler and his associates.

Profitable exploitation notwithstanding, Goering hoped that the French would remain perpetual providers of food and wines, the good things of life. Goebbels preferred to represent them as a nation of couturiers. Rosenberg believed that the French had invented class warfare with the 1789 revolution, and they would have to be made to put the clock back. When indulging his favourite sentimentality that he was an artist by nature, Hitler found occasion to patronise French architects and town-planning, but that was all. The eyes of the French would pop out of their heads, Goebbels one day reported, if they knew what plans Hitler really had for them.

Rather than just let their eyes pop out of their heads, of course, they might have resisted. Until June 1940 the concept of Frenchmen collaborating most willingly in turning over their country's resources of labour and raw material to Germany would have been unimaginable. Yet the blitzkrieg and then the immediate swift return to a new order as part of Hitler's Europe opened the way to ideas and practices which until then had been abhorrent and marginal.

What happened in France during the early part of the occupation illustrates that sleight-of-mind which so fascinated George Orwell, whereby people under totalitarian control rationalise and justify what they are being forced to do, when they would rebel if asked to do the same thing in a society with the usual democratic constraints. To adapt Orwell's imagery, there had been a Two Minute Hate, after which, and by means of which, the dreaded enemy had been transposed into the benevolent saviour and partner. The process was well understood by the German authorities. Their soldierly performance was allowed to speak for itself, and now the population at large, through the mouthpiece of the Vichy government, was invited to consider what sort of favour could be done, what gratitude earned, in order for France to plead for generous treatment in the peace conference to which Hitler was looking forward with confidence.

So procedures and policies which the Germans knew to be exploitation pure and simple were presented by Vichy for general acceptance on the grounds that French self-interest was being served. The deception involved is fully illustrated in the single detail that France was ordered to pay for the costs of the German occupation a daily sum of 400 million francs - in other words, financing its own spoliation. In the deception lay the human desire to avoid some undefined great sacrifice by making a series of smaller concrete sacrifices.

Such had been the logic of pre-war appeasement as well, whereby from a position of comparative strength in 1938 Czechoslovakia had been delivered to Hitler for fear of something even worse happening.

The Vichy regime's extension of appeasement, from a truncated zone in which it was best tolerated with cynicism by its overlords, proved a mechanism for inflicting injuries upon itself. That this could ever be defended as a political process was a measure of illusion about the nature of Nazism even in the face of experience. Between sixty and a hundred percent of the entire French agricultural and industrial production was diverted to Germany; two million labourers were compulsorily sent to Germany. Confiscations, chicaneries and frauds, controls, official purchasing agencies which were concealed cartels, black markets connived at by the German authorities, bled the country. As it turned out, the Germans used every illegality and violence to enrich themselves - the very thing which they were trying to accuse the Jews of doing.

A number of French Nazis declared themselves unequivocally to be on the winning side, as they saw it. Such men came from all levels of society; some were sincere, some were dupes, some were gangsters and some were fools. Three or four hundred thousand Frenchmen enrolled in German military organisations, including the Waffen S.S., or as French gestapistes, agents in German pay, and as members of such fascist movements as the P.P.F., the Parti Populaire Francais, run by the ex-communist Jacques Doriot, or the rival R.N.P., the Rassemblement National Populaire, run by the ex-socialist Marcel Déat. The danger of these people derived from their mass-identification with Hitlerism. The rest of society, the majority whose motivations were too complex for generalisation, found in practice that choices had been made for them - choices which also proved indispensable to Nazism as often as not. Conscientious bureaucrats in the administration, for instance, had been converted into traitors, whether they liked it or not, by Vichy's collaboration. Between eight and nine million Frenchmen in one way or another worked directly for the Germans, building the Atlantic defences with military roads and blockhouses and pens for U-boats, or in factories producing aircraft and armaments and vital components for the Nazi war-machine, or growing food for Germany.

Collaboration, then, facilitated rather than mitigated Nazism. A number of studies have shown this to be the case, and strikingly so where persecution of Jews was concerned. Vichy France and the Jews, by Robert O. Paxton and Michael R. Marrus, concludes beyond all possible doubt that collaboration did not ward off the French contribution to the holocaust, but on the contrary made certain of it.

Before 1940, there were several thousand anti-semites who would have practised racialism if offered the opportunity. They belonged to fringe associations of their own. Some of them were in touch with anti-Jewish pressure groups operated out of Erfurt by Julius Streicher whom they liked to imitate, and they had attended occasions such as the annual Nuremburg rallies. But even the extremists among them could hardly have visualised the public remaining indifferent to officially-sanctioned persecution of Jews.

Collaboration brought these anti-semites to the fore. Moral checks had been removed at a stroke. Since the German intention to persecute had already been evident for some years before the war, Jews were to that extent hostages to fortune. Now, according to the Vichy attitude, the concrete sacrifice of Jews was acceptable, in the expectation of receiving compensatory concessions in some other sphere. One or two Vichy ministers, notably Raphael Alibert the minister of Justice, and Peyrouton, the minister of the Interior were anti-semites by conviction, and urged it upon their colleagues. Petain had not previously had occasion to give the Jewish question much thought. His feelings were probably expressed in a remark of his at that time, "A Jew is never responsible for his origins but a man is a free-mason by choice." Laval, his deputy, made no bones about the fact that he could see the elements of an advantageous bargain or deal in the German anxiety to lay hands on the Jews. The effect of the Two-Minute Hate, then, to continue Orwell's image for the way France had been transformed, was to make the Jewish question an essential test of collaboration. Put another way, democracy had been an essential factor in the previous safety of Jews.

By 1940 there were perhaps 350,000 Jews in France, of whom half were French citizens by birth. Numbers were disputed but during the Twenties and Thirties, when comparatively liberal immigration laws applied, as many as 150,000 Jewish immigrants may have reached France, though a proportion would then have moved on further. One authority gives the figure of 55,000 Jews entering France in the decade after 1933.

Be the statistics as they may, this was the very first group of people against whom Vichy moved. The compulsion to do so came entirely from within, as an integral step in accomodating to the Germans.

The Germans themselves had not yet begun anti-Jewish measures in the occupied zone, where paradoxically they even had to restrain P.P.F. youths from attacking Jewish shops. The Germans had put no pressure at all upon Vichy to begin organised anti-semitism. Persecution of Jews was therefore a matter of voluntary propitiation of Hitlerism, an early offering of goodwill, one of those favours which it was hoped would be one day recompensed.

Between August 1940 and March 1941, previous legislation was repealed and the French equivalent of the Nuremberg laws was passed. Jews were excluded from the public service, and allotted a secondary position under the law. Numerous further restrictions were imposed in order to harass them. What in Germany had taken five years, in France was achieved within eight months, by means of seventeen laws and twenty three decrees - here was the main administrative thrust from Vichy during the opening stage of the German occupation, never mind what other problems and political considerations had more realistically to be faced. By March 1941 a Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives, the CGQJ, had been set up, with at its head an anti-semitic of long-standing, Xavier Vallat. A war veteran, Vallat did not care for the Germans, and was to a considerable extent motivated by the sentiment that national honour required him to show the Germans how these things were done. Special anti-Jewish police forces were recruited and placed at his disposal, with powers of entry and arrest.

One step behind Vichy, quite separately, the parallel apparatus of the planned persecution was installed in the occupied zone, in conformity with Hitler's intentions. At the end of September 1940, a member of the S.S. Hauptsturmführer Dannecker, arrived in Paris. He was only twenty seven, and even to Vallat the man's anti-semitism seemed "frenzied." His superior in Berlin was Eichmann, who was directly responsible in turn to Himmler for running the anti-Jewish department within the Nazi police complex, the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, or R.S.H.A. In the Paris offices, Dannecker was in charge of a section of not more than thirty men. The cooperation and goodwill of the French authorities were therefore indispensable to him.

Addressing himself to the Préfecture de Police in Paris, Dannecker arranged to liaise with the special new anti-Jewish police squads. Soon he was to be reporting back to Berlin, "The French inspectors formed and instructed in collaboration with our section for Jewish affairs today constituted an elite body, as well as training cadres for Frenchmen to be drafted in the future to the anti-Jewish police."

No obstacles were put in the way. On behalf of Dannecker, the French police in October ordered a census of the Jews. Everyone Jewish was obliged to register in alphabetical order at police stations, providing details of their profession, nationality, and domicile. Henri Bergson's reply had a resonance all its own: "Academic. Philosopher. Nobel Prize Winner. Jew." The results of the census were kept by a civil servant by the name of André Tullard, and were therefore known as the "Tullard dossiers", but more properly they were death files. (After the war, incidentally, Tullard, like so many others, was considered to have merely done his bureaucratic duty; he rose to the top of his profession, and eventually died loaded with honours.)

Looting of pictures and works of art from Jewish owners had begun the moment the German army had arrived. Otto Abetz, for example, arriving at the German embassy to take up his appointment as ambassador, spent the opening weeks of the occupation sorting out and crating up for despatch the choicest collector's items, destined for German museums, for Gering, and even for Hitler personally. In October, with the census-taking, this plundering was placed on a more systematic footing. Owners of Jewish businesses, from the largest industrial enterprises down to small workshops, were obliged to register. Instructions to the Militärbefehlshaber were "to suppress Jewish influence in the French economy." Whatever served or supplied the war-machine was expropriated. Numerous companies were deviously transferred into German ownership. 11,000 buildings owned by Jews, and 27,000 businesses were sequestered on behalf of French "commissaires-gérants" or managers approved by the occupation authorities. In many cases they acquired title and full rights. Indeed these particular war-profiteers formed an association to lobby for security or ownership in the event of the dispossessed Jews one day returning to claim what was theirs, Vichy was anxious in case this transfer of wealth created lost opportunities, and Germans enriched themselves where Frenchmen might have done. Similar measures, often justified as being in defence of French interests, were therefore undertaken in the unoccupied zone through the C.G.Q.J. One of the reasons for Vallat's downfall in 1942 was the corruption of his inspectors, too frequently caught lining their pockets with money stolen directly from Jews.

Frenchmen were subsidised by Dannecker to launch a variety of anti-semitic institutions, which served not only to obscure S.S. purposes but also to heighten the impression that the French could give a lead when it came to attacking the Jews.

Quite separate from the Vichy C.G.Q.J., an Institut des Questions Juives was founded in Paris on S.S. money, under the chairmanship of Capitaine Paul Sézille, a former colonial officer. Its function was to uncover all and any Jewish elements, wherever they might be, and publicise them, as though spontaneously. Nothing was too small to escape the notice of this glorified and paranoid police informer. In a letter dated July 16, 1942, or a year or so after his Institut had come into existence, Sézille was writing to an official at the German Embassy to explain that a subsidiary "Friends of the Institut" had been formed, containing 31,287 vigilantes. Among other organisations promoted by Dannecker and Sézille was the Association of Anti-Jewish Journalists, which numbered 3,000 members.

By August 1941, various concentration camps had been prepared, of which the most central was Drancy, in an uncompleted housing-estate close to Le Bourget with its airport and railway station. The camps Drancy included, were staffed and administered by French police, under instruction from Dannecker.

The translation into actuality of these carefully conceived facilities for persecution came with the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. The expediency of the 1939 pact was laid aside. Taken unawares, Stalin appealed for help from every quarter, thus dispensing Communists everywhere from the earlier obligation to collaborate. The first shots were now fired at Germans in Paris, by Communists, some of whom were also Jews. The Militärbefehlshaber thereupon imposed a collective fine of a billion francs upon the Jewish community, and arrested and sent to Drancy several hundred of the more prominent Jewish personalities. Far from being held as hostages, on March 27 1942 these were the first French Jews to be deported to Auschwitz.

To simulate a favourable climate for operations, the S.D. stage-managed a Paris version of the Kristallnacht. On the night of October 2 1941, squads of hired French Nazis were provided with explosives, with which they blew up seven synagogues. This was intended to signal widespread resentment by the Parisians of the Jews living among them, and to be followed by massive demonstrations on the part of the public. Anti-semitism, it was hoped, would look popular. In fact, the subterfuge was so transparent that it set the Militärbefehlshaber and the Nazi Party at loggerheads. This power struggle, for such it essentially was, remained unresolved until May 1942, when General Carl Oberg was appointed to Paris, with the title of Höherer S.S. und Polizei Führer.

Oberg was a personal friend of Himmler's. He had come from murdering Jews in Poland, notably at Radom.

Xavier Vallat had been curtly informed that Jews were now to be deported from France, and that his C.G.Q.J. was to be available to carry through necessary measures in conjunction with the S.S. and the S.D. Vallat's response was considered insufficiently enthusiastic. He preferred anti-semitism with a French accent, and on these quasi-nationalistic competitive grounds he hesitated. Impatiently the Germans took the occasion to insist that he was replaced by one of their paid agents, Darquier de Pellepoix, a man with a record of anti-semitic agitation. At the moment of their choosing, the Germans had simply incorporated Vichy's parallel mechanism of persecution. So much for the defence of French interests through collaboration.

On May 5 1942, a large gathering took place in the Ritz Hotel in Paris, at which Heydrich, then head of the Sicherheitsdienst, introduced Oberg to the ranking S.D. and S.S. officers in France, as well as to selected senior personnel from the staff of the Militärbefehlshaber. Heydrich explained to them what had been decided a few months previously at the Wannsee Conference. He then described in detail how the policy of mass-murder was developing in Eastern Europe, and what part in it would be expected of the German administration and the Vichy regime. Urgency was impressed upon his listeners; the war did not allow them to be leisurely; the Jews were to be deported and killed by the end of the year.

To clarify how this was to be done, Heydrich had a further meeting with the Prefect of Police in Paris, René Bousquet. In order to suppress resistance and deport Jews for the "Final Solution", Heydrich demanded that the regular French police forces should be subordinated directly to Oberg. A precedent for such a step existed in Belgium. A witness of this encounter was Fernand de Brinon, the delegate-general of the Vichy government in Paris, and the most outright of collaborators. He wrote, "Heydrich must have had some sort of soft spot for Bousquet, who appeared to him full of goodwill, affirming his wish to collaborate with the German authorities in order to struggle against Communism. Bousquet professed, in words at least, a great admiration for the courage of the S.S." The French police, as Bousquet and Heydrich arranged in the event, would do what was required, but there would not be a joint police bureaucracy to formalise their mutual understanding. Such conduct painfully reveals the expedients to which the Vichy regime was driven in order to screen ugly reality.

After the war, Bousquet was condemned for collaboration and simultaneously reprieved and decorated for resistance - a double-faced judgement characteristic of the time.

On May 29, only three weeks or so after the Heydrich-Bousquet accord, German preliminaries were finalised with the decree that Jews would have to wear a yellow star on their clothing, as in Poland and Germany itself. This symbol, the German authorities believed, would segregate and alienate Jews from the French. Eichmann himself now arrived in Paris to activate deportation.

The French government was provided with summary demands for the delivery of Jews according to German requirements. Some prevarication took place on the part of Laval, when he sought to draw distinctions between Jews who were French-born, and therefore full citizens of the state, and those who were foreign born, now deprived of legal rights of any kind. His hesitations were insincere. In the perspective of Vichy, the Jews had value only in that the Germans seemed to want to have them so badly. Not even time was gained.

The first mass arrest, known as la Grande Rafle, took place on the night of July 16, and lasted for twenty four hours. Five Paris arrondissements were sealed off, disrupting the life of much of the city. From Tullard's files 27,388 names had been selected, though about half of these managed to avoid arrest, because absent or in hiding. Nearly 900 teams of French gendarmes the familiar blue-uniformed men, were assisted by bands of P.P.F. youths. Fifty buses, the familiar green-and-white buses, were requisitioned from the Compagnie des Transports. So it came about that what the S.D. had instigated was performed entirely by the French themselves. No German was observed to be playing a part.

From that moment until the liberation of Paris at the end of August 1944, transports left Drancy at regular intervals. At every step, gendarmes continued to do exactly what was demanded of them. There are reports of by-standers applauding, and there are reports of by-standers weeping, but no recorded instance of interference, or even active protest. There are also reports of gendarmes overcome by emotion, but no authenticated instance of a single one who preferred to resign rather than be so degraded.

Late in 1943, by which time Dannecker was away in Bulgaria and had been replaced by another Hauptsturmfuhrer, Roethke, and by which time also the worst had already happened, the S.D. formally took over the running of Drancy, though still employing French gendarmes there.

Le Mémorial de la Déportation des Juifs de France compiled name by name by Serge Klarsfeld from German records of the transports, has established that eighty five convoys left Drancy containing 75,721 Jews of whom about one third were French-born. This is a minimum number. As Klarsfeld emphasises, there were deportations incompletely recorded from the Vichy zone, as well as the shooting of hostages and other atrocities for which he has been unable to provide named victims.

What did the French people make of it? That Jews were being plundered and arrested with every brutality, and then deported to the East, was common knowledge. Crowds would gather to watch daily scenes, not only the dramas of Drancy, but for instance the conveying of Jews under armed guard to the huge Lévitane department store in the centre of Paris. Once Jewish-owned, this place had been sequestered and was used as a depot where clothes and furnishings from Jewish homes were sorted out and packed up to be despatched to Germany. Three days after la Grande Rafle, Claude Mauriac, son of the famous novelist, was seeing his mother off at the Gare d'Austerlitz. "A long goods train was ringed with police in impressive strength, and at the narrow openings of the cattle trucks were pressed the white faces of children. That was what I saw yesterday morning," and he added in his diary, "Maman was shattered by the sight." and no doubt were the thousands of other travellers at the station that day.

What would happen in the East was not known. Jews themselves were uncertain about their fate upon leaving French soil. One widely accepted deception, spread by the Germans, was that a magnified ghetto was being created in the vicinity of Lublin, where Jews would work the land. This was implausible, to say the least, if only because of the implied wastage of skills. There was also an under-current of persistent rumour that Jews were being systematically killed. The Likelihood, though it is beyond proving, is that this information filtered down from the upper echelons of the German administration, from those men who had listened to Heydrich's briefing and discussed it afterwards in ever-widening circles. And the truth also sounded implausible, though validated by the inhumanity of any and every contact with the Germans.

At the individual level, decent impulses often prevailed when French men and women saw others worse off than themselves. It may be reasonably asserted that some thousands more Jews might have gone to their deaths had it not been for papers counterfeited for them, false identities and alibis provided, and accommodation offered in farms, schools, monasteries, cellars and attics - France, like all countries under Nazi occupation had its share of brave and desperate people.

The Catholic church was divided in its response. As a rule, the higher prelates advocated passivity or outright collaboration, some of them going so far as to draw attention to anti-semitic utterances dating back to the earliest historic times of the Papacy. On the other hand, Monseigneur Salièges, Archbishop of Toulouse, on August 23 1942 gave instructions that a text of his be read aloud in the churches of his diocese, calling for an act of conscience in regard to the Jews. "Ils font partie du genre humain" - they are part of humankind - was one of the tragic sentences which he found himself reduced to uttering. Laval sent for the Papal Nuncio in order to protest against this text.

At about the same moment, Paster Boegner, head of the Protestant community, sought an interview with Laval, to plead for Jewish children in particular, because they were being separated from their parents. He returned to report "Je lui parlais de massacres; il me répondait jardinage" - I was speaking about massacres, he answered me with chat of gardening. Laval by then had had a number of meetings with Oberg and other leading S.S. and S.D. officers, and certainly was fobbing off his importunate visitor.

Outright resistance naturally included Jews: there were some exclusively Jewish groups. The number of Jews summarily executed in France, either as hostages or as armed militants captured by the Germans, is 1,100, according to Serge Klarsfeld. Once again, he stresses that this is the minimum figure which can be established.

The more widespread response, however, was either to shelter under Vichy policy and turn a blind eye to what was happening, or to encourage in its ways which were sometimes furtive and anonymous, sometimes active and open. The idea that Jews might indeed be going to their death in the East was circulated with approval in print, as in this article on November 19 1942 - it is hard to believe that its author, Maurice de Séré, had not been informed of Heydrich's briefing.

Mais maintenant, juif, que les hommes qui te combattent a mort ont pénétré dans ton fief, cette demi-France que tu avais cru pouvoir barder en espérant réoccuper bientôt l'autre moitié, que vas-tu faire? Envahi par la terreur, tu sais quel est le sort qui t'attend. Tu t'enfuis dans les montagnes et tu te caches dans des coins secrets. Mais prends patience, juif, tu ne perds rien pour attendre et, tu le sais, ton sort est réglé, tu disparaîtras jusqu'au dernier de ta race.

(But now, Jew, the men who are hunting you to death have penetrated your kingdom, that demi-France which you thought you could carry off while hoping soon to recover the other half, and what are you going to do?

In the grip of terror, you know what fate awaits you. You flee to the mountains and you hide in secret corners. But be patient, Jew, you lose nothing by waiting, for as you know, your fate is sealed, and you will disappear down to the very last one of your race.)

Au Piloni, the weekly magazine in which this appeared, specialised in gutter racialism. No insinuation or prejudice was too vile for it. One of its earliest slogans immediately after the German entry into Paris, had been "The Jews must pay for the war or die." Its columns were always pointing the finger at Jews or crypto-Jews, insisting that penal measures be taken against them. Here, in short, was an organ for denunciation, one subsidised by the government, what is more, in that official advertisements were inserted in it. Sales were also high, probably at least 100,000, comparable to its German parallel, Der Stürmer.

On August 13 1942 Au Piloni was giving advice. "Numerous readers ask us to which organisation they should address themselves in order to point out the occult activities or frauds of the Jews. It is sufficient to post a letter or a simple signed note to the Haut-Commissariat aux Questions Juives, or failing that, to the offices of our paper for onward transmission." Signed letters obviously committed the writers. Not only Au Piloni but every paper carried its column aimed at tipping off the police. Je Suis Partout, which correctly proclaimed that it had gathered a team comprised of the leading Nazified intellectuals, expressed the sentiments of Au Piloni, but in better French. At the height of its wartime popularity, its circulation was an astonishing 300,000.

"J'irai le dire à la Kommandantur" was the title of an article by the poet Robert Desnos in the paper Aujourd'hui as early as September 1940 - Desnos himself was eventually deported and died in a German camp. It was in this sudden and growing practice of denunciation that the totalitarian state was proving the kind of power it exercised over the individual, corrupting private standards of civic behaviour and destroying solidarity. Desnos did not use such explicit language but his meaning was clear, and to stop denunciations he appealed to "the sense of dignity." In the well-known satirical novel Au Bon Beurre, by Jean Dutourd, published after the war, the married couple who are its protagonists think nothing of posting off an unsigned letter to the Kommandantur to give the address where an escaped prisoner of war can be picked up, a man who happens to be the son of a neighbour and a customer at their grocer's shop against whom they have a temporary grudge.

Even today, after the ceaseless weeding of evidence and the construction of alibis, thousands of these anonymous denunciations survive to bear witness to fear and jealousy. This was what moral collapse really looked like.

This letter to the C.G.Q.J. was on Ministry of Interior paper. "I have the honour to draw to your attention for whatever useful purpose it may serve, that an apartment at 57 bis, boulevard Rochechouart, belonging to the Jew Gresalmer, contains very fine furniture."

"I am a concierge in the rue Saulnier, Paris 9," ran another letter, "my owner is Jewish and I want to declare that in the building there is a practising synagogue."

Dr Laurent Viguiier was a full-time activist at Sézille's Institut des Questions Juives, and delighted in signing his name to letters for the Germans. "Since there is a decree to the effect that Jewish employees are forbidden to be in contact with the public, Madame S. must be stripped of her position."

Henri Amouroux, the historian, has collected scores of examples in his La Grande Histoire des Français sous l'occupation, in one chapter especially to which he has given the heading Le Cancer des Ames - Cancer of the Soul.

"In the rue Pierre-Demons, on the fourth floor, on the left of the storage room, the owners are very friendly with the Jews Blum. They are claiming that the furniture in store is theirs. The concierge is receiving rations in parcels to share. The concierge hates Marshal Pétain. You have only to make her talk." This is signed, "Someone in the neighbourhood."

A professor from Toulon writes to ask for the arrest of his wife's lover on the grounds that the man is Hungarian, a Jew and a communist.

A woman writes to denounce her husband's mistress. "This person, not satisfied with being Jewish, debauches the husbands of true Frenchwomen and you'd better make sure what she's living on. Defend women against these Jewish women and that will be your best propaganda and you will return a French husband to his wife."

A seventeen year old schoolboy offered his services to Sézille as an informer because another boy in school had said to him, "Some Jews are more French than you are."

An eighteen year old wrote to the German embassy to promote himself as a specialist in spotting Jews not wearing their yellow star.

Roethke, who in 1942 replaced Dannecker and took over Drancy, wrote a note on November 14 1943 requesting permission for a man called Bertrand to bear side-arms because "he has been threatened by Jews and others who are pro-Jewish. He has furnished me with excellent material against Jews and has shown himself to be unlimitedly anti-Jewish."

As for the motivation behind what was effectively murder through the agency of others, Henri Amouroux writes that those whose lives were a failure, for which they might not be responsible, were hoping to answer the envious question, "Why him, why not me?" There were of course simple rewards as well. Depending on local factors, denunciations of Jews might be recompensed with sums ranging between a hundred francs and three thousand francs.

Human nature no doubt remains constant down the ages, but which aspects of it will be expressed depends upon social organisation. When instituting its own brand of anti-semitic repression, Vichy may well have had confused motives to propitiate, to take the easy advantage, perhaps to keep the Jewish question in its hands, What it achieved was the condition legitimising persecution. It was characteristic of totalitarianism, of Nazism in particular, that the quite ordinary men and women who wrote those denunciations or worked for the C.G.Q.J. or the police, had been brought to conceive their contribution to genocide to be a matter of useful duty and service to the state.

Bousquet for one, knew it, for he is on record as telling Oberg, just prior to the Grande Rafle, that the fact that this man-hunt was to be undertaken by his men was "embarrassing for Paris." In other words, the connivance in murder was clearly perceived. At that time, the German authorities maintained three battalions of S.D. police in France, mustering less than 3,000 men. Of these, few were fluent French speakers or had any specialist knowledge of the country.

Their parade of power masked considerable helplessness. Oberg reported to Berlin that, politically speaking, he could do as he liked where deportation were concerned, but to be effective in practice he asked for a reinforcement of 250 men. He had to make do with exactly four. Manpower demands for the surveillance of frontiers, as well as for counter-resistance and security measures, and finally for the process of deportation, far exceeded capacity to meet them. As the war turned against Germany, these resources were stretched thinner still. In November 1942, in response to the Allied invasion of North Africa, the German army took over the Vichy zone, spreading the same police forces over twice as much territory. Increasingly the task of persecution fell upon French fascists.

In the circumstances, the deportation from France of Jews depended upon enough Frenchmen consenting to take part in it. The pretext to do so was provided by the Vichy regime. The few had assured the complicity of the many.

OBITUARIES

NORMAN FRIEDMAN

Norman Friedman, who died after a long illness, is mourned by his wife, two sons and daughter and by his many friends.

Before the war he lived in Zolunska Wola but spent the war years in the Łódź Ghetto, Auschwitz and in other camps in Germany. He came to England with the Windermere group and lived in the Bedford hostel for some time.

Norman was an active member of our Society and for a few years was a member of our Committee as well as a member of the Editorial Board. He was a serious minded person with a great love of knowledge and learning. His premature death is a sad loss. We extend our most sincere condolences to his wife Muriel and his family.

B.H.

ISSY POMERANTZ

Issy Pomerantz died on 6th January 1983 after a long illness.

He was born in Dzialoszyce and spent the war years in Plaszów, Skarzysko, Buchenwald and in other concentration camps in Germany. He came to England with the Windermere group and later lived in the Loughton and Belsize Park hostels. In 1948 he went clandestinely to Palestine where he joined the infant Israeli Air Force. After the War of Independence he came back to England and settled down to a married life. Issy was a quiet and likeable man, devoted to his family. As the Rabbi stated at the Funeral oration "it was difficult to get annoyed with Issy". All those who came in contact with him had a healthy respect for his decency and reticence. He was a loyal friend, whose charm will be sadly missed. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, son and daughter.

B.H.

JOHN CARLISLE (JASIEK KURTZ)

John Carlisle, known to most of us as Jan or Jasiek Kurtz, passed away on the 30th July 1982 in Saratoga Hospital (U.S.A.), struck down by cancer of the colon. Certainly one of the most colourful characters in our group of "Windermere Boys" John was very witty and extremely sensitive to any form of injustice. I got to know him well in the time we spent together in a hostel in Manchester, where he displayed a keen sense of chivalry and comradeship. After Manchester he came to London for a short time, where he was lucky to learn that his mother was alive and well in Berlin. He joined her there and eventually both emigrated to the U.S.A.,

where he volunteered for the army. John fought in Korea and on return settled down as a cab driver in New York, where he soon became a "personality" - well known for chivalrous behaviour, great wit and physical toughness. A brilliant chess player (of which prowess he was very proud) he sent me a card with a chart of his "moves" in a match he once played against the champion Fisher. His short story "A ten year old prisoner of the German Reich" was published some years ago in the U.S.A.

The streets of New York will be poorer for his absence and his passing is mourned by his heartbroken mother, friends and companions with whom he shared past misfortunes and Nazi persecution, who are now scattered all over the world. Friends, let us say a prayer for his soul.

Arthur Poznanski

MEMBERS' NEWS

SOCIAL LIST

Compiled by Kitty Dessau

October 81

Engagement of Steve, son of Mr. & Mrs. Mike Silberstein (USA)

January 82

Birth of 2nd grandchild (a girl) to Fay & Moniek Goldberg (USA).

Engagement of Aron, son of Pat & Icky Stein.

Wedding of Marilyn, daughter of Tauber & Myer Cornell.

February 82

Engagement of Lorraine (to Martin), daughter of Milly & Monty Graham.

Wedding of Chuni, son of Mr. Kahan, to Gitty, daughter of Sylvia & the late Mottel Litvin.

March 82

Wedding of Phillip, son of Fay & Moniek Goldberg (USA).

Barmitzvah of Danny, son of Sara & Jan Goldberger.

Wedding of Sharon & Martin (daughter of Beatrice & Leon Manders)

April 82

Birth of first grandchild (Samantha Jayne) to Gertie & Alf Wolreich.

May 82

Birth of daughter, (Hayley) to Karen & Barry, son of Anne & David Peterson.

Wedding of Hirshl & Esther, son of Goldie & Monty Tabacnik (Canada).

June 82

Stonesetting for Mark Ward.

July 82

Wedding of Caroline to Nigel, daughter of Shirley & Alf Huberman.

Barmitzvah of Helen, daughter of Milly & Monty Graham.

Engagement of Stephen to Susan, son of Vivien & Kopel Kendall.

Birth of 2nd grandchild, Eli Zeev, to Evelyn & Aron Zylberszac.

August 82

Wedding of Sharon, daughter of Beattie & Boruch Pollak.

Barmitzvah of Sammy, son of Maureen & Jack Hecht.

Barmitzvah of Michael, son of Arza & Ben Helfgott.

Wedding of Heln to Jacob, daughter of Carol & Frank Farkas.

Birth of 4th granchild (a girl) to Sala & Benny Newton.

September 82

Wedding of son of Edith & Myer Hochman (Canada).

Birth of 3rd grandchild (a boy, Leslie Andreas) for Fay & Moniek Goldberg. (Yet again!!!) (USA).

Wedding of Yvonne to Nickey, daughter of Sylvia & Johnny Gutman.

Birth of 1st grandchild, Robert Anthony, to Jeanette & Ziggy Shipper.

October 82

Birth of 2nd grandchild, Joshua, for Marie & Bob Obuchowski.

Engagement of Martin to Mandy, son of Gloria & Krulin Wilder.

Marriage of Yankele, son of Goldie and Monty Tabcznik.

November 82

Sad death of Norman Friedman after a long illness.

Birth of 3rd grandchild for Muriel, Timothy Nathan, to Stacey & Trevor Freidman.

Death of Carol Farkas' mother.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Martin Bandel passed his Chartered Accountancy finals (July 82).

Trevor Friedman qualified as a doctor.

Gary Sylberszac attained his Badge as a fully-fledged London Cabbie. (We think he is the youngest on record!!!)

Simon Wilder gained his B.A. (Hons) in August.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Sylvia & Johnny Gutman would like all their friends to know their new address: 150 Roding Lane South, Redbridge, Essex.
Telephone; 550 3763.

Abe Elkinbaum has moved to: 2865 Begonia Way. Cooper City.
Florida. 33026. USA.

Zvi Dagan has moved to: 9 Eilat. Afridar-Ashkelon. Israel.

January 83

Engagement of Gaynor, daughter of Jasmine & Michael Bandel.

Engagement of Lorraine, daughter of Jeannette & Zigi Shipper.

Engagement of Ivor, son of Marie & Bob Obuchowski.

Engagement of Deborah to Nigel Fish, daughter of Barbara & Jack Kiegan.

A third grandchild - a granddaughter - to Sylvia and John Gutman.

March 83

Mr & Mrs M Cornell celebrated their pearl wedding.

A grandson to the late Norman Friedman and his widow, Muriel.

Dr Ellis Friedman, son of the late Norman Friedman and his widow Muriel, has been appointed Senior Registrar in Community Medicine for the Manchester Area Health Authority.

The stone setting for Normal Friedman will take place at Bushey Cemetery at 11.15 a.m. on Sunday, September 18th, 1983
(see also Obituaries).

I would like to thank Evelyn Zylberszac for phoning me several times, and keeping me informed of events to be included in this diary, of which I would not have known otherwise.

Below we print two items concerning the Barmitzvah of the son of Maureen and Jacob Hecht which, as noted in Members' News, took place in Israel in August of last year. The first item is an extract from Jacob's contribution to the Erev Shabat service. The second item is reproduced from the Bulletin of the synagogue where the Barmitzvah took place.

Members may perhaps remember Jacob Hecht's short, moving article in the first issue of our Journal, an article which should be remembered in connection with his son's recent Barmitzvah. (Ed.)

For our family this day is the realization of a dream - to have Sammy's Barmitzvah here in Israel, surrounded by family and friends. The theme of Sammy's portion is 'Schmeetah' - Release - and some of the friends present tomorrow know exactly what 'Release' can mean. They were, like me, slaves in the concentration camps. My captors did not keep to the laws of Schmeetah. In those dark, dreadful days little did I dream that I would have a fine son like Sammy, let alone that we would be in Israel - the Promised Land.

Then in 1945, as we were forced by our captors out to the notorious death marches, the American Allies liberated us and that was the first part of our release.

Later I was taken to England from where I wrote to my brother in Israel, at a vague address. By a miracle the letter reached him. I then heard of my sister's survival and of the rest of the family in Israel. Our thanks go out again to your congregation for welcoming us, and to Sammy for making us feel so proud.

"ADAT SHALOM"

THE M'SORATI (CONSERVATIVE) CONGREGATION OF REHOVOT

P. O. Box 1301, Rehovat, Israel

"BARMITZVAHS"

The last of this series, Sammy Hecht, son of Jack and Maureen Hect of Edgeware, England, was Bar Mitzvah in mid-August. The Hechts have a large group of family and friends in Israel and in England, many of whom came over to partake of the "simchat mitzvah". Sammy really did his parents proud, having learned to read a full "aliyah" from the "parsha", as well as his "maftir" and "haftarah"!! With a really full house, and a warm feeling of participation, it was a lovely Shabbat. It was only later, at the reception, that we learned that Jack Hecht had lived through the Nazi Holocaust in Europe with many of the group of friends we met. They had stuck together through thick and thin, and had preserved and developed the strong bonds of friendship all through the years since liberation.

Again we were touched deeply by this particularly Jewish microcosm. This quite naturally put a completely different aspect to the "simcha", symbolizing, as it did, the survival values of Judaism, the tradition of many many generations.

We know how difficult it is to remain fully and consciously Jewish in the Diaspora, even under the best conditions. We also know what a struggle it is to remain a thinking, active, conscious Jew in Israel. We take pride in being part of the process of rapprochement, of "rediscovery" of the coming together of Jews with their heritage. The resumption of this combination is vital for the continued welfare and progress of Israel, as well as the Jewish nation in all its Diasporal dispersal.

PAST AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The 7th annual Leonard G Montefiore Lecture took place on Thursday, 17th February 1983 at 8.15 p.m. at the Stern Hall. The Lecture was delivered by Professor Walter Lacqueur on the topic: "Nazism - Fifty Years Later".

AUSCHWITZ EXHIBITION

The East London Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Bishop of Stepney, The Rt. Rever. J Thompson, sponsored an exhibition on Auschwitz which was held from 24th February to 31st March 1983 at St George-in-the-East Church, Cannon Street Road, London E1. The Exhibition was designed primarily for school children of whom some 15,000 visited the Exhibition, at which many of our Members acted as guides. The Exhibition seems to have been a great success, and we hope to publish an article on it.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 40th ANNIVERSARY OF THE WARSAW GHETTO RISING

A Commemoration of this tragic and heroic episode was held in Warsaw. A delegation from the UK - including Members of our Society - joined in this Commemoration under the auspices of The Board of Deputies of British Jews. We hope to publish an article on this event.

1983 REUNION

The Reunion to mark the 38th Anniversary of our Liberation will take place on:

Sunday, 8th May 1983

4.30 for 6 p.m.
at the PORCHESTER HALL
Porchester Road, London W2

For tickets please contact the Ticket Chairman Mick Zwirek
Tel: 01-550 9426.

Reunion Brochure

The Joint Chairmen for the brochure are:

HARRY BALSAM	906-1702
DAVID HERMAN	458-7959
HARRY SPIRO	203-4836
DAVID SOMMER(MANCHESTER)	061-773-5080

The brochure prices are:

GOLD PAGE	£100.00
SILVER PAGE	£ 75.00
FULL PAGE	£ 50.00
HALF PAGE	£ 35.00
QUARTER PAGE	£ 25.00
CHILDREN'S NAME	£ 2.00

'45 AID SOCIETY MANCHESTER

1981

September Fione Alterman daughter of Izek & Myra celebrated her 18th birthday
" Grandson born for Marie & Mendel Beale to their son Simon and his wife
October Sam & Hannah Gardner became grandparents again when their daughter Maralyn had a son
November Barmitvah of Daniel son of Myer and Lillian Zwicker
" Warren son of Marita and Maurice Golding celebrated his 21st birthday
" Eunice and Jerry Parker became grandparents for the first time.
December Johnathon son of Marita and Maurice Golding became engaged
" Marita and Maurice Golding celebrated their Silver Wedding
" Blanche and Sam Laskier celebrated their Silver Wedding.

1982

January Michael son of Alice & Joe Rubinstein became engaged
February Hynda & David Sommer celebrated their Silver Wedding
" Michael son of Marie and Martin Wertheim was married
" Edna & Charlie Igelman celebrated their Pearl Wedding
March Harvey son of Nat and Dorca Samson qualified as an Accountant
April Harvy son of Nat and Dorca Samson was married
June Sharon daughter of Lillian & Myer Zwicker was married
" Heather daughter of Marion and Jack Cygelman was married
" Eric Herish married
July Fione daughter of Itzek and Myra Alterman celebrated her engagement
" Adash and Zena Bulwa became grandparents on the birth of a baby boy to their daughter Susanne
August Michelle daughter of Myer and Lillian Zwicker was married
October Steven son of Louise and Herbert Elliott became engaged
" Rosalind daughter of Alice & Joe Rubinstein had a baby girl.
1983
February Steven son of Lillian & Myer Zwicker was barmitvahed
March Michael son of Alice & Joe Rubinstein was married
" Rosalind wife of Abraham Pawlowski tragically died
June Steven son of Louise and Herbert Elliott was married
" Johnathon son of Marita and Maurice Golding was married.