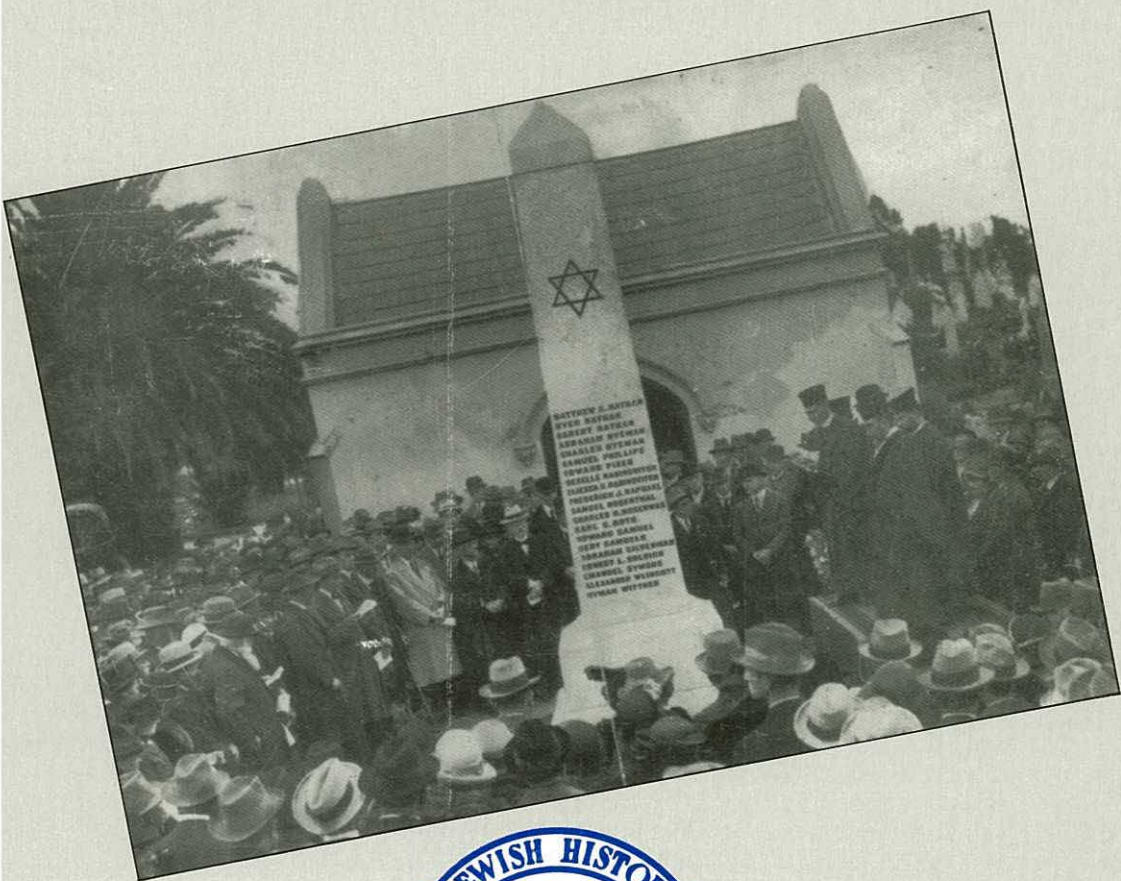


**JOURNAL OF THE
AUSTRALIAN JEWISH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



VOL. XII 1993

PART 1

THE JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY — VICTORIA INC.

The Australian Jewish Historical Society was founded in Sydney in August 1938. The Victorian Branch of the Society was founded in August 1954. Branches also exist in Canberra and in Western Australia.

The *Journal* of the Australian Jewish Historical Society has been published since 1939. From 1988, production of the *Journal* is being shared by the Victorian and New South Wales sections.

The Victorian-based issues of the *Journal* are edited and published by an Editorial Committee, whose members are:

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Mrs. Beverley Davis (Dip. Archives & Records) (Honorary Secretary).

Dr. Howard A. Freeman, B.D.Sc., L.D.S. (*ex-officio* as President of the Victorian Committee).

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A complete list of the Society's office-bearers is printed inside the back cover.

The Editor welcomes suggestions for articles and manuscripts by authors dealing with any aspect of the history of the Jewish people in Australia. The *Journal* is national in coverage and deals with the whole sweep of Australian Jewish history from 1788 to the contemporary period.

Manuscripts submitted for consideration for publication in the *Journal* should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of a page, and may be accompanied by illustrations. References should be in the form of endnotes rather than footnotes. No payment can be offered for any contribution.

Communications regarding publication should be sent either to the Editor, Professor W. D. Rubinstein, School of Social Sciences, Deakin University, Victoria 3217, or to the Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Beverley Davis, P.O. Box 255, Camberwell 3124, from whom information about membership in the Society and its other activities and resources may also be obtained.

The Australian Jewish Historical Society — Victoria Inc., gratefully acknowledges the generous contribution towards the publication costs of this *Journal* by the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs, Melbourne, Australia, and its Publication Advisory Committee: Isi J. Leibler, AO, CBE, D.Litt. (Chairman), and Professor Louis Waller, AO.

Cover: Standing alongside Rabbis Brodie and Abrahams, Rev. Jacob Danglow leads prayers at the unveiling and consecration of the memorial to the Victorian Jews who fell in World War One, Melbourne General Cemetery, Carlton (14 December 1924), the site of regular VAJEX ceremonies. (See article by Walter Jona.) (Courtesy Sol Rose & Walter Jona)

THE JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

November 1993

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Part 1

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Opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Society.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Following discussion with the Sydney Committee, we have agreed that this issue will begin Volume XII of the *Journal*. We have begun a new Volume to facilitate the binding and indexing to Volume XI, which has itself grown to unprecedented length in record time.

The extraordinary amount of material in our *Journal* reflects the fact that the last issue produced by the Victorian Committee, in November 1992, was a special one consisting of Rabbi Porush's memoirs and did not contain any other material. Its size reflects as well the continuing surge of interest in Australian Jewish history, as well as, we believe, the fact that the attractiveness and regular production schedule of the *Journal* in its present format spurs historians on to greater efforts.

Volume XII No. 1 begins with three articles of considerable interest to the study of Jews in colonial Australia. Naomi Cream's very important article rewrites the history books, suggesting that the previously unknown Isaac Leo Lyon was the first free Jewish migrant to these shores. Muriel Hart Chesler spells out the early history of the Hart family, demonstrating the importance of viewing the British Empire as a unit of Jewish history. The author's father was born in Melbourne, while Rabbi Dr. John Levi, a member of our Editorial Committee, is, it would seem, descended from Rabbi Aaron Hart, who figures prominently in her article. Graham Pont, the Sydney musicologist, provides much new information on the life of Isaac Nathan, the 'father of Australian music', based upon intensive research in England and Australia towards a new biography he is writing.

Peter Love, the well-known Labor historian, examines the anti-Semitic phase of the career of Frank Anstey, the Victorian politician. Labor anti-Semitism was a real but unpleasant facet of the Australian Left early in this century, targeting Jewish (and non-Jewish) 'finance capital'.

Two articles by Eliyahu Honig focus on early Zionism and Palestinian migrants here, while Linda Joseph looks at a previously neglected pioneer rabbi of Liberal Judaism in Melbourne. The difficult years of the 1930s are surveyed in three articles. John Dally examines an important literary movement of the time with anti-Semitic overtones, while Hilary L. Rubinstein considers the other side of the coin, a notable Australian philo-Semite. The editor (W.D. Rubinstein) examines the attitudes of both the Australian and Jewish press to the earliest Nazi anti-Semitism.

Jewish Carlton, today viewed with so much nostalgia, has received surprisingly little coverage by historians. This is rectified in two articles as Malcolm J. Turnbull examines the history of the largest synagogue in the area, and Miriam Kuna recalls what living in Jewish Carlton was actually like.

Two articles deal with the period of World War Two. Rodney Goultman's article shows how the federal government regarded the Zionist Revisionist movement as a potential security threat, while Paul R. Bartrop recounts the previously untold story of wartime alien internees from Singapore. Walter Jona adds a third article with a military theme, examining the important history of the Victorian Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, the major Jewish veterans' body.

Three contributions concern the post-war Jewish Left, which has lately been the subject of much historical analysis. Two, by Lou Jedwab and Norman Rothfield, are autobiographical, while the article by Philip Mendes examines the outlook of

Jewish students during the 1970s. It should be unnecessary to add that this *Journal* is open to contributors situated at every point on the Jewish spectrum — as the articles of, among others, Eliyahu Honig and Walter Jona show — and that the *Journal* has no official viewpoint on any controversial event. (Norman Rothfield's article was written before the signing of the recent treaty between Israel and the PLO.)

Finally, the editor briefly analyses the number of Jews in the most recent census and the important recent survey of Melbourne Jewish life released by the Welfare Society, while Lorraine Freeman concludes this issue with her popular feature, '100 Years Ago'.

This volume also contains reviews of fifteen recent books, an obituary of Walter Lippmann, and other material. To employ the cliché, this issue is certain to contain something for everyone. It remains for me to express, yet again, the profound debt owed by this *Journal* to the Society's honorary secretary Beverley Davis and to its committee member Dr. Hilary L. Rubinstein.

In future, contributors are encouraged to send us both a typescript or printout and a computer disk. Disks must be 3.5 inch (not 5.25 inch); we are able to convert DOS to Macintosh format. Please indicate the software used (Microsoft Word is preferred.) Contributions which cannot be word-processed will, of course, still be welcome.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein
November 1993

ISAAC LEO LYON: THE FIRST FREE JEWISH MIGRANT TO AUSTRALIA?

Naomi Cream

It is usually stated that Jewish convicts arrived with the First Fleet in 1788, and that the first free Jews were Esther Isaacs in 1816 and Barnett Levy in 1821.¹ However, it appears that an earlier free Jewish migrant, albeit one who must have concealed his Jewish background, arrived in 1809. His name was Isaac Leo Lyon, and his history is bound up with the history of education in New South Wales.

By 1792 there were nearly 250 children of European origin in the colony. In 1789 Governor Phillip had been ordered to reserve 200 acres in or near every town for the support of a schoolmaster, but it was mainly left to the efforts of Reverend Richard Johnson to establish the first schools in makeshift premises in the main areas of settlement in Sydney and Parramatta; a teacher was found for Norfolk Island in 1793. Johnson's ministry was joined in 1794 by the Reverend Samuel Marsden. During the period 1795–1800, when Hunter was Governor, the chaplains continued to control education and Marsden took charge of religion and education in Parramatta. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (which adhered to the Church of England) gave small payments for teachers from 1793 and from an early date supported the religious education of the convicts by sending books and tracts. Religious influence was further strengthened with the arrival from Tahiti in 1798 of missionaries of the London Missionary Society (a strongly non-Conformist body), several of whom subsequently set up schools.

King became Governor in 1800. He had become deeply concerned by the large number of destitute and orphaned children in the colony (approximately 400 from a total of nearly 950 children) and founded the Female Orphan School in Sydney, opened by Marsden in 1801.² Marsden viewed the school as the 'foundation of religion and morality in this Colony — without an establishment of this nature to rescue the rising generation from ruin, it could never prosper'.³ By the time King left the colony in 1806, there were nine schools receiving government support and a few private schools catering for the emerging upper and middle classes.⁴ Most teachers were convicts or ex-convicts.

Bligh succeeded King in August 1806. By then, there was a population of 7840 spreading out from Sydney. There were 1832 children of whom more than a thousand were illegitimate and many forsaken by their convict parents.⁵ Concerned about the plight of these children, he wrote to London the following February:

With respect to the education of Youth four respectable Men are wanted for the benefit of the rising generation, these also should be married Men; and a Man and his Wife are necessary for the Orphan School. At present we are doing all we can to educate the Children having nearly four hundred of them under tuition in the different parts of the Colony.⁶

(Surprisingly, the proportion of children receiving education was higher than in England, probably because of the demand for child labour in England).⁷

The Reverend Samuel Marsden set sail for England that same month of February with his wife and family (and some of his best wool which was later woven into a suit which he wore for an audience with King George III).⁸ Marsden was by then the Senior Chaplain in the colony and had been in New South Wales for twelve years.

He had many reasons for his trip, but a prime objective was to obtain additional clergymen and schoolteachers. With this in mind, he wrote soon after his arrival to Edward Cooke, the Under-secretary of State. He had a gloomy view of the people he had left:

... there has scarcely appeared a Germ of Virtue on which to build a Hope of the general Character changing for the better. The depravity and Vice which pervades a large portion of the Community does by its preponderating Influence effect the whole, and gives to the Individual Habits and Manners much to be deplored. . . . when [any observer] beheld a Rising Generation of several Hundreds of fine Children exposed to a contamination fatal to Body and Soul, he would tremble for their Danger.

He held a deep conviction that salvation could only come from the young:

He would also soon discover, that, on the Care and Right Management of the Young, it wholly depends what the Colonists and Colony shall in future be. Whether by continued Vice, Idleness, and Disaffection, to be a constant Disgrace, Expense and Danger to their Governors, or by Virtue, Industry and Loyalty, to gain a good Name, easy Circumstances, and diminish the present great Expense to the Parent State.

Wise government and, especially, clergy and schoolmasters were required as soon as possible to save the young of both sexes from the destruction that threatened them, and to enable the colony to become valuable to the mother country. One teacher was needed for the Hawkesbury and Nepean settlements (population about 2000) and one for Parramatta (also about 2000 people), but Sydney needed both a 'steady prudent man and woman' for the orphan girls and a master for the orphan boys. A clergyman was needed for each area. He stated the qualifications needed:

The Clergyman must not expect to be stationary and quiet as at home: attention to a turbulent Individual must often be his Employment for a whole Day, and to qualify him for this duty, he should have a good natural Constitution to endure the Voyage, and the fatigue of active Service in the Colony. . . . Next to health, personal Piety and an earnest desire to communicate Christian Knowledge is necessary; and if he does not possess these, he may as well stay at Home; for no real good can be effected by him. The Schoolmasters should also be of this Kind and disposition; their Task is very great.

And he concluded:

Remote, helpless, distressed, and Young — these are truly the Children of the State — and though at present very low in the Ranks of Society, their future numerous Progeny, if care is now taken of the Parent stock, may by their preponderancy, overbalance and root out the vile depravities bequeath'd by their vicious progenitors. And what the Character of the Rising Race shall be is therefore an extremely interesting thing. By their Geographical Situation they are destined to convey to the numerous Islanders in the Pacific Ocean the Blessings of Civilization, and Knowledge of the Divine Truth, and perhaps to add strength and Wealth to the Parent state.⁹

The Colonial Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, and the Archbishop of Canterbury approved his plans to obtain clergymen and properly qualified schoolmasters.¹⁰ By 30 March 1808 he had nearly succeeded:

Two Clergymen were ordained on Sunday last who will come out before, or with me when we return. I am now looking out for another. Two or three Schoolmasters I hope to meet with, who will be very useful in the Colony — if proper men can be found who will go.¹¹

The 'proper' men were John Hosking (referred to as Hoskins in Colonial Office records), Isaac Leo Lyon (usually spelt Lyons in colonial records) and Thomas Bowden. Hosking and Lyon were appointed from an official date of 1 January 1808 in a letter dated 29 April.¹² Their salaries were £60 per annum and they were the first trained teachers in either England or Australia to be paid by the British government.¹³ However, Bowden could not afford to go until 1812 when the salary was increased to £100 per annum.¹⁴ Perhaps the Government had heeded the advice given by William Wilberforce in 1805: 'I wish you would send out a few persons with small salaries to take on them the office of schoolmasters. I say small salaries because if you were to give large ones, improper people would accept the situations.'¹⁵ By comparison, the salary given to the clergyman William Cowper was

£240 per annum.¹⁶ Both Hoskins and Bowden were recommended to Marsden by 'religious societies' in London,¹⁷ but Lyon did not claim any special religious affiliation.

This was not surprising, because he was almost certainly the son of a Jew. His father was Reverend Solomon Lyon (1755–1820) who had come to England in the latter part of the eighteenth century from Bohemia, where he had attended Prague University.¹⁸ He had a small boarding school in Cambridge at the turn of the century, reputed to be the first Jewish boarding school in England, and was a registered Hebrew tutor to the University.¹⁹ In 1818 he advertised himself at Bath as 'Teacher of Hebrew to the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Eton College, and several classical schools in town and country'.²⁰ His non-Jewish pupils included the Duke of Sussex (later a good friend of Anglo-Jewry and a good Hebrew scholar), the second Duke of Wellington and other well-connected members of the English upper classes.²¹ One of his young Jewish pupils in Cambridge had a later Australian connection. He was Isaac Nathan, 'the father of Australian music', who was sent to Cambridge in 1805²² at the age of about 14 to be trained as a *chazzan*.²³ Various sources indicate that he was taught Hebrew, Chaldean, German, mathematics, Latin and English.²⁴

Solomon Lyon had married Rachel Hart in 1784 and their eldest son, Isaac Leo Lyon, was born in Portsmouth on 3 April 1787.²⁵ Solomon Lyon's eldest daughter, Emma, was born on 17 September 1788,²⁶ also in Portsmouth,²⁷ and one of her sons was Michael Henry, later an editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*. Her obituary stated that

Enjoying in early life the advantages of a high education and the society of learned men connected with the University, she became far superior in educational acquirements to the majority of her compeers; and when her father's failing sight threatened the whole family with poverty, she devoted her talents to their support.

She herself wrote from London on 18 May 1812 in the sad preface to her little book of poems:

Allured by [the Muse's] fairy charms, and impelled to seek solace from the gloom of surrounding embarrassments, I soothed my anxieties in her mazy bower, twining garlands to deck the dark brow of fate. But the airy dream has vanished. The piercing thorns which still spring in our rugged path, force me to yield to the glaring eye of day the employment of my lonely hours. It is the only means in my power of contributing to the support of a large family, the object of my tenderest solicitude.²⁸

The book, which was the first by an Anglo-Jewish woman, was dedicated by permission to Princess Charlotte, and subscribers included the Prince Regent and three Royal Dukes. By an interesting coincidence a subscriber to both this book and to her father's *Theological Grammar and Lexicon*²⁹ was Charles Simeon, an important evangelist cleric at Cambridge who was Marsden's teacher and influential friend.³⁰ Less illustrious subscribers to Emma's book were two of her brothers and her brother-in-law in Surinam, and Isaac Leo Lyon — in New South Wales.

In the General Muster of New South Wales of 1811 there appears the name of Isaac Leo: [sic] Lyons [sic] who arrived free on the *Aeolus*.³¹ Since Isaac Lyons, schoolmaster, also arrived free on the *Aeolus* (see later), these two men and the Isaac Leo Lyon who subscribed to Emma Lyon's book must have been one and the same.

What induced Isaac Lyon to take up Marsden's offer of employment? It was not likely to have been evangelical Christianity or the enticements of the convict colony. As Marsden himself wrote: 'The Very Name of the place was offensive to Many, and others were deterred by the distance.'³² But life was hard for the poor in England, as Marsden also recorded later that year:

There are very bad times in England. The poor greatly distressed. Riots and Disturbances in the large towns and no work for the poor . . . What the event will be God only knows. People appear much alarmed and afraid of civil Commotions as well as foreign wars. What is to be done no Person knows³³ . . . We have found England much altered with Respect to living — all things is dear — and many thousands in the west of Yorkshire, and in Lancashire where I have been are greatly distressed for Provisions. Trade is exceeding bad and the whole Nation feels the effects of war. There is not the most distant prospect of peace but a very bloody war on the Continent. Upwards of 60 000 men are gone or are going from England to Spain and Portugal.³⁴

Certainly Lyon's family was impoverished, at least until 1815 when his father's sight was restored by cataract surgery.³⁵

Shortly before he met Marsden, and perhaps mindful of the requirement for married men, Isaac Leo Lyon [sic] married Maria Worland in the church of St. Martin in the Fields, Westminster, on 16 March 1808.³⁶ Perhaps some of the gloom and anxiety which affected his sister Emma so deeply was caused by her brother's estrangement from his religion and hence from his father.

Lord Castlereagh asked about passenger accommodation for New South Wales about a week after Lyon's marriage. He was told that there were two possible ships — the *Admiral Gambier* with room for one cabin passenger and the *Aeolus* with room for six cabin and twelve steerage passengers.³⁷ The *Admiral Gambier* was a convict ship of 501 tons and the *Aeolus* was a smaller vessel of about 300 tons.³⁸ Marsden himself did not care to sail in convict ships if he could avoid it as they were 'at all times unpleasant, and dangerous'.³⁹ On 12 April, having been informed by the Agent of Transports that both ships would shortly be ready to sail but that there was only room for one family on the *Admiral Gambier*, he wrote that if accommodation for either or both schoolmasters could be found on the *Aeolus* they would get ready immediately.⁴⁰ Arrangements for travel on the *Aeolus* were finalised by him on 22 April, when in addition to John Hosking, his wife and three sons, Isaac Lyons and his wife and Reverend Cowper, his wife and four children, he added a servant for Mr. Cowper:

As there will be three Families going out they will not be able to do without one Servant to attend to them . . . As they go out in the Female Convict Ship, they will not be able to get one of the Sailors to do anything for them.⁴¹

They were due to embark within a few days at Deptford, on the Thames.⁴² There were considerable expenses involved with the journey, so at the end of April Isaac Lyons received an Advance of Six months' salary of £30. However, this sum proved inadequate to fit himself and his wife out for the voyage and for their life ahead, and at the end of May a further six months' advance was sanctioned. The Hosking family required similar financial help, but received ore money, because Mrs. Hosking also received a salary as Matron of the Female Orphan School.⁴³

By 10 June both convict ships were on their way to Portsmouth, where male convicts had to be put on board the *Admiral Gambier* as soon as possible because the convoy (necessary because of the war with France) was waiting. Finally, the *Admiral Gambier* with 215 male convicts and the *Aeolus* with 88 female convicts (further women expected from Perth in Scotland had not arrived in time) were ready⁴⁴ and the convoy left Portsmouth on 2 July. The voluntary passengers on the *Aeolus* were Isaac Leo Lyon and his wife, John Hosking, his wife and three young sons, and Captain Lewis of the New South Wales Corps and his family. William Cowper was prevented from sailing at the last minute by the death of his wife.⁴⁵ Also on board were a young cow and a bull sent by Marsden for his farm, a new iron cask full of clothes for his men, leather and clover seed.⁴⁶ The convoy of 37 ships included a West India fleet, His Majesty's Ship *Polyphemus* of 64 guns, two Portuguese frigates, three gun brigs and a whaling ship, the *Juno*. *Aeolus*, *Admiral*

Gambier and *Juno* left the convoy at Madeira, and the *Admiral Gambier*, presumably with the *Aeolus* and *Juno*, arrived at Rio de Janeiro on 8 September.

Here tragedy struck when Lyon's wife died (the details are unknown but this turned out to be the only death on the whole voyage of the *Aeolus*). The ships stayed until early October when the *Admiral Gambier* left with the whaler but without the *Aeolus*.⁴⁷ From Rio news arrived back to Marsden who was very pleased to learn that his animals were in good health and mentioned Hosking:

I have just heard that my bull and Heifer were well at Rio. I will thank you to take particular Care of them should they arrive safe. As the Bull is young I wish he may not have any Cattle put to him till I come out excepting the female that comes out with him and any other promising one of my own that you may approve of. Tell Mr. Hosking I shall write to him in a few days by Mr. Wilson's Vessel. If you can pay any little attention to him and his wife I am sure they will merit it.⁴⁸

He disdained to mention Lyon in this letter and had dismissed him in a previous one:

Two Schoolmasters will come likewise in [the ship] — one for the Orphan House. A Mr. Hosking and his wife pious People, and I think will answer well for that Situation. I will thank you to pay them any little attention you can, and give them any needful Advice. The other man and his wife are not religious, but the Salary was too small for any proper Person to accept it.⁴⁹

The *Aeolus* arrived in New South Wales 26 January 1809, about a month later than the *Admiral Gambier*, after a journey of over six months.⁵⁰ We can only guess at what happened next to Lyon. He arrived widowed, young and without connections, to a colony in turmoil. The 'Rum Rebellion' had taken place a year earlier and the administration was in chaos. The scene which confronted him on his arrival was probably similar to the one which greeted Macquarie the following December:

I found the colony barely emerging from infantile imbecility, and suffering from various privations and disabilities; the country impenetrable beyond 40 miles from Sydney; agriculture in a yet languishing state; commerce in its early dawn; revenue unknown; threatened with famine; distracted by faction; public buildings in a state of dilapidation and mouldering decay; the few roads and bridges formerly constructed rendered almost impassable; the population in general depress'd by poverty; no public credit nor private confidence; the morals of the great mass of the population in the lowest state of debasement, and religious worship almost totally neglected.⁵¹

There had also been upheavals among the clergy because the Reverend Henry Fulton (standing in for Marsden) had refused to obey the rebels and had incurred their displeasure. As a result, Thomas Pascoe Crook, a former missionary from Tahiti and then schoolmaster at Parramatta, had been summoned to Sydney to perform divine service instead.⁵² Lyon, who had been expecting to be sent to the school for orphan boys, found that it had not yet been built.⁵³ Subsequent events suggest that he was sent to Parramatta to take over the school previously managed by Crook. He may well have travelled there with the unfortunate women from the *Aeolus*.⁵⁴

Crook had opened a school for 70 children in the Parramatta 'new' church (St. John's) in 1804. (There was already a small private school in Parramatta established by John Tull in 1796 and funded by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel).⁵⁵ At first Crook and his wife lived near the church, but later moved into Rowland Hassall's house while Hassall moved to a better one adjoining. Their two gardens communicated.⁵⁶ Hassall was another evangelical missionary and an increasingly prosperous businessman who had arrived via Tahiti and was Marsden's agent while he was in England. In 1804 Crook advertised for boarders:

Mr. Crook has resumed charge of the Public School kept in the Parramatta Church, and wishing to have a few young gentlemen to board and lodge with him, he has taken a house where he can accommodate them. The branches of instruction will be adopted to the situation for which the pupil may be designed, who will be taught to read, speak and write the English tongue with accuracy and propriety, Bookkeeping, Geometry, Trigonometry and Mensuration practically applied in Navi-

gation, Surveying, Gauging, etc. He will endeavour to store their minds with a general knowledge of Geography, History and Astronomy, making every part of Education as pleasant as possible.⁵⁷

In the following year fifty children attended his other (public) school and he had seven boarders whom he took to the church school with him. He was in great need of stationery and books.⁵⁸ One book he asked for was 'Watt's Divine Songs', a popular song book containing the stanza

LORD, I ascribe it to Thy grace
And not to chance, as others do,
That I was born of Christian race,
And not a Heathen or a Jew.⁵⁹

In January 1807, a year before Lyon's arrival and just before Marsden left for England, Crook wrote in unpunctuated prose:

My time is thus spent in general from an early hour till 7 in private and social devotion 7 to 8 teaching all my boarders Geography and grammar and preparing for my evening school 8 to 9 family prayer the scripture read by one of my pupils, breakfast and walking with my male boarders half a mile to the church where I instruct them together with 20 or more day scholars (excepting a little relaxation at noon) till 3 in the afternoon we then return to dinner after then tea and a few domestic duties soon brings the hour of prayer 8 o'clock after which the young people go to bed and we enjoy a very pleasant hour till our time of retirement. My dear wife in addition to her family and material concerns instructs the female boarders and 2 or 3 others at home. On the sabbath day we take all our boarders to school at an early hour and teach all the children that will attend . . . we have considerable discouragement from the profligancy of the parents the independency of their children and their love of pleasure and above all from the want of suitable rewards to excite their attendance . . . We have 8 male and 4 female boarders and expect 4 more shortly . . .⁶⁰

When Crook went to Sydney after the military uprising the boarders probably left too, so Lyon would have been left to teach the day pupils. However, within ten months he was suspended from duty by government order:

Head Quarters, 27 October 1809

G.O.

Parish, Tobago . . .

Isaac Lyons having, from negligence and incapability, proved himself totally unfit for the Situation of School Master at Parramatta, he is Suspended from this day, and Robt. [?] Jones will take charge of the School until further orders . . .

James Finucane, Secretary.⁶¹

What he had done is not known, but he later protested his innocence. Could he have fallen foul of Rowland Hassall and his stern Christianity? Hassall must surely have taken a keen interest in the progress of the school in the absence of Marsden and Lyon would not have been able to maintain his predecessor's piety or his standard of religious instruction, judged so important in the training of the young. Clark writes about Hassall that despite his high calling neither his charity nor his loving kindness were very fully developed, and for the lack of these qualities he was often reproved by the convicts to whom he lectured on Christian values.⁶²

It may be relevant that Hassall had met Lyon only a fortnight before, when he was the coroner and Lyon a juror, at an inquest at Kissing Point on one George Patfield, who had hanged himself with a handkerchief from the bough of an oak tree, 'being seduced and moved by the instigation of the devil.'⁶³

Marsden returned from England four months later. He wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury:

One of the schoolmasters of the name of Lyons who was to have attended to the Orphan Boys turned out a bad character he has been discharged. The sum of £60 per annum which was allotted him by Government is too small a sum to induce any man of character and Education to come to this country. Government should allow a married man £80 or £100 per annum.⁶⁴

Following Lyon's dismissal, he found employment with Robert Jenkins, a merchant

and later a founder director of the Bank of Sydney, who had arrived free in July 1809.⁶⁵ An advertisement appeared in the *Gazette* on 3 December 1809:

Isaac Leo Lyons requests that all Notes or Checks of any kind drawn by him may be immediately presented at Mr. Jenkins's.

And another two months later:

All persons indebted to the late Concern at the Hawkesbury, which was under the Management of Mr. Lyons are requested to pay the same to Mr. Cox at the Hawkesbury, and to no other person. Robert Jenkins.⁶⁶

Further references suggest that he did not live thereafter for long periods in Sydney, because letters awaited collection there for 'J. Leo Lions', 'J. Leo Lyon', and 'J. Leo Lyons' on 30 June 1810, 6 July 1811, 5 and 19 October 1811.⁶⁷ He did not prosper, and in early December 1812 found passage for England on the *Minstrel*.⁶⁸

The *Minstrel* had arrived with 125 female convicts and a cargo of ducks, tobacco and casks at the end of October. She had made a record time on her passage of 54 or 55 days to Rio.⁶⁹ Her captain, John Reed, initially intended to travel to Calcutta in November,⁷⁰ but the Governor, who, according to Marsden, thought highly of him,⁷¹ requested him to help evacuate the remaining inhabitants from the dwindling penal settlement at Norfolk Island.

The *Minstrel* left on 14 January 1813 for the 800 mile voyage to Norfolk Island and arrived about 3 February. Sailing with her was Isaac Leo Lyon, as clerk to Captain Reed, as he later informed the Colonial Secretary. Lyon must have recorded the 28 settlers, 14 convicts, 8 women and 12 children who were evacuated and the chisels, gouges, saws and spades which they took with them.⁷² About 30 people remained to kill and cure for Government use the stock which could not be removed (70 horned cattle and 3000 to 4000 sheep), and to destroy the remaining buildings. The surgeon of the island described the journey which followed:

We sailed from [Norfolk Island] on the 17th Feby. 1813 for Fort Dalrymple with the Inhabitants and their effects . . . and the establishment of the 73 Regiment of foot under the command of Lieutenant Crane, and came to anchor in the River Tamar early in March following, from whence the Inhabitants . . . were conveyed in large boats up the river to Launceston, about Forty miles distant, that duty being performed, we proceeded to Sydney New South Wales, and arrived there on the 4th of April 1813 where I remained until the 6th of July following, whence I took my departure for England on the same ship *Minstrel* and arrived in London the 4th March 1814 . . . The number of days from Norfolk Island to my embarking for England amount to one hundred thirtynine.⁷³

The *Minstrel*, with a crew of 28, sailed for England on 3 July 1813 with a mixed cargo, which included 8000 pounds of Marsden's wool:

The *Minstrel*, Captain Reid, sails for England in about a fortnight, intending to call at Rio, and proceed afterwards to St. Helena for convoy. From hence she has the credit for exporting, for the British market, the first cargo of a mixed produce ever sent from the Colony, collected partly within itself, partly from the circumambient ocean, and partly from contiguous islands whither a laudable spirit of enterprize had conducted our marine adventurers. About 200 tons of colonial wool are already shipped, together with a quantity of raw hides; from which 50 to 60 tons of the pearl shell, a quantity of sperm oil, seal skins, crooked timber, flour, tallow, and blue gum in plank; from which little catalogue we may judge that we are not without natural resources, if the means of requirement are properly exerted.^{74, 75}

There was also a quantity of spirits purchased from Government stores after special permission from Macquarie and strictly only for consumption on the voyage.⁷⁶ At least twenty passengers were enticed with offers of excellent accommodation and moderate terms.⁷⁷

Back in London in early March 1814, Lyon sent a petition in May to the Colonial Secretary from an address in the main area of Jewish settlement in London:⁷⁸

To the Right Honble. Earl Bathurst Secretary of State for the Colonies &&

The Memorial of Isaac Leo Lyons

Most Respectfully sets forth

That your Mem^l was appointed Schoolmaster in the Colony of New South Wales 1st Jan^y 1808 sanctioned by Lord Castlereagh the then Secretary of State, and arrived at the place of his Destination 26th Jan^y 1809, when he officiated in the above Capacity till the 21st Oct^r following when he was suspended from doing his duty till orders should arrive from England, Confirming such Suspension.

That your Mem^l having waited till the arrival of a legal Gov^t in order that he might be able to obtain his rights, but having no document to shew that y^r Mem^l was the identical person so appointed, could not have his request granted, That

Your Mem^l then endeavor'd to return to England, as soon as Convenient but for the want of Money, was Obligated to go in the Capacity as Clerk to Capt. Reed of the Ship Minstrel, in order that he might obtain by Mem^l a Compensation for the many troubles, and hardships he has endured; the Loss of his Wife at the Brazils greatly Augmented his Misfortunes, And further Sheweth That

On the Evacuation of Norfolk Island Mem^l made himself Completely useful in adjusting the public Accounts, for which Service, he never rec^d any Emolument, and Capt. Reed has testified by Certificate, annexed And

Your Mem^l has enclosed a Statement of Monies rec^d and sincerely trust that his Lordship will take his Case into Consideration, and Allow him some Remuneration for the many troubles he has met with during his Suspension, and further Mem^l is ready and willing to fulfil his engagement, if his Lordship should think proper to Confirm his Appointment, and Mem^l will as in duty bound ever pray & & &

ILL

15 Duke Street
Aldgate

An account of Monies rec^d by Isaac Leo Lyons from the Lords Commissioners of H.M. Treasury as Schoolmaster in the Colony of New South Wales

From the 1st Jan^y 1808 to 21st Oct 1809, £100 15s -d

Due from the 22^d Oct 1809 to 1st Jan^y 1814 [this section is covered over and cannot be read]

Captain John Reed, attached his testimonial, written nearly two weeks before:

This is to Certify that Isaac Leo Lyons has been with me in the Evacuation of Norfolk Island and made himself very useful in assisting in adjusting the public Accts. Further during the time he has been in my Employ he has ever Conducted himself with the strictest degree of Sobriety and honesty.

The outcome is unknown, but, judging by the number of repeated claims to rightful compensation from better-known men which litter the Colonial Office files, he was probably unsuccessful.

There follows an eight year gap in his history. Then — in 1822 — he seems to have renewed his Jewish contacts by the time of his second marriage to Anna (probably Hannah), daughter of Moses and Rachel Levi at 377 Strand, in London. The same source then records the birth of his third child and second daughter, Julia, in 1830.⁷⁹

In 1836 Isaac L. Lyon published his first book — a *Form of Daily Prayers, according to the custom of German and Polish Jews: as read in their synagogues, and used in their families*. He called himself a professor and teacher of the Hebrew language.⁸⁰

He was successful with his next publication in 1837, which ran to two editions.⁸¹ He claimed that it was the first book written specially to teach Hebrew to young people:

Although many Grammars have been published, there has never yet appeared any simplified initiatory book for young persons, to enable them to acquire, with facility, the knowledge of this Sacred Language . . . To the spelling and reading Lessons are added, Fables, Scriptural Phrases, and Dialogues, necessary for the learner to be acquainted with; to which will be appended, a brief (but compendious) Hebrew Grammar, with Questions and Answers . . . The Author pretends not to boast of new discoveries, but flatters himself to have selected every thing that is necessary and useful. He need not point out the great utility of such a work; as it is sufficiently evident to those who are employed in the care of instructing youth, whether in Schools, or by Private Tuition. He hopes the Gentlemen of the Profession will do him the justice to believe, that his design, in this performance, was not to dictate, but to EASE the Master, as well as to facilitate the pupil, in his laudable endeavours to acquire a thorough knowledge of this Holy Language.

He added to the second edition:

I.L. Lyon, the Author of the Hebrew and English Spelling book, returns his sincere thanks for the encouragement he has received from those who have entrusted their children to his care, and informs them that he still continues his establishment, at No. 14, Leman Street, Goodman's Fields, where youth are taught Hebrew and English Literature in the most expeditious manner. Private Lessons in Hebrew on moderate terms.

By June 1841 he had moved not far away to New Castle Street, Whitechapel, where he lived with his wife Hannah and his three children: Solomon (apprenticed to a cigar maker), Rachel and Julia. He was still a Hebrew teacher. The two eldest children were in the census age range of 15–19 years and Julia was eleven.⁸²

When the Duke of Sussex — his father's former pupil — died in 1843 Lyon composed and read a funeral oration at a meeting of a hundred Jewish Freemasons at the George and Vulture, Cornhill:

The room looked awfully grand, the Chairs, Pedestals, and the appropriate Furniture of the Master's degree, were covered with black cloth and velvet, surrounded with large wax lights, each Brother bearing a sprig of Acacia, and the Lodge strewn with flowers upwards of One hundred Brethren assembled, at 8 o'Clock P.M. the Lodge was formed . . . I.L. Lyon gave the funeral oration: ' . . . Let it not be said my brethren, we desire a separate interest, opposite to that of civil society and the community of mankind: No — we have been enabled to distinguish ourselves by acting a worthy part in all times of public sorrow; . . . And may we go on to show the world, as we have ever done, that we are as loyal and zealous subjects as any in her Majesty's dominions.'⁸³

A few months later in August, he was the secretary of a group which organised a meeting at Howard's Coffee House, St. James's Place, Aldgate for the Orthodox Jewish Community 'to support and sign a Counter Memorial to be presented to the Great Synagogue, to prevent any innovation in our Ancient Mode of Worship.'⁸⁴ This was probably a protest against the introduction of English sermons and a reduction of the liturgy.⁸⁵

Thereafter, events in his life were reported in the Jewish press. In 1845 he spoke at a rowdy meeting addressed by Rev. T.T. Crybbace, 'self-styled representative of the British and Foreign Society for restoring the Jews to the land of their fathers':

Mr. I.L. Lyon called the Lecturer's attention to several portions of the Prophets, and Ezekiel in particular, showing that the precursory signs of the restoration had not yet appeared. He, therefore, considered the Rev. speaker to be under a delusion, similar to that of a person sitting next to him, who actually imagined himself to be 'the regenerated light of the world'. (The person alluded to had interrupted Mr. Crybbace several times during his speaking in the evening, by declaring himself the Messiah. The unfortunate gentleman is known to be *insane*) . . . Mr. Crybbace [was] driven away by the continual calls of the meeting, 'Who put you in the chair?'⁸⁶

The next year he was instrumental in founding a charity 'to supply bread, meat, coals, and grocery to poor Jewish married females during their accouchements'. Four months later there were nearly 600 members — mostly working class — and three years later he was able to read a successful report:

At the third anniversary dinner of the Jewish Lying-in Charity at Black Lion Tavern, Aldgate . . . Grace having been said, the cloth removed, and the usual loyal toasts given and responded to, the secretary, Mr. I.L. Lyon, . . . read the report . . . Since the founding of the charity the sum of £300 had been distributed in bread, meat, coals and grocery, to 250 applicants, at the rate of twenty-four per month, viz. during the period of their accouchement . . . [He] alluded to the scarcity of employment among the working classes . . . [and made a] strong appeal to the public for renewed exertions . . . Patronage from Baron and Baroness L. de Rothschild's company numbered nearly forty.⁸⁷

In 1846 he sent a letter to the *Jewish Chronicle* about the lost ten tribes of Israel, and concluded after considering biblical records and modern geographical knowledge

Any person who is conversant with the East Indies, particularly with Asiatic Tartary, Thibet, Persia, Affghan, Hindostan, Birma, China, Cochín China, knows that many traces of Jewish observances exist; and when it shall please Providence to fulfil his will as recorded in Isaiah xlix. 5, . . . they shall come from far, from the North (Tartary, Thibet, etc.), from the West (Kushean mountains), and from

the land of Sinnim, no doubt China; and in all those places are Jews to be found, whose history is enveloped in mystery.⁸⁸

There is no mention of him in the following year except as the executor of a testimonial which was 'a beautiful specimen of illuminated penmanship' in a handsome frame which was presented at a meeting of a benefit society for the sick, those in mourning and widows. Following the presentation there was a 'sumptuous entertainment and after an evening spent in hilarity, the company retired at a late hour'.⁸⁹

He continued his work with the poorer members of the community when in 1848 he spoke on the 'Origin of Science' to a large audience of working class Jews. The occasion was a meeting of a newly formed organisation for the 'moral and intellectual improvement of the working classes of the Jews'. Free Friday evening lectures were offered as an alternative to the more profane activities of many Jews, 'who apparently spent their Friday evenings in low places of amusement, public houses and in general profligancy'.⁹⁰ He was 'listened to throughout with the most marked attention, by an audience hitherto unaccustomed to attend learned lectures' and 'was repeatedly and deservedly applauded.'

The lecture showed, that science had its origin in the East, which he clearly demonstrated by educing examples from sacred and profane history. He also contended, that Thales was the first of the Sophi, and introduced astronomy, astrology, and theology in his travels from Miletus to Egypt. He said, that Pythagoras, by his travels into Babylon, had become conversant with the learning of the Magi of the Chaldeans; Pythagoras also travelled into Ethiopia, Arabia, etc., and thereby increased his store of knowledge. Plato, having received his from the Phoenecians, Syrians and Hebrews, also travelled for the noble purpose of disseminating learning, to which our modern languages are much indebted, etc.⁹¹

His final recorded statement was shortly before his death. At a well-attended meeting organised by a committee of working men, he moved the resolution to found a 'Hannah Rothschild' memorial scholarship for the education of poor Jewish children. The account of his speech is a fitting epilogue to his own life:

No one could appreciate the blessing of education more than he did, having passed his life in scholastic pursuits; and often he had cause to regret that, in his youth, he had not more freely availed himself of the great benefits which were placed within his grasp . . . In his experience, as an instructor of youth, he had met with many children with excellent capacities, but whose intellectual powers remained dormant for want of means of cultivation. Therefore he did not think that money could be better bestowed than in the cause of education, and we ought to be happy that an opportunity was offered worthy of the acceptance and support of the meeting mainly composed of Jewish working-men. [He concluded] 'Let us, then, contribute our mite towards the undertaking, and never forget that "many a little makes a muckle" (cheers).'⁹²

He became the honorary secretary of the project, but probably did not live to see its fruition because he died two months later, aged 63, at his home in Whitechapel, on 24 December 1850.⁹³

However, the family's connections with Australia did not end with his death. Two grandchildren emigrated there; one settled in Adelaide in the 1890s where he became a watchmaker. That man's son, Aubrey Lewis (1900–1975) — Lyon's great-grandson — was brought up in the Jewish community and received his schooling and medical education in Adelaide. He later went to England, where he became professor at the Maudsley Hospital, London, and was knighted for his contributions to psychiatry.

ABBREVIATIONS

AONSW Archives Office of New South Wales.

LMS London Missionary Society Archives, School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

PRO Public Record Office, London.

NOTES

1. J.S. Levi and G.F.J. Bergman, *Australian Genesis: Jewish Convicts and Settlers, 1788–1830*, Adelaide, 1974; W.D. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Australia*, Melbourne, 1986.
2. J.F. Cleverley, *The First Generation, School and Society in Early Australia*, Sydney, 1971, p. 87.
3. J.R. Elder, *Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden*, Dunedin, 1932, p. 36, quoting Samuel Marsden to William Wilberforce, 17 August 1801.
4. C. Turney, *Pioneers of Australian Education*, Sydney, 1969, p. 2.
5. Marsden to Cooke, 21 November 1807; PRO:CO 201/45 f. 319.
6. Bligh to Windham, 7 February 1807, PRO:O 201/44 f. 84.
7. J.F. Cleverley, *The First Generation, School and Society in Early Australia*, Sydney, 1971, p. 31.
8. A.T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, Melbourne, 1977, p. 122.
9. Marsden to Cooke, 21 November 1807, PRO: CO 201/45 ff. 318–320. Marsden arrived about 8 November, ref. A.T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, Melbourne, 1977, p. 112.
10. Castlereagh to Bligh, 31 December 1897, PRO: CO 202/7 f.3.
11. Marsden to Hassall, Hassall Correspondence, Vol. 1, p. 187, Mitchell Library A859.
12. Cooke to Chinnery, 29 April 1808, PRO:CO 324/115 ff. 216–7.
13. J.F. Cleverley, *The First Generation, School and Society in Early Australia*, Sydney, 1971, pp. 5, 136.
14. P. Geeves, *A Place of Pioneers*, Ryde Municipal Council, 1970, p. 45–6.
15. Wilberforce to Dundas, quoted by J. Jervis in 'A History of Education, Schools and Teachers in Parramatta', *Parramatta and District Historical Soc. Journal and Proc.*, 1921, Vol. 2, p. 29.
16. Cooke to Chinnery, 29 April 1808, PRO:CO 324/115 ff. 216–7, 219.
17. Bigge to Bathurst, 7 February 1823, in John Ritchie (ed.), *The Evidence to the Bigge Reports*, Melbourne, 1971, Vol. 11, p. 176.
18. *Jewish Chronicle*, 24 November 1871. Added evidence for Isaac Lyon's parentage is: (i) [Rev. Solomon Lyon] should not be confused with his son Isaac Lyon' (ibid.); (ii) 'relict of the late lamented Isaac Leo Lyon, of Cambridge' (from the death notice of his second wife), *Jewish Chronicle*, 26 August 1864.
19. *Jewish Chronicle*, 24 November 1871.
20. *Bath Chronicle*, 29 January 1818.
21. J. Picciotto, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History*, 1875, edited by I. Finestein, London, 1956, p. 307.
22. *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie, London, 1980.
23. A. Barnett *The Western Synagogue through Two Centuries*, London, 1961, p. 116.
24. O.S. Phillips, *Isaac Nathan, Friend of Byron*, London, 1940, p. 28; C. Mackerras, *The Hebrew Melodist*, Sydney, 1963, p. 12; *Cambridge Chronicle and Journal*, 10 January 1801.
25. Family papers. This date is suspect in view of the parents' later fertility and the dates of birth of their eldest children.
26. *Jewish Chronicle*, 6 January 1871.
27. 1851 and 1861 censuses.
28. Emma Lyon, *Miscellaneous Poems*, Oxford, 1812.
29. Rev. Solomon Lyon, *A Theological Grammar and Lexicon*, Liverpool, 1815.
30. A.T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, Melbourne, 1977, p. 15.
31. PRO:HO 10/5.
32. A.M. Grocott, *Convicts, Clergymen and Churches*, Sydney, 1980, p. 221.
33. Marsden to Hassall, 78 June 1808, Hassall Correspondence Vol. I, pp. 193–200, Mitchell Library A859.
34. Marsden to Hassall, 24 August 1808, Hassall Correspondence Vol. I, pp. 211–2, Mitchell Library A859.
35. Rev. Solomon Lyon, *A Theological Grammar and Lexicon*, Liverpool, 1815 (preface).
36. Parish Register, St. Martin in the Fields, Vol. 49, City of Westminster Archives. Both parties lived in the parish, were of full age and the marriage took place by banns.
37. Two identical letters from Leay to Cooke, 1 April 1808, PRO:CO 201/48 f. 131; 108/21 f. 96.
38. Ibid., and C. Bateson, *The Convict Ships*, 2nd ed. 1969, p. 338.
39. Marsden to Hassall, 24 September 1808, Hassall Correspondence Vol. I, pp. 211, Mitchell Library A859.
40. Marsden to Cooke, 12 April 1808, PRO:CO 201/48 f. 147.
41. Marsden to [?], 22 April [1808], PRO:CO 201/48, f. 170.
42. Identical letters from Leay to Cooke, 1 April 1808, PRO:CO 201/48 f. 131; ADM 108/21 f. 96.
43. Cooke to Chinnery, 29 April 1808, PRO:CO 324/115 f. 216.
44. A.M.L. to Cooke, 24 June 1808, PRO:ADM108/21 f. 109; A.M.L. to F. Beckett, 10 June 1808, PRO:ADM 108/21 f. 108.
45. Elizabeth Marsden to Hassall, 13 June 1808, Hassall Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 202, Mitchell Library A859.

46. Marsden to Hassall, 24 August 1808, Hassall Correspondence, Vol. I, pp. 211–2, Mitchell Library A859.
47. Captain's log H.M. *Polyphemus* PRO:ADM 51/1975; *Sydney Gazette*, Sunday 25 December 1808.
48. Marsden to Hassall, 24 November 1808, Hassall Correspondence, Vol. I, pp. 269–270, Mitchell Library A859.
49. *Ibid.*, 7 June 1808, p. 194.
50. *Sydney Gazette*, 25 December 1808 and 29 January 1809.
51. Macquarie to Bathurst, 27 July 1822, quoted in Manning Clark, *Sources of Australian History*, Melbourne 1957.
52. Hassall to London Missionary Society, 2 September 1808, LMS, Box 1, 3, C.
53. D.D. Mann, *The Present Picture of New South Wales*, London, 1811, reprinted Sydney, 1979, p. 34.
54. *Sydney Gazette*, 29 January 1809.
55. J. Jervis, 'A History of Education, Schools and Teachers in Parramatta', 24 September 1919, *Parramatta and District Historical Soc. Journal and Proc.*, 1921, Vol. 2, p. 29.
56. Hassall to Hardcastle, 10 March 1804, and Marsden to Hardcastle, 12 March 1804, LMS Box 1, 2, B; Crook to LMS, 5 May 1805, LMS Box 1, 2, C.
57. *Sydney Gazette*, 19 August 1804, quoted in J. Jervis, 'A History of Education, Schools and Teachers in Parramatta', 24 September 1919, *Parramatta and District Historical Soc. Journal and Proc.*, 1921, Vol. 2, p. 39.
58. Crook to LMS, 5 May 1805, LMS Box 1, 2, C.
59. I. Watts, *Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children*, London, n.d., p. 16, quoted in J.F. Cleverley, *The First Generation, School and Society in Early Australia*, Sydney, 1971, p. 47.
60. Crook to LMS, 20 January 1807, LMS Box 1, 3, B. (... used with permission, Council for World Mission.)
61. Archives Office New South Wales, Reel 6037 SZ 993 p. 1851; *Sydney Gazette*, 29 October 1809.
62. C.M.H. Clark, *A History of Australia*, Melbourne, 1979 (paperback edition), Vol. 1, p. 250.
63. 13 October 1808, Mitchell Library Film Reel 6021 pp. 503–5. His signature on this document is similar to Isaac Leo Lyon's signature in the marriage register in 1808.
64. Marsden to Archbishop of Canterbury, 2 May 1810, PRO:CO 201/127 f. 280.
65. C.J. Smee and J. Selkirk Provis (ed.), *Pioneer Families*, Netley, S. Australia, 1981, 2nd edition, Vol. 1.
66. *Sydney Gazette*, 17 Feb 1810, PRO:CO 206/2.
67. *Sydney Gazette*, 30 June 1810, 6 July 1811, 5 October 1811, 19 October 1811, 5 December 1812, 12 December 1812. (The capital initial 'T' was probably mistaken for 'J').
68. *Sydney Gazette*, 5 and 12 December 1812.
69. Despatch from Port Jackson, 1813, PRO:CO 201/67 ff. 168, 192; *Sydney Gazette*, 24 October 1812; C. Bateson, *The Convict Ships*, 2nd ed. 1969, pp. 189 and 202.
70. *Sydney Gazette*, 14 November 1812.
71. Marsden to LMS, 12 November 1812, LMS Box 1, 4, B.
72. Papers of Colonial Secretary, 15 February 1813 and 10 May 1813, AONSW Reel 6020 4/6977A pp. 21, 35.
73. John Conellan to Bathurst, 2 June 1815, PRO:CO 201/78 f. 365.
74. A.T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, Melbourne 1977, pp. 133–4. The first mixed cargo was actually on the *Lady Barlow* in 1805.
75. *Sydney Gazette*, 22 May 1813.
76. 10 May 1813, Papers of Colonial Secretary, AONSW Reel 6043 4/1728 p. 363.
77. *Sydney Gazette*, various advertisements between 26 December 1812 and 19 June 1813.
78. Isaac Leo Lyon to Bathurst, 19 May 1814, PRO:CO 201/74 ff. 245–246.
79. Family record, source unknown. No. 377, Strand was a private address. The rates were paid by Matthew Mazzoni, a plaster cast figure maker. Julia was born at City Road, London.
80. Isaac L. Lyon, *Form of Daily Prayers, according to the custom of German and Polish Jews: as read in their synagogues, and used in their families*, London, 1836 (5596).
81. I.L. Lyon, *Hebrew and English Spelling Book . . . to which is affixed an abridgement of the Hebrew Grammar*, London 1837 (5597). 2nd edition, London, 1839 (5599).
82. Census 6 June 1841, 15 New Castle Street, Whitechapel. PRO HO 107 717. This description of the family fits the family data on Isaac Leo Lyon. It seems reasonable, therefore, to assume that Isaac Lyon, Hebrew teacher of Whitechapel, Isaac Leo Lyon, son of Solomon Lyon and school teacher of New South Wales, and I.L. Lyon, author and Hebrew teacher and later subject of record in the *Jewish Chronicle* (see below) were the same. The notice of his wife's death also confirms this analysis (see note 18 above).

83. S.M. Lazarus, *Masonic Form of service delivered at the Lodges of Joppa and Israel . . . on Thursday the 4th of May 1843, being the day of the obsequies of . . . the Duke of Sussex*. Arranged by S.M. Lazarus (Funeral oration by Brother I.L. Lyon), London, 1843.
84. Poster, size approx. 7 inches by 7 and a half inches, reproduced in Picciotto, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History Part II*, Mocatta Library, London.
85. C. Roth, *History of the Great Synagogue*, London, 1950.
86. *Jewish Chronicle*, 13 June 1845, p. 180.
87. *Ibid.*, 26 June 1846, p. 172. (His address was 13 [sic] Newcastle-street, Whitechapel); *ibid.*, 16 September 1846, p. 224; 25 May 1840, pp. 267.
88. *Jewish Chronicle*, 16 September 1846, p. 226.
89. *Jewish Chronicle*, 22 October 1847, p. 283.
90. A. Barnett, 'Sussex Hall', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, Vol. XIX, p. 72.
91. *Jewish Chronicle*, 11 February 1848, p. 429.
92. *Jewish Chronicle*, 25 October 1850.
93. Death certificate copy. Died at 15 New Castle Street, Whitechapel, stated age 64 years, occupation schoolmaster, cause of death bronchitis.

LINKS IN THE CHAIN: THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE OF AN ANGLO-JEWISH FAMILY

Muriel Hart Chesler

Throughout history, a major cause of migration has been the opportunity for economic advancement and self-fulfilment in new lands. For Jews there has been the additional incentive of survival, freedom from persecution, or, at the least, the removal of civil and religious disabilities. All these they found in the British colonies, many years before Jews in England attained equal status with their gentile neighbours.

The North American Jewish experience is well documented. Much less is known of the experience of Jewish settlers in other colonies, such as the West Indies, which in the early days of the eighteenth century had the greater Jewish population.¹ This paper began as an attempt to establish a connection between the Jamaican Jewish forebears of the author and the Hart family of London, founders of the Great Synagogue. By the third generation the Harts in London were well on their way to assimilation; as far as is known there are no English Jewish descendants today of this once distinguished family. The paper suggests that a branch of the family travelled to Jamaica, taking root there and retaining its Jewish identity for many years. The author follows a London Jewish family called Hart in its westward journey to the Americas at the end of the eighteenth century, and describes subsequent migrations to Australia, South Africa and Israel. In so doing she hopes she has added some details to the picture of Jewish life in the colonies, and in particular in Jamaica — one of the earliest and originally the most valuable of Britain's overseas possessions.

Today the Jews of Jamaica, the oldest surviving community on the island, are a mere handful — approximately 200 souls in a population of 2.3 million. Their history is interwoven with that of the country, and since their arrival they have played a part in its economic and civic life out of all proportion to their numbers.

Marranos had sailed with Columbus on all three voyages to the West as navigators, ships' doctors and ordinary seamen. Columbus discovered Jamaica before reaching the mainland of America, and the island became the personal property of his family. It passed by marriage to the House of Braganza, which gained possession of the throne of Portugal. As a personal favour to Columbus, who was well disposed towards the Jews (and could possibly have been a Marrano himself), the Inquisition was excluded from the island, which between 1509 and 1655 was a rather neglected Spanish colony. The original inhabitants, the Arawak Indians, had been exterminated, and cattle ranches were worked by imported Africans.

In Jamaica at this time a number of Spanish and Portuguese Jews lived in comparative safety, and were known as 'Portugals'.² It is interesting that while the pronunciation of many Sephardi names in Jamaica today is derived from Spanish, their spelling is Portuguese (for example, Nunes, Rodrigues).³

Jamaica was captured by Britain during Cromwell's Protectorate in 1655, nine years before New Amsterdam fell to Charles II and was renamed New York. For many years it remained the most important of Britain's new trading outposts in the West. The promotion of British trade by the subjugation of the Spanish Main had

been a major factor in Cromwell's response to Menasseh ben Israel's request for the return of the Jews to England. The fact that there were close ties between England's Marranos and those of Holland, the West Indies and North America (among other places) increased his gratitude to the Jamaican Jews for their substantial co-operation in his West Indian campaign.⁴ Possibly for these reasons, the 'Portugals' remained in Jamaica and practised their religion openly when the Spanish colonists were expelled to Cuba.

These Sephardi Jews had contributed to the island's commercial prosperity before the English occupation. After 1655 they were joined by Jews from Holland, who had been encouraged to emigrate to Jamaica by Menasseh ben Israel. When the first six Jewish settlers from England arrived in 1663, the small community they found had been augmented by immigrants from Brazil, British Guyana and Surinam. Later there were a few Jews from Curaçao and Germany and in the early nineteenth century a number of Ashkenazi Jews arrived from England,⁵ including some named Hart.

For the first 150 years of British rule the Jews were regarded as 'a strange and alien people' and were barely tolerated by the English colonists. Most Jewish immigrants began their new lives in a small way but records show Jews acquiring both 'foot' land and arable land from as early as 1664, indicating that they were building houses and becoming an integral part of the producing population. Some were in retail trade, but the majority were wholesale merchants.⁶ From 1661 all Jamaicans of English descent were considered free denizens of England, with the same privileges as freeborn English subjects. As naturalisation required the oath of allegiance, entailing acceptance of the sacrament, most Jews preferred endenization, despite the limitations of this lesser status. The cost of endenization was over £100, which therefore furnished proof of solid financial standing.⁷

Under the Restoration the number of Jews increased, and as the greater part of the trade with the Spanish Main was now in Jewish hands some jealousy was aroused. In 1671 a number of English merchants petitioned for the expulsion of the Jews on the grounds that they were not naturalised and therefore illegally engaged in trade. The Governor replied to the effect that the planters were in favour of Jewish merchants, whose large stocks enabled them to sell at low prices. He also recommended the encouragement of further Jewish immigration.⁸ In 1681 another attempt was made to expel the Jews by the Council of the island on the grounds that they were the 'descendants from the crucifiers of the blessed Jesus'. The Crown snubbed this request, but continued to acquiesce in the levying of special taxes on the Jews on account of their wealth. Jews at this time were excluded from all public office, denied the vote, barred from serving on juries, and not permitted to acquire white servants. Permission was given, however, to erect synagogues.⁹

There are early records of Jews living and trading in the legendary Port Royal of the buccaneers before the great earthquake of June 1692 destroyed the city. Old invoices and bills of lading record the names of Jewish merchants such as Henriques, Alvares, Cordova, Gutierrez and Cohen. In 1677 a tract of land was bought for the building of a synagogue.

The Reverend G.W. Bridges, rector of St. Anne's parish, wrote in his *Annals of Jamaica*, vol. 1 (1827), that in 1684 permission was obtained from Governor Molesworth 'to erect a Synagogue and perform Worship according to their ritual' in the great port city. According to Jacob Andrade, the Jamaican Jewish historian, writing in 1941,¹⁰ there was no evidence that the synagogue was built at that time. However, confirmation of the existence of a synagogue can be found in an article by

Henry P. Silverman in *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, 37 (1947). Giving a list of Sephardi Jewish graves at the Hunt's Bay Cemetery, twenty years before the earthquake of 1692, he quotes from a letter in the Bodleian Library written by one Edmund Heath of Port Royal to the then Master of University College, Oxford. In an eyewitness account of the earthquake, Heath wrote: 'I turned into ye Jewes Street in order to get home, when their synagogue fell by my side.' After the earthquake, the synagogue was rebuilt.

As early as January 1699 evidence of the respect in which the Jews were held is seen in a letter from the Commissioner of Trade to the Earl of Jersey, advising that His Majesty (William III) direct the Governor of Jamaica to 'treat the Jews gently, and that they not be obliged to bear arms on their Sabbath or other solemn feasts, unless it be when the enemy is in view.'¹¹

Jamaica as a commercial centre was at its height during the first half of the eighteenth century when the Jews were responsible for much of the internal and external trade. The vanilla and sugar industries and almost the entire foreign and inter-colonial trade of the colony was in their hands.¹² In 1700, the Jews bore the bulk of the island's taxation, although they numbered only eighty, of whom five were plantation owners.¹³

By 1735, according to a contemporary estimate, the Jewish population had increased to between 700 and 800 persons.¹⁴ Jewish self-confidence is demonstrated by their repeated petitions and remonstrances against their disabilities. In 1702 a Jewish demand for the right to vote in the House of Assembly was met with a communal fine of £2000. The matter was raised in the Assembly in 1711, but the Bill was defeated. A few years later, however, the political climate in England began to change under Sir Robert Walpole. 'The changes came in two directions — alteration of taxation policy of the Jews in Jamaica, and towards rendering it possible for the colony's Jews to become naturalised subjects without breaking any religious obligation.' In 1736, after a lengthy dispute, the Governor obliged the Assembly to remove the objectionable tax.¹⁵

Of the 189 Jews recorded as naturalised in the 'American' colonies, under the Act of Parliament of 1740, between that year and 1755, as many as 151 resided in Jamaica. The only restrictions now suffered by the Jews were those suffered by all nonconformists to the Established Church in Jamaica as well as in England.¹⁶

It is interesting to note how Jamaican historians regarded the Jews of their day. Charles Leslie wrote in 1740 of the increased influx of Jews and the erection of new synagogues; while he conceded their industry and moderation in the business of trading, he emphasised that 'their little roguish tricks are such that they prove detrimental to any society in which they live.'¹⁷

Max J. Kohler¹⁸ recalls the more complimentary remarks of the planter historian Edward Long, who was Private Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Henry Moore. Long wrote in the early 1770s that

Their knowledge of foreign languages and intercourse with their brethren, dispersed over the Spanish Main and other West Indian Colonies, have contributed greatly to extend the trade and increase the wealth of the Island, for they have always been the chief importers of bullion, and the riches they acquire to themselves are expended in effect to the public welfare, for they are not mere brokers and money-lenders that may remove 'ad libitum', for they are allowed the purchase of lands and tenements and actually possess a large share of both. Among the chief men are some very opulent planters and capital merchants who are connected with great houses in the City of London.

After quoting a passage from the French Code Noir of 1685, by which Jews were excluded from the French colonies, Long adds:

But what must our losses of trade and inhabitants have been at Jamaica had we copied from this

precedent, and (as our Council once previously petitioned the Crown) proscribed these useful people from our islands? In fact this measure of the French Government has been, comparatively speaking, almost as beneficial to us as their persecution of the Huguenots many years ago proved to England. We gained a large accession of subjects who brought not only their wealth with them, but their knowledge in trade.

He also contrasted the Jews' low death rate with that of their neighbours, describing them as 'remarkably healthy and long-lived' and 'abstemious and so temperate that a drunken Jew is rarely seen.'¹⁹

In 1770 one-third of the membership of the Kingston Business Men's Club were Jewish merchants. Twenty years later, Bryan Edwards noted that, despite their many civil disabilities, Jews were allowed the liberty of purchasing and holding lands, as well as that of public worship, 'and I have not heard that Jamaica has any reason to repent of her liberality towards them.'²⁰

Joseph Addison, in an essay in the *Spectator* in 1712, wrote of the Jews that

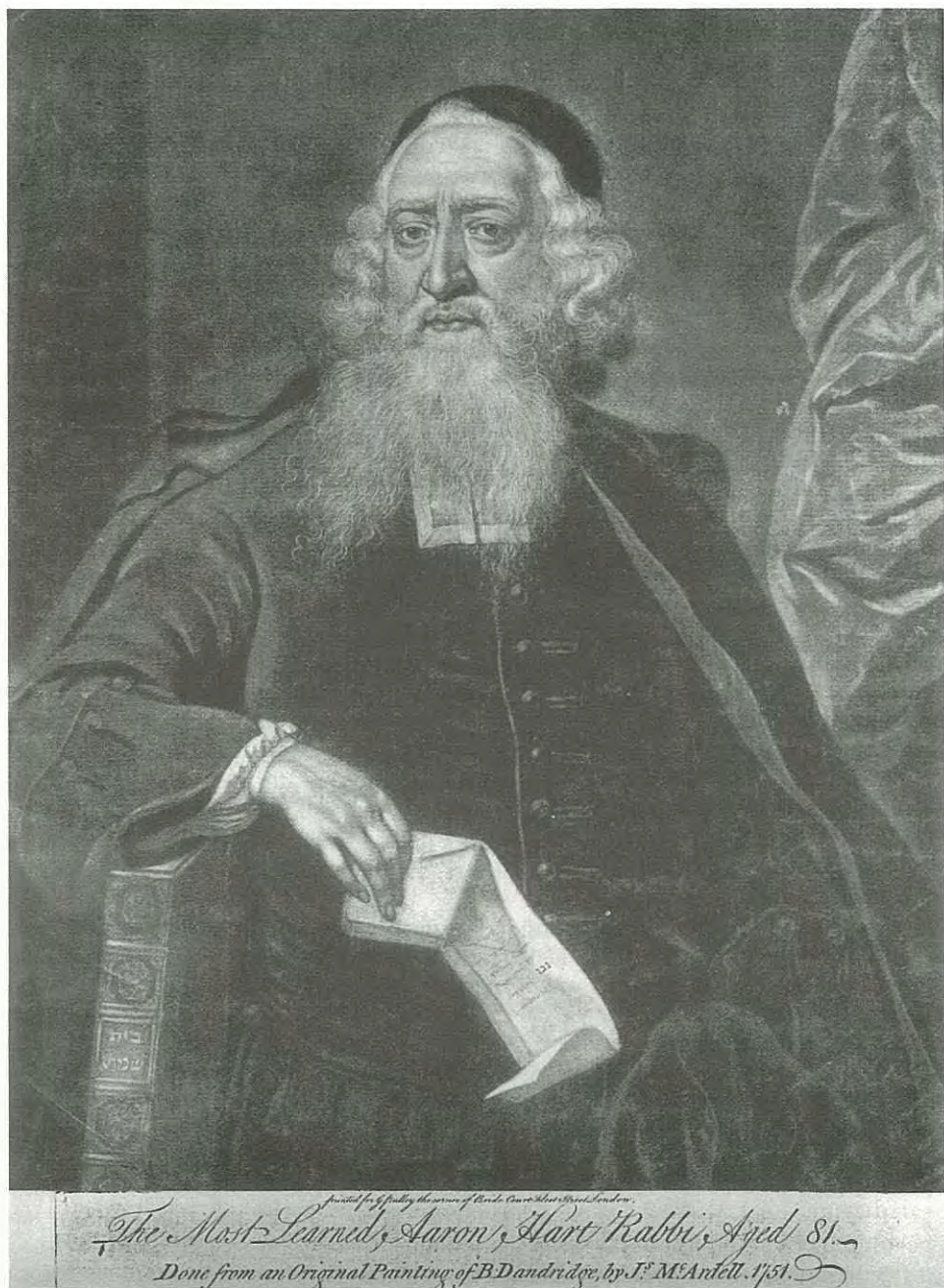
They are, indeed, so disseminated over all the trading posts of the world, that they are become the instruments by which the most distant nations converse with each other, and by which mankind are knit together in a general correspondence. They are like the pegs and nails in a great building which, though they are little valued in themselves, are absolutely necessary to keep the whole frame together.

Max Kohler, when quoting this, mentions that Addison's involvement with Britain's foreign affairs gave him particular knowledge of international trade relations.²¹

Miriam K. Freund wrote that the early Jewish merchants in America were the links between the colonists of the Atlantic coast and the rest of the world. A similar role was played by the Jews of Jamaica.²² Though not popularly associated with the sea, Jews had had maritime connections since the opening up of the Americas. The Records of the Vice-Admiralty Court, Jamaica, 1750–1889, housed in the Jamaica Record Office in Spanish Town, show Jewish names among the purchasing agents, masters and commanders of vessels. Jews were also shown as owning vessels, and some owned privateers. The names of Hart and Adolphus appear in these records both singly and as the firm of Hart and Adolphus.²³ These two families were connected by marriage from the earliest days of the Ashkenazi settlement in London.

The Harts of London were among the original members of the Ashkenazi Jewish community in England in the last years of the seventeenth century, as well as founders and leaders of the Great Synagogue in Duke's Place, Aldgate, in the first half of the eighteenth century. The family came originally from Hamburg, and moved to Breslau sometime before 1670. Moses Hart (1676–1756) came to London when young, joining his kinsman Benjamin Levy in business. By 1704 he was enrolled as one of the twelve authorised 'Jew Brokers'. The original building of the Great Synagogue was erected at his sole expense in 1722 (the renovated building was made possible by a £4000 donation in 1790 from his daughter, the eccentric Judith Levy of Richmond Green).²⁴ Moses' brother, Aaron (1670–1756), came to London in about 1692 to act as rabbi for the new Ashkenazi congregation, later becoming the first rabbi of the Great Synagogue. During his more than fifty years in office, congregations were established throughout England. Although the title of Chief Rabbi was not conferred at that time, Aaron Hart is generally considered to be the first Chief Rabbi of England.

The Harts and their relations intermarried with the leading Jewish families of the day, branches of which had emigrated to America early in the century. There are tantalising glimpses of English and American Jewish mercantile connections with



Illustrious ancestor: Rabbi Aaron Hart (1670–1756), aged 81, in an engraving by James McArdell after a painting by Bartholomew Dandridge (1751).
(Courtesy Muriel Hart Chesler)

Jamaica during the eventful eighteenth century. The family connections of the London Harts, such as the Simsons, the Waages (or Waggs)²⁵ and particularly the Franks²⁶ family, of both England and America, played an important role in shipping and inter-continental trade at that time.

Dr. L. Hershkowitz, in his paper 'Some aspects of the New York Jewish merchant in Colonial trade', states that

the Jews had been a useful segment of the mercantile community, and were an important part of colonial trade; a fact often overlooked by historians. Later, as they integrated into Colonial society and the professions were open to them, there was a decline in their involvement in overseas trade. At that time, however, a large percentage of cargoes were also bound to and from Jamaican ports.²⁷

In an Appendix, Hershkowitz cites among some Customs records a list of the Freemen of the City of New York 1701–64, which includes the names of Jacob Franks, merchant, 1711, Moses Hart (nephew of the Moses Hart of London), merchant, 1714, and Isaac Adolphus, merchant, 1758.

According to Gedalia Yogeve, 'there were lively commercial relations between the Jewish merchants of the City of London and the Jewish communities of the West Indies', though they were not as important as those with the mainland American colonists, and far less important than the City's trade with India and the Far East. There was, however, much interconnection between the three. There was also a contraband trade with the Spanish colonies.²⁸

Jacob Franks and his sons, Naphtali, Moses, David and Aaron, were well-known shippers and traders of New York, Philadelphia and Charleston. Jacob Franks also served as the British Crown's sole fiscal agent for the Northern Colonies. Among the family's numerous trading activities, which included the busy American coastal trade, Naphtali was running a victualling business, New York to Jamaica, in 1746.²⁹ He had married his English cousin, Phila, daughter of Simcha Hart and Isaac Franks, in 1742, and later moved to England where they lived in style on the Thames near her grandfather, Moses Hart of London and Isleworth. Naphtali's brother Moses married another cousin, also called Phila, daughter of Bilah Hart and Aaron Franks of London. They settled nearby in fashionable Teddington, where they moved in Society and had their portraits painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds.³⁰ Their daughter, Isabelle Franks, was painted by Thomas Gainsborough when she was six years old. It is said that three out of four New York merchants had dealings with this same Moses Franks of London.³¹

The founder of the Canadian Jewish Hart family was also an Aaron Hart (1722–1800) from London, though he is not a proven connection. He went to Jamaica in his youth, before going to America, where his first contacts with the army were made through the Franks family, then chief purveyors to the British forces there.³² He became chief commissary officer and in 1763 entered Montreal with General Amherst. Later he established a world-wide shipping business and became the wealthiest man in the British Empire outside the British Isles. In 1770 the first Hebrew prayer book printed in England, produced by Alexander Alexander and Benedict Just of Halberstadt, bore a list of subscribers. Among the many Great Synagogue worthies are Mr. Aaron Hart and Mrs. Dorothy Hart from 'Canady'.³³

The firm of Naphtali Hart & Co., of Newport, was a family business run by Naphtali, Samuel, Abraham and Isaac Hart, who may or may not have been related to the London Harts. Documents in the American Jewish Archives contain an order given to the captain of their ship, *Pelican*, in 1754 to hand over the cargo to Abraham Hart on reaching London.³⁴ In 1748 an Abraham Hart of America had traded with Jamaica. In 1797 in Jamaica an Emmanuel Hart, son of Naphtali, mar-

ried Rachel Abraham of Kingston, Jamaica.³⁵ Despite the lack of modern communications the world was a small place to these much-travelled Jewish merchants.

In the American War of Independence, as in many other wars, Jewish loyalties were divided. Although most Jews sided with the American colonists, there were some who upheld the British cause, and suffered heavily for their loyalty. Newport in particular was a hotbed of rebellion. Here Isaac Hart, who was a prominent citizen and patron of the arts, was brutally assaulted by rebel soldiers and died of his wounds.³⁶

Abraham Wagg of New York was the son of Meir Waage (or Wagg) of London, who was closely associated with the administration of the Great Synagogue, and of Zipporah, sister of Aaron and Moses Hart.³⁷ His attempts to negotiate a settlement led to his ruin, and he, with his wife and children, retired to England. They were supported in Bristol by his wealthy cousin, Judith Levy (Moses Hart's daughter), whose affairs were being managed by his brother David Wagg.³⁸ Another sister of Aaron and Moses Hart, Margoles Simmons, left money in her Will of 1786 to this same Abraham Wagg 'to hold in trust for his daughter Judith, a minor'.³⁹

After the War of Independence most Jewish loyalists went to Canada, together with most of the other 80 000 American loyalists. In 1783 some Jewish families left for Jamaica.⁴⁰

During the war Britain's resources were greatly stretched. In 1778 the United States concluded an alliance with France, which was soon joined by Spain and Holland. Initially forced to supply and defend the army in North America, the Royal Navy now had to defend Britain's possessions in the Caribbean, and also her trade with India and the Far East. Powerful French, and later Spanish, forces harried British shipping in Caribbean waters and along the Spanish Main.⁴¹ In Jamaica there was constant fear of invasion by the rival imperial powers, as well as the ever present fear of rebellion by the slaves. In 1782, however, by defeating De Grasse at the Battle of the Saints, Admiral Rodney saved Jamaica from invasion by the French.

The young Nelson had seen his first active service in the Caribbean. In 1779 he was quartered at Port Royal, where the British officers were lavishly entertained by the rich Jamaican planters. He found strong sympathy among the colonists for their American counterparts, with whom they had much in common, particularly among the merchants, who wanted to continue their profitable trade with the rebel colonies. They imported materials for the sugar trade, maize and white flour for the white colonists and salt fish for the slaves.⁴² In the event the disruption of this trade by the blockade of America caused a severe food shortage on the island, and in the wake of the hurricanes of 1780 and 1781 thousands of slaves died of starvation.⁴³

During the wars of the eighteenth century privateers were much used by the Royal Navy. They raided enemy ships and harbours, captured prime vessels and stopped and searched neutral ships. The Court of the Vice-Admiralty in Jamaica dealt with claims for the reward of property as lawful prize, which was then sold and distributed by agents. In the records Jewish names appear in all capacities.⁴⁴

On 26 August 1789 the *Kingston Journal* carried a report under 'European Intelligence' of Revolution in France. It also noted that the House of Commons was examining the evidence of the slave trade. Both these events were to have a profound effect on the future of Jamaica and its Jews.

The effects of the Revolution were first felt in the neighbouring French island of

St. Domingue. Here, under Toussaint Louverture, the slaves gained their freedom and declared the black Republic of Haiti on 31 December 1803.⁴⁵ There was much alarm when French refugees and agents appeared in Jamaica. There was even a Jewish spy from Haiti, as described by Dr. Zvi Locker.⁴⁶

On 24 May 1805 the French fleet was reported to be sailing in the Caribbean. The Governor of Jamaica held a Council of War, Martial Law was declared and the militia called up for duty. Two days later Lady Nugent, the Governor's wife, recorded in her diary

... to church at 10; an immense congregation, and all in scarlet. The heat extreme. The poor Jews looked uncomfortable the whole service, but they would have lost their pay of 5s. per day if they had not attended.⁴⁷

In the Infantry Regiment of the Kingston and Spanish Town Militia, three out of twelve companies were Jewish.⁴⁸

During her stay on the island Lady Nugent met few Jews socially. A notable exception was Jacob Adolphus, a relative of the Harts of London, who lived in St. Elizabeth. Inspector General of army hospitals and Government Physician to the militia forces in Jamaica, he was later knighted at St. James's Palace. He was both doctor and friend to the Nugent family. Writing of her attendance at the local theatre during her stay in Jamaica, Lady Nugent observed 'The audience was of all colours and descriptions; black, brown, Jews and Whites.'⁴⁹

The success of the American Revolution and the influence of the ideals of 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' would soon combine with the liberal principles of the rising industrial middle classes in England to transform Jamaican society.

This article now attempts to demonstrate that descendants of Rabbi Aaron Hart of London found their way to Jamaica, where they continued to be professing Jews until well into the twentieth century.

The eighteenth century had been a period of prosperity for Jamaica, giving rise to the expression 'as rich as a West Indian planter'. The attraction of the West Indies had even featured in the rabbinical dispute of 1706 in London, which arose from a controversial divorce granted by Aaron Hart to a Jewish debtor who was on the point of absconding there.⁵⁰

That there had been Jews called Hart who put down roots in Jamaica in the early eighteenth century is shown in the island's records for naturalisation and for the granting of patents for land. Among the lists there appear the names of Abraham Hart, 1705, and Solomon Hart, 1715. In 1724 Solomon Hart was granted a patent for 300 acres in St. Elizabeth, county of Cornwall.⁵¹ (This parish of St. Elizabeth was later the home of the writer's forebears in the nineteenth century — which may, or may not, be mere coincidence.) Given that so many connections of the London family had left for the West Indies and America early in the eighteenth century, either or both of these two Harts could have been their relations.

Such was the success of the Jamaican economy that one of the grievances of the thirteen American colonies was 'the disproportionate influence of the sugar island with the British government.' Jamaica's fortunes increased with the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars, which gave her the supremacy of the sugar trade, as well as improved trade with Cuba and Latin America.⁵²

Jamaica's prosperity was not to last, but in the early days of the nineteenth century it was still considered a land of opportunity by prospective settlers. Most of the immigrants were more interested in trade than in agriculture, so that business expanded considerably. There were Ashkenazi Jews among the small number of English settlers who sought a better life there.⁵³

After Britain abolished the slave trade in 1807, there was an outcry in Jamaica over the loss of imported labour. At that time, according to H.P. Jacobs, 'the planocracy controlled the electorate through economic domination and parochial patronage.'⁵⁴ They mistrusted the merchants, the Dissenters and the Jews, all of whom were more tolerant towards slaves and free coloureds, and less affected by the loss of unskilled labour. The Jews, who still suffered civil disabilities, were then in the same position as their cousins in England. They maintained their rabbis, synagogues and cemeteries but, although there were many able and wealthy men among them, they had no political rights. They were also unable to hold public office, except as medical officers in the British army and navy. Major-General Sir Jacob Adolphus, mentioned above, was one of the first Jews to attain high rank in the army.

The eminent Jamaican historian, the late Ansell Hart, told the author that his uncle, Albert Joseph Hart, had maintained that their family was descended from a Chief Rabbi of England. Ansell Hart's own researches into the family connection were lost in the great fire and earthquake of 1907. During the author's research in the Jamaica Record Office at the old capital of Spanish Town, it became evident that Ansell Hart was a second cousin of her own father, Ernest Edward Hart, who was born in Melbourne, Australia. Their Jamaican forebears stemmed from one Lyon Hart, son of an Aaron Hart of London, who arrived on the island in or before 1806, either alone or together with his brother Nathan; another brother, Levy, was already in Jamaica.

The problem now confronting the author was the lack of hard evidence linking these Harts of Jamaica directly to Rabbi Aaron Hart of London. In pursuing leads in both countries, however, a body of circumstantial evidence emerged which has encouraged her to construct a working hypothesis.

We have seen that the Jewish Harts of London had strong family and mercantile connections with the New World in the eighteenth century. The persistence of a legend claiming descent from a Chief Rabbi of England in the Jamaican Hart family converges with a similar claim to descent from Rabbi Aaron Hart in the family, from Canterbury, of the late Miss Janetta Rosenbaum.⁵⁵ Research shows that there were intimate connections between the Jamaican and Canterbury Harts.

It is known that Rabbi Aaron Hart of London who died in 1756, had one son, Abraham, who predeceased him.⁵⁶ Nothing more of his life or career can be traced in the English records. The Rabbi was also predeceased by one of his daughters, Rebecca, who had married Simon Jacobus Moses and borne him a daughter, Hester. The Rabbi's heir, his other daughter, Susanna, was married to a member of the wealthy Heilbut family. In the event, she waived her claim in favour of 'the grandchild, Bilah Moses', a spinster, presumably another daughter of her late sister, Rebecca.⁵⁷

The author began her search by trying to link the Rabbi's son, Abraham, with the Aaron Hart of London whose sons, Lyon, Levy and Nathan, emigrated to Jamaica in the early years of the nineteenth century.⁵⁸ A candidate considered by the author in trying to find this link was an Abraham Hart, whom the records show to have been an ensign in the American Regiment in 1756.⁵⁹ He could possibly have been the Rabbi's son, and could conceivably have died before his aged father in 1756, leaving a son, Aaron, named after the Rabbi. (While unusual among Ashkenazim, the practice of naming a child after a living relative is not unknown, and actually occurred more than once in this family.) Thus Aaron, father of Lyon, Levy and Nathan, could have been the grandson of Rabbi Hart.

A new line of enquiry was opened up, however, by the author's searches in the old Ashkenazi Synagogue records for births, marriages and deaths, housed at the Jamaica Record Office in Spanish Town. Lyon Hart had two children by a first marriage, Moses and Elizabeth, who were living with him in Jamaica.⁶⁰ There, in 1806, he married Rachel Jacob of Kingston, who had a six-year-old son, Aaron.⁶¹ In 1807 we find him advertising in the *Jamaica Gazette* as 'a tailor recently arrived from London.' He seems to have prospered. The name Lyon Hart appears occasionally in the local press of the time in connection with a lease here or a court case there. In 1818 he died, leaving a fairly substantial Will, with his brother Levy as Executor.⁶² Apart from a few small bequests, the Estate was left to the daughters of the second marriage, Sarah and Amelia. His eldest son, Moses, and his step-son, Aaron, received £50 each, while £25 was left to his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, who would already have received a marriage settlement.

Elizabeth had married a Samuel Hart in 1815. This Samuel seems to have been staying in her father's house at the time, and could have been his ward, because the Synagogue register describes Lyon Hart as the 'parent' of both Elizabeth and Samuel. In the *Ketubah*, however, the name of Samuel's father is given as Ze'ev (Benjamin or Wolf in English), of whom nothing further is known. This mystery brings us to the Canterbury connection.

The late Miss Janetta Rosenbaum (1901–72) of London, told the author the story of her great-great-grandparents, Zeib Wolf Hart and Beilah Hart of Canterbury, who were married at the Great Synagogue of London in 1794.⁶³ Zeib Wolf was the son of Aaron Dov Behr Hart, and Beilah the daughter of Rivkah and Shmuel Hart, themselves married in the Great Synagogue in 1777.⁶⁴ They were all reputed to be descended from Rabbi Aaron Hart. Miss Rosenbaum spoke of a painting, a copy of the well-known portrait of the Rabbi, which for many years hung in the home of her mother, Harriett Rosenbaum (*née* Lesser), great-grand-daughter of Beilah and Zeib Wolf Hart.⁶⁵

According to Miss Rosenbaum's family history, Zeib Wolf Hart was drowned at sea while travelling to or from Jamaica, where he had business connections. He left a young widow, with two small children, who subsequently remarried in England. For the rest of her life his widow, Beilah (known as Elizabeth or 'Betsy'), received a quarterly allowance from Jamaica, which was brought to her personally. On her death, her daughter Zipporah (Sophia Lesser), Miss Rosenbaum's great-grand-mother, continued to receive the allowance.

Sophia Hart had married Isaac Lesser at the Great Synagogue in London in 1825; the Register names her as 'daughter of Zeib Wolf'. The Census Returns for 1841 shows that a Mrs. Benjamin, aged 64, of private means, together with a Jane Benjamin, aged 24, were living at the same address in London as Isaac and Sophia Lesser and their children. It seems likely that this Mrs. Benjamin was Sophia's mother, Beilah, or Elizabeth. (Benjamin was presumably the name of the subsequent husband Jane a child of that marriage.) The significance of Mrs. Benjamin's presence in the Lesser household will soon become apparent.

According to Cecil Roth, in 1799 the Ashkenazi Synagogue in Kingston, Jamaica, was presented with silver bells by a Naphtali ben Aaron of Canterbury.⁶⁶ Zeib Wolf Hart of Canterbury had been the son of Aaron. It is thus likely that Naphtali was his brother, and the donation was in memory of Zeib, who we know died tragically after only a few years of marriage. Also in 1799, Beilah Hart's sister, Rebecca — married to Aaron, son of Zvi Hirsch — was promised unconditional *chalitzah* by her two brothers-in-law, Mordechai and Eliezer, if and when required.⁶⁷ This concern

with young widowhood suggests a recent death in the family, and that the year of Zeib's drowning was 1799. Neither of his two children would have been more than four years old at the time.

It is the author's belief that Samuel Hart of Jamaica was the other child of Zeib and Beilah, and Sophia (Lesser)'s brother. Given the evidence of Zeib Wolf's Jamaican connections, and the probable time of his death, it is reasonable to suggest that Lyon, Levy and Nathan Hart were related to him. On that basis it is not surprising, some years later, to find Zeib's son in Lyon's house in Jamaica. We have shown that the Kingston Synagogue register describes Lyon and Samuel's 'parent', while the *Ketubah* gives Samuel's father's name as Ze'ev. The serendipitous discovery by the author of Samuel's Will of 1844 provided the first clear evidence of his English connections. It contains a clause insisting that, prior to all other bequests, £40 per annum be paid to his mother — Mrs. Elizabeth Benjamin of London!⁶⁸

Further evidence of the Canterbury connection is found in the Will of Lyon's brother Levy, dated December 1821. Levy came to Jamaica via America, having left a wife and daughter there, the latter benefiting from his American properties on his death. In Jamaica he had married Rachel Isaac in 1789, but left her only £5. However, he left the sum of £100 to the elders of the Canterbury Synagogue, England, for the relief of the poor — compared to £50 to the German and £25 to the Portuguese Synagogues in Kingston.⁶⁹

The third brother, Nathan Hart, was a wealthy bachelor. In his Will of 1821, £200 was left to the German Synagogue in Amsterdam, as well as generous bequests to the local Jamaican community, Jewish and general. After making provision for his other relatives, he left the bulk of his Estate to his niece Elizabeth Hart, wife of Samuel Hart of St. Elizabeth, 'to hold the same to her, her heirs and assigns, for ever'.⁷⁰

Before moving on to the well-documented story of Samuel and Elizabeth Hart and their descendants, it might be useful to summarise such evidence as we have of their antecedents. Proof of a relationship between the Harts of Jamaica and London and Rabbi Aaron Hart has not yet been found, and any such claim relies on family tradition and circumstantial evidence.

There is, however, ample evidence of close ties between the Jews of London and those of the West Indies in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in which family connections of the London Harts figured prominently. Two separate Hart family legends, one in Jamaica and one in England, claiming descent from an English Chief Rabbi, have persisted to the present day. On investigation these legends seem to converge in the person of Ze'ev Hart, father of Samuel Hart of Jamaica — Zeib Wolf Hart of Canterbury.

Corroboration of the Jamaican Hart connection with the Jewish community of Canterbury comes through the widow of Zeib Wolf Hart, Beilah (later Mrs. Benjamin), who received, and whose daughter Sophia continued to receive, a quarterly allowance from Jamaica. The presentation of silver bells to the synagogue in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1799, by Naphtali ben Aaron of Canterbury, combined with the granting of *chalitzah* [ceremony enabling a man's brother's widow to remarry] to Beilah's sister in the same year, gives credence to the story of Zeib's death on a voyage to or from Jamaica, and suggests that it happened in that year. According to the legend, Zeib left two children: one we know was Sophia Lesser, who lived with a Mrs. Benjamin in London; the other appears to have been Samuel Hart, who provided in his Will for his mother, Mrs. Benjamin, in London. Thus, the convergence of the two family legends is more than coincidental, and appears to give substance to their respective claims. Indeed, according to the dates, any of the

above Harts — Aaron of London, Aaron Dov Behr, Shmuel or Rizkah of Canterbury — could well have been descended from Rabbi Aaron Hart.⁷¹

With the good start of Nathan Hart's bequest, Samuel and Elizabeth prospered and produced a large family. When their son Samuel was born in 1824, they were produce merchants in Black River in the parish of St. Elizabeth in south-west Jamaica. They had moved from Kingston to this busy port on the river mouth some time before 1821.⁷² Like other seaports, Black River was more tolerant in the treatment of its slaves than the surrounding countryside of the county of Cornwall, where some of the most violent slave revolts were to take place.⁷³

According to the records at the Deeds Office, Spanish Town, Samuel and Elizabeth made a number of individual transactions connected with property. It would seem from the columns of the *Jamaica Standard* of 29 June 1839 that Samuel was a man of some substance, for his name appears on the list of those present at the General Meeting of Subscribers of the Planters Bank, Kingston, for that year. The capital of £500 000 was divided into 20 000 shares of £25 each, the number of shares taken up ranging from 100 to 5. Samuel had subscribed to 50 shares, which put him among the larger shareholders.⁷⁴

At the same time the *Jamaica Standard* carried large advertisements for the sale of a variety of goods from London being unloaded at Montego Bay by the barques *Elizabeth* and *Jane* and *Waterlily*, which were owned by a Hart. Among the goods were hardware, saddlery, liquor, perfumery, soft goods, clothing, chemicals, medicines, groceries and confectionery.⁷⁵ It is not clear which Hart was in the shipping business, but Elizabeth's step-brother, Aaron Hart, had a business at Reading Wharf, west of Montego Bay, after his property outside the town had been destroyed in the slave rebellion of 1831–32.⁷⁶

In the July to November lists of jurors for the Cornwall Assize Court of 1839, Samuel Hart is listed as a merchant of the Parish of St. Elizabeth, and Aaron Hart as a merchant of the adjacent Parish of St. James.⁷⁷ Two other Harts are listed for St. James, Abraham Hart, gentleman, and Mordechai Hart, planter.⁷⁸ The latter was a beneficiary under Nathan Hart's Will, although his relationship is unknown.

Samuel the younger grew up in troubled times. Economic conditions in Jamaica had begun to deteriorate. The sugar trade, begun in 1664, had reached its height in 1786, with 1061 plantations in Jamaica worked by slave labour. The large sugar estates were almost like villages, the great houses set apart from the factories on high ground.⁷⁹ The plantations exported directly to agents in London and Bristol.⁸⁰ Many absentee proprietors lived in England or Europe in the utmost extravagance, and left the running of their estates to paid lawyers and overseers. The absentee system was much abused, and the main sufferers were the slaves. After 1796 the sugar trade started to decline. Sugar prices rose owing to the mismanagement of the estates, and, by the end of the process of Emancipation in 1838, there were only 670 factories on the island.⁸¹

Many slaves had never been reconciled to their fate. There had been dozens of slave rebellions and conspiracies throughout the Caribbean in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which had been cruelly suppressed. In Jamaica the escaped slaves (or Maroons) had briefly compelled the authorities to recognise their freedom in two wars (1739 and 1795).⁸² The newspapers of the day carried a special page for the local workshops (slave prisons) which advertised the names of run-away slaves — to be claimed by their former masters or mistresses, or to be sold afresh. The language of the day, in which slaves were regarded as chattels, makes strange and distasteful reading.

The Jews of Jamaica were part of the island's social and economic structure. They

owned, and in some cases dealt in, slaves. That they were no different from their neighbours in this respect can be seen in the *Jamaica Almanac* for the year 1826, which enumerated the residents of Jamaica outside Kingston.⁸³ Judaism specifically reminded them, however, that slaves had to be accorded humane treatment.

In nineteenth century England, the mercantile system was giving way to industrial development and humanistic philosophies; a consequence of this process was the repeal of discriminatory laws against Dissenters and Roman Catholics. The Reform Act of 1832 signalled the rise of the British middle classes. From now on Parliament would serve the new industrial interests as well as the traditional agricultural ones, and gradually liberalise public policies. The growing influence of the Abolitionist movement, led by William Wilberforce and Thomas Fowell Buxton, was a reflection of these changes in political and economic power.

Among those planters who remained on their plantations, many took black concubines in addition to their white wives. Some sent their coloured sons to be educated in England, and these Mulattoes became the spearhead for change in Jamaica.⁸⁴

The Free Coloureds and the Jews had long been pressing for the removal of their civil and political disabilities. Their struggle bore fruit when the franchise was granted to the Free Coloureds in 1830 and to the Jews in 1831. In 1838 Sir Francis Goldsmid was able to use the results of this emancipation — compiling a long, distinguished list of Jews appointed to civil and military offices in Jamaica since 1831 — as an argument in favour of similar rights for the Jews of England.⁸⁵ It was not until 1858, however, that Lionel de Rothschild finally took his seat in the House of Commons. Thus Jamaica (soon followed by Canada) became the first part of the British Empire to grant full political and civil rights to Jews.⁸⁶

Jews also entered enthusiastically into the cultural life of the island. In 1834 a Jew named Jacob de Cordova co-founded the *Gleaner*, still the leading newspaper in Jamaica today. In 1835 a Jew was elected Speaker of the House and later Receiver General. By 1849 Jews had become one-sixth of the Jamaican Assembly and the House voted to adjourn for Yom Kippur — the Jews not voting. Within a few years they had taken their place in all spheres of public life.⁸⁷

A contemporary account of Jamaican Jewry is given by a retired military officer named Bernard Martin Senior, writing in 1835:

Here we must allow that our brethren of the Hebrew nation greatly eclipse the Christians in taste, splendour, ingenuity and management. In people of this persuasion Kingston abounds, and many are not only wealthy but highly respected members of society . . . Some of their establishments are very splendid, both as regards the private residence and the public place of business; and although a Christian certainly must be clever to make an advantageous dealing with a Jew, yet he will find the liberal and gentlemanly feeling predominate during the intercourse. They carry on the principal part of the Spanish Trade, and some of the firms do a great deal of business with the Americas.

He is less glowing in his description of the poorer Jews:

The stranger while passing from one street to another must make up his mind to be somewhat pestered by hawkers principally of the Jewish tribe, who sometimes sell articles uncommonly cheap; but these are usually goods that they themselves have bought at some sale of an insolvent's stock and seldom to be relied on for the measure of quality described.⁸⁸

While the abolition of slavery had been promoted in England since before the French Revolution, the Abolitionists' agenda had lacked urgency. In the early nineteenth century widespread unrest among the slaves in Jamaica culminated in the 1831–32 Emancipation Rebellion in the west of the island, in which plantations were ravaged and properties ruined. (This was the time when Aaron Hart, step-brother of Elizabeth, 'fell on evil days', as recounted by his grandson Ansell Hart to

the author: 'that wicked old reprobate, who recked not where he got it' was to play a decisive role in young Samuel Hart's life.)

This uprising forced the Abolitionist issue in Parliament, and set a timetable for emancipation. In 1833 the Government passed the Abolition of Slavery Act and put pressure on the reluctant colonial legislatures to enact corresponding local statutes.⁸⁹

Despite fierce opposition from the Jamaican Assembly, and from public opinion in other colonies such as the Cape, emancipation was achieved throughout the British Empire during the following year. However, there is evidence that slavers were sailing in British waters as late as December 1839;⁹⁰ the United States retained slavery in the south until after the Civil War.

In Jamaica, to help ease the change, there was a transitional Apprenticeship system for four years. The author's father proudly maintained that a member of his father's family was the first Jamaican voluntarily to free his slaves. This story, formerly thought to be apocryphal, is corroborated in two places. The *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states that 'a Jew named Hart was the first Jamaican to free his slaves'. The other source is Max J. Kohler, who describes at length the act of manumission of a prominent Kingston merchant, lawyer and politician, Daniel Hart of Bowden — himself the first professing Jew to be granted civil and political privileges in Jamaica. Kohler points out that it is not the timing of Hart's action that is so important, for it preceded the official date (1 August 1938) for the ending of Apprenticeship by only a few weeks, but the thoughtful and humane manner in which he gave their slaves their freedom.

Assembling them on Queen Victoria's Coronation Day, 28 June 1838, he gave them a framework for a free life, and urged them to be guided in all things by their Christian pastor. He made provision, at his own expense, for the housing and maintenance of the blind, the sick and infirm among them. He stressed the importance of education, and suggested that they send their children to school for at least three days a week. If they wished them to work on the other three days he was prepared to find them light work at a good wage.

This action received a long and detailed report in the *Jamaica Despatch and Kingston Chronicle* of 6 July, which stressed Daniel Hart's Jewish faith. The article was translated and published in America in the German-language newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*.⁹¹

According to the synagogue registers, Daniel Hart's father, and also his son, were both called Jonas.⁹² The Will of the elder Samuel Hart, made in 1844, refers to a Jonas Hart as tenant of his property in Harbour Street, Kingston. Although kinship has not been proved, this may be more than a coincidence.

Samuel Hart the younger was ten years old when emancipation was proclaimed, and fourteen when Daniel Hart freed his slaves. That these social changes made a deep impression on him is seen in the poems he wrote throughout his life. Though written in the high-flown style beloved of the Victorians, these reveal a broad humanity and compassion which must have affected his decision to eschew America, land of opportunity, and choose, instead, Australia for his future home.⁹³

Emancipation brought many problems in its wake. The transition period had been chaotic. The slaves resented the interim status of apprenticeship, and many refused to co-operate with the scheme. The plantation system began to disintegrate.

The state of the island is reflected in an editorial in the *Jamaica Despatch and Jamaica Gazette* of 4 January 1840. Complaining of the increasing desire of the

Negro for luxury — 'the plain fare of the English pleasant at Christmas would be spurned by the wretched and degraded Negro' — the writer continues:

The carnival is still going on and not a soul has returned to work. The coffee now ripening is dropping from the trees, and yet it will be a week or ten days before the labourers can be induced to resume their occupations, and an immense loss must consequently ensue. The canefields are also getting very foul.

Property declined in value.⁹⁴ In 1846, with Britain's policy of Free Trade, came the withdrawal of the protective tariff on sugar. Trade declined in competition with Cuba and Brazil, and resulted in much hardship on the island. Banks failed. Sugar and coffee plantations collapsed, and were sold for whatever they could fetch. Many were abandoned, while some were bought at ridiculous prices and divided into small lots for sale or rent to Negro peasants.⁹⁵

On the other hand, in order to ensure a continuing supply of cheap labour for the plantations, official policy actually restricted the possibility of former slaves acquiring land and becoming a self-supporting peasantry.⁹⁶ Because of their dependence on the plantations, the freed slaves also suffered from the Sugar Equalisation Act. For many there was no work, no food and no shelter.⁹⁷

In 1843 there was a great fire in Kingston. In 1850 Jamaica suffered drought, earthquake and cholera, which last alone reduced the population by eight per cent. With Jews among the victims it became necessary to organise a Hebrew Benevolent Society. In 1852 there was an epidemic of smallpox in which practically every family suffered grievous losses. This was the nadir in the fortunes of the island.

In 1842 young Samuel Hart became an ensign in the St. Elizabeth Militia. A year or two later, according to the author's father and aunt, he left to take up studies at Oxford, but was recalled on his father's death in November 1844. (The author's cousin remembered her mother — Samuel's daughter, Alice — urging her children to 'Cheer for the dark blue! Cheer for Grandpa Samuel!')

At this time many colonists were leaving the island for Australia and North and Central America, along them Jews whose descendants are today well established in England and the Commonwealth. In the case of Samuel Hart, however, personal factors probably weighed more with him than the island's catalogue of disaster.

When the author, as a child, first heard of Samuel's departure for Australia in 1852, it was the story of a disputed Will that fired her imagination and was responsible, later, for many years of research into her family history. For, according to her father, Ernest Edward Hart (Samuel's youngest son), his father had been disinherited by an uncle or cousin. Preferring not to fight a legal battle, and having inherited money from his mother, Elizabeth, he left Jamaica.

Research has borne this out, for the Will of Samuel Hart the elder, who died in 1844, shows that he had married a second time. That there was dissension in the family is revealed by the phrase in which he asks his children 'to bear and forbear with each other and my wife, Caroline'. The property was to be divided equally between his wife and children. Aaron Hart, Step-brother of his first wife Elizabeth (he who 'recked not where he got it'), was to receive £500, and to act as Executor, together with Caroline and his eldest son Henry (who, according to the Jamaican branch of the family, later emigrated to Hawaii and married a Polynesian princess). There was, however, an injunction that the property was not to be divided for eight years.

In the 1851 Census Returns for England and Wales, we find a Caroline Hart living at No. 2, Cambridge Terrace, Paddington, London. This appears to have been a superior boarding-house with five lodgers, all of them annuitants. According to the legal documents in Jamaica, in 1846 Caroline Hart had 'ceded power to others'. This

meant that the Executorship of the Will now resided in the hands of Aaron Hart and Henry Hart.

What was perpetrated we shall never know. We have only a long, despairing poem, 'Lines written in Jamaica in 1847',⁹⁸ by Samuel at the age of 23. It is highly emotional, and speaks, in generalised and poetic terms, of his 'Barque of Life becalmed', 'The plot astute with selfish cunning fraught', of 'bitterness' and 'martyrdom'.

He waited out the eight years until the division of the property was made in 1852, by which time the value of his inheritance must have been even less than he had expected, given the state of the country. During this period records show a Samuel Hart working as Postmaster at Flint River in 1850.

By way of contrast, another Mr. Hart was living the good life, as we see from an interesting titbit in the *Colonial Standard and Jamaica Despatch* of 8 January 1852. In this amusing account of the first Race Meeting to be held in St. Elizabeth, just after Christmas 1851, we read of the 'hearty manner in which everyone enjoyed himself' and 'the orderly behaviour of the lower orders'.

Wednesday broke serenely clear and ho! for the Course was the universal cry; every sort of van and cart was put in requisition to carry all sorts and sexes to the scene of gaiety and fun. Here we find Mr. Hart's chestnut filly winning the Pony Purse in two minutes and four seconds. Could this have been Samuel's worldly uncle, Aaron, from the adjoining parish of St. James?

Some months later, in October 1852, just before his 28th birthday, Samuel Hart left Jamaica for Australia. He took with him a large Family Bible, which was to hold the record of his family life there.

As Samuel waited off Gravesend in the sailing ship *Blackheath* for the right winds to start his five-and-a-half-month voyage to Port Phillip, he composed a poem that was completely different in spirit from 'Lines written in Jamaica'. Written to the tune of a popular air, this buoyant song, 'To the South, to the South'⁹⁹ is full of hope for a better life in 'the bright and sunny land, where honour and wealth wait on Labour's hard hand, where the deep wrongs of ages shall cease for the poor, and the guerdon of merit is ample and sure.' It ends with the words

To the South! to the South! Leave to such as dream best
The rivers, lakes, forests and plains of the West:
Though Empire and Commerce advance in their clime
There Slavery's dark midnight broods blackened with crime.
Blow ye winds, waft us on, for our hearths shall be free!
Let us raise a great realm on that Lone Southern sea!
Through the vista of years, glimmers joy for our band —
There are hopes for Mankind in that sunny South Land!

Samuel's life in Australia is another chapter in the history of the Hart family, and is dealt with more fully in a different paper.¹⁰⁰ In 1854 he married Eleanor Anne Tomlinson, from Purfleet, in Essex, who was not Jewish. Inter-marriage was not uncommon at the time, given the great shortage of Jewish women in the colony. She died in 1868, leaving five young children.

Two years later, Samuel married Hannah Jacobs Jones of London, whom he met when she was visiting her family in Australia. Her parents, Abraham Jacobs Jones and Sarah Sophia Goldsmid, had been married in the Great Synagogue. (He was a quill merchant and stationer, and she came from a humbler side of the Goldsmid family — fruiterers and orange merchants in Lambeth.) Hannah bore him four more children. Samuel wrote often of his vision of a great nation of free men — 'Britannia renewed on Australia's shore'. His idealistic patriotism found expression

in a long poem, 'Britain, Ever Great', which he was stimulated to write after a lively discussion at the end of the Franco-Prussian War between British and German Jewish immigrants on the merits of their respective motherlands. It was published in the *Australian Israelite* on 25 August 1871, and on 24 November the *Jewish Chronicle* of London commented on this 'fine ode' — 'It is fraught with fine thoughts embodied in noble and poetic language' — and ended with the words: 'we are delighted to find that the thoughts of patriotic Britons, irrespective of religion, are common to all who own the Queen's sway, from the banks of the Tay in the North to those of the Yarra in the south.'¹⁰¹

Samuel's feelings as a Jew are also expressed in his poems. For the barmitzvah of Joseph Morris Cohen, son of his wife's sister and brother-in-law, Bella and Morris Cohen of Melbourne, he wrote an acrostic which began:

Judea's sons, though realmless and maligned,
O'er earth's broad surface homelessly though spread
Sway still the teeming myriads of Mankind:
Enforcing homage — by the power of the mind!
Proofs of a living faith and Judgment dread
High is their destiny though deep their woe.¹⁰²

In another poem, written in 1874 on the birth of a friend's son, he concluded:

Just God of Light let not thine anger last,
Oh let repentant lives wash guilt away.
May Israel in thy days, oh boy, regain
In peace, their Land and unmolested remain;
No more a prey to obloquy and pain!¹⁰³

This was written twenty-two years before the publication of Herzl's *Der Judenstaat*. Hart later put forward his own solution to the fate of Russian Jewry. The pogroms of 1881 had shocked the world, and the Anglo-Jewish Association of Australia held a public protest meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall, presided over by the mayor. A collection from both Jews and Gentiles brought in the sum of £2 017. L.M. Goldman, the Australian Jewish historian, wrote: 'Besides monetary help, other suggestions were proposed for the assistance of the persecuted Russian Jews. Samuel Hart suggested that the Jews should have a land of their own, if not Palestine then some other territory.'¹⁰⁴

Samuel died on 2 March 1883, at the age of 58, after thirty years in Australia, leaving a record in verse and prose of many of the events in his family life. He was survived by his widow, Hannah, and nine children. The Jewish side of the Australian family continues through the descendants of their eldest son, Albert Abraham Hart, born in 1872.

Their youngest son, Ernest Edward Hart (father of the author), was born on 5 November 1876. At the age of fourteen he was the youngest boy in Australia to matriculate. Of an adventurous nature, he at one time prospected for gold, and also travelled through Australia on a bicycle. He married, but tragically lost both wife and baby in childbirth, and at the turn of the century left for South Africa as a corporal in the Victorian Mounted Rifles to fight for Britain in the Anglo-Boer War.¹⁰⁵ He stayed on in Johannesburg and in 1911 married Florence Glasburg (or Glassberg). The daughter of Henry Glassberg and Matilda Abrahams of London — whose parents were from Plotsk, in Poland — Florence had emigrated to South Africa with her family in 1904.

Matilda's brothers, Abraham and Isaac, had been close friends of Israel Zangwill when all three were young teachers at the Jews' Free School in London. Zangwill was to become the famous Anglo-Jewish writer and a friend of Theodor Herzl. The



Ernest Edward Hart, of Melbourne, served with the Australian contingents in the Boer War (1899–1902), and settled in South Africa, where he married Florence Glasburg, from London (pictured with him).

(Courtesy Muriel Hart Chesler)

brothers both went on to have distinguished careers in South Africa, and remained lifelong Zionists.

A.M. Abrahams was for many years principal of the Jewish Government School in Johannesburg. He organised the teaching profession in South Africa and was founder of the Transvaal Teachers' Association, which he served both as treasurer and president. He also served on the Executive of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies. From 1911 he was successively elected president of the South African Zionist Federation, finally becoming honorary life president. He was also a director and editor of the *South Africa Zionist Record*.

His brother Isaac became vice principal of the Johannesburg Commercial High School. At one time secretary of the South African Zionist Federation, he was also the first editor of the *Zionist Record*.

Ernest and Florence moved to Cape Town at the outbreak of World War One, where Ernest served in the armed forces and was stationed at Simonstown. They had four daughters. The family made their home in the seaside village of Muizen-

berg on the False Bay coast. A man of diverse experience and always an eloquent speaker, Ernest Hart took an active part in public life and was chairman of the Cape Chamber of Industries.

With the Jewish struggle for independence in Palestine, his strong pro-British sentiments underwent a change and he became a leading Zionist. He died in 1956. Two of his daughters, and two grandchildren, went to Israel on *aliyah*.

We have thus traced, over approximately two hundred years, the movement of this Anglo-Jewish family half-way round the world. Today there are seventeen descendants of Lyon Hart of London and Jamaica living in the State of Israel.

Epilogue

In Jamaica there was a slow upward climb, with many a setback, on the road to self rule and independence by the black majority. Those Harts who remained in Jamaica gradually lost their Jewish identity and have become fully assimilated into the life and the population of the country.¹⁰⁶

Aaron Hart, Elizabeth Hart's stepbrother, was the father of another Samuel (1844–1919), who was born in the year that his uncle, the elder Samuel (son of Ze'ev), died. This Samuel was 'greatly loved and respected by all classes of the community, particularly the labouring classes, to whom he was very sympathetic.' He kept his Jewish identity as a member of the small community of Montego Bay; he married three times, and all his wives were Jewish. He was the father of the historian Ansell Hart. Andrade records his life, as well as that of his brother Albert Joseph Hart, and mentions the claim of lineal descent from Chief Rabbi Aaron Hart of London.

Ansell Hart was born in 1878 and died in 1973 at the age of 94. He was the last of the Jewish Jamaican Harts. In the course of research into her father's family, the author had written to the Jamaica Institute in Kingston in 1961. Her letter had been passed by them to Ansell Hart as one of Jamaica's foremost historians. In response, she had received a letter from him which led to a nine-year correspondence and her visit to the family in Jamaica a year before his death. The exact relationship — that Ansell was a second cousin of her father, Ernest Edward Hart — was confirmed by her searches during the visit.

Ansell Hart was the link between past and present. Through his letters and writings he preserved the continuity of the Jamaican experience. It was he who inspired the author to delve further into the history of the Jewish Harts of Jamaica.

Ansell had gone to boarding school at an early age, and was brought up in a non-Jewish environment. A lawyer by profession, he had campaigned to reform the iniquitous system of legal costs in conveyancing. He had espoused liberal causes and in 1936 helped to fund *Public Opinion*, the weekly paper of the radical intelligentsia. In his last twenty years he began writing on the history of the Jamaican people, and published a biography of the Jamaican patriot George William Gordon.¹⁰⁷ During his 'retirement' he circulated a printed leaflet, *Monthly Comments*, in which he wrote articles on historical and current matters. In 1969 he was awarded the Musgrave Gold Medal by the Institute of Jamaica for his literary contribution to Jamaican history. He later received an honorary degree in History from the University of the West Indies, to which institution he donated his important collection of books on the West Indies. He also had a strong interest in agriculture,

and was a practical farmer. At the time of his death he was working on 'A New Utopia', a blueprint for the future of the country.

Though far removed from his Jewish roots, Ansell was very interested in the research for this paper. In hospital, just before his death, he sent for the rabbi of Kingston who arranged a Jewish funeral. He was buried in the Orange Street Jewish Cemetery at Kingston on 24 April 1973. In his oration Rabbi Bernard Hooker quoted from Ansell's own works and concluded:

Immortality can be achieved in other ways. First, one achieves immortality as long as one's memory remains alive in the minds of one's children and children's children. Second, one achieves immortality as long as one's contribution to life and thought here on earth remain relevant and stimulating. In this sense, while we pray for his immortal soul, we can rest assured that the contribution which Ansell Hart has made to the life and thought of Jamaica will ensure him an eternal place in the history of this island.

The funeral was attended by the Governor-General and his *aide-de-camp* and a very large number of people from all walks of life. Among the remarkable obituaries in the Jamaican newspapers were references to the sweetness of Ansell's disposition, his integrity, erudition and humanity.

Ansell Hart's family, three sons and a daughter, all played a useful and prominent part in the life of Jamaica: in business, the legal and nursing professions. His youngest son, Richard, was a founder of the Trade Union Movement and of the People's National Party. A lawyer, historian, lecturer and writer, he lived for many years in England, but has now returned to the country of his birth. His two-volume publication, *Slaves who Abolished Slavery* (University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica, 1980 and 1985), has been a valuable source of material for this paper.

The Jewish community in Jamaica today is very small. There are now only 200 Jews in the country, consisting of 100 congregants and 100 with no allegiance to the community. The last synagogue, in Kingston, is unable to attract a rabbi.¹⁰⁸ A high degree of assimilation, and the relaxed religious attitudes of the congregation, pre-sage the end of a community which has existed for over 300 years.

In the author's pursuit of a connection between a family of Jewish Harts in Jamaica and the founders of the Great Synagogue in London, a story has unfolded of a sojourn in one of Britain's oldest colonies which may serve as a footnote to both Jewish and Jamaican history.

NOTES

The abbreviations used in these notes are as follows

- Trans.JHSE Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England
- Misc.JHSE Miscellanies of the Jewish Historical Society of England
- Pub.AJA Publications of the American Jewish Archives
- Pub.AJHS Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society
- BNL British Newspaper Library

PRIMARY SOURCES

Hart family documents including:

Samuel Hart's Family Bible, dated 1852, containing personal information and records from that date; thanks to the kindness of the descendants of Samuel Hart and Eleanor Tomlinson, namely Lucille Grey, Shirley Williams and Josephine Kuperholz; as well as the descendants of Samuel Hart and Hannah Jacobs Jones, the author's cousin the late Bertha Isaacs (née Hart) and her son, Albert Isaacs, all of Melbourne; Samuel Hart's Album of Poems, handwritten by himself, a xerox copy of which was kindly made by his granddaughter, the author's cousin, the late Nancy Brushett of Chester, England; sundry other papers, portraits, engravings and photographs; Collyer Fergusson Papers, Archive and Manuscript Collections of the Hartley Library, University of Southampton; Hallenstein/Hart Papers, as in the preceding; Albert Hyamson Collection, Society of Genealogists, London; Lucien Wolf

Papers, Jewish Studies Library, University College, London; synagogue registers, registers of deeds, census returns, Wills, etc., England, Jamaica, Australia.

ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

South Africa: the South African Public Library, Cape Town; the Jacob Gitlin Library, Cape Town; the Jewish Museum, Cape Town; the National Archives, Cape Town; the South African National Archives, Pretoria.

Australia: Australian Jewish Historical Society Archives and Journals, Sydney and Melbourne; synagogue Records of East Melbourne Hebrew Congregation; the Jewish Museum of Australia, Melbourne.

Jamaica: West India Reference Library of the Institute of Jamaica, Kingston; Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town.

Israel: Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; the Jewish National and University Library, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; the Diaspora Research Institute, Tel Aviv University.

England: Jewish Historical Society of England, and Jewish Studies Library, University College, London, for *Transactions*, *Miscellanies* and *Index*, compiled successively by A.M. Hyamson and Walter M. Schwab; British Museum, London; Jewish Museum, London; British Newspaper Library, Colindale, London (BNL); *Jewish Chronicle* Archives, London; Public Record Office, London, for archives of Estate Duty Office; Prerogative Court of Canterbury; Guildhall Library, London, including Lloyd's Marine Collection; the Jewish Studies Library, University College, London; Jews' College Library, London; Society of Genealogists, London; Genealogical Centre, Church of the Latter Day Saints, London; United Synagogue Archives, London; Archives, Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, Maida Vale, London; Richmond Reference Library, London.

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1. B.G. Sack, *The History of the Jews in Canada*, trs. Ralph Novek, Montreal, 1965; and Jacob R. Marcus, 'The West India and South American Expedition of the American Jewish Archives 1952', *Publ.AJA*, vol. 5, no. 1, January 1953.
2. Jacob A.P.M. Andrade, *A Record of the Jews in Jamaica from the English Conquest to the Present Time, 1750-1889*, Kingston, 1941.
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34. *Manuscript Catalogue of the American Jewish Archives*, vol. 2, 1971.
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39. Lists of Hart family Wills, Lucien Wolf Papers, as above.
40. Sack, *op.cit.*
41. T. Pocock, *The Young Nelson in the Americas*, London, 1980.
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55. Miss Janetta Rosenbaum, in correspondence with the author, 27 May 1969 and 26 June 1969.
56. Cecil Roth, 'The Membership of the Great Synagogue of London to 1791', *Misc.JHSE*, part 6, 1962.
57. Roth, *History of the Great Synagogue*, *op.cit.*, ch. 8, note 6.
58. Synagogue registers, Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town.
59. Cecil Roth, 'The Jews in the Defence of Britain', *op.cit.*
60. It is possible that this first marriage took place in America, his brother Levy having reached Jamaica by that route. The name Lyon Hart appears in two American records of the time. According to N. Taylor Phillips, *Publ.AJHS* vol. 6, 1897, 'The Congregation of Shearith Israel', a congregant Lyon Hart is on the list of voters for 1784. In 1790 a Lyon Hart was registered as a founder member of Kahal Kodesh Beth Shalom, Richmond Virginia, fifteen years before our Lyon Hart arrived in Jamaica. (This is mentioned in both Jacob Ezekiel, 'The Jews of Richmond', *Publ.AJHS*, vol. 4, 1896, and Leon Huhner, 'The Jews of Virginia from Earliest Times to the Close of the 18th Century', *Publ.AJHS*, vol. 20, 1911.) Alternatively, if he had come directly from England, he might have been the Lyon Hart 'made in Hiram's 1803 or 1804' mentioned by the Rev. Morris Rosenbaum in a list of Jewish Freemasons. This is appended to John M. Shaftesley's article 'Jews in English Regular Freemasonry 1717–1860', *Trans.JHSE*, vol. 25, 1977.
61. Synagogue registers, Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town.
62. A notice of his death appears in the *Jamaica Gazette*, vol. 40, no. 2, 3–10 January 1818: 'Died at Port Maria in St. Mary's on the 4th inst., Mr. Lion Hart, tailor, formerly of this city [Kingston].' Lyon Hart's Will is in the Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town. It is disconcerting to find that Lyon signed his Will with a cross, while the signatures of his two brothers, Levy and Nathan, are appended to their Wills. It could have been due to failing eyesight, a not improbable fate for a tailor.
63. Some events taking place around the date of the marriage of Zeib and Beilah Hart invite speculation. The *Jamaican Royal Gazette*, vol. 15 (BNL), 4–12 May 1793, lists a Mr. Hart among the passengers arriving in London from Jamaica. Kingston journals for some years during the 1790s carried advertisements for a firm, Harrison, Hart & Co., which imported and exported all types of goods from food to clothing, hardware to tobacco. In 1794 the firm was advertising a sloop for sale. Could this have been the means of providing a dowry?
64. Miss Rosenbaum, in letters as above.
65. According to Miss Rosenbaum (see letters, above), this copy was painted by a relative and later given by her father, the Rev. Morris Rosenbaum, to a person named Solomon living in Scotland, who claimed a closer relationship to the Rabbi.
66. Cecil Roth, *The Rise of Provincial Jewry*, London, 1950; and Andrade, *op.cit.*, Appendix Q.
67. Miss Rosenbaum, in letters as above.
68. Samuel Hart's Will, Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town, and Somerset House, London. (The latter now in the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane.)
69. Levy Hart's Will, Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town.
70. Nathan Hart's Will, Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town.
71. The few surviving records of the former congregation at Canterbury are at present unavailable. They are in the process of being sorted at the University of Southampton.
72. Synagogue registers, Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town.
73. Jacobs. *op.cit.*
74. *Jamaica Standard*, vol. 3, no. 240, Montego Bay, 29 June 1839, p. 3, in the BNL.
75. *Jamaica Standard*, vol. 3, no. 321, Montego Bay, 3 July 1839, p. 3, in the BNL.
76. Ansell Hart, in conversation with the author.
77. *Jamaica Standard*, Montego Bay, 26 and 19 October 1839 respectively, BNL.
78. *Jamaica Standard*, Montego Bay, 10 July 1839, BNL.
79. Black, *op.cit.*
80. Yogev, *op.cit.*
81. Black, *op.cit.*
82. Richard Hart, *The Abolition of Slavery*, London, 1989.
83. Max J. Kohler, 'Jews in the Anti-Slavery Movement, II', *Publ.AJHS*, vol. 9, 1902.
84. Black, *op.cit.*
85. *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 7, New York, 1904.
86. Andrade, *op.cit.*
87. *ibid.*

88. *Sunday Gleaner*, *op.cit.*, quoting from Bernard Martin's book, *Jamaica as it was, as it is and as it may be ... an authentic narrative of the Negro Insurrection in 1831 by a retired Military Officer*, London 1835. The author's full name was Bernard Martin Senior, but the surname has often been omitted.
89. Hart, *The Abolition of Slavery*, *op. cit.*
90. *Jamaica Standard*, Montego Bay, December 1839: 'Her Majesty's Schooner *Skipjack* with the captured schooner *Ulysses*, having on board 529 Africans 43 days from the Coast. We are happy to observe the superior conditions of the present cargo compared with those formerly brought into this harbour. Only nine, we understand, died during the passage.' Further to this, the *Jamaican Despatch and Jamaica Gazette*, 1 January 1840, published a Government Advice from King's House: 'Parties desirous of contracting for the services of the Africans landed at Montego Bay from the Portuguese Slave Brig, *Ulysses*, are to apply to P.S. Lambert Esq. at Montego Bay, who is approved to enter into contracts with parties on behalf of the Africans. The number of Africans is altogether about 520, comprising males and females in nearly equal proportions, the greater part of the ages varying from 6 to 16.' The incident ends on 19 January 1840 with a notice from the Court of the Vice-Admiralty stating that the Attorney-General had applied for the condemnation of the same slave vessel. On 20 January 1840 judgment was given in the case of the Queen against the Portuguese brigantine *Ulysses* and 583 slaves, when both vessel and slaves were forfeited to Her Majesty under the 'British Act against the Slave Trade'.
91. Kohler, 'Jews in the Anti-Slavery Movement', *op.cit.*; and Andrade, *op.cit.*, quotes in full the long epitaph on Daniel Hart's tombstone which lists all his public positions and refers to his strict integrity.
92. Synagogue registers, Jamaica Record Office, Spanish Town.
93. Samuel Hart's handwritten book of poems, 1847-1883, was in the possession of his granddaughter, the late Mrs. Nancy Brushett of Chester, who gave copies to the author.
94. The *Jamaica Standard* of 12 January 1839, vol. 3, no. 268 (BNL), p. 4, prints a letter sent to London the previous year. 'Property of every description is so lessened in value that it will produce one-third of the amount it would have done four or five years back.' The correspondent writes of an estate that was formerly let for £800 per acre and more recently at the reduced rent of £450; the most that could now be obtained was £150. In the *Jamaica Standard* of 18 March 1840, a similar tale of woe ends as follows: 'Never has a country been so cursed and robbed as Jamaica, and the mind of the ignorant negroes misled by a set of mountebank preachers and sectarians — the scum of England. Two millions of compensation remain unpaid. Let this be given to import Africans from Africa and free blacks from America in Government ships. Get also Highlanders from Scotland (hardy people) who have been reared alone on potatoes milk and herrings ...'. The solution found was to import labour from the East.
95. Black, *op. cit.*
96. Hart, *The Abolition of Slavery*, *op. cit.*
97. Black, *op. cit.*
98. Samuel Hart, 'Lines Written in Jamaica, 1847', from his handwritten book of poems.
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100. M. Hart Chesler, 'A Link in the Chain — a Victorian Cameo, The Life and Work of Samuel Hart', *Journal of Australian Jewish Historical Society*, vol. 10, part 3, 1988.
101. The complete set of the *Australian Israelite*, 1871-75, is housed in the State Library of Victoria, Melbourne. The 24 November 1871 edition of the *Jewish Chronicle* is in the *Jewish Chronicle* archives, London.
102. Dated 1872 in Samuel Hart's handwritten book of poems.
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104. L.M. Goldman, *The Jews in Victoria in the Nineteenth Century*, Melbourne, 1954, p. 174.
105. Ernest Edward Hart (author's father), in conversation.
106. Rabbi Bernard Hooker (the last permanent Rabbi of the last remaining synagogue in Jamaica) wrote in 1968, when there were still approximately 600 Jews in Jamaica: 'Most of the Cohens, Levys, Isaacs and Abrahams on the island are not Jews. It would be interesting to discover how they came by these names, and it is possible that intermarriage, concubinage, and slave emancipation may have made their contribution.'
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THE REDISCOVERY OF ISAAC NATHAN; OR 'MERRY FREAKS IN TROUB'LOUS TIMES'

Graham Pont

The rediscovery of Isaac Nathan began in 1984 when the Jewish American scholars Fred Burwick and Paul Douglass published a cassette recording of selections from the *Hebrew Melodies* (1815–16 et cetera). Coincidentally I gave a talk that year on Nathan to the Musicological Society of Australia. The address was illustrated with his arrangement of 'Holy Lord God Almighty' performed by Prue Freiinger and Michael Dyer. In 1988, on the bicentenary of Byron's birth, there was a memorial ceremony at St. Stephen's Newtown, organised by the Byron Society of Australia. After visiting Nathan's tomb, the small but dedicated company adjourned to the church to hear a selection of the composer's music, sung by Barbara Albertini and accompanied by Michael Dyer on an organ which was badly in need of restoration. In 1976 Dyer accompanied Claire Ford in the first modern performance of Nathan's arrangement of 'Angels ever Bright and Fair' (from Handel's *Theodora*).

The association of the noble poet and the young Jewish composer was again recalled by the facsimile reprint of the original volumes of the *Hebrew Melodies*, a collection of solo and part-songs for which Lord Byron supplied all the poetry.¹ Editors Burwick and Douglass show how Nathan derived his melodies from various musical traditions, including those of the synagogues of London and his native Canterbury (where his father was a chazzan or cantor). In a refreshing defence of the once-famous *Melodies*, Burwick and Douglass find real merit in the music and — more surprisingly — in the genuineness of Byron's Jewish sympathies; but they completely miss the influence of Handel (Nathan was recommended to Byron as a master of the Handelian style.) The present writer has exactly the opposite problem in dealing with the stylistic complexities of Nathan's music and its Polish-Jewish origins. After a century of neglect, during which the reputations of both poet and musician suffered badly, Burwick and Douglass opened the way to a new assessment of a half-forgotten period of English art history — one of fundamental importance in the formation of Australian culture.

In 1990, Jacqueline Voignier-Marshall of the Australian Byron Society persuaded the State Library of New South Wales to mount a memorial exhibition on what was believed to be the bicentenary of Nathan's birth. On his tombstone the date of birth was recorded as 1790 — obviously without consulting Nathan himself who died suddenly on 15 January 1864, after being run over in Pitt Street by one of Sydney's first horse-trams. But, in at least two published biographies, Nathan had recorded that he was born in 1792, the date usually given in the older reference works. This was the first of many problems to be addressed by recent research. The project was inspired by an invitation from the former Mitchell Librarian, Margy Burn, to compile a catalogue for the exhibition in the Dalgety Walkway, part of the new extensions which have made the State Library the most comfortable and convenient research centre of its kind in Australia.

During September 1990, work began on a catalogue 'of 10–20 pages'. In December the exhibition of *Isaac Nathan: the Man — the Music — the Myth* was

mounted, with an endless tape of background music, and ran until the following May. As a result of this prolonged exposure, some of Nathan's music is now better known at the Mitchell Library than anywhere else in the world! But the catalogue never eventuated, because the research immediately opened a Pandora's Box of problems which still refuses to be shut. The 'catalogue' soon grew into a modest, then a more substantial, biography but even that failed to appear on the real anniversary of Nathan's birth, in 1992. After three years' work, the authors are still struggling with an embarrassment of riches which they sincerely hope will see the light in 1994. Part of their problem has been an extraordinary run of luck, a series of unforeseen accidents, happy coincidences and picaresque situations which have made the rediscovery of Isaac Nathan seem no less implausible — and hardly less enjoyable — than one of his own comic operas. Nathan himself might as well have composed and directed the whole improbable episode.

The beginning of the affair was truly comical. At the first interview, the librarians who had spent about three weeks getting out what they could find of Nathan's scattered works were asked for the manuscript score of *Don John of Austria* (often described, quite wrongly, as Australia's first opera). Both ladies looked absolutely blank. After an enraged outburst, the manuscript was eventually located — badly catalogued and precariously misplaced. Having taken pride of place in the exhibition, along with the National Library portrait of the composer, this precious relic — by far the most important early record of Australia's operatic history — was catalogued anew and duly transferred to the security of the manuscript collection.

Don John of Austria (completed in 1846, performed in May 1847 and partly published in 1848) was actually Nathan's *second* Australian opera: his first, *Merry Freaks in Troub'lous Times* was completed and privately rehearsed in 1843. The libretto had already been printed, evidently for a projected performance, when Nathan was declared bankrupt in March 1844. Nathan finally published the vocal score in 1851 — 170 pages laboriously set up by himself in musical type. This light-hearted 'historical operatic drama', set in the time of the Commonwealth and exile of Charles II, was the first work of its kind to be composed and published in Australia: a century and a half old this year, it still awaits its first public performance — a sad comment on the Australian sense of theatrical history. Though nearly all the score has been arranged for voices and pianoforte, one aria ('The Kiss You Stole') is printed in its complete orchestral setting — it must have been a special favourite of Nathan's. These ten pages of full score are the sole surviving remnant of his Australian orchestral music, as well as the first complete example of operatic score to be published in Australia. The rest of Nathan's Australian orchestral arrangements remained in manuscript and were presumably destroyed after his death.

Just as the exhibition was being mounted, the Sydney antiquarian bookdealer Peter Tinslay discovered a small collection of Nathan's original publications — mostly Australian pieces and all of family provenance. One of the items was *Hey-Diddle-Diddle!*, inscribed by the composer to his grand-daughter Marion: this was immediately included in the exhibition. Fortunately, my colleague and co-author, Paul Wilkins, was able to secure all these valuable items for the University of New South Wales Libraries, where the whole collection has now been restored and conserved through a generous contribution from the Great Synagogue to the University's 'Adopt a Book' programme.

Soon after — in another extraordinary coincidence — Peter Tinslay located a whole volume of music from Nathan's personal library, including some of the music that was performed at his first Australian concert in Melbourne (18 February

1841) This too went to the University of New South Wales Libraries, which now have the third most important Nathan collection in the country (the second being that of the National Library). An admirer of Nathan, Peter Tinslay also recalled that he had once seen a book of costume designs which appeared to have been owned by Nathan and which (he surmised) included the designs for *Don John of Austria*. He had been shown the volume years ago in Sydney but could not recall where.

Late in 1990, I ran into the well-known Sydney author Dick Hall: old friends from university days, we met by chance at the local pub. I told Dick I was working on a biography of Nathan — he told me he'd been married to one of Nathan's descendants! From this unexpected exchange, I was introduced to Venetia Nelson (née Nathan, a great grand-daughter of the composer and his second wife) who put me onto her niece, Micaela Nathan in Queensland. This charming lady, who continues the family tradition as a professional clarinettist, turned out to be the owner of a unique manuscript — the E flat 'Clarienet' part of the overture to *Merry Freaks* copied out and signed on all four pages by the composer himself. According to family tradition, Nathan's second wife burnt all the manuscripts of her deceased husband as 'rubbish'. So this single part is the only known copy of Nathan's music that survives entirely in his own hand. I was later told by Nathan's most distinguished descendant, Sir Charles Mackerras, that the E flat clarinet was an instrument used in the colonial military bands, who used to assist at Nathan's performances. Nathan sometimes included extracts from the unperformed opera in his Sydney concerts: the clarinet part probably owes its survival to some bandsman who took it home after a performance rather than returning it to the composer-conductor. The manuscript proves conclusively that the vocal score of *Don John* is not in Nathan's hand — it might have been copied out by one of his daughters, who were all professionally trained.

At the end of the year, I visited the late Charles Venour Nathan, great-great-grandson of the composer and his first wife Eliza (who married her handsome music master when she was only seventeen). The house in Vaucluse was stacked with treasures but in a terrible mess. I noticed on the wall a large portrait in oils of Nathan's eldest son, Dr. Charles Nathan who became Sydney's first anaesthetist, a prominent amateur musician and a founding father of the University's medical faculty. Among the piles of dusty papers I also spotted copies of Nathan's original publications mixed up with many photocopies of data collected by Venour Nathan in a lifetime of research dedicated to his illustrious ancestor. He had compiled a provisional list of Nathan's works, dating many of the Australian publications from announcements in the press, and he had donated valuable copies of his ancestor's music to the Mitchell Library. From his collection also came the fine portrait of the young, Byronic Nathan which is now in the National Library. Venour Nathan also assisted Burwick and Douglass in their researches and in gratitude they dedicated their volume to him. By the time I got to see him, however, his concentration was beginning to wander.

It was a hot and steamy summer's day. I sent him a draft of the 'catalogue' in advance and he received me kindly, allowing me rummage freely through his collection which was dispersed in several rooms. I soon found his copy of *A Good Black Gin* (1845; the first Australian composition dedicated to an Aboriginal) and immediately sat down and played it on the piano. The old man began to sing, in a voice that was still steady and well-tuned; but my attempts to engage him musicologically were to no avail. Over a lunch of pie and coffee (before which he pronounced Grace), he reminisced of his days at Tobruk. With awful clarity he recalled all the

movements of a battle in the desert, including his encounter with an Italian soldier dying of wounds. The story went on after lunch while I pretended to listen, still anxiously sorting through more piles of music and photocopies interspersed with some fetching pinups of the 1940s and 1950s. I tried to make a list of his Nathan holdings, noting the variant editions and copies inscribed by the composer; but what I really needed was photocopies of the rarer items. When I asked if I could take some away for copying, he adamantly refused: he was the conscientious guardian of a heritage. When he died in 1992 his executors would have thrown it all out but for the timely intervention of Margy Burn who rescued the musical legacy (no less than 23 of Nathan's original publications) and secured it all, along with the portrait of Charles Nathan and other items, for the State Library. It now boasts the finest Nathan collection in the world, including microfilm copies of all the British Library holdings of the composer's English works previously unrepresented in the Australian collections.

For several months I did the rounds of Nathan's Sydney. I visited the Archdiocesan Archives at St. Mary's Cathedral, where Nathan had once been organist and choirmaster (1842–43). Apart from copies of the *Freeman's Journal* (to which Nathan contributed various notices of his musical activities), nothing survived the disastrous fires of 1865 and 1869 other than the *Minute Book* of the St Mary's Choral Society which Nathan conducted in the early 1850s. Nathan got on well with the choir but not with the organising committee. Having been hired and fired in 1851, he was re-engaged in February 1853 and sacked again in August 1854. It appears that the committee objected to Nathan's Aboriginal settings, one of which might have been *The Aboriginal Mother*, a lullaby comforting a child after the notorious Myall Creek massacre of 1838. Gerry Almond, who has made a special study of Church politics in this period, has suggested that the authorities were disturbed by possible associations between the image of the Aboriginal mother and her child and that of Mary and Jesus. In the uneasy years preceding the promulgation of the Immaculate Conception, Almond suggests, Nathan and his music were swept away in the political turbulence of that watershed in Church doctrine. Gerry Almond also discovered the partly obscured and almost illegible inscription on the other side of Nathan's tomb recording the burial there of his second wife, Henrietta, who died in 1898. I take the liberty of including this information and expressing my gratitude to Mr Almond, who is now seriously ill in hospital.

I also visited the Archives of the NSW Jewish Historical Society where I was warmly welcomed and given the best advice of the whole project, by the archivist Helen Bersten. In the files I found original notes and correspondence of Nathan researchers and also details of the old York Street Synagogue which was opened on 2 April, 1844. Nathan conducted the music for this occasion which included some of his compositions; he was assisted by two other Jewish colleagues, the recently arrived pianist J.H. Anderson and a mysterious Mr. (Louis?) Leo, said to have been a pupil of Nathan's. Both of these followed him in publishing arrangements of 'Hebrew Melodies'. Leo's appeared in London that year and Anderson's was published in Sydney, a few months after the ceremony: *The Lays of the Hebrews. . . as Sung at the Consecration of Sydney Synagogue. . . arranged for the Piano Forte*. The only known copy of this small collection is in the Mitchell Library. The publication was advertised in the *Weekly Register* of 21 September 1844 and sympathetically reviewed by Nathan himself in the same issue.

As a result of my regular visits to the Great Synagogue, I was invited to address a meeting of the NSW Jewish Historical Society on 30 March 1992. It was agreed that

AUSTRALIAN and ABORIGINAL MELODIES, by NATHAN.

"STAR OF THE SOUTH,"

Inscribed to His Honor Mr. La Trobe.

"MABLE MACMAHON,"

Inscribed to Roger Therry, Esq. Attorney General.

"KOORINDA BRAIA,"

Inscribed to Mrs. E. Deas Thomson.

"THE EAGLE CHIEF,"

Inscribed to Lady O'Connell.

"THE ABORIGINAL MOTHER,"

Inscribed to Lady Gipps.

And the New NATIONAL ANTHEM,

"LONG LIVE VICTORIA,"

Inscribed to Sir George Gipps.

Published for the Composer, Ada Cottage,
Prince-street.

(Courtesy Graham Pont)

the presentation should include musical illustrations. Adjoining the Synagogue is a fine auditorium with a stage and a grand piano; but, having discovered that the grand had one leg and several ivories missing, we resorted to a truly Davidian substitute, a concert harp. Played by Marie-Chantal Bertinazzo, it created a magnificent effect and made Nathan's songs sound even better.

The illustrations included some of the *Hebrew Melodies* and possibly the first modern Australian performance of Nathan's most popular operatic song, 'Why are you wand'ring here, I pray?' (from his first and most successful work for the stage, *Sweethearts and Wives*, 1823). This delightful air was sung by Joseph Toltz, the conductor of the Synagogue choir, who also sang the most famous of all the *Hebrew Melodies*, 'She Walks in Beauty' (the melody has been identified as a 'former *Lakha dodi* of London Synagogues' and is still known today). Prue Freiinger sang 'The Wild Gazelle' and 'Oh! snatch'd away', both in Nathan's best Handelian style, and also his virtuoso setting of Sarti's cavatina 'Lungi dal caro bene'. But what stole the show was the final illustration: the dramatically novel 'Koo-ees' from *The Southern Euphrosyne* (1848-49). I shall never forget watching the faces of the audience as they heard Mr Toltz's opening 'koo-ees' accompanied by Nathan's strange harmonies on the harp — and then unexpectedly answered from afar off, by Ms Freiinger from the back of the hall.

Even today, however, Nathan has his problems with authority. Before my address I had to submit the list of proposed musical illustrations to the Rabbi for approval. I wanted to present the some of Nathan's Australian choral works including *The Lord's Prayer* (1845) and *The Names of Christ* (ca. 1853) and, understandably,

the Rabbi would not permit these to be sung. But he also expressed reservations about *Hey-Diddle-Diddle!*, while allowing the even more subversive 'Koo-ees'. . . In the preliminary advertising the title of my address was surreptitiously changed to something about 'The Father of Australian Music'. I quickly put an end to that nonsense — no better than schoolboy history about Captain Cook's 'discovery' of Australia. Apart from its colonial arrogance and presumption, that ridiculous sobriquet will not stand a moment's examination. Though Australia lacks a definitive musical history, it is well known that Nathan was preceded not only by the untold millennia of Aboriginal musicians but also several noteworthy colonial artists. The first significant European musician to arrive here and settle permanently was the ill-fated Charles Sandys Packer (1810–83), who was transported to Norfolk Island in 1840 for forgery, pardoned in 1850 and gaoled again for bigamy for 1863. During his years of freedom in Sydney he was widely regarded as the best of the colonial musicians and always treated with respect by Isaac Nathan. From Packer's brother is descended the well-known newspaper family.

By now the 'catalogue' had turned into a general survey, with ever-widening horizons. During 1991 a long-standing Nathan puzzle was solved by a new method of research which might be called, for want of a better term, 'pitch profile comparison'. In 1843, Nathan published the seventh in his series of 'Australian Melodies', *The Aboriginal Father*. Apart from the 'coo-ee' call, this was apparently the second Aboriginal melody to be recorded in musical notation: it had previously been published by the Czech explorer Dr. John Lhotsky (Sydney, ca.1834–5) but Nathan had decided that the melody had been 'deformed and mutilated by false rhythm' as well as 'disguised in complete masquerade by false basses & false harmony'. In the preface to his edition, Nathan comments at length on a remarkable similarity he had noticed between the Aboriginal melody and one of Handel's arias — but he neglected to say which aria it was. This curious story has been repeated many times, without any new light being shed on the subject. However, by encoding the pitch profile of Nathan's melody, according to the method invented by Denys Parsons in his *Directory of Tunes and Musical Themes* (Cambridge, 1975), it was possible to check its basic melodic form against a large collection of Handel's opera and oratorio arias stored in machine-readable form at the University of New South Wales. Within seconds we had the answer: it was the aria 'Peni tu per un ingrata' from *Ezio* (1732), one of the most obscure of Handel's failed and forgotten Italian operas. (Nathan probably encountered it through teaching the only aria from the opera that had survived in the repertoire, *Nasce al bosco*).

In April 1992 I gave a lunch-time talk to the University of New South Wales Club, reporting the discovery of Isaac Nathan's forgotten career as colonial journalist and music critic. Having suspected for some months that he was the author of so much I was reading in the contemporary press, I finally made a forced march during the previous summer vacation through virtually all the available newspapers and periodicals of Nathan's time in Australia (1841–64) and thereby revealed not only our first significant music, drama and art critic but also a voluble and ubiquitous man-about-town, the Leo Schofield of colonial Sydney! Nathan even contributed to the short-lived scandal-sheet, the *Satirist and Sporting Chronical*, the *Private Eye* of colonial Sydney. After a few turbulent months (January–April, 1843) that venture ended with the editor being thrown into gaol on a charge of criminal libel. I recently discovered that, during 1831, Nathan had also written for the London *Satirist* and a contemporary rag, the *Age* (held but apparently unrecorded by the British Library). Both reveal him as a larrikin and stirrer. In October 1992, I presented a more

detailed account of 'Isaac Nathan's anonymous contributions to colonial arts and letters' to a conference on rare books in Australia, at Monash University.

According to the present tally, Nathan contributed to at least forty colonial newspapers and magazines (in Melbourne as well as Sydney). His unsigned writings, many of them unashamedly reviewing his own performances and publications, have often been quoted as historical evidence but they are frequently little more than Nathan's own puffery and self-publicity: even 'The Hebrew Melodist', the title adopted for Catherine Mackerras's much-read biography (1963), was Nathan's own creation — like so much else of the myth that surrounds his name.

During sabbatical leave this year in London, I was able to confirm my expectation that Nathan was also active — often hyperactive — in the English press: his identifiable output there ranges from 1813 to 1840, including several years of musical criticism in the newspapers of Bristol and Wales where he fled in 1819 to avoid his creditors. Guided by hints from Nathan's books and family tradition, I have been able to reconstruct something of his lost years in the West Country (1819 to 1823 and possibly later). Though the research is far from complete, it now appears that Nathan was a real pioneer of professional music criticism in England: his early Bristol writing almost coincides with the appearance of England's first music journal, the *Quarterly Musical Magazine* (London, 1818).

Nathan indeed may turn out to be England's, as well as Australia's, first composer-critic (like the young Weber in Germany). He also turned his hand to reviewing other art-forms including drama, ballet, architecture, gardening and cookery. Though often unable to afford a decent meal, Nathan was a gourmet, well-read in the literature of gastronomy; in Sydney he became Australia's first restaurant reviewer (1854). He may well emerge as a major unrecognised figure in colonial literature. His voluminous and encyclopaedic writings on Australian music, drama and the other arts, both fine and applied, would make a very substantial volume. It is no exaggeration to say that Nathan's extensive corpus of anonymous journalism constitutes the single most important primary source on the colonial music and theatre of his day.

After hearing my remarks at the University Club, Joan Griffin of Castle Cove remembered that her neighbour, Laurel Austin (of Bavarian-Jewish descent) possessed a volume 'that belonged to Isaac Nathan'. Filled with excitement, I met Ms. Austin at her home and was shown her valuable collection which included the very volume previously sighted by Peter Tinslay. Bound in full black leather, with watered silk linings, were 39 cartoons of theatre costumes from Nathan's time, all beautifully rendered in brilliant water-colours and nearly all in an excellent state of preservation.

On seeing the cover stamped in gold 'I. Nathan, Costume Book' I too immediately assumed that the volume had once belonged to the composer. Though this is still a possibility, I now have my doubts: for one thing, there is no sign of Nathan's signature, though this could easily have disappeared with the missing two thirds of the contents. But the volume had been inscribed several times by other people of the same name, including one 'Isidore J. Nathan'. Recently in London, I discovered that there were *two* firms of 'Masquerade and Fancy Ball Dress Makers' doing business during the 1830s, both named Nathan. The volume might have belonged to one of these, possibly Isaac John Nathan of 18 Castle Street, Leicester Square. The composer must have been aware of these Jewish costumiers operating in his beloved theatre-land. Although the volume has as yet no proven connection with his own stage-works, it belongs exactly to their period and thus could have been

brought by him to Australia. Many of the designs are for the kind of foppish cavaliers that feature in his first Australian opera. In any case, the association is very close because one design is for the Scottish figure Rob Roy Macgregor, the subject of an opera which was presented along with Nathan's fourth opera *The Illustrious Stranger* at Drury Lane in October 1827. This rare and important volume of early nineteenth-century costume designs was recently purchased by the Mitchell Library.

During 1992 yet another treasure came to light: Sotheby's sold a letter written by Nathan in June 1840, offering the unknown addressee the plates of his most valuable music, the *Hebrew Melodies* and 'Why are you wand'ring here, I pray?' for four hundred pounds and expressing his intention of moving to Scotland. Nathan was then on the edge of financial ruin. During 1837 he had been sent on a confidential mission to the Continent on behalf of William IV, apparently to recover some sensitive documents. He delivered the papers in November 1837, claiming the very large sum of £2,326 in expenses, but in the meantime the King had died and the new Queen's prime minister Lord Melbourne was reluctant to pay, finally authorising only 326 pounds. The calamity caused his emigration to Australia.

Very few of Nathan's letters survive; this rarity fetched the incredible sum of £1,200. It is now for sale again, at an even more incredible price, and every effort is being made to raise money for its purchase by the Mitchell Library. Of considerable historic interest, the letter suggests that Nathan's decision to move to Australia was a sudden one — he left England with all but one of his large family in December of that year.

Another fortunate coincidence of 1992 was the appearance of Adam Zamoyski's biography of Stanislaw Poniatowski, *The Last King of Poland* (Jonathan Cape, London). Nathan's father is said to have been the illegitimate son of Poniatowski, by a Jewish mistress: as well as bearing a striking physical resemblance to his supposed grandfather, Isaac shared many of his talents and predilections, including a love of literature, languages and the arts, liberal and progressive politics, freemasonry, an interest in alchemy, considerable diplomatic and conversational abilities, generosity, extravagance and financial irresponsibility, and something even of Poniatowski's sexual appeal and stamina. The King, however, is said to have had no ear for music.

A less conspicuous but still commendable achievement of 1992 was the conservation and rebinding of two important volumes of Nathan's music in the Mitchell Library. This work was funded, on the initiative of Joan Griffin, by the music study group she convenes at Killara, NSW, Opera Lunedi. Most of the Nathan collection has now been restored and conserved and all of it will soon be made available for general reference purposes on microfilm.

In November of that year the Victorian Chapter of the Musicological Society of Australia invited me to make a bicentennial presentation at the Melba Conservatorium, illustrated with performances of the two arias which Nathan arranged for his pupil William J. Palmer. Palmer, a member of the St. Mary's Choral Society, must have been a phenomenally gifted boy soprano: Nathan's arrangements for him of 'Angels ever Bright and Fair' and 'Lungi dal caro bene' are embellished in the grand Italian style, with ornaments and divisions requiring a very advanced vocal technique. These were admirably sung, at their true pitch, by Mr Andrew Muscat-Clark of Melbourne — who possesses the rare soprano falsetto voice — accompanied by pianist Shirley Trimbath. Ironically, Nathan seems to be of more serious academic interest in Melbourne than Sydney: as well as receiving the most

A GOOD BLACK GIN,

AN AUSTRALIAN MELODY

Inscribed with great deference and profound respect, to the Loyal subjects of His late most gracious,
highly accomplished, and revered, antipodal Majesty,

KING BUNGAREE.

Poet, Lieut. J. W. Dent, R.N.

Composer, I. Nathan.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

1845.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

Published by W. Moffitt, Pitt-street, Sydney; and by Fulkner, 3, Old Bond-street, London.

ANIMATO
BEN
MARCATO.



(Courtesy Graham Pont)

scholarly advice and criticism from Melbourne² I have had two requests from Victorian researchers for copies of the book-in-progress (though neither, incidentally, has yet acknowledged receipt of the manuscript). I might also record here my disappointment at failing, after two attempts, to secure funds from the Australian Research Council for assistance in pursuing Nathan's anonymous publications. Sure trivial problems can hardly be compared with the difficulties under which Nathan himself laboured. His courage and confidence in the future of Australia should inspire us to greater efforts in the present 'troub'lous times'.

Nathan's real bicentenary in 1992 would have passed unnoticed in Australia, except for the exertions of a few enthusiasts. There was a memorial concert at St. Stephen's Newtown which featured an unforgettable performance of the sexiest song Nathan ever wrote, played *molto religioso* on the grand organ (now fully restored). Few of the congregation could have realised that the poetry of this 'Hebrew Melody' ('I speak not — I trace not') was Byron's anguished confession of his incestuous love for Augusta Leigh! Even more memorable was the 'Souvenir de Sydney' presented at the Garrison Church in the Rocks on May 31: billed as 'a Harp Concert in Colonial Style', it included an amazing performance of the overture to *Merry Freaks*, arranged for 26 harps led by the cream of Sydney's executants. Though Nathan called for only one harp in his original score, he would have revelled in that sumptuous feast of sound!

Well before and again during 1992, I repeatedly approached the Australian Broadcasting Corporation with proposals for celebrating Nathan's bicentenary in some appropriate radio programme. Those pleas went unheeded until the last moment: the day before the November issue of *24 Hours* went to press, my old colleague Owen Chambers rang wanting *immediately* the title and full details of a 90-minute dramatised documentary on Nathan's Australian career — and a script next week or sooner! From then until the programme went to air, on November 28 (Australia Music Day), it was one mad rush. I compiled the script in two days, calling it 'The Southern Euphrosyne; or Mirth in the Antipodes' (I was determined to get 'Euphrosyne' pronounced correctly, for the first time on the ABC, with the accent on the second, not the first syllable!). The text was adapted almost entirely from Nathan's own words, from his various publications — especially the anonymous Australian writings. One could compose a whole opera — indeed a saga of Wagnerian proportions — from all these writings, which are usually well-expressed, picturesque, full of humour, eminently quotable and sometimes quite eccentric.

Three excellent Sydney actors were hired to read the parts: David Nettheim as Nathan — an inspired choice (whenever I think of Nathan's words now, I hear David's beautifully modulated voice); John Gregg as the 'Australian Critic' (who gave a very amusing delivery of a pastiche of newspaper extracts attacking Nathan); and Robert Alexander as the 'Narrator' (his contribution included some admirable changes of accent for the brief appearances of Ludwig Leichhardt, and a drunken Irish alderman at the City of Sydney's first civic dinner). The recordings of the spoken texts were all laid down in one long morning, with virtually no rehearsal.

The musical illustrations for the broadcast were another story. The ABC held a number of old recordings of Nathan's music, mostly made in the 1960s and 1970s, including a brilliant version of the Overture to *Don John of Austria*, arranged and conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras. But, while delighted to have so much ready-made music to hand, I stoutly resisted the suggestion that the programme should rely entirely on this very uneven selection in the archives, particularly as Nathan's Australian output was poorly represented. After some agonising, the ABC agreed to pay for new live performances of such essential items as 'Why are you wand'ring here, I pray?', 'The Visions of Youth' (the best aria from *Don John of Austria*) and one of Nathan's last compositions, *The White Owl* (to words of Tennyson). None of this fine music had ever been professionally recorded before.

The soloist who undertook the task at short notice was again Prue Freiinger, accompanied by Michael Dyer. Her well-characterised rendition of 'Why are you wand'ring?' brought out the amusing vocal contrast between the inquisitive old

man and the coy country lass waiting for her lover — the thoroughly English style of balladry clearly anticipates Gilbert and Sullivan: that tradition goes back to the *Beggars' Opera* (1728) which Nathan knew well, having acted the role of Macheath at Bristol (1819) as well as conducting a charity performance in Sydney (1846). Many years later in *Don John of Austria*, Nathan quoted the music of 'Why are you wand'ring?' in 'The Visions of Youth', in a way that suggests he himself was 'the weary wand'rer here': as I argue in the book, the aria contains an esoteric explanation for his 'wand'ring' exile in the Antipodes — his secret love for Lady Caroline Lamb. They became friends during her notorious affair with Byron and even closer friends afterwards. It was her ex-husband who refused to pay Nathan's continental expenses!

That left only the choral music. The ABC happened to have a fine recording of Nathan's favourite Australian work, *The Lord's Prayer* — he preferred this even to *Leichhardt's Grave*, his best known Australian work which was composed in the same year (1845). But, since the focus of the broadcast was to be his Australian music, I wanted to include more of the choral music that Nathan composed in Sydney. After more agonising — and a certain amount of arm-twisting — the Taverner Consort of Sydney agreed to prepare four items: *Humbbug*, the first glee composed in Australia (in a fit of rage at being exposed for puffing his own works in the newspapers, Nathan wrote the words and the music and published a review of the work all in the space of 24 hours!); *The Lord's Prayer* (a performance by the Adelaide Singers was used in the broadcast, mainly because it had an organ accompaniment); *The Names of Christ* (Nathan's last sacred work); and *Hey-Diddle-Diddle!* (a delightful setting of the nursery rhyme, which ought to be in the repertoire of every Australian school choir). In another hectic recording session, the Taverner Consort, ably directed by Dr. Sandy Newman, laid down all four of these as well as tossing in an unrehearsed extract from the choral version of 'She Walks in Beauty' and a convincingly drunken rendition of the toasting song, *The Currency Lassies* (1846). Though at first somewhat reluctant, the singers soon warmed to Nathan's Muse: his Australian choral music is now part of their concert repertoire.

By now time was running out. Editing of the recorded materials had been proceeding as they became available and, with less than a week before the programme was to go to air, the final mixing began with Owen Chambers as producer and Wayne Chapman, a master of technical radio production, at the controls. Some of the mixing was so complicated that it required more hands than were available at the time. My role was merely to make sure all the bits were there, in the right order. The tape was finished, or finished enough — as time had run out — by 4.30p.m. of Friday, November 27: the broadcast was scheduled for Saturday morning, at 8.30. One serious problem remained, however: the programme was twenty minutes too long! But there was no more studio time and we were all exhausted anyway. In a bold executive stroke, Owen Chambers rang Adelaide and arranged for a longer time-slot. The broadcast on Radio National was well received and it is hoped it will be replayed when the book finally appears.

As a result of doing the research and listening to a lot of Nathan's music, I found myself not just enjoying his compositions but becoming obsessed with them. I discovered that I had got to know the composer rather well — perhaps too well — and I found myself constantly listening to his melodies internally, as well as playing the tapes over and over again. His written words, so well declaimed by David Nettheim, also stayed in my mind for days and months. I felt as if I had entered a

new relationship with the music and culture of colonial Australia (in which, I am now convinced, the Byronic tradition is an important influence). I am confident that any genuine lover of music would find that Nathan's compositions well repay the time spent on getting to know them. At the moment, however, his only Australian work that is commercially available is the overture to *Don John* and this, for all its merits, is far from an historically authentic example of his music.

The neglect of Nathan's works and those of his colonial contemporaries — as well as the absence of any half-decent study of the period — is a shocking indictment on the state of Australian music history. One wonders how the academic music departments in this country actually spend their time. The same point can, with equal justice, be made about the neglect of Nathan's four monographs, which display his immense erudition and impressive command of languages ancient and modern, while overflowing with historically interesting material. His last book, *The Southern Euphrosyne* (ca.1848–9), is Australia's first musical monograph — yet it has hardly earned more than a passing comment from our musicologists, let alone the extended critical analysis it deserves.

What then of the future? The book, now well over 60 000 words, will probably be ready for publication some time next year. It will include a new account of Nathan's career in both hemispheres, and a re-assessment of his importance in Australian music and colonial culture generally, together with the first complete bibliography and an almost perfect chronology of his extant Australian compositions. That chronology will soon become the basis of a reclassification of Nathan's legacy at the Mitchell Library and finally, it is to be hoped, of his citations on the Australian Bibliographical Network. At the University of New South Wales, Nathan's theoretical writings are being scanned into machine-readable form by Dr. Nigel Nettheim, primarily for the purposes of indexing and searching; but that very useful data-base might eventually be made publicly accessible or integrated with a complete collection of Nathan's works on CD-ROM.

But what is needed most of all is the opportunity to hear Nathan's music again, professionally performed in historically authentic style and in venues appropriate to its cultural context. Australia surely owes its first important colonial musician a full and fair rehearing. We have missed the opportunity for a sesquicentenary premiere of *Merry Freaks* but moves are afoot for a revival of *Don John of Austria* in 1997, under the baton of Sir Charles Mackerras. That would be the right time too for a full scholarly and critical review of Isaac Nathan's unique contribution to Australian culture.

NOTES

1. *A Selection of Hebrew Melodies, Ancient and Modern*, by Isaac Nathan and Lord Byron, Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, c.1988.
2. I particularly thank Mr. Anthony Rainer of Melbourne University for his helpful advice throughout this project.

THE KINGDOM OF SHYLOCK: A CASE STUDY OF AUSTRALIAN LABOUR ANTI-SEMITISM

Peter Love

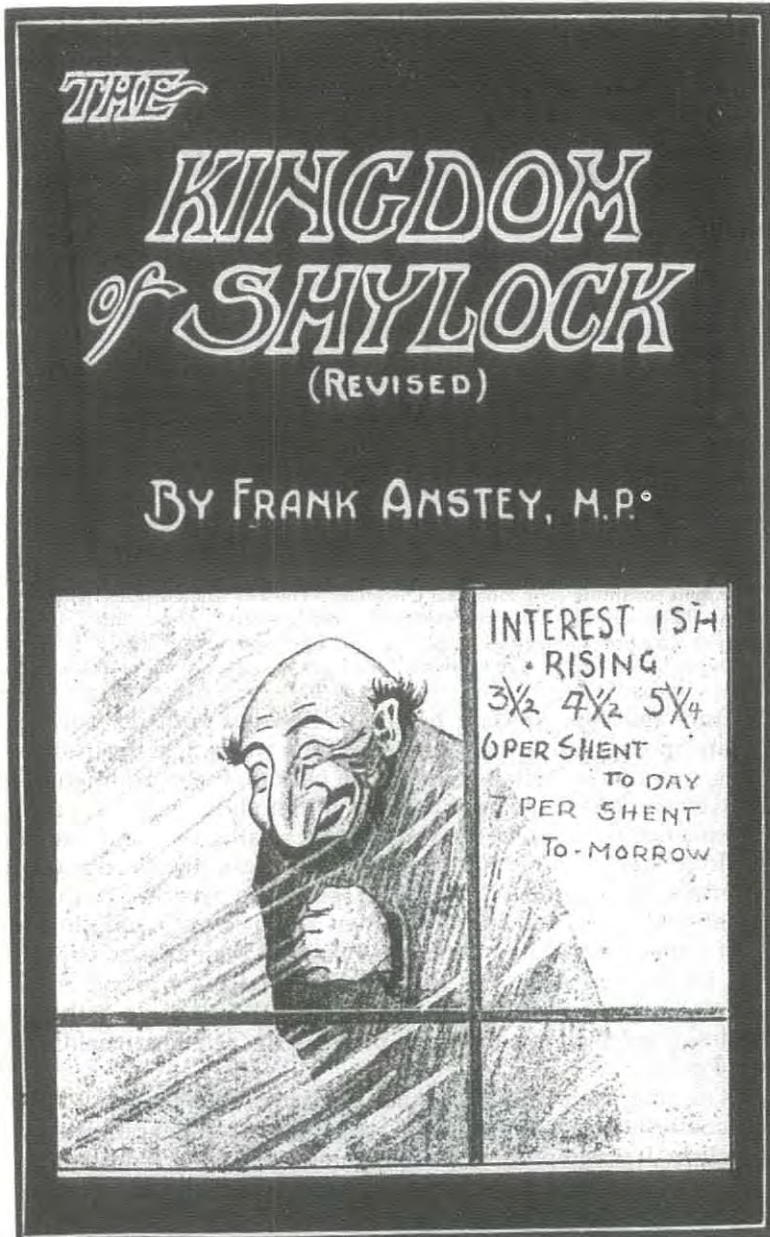
Frank Anstey's *The Kingdom of Shylock* is one of the texts most frequently cited as evidence of Australian labour anti-Semitism. The title, the cartoon on the front cover and the first chapter proclaim a direct link between Jews and the depredations of finance capital. It is clear, direct and eminently quotable evidence. However, a close reading of the pamphlet suggests that the anti-Semitic flourishes, both written and pictorial, were largely incidental to Anstey's analysis. Indeed, as he developed the argument between 1915 and 1921, many of those rhetorical flourishes were progressively diminished. There are many similar examples of off-hand derogatory comments scattered throughout labour movement literature, as the random selection of cartoons included here suggests. They were unthinking insults rather than incitements to pogroms or final solutions. Nevertheless, anti-Semitism has remained a recurring theme in the radical political economy of the Australian left.¹ *The Kingdom of Shylock* provides an instructive, though far from definitive, case study of why this apparently gratuitous anti-Semitism has persisted for so long.

In many ways, Frank Anstey's background was typical of many labour activists of his generation. He was born in London of working class parents in 1865, came to Australia as a teenager and spent much of his youth at sea, after which he worked as an itinerant labourer before settling in Melbourne in the late 1880s where he established a family and took an active part in the city's radical milieu of the 1890s. In 1902 he was elected to represent the people of Brunswick as a Labor member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly and served there as a vigorous critic of successive governments until his transfer to the House of Representatives in 1910 where he remained until his retirement in 1934. During World War One he was one of the earliest and most trenchant critics of the Fisher and Hughes governments' war policy. It is in that context that he wrote the series of articles, pamphlets and books from which *The Kingdom of Shylock* emerged. His exploits as an enthusiastic publicist for the Russian revolution, his years as Assistant Leader of the Australian Labor Party in the House of Representatives, his term as a minister in the Scullin government and his period of retirement before his death in 1940 are beyond the scope of this article and need not detain us. That story has been told elsewhere.²

The point at which we enter the story is the first year of World War One. In April 1915 he warned that unless something radical was done about financing the war effort, the casualty lists would be only part of the burden that the people would have to bear.

This war will put a millstone of debt around the necks of the producing classes of every country. It will grind them to degrading slavery. It will make the monetary power more powerful and opulent than ever. All who remain alive from the slaughter will toil to pay the parasitical classes annual tribute for the money invested in blood. All wars — all international wars — are the instruments by which iniquities re-establish their crumbling thrones, by dissipating on battlefields the human virility that threatened their existence.³

This was the beginning of what was to become an elaborately articulated analysis of the relationship between war and finance capital. He began with a series of articles



The front page of the 1917 revised edition of Anstey's work.
(Courtesy Peter Love)

in *Labor Call*, a Melbourne weekly which he helped establish and occasionally edited.⁴ They were published in pamphlet form as *War and Finance* early in 1915.⁵ In July-August 1915 he wrote another series under the collective title *The Kingdom of Shylock*.⁶ They were issued shortly after as a pamphlet with a crude anti-Semitic

cartoon on the cover.⁷ Two years later *War and Finance* was combined with the original *Shylock* articles, along with new pieces to bring the analysis up to date.⁸ This enlarged series was also issued as a pamphlet.⁹ In 1921 the argument was again revised and extended into its final form under the new title *Money Power*, from which many of the anti-Semitic references were removed.¹⁰

Anstey began his analysis on a point which, he claimed, the Australian labour movement had ignored in its attempts to theorise about the structure of modern capitalism.

This movement of ours talks of 'The Means of Production, Distribution and Exchange'. Of the first two we read much, hear much — upon the last we are silent in speech and policy. Yet in the modern world the last is fundamental in industry, in statecraft, and in war. It is in coping with the problems of Finance that the world has got to find its regeneration.¹¹

These 'problems of finance' became the touchstone of his political economy. In Anstey's view, the dominant position of 'Finance' represented the highest stage in the development of monopoly capitalism. The result was that:

The 'Money Power' is something more than Capitalism. It is its product, and yet its master. 'Capitalism', in its control of the great agencies of production, is observable and understandable. The other lurks in vaults and banking chambers, masquerading its operations in language that mystifies or dazzles. Industrial Capitalism may roll itself up into great monopolies in production and distribution. *It cannot exist for an hour apart from the powers that hold the 'Monopoly of the Instruments of Exchange'.* Modern Capitalism throws ever-increasing power into the hands of men who operate the monetary machine. These men constitute 'The Financial Oligarchy'. The key to their power is combination and concentration. They control banks, trust companies and insurance. They control the savings of the people. They say to whom the savings shall be lent and from whom withheld. They finance industries in which they are interested, and withdraw facilities from would-be rivals. *Such is the Modern Money Power.*¹² [His emphasis.]

This view from the commanding heights contrasted with the socialist's 'base-superstructure' model of how the capitalist system worked. In the historical materialist analysis, monopoly capitalism had been built on the expropriation of surplus value created by workers in the production of commodities. It was usual for socialist radicals to explain and denounce the wage labour relationship as a means of undermining the foundations of surplus value. Accordingly, the workplace became a contested terrain where socialists tried to persuade workers that they should struggle to abolish wage labour rather than settle for the traditional labourist objectives of better pay and conditions within the system. But while labourists campaigned for a better share and socialists battered away at the foundations of capitalism, left wing populists like Anstey assailed the pinnacle of the system; the 'great agencies of production', and more particularly 'The Financial Oligarchy', or the 'Money Power'.

There was nothing novel in this populist version of elite theory. The notion that society was controlled by 'powers' had a long ancestry in the political economy of British radicalism. It was replicated, with regional variations, in its American populist progeny. As one such 'power', bankers and all their works had long been the subject of hostility and distrust in that radical tradition. In eighteenth and nineteenth century England such diverse characters as Henry St. John, Thomas Paine, John Cartwright and, later, William Cobbett were profoundly suspicious of financiers. Their attitude was, in part, a reaction to the wider social changes that were reflected in the growth of a more sophisticated capital market; in changes that saw a secure and familiar world being betrayed by 'stockjobbers', by corruption centred on the City of London, and political manipulation of the national debt. The emergence of capitalist social relations — or in Cobbett's words 'The Thing' — was responsible for the decline of the minor gentry, yeoman farmers and independent

artisans; the quintessential 'freeborn Englishmen'.¹³ As a young man in the 1880s, Anstey's thinking had been partly shaped by this tradition, the related ideas of the romantic movement and the particularities of the Sydney *Bulletin's* populist nationalism.¹⁴

Following the collapse of the Australian monetary system in 1893, an entirely understandable antipathy to financiers was articulated in a language derived from the works of American writers such as Henry George, Edward Bellamy and Ignatius Donnelly. Although they approached the 'problem of Finance' from different positions, each believed that a distorted monetary system had given rise to rural and working class discontent. In one way or another, the individuals and institutions involved in banking were an impediment to economic equality and political liberty. Through the medium of the nationalist and labour press, their simple equation of private finance with economic disruption and social crises found a receptive audience among Australian radicals of Anstey's generation.¹⁵

If Anstey's political economy could be said to have been influenced by any established body of economic theory, it would be a vulgarised form of underconsumptionism. Although he did not argue the standard underconsumptionist's case, he borrowed from their works whenever it suited his purpose. His definition of the Money Power, for instance, bore a striking resemblance to passages in J.A. Hobson's *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism*. The opening sentence of Hobson's chapter on 'The Financier' reads: 'The structure of modern Capitalism tends to throw an ever-increasing power into the hands of the men who operate the monetary machinery of industrial communities, the financial class.'¹⁶

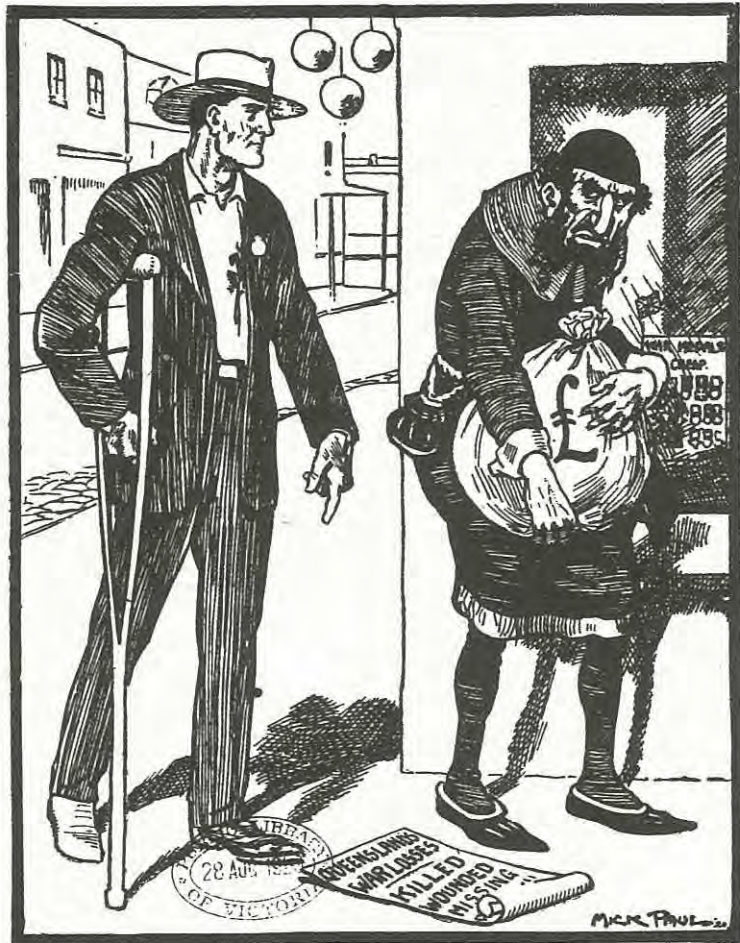
Anstey's *Kingdom of Shylock* and *Money Power*, however, were not simply technical treatises on the political economy of war and finance. The social consequences of war were as much a matter of public morality as they were of economics. Indeed, the two were inextricably linked. All his writings on the subject were informed by a vigorous appeal to fundamental moral principles.

Out of this war will emerge two classes, bondholders and slaves to the bondholders. All who come alive out of the war must be bled dry that interest mongering vampires within the nation may extract from the products of toil hundreds of millions per annum. That is what they mean when they say 'the standard of life must be reduced'. Working men! You shall eat less, have poorer food, shabbier clothes, scantier furniture, fewer pleasures, and know more hardship than ever you knew in all your days and generation. Is it not plain? If every year Shylock is to draw hundreds of millions more in interest from investments in wasted lives and bloody slaughter you who remain alive must slave for it and pay for it. All your days shall be made bitter with hard bondage.¹⁷

This and many similar passages signified a moral view which held war to be an evil that not only brought death and destruction but also strengthened the position of those capitalists who would deny the basic principles of a civilised human existence.

Thus, because the interests of rival robbers are at the base of war, human rights, social rights, the political and industrial rights of the masses are never written in the Peace terms of warring capitalist States. They are always written in terms of coal, iron, oil, steel rails, locomotives and timber concessions. Give us, sell us, or buy from us, always in terms of property and profit.¹⁸

This was the essence of the moral problem. In Anstey's 'moral economy', all citizens had a legitimate claim to the basic necessities of a civilised existence but modern capitalism, in its ruthless pursuit of profit, cared nothing for simple human rights. The social relations of a modern market economy had displaced an ancient system of reciprocal rights and obligations that had once bound society together in a great chain of being, and reduced social relations to a simple cash nexus.¹⁹ Thus far, the formal institutions of modern democratic states had failed to solve the problem.



THE MEANEST SHYLOCK.

SHYLOCK (British financial interests):

"No! I refuse to lend thee moneys
I want my pound of flesh."

ANTONIO (Queensland).

"Look, Jew, you've had your pound of flesh,
And many more beside, that I gave freely
To protect that very money."

—Shakespeare Reversed.

*An example of labour movement anti-Semitism which refers to the 1920 Queensland loans tussle between Premier E.G. ('Red Ted') Theodore and the London money market.
(Courtesy Peter Love)*

If democracy meant government of the people for the people by the people, then hunger, discontent, unemployment and despair ought to disappear, and all the perquisites of life should not be for the few, nor all the struggles for the many. Until that was accomplished democracy existed as a name, and not as a political force.²⁰

In accustomed manner, he went on to talk about reform in terms of the abolition of social 'evils'.

This moral discourse informed Anstey's analysis of how modern capitalism had been transformed into a cabal of financiers. With an increasing concentration of

wealth and power in the hands of fewer and fewer men, the motive force of capitalist development shifted from the logic of economic interests to malicious acts of human will. What began as an amoral economic and social process ended as a conspiracy of evil. This signified a slide from materialist political economy to an ethical discourse shaped by the same Christian moral principles that Anstey and many of his fellow radicals had imbibed in their childhood. There, he had learned that the choice between good or evil required acts of free will. An analysis which focused on an increasingly small group of powerful men had an inherent tendency to explain the motivation for social behaviour in terms of conscious human agency. Accordingly, the motive force underlying the development of modern finance capitalism was derived from a darkness in the heart of a few evil men obsessed by greed and ambition. This, in turn, inclined the analysis towards a personification of plutocracy.

In his personification of the modern Money Power's ancestry, Anstey invoked a familiar stereotype:

After Medina came the Jew, Manessah Lopez. He amassed a fortune in the panic which followed the false news that Queen Anne was dead. He 'bought on the slump and sold on the rise'. Then came Samson Gideon and the Goldsmids — Abraham and Benjamin. They were succeeded by the Rothschilds.²¹

This was followed by a history of the Rothschild family which purported to expose their skill in financial manipulation and how it had won them a place at the pinnacle of both German and British society.²²

The anti-Semitism in *The Kingdom of Shylock* was no aberration. It emerged from the logic of Anstey's analysis which drew its images from prejudices deeply rooted in his cultural heritage. The vulgarities of popular Christian mythology had built up an accretion of suspicion and hatred towards Jews over many centuries. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century this was compounded by the 'science' of human classification which constructed a hierarchy of 'races' wherein physical, intellectual and cultural characteristics were all deemed to be hereditary.²³ Many ancient prejudices slipped through the cracks in this modern 'mismeasure of man'.²⁴ The resulting stereotype of the greedy and cunning Jewish financier was a commonplace convention in the writings of British radicals and American populists. Indeed, the quotations scattered throughout *The Kingdom of Shylock* illustrate his heavy reliance on British and American sources. It was also a persistent theme among Australian labour radicals.²⁵ Having defined the epicentre of power within modern capitalism in terms of an evil conspiracy, it is not surprising that a man of Anstey's background should have chosen to invoke such a stereotype.

He was, however, taken to task on this matter. As a young man, Ralph Gibson, who was later to become a leading member of the Australian Communist Party, remembered Anstey and reactions to his writing. Referring to *The Kingdom of Shylock*, Gibson recalled:

Its worst fault, its branding of Jews as usurers and its anti-Semitic expressions and cartoons, was also characteristic of Anstey's circle and his period. In the later expanded version of 'Money Power' the anti-Semitism vanished. I learned from the late highly respected Melbourne Jew, Alec [Alick] Mushin, that he had written to Anstey as a political supporter deploring his anti-Semitism and got from him a very fine reply paying tribute to the Jewish people and promising to note his comments for the future.²⁶

E.W. Peters, a protégé in Anstey's latter years, offered a similar explanation, although he claimed that it was R.S. Ross and other friends in the Victorian Socialist Party who objected to the anti-Semitism.²⁷ It is possible that both may be right about who complained to Anstey. It is also true that, with each revision and expan-



"Only one-third of Australia's debt is deadweight."—Bruce in London.

THE BURDEN BEARER: "But the rest is very much alive."

Another example of labour anti-Semitism, this time concerning Australia's foreign debt in 1930-31. (Courtesy Peter Love)

sion, the anti-Semitic references diminished markedly. They did not, however, entirely disappear. The references to the Rothschilds quoted above remained in the final edition of *Money Power*.²⁸ The stereotype was so deeply embedded in the popular imagination that neither Anstey nor most of his contemporary readers would have been easily persuaded that there was anything wrong with an emphasis on the ethnic origins of a family whose fortune had been made in banking and finance. It is in the logic of his analysis of the structure of modern capitalism, in the moral economy which informs the passion in his exposition, the simplistic ethical discourse of Sunday School Christianity and in the accretion of centuries of suspicion and hatred towards Jews emanating from those traditions that we find the reasons for Anstey's anti-Semitism. While he was able to cast a good deal of it aside in his own writings when challenged, the underlying structures of meaning and significance in popular radical discourse remained. For that reason, *The Kingdom of Shylock* is of more than antiquarian historical interest.

NOTES

1. On the persistence of anti-Semitism in labour ideology see Peter Love, *Labour and the Money Power: Australian Labour Populism, 1890-1950*, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1984. On the left more specifically, see Rodney Goutman, 'The Communist Party of Australia and "The Jewish Problem"', 1933-1953', *Menorah: Australian Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol.2, no.2, December 1988 and Rodney Goutman, 'The Australian Left and the Jews', *Without Prejudice*, no.2, February 1991.
2. See Peter Love, 'Frank Anstey and the Monetary Radicals' in R.T.Appleyard and C.B.Schedvin (eds.), *Australian Financiers: Biographical Essays*, South Melbourne: Macmillan for the Reserve Bank of Australia, 1988; and Peter Love, 'Frank Anstey: A Political Biography', unpublished PhD thesis, Australian National University, 1990.
3. *Labor Call*, 15 April 1915, pp.4-5.
4. The series began in *Labor Call* on 19 November 1914, pp.4-5.
5. Frank Anstey, *War and Finance*, Melbourne, Labor Call Print, n.d. [1915].
6. See *Labor Call*, 15 July 1915, p.5; 22 July 1915, p.5; 29 July 1915, p.5; 5 August 1915, p.5; and 12 August 1915, p.5.
7. Frank Anstey MP, *The Kingdom of Shylock: The War Loan and the War Tax*, Melbourne: Labor Call Print, n.d. [1915].
8. The nineteen instalments appeared in *Labor Call* between 31 May 1917 and 27 September 1917.
9. Frank Anstey MP, *The Kingdom of Shylock*, (revised edition), Melbourne: Labor Call Print, 1917.
10. Frank Anstey MP, *Money Power*, Melbourne: Fraser and Jenkinson, March 1921.
11. Anstey, *Kingdom of Shylock*, revised edition, p.vi. It remained in *Money Power*, pp.9-10.
12. Anstey, *Kingdom of Shylock*, p.2. Emphasis in the original.
13. On this point I have borrowed heavily from W.D.Rubinstein, 'British Radicalism and the "Dark Side" of Populism' in his *Elites and the Wealthy in Modern British History: Essays in Social and Economic History*, Brighton: Sussex, The Harvester Press, 1987.
14. For a detailed account of this see Love, 'Frank Anstey: A Political Biography', chapter 2.
15. See Robin Gollan, *The Commonwealth Bank of Australia: Origins and Early History*, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1968, chapter 3; Love, *Labour and the Money Power*, Introduction; and Love, 'Frank Anstey and the Monetary Radicals', *op. cit.*, pp.257-259.
16. John A.Hobson, *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism: A Study of Machine Production*, London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co. Ltd., 1916 new and revised edition, p.235. (Originally published in 1894.) There was a closer convergence of underconsumptionist economics and Australian monetary radicalism in the debates over monetary and fiscal policy in the depression of the 1930s. See Love, *Labour and the Money Power*, chapter 6.
17. Anstey, *Money Power*, p.133.
18. *Ibid.*, p.17. Although he did not address the matter here, he did discuss the alternative posed by the October Revolution in his *Red Europe*, Melbourne: Fraser and Jenkinson, 1919.
19. For a discussion of the concept of 'moral economy' see E.P.Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, no.50, February 1971. There are hints of this throughout all of Anstey's works, beginning with the commonplace book that he kept as a young seaman in the early 1880s. See Love, 'Frank Anstey: A Political Biography', chapter 2.

20. He made these remarks in the course of an address entitled 'The New Despotism' at a meeting of the Socialist League held in the Bijou Theatre on 5 September 1915. For a summary see *Argus*, 6 September 1915, p.8. He was one of the few members of the House of Representatives who regularly drew attention to such basic issues as the rising price of food during the war years. See, for example, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, vol.76, 15 April 1915, p.2343 and vol.77, 4 June 1915, pp.3738-3739.
21. Anstey, *The Kingdom of Shylock*, p.5.
22. *Ibid.*, pp.5-6.
23. See, for example, Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1992. (Originally published by W.W.Norton in 1981.)
24. See *ibid.*, pp.225 and 271.
25. On this point see Love, *Labour and the Money Power*, pp.37, 49, 60 and 64.
26. Ralph Gibson, *My Years in the Communist Party*, Melbourne,: International Bookshop, 1966, p.21.
27. Interview with E.W.(Ted) Peters, offices of the Australian Insurance Employees' Union, Queen Street, Melbourne, 18 April 1978. Peters worked closely with Anstey in the electorate of Bourke during the early 1930s and later held the seat between 1949 and 1955. For outline details of his career see Joan Rydon, *A Biographical Register of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1901-1972*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1975, p.177.
28. Anstey, *Money Power*, pp.14-15.

SOME NOTES ON THE 'PALESTINIAN' IMMIGRANTS IN MELBOURNE 1900-1930

Eliyahu Honig

One of the unique factors in the development of the Zionist movement in Australia was the part played by Palestinian emigrés who came to Australia in the first three decades of the century. The contribution they made as individuals and as a group to the development of the Jewish community in Melbourne in general, with emphasis on Jewish education and culture in particular, was far beyond their numerical strength in the community.

In Melbourne they constituted a sub-culture, focusing on those Jewish-Hebrew-Zionist values they considered vital for their own future and that of their children. Their Zionism was inward looking and they were concerned about the continuity of Jewish life and the standards of Jewish consciousness and Hebrew education for the younger generation. The newcomers were dissatisfied with the existing levels, which had been established by the community based on the Anglo-Jewish traditions in Britain. As a result they worked tirelessly to establish new educational and social frameworks through which they hoped to express the Hebrew-Zionist culture they brought with them from Palestine to the Australian community.

For some of them the sojourn in Australia was regarded as temporary, and as soon as conditions would become suitable they planned to return to the Zionist homeland. For this reason too it was vital for them to maintain modern Hebrew culture for themselves and even more important for the sake of their children.

Who were they? The conditions in post-World War One Palestine, the end of the Turkish occupation, were very harsh: in Jerusalem, Safed, Rishon-le-Zion, Zichron Yaakov, Rosh Pina and other towns Jews were starving.

The way to Australia was far easier than to the United States — a third class steamer ticket from Port Said to Fremantle would cost £10 or less¹, and there were no bureaucratic restrictive quotas to overcome, as then existed in the United States. By 1920, under the terms of the Mandate the Jews of Palestine were technically British subjects and could therefore be issued with British passports. As a result, the stream from Mandated Palestine to Australia was relatively large.²

Charles Price, in his article on chain migration, notes that in Perth in the 1920s Palestinian-born Jews made up nearly forty per cent of the new arrivals, explaining in part the 'unusual and lively character of Perth Jewry'.³

The number of Jews who originated from Safed, Zichron Yaakov and from little towns like Castina, who settled in Perth, demonstrates Price's chain migration and settlement principle, where people from a particular town or district in one country come and settle in one area in a new country. Through letters, visits and help there was formed a chain whereby over a period of years these people migrated to the new town or district. Many of the Palestinian Jews who reached Perth later moved east to Melbourne after an initial period of settlement and adjustment.

The Palestinian Jews who came to Australia can be classified in two broad categories: those who had been born in Palestine and came to Australia in the post-First World War waves for reasons indicated above; and those who had migrated to Palestine from Eastern Europe, and after having worked there for a period as *Cha-*

lutzim found life too difficult and so decided to seek new opportunities in Australia.

It is interesting to note that although many Palestinian Jews did in fact emigrate at this time to other countries as well, for example South Africa, Canada and the United States, in these countries unlike Australia their impact on the Jewish community and the Zionist movement was minimal and hardly noted.

This article will deal briefly with two basic aspects of the influence of the Palestinian newcomers in Melbourne: some of the individuals who played a role in the development of the Jewish community and the Australian Zionist movement, directly and through their own association, the *Ivriah*; and the institution *Ivriah* which was the central organisation through which these immigrants functioned and expressed their needs in the community and their hopes for the future.

Professor Charles Price has collected many hundreds of immigration certificates of Jewish migrants to Australia who came from Palestine during the first decades of the twentieth century. These certificates provide interesting and important information such as date and place of birth; town of residence in Palestine; date of arrival in Australia; place or places of residence in Australia; occupation; marital status; languages spoken; other details relating to spouse and children.⁴

The lists of these certificates include the names of many families who played an active role in community affairs. A small random selection based on Price's list and some other sources follows: Ashkanasy, Bloom, Berinson, Belkin, Berkon, Brender, Bolten, Baron, Dorewicz, Elbaum, Mushin, Ernest, Epstein, Atlas, Rosenbaum, Feiglin, Slonim, Kantor, Sacks, Wertheim, Patkin, Honig, Kanatopsky, Kaplun, Plotkin, Shapira, Spivak, Sher, Yaffe, Hovev, Holzman, Lubansky, Fonda, Ginzberg, Rubinstein, Rockman, Altschul, Fetter, Fink, Gross, Givoni, Hurewitz, Lore, Konowel, Ginges, Korn, Shavitsky, Rischin, Meerkim, Markov, Monester, Newton, Warhaftig, Joffe, Steigrad, Schalit, Segal, Same and Tiomkin.

In order to show some of the common lines of background and involvement in Australian communal life, especially in the Zionist movement and the establishment of the *Ivriah*, we shall look at a number of examples which fit into patterns outlined above. The emphasis will be on those who were among the active founders of the *Ivriah*.

Solomon Wertheim was born in Bessarabia in 1875, and went to Palestine in 1891. He worked in Rehovoth and Rishon. After his brother was killed by Arabs he returned to Bessarabia where he served in the Russian army. He came back to Palestine in 1904, working in Rishon, and then married. In 1908 he arrived in Australia and worked in the Western Australian goldfields. Wertheim helped organise the Zionist organisation in Perth before moving on to Melbourne in 1914. He was one of the most prolific Zionist workers in the history of the Melbourne Jewish community, being one of the founders of the Kadimah, the *Ivriah*, the Judaeon League, *Hatchiah* and *Jordania*. He worked tirelessly for the Jewish National Fund, was involved with the Welfare Society, the Friends of the Hebrew University, and associated with any and every initiative that promoted Zionism and community welfare. While not at all proficient in Hebrew, he had a love for the language and its literature and gave all programmes to promote such cultural efforts his exuberant support.

Dr. M.A. Schalit was born in Russia, and came to Palestine as a youngster. His family were among the founders of Rishon. Schalit moved to Geneva to study medicine. He did not return to Palestine but went on to Australia where he arrived

in 1901, settling in Melbourne. A staunch and passionate Zionist, he was one of the founders of the Friends of the Hebrew University and was involved in many of the cultural and political Zionist projects undertaken during the 1920s and 1930s.

Benzion Patkin was born in Russia in 1902, and arrived in Palestine in 1924 as a member of a pioneer group which settled in Ness Ziona. In 1929 he moved to Australia. Patkin was one of the founders of the *Ivriah*. He served as honorary secretary of the Zionist Federation, and was a prominent officer of the Victorian State Zionist Council and the Victorian Zionist Organisation. He founded the Magen David Adom, and co-founded the Friends of the Palestine (Israel) Philharmonic Orchestra. His Zionism was community-wide and all embracing. Patkin's most significant contribution to Jewish life in Australia was his determined and tenacious initiatives, over a period of nearly two decades, within the framework of the *Ivriah*, the Zionist Federation, the Victorian Zionist Organisation and the Victorian Board of Deputies, for Jewish education and a day school. These efforts led to the establishment of the Mount Scopus Memorial College. He served as the first president of the School Council from 1948 to 1952.

Mordechai Honig was born in Jerusalem in 1896, and arrived in Australia during World War One. In Perth he was the initiator of the new Hebrew-speaking school. He is recorded as being a most gifted educator and organiser who 'employed varied methods including song and drama to enliven his language instruction.'⁵ He left a lasting impression on the Perth Jewish community. In 1922 Honig moved to Melbourne where he quickly became active as a leader in many Zionist activities, especially the Jewish National Fund and the *Ivriah*. Together with Rabbi Israel Brodie he worked hard to establish a community-wide basis for Zionist culture. In 1927 he was chosen to serve as the honorary secretary of the first Interstate Zionist Conference which founded the Australian Zionist Federation. Four years later he was elected honorary secretary of the Zionist Federation itself and promoted Zionist cultural activities rather than political work. In 1932 he returned with his family to Palestine.

Yehudah Honig, brother of Mordechai, was born in Jerusalem in 1904 and arrived in Australia in 1926. Together with his brother and Aaron Bar Kohen, he taught at the *Ivriah* Hebrew School, of which he was one of the founders. A gifted writer in Hebrew and Yiddish, he was the co-editor of *Dos Australier Leben* in 1931, and later wrote frequently for the *Yiddishe Nayer*. Yehudah Honig served as president of the Kadimah, the Revisionist Zionist Organisation, and was one of the founders of the Bialik Hebrew School. For many years he worked closely with Benzion Patkin in many aspects of Jewish-Hebrew education and culture in Melbourne.

Israel Sacks was born in Russia, and came to Palestine in 1919. He arrived in Australia in 1928 and immediately began working for the Jewish National Fund and the *Ivriah*. He and his entire family were involved in many community initiatives on behalf of Zionism, Jewish and Hebrew education within the framework of the *Ivriah* and later the Bialik Hebrew School.

Shmuel and Dvorah Edelman were born in the Ukraine, and came to Palestine with a Zionist pioneer group after the 1917 revolution in Russia. They arrived in Australia in 1927 and became active in Zionist affairs. They were among the central core of emigrés who established the *Ivriah*. The Edelmanns returned to Palestine with their family in 1935.

In 1930 the *Australian Jewish Chronicle* published a short article entitled 'How the

Ivriah was formed'. Since this article is an important document relating to the birth of a society which played a vital role in the Melbourne Jewish community, it is worthwhile quoting sections from the piece:

It was early in 1923, a period in which the Jewish immigration to Australia was increasing, that at the initiative of several young men a meeting of Palestinians was called with the object of founding a Hebrew Society to fill a gap in Melbourne Jewry. The reasons were obvious — the Jewish immigration from Palestine particularly was increasing rapidly, and the new arrivals, to whom Australia was a strange land, had nobody to assist them. There was no institution where they could meet each other to discuss their prospects in this new land, or read a Hebrew paper.

A society, namely *Ivriah*, was formed, the Kadimah being acquired as club rooms, and the membership list began to soar. Lectures, literary events, etc. were held with great success. The *Ivriah* was formed mainly for Palestinians, but Melbourne Jewry, to whom a Hebrew club was a novelty, started to flock to it, leading the committee into great difficulty.

In carrying out their work, it was their aim to function in Hebrew only, which was strange to the major part of the members . . . The time was not yet ripe for a society of such a nature and it ceased to function with the hope that some day its wishes would be fulfilled.

In 1928, when the economic position in Palestine was the worst in history, its young men began to emigrate, and Melbourne Jewry was increased by hundreds.

The younger element of those, mostly *Chalutzim*, who helped rebuild our land, but were compelled to leave it for obvious reasons, attempted to establish again this Hebrew society. What was considered an impossibility once, proved a great success this time, the field being much larger and with many talented men to carry the work on.

In July 1928 a Provisional Committee called some of the Palestinian Jews to a meeting to place its plans before them. Hundreds of people attended, including many Melbourne well-known Jews, and the *Ivriah* society was inaugurated with the following aims:

1. to create a Hebrew Cultural Centre in Melbourne
2. to extend financial assistance to its members
3. to assist all Zionist organisations in their work for the cause
4. to assist any members desirous of returning to Palestine
5. to spread the Hebrew language among the Jewish community

The article then goes on to describe the work programme of the society. This included the establishment of a Hebrew library⁶, Modern Hebrew classes for both children and young adults, and an annual Purim fancy dress competition ball (the precursor of the Jewish National Fund Queen Competition Ball). *Ivriah* joined with the Kadimah and the Judaeon League to raise money for distressed families in Palestine after the 1929 riots.

Ivriah was essentially a self-contained cultural centre in its initial stages having established its own Zionist society, *Geula*⁷, to which was attached the Zionist youth group, *Nordiah*, and also its own Hebrew school, *Hashachar*⁸, whose founders were later among the activists on behalf of the idea of the day school movement in Melbourne.⁹

In the late 1930s the *Ivriah* merged into the Victorian Zionist Organisation. Many of its founder members continued to play a central role in Zionist and communal affairs especially in the efforts on behalf of Jewish-Hebrew education in the community.

While many of the Palestinian newcomers became associated with the Zionist organisation soon after their arrival, there were others and in significant numbers who posed a serious problem for the movement. Dr. Alexander Goldstein, who was the *Keren Hayesod* emissary in 1927, and who was instrumental in establishing the Australian Zionist Federation, reported that

Every month immigrants are arriving from Palestine who spread the most exaggerated and gloomy rumours about the alleged starvation and misery reigning in Palestine.

This makes the average Jew think that the money he gave six years ago has been given in vain and that the Jewish home is a complete failure¹⁰

This problem was not just kept within the confines of the Jewish community. Goldstein later reported that

Last week there arrived 200 Jewish immigrants to Melbourne on one steamer, out of whom 85 came from Palestine. Some of them who were interviewed by the representative of the leading Melbourne paper, the *Argus*, gave the most discouraging and false information about the 'complete failure' of the Jewish colonisation of Palestine. The malicious tales they spread among the Jews in Melbourne about the brutality and mis-management of the Zionist officials in Palestine are eagerly seized upon by our antagonists . . . Those *Meraglim*¹¹ make my task yet much more difficult . . .¹²

Goldstein, who was on a fund-raising mission for the Zionist movement, decided to face the problem in a direct manner. He agreed to address a mass meeting with 'those of the Palestinian emigrants who are poisoning our work here'. The discussion was 'bitter and extremely antagonistic. I answered at length and in a dignified manner, and this meeting helped in clearing the thick fog of misrepresentation and calumny which were spread in the last eighteen months.'¹³

Apparently these efforts by Goldstein achieved the purpose and there were few reports after that of open criticism of the Zionist efforts in Palestine by the newcomers. It is also possible that the 1929 riots in Palestine and the community-wide appeal to help the victims of the Arab massacres had a sobering effect and created a new situation. Many of the former Palestinians worked hard in the effort to raise funds for this purpose.

As we have seen, one of the declared aims of the *Ivriah* was to assist any former Palestinians who wished to return 'home'. There were some who were able to save up enough to assure them a decent living and they returned. Others as individuals needed help and looked around the community for financial support.

Organisations such as the Palestine Welfare League Ladies' Auxiliary, headed by Mrs. Reuben (Lucie) Hallenstein and Miss Frances Barkman, helped out in a number of cases.¹⁴ There were other cases recorded where Rabbi Israel Brodie personally advanced the necessary monies to enable families to return to Palestine.¹⁵

One of the interesting episodes occurred in 1932 when a group from the *Ivriah* organised themselves with a view to return to Palestine and settle on the land. A letter sent to the Jewish National Fund by Yehudah Honig and Joseph Ginzberg in Hebrew reads as follows:

We have in our city some hundreds of Palestinians who wish to arrange to return Home, now and in the near future. Our organisation, *Ivriah*, is ready to help from an organisational point of view. The idea is to finance a project of orange groves on J.N.F. land (a) to organise a group of 100 members; (b) to plant 500 dunam as a start; (c) each member will deposit £30 and make monthly payments of £4; (d) in this way the group will pay a total of £25 000 over five years. Please tell us how to go about implementing this plan.¹⁶

The response from Jerusalem came from Joseph Weitz, one of the senior officers of the JNF who explained that while the JNF was ready to set aside an area of between 100–1200 dunam, so that each member could have 10–12 dunam including a building plot, nothing could be done until the group sends in the required funds needed to purchase the land 'in order to show us that you are serious and wish to carry out the plan'. He added: 'In any case since JNF itself does not do planting and grove management, we have passed over your letter to the Yachin company. You should therefore be in direct contact with them.'¹⁷ There was additional correspondence between the Yachin company and the *Ivriah* but in the end nothing came of the negotiations. Some of those registered in the scheme did in fact return to Palestine, but not as part of a group.

A final note: an impressionistic survey will show that very many of the 7000 Australians who are today settled in Israel are the children and grandchildren of

those Palestinians who reached Australia in the first decades of the twentieth century. This unusual process of return, which appears to be on a scale unknown in any other country, is a subject that deserves some attention and research.

NOTES

1. See David Mossenson and Louise Hoffman, *Hebrew, Israelite, Jew: History of Jews of Western Australia*, Uni. of W.A., 1990.
2. See Charles Price, *Jewish Settlers in Australia 1788-1961*, Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal, vol. V, pt. VIII, 1964.
3. See Charles Price, 'Chain migration and immigrant groups, with special reference to Australian Jewry', *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. VI No. 2, December 1964.
4. Professor Price made copies of the entire listing available to the late Samuel Gorr of Jerusalem, who shared the material with the author.
5. See *Hebrew, Israelite, Jew* for details of Honig's pioneering work in Hebrew education.
6. See CZA KH4/299 30 January 1929. M. Ettinger to Z. Schwartz, Jerusalem, re the sending of money for the purchase of Hebrew books, newspapers and song books for the *Ivriah* library.
7. See *Australian Jewish Herald*, 11 and 23 June 1931.
8. See *Australian Jewish News* 10 February 1939, with a note on the reunion of past pupils; also *Australian Jewish Herald*, 1 September 1922, announcing the annual examinations of the school.
9. For a full discussion on the work of Honig, Ginzberg, Wertheim, Patkin, Sacks and Edelman in this connection see Benzion Patkin, *Heritage and Tradition*, Hawthorn Press, Melbourne: 1978.
10. CZA KH4/301, 8 October 1927, Goldstein to Head Office, Jerusalem.
11. Hebrew for spies, but it also has a connotation of traitor.
12. CZA KH4/301, 8 October 1927, Goldstein to Head Office.
13. CZA KH4/301, 10 October 1927, Goldstein to K.H. Office, Jerusalem.
14. CZA KH4/293, 4 June 1929, M. Ettinger to Keren Hayesod, Jerusalem.
15. CZA KH4/933, 22 November 1928, Ettinger to Keren Hayesod.
16. CZA KK15/607, 30 June 1932, Y. Honig and J. Ginzberg for *Ivriah* to Head Office J.N.F., Jerusalem.
17. CZA KK15/607, 9 August 1932, Weitz to *Ivriah*.

A ZIONIST VISITOR TO AUSTRALIA

Eliyahu Honig

In November 1924 a very special visitor arrived in Australia. This was David A. Brown, an American industrialist and civic leader who had served as national chairman of the American Jewish Relief Campaign in 1921–22, and who saw himself as a Zionist leader and a close colleague of Chaim Weizmann.¹

Brown was planning a world tour and had suggested to the American Zionist leader, Louis Lipsky, that he might be used to carry out effective propaganda on behalf of the Zionist movement.² Chaim Weizmann himself cabled Brown at Auckland expressing his great appreciation of Brown's willingness to help the Keren Hayesod, and confirmed that they had cabled the Zionist leaders in the principal cities to organise meetings for Brown to address.³

The Zionists in Australia were delighted at the prospect of having such an important American Jewish leader who had just been to Palestine, come and address them. Alec Masel, then treasurer of the Palestine Welfare League, an organisation unique at that time in that it had both Zionists and non-Zionists working together for the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and other philanthropic projects in Palestine, wrote to the JNF headquarters in Jerusalem thanking them for the opportunity and outlining the plans for the Brown visit:

Chanukah will be celebrated by a big function in aid of the JNF at which Gen. Sir John Monash will preside. Mr. Brown who has just visited Palestine will deliver an address. . . . The proceeds will be either for a Monash forest or if we secure the co-operation of the other states for the purchase of land for a Monash Colony. As Sir John Monash has hitherto taken no interest in this kind of work, we regard his willingness to associate with us as of great importance.⁴

It is interesting to note that the elected officers of the Palestine Welfare League at that time were President, Rabbi Israel Brodie; Vice-presidents, Rev. Jacob Danglow and Rev. Solomon Mestel; Hon. Treasurer, Alec Masel; Hon. Secretary, Miss Frances Barkman.

The reports in the Jewish press covering Brown's visit describe large and enthusiastic audiences in Sydney, Melbourne and other centres. The Union of Sydney Zionists, together with the Council of Jewish Women, held a special reception which drew a large attendance and at which Brown spoke of the situation in Palestine. He described the Hebrew University as a great Zionist project which was about to be opened on Mount Scopus. He also discussed the Arab problem which he claimed was no problem at all.⁵

Brown himself, in a report to Chaim Weizmann which he sent from the ship soon after leaving Australia, tells of the meetings he addressed in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Adelaide. Many people, he said, Jews and non-Jews, heard him:

this was very good publicity and our people were very happy. . . . The idea of a millionaire Zionist who was devoting all of his time to the cause made quite an impression on these wealthy Jews who had stood aloof from Zionism. I got them interested in Palestine . . . particularly my view of the relationship of Palestine to the British Empire. This seemed to grip these rock ribbed Britishers and they told me afterwards that this gave them special reason for being interested . . . General Sir John Monash was quite taken with this angle of the situation and took many notes during my conversation with him, which he used in the introduction of me at the Melbourne meeting . . . These people have

no conception as to what is being done elsewhere. They need a professional who will worry about press and information, some-one who can initiate and stimulate people to give on a regular basis. Brown claims he also spoke to Monash about assuming a position of leadership in the Zionist organisation. Monash said he would think about it.⁶

All these reports from Brown and the Jewish weeklies at the time seem to indicate that the visit was a highly successful one and it brought about renewed interest in Zionism in Australia. From the letter Brown wrote to Weizmann he gave the impression that he, the polished leader from the big world, had helped lift Australian Zionism out of its provincial doldrums and given it a great push forward.

This is the view that Brown promoted. There seems, however, to be another side to the episode. Not only was Zionism not greatly helped by this visit but the opposite could very well be true. Almost three years later, Dr. Alexander Goldstein, the eminent Zionist leader and organiser was sent to Australia by the Zionist organisation to bring the Zionist message and lead a fund-raising effort for Keren Hayesod.

He found the Zionist movement in a terrible state. In his first report back to Jerusalem, Goldstein lists a number of factors which had caused the decline of Zionism in the period dating from the visit of Israel Cohen who came out in 1920 to lead a successful campaign on behalf of the Palestine Restoration Fund, through to the present, 1927. One of the negative factors he found was the visit of David Brown. It would seem that while some of the public meetings addressed by Brown were relatively successful, his attempt at fund-raising resulted in a terrible fiasco. Goldstein writes:

Mr. David Brown could have achieved much more if he knew what Zionism is, and if he had the proper methods. He had a very representative meeting which he insulted by a blunt and empty speech. After the speech he asked the ushers to close the doors and not let anyone out before they contributed. The result was disastrous.

This "American" trick may be tolerated in Detroit, but the effect on the Melbourne representative audience was that even those who intended to contribute were so indignant that they did not do so, and so the whole of the rich and influential section of the community declared that this was the last Zionist meeting they would set foot in.⁷

Goldstein had to work very hard indeed to repair the damage and win back the support of the wealthy non-Zionist sections of the Jewish community. He succeeded in his campaign and also went on to organise the first Interstate Zionist Conference which established the Australian Zionist Federation of which General Sir John Monash was elected honorary president.

In Australia the visit of David Brown was soon forgotten. But in the United States, he went on to become the successful National Co-ordinator of the Emergency Campaign at the time of the 1929 Palestine riots. He succeeded in bringing together the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), Hadassah, Zionist Organisation of America (ZOA), United Palestine Appeal, and the other organisations which were mobilised in the great outpouring of Jewish support to help the stricken Palestine Yishuv.

NOTES

1. See *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 4., p. 1411, for biographical details.
2. Central Zionist Archive. KH/183, 28 October 1924, L. Herrmann to Israel Cohen.
3. Weizmann Letters vol. II, KH1/183, p. 248.
4. C.Z.A., KKL/5/313, 17 November 1924. A. Masel to J.N.F. Jerusalem.
5. *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 11 December 1924; *Hebrew Standard*, 12 December 1924, p. 6.
6. C.Z.A., KH4/933, 30 December 1924. David Brown, SS *Mongolia* to Chaim Weizmann.
7. C.Z.A., KH4/300, 9 September 1927, A. Goldstein, Melbourne, to Keren Hayesod, Jerusalem.

THE IMPACT OF A LIBERAL PIONEER IN AUSTRALIA: RABBI JEROME MARK

Linda Joseph

The axiom that behind every good man stands a woman finds truth in the introduction of the Reform rabbinate on Australian shores. The 1880s had seen the Viennese Jew Reverend Dr. Dattner Jacobson attempt to introduce a ministry of reform at the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, only to meet with failure.¹ It was not until fifty years later through the inspiration and efforts of Mrs. Ada Phillips that both a Liberal community and rabbinate came into being.

The story begins in 1928 when Mrs. Ada Phillips on a sojourn to London attended services at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue. Impressed by the congregation's principles, liturgy, rabbinic and lay leadership she returned home resolved to establish a like-minded community in Victoria. She rallied together an organising committee consisting of her two daughters and five others.² The aim of this small group was to halt the rising assimilation of Jews:

Without in any way desiring to deny the fact that to a large section of our people the old Orthodox practices and customs mean a great deal, we insist that to a section quite as large, if not larger, they have no meaning whatever. This section in the past had either to be satisfied with something they did not understand or to join the ever increasing army of those who had drifted away from the Jewish people altogether. The Liberal Synagogue came into being in an attempt to stem the tide.³

To ensure the success of their venture the group underwent a search for rabbinic assistance that could be brought out to help their fledgling cause. Ada Phillips was in lively correspondence with the Hon. Lily Montagu of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) whom she had met at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in London, and with the Union's encouragement the search commenced.⁴

The person settled upon was Rabbi Jerome Mark who had served for two years at a classical Reform congregation in Selma, Alabama. He was offered a travelling stipend to Johannesburg, South Africa, from where he could continue his six month pioneering trip (with the option for extension) in Melbourne, Australia.⁵ Eventually, Rabbi Mark was persuaded to drop his plans for the South African part of his journey, and embark for Melbourne.⁶ Financial help was required for such a venture by the young Liberal Jewish Congregation and a request was sent to the WUPJ for assistance.⁷ The answer came to Melbourne in a cable sent on 23 July 1930:

Governing body confirmed Rabbi Mark's appointment stop Salary guaranteed till January position then be reviewed stop Please cable if can come immediately shall we send prayerbooks anything else for the Holydays Montagu.⁸

Rabbi Mark left on the *Sanoma* from San Francisco on 21 August 1930 to Sydney, from where he immediately departed on the 'Sydney Express' to Melbourne. There he was greeted two days later, on 13 September, by the committee of the new organisation.⁹

Rabbi Jerome Mark's debut into the Australian community commenced with the imminent High Holyday season of 1930. His arrival saw a community reception at Wickliffe House on the Esplanade, St. Kilda which was attended by four hundred participants. The only other rabbinical presence at this gathering was Rabbi Jacob Danglow.¹⁰

Rosh Hashanah evening saw 'the first complete Liberal Jewish service that had

been presented in Australia'.¹¹ Attendances saw 225 people present in a small hall that night, and 200 present the next day.¹² For Yom Kippur the need for a larger hall was necessary, yet even that was not large enough to hold the capacity crowd:

We estimate that about 350 were present — and a very large number were unable to gain admission. We arranged for a broad-cast of the sermon and parts of the service.¹³

Novelty and curiosity brought the people in. Rabbi Mark notes in a letter to Lily Montagu: 'Many folks came; of course, they were not all interested or prospective members.'¹⁴ These services were mustered together with some difficulty: '... we did not have any Prayer Books, the hall was not entirely suitable, the Choir had not had sufficient practice, and many other disabilities.'¹⁵

Yet for some the experience was extremely enjoyable. 'There can be absolutely no question of the personality and ability of Rabbi Mark. The services have been remarkable in every way', wrote Ada Phillips.¹⁶ She was especially taken with the introduction of a children's service on the Day of Atonement. Her view is contrasted by an antagonistic opinion in a survey of all High Holyday services that year published in the *Australian Jewish Chronicle*:

Interest was lent to the solemn proceedings this year by the presence of the Reform synagogue ... many people wandered down to have a peep at the service and listen to the Rabbi endeavouring to keep order. We are used to hearing that the very orthodox shools are disgracefully noisy, but the difference between the noisy Reform Shool and the noisy orthodox shool, is that the noise in the latter is caused by the individual participation in the service.¹⁷

On 7 December a motion moved by Ada Phillips was carried unanimously with prolonged applause to invite Rabbi Mark as the incumbent minister of the congregation. This he accepted with the assurance to the congregation of loyal and faithful service.¹⁸ The terms agreed to included a two year contract from 1 March 1931 to 31 March 1933 at a salary of £1200 over 25 months (that is, one month without salary of £100), with an option of another two years employment. No special allowance was given for bringing his family, and thus Rabbi Mark asked the World Union to pay him £400 owing to him from them, to help him make his ends meet.¹⁹

Congregational life was full under the auspices of Rabbi Mark's leadership. He summarised the contents of his progression in establishing the Liberal movement in regular reports to Lily Montagu during his first year.²⁰ The variety and content of his activities are also attested in the *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*, a publication which Rabbi Mark initiated in order to extend his pastoral messages and to share the ideals of the 'New Voice' he brought to Australian shores.²¹ Prior to his appointment as minister on 7 December, Rabbi Mark commenced regular Shabbat services using the English Liberal prayerbook, copies of which would arrive at a later date. They met in a suburban soldiers' Memorial Hall (the RSL) on Acland Street in St. Kilda. A Torah was on loan from an Orthodox synagogue because the donor was sympathetic to the Liberal cause. Services ran for about ninety minutes beginning at 11 a.m. on Saturday mornings. While the feature of these services was the sermon, Rabbi Mark writes: 'Avoid polemics to a great extent in these sermons. I feel that people should see what we are doing rather than hear us shout against existing institutions.'²² External innovations were included in these services: 'Services are shortened, most prayers are in our vernacular language, an organ supports the choir, men and women sit together, and men please themselves whether they cover or bare their heads.'²³

Friday evening services were not held because

Some traditions and customs possess beauty which raises them to a plane worthy of regard as being inseparable from religion itself. No one would but urge, for instance, the continued veneration for the

Friday evening meal . . . the Liberal Synagogue does not hold its evening service on Friday solely because Friday is not a convenient evening for communal worship.²⁴

By *Shavuot*, the prayerbooks had not yet arrived. Services were conducted in the evening and the morning. A tabernacle was built over the altar, and an improvised children's offering was made (this was later taken to the old folks' home). The Orthodox congregations were unco-operative regarding a palm branch and citron for the festival, but all the necessary paraphernalia was gathered together from various places.²⁵

Rabbi Mark showed a special interest in the children. From Rosh Hashanah onwards there were children's services, and on 19 October a Religious School was opened. There were two volunteer, but trained, teachers, and Rabbi Mark himself in charge of the confirmants.²⁶ His work with the children ensured admiration and success:

Our Religious School has proved to be highly popular and successful. We started with a roll of 21 children and on the sixth Sunday we had 49 on our list. On Sunday 21 Dec. the children are giving a Chanukah play which the Rabbi is producing. Of course the preparations for this have been hurried but the Rabbi has the good will and the affection of the children and the parents, and they are working wonderfully for him.²⁷

By 19 October, the congregation commenced Sunday weekday services. These lasted about forty minutes in duration, followed by a thirty minute lecture with a forum discussion. Rabbi Mark lists some of the topics he talked about including 'The Bible in the Light of Modern Research', 'Jewish Influence in Modern Thought', 'The Function of Ceremonies in Judaism', 'Ethics and Religion', 'The Problem of Evil', 'Immortality'. He mentions that the questions at these lectures are quaint, and that often the orthodox would attend, trying to trip him up. He would publish announcements of lectures and the contents of some of these lectures and questions in the *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin* from February 1931 onwards. Ada Phillips notes that these services were especially popular.²⁸ In addition to this meeting there was a regular Bible class consisting of fifteen interested adults.²⁹

During this period prior to his contract from the Congregation, a community was established over several business meetings. Rabbi Mark quotes 130 members, representing seventy-five families, who were not from the wealthy class but were educated and intelligent. A constitution was adopted with some difficulty. The only document requested that arrived in time to base the new constitution upon was a document sent by the World Union.³⁰

With the advent of the two year contract, Rabbi Mark made plans to bring his wife and two children across the waters. During this period his residence moved from his board with Ada Phillips at 184 Wattle tree Road, Malvern, to Marne Street, South Yarra. Once he had settled down with them he renewed his reports to Lily Montagu, hoping that the missives of Ada Phillips and the *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin* had kept her up to date with the antics of the congregation.³¹

Werner Graff suggests that the aim of the *Bulletin* which Rabbi Mark initiated was to extend his pastoral messages.³² From the *Bulletin* and correspondence we get a clear picture of the busy months ensuing: Services on Saturdays and Sundays with various addresses; *Purim* was celebrated with a *Purim* dance for the adults and with a swimming picnic for the children; a community Passover Seder and Passover services using the American Reform Union Haggadah and the Union prayerbook. Services marked *Lag B'omer* and *Shavuot*. Confirmation was introduced, but was not celebrated on *Shavuot* because of the community's lack of permanent residence. The ceremony was performed on the Sunday following *Shavuot*, with six girls and six boys.

A teachers' course was held. Bible classes continued to be a staple. Despite the difficulty in obtaining books, a congregational library was beginning to be built with the assistance of the American Reform. Prayerbooks arrived for High Holyday and weekday services. The search was on for a Torah scroll to be donated to the congregation.³³

Rabbi Mark's rabbinical period was marked by a search for suitable headquarters to accommodate all this activity. Beginning with the High Holyday period of 1930, meetings were held in 'a drab backroom of Wickliffe House in Acland Street, St. Kilda, which was otherwise a busy cafe.'³⁴ This space was unsuitable because of its small size, and in February 1931 they moved to the RSL Memorial Hall in Acland Street, St. Kilda.³⁵ Rabbi Mark felt that the decorum of these quarters was most unsatisfactory, and inhibited the popularity of Liberal Judaism. He writes to Mr. Joseph of the World Union for Progressive Judaism

Our range of work is expanding fast. Our membership is of the highest character, and noblest visions ... Our gravest difficulty at present is a permanent home and headquarters. Were the times only a bit more propitious we should not need to worry even on that score — but you doubtless know the local situation from financial reports in the London press. A modest synagogue house would be our greatest help right now, and we are hoping to reach that goal somehow.³⁶

In June 1931 another move was made to the Gregory Hall, All Saints Church, Chapel Street, St. Kilda.³⁷ In June 1932, the congregation was on the move again in search of more suitable synagogue headquarters. After rejecting an old court house, that would have cost a lot of money to convert to a synagogue, and would only have been leased to them for ten years, they settled on a Baptist Church building next door to the East Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. The building had a large auditorium (which was noted as *too big* in its capacity for 750), a Sunday School room and an assembly hall, the latter used for gatherings to which Rabbi Mark would not object. He writes:

These facilities were rented to us for use only at stated occasions: Sabbath and Sunday worship, religious school, and all Holy Day observances; at the nominal sum of three Pounds weekly to start. If our work proves successful we shall be required to pay for later. Also, if and when we are willing to sign a lease for any length of time the authorities will supply electric radiators — halls in Melbourne are never heated. I might add that an office was made available for my own use as a study, and I am now doing my work in this place.³⁸

Rabbi Mark was quite taken by these quarters, but not so some of his congregants who objected to the distance they had to travel for services and gatherings. Others had misgivings about it being so close to an old established Orthodox synagogue. Some congregants even resigned membership over this move leaving their numbers depleted. The move was a mistake. Thus comes the fifth move, back to the suburb of St. Kilda. Rabbi Mark reports to Dr. Morgenstern, President of the Hebrew Union College

Our chief difficulty to date was in the lack of proper headquarters. We have worshipped in five different places in two years. We had one most attractive old church building but it proved too far from the centre of the cultured Jewish settlement. At present we are in the local 'Avondale' [the Cincinnati Jewish suburb]. We have redecorated an old hall, although we do not have exclusive use of it. It is well located and appropriate for our purposes. We have put in a dignified ark, and will soon have a perpetual lamp and Menorahs. All of which will give us more assurance of permanency and a better outlook for future growth.³⁹

Among his constituents Rabbi Mark maintained a faithful popularity from the beginning: 'Rabbi Mark has been with us for ten days and in that incredibly short time has carved a niche for himself and become an integral part of our lives. There is about him a curiously magnetic force which is indiscriminately attractive to man,

woman and child'⁴⁰, wrote Ada Phillips to Lily Montagu. Her sentiment is echoed by the first president of the congregation, E.S. Levinson:

The nomination of Rabbi Jerome Mark as the organising representative of the World Union for Progressive Judaism was indeed a happy choice. We recognise and appreciate Rabbi Mark's cultural attainments; his sermons possess an intellectual spirituality to which we are not accustomed; his resonant voice intensifies the beauty of the prayers; his sincerity and his knowledge have at once commanded respect.⁴¹

Alas, this popularity was not echoed in the domineering orthodox community. Prior to Rabbi Mark's appearance on the Melbourne scene, the press had a neutral attitude to English Liberal Judaism.⁴² This soon changed after the advent of Rabbi Mark. The new attitude is portrayed in the *Jewish Herald* on 18 September 1930:

We make no apology for re-emphasising it now that Orthodox tradition has still much to offer to the Jewish people. Judaism is not reactionary. It absorbs and readjusts. But it declines to admit the superiority of the outside world, merely because there lies the majority. It will not countenance any so called Reform; that is merely defeat. Reforms will proceed and are proceeding from within and not from outside. That Rabbi Mark could not have chosen a more unfavourable moment either for himself or for the community, must be readily admitted. The future will show.⁴³

The fact that this new movement was directing itself towards the disillusioned and unaffiliated remains unacknowledged in the press. The bias of the newspaper reports is noted by Rabbi Mark in a letter to Lily Montagu:

Please do not pay much attention to the newspaper reports of our Melbourne work. I have written you that Mr. Rosenthal, Editor of the *Jewish Herald*, feels himself a crusader of the Lord of hosts. He has written most abusively of my work, and has taken the occasion to insult me personally. Unfortunately, he is the Australian reporter to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and I find that his items have found wide publicity in the American papers — and, perhaps, in England, too.⁴⁴

The attitude of the orthodox rabbinate was also antagonistic. With the first *Sukkot* approaching, the new congregation approached the orthodox regarding a palm branch and citron. Mrs. Ada Phillips was told 'she would have to answer for her sins on High'.⁴⁵

As the years passed, the orthodox community's opposition to the radical reform ideals of Rabbi Mark did not subside. He earned a reputation for 'parking his unconsumed cigar on the porch of the Great Synagogue in Sydney on Shabbat morning' or 'talking to the Melbourne Rotary and extolling the virtues of ham'.⁴⁶

Rabbi Mark's belief in the ethical monotheism of the prophets and that many ancient Jewish regulations were outmoded were difficult for the Orthodox to accept. He was condemned in the press for his objections to prayers for the renewal of the sacrificial cult, the desegregation of the sexes in the synagogue, his movement of *Shabbat* to Sunday for economic reasons, and for shortening the 'feast' of *Yom Kippur*. The prevailing attitude was that 'religion is much too sacred to be meddled and humbugged with'.⁴⁷ The President of the congregation, E.S. Levinson, attributed their attitude to fear of the strength they saw in this 'desirable corollary to the Judaism of the Traditional synagogue'.⁴⁸

The attitude of the press and the newspapers permeated the minds of many in the Jewish population at the time. An incident of 1932 related by Rabbi Mark illustrates this point:

... I met the Shochet [outside of the Baptist Hall that was to be the new headquarters in downtown Melbourne, next to an orthodox synagogue] ... who upbraided me for encroaching on his territory. In fact he seemed quite grieved and hurt. My answer to him was ... Moses' answer to Joshua in connection with Eldad and Medad who prophesied in the camp: 'Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His spirit upon them' (Lev. 11:29) ... I quoted him the story of Hillel (?) visiting the Roman public bath, where there was a statue of Aphrodite, who said that she invaded his territory, not vice versa — with its rabbinic interpretation that the bath was the important

feature, while the statue was merely placed there to adorn the structure. Consequently he had the right to disregard the goddess and to use the utility offered. This rather silenced him, although the Shochet failed to appreciate my argument that we did not seek him or his institution . . .⁴⁹

Despite the Orthodox dislike of Rabbi Mark and his new reforms, they were not slow at imitating his successes:

Nor do these leaders hesitate, after their ferocious attacks to follow the good Christian principle 'Go thou and do likewise'. They are not at all inhibited from introducing our method of reciting the Kaddish slowly and deliberately with the minister facing the worshippers; they also introduced the Community Seder, which had been pronounced 'trefah' last year; and finally, the Sunday night services and lectures, which both the leading synagogues have now adopted. At least I have the satisfaction of having put these two ministers to work!⁵⁰

The picture given in the letters of congregants of the new Liberal congregation, and in the reports and reactions of the Jewish press and orthodox clergy are contradictory. Rabbi Mark is remembered as a 'Radical Yankee Reformer' with the dreaded 'Ultra-American accent . . . [and] . . . methods that might not enhance success'⁵¹, lending the pioneer rabbi an unpopular image. Ironically, the attacking words of Solomon B. Freehof in the *American Israelite* echo over time to tell the truth:

It was not surprising that he was met with instant and vehement opposition. The local rabbis denounced him and his American methods . . . It is certain that Rabbi Mark is not at all terrified at it.⁵²

For at least the first two years, Rabbi Mark was successful and popular among his own congregants. This is attested by their letters and by good attendances at his services and programmes. Attendance only seems to fall off when the synagogue makes its move to East Melbourne, distant from the Liberal Jewish population. Certainly Rabbi Mark's innovations cast the influential first seed of the Reform movement in Australia.

From the first edition of the *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin* and in subsequent editions, we may summarise that the purpose of Rabbi Mark's sojourn in Australia, was one of his primary messages. Indeed, when the *American Israelite* printed an article entitled 'Mark the Missionary', their description was apt.⁵³ To quote Rabbi Mark in a sermon entitled 'The Fate of a Prophet',

Ours is a return to prophetic Monotheism, which imposes upon us the obligation of being a light to the nations. At this period new values are being established, new inspiration is sought . . . Liberal Judaism in our midst must rekindle the ancient fires of prophecy . . . Our fates, as prophets, lie in God's hands. But our dedication and our work will live most gloriously.⁵⁴

He advocated a Judaism with 'some modified form of worship broad-based upon the primary Jewish traditions, that unassailable high ground on which this very European civilisation must never rest, but brought into line with modern knowledge and progressive ideals.'⁵⁵ He advocated a type of Judaism which the Jew could relate to and be proud of: 'Throwing off his inferiority complex, revitalised spiritually by the unsullied vision of the ideal glory of God, the modern Jew can face the present day challenge in his ancient mission.'⁵⁶

Interest was displayed in extending this missionary work beyond the Melbourne limits but practicality was the rule:

As far as extension work in Australia is concerned: we can certainly expect a favourable response to our activities, should we undertake them in a serious manner. The only problem is that of financing it. Distances are so great here, and travelling so expensive. We must bide our time, but not allow the opportunity to slip away.⁵⁷

Such opportunity was realised when Kalgoorlie Hebrew Congregation in Western Australia applied for affiliation. The approval from the Melbourne board, the little assistance and the six month correspondence eventually came to nought.

The twenty-eight Jews who lived in this goldmining town were simply not sufficient in number to sustain a congregation.⁵⁸ Expansion to Sydney was also a possibility:

I spent only 48 hours in Sydney, so cannot tell from first hand information; but it has come to me definitely that many Jews of that city are prepared to cooperate towards such a realisation. Nevertheless, no one has approached me with any sort of definite plan as yet. It is my hope to meet Mrs. Mark and my little children in Sydney soon, and, while there, I shall try and investigate the field more closely.⁵⁹

Opportunity arose in 1932, when Sir Samuel Cohen contacted Rabbi Mark and sponsored a trip to Sydney. Despite Cohen's staunch support of Orthodoxy and his close friendship of the rabbi of the Great Synagogue, he was interested in sponsoring a Liberal group in Sydney because his grandsons had married Christians. He wanted Rabbi Mark to convert the girls, something which could not be done by the Orthodox synagogue, because the family was of priestly stock. It was decided by Rabbi Mark and the Liberal president in Melbourne that these conversions were best handled locally, and Mark refrained from obliging. He hoped that the conscience of the antiquated attitudes of the Orthodox would be raised by his experience in the Sydney community, and would make the Jews there more amenable to a Reform community in the future.⁶⁰

This brings us to another central concern of Mark's work in Melbourne. Conversion was one of the hotly debated issues around the community, and Rabbi Mark felt inadequate without his books to deal with the issue. He corresponded with Rabbi Israel Mattuck of the London Liberal Jewish Synagogue regarding his concerns. Inter-marriage was rife and the Orthodox solution was to 'simply refuse to recognise the problem, absolutely bar all entry into the Jewish faith, and let it go at that.'⁶¹ If Rabbi Mark had his way he would have converted on a 'wholesale scale'.⁶² Caution was used, and Rabbi Mark did not convert with zeal, aware of the watching eye of his Orthodox enemies. Conversion demanded a period of study and, by 1932, there were only four Reform proselytes in the community. Despite the caution, the Orthodox, while not having power to impose a *herem* (excommunication), were threatened and taunted the Liberal community with refusal of burial in the Jewish cemetery. Rumours of easy Reform conversions were not abated.⁶³

It is no wonder in this atmosphere that another central message that Rabbi Mark chose to preach was *unity* rather than *uniformity*.⁶⁴ He is quoted in the Melbourne *Herald* of 8 June 1931 as saying

In America . . . real friendship exists between the rabbis of the Orthodox Jews and those of our movement. Here we are not interfering with the old congregations. We are appealing to the many Jews who did not identify themselves with any congregation, and more particularly to the younger people who are groping for a new interpretation of their religious laws.⁶⁵

He hoped that this environment could be duplicated in Australia., perhaps so he could concentrate on what seemed important to him. Rabbi Mark hoped that he would be instrumental in Australia in creating an Australian liturgy, an Australian Judaism that would grapple with pertinent questions. His greatest, and still unrealised ideal, may be found in these words:

Not least among the advantages offered by Liberal Judaism is that flexibility which permits the evolution of an indigenous ceremonial. If our faith in our country, its aspirations and its customs, is strong enough, we can attain to a system of worship Jewish in its traditions, Australian in its form, which will identify the ancient faith with modern thought.⁶⁶

All of this activity was going on during the years of the Great Depression in Australia. The early Reform congregants, as noted above, were well educated but not wealthy. The Depression hit them particularly hard. Rabbi Mark bore the

brunt after an emergency meeting of the Temple Board when he received a £500 cut in salary from 1 November 1931.⁶⁷ Disillusioned, he wrote to his mentor, Dr. Morgenstern:

My reasons for wanting to come back are these: At the present juncture the economic situation here is bad. Far worse, I assure you, than is the case in America. With a membership list of 125 we find it hard to meet our obligations, in spite of the fact that we also receive small contributions from non-member sympathisers . . . The moral life is disintegrating along with the economic collapse. Contracts and obligations are flouted, the citizens hiding behind the fact that they are only following the governmental policy of repudiation.⁶⁸

Rabbi Mark's personal income with Strauss Bonds in the United States had collapsed and income tax and the cost of his children's schooling were eating away at his wage. He was borrowing funds on his policies to pay premiums. His wife was missing her parents. In other words, existence was hard for the young Rabbi.⁶⁹

He felt that this was the opportune moment to return:

We have laboured for an ideal and a goal. I feel confident that the same will hold true in the future; although I personally ought to be *relieved of the responsibility*. We have finished the first chapter of the story; perhaps the hardest one. The next may well be written without me, while I should be permitted to return home.⁷⁰

Accordingly, Rabbi Mark returned to the United States of America on 19 August 1933 on the *Mariposa*.⁷¹

Rabbi Jerome Mark was an extraordinary pioneer for Liberal Judaism. He brought to Australia self-reliance, energy and perseverance to create a community that would be the seed of the strong Reform Judaism that would be brought to fruition under Dr. Herman Sanger.

Rabbi Mark faced adversity from his Orthodox colleagues, from his distance from the rest of the Jewish world, from the grasps of the Depression. Yet he stuck with the cause and created a community of congregants who had the utmost respect for him. He established a Liberal congregation that would out-last him. His innovations even influenced some change among the Orthodox who detested him. Indeed, he was the catalyst that brought Australian Judaism into a consciousness with modernity. He should be remembered in Australian history for his contribution to Jewish life.

NOTES

1. Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Victoria 1835-1985*, Sydney, George Allen & Unwin, 1986, pp. 57-68.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
3. The words of Millie Phillips, honorary secretary of the organising committee, from the *Hebrew Standard*, 5 September 1930. Quoted in Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
4. E.S. Levinson to Rabbi George Zepin, 10 February 1931. MSS Coll. No. 16, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
5. Lily Montagu to Rabbi Jerome Mark, 3 March 1930, World Union for Progressive Judaism Records, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio (subsequently cited as WUPJ Records). Also Werner Graff, 'The Origins and the Early History of the Liberal Jewish Movement in Melbourne', Melbourne, unpublished manuscript, Temple Beth Israel Archives, 1974, p. 17.
6. Dr. Morgenstern to Lily Montagu, 6 March 1930, WUPJ Records.
7. Dr. Isabella Phillips to Lily Montagu, 28 May 1930 (cable). From the minutes of 'Meeting of persons interested in Liberal Jewish congregation held 9 August 1930'. Temple Beth Israel Archives, Melbourne. 'Grateful your offer Rabbi Mark stop if Union undertakes his expenses and salary our small group will gladly use utmost endeavour make some refund stop After first year out finances would greatly depend on whether Rabbi personally popular here stop Kindly note confidentially that any ultra American accent or methods might not enhance success Phillips'.
8. Lily Montagu to NLT Phillips, 23 July 1930 (cable). WUPJ Records.
9. 'Meeting of persons interested . . .', 9 August 1930. Also, 'Rabbi Jerome Mark . . .' the *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 18 September 1930, p. 8.

10. Graff, p. 14.
11. E.S. Levinson to Rabbi George Zepin, 10 February 1931.
12. Ada Phillips to Lily Montagu, 24 September 1930, WUPJ Records.
13. Same to same, 3 October 1930, WUPJ Records.
14. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930, WUPJ Records.
15. E.S. Levinson to Rabbi George Zepin, 10 February 1931. Ada Phillips notes that it was the rabbi who brought with him the music for New Year and Atonement. Ada Phillips to Lily Montagu, 24 September 1930.
16. Ada Phillips to Lily Montagu, 3 October 1930.
17. *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 16 October 1930, p. 3.
18. Minutes, General meeting of the Liberal Synagogue Beth Israel, 7 December 1930, WUPJ Records.
19. Minutes, Meeting of the Committee, 7 December 1930. Temple Beth Israel Archives, Melbourne. Also, Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930, WUPJ Records.
20. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930, 30 April 1931, 9 June 1931, and 11 August 1932. WUPJ Records.
21. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin* No. 1, Melbourne, February 1931, p. 1.
22. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930.
23. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*, No. 1, p. 1.
24. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*, No. 1, p. 1.
25. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930.
26. Ibid.
27. Ada Phillips to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930, WUPJ Records.
28. Ibid.
29. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930. See copies of the *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*.
30. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930.
31. Same to same, 30 April 1931.
32. Graff, p. 20.
33. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin* No. 2, Melbourne, March 1931, p. 1; *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin* No. 4, Melbourne, May 1931, p. 1. Also, Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 30 April 1931.
34. Graff, p. 21.
35. Ibid.
36. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Mr. Joseph, 31 April 1931, MSS Coll. No. 16, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
37. Graff, p. 21.
38. Article, labelled in handwriting: 'Building, place etc.', June 1932, WUPJ Records.
39. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Dr. Julian Morgenstern, 8 November 1932. MS Coll. No. 5, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
40. Ada Phillips to Lily Montagu, 24 September 1930.
41. Dr. Levinson to Rabbi George Zepin, 10 February 1931.
42. Graff, p. 15.
43. *Jewish Herald* Vol. 49 No. 26, 11 September 1930. Quoted in Graff, p. 15-16.
44. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930.
45. Ibid. See also Graff p. 16 for Miss Phillips' telling of this story.
46. Rabbi Perry E. Nussbaum, to Eliot Baskin, 24 June 1984 and Rabbi Jerome Mark, *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin* No. 1, February 1931, quoted in Graff, 'Origins', 23. Quoted in Eliot Joel Baskin, *Dinkum Liberal: The Development of Progressive Judaism in Australia*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Cincinnati, HUC-JIR, 1985, p. 51. It should be noted that Rabbi Nussbaum followed Rabbi Mark in the Australian pulpit. His remarks may reflect his own unpopularity, and resentment of an earlier colleague.
47. Letter to the Editor from D. Aronson dated 28 September 1930, *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 2 October 1930, p. 6.
48. E.S. Levinson to Rabbi George Zepin, 10 February 1931.
49. Article, 'Building, place etc.', June 1932.
50. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Rabbi Israel Mattuck, 30 June 1932, WUPJ Records.

51. Graff, p. 17, and Baskin, p. 51.
52. 'Mark the Missionary', *American Israelite*, n.d., WUPJ Records. The irony lies in this being an article that sets out to attack Rabbi Mark for his work in Australia in which he was successful.
53. Ibid.
54. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*, No. 1.
55. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*, No. 2.
56. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*, No. 2.
57. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 30 April 1931.
58. Baskin, pp. 52-53.
59. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 11 December 1930.
60. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Rabbi Israel Mattuck, 30 June 1932.
61. Rabbi Jerome Mark, 'Intermarriage and Proselytism', June 1932, WUPJ Records.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid. Also, Rabbi Jerome Mark to Rabbi Israel Mattuck, 30 June 1932.
64. Hand-written addition, Rabbi Jerome Mark to Lily Montagu, 9 June 1932.
65. Liberal rabbi's Plea for Unity', *Herald* (Melbourne), 8 June 1931, n.p. WUPJ Records.
66. *Liberal Synagogue Bulletin*, No. 4.
67. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Dr. Julian Morgenstern, 17 August 1932, MSS Coll. No. 4, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
68. Minutes, Board Meeting, 4 November 1931, Temple Beth Israel Archives.
69. Rabbi Jerome Mark to Dr. Julian Morgenstern, 17 August 1932.
70. Ibid.
71. Baskin, p. 56. Also President's report dated and signed by Ada Phillips, 17 September 1933, WUPJ Records.

(This paper could not have been written without the remarkable co-operation and assistance of Rabbi John Levi who suggested the topic, and the staff and volunteers of Temple Beth Israel of Melbourne, Australia, who kindly copied and sent pertinent material from the synagogue's records.)

ULTRA-NATIONALISM AND LITERATURE IN AUSTRALIA

John Dally

This article is based upon a lecture prepared rather tentatively for a Conference on Religion Studies. I worried at the time that the subject matter was only partially relevant to religion: I seemed to be talking far more about literature and politics. I am a little less tentative about writing up this article, partly because people at the Conference kindly assured me of the relevance of the subject matter and partly because I have edited the material fairly severely.

Let me now expand on my title and establish my parameters. I shall be giving special attention to the early 1940s in Australia and referring to the Australia First Movement ('Ultra-nationalism') and the Jindyworobak School of poets ('literature'). I shall deal with the literature first.

The Jindyworobaks were a group of poets who emerged in the late 1930s in South Australia. Their founder was Rex Ingamells, a young university graduate in English and History, who was singularly unimpressed by the nature of the poetry that was being written at the time. Ingamells was right not to be overly impressed. Australian verse in the 1930s was very sparse. In 1930 only one book of poetry was published for the entire year (Mary Gilmore's *The Wild Swan*). In 1931 there were three, and even as late as 1935 and 1936 there were only two, poetry books published in each year. If Ingamells had turned to poetry published in the Little Magazines of the time he would have found only the *Bulletin* to be of any real literary significance and, in those pages, he would have found little poetry and that fairly insipid by his standards. The influence of Norman Lindsay's Vision School lay mistily on the poetic landscape and it was thus very easy to find poetry which was deliberately non-Australian and which put forward a 'vitalist' philosophy expressed in terms of Ancient Greek fantasy.

D.P. McGuire, for example, discovers that

In some dark wood sleeps Pan, the fallen leaves
Of withered summer drifting over him.¹

There were many other instances of alien Pans.

It was also possible to find examples of Georgian lushness which, apart from the occasional 'local' word, could have been written anywhere.

Now a blithe announcement comes
Through the she-oaks and the gums
When at dawn or sunset's blush
April, April hither comes
Flutes the magpie, sings the thrush.²

OR

Sweetheart of the bush, the wild rose quivers
With joy of summer in her bower of fern.
Roses, wild native roses, fresh and simple
Kissed by the morning sun and bathed in dew
Each like a princess in her pale-pink wimple
Raising her head to blow a kiss to you.³

Ingamells, quite understandably, developed the view that Australian poetry should be about Australian subject matter and use Australian idiom. He believed that not even the Balladists and the *Bulletin* School of the 1890s had been suffi-

ciently nationalistic in their practices. Their subjects had often been too jolly and colonial and, in particular, they had not sufficiently understood that certain words were appropriate for Australian poetry and that certain words were not. He picked out instances of the use of words like 'armour', 'lances', 'jewels', 'faerie' which were certainly doubtfully used in an Australian context. He was on less secure ground when he objected to 'star-crowned', 'carpet' and 'aisle'!

The grey gums by the lonely creek
The *star-crowned* height
The wind-swept plain, the dim blue peak
The cold white light.⁴

Out in the dark where the night winds hurry
And dead leaves *carpet* the silent bush . . .⁵
The cattle tracks between the trees
Were like long dusky *aisles* . . .⁶

This perhaps acts as a quick example of Ingamells' fatal flaw as a literary theorist. His views were fine in outline and, in many ways, in advance of his time but he had a tendency to go to extremes. I think it's a fair claim that words and expressions do carry with them a sort of metaphorical and historical freight and that this makes some of them unsuitable for poetry which is describing Australia but Ingamells clearly took that argument too far. It's a fair argument to say that, by and large, Australian poets should know their country and write about it. Ingamells, however, claimed, without qualification, that 'a fundamental break . . . with the spirit of English culture is the prerequisite for the development of an Australian culture'⁷. It's a fair argument (and very much in advance of its time) for Ingamells to give due weight to the culture and dreamtime myths of the Aborigines and he was admirable in the way in which he persisted with this view against a very prejudiced Australian literary community. There was, however, no need for him to go the further step of insisting that 'our writers and painters must become hard-working students of Aboriginal culture'⁸. There was certainly no need for him to try to prove his point by writing poems like 'Moorawathimeering':

Into moorawathimeering
Where Atninga dare not tread,
Leaving wurly for a wilban,
Tallabilla, you have fled.
Wombalunga curses, waitjurk —
Though we cannot break the ban,
And follow tchidna any further
After one-time karaman.
Far in moorawathimeering,
Safe from wallan darrenderong,
Tallabilla waitjurk, wander
Silently the whole day long.
Go with only lilliri
To walk along beside you there,
While douran-douran voices wail
And karaworo beats the air.⁹

As well as pointing out Ingamells' excessive zeal and the absurdities which sometimes sprang from this, I must also do justice to the excellent work he did in reviving a necessary debate on Nationalism and selflessly providing means for many poets to achieve publication. He established a Jindyworobak Club and an annual Jindyworobak Anthology both of which he supported with great enthusiasm. The latter enterprise, in particular, was of great use to young poets — even

though Ingamells experienced some difficulty in disciplining his guest editors into a proper understanding of what he called 'environmental values'.

Let me move on to demonstrate that the literary Nationalism of Ingamells and his friends spread in a rather disorganised way into other areas of their lives. Those who were University students were disenchanted with the fact that every Professor of English and History in Australian universities in the 1930s was born and educated in England and that this derivation was reflected in the University and Public Examination syllabuses. Ingamells and his supporters were unhappy with the sycophantic attitude taken by many Australians to overseas culture, to English culture in particular. They were at one with the views later expressed by the South Australian poet, Ian Mudie:

Alien hands laying axe to our thoughts;
alien eyes seeking alien comforts
in this stone-old land.

Alien voices destroying our vigour;
alien pockets festering our sweat
at ten per cent.

Alien tide creeping over us
incoming ships of thought
and printed word.

But our blood swinging
like play boomerang,
back to its channels.¹⁰

It was not surprising therefore that when P.R. Stephensen, Rhodes Scholar and failed publisher, printed his editorial 'Foundations of Culture in Australia' in the *Australian Mercury* in 1935, the young Ingamells, along with many others, found it extraordinarily influential.

Stephensen was of the view that, although the influence of other cultures (particularly English) should be recognised, they should not be allowed to swamp the emerging Australian culture. He was derisive of the narrow views of the imported professors of English. His own concerns were wide, covering economics, business and politics but he recognised that culture helped to define a nation and therefore spent a significant section of the essay dealing with literature. He makes a great deal about the fate of W.C. Wentworth's *Australasia* which was beaten into second place in the Cambridge University Chancellor's Gold Medal back in 1823 and cites it as an early example of imperial cultural bastardry (although he doesn't use that phrase).

There is little doubt that Ingamells' own manifesto *Conditional Culture* published later in 1938 owed a great deal to Stephensen although Ingamells, looking back in 1948, was a little grudging in conceding the influence. Perhaps typically, Ingamells believed that Stephensen had not gone far enough in his condemnation of alien influences. Ingamells tended to use extreme phrases like 'debunking . . . nonsense' and wrote of alien influences which 'trammelled' Australian art. By comparison Stephensen had produced a thoughtful, valuable and timely commentary. Stephensen was to become less thoughtful very soon.

It is now appropriate to trace the extraordinary history of the Australia First Movement and, in the process, move from charting a reasonably healthy nationalism to surveying a sinister form of ultra-nationalism.

Sometime between the publication of 'The Foundations of Culture in Australia' and the outbreak of the Second World War, P.R. Stephensen made the acquaint-

ance of W.J. Miles, a Sydney businessman of considerable private means. They joined forces in 1936 to found the monthly magazine the *Publicist*. Miles was prepared to sustain a substantial loss on a costly operation in order to present his own (and, it seems, Stephensen's) views on Nationalism. It was quickly evident that these views were based upon certain premises (or prejudices). The *Publicist's* attitudes were nationalistic, monarchical, anti-democratic, anti-Communist, anti-Jewish and quickly became exemplified in the slogan 'Australia First'. These views attracted little attention in the pre-war years largely because they were erratic, declamatory and self-contradictory and in no way threatened the vast majority of Australians. After the outbreak of war in Europe, however, and particularly as Japan loomed as a possible aggressor, the magazine and its supporters became the subject of Military Intelligence surveillance. It must be said that this was not because of any official objection to the anti-Semitic tone of the publication but rather to the perception by the authorities that its nationalist anti-democratic views verged dangerously on national socialism in the Nazi sense of the term. Certainly, after April 1940, the *Publicist* was required to submit copy for censorship before publication. One month later, the magazine published 'Fifty Points of Policy for an Australia First Party after the War'. We must look at some of these because it is here that most clearly are laid out the anti-Semitic attitudes that infused the magazine and motivated many of its contributors.

Fortunately for our purposes, P.R. Stephensen wrote a lengthy 'exposition' of the Fifty Points in August 1941. There is no need for us to spend time on points such as Point 3 'for self-dependence; against colonial status' or Point 7 'for forthright diplomacy; against moralising' or Point 23 'for personal responsibility; against government paternalism' or Point 35 'for women in the home; against women in industry'. In the context of right-wing groups these are motherhood statements — or perhaps it would be more accurate to call them fatherhood statements. They are repetitive and predictable and, largely for these reasons, close enough to harmless. In many other Points, however, it is hard to miss the touch of vituperation and extremism. Thus, in discussing 'territorial entity':

Australian disloyalists have recently suggested the virtual cession of a part of northwest Australia for occupation by alien Jews: an outrageous proposal implying cession, and equivalent to conniving at invasion by trickery.¹¹

and, in discussing higher birthrate as against immigration, he states that:

there are already enough women of child-bearing age in Australia to enable the continent to be populated to its optimum with Australian-born citizens . . . Future immigration from European Continental countries is hypothetical, except in the case of alien Jews, who would form segregated alien racial minorities within Australia, contrary to the National policy of homogeneity.¹²

There is obviously an anti-Semitism evident here which itself becomes sickeningly predictable and is dragged in by the hair of its head at every opportunity. Thus, at the end of his discussion of the inevitable Point 29 'for Rightism; against Leftism', Stephensen allows himself the totally gratuitous comment, 'Most of the "Leftist" literature distributed in Australia bore the imprint of the London Jewish firm of Gollancz'.

As is to be expected, though, the issue is addressed quite blatantly in Point 16 'for Aryanism; against Semitism'. The rationale here was that this

is an attempt to make even more precise the principle of racial homogeneity implied in the 'White Australia' doctrine . . . The term 'aryan' is here used, as it has been used by scientific and historical writers for more than seventy years to describe those inhabitants of present-day Europe whose ancestors migrated in the dawn of history, from India, Persia and the Caucasus regions westwards into the European regions, where they settled, became acclimatised, and established European

nations, derived from the racial characteristics which are in fact different from the racial characteristics of the Semitic, Negro, Mongol and the other races of mankind. The effect of the 'White Australia' policy has been to establish a population here which is approximately 98 percent Aryan. Any large-scale immigration of non-absorbable Semitic or other non-Aryan elements here now would inevitably create biological disease and disorder in the Aryan Australian community. This problem may become very urgent as a sequel to the present war in Europe, from which there may be a Semitic 'exodus' towards Australia as a 'Promised Land'.¹¹

Most of this is, of course, wrong-headed nonsense but not obviously subversive or dangerous to the State. Nonetheless, as I mentioned earlier, Stephensen, Miles and their supporters were already subject to specific surveillance by the authorities. Intelligence contacts had been put in place within the *Publicist* group and within the so-called 'Yabber' Club, a coffee-house discussion group which met in Sydney.

Four months after the publication of the above explication, the Australia First Movement was officially formed (in October 1941). The Intelligence contacts continued to report back, shorthand writers continued to attend public meetings organised by the Movement but no action was taken. It seemed to be the view of the observers that the Movement was still not a danger to the State.

In December 1941, Japan entered the war. The Movement lost momentum and started to divide. Nonetheless Dr. Evatt, the Attorney-General, ordered the surveillance to continue even though the reports that he was receiving recommended that no further reports were necessary. Public meetings organised by the Movement began to suffer from disruption which Stephensen was convinced was the result of collusion between Evatt and the Communists.

Finally, in March 1942, four members of the AFM were arrested in Perth and, a little later, 16 were arrested in Sydney and, still later, one in Melbourne. The AFM was officially broken. The four Western Australian members were tried on charges of subversive activity and attempted sabotage (two were found guilty) but it is a disturbing fact that none of the others was ever brought to trial. Instead they were interned for varying periods. Stephensen was the last to be released — in September 1945 — over three years later.

There are many questions of civil liberties raised by the whole issue. But these are not much to our present purpose. Paul Hasluck¹² has written about them, as has Bruce Muirden¹³. Both authors have depicted the AFM members as muddle-headed and wrong-headed and unpleasantly anti-Semitic and with a regard for some form of national socialism. But they seem not to have been a material danger to the State. The conspiracy theory run by Stephensen was that the whole plot had been engineered by the left-wing and the Communists to put paid to a right-wing movement and to prove their own national loyalty at the same time. The events took place about a year after the *volte-face* of the unions when Russia entered the war and the theory would have it that the AFM arrests represented a golden opportunity for Evatt and the left wing to appear in a good and patriotic light.

Enough of that. It is more to our purpose to note that the AFM had been broken and attacked for subversion. It was not a popular group to be linked to. The arrests took place in an atmosphere of confusion, turmoil and rumour and against the background of the menacing advance of the Japanese forces. The AFM was far from being viewed then as a mere idiosyncrasy; its policies aroused fear and loathing and its demise aroused delight in certain quarters — some of them literary.

It is now time to return to the Jindyworobak group of poets. I have already pointed out that Ingamells had drawn upon Stephensen's pamphlet in writing his own manifesto. At that time they had not met or, it seems, corresponded and, if they had, they would have found little in common. Ingamells claimed (rather disin-

genuously) to be a political innocent at the time, commenting retrospectively in 1945 that he had not had a political notion in his head.¹⁴ His writing had certainly been innocent of socio-political comment apart from a generalised anti-Pomism and a concern for the Aborigines which was more sentimental than anything else. He was positively Georgian in his determination to keep the real world away from his poetry.

Ingamells in 1939–40 had none of the Australia First characteristics apart from a nationalistic attitude. He was not a subscriber to the *Publicist*. It is possible that he had not even heard of the magazine or even of Australia First. Then in 1940 he met Ian Mudie, a South Australian poet. Mudie had been, for some time, an enthusiastic disciple of Australia First, a prolific contributor to the *Publicist* and a correspondent and friend of P.R. Stephensen. Mudie was later to visit Sydney, become a member of the Yabber Club — and be investigated by Military Security at the time of the internments. He was not interned himself and, in a later letter to Ingamells, recognised a degree of good fortune in this: 'Well, if P.R. and the rest were guilty so was I! If they were innocent . . . then I was equally so'.¹⁵

From the time of his meeting with Mudie, a new political awareness became evident in some of Ingamells' poetry, particularly in a rather turgid piece called 'The Gangrened People'

We, the Gangrened People,
swollen up with fabricated virtue,
virus of hypocrisy,
call ourselves the champions of Justice
and Liberty and O Democracy . . .
Observe the countenance of Commercialism,
the unchecked daughter of invalid honest Commerce,
begot, by clever and not honest men.
I will outstare the harlot face of facts,
expose and not condone the inhuman clash
of absolute contradictions . . .¹⁶

The little volume of Ingamells' work in which this appeared, *At a Boundary*, was sent by Mudie to Stephensen. This action set in train a rather lush correspondence among the three of them. Something of the tone of this can be deduced from the following extracts

From Mudie to Ingamells

I'm still feeling heady and exhilarated by our talk last night . . . I think we might well describe PRS's plan for the present as being roughly equivalent to the Mont St. Quentin cry ('each man to act on his own, and as many as possible to reach the top'). At the same time he encourages cooperation between individuals, the closer and closer study of Australian problems, the preparation of everyone of us for the taking of a part in a political party as soon as the war ends.¹⁷

From Stephensen to Ingamells

Yours of the 8th inst has arrived, to pep up your avuncular Bunyip Critic with contagion of its enthusiasm . . . That is why, having now reached the age of 40, I look for younger men to give the Australia First propaganda a new and vital stimulus in their own way . . . It is because I think that you, Rex, have in you the power to influence many Australians, that I send you my Episcopal Bunyip Benedictions which I have formally conferred only on six people, among them Ian and his son, Bill, I would never waste Bunyip Benedictions on a person unworthy . . . This seems sententious, so I'll not refer to it again, but it clears the air, and now you are in my Tribe as securely as such an initiation ceremony can place you there; and I am in yours. The main thing is, that I'll NEVER misunderstand anything you say, or take umbrage at it; so go your hardest and do your darndest with my irrevocable blessing.¹⁸

It seems clear enough that Stephensen and Mudie felt that Ingamells was worth cultivating. Much of their correspondence is quite extraordinary and indicated that their expectations went a great deal beyond that. They saw Ingamells as an ally and

a fellow enthusiast — and it's hard to escape the view that they were right. For one thing there is the internal evidence of a political sea-change in 'The Gangrened People'. Then there is the clear evidence that Ingamells quite formally joined the AFM. Stephensen wrote in January 1942

I received your letter dated 27th Dec. from Port Broughton, with 10s enclosed for membership in the A.F.M. Official receipt for this and Member's ticket will be forwarded after our next Executive Committee meeting.¹⁹

Ingamells' sense of timing was deplorable. He applied for membership twenty days after the Pacific War started and just as the Security forces were intensifying their investigations into the AFM. Perhaps it is not surprising that Ingamells himself was apparently questioned after the Australia First arrests in March and his effects searched.

Ingamells seems not to have made much of this interrogation. There is no mention, in Ingamells' own accounts, of such an event. His widow could not recall that he had been involved. It clearly happened, however, because Ian Mudie recalled that Ingamells was interrogated and material confiscated while Clem Christesen both in letters at the time and in correspondence with me confirmed the event.

I recall that Rex wrote to say that police had searched his house and had scattered books all over his study or words to that effect. The John Masefield letters were taken, among other material. He also mentioned an enquiry by 'Intelligence', probably Commonwealth Security. Certain of this confiscated material was later returned to Rex.²⁰

This evidence seems to argue a very strong association between Ingamells and the Australia First Movement at a time when it was becoming unwise to have such an association.

We may, in fact, move on to adduce even more evidence. It is not hard to establish that magazine articles written by Ingamells at about this time were increasingly about non-literary matters. The journal *Cultural Cross-Section* edited by his brother John was published in 1941 and contained articles which elicited the following response from Stephensen

Hooray Hooray and BANZAI thrice and yip-yip-yippee for *Cultural Cross-Section*, arrived per Ian. I refer particularly to your article and Ian's and John's . . . Will you please reply by airmail to tell me what is the position if we wish to reprint your article and Ian's?²¹

In *Meanjin* in late 1941 (called the Nationality Number) Ingamells contributed the introductory article on Australianism in which Australia First and Jindyworobak are openly linked for the first time as 'unique in the ways in which they have stirred public consciousness in matters of extreme national importance'²². In a later *Meanjin* article (probably published at about the time that the AF arrests were being made) he falls rather easily into AF rhetoric

. . . the propaganda and lying advertisement that filled the whited halls of Commerce and Humbug are blared forth in the very fastness of Hope and Wonder. We, the Australian people, are the hol-lowest of shams, the most pitiful pretentiousness that the spark of life has contrived; the most ashen gutter the brief candle spiritual existence has given to the dreams of civilisation.²³

It is perfectly understandable that after the arrests this sort of fairly straightforward support for AF principles was not so evident.

What is not so understandable is why, in the year after the arrests (1943), Ingamells announced the W.J. Miles Memorial Prize for the best contributed Australian song or poem. Although AF was not mentioned in the advertising material, it was reasonably well known that Miles had been the publisher of the *Publicist*. It was less well-known that the contest was financed by Val Crowley, one of the AF interneers. I should point out in passing that the contest was eventually won by the AF stalwart, Ian Mudie, for the poem 'The Australian Dream' which was subsequently published at Val Crowley's expense!

There is a fool-hardiness about this sponsorship which aroused concerns among some of the Jindyworobak 'troops'. J.K. Ewers of Perth wrote

I am returning with this letter your circular about the W.J.MILES MEMORIAL COMPETITION because I flatly refuse to act as an agent for any activity associated with W.J.Miles, or in other words, the Australia First Party . . . Perhaps you are flattered by the interest shown in Jindyworobak by Val Crowley and his friends . . . But, by heavens, commonsense dictates that you should closely examine the motives of the giver . . . Val Crowley & Co are money lenders. When the day of settlement arrives they will demand you and your dearly loved Jindyworobakism as legal hostages.²⁴

Some months after the Competition, Mudie reported to Ingamells that 'Ewers now says that all his fears about the competition have been dispelled'²⁵. But it seems pretty clear that concern over a relationship between Jindy and AF remained in others' minds. Even two years after the internments, Mudie wrote to Ingamells as follows

As to the Jindy pamphlet, I think it'd be best for politic reasons if you left me out. I'm really a late comer to the movement and I find that most people look on me as being more or less merely associated. They look on me as A.F. Therefore my name too prominently associated would probably cause a suspicion that Jindy is a political dingo in a literary kangaroo's clothing. And though Jindy is of intense political significance, the time is not yet ripe to force that fact down people's throats.²⁶

The conspiratorial tone of this letter is deeply interesting. Mudie has obviously not abandoned the hope of post-war AF activity and he sees Jindyworobak and Ingamells as having a part in this.

In the event, the Jindy movement petered out, despite Ingamells' devoted attention. The Jindyworobak Anthologies continued to be published until 1953 and many small volumes were published under the Jindy colophon but any influence that Jindyworobak or Ingamells might have had effectively stopped in 1942. Ingamells himself was killed in a car accident in 1955.

It is a matter of clear record that the Jindyworobaks were quite soundly berated by the literary critics. It is also a matter of chronological fact that, at about 1941-42, the tone of the critical comments that were made about them turned from a kind of exasperated indulgence to quite serious vituperation. A.D. Hope, just beginning his career as a literary critic, charged them as follows

The Jindyworobaks might be described as the Boy Scout School of Poetry. They have the same boyish enthusiasm for playing at being primitive, they lay the same stress on the moral values of bushcraft and the open air, they promise to be pure Australian in word and thought and deed, but above all there is the common determination to do noble deeds, not to dream them all day long.²⁷

At the end of the article Hope suggested that Troop Leader Rex should be required to give up his bushcraft badge. There were oblique references by critics such as Hope and R.G. Howarth which suggested that they knew of the link between Jindy and the AF Movement. Some critics saw it as more than a link. C.R. Badger wrote of

P.R. Stephensen's exploratory essay, 'Foundations of Culture in Australia' and its issue — the Jindyworobak School.²⁸

Even as late as 1960 we find Peter Coleman writing that

Stephensen was one of Jindyworobak's most promising spokesmen.²⁹

It is not hard to subscribe to a theory that the Jindyworobak Movement in general and Ingamells in particular suffered from a perceived link with the AF Movement in the minds of many.

There is almost certainly no doubt the AF internees were harmless to the Australian war effort and were interned with little justification. They were muddle-headed and racist eccentrics but they had no power to carry through their philosophies and finished up as the pawns of more powerful men. Nonetheless in the somewhat hysterical days of early 1942 it was easy enough to paint them as

politically dangerous and certainly as dangerous to know. Literary commentators were not privy, of course, to the correspondence between Stephensen, Mudie and Ingamells but it seems likely that they knew in a generalised way that there was a link. In the 'whispering gallery' (to use Peter Coleman's phrase) which made up Literature in Australia at the time it seems fairly certain that it was being suggested that the Jindyworobaks had taken a wrong turning.

The fever of the time is well exemplified in a series of letters to Ingamells from Clem Christesen, editor of *Meanjin*. Christesen wrote

Has anything occurred which might have a bearing on the Australia First Movement in South Australia? Of recent weeks, that is. Very disturbing things have been happening in Sydney and Brisbane.³⁰

Well, there have been a few more raids among the local lads — and further enquiries about the Australia First Movement. Nothing's happened to me though . . . By the way, did 'they' take any of my letters to you — or did they only collar the Masefield batch?! . . . I was informed yesterday that Stephensen had been interned. Is this correct? News came from three sources. If so, I am exceedingly sorry . . . P.S. Do you know whether your mail is examined? If so, you may perhaps let me know, ole boy, ole boy.³¹

What's all this about the A.F.M.? Do you think it is true what has been alleged in the press? Or was that report a red herring . . .?³²

I'm still at a loss to understand the AF affair. It looks very bad to me, whichever way one looks at it. Has the Government made a hell of a balls of the whole business? If so, what on earth will happen? If not, what then will happen? Why the inordinate delay? I feel this affair may have very far-reaching repercussions. Has anything 'happened' to Hooper and Crowley? Do you know the names of the chaps concerned? A hell of a lot of queries — but I'm very much in the dark about the whole business. Any news you can let me have will be much appreciated.³³

This quite graphically illustrates the paranoia of the time and shows as clearly as anything could how ill-judged was Ingamells' association with Australia First.

It is possible to argue, and it was very likely the case, that Ingamells' contact with Stephensen was undertaken for the best of motives — a shared interest in Nationalism. It is possible to argue and it was very likely the case that Ingamells was not aware of the more sombre elements of the AF beliefs. He was after all living in Adelaide and the AF was firmly centred in Sydney. It is possible to argue and it was very likely the case that the AF internees should not have been arrested in the first place let alone incarcerated for so long.

It is possible to believe all this and still to say that in the climate of the times an association with Stephensen and Miles was enough to damn Ingamells and his movement in the eyes of many of his supporters and enemies — particularly those with left-wing tendencies (and there were many of these). It was enough to cause literary friends and colleagues to act very cautiously around him. It was enough to poison the very important critical debate on Nationalism which had been generated by Ingamells and enthusiastically carried on by him.

In summary, it was a great pity for Jindyworobak that the connection with Australia First was ever made but I suspect that the greatest charge that can be laid against Ingamells is political naivete.

There is no doubt that the Movement, like many right-wing nationalist movements before and since, was racist and specifically anti-Semitic and purveyed a particularly tawdry version of those sentiments. I must conclude by saying as firmly as I can, however, that I saw no evidence of these views appearing in the poetry, the articles or the private correspondence of Rex Ingamells or indeed in any of the poetry or other writings sponsored by the Jindyworobaks. There was plenty of evidence of anti-Pomism — but that's another matter and a much more legitimate source of complaint to an Australian Nationalist!

NOTES

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31. Same to same, 25 March 1942, Latrobe Library.
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SIR JAMES BARRETT (1862-1945): AUSTRALIAN PHILO-SEMITES

Hilary L. Rubinstein

Australia, as Reverend D.I. Freedman of Perth once remarked, has been 'a land of sunshine' to its Jews.¹ Their lines, to invoke the Psalmist, had 'fallen in pleasant places.' Admittedly, shadows did cast their pall: the twin shadows of assimilation and anti-Semitism. But, as Jewish leaders are fond of warning in our own day, the latter did not present the same degree of threat as the former. Internal perils, rather than external dangers, presented the Australian Jewish community of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with its gravest and most immediate challenge.²

It has been remarked that 'If an informed observer were asked . . . whether Australia, in comparison with other nations, has experienced a great deal of anti-Semitism or very little, he would be obliged to say . . . very little.'³ Commentators and historians have, perhaps understandably, tended to concentrate on manifestations of anti-Semitism in Australia, and have tended to ignore the equal or even greater extent of philo-Semitism in this country. Dr. Serge Liberman, in a path-finding essay, has presented a glimpse of that other side of the picture — 'Gentile champions of Jews in Australia'.⁴

This brief article focuses on one such champion of Jews and Jewish causes — Sir James Barrett, an eminent ophthalmologist, music lover and public figure, who was demonstrably pro-Jewish refugee during the 1930s. His philo-Semitism is instructive: it demonstrates that championship of Jews has not been the exclusive preserve of progressives and leftists. For Barrett, who capped his distinguished career by becoming Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, was a leading member of the Melbourne 'Establishment', a conservative (he held office in the National Federation, one of the forerunners of the federal Liberal Party) and a staunch and vocal Empire loyalist (he was founder and president of the Victorian branch of the Royal Colonial Institute which became known as the Royal Empire Society of Victoria, and in that capacity he was a tireless lobbyist and publicist.)

Barrett was born in South Melbourne in 1862, the son of English immigrants; his father was a physician. He was educated at Melbourne Church of England Grammar School and at Carlton College, where he was dux. After medical training at the University of Melbourne and in London he commenced medical practice in Melbourne in 1886. Two years later he was to forge the first of several familial links of sorts which he had with Australian Jewry. For in 1888 he married the non-Jewish widow of Frederick Joy Pirani. At the time of his accidental death in 1881 Pirani was Professor-elect in Natural Philosophy at the University of Melbourne. Although Pirani, member of a well-known Anglo-Jewish family, had been a secular examiner to Common School 180, the Jewish day school in East Melbourne, he had jettisoned even nominal ties to Judaism. He was a rationalist, and his funeral service — without religious participation of any kind — and interment in unconsecrated ground caused a stir; he was 'buried like a dog', a Christian prelate railed.⁵ Despite his eccentricity and his out-marriage, Pirani had inescapable Jewish connections: his extended family comprised many prominent figures in the Australian Jewish 'Establishment'. It seems reasonable to suppose that Barrett's marriage to Marian

Pirani brought him into contact with some of these Pirani relatives and associates, rather as his contemporary, Sir Frederic Eggleston, reinforced ties to a Jewish circle following his marriage with Lulu Henriques.⁶ At any rate, Barrett's marriage to Pirani's widow must have raised his awareness of Jews, and it perhaps kindled his feelings of sympathy for them. In addition, one of Barrett's three daughters by Marian Pirani married a Jew — Benjamin Marks, of the Suva, Fiji/Melbourne merchant family.⁷

The Jewish milieu of the Markses, the Piranis and their relatives — which included two distinguished and influential families of Cohens — would have struck Barrett (a nominal Anglican) as no different from the non-Jewish middle class milieu from which he sprang, except in religion. Loyalty to Crown and Empire, one of the governing passions of his life, was a marked characteristic of the Australian Jewish community itself, particularly as voiced by its prominent members.

This loyalty on the part of Australian Jewry was, in large measure, the outcome of deep and sincere gratitude for living in a country, based on British ideals of justice and tolerance and secure under the British flag, which treated Jews as equal citizens and allowed them, unhindered by institutionalised anti-Semitism or serious bigotry, to play their full part in Australian society. As Reverend J.H. Landau, assistant minister at Sydney's Great Synagogue, declared at the birth of federated Australia in 1901: '[England's] strength has always been in her equal laws . . . The great English pro-consuls have striven to do one thing for every land on which our flag is raised — to give the people, from the prince to the meanest inhabitant, the safety and rights of liberty . . .'.⁸ Thus, 'the responsibility and meaning of Empire . . . solemnises and gladdens us . . . We rejoice to think this is a Federation under the crown of England, that we continue to be related to the dear old Home as eager, free, all-hoping, and ever-advancing children to a proud and happy mother . . . England, our mother and our dearest friend.'⁹

The annals of Australian Jewry are replete with such statements. Save for that peculiar sense of gratitude for freedom from oppression which reinforced them, these statements and their motivating feelings closely resemble those of imperially loyal non-Jewish Australians, including Barrett, for whom sentimental attachment to the motherland dovetailed with a realistic appraisal of their country's defence needs and other interests which meant reliance on the British tie. Such feelings as articulated by Landau and other communal leaders indicate both the Australian Jewish community's symbiotic relationship with Britain, and the similarity of its members to their fellow countrymen and women.

For the Australian Jewish community in Barrett's day differed from the wider community only by virtue of religion — that restrained and essentially undemanding brand of Anglo-Orthodoxy which characterised Judaism in Australia and enabled its adherents to tread a *via media* and maintain a *modus vivendi* with their fellow subjects. It was the Judaism of a community which was at ease in its environment yet was, nevertheless, discreet, circumspect, prudent, in its dealings with the non-Jewish world. Anti-Semitism might be diminished, but it was not absent altogether, and although some of the Australian Jewish community's ablest and luckiest members might occupy some of the highest offices in the land, fear of arousing prejudice still loomed in the communal breast.

The folk memory of centuries of vicious persecution in Europe could not be eradicated even in the 'land of sunshine'. Moreover, communal anxieties were provoked by a sense of demographic minority status, a sense both amusingly and poignantly expressed by the scion of an old-established family distinguished in

Australian law and letters (some members of which were certainly personally known to Barrett), A. A. Phillips, English master at Wesley College, Melbourne, and coiner of the phrase 'cultural cringe' to describe what he viewed as Australia's unwarranted deference to the values of the Old World (clearly he was an exception to the type of pro-British Jewish ultra-loyalist we are emphasising here!) recalled a 'cultural cringe' of his own. Looking back to a phase of his childhood shortly after the turn of the century, he wrote that when he was 'about eleven' he was

struck by the strange improbability that I was an Australian Jew, when it was so much more likely that I would have been born an American Christian or a Confucian Chinese. I was aware that there were 'millions and trillions' of Americans and Chinese and only a few thousand Australian Jews. What a funny thing that the most important person in my universe — Me — should be such a long-odds chance. I was not sure whether I was proud of my special rarity or annoyed with God for making me something so peculiar.¹⁰

Needless to say, such a sense of ambivalence propelled some of those it afflicted towards total assimilation, to which others were driven by apathy. From total assimilation certain members of Lady Barrett's first husband's family were not immune.¹¹ But for most Australian Jews, bent on that 'integration without assimilation' which guided the community as it felt its way in the wider society, the feeling of ambivalence, the awareness of belonging to a tiny minority, produced different results. That feeling, that awareness, strengthened the commitment of most Australian Jews among Barrett's contemporaries to maintain and foster good relations with non-Jews by down playing distinctiveness and stressing the community's British patriotism and Empire loyalty.

It is not surprising, therefore, that several Jews worked alongside Barrett in the Empire's cause. Those two doyens of the interwar Victorian Jewish 'Establishment', Archie Michaelis and Colonel Harold Cohen (who had married a Pirani) served on the committee of the Constitutional Club which, *inter alia*, 'shall consist of members pledged to loyalty to the Throne and Empire'.¹² Alan Michaelis was President of the Empire Reciprocity League.¹³ Barrett's own Royal Colonial Institute (Royal Empire Society from 1928) had a number of Jewish members. They included Theodore Fink, Dr. Leon Jona (who evidently saw no conflict between Zionist aspirations and British imperial policy, at any rate in the early years of the Mandate), L.J. Levy, Mrs. E.Z. Michaelis, F.D. Michaelis, Miss A. Michaelis, and Dr. M.M. Perl. Levy and F.D. Michaelis were among Barrett's fellow Council members on the Royal Empire Society. Mrs. Joseph Levi (Kate, *née* Davis, sister of the famed Australian Boer War hero Major Walter 'Karri' Davis) was a prominent office-holder in the Australian Women's National League (AWNL). The AWNL was in effect the women's branch of the National Party, to which Barrett belonged and in whose interest he stood unsuccessfully, and it was also zealously pro-Empire.¹⁴ Prominent lawyer M.M. Phillips served as Treasurer of the League of Nations Union in Victoria, which Barrett had been instrumental in establishing. Barrett's involvement in that Union shows, incidentally, how much credence he gave to Viscount Sydenham's assertion (*infra*) that the League of Nations was part of a dark Jewish conspiracy against British interests! Lawyer P.D. Phillips was yet another prominent Melbourne Jew active in imperial affairs: he was especially interested in the constitutional aspects of Britain's relationship with the Dominions.¹⁵ So it seems fair to say that Barrett had plenty of Jewish acquaintances, and ones, moreover, of a type to make a favourable impression upon him.

Although he appears to have been an agnostic, Barrett was, socially, a member of Victoria's Protestant 'Establishment'. In considering the reasons for the almost craven circumspection,¹⁶ the carefully cultivated and frequently ostentatiously ar-

ticated patriotism and Empire loyalty evinced by the interwar Australian Jewish community, historians have disregarded what was almost certainly a crucial catalyst: the example of sectarianism. The spectacle of sectarian battles of the first half of the twentieth century surely had a salutary effect on Australian Jewish leaders.

It is easy to overlook, and astonishing to confront, in the frenzied polemics of the protagonists, the full extent of the bitterness which dogged Protestant-Catholic relations during the conscription controversies of World War One and beyond, particularly in Victoria.¹⁷ The ferocity of anti-Irish feeling on the part of the Protestant 'Establishment' must have intensified Australian Jewry's resolve to pursue a policy of circumspection, in order to prevent a similar outbreak directed at themselves. It would have made them especially keen to demonstrate that *they* were one minority group whose loyalty to Britain and the Empire could be counted upon. The community had responded admirably to the call to arms during World War One, but the post-war linking of Jews with Bolshevism in some minds presented a potential threat, and one communal leaders would have been eager to eradicate as swiftly as possible. Similarly, the example of sectarianism must have fuelled that cautious attitude towards 'political Zionism' displayed by Australian Jewish leaders between the wars. They surely feared that in view of British policy becoming increasingly out of step with Zionist demands as the Mandate proceeded, 'Zionist' could become the hate-label which 'Sinn Féin' had been. As it was, the Victorian Protestant Federation, far from showing hostility towards Jews, used the anti-Semitic utterances of certain Australian Catholic priests as sticks with which to beat its adversaries.¹⁸

For the Protestant Federation, as for most Australians, Sir John Monash was a revered and treasured 'national possession', as his biographer dubs him,¹⁹ and Sir John's fame and heroism tended to enhance the standing of his compatriotic co-religionists. Sir James Barrett was well-acquainted with Monash,²⁰ and although Barrett's philo-Semitism appears to have transcended that friendship, it was no doubt enhanced by it. Barrett's sympathy with Jews might also have been reinforced by the number of Jewish practitioners he encountered in the medical profession and in the music world; in addition to being a distinguished ophthalmologist he was a gifted pianist with an active interest in orchestral development in this country and a dedication to building support for classical music.²¹ Then, too, as a leading member of the academic community he might have been imbued with a respect and admiration for the traditional Jewish commitment to learning. Again, his voluminous writings convey the impression that he was a man of extravagant feelings as well as of decency and integrity: in the final analysis, he may have championed the cause of besieged Jewry simply because to do so was in his view charitable, right and just.

And so to some of the ways in which Barrett's philo-Semitism manifested itself. An article he published in 1914 in the *Australian Farm and Home*²² may at first sight seem to belie that philo-Semitism. In that article he touched on the subject of criminality, citing the examples of four recently executed hit-men in the United States. Three of the men (like their victim) were Jews — the fourth was Italian — and the fact that Barrett chose to highlight that fact seems initially somewhat sinister. Then, as now, Australian Jews were sensitive about the Jewish identity of miscreants being mentioned in the press, and they suspected an anti-Semitic motive. However, a close reading of Barrett's article suggests that in mentioning the fact that the men were Jews the author intended no mischief. Rather, he sought to give the reader a complete profile of the criminals concerned in order to set them in

their socio-economic context and to demonstrate how even the sons of 'respectable orthodox Jews', of 'members of a synagogue', of a comfortably-off tailor who ensured his boy's religious instruction until the age of thirteen, could be lured into the criminal underworld. Had the men concerned been sons of devout churchgoers, there is little doubt that Barrett would have drawn attention to that fact too.

Barrett was in communication with many prominent people at 'Home', including several ex-governors of Victoria. One of his correspondents was Viscount Sydenham, who as Sir George Sydenham Clark had been Governor of Victoria from 1901 to 1903. Sydenham was undeniably anti-Semitic, and made no attempt to conceal it.²³ Indeed, he believed that Jews were responsible for many of the ills of the modern world, and he did not demur from telling Barrett so. 'There is now an organised attack mainly Jewish upon the Empire and no effort is spared to bring us to disaster . . .' he wrote to him in 1920. 'Trouble . . . is being carefully fostered and plenty of money appears to be available.'²⁴ A few months later he assured Barrett that 'The League of Nations is a Jewish invention directed principally against our Empire . . .'²⁵ On no occasion did Barrett reply in kind, to Sydenham or — as far as can be ascertained — to any of the other personalities with whom he corresponded about imperial affairs. His concerns included fighting the perceived invasion of Australia by American films (again, not a hint of anti-Semitism pervaded his correspondence) and he spearheaded the opposition to the appointment of Isaacs as Governor-General (opposition predicated not, as is often said, upon the fact that Isaacs was an Australian, much less that he was a Jew, but on the supposition that the method of appointment flouted the King's prerogative: indeed, Barrett's opposition to the method of appointment pre-dated Isaacs' nomination.)²⁶

It was in regard to Jewish victims of Nazism that Barrett's philo-Semitism became fully apparent. When the newly installed Nazi regime began its policy of anti-Semitism, Barrett, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, immediately avowed his sympathy with the persecuted. In May 1933 a mass protest meeting against German policy was held at the Melbourne Town Hall. Barrett was unable to attend, but a letter of solidarity from him was read to the 2000-strong crowd. In the letter Barrett compared the plight of German Jewry to that of the Huguenots three centuries earlier.²⁷

Over the ensuing years various correspondents apprised Barrett of events in Europe. 'Some Austrian refugee friends of ours . . . fully corroborate the reports of German atrocities in concentration camps', reported an Australian Defence Department employee to Barrett about the end of 1938.

The husband was in Dachau camp for three months and considers himself lucky to be alive to tell of it! The wife saw very young Jewish children and aged Jewish men and women thrown into the Danube to drown, whilst storm troopers danced along the bank crying 'See the silly Jew. He can't swim to save himself.'²⁸

Reports such as that kept the situation of Jewry in the forefront of Barrett's mind and undoubtedly fortified his resolve to help in whatever way he could. This included publicly championing the cause of Jewish refugees.

Among Barrett's admirers was the equally philo-Semitic Professor A.R. Chisholm of the French Department at the University of Melbourne. 'May I express to you,' Chisholm wrote in 1940, 'the gratification that I feel in seeing you take up and defend so ably in the press the cause of decency and civilisation.'²⁹

This attitude may be contrasted with that of another university colleague, the economist Professor L.F. Giblin, who occasionally worked with Barrett in imperial causes. In response to a report on Nazi activities sent to him by Barrett Giblin

admitted: 'I find the Nazi technique distasteful . . . but broadly I cannot quarrel with their aims.'³⁰ Barrett's sensitivity to what Nazism meant for millions trapped under its jackboot may be contrasted also with the hard-headed views of the well-known international affairs analyst Professor W. McMahon Ball. 'If Hitler will be satisfied with Eastern Europe,' Ball told Barrett in 1939, 'I suppose it is better that he should expand there than fight us.'³¹

Barrett had a long-standing interest in the development of tropical regions of Australia, and devoted much discussion to the question of white colonisation of the Far North and Queensland.³² His passionately held opinion was that 'Australia offers a better opportunity for effecting the settlement of white people in the tropics than any other country I am acquainted with.'³³ Possibly to his chagrin, he found one article he devoted to this subject reprinted in a German anthology in 1934 alongside several rabid anti-Semitic articles gleaned from continental sources.³⁴ But Barrett's article, which first appeared in the *Australian Quarterly* in August 1934, was also drawn to the attention of a rather different European readership — the Freeland League for Jewish Colonisation.

Founded in 1935, the Freeland League aimed to assist suitable German (and later Austrian and Czech) refugees to develop self-supporting agricultural communities of their own in democratic countries such as Australia. Its representative, Dr. Isaac Nachman Steinberg, visited Australia from 1939–43 and campaigned vigorously among politicians and other policy and opinion makers on behalf of his scheme to settle some 50 000 Jewish refugees on about seven million acres in the East Kimberley region of north-west Australia, a proposal whose history has been traced in detail elsewhere, and which in 1944 was formally rejected by the Federal Government.³⁵

On 30 December 1938 Barrett sent a copy of his article on tropical Australia to Dr. Steinberg at the Freeland League's London headquarters. His intention was obviously to bolster the League's resolve to pursue the Kimberley scheme, and to counter the claims of those who — as in earlier decades — had insisted that the Far North was unsuitable as a field of white settlement.

Barrett's 'illuminating study' evidently delighted its recipient. 'The conclusions you reached about the White Colonisation of the Tropics were most encouraging for us and I am looking forward to discussing all problems with you personally,' wrote Steinberg enthusiastically if a trifle tardily the following April. 'We greatly appreciate the friendship you showed to the distress of the Jewish people and sincerely hope for a fruitful cooperation between us.'³⁶

In the meantime Barrett had received a glowing report of Steinberg from one of his many British acquaintances and contacts, a Harley Street specialist who had enlisted Barrett's aid on behalf of individual Jewish refugees. 'I know Dr. Steinberg quite well,' wrote Dr. Arnold Sorsby. 'He is an exceptionally nice man and I am sure that he is not inspired by any motives of narrow nationalism.' Sorsby, however, was decidedly less enthusiastic about the Kimberley proposal:

As regards the larger issue you raise, I am afraid there is no easy solution to the multitude of problems, of which the Jewish problem is but one — and small — facet. One must reluctantly face the fact that Europe is now in for an indefinite period of war and revolution . . . In this situation I am not very sanguine about long term policies of migration. Questions like a Jewish state in Australia are, I think, beside the point. I am desperately anxious to find places of refuge for individuals, but I feel no interest whatever in far-fetched schemes of settlement, carrying with them a legacy of this mad Europe.³⁷

A man of Barrett's firm conviction and robust egotism was not, however, easily deflected from his purpose. He became one of the prominent Melburnians who

signed a petition on behalf of the Kimberley scheme, thus joining a number of University of Melbourne colleagues — including Chancellor Sir John Medley and Professor A.R. Chisholm — in publicly supporting the proposal. Incidentally, the prominent Empire loyalist Sir Charles Merrett, who worked closely with Barrett in imperial causes, also signed the petition, thereby evidently giving the lie to any assumptions that his organisation, the British Empire Union, was as anti-Semitic as its British parent is said to have been. (The local British Empire Union, incidentally, consisted of Merrett and one other member, but Merrett was also on the council of the British Empire League). But the president of the Royal Empire Society in Sydney, Sir Hugh Denison, was implacably opposed to the proposal, and unlike Barrett proved to be hostile to Jewish refugees in general.³⁸

It is perhaps worth noting that conservative and Empire loyalist though Barrett was, Steinberg's early association with Lenin — he had served briefly as the latter's Minister of Justice — did not deter Barrett (who incidentally, Nationalist though he was, once found himself in hot water with Sir Hugh Denison and other Empire loyalists for lending his support to an Australian-Soviet culture group); nor, indeed, did it deter Merrett and other right-wing sympathisers. It is probable that Barrett's support for the Kimberley scheme was based on his sympathy with the victims of Nazi persecution and also on his conviction that 'Australia depends for its existence on the farmer and the stockbreeder'³⁹ — and that sympathy and that conviction neatly fused. Doubtless Barrett would have echoed Sir Walter Murdoch's phrase: 'Israel's extremity is Australia's opportunity.'⁴⁰

Many of those who doubted the feasibility of the Kimberley scheme held stereotyped notions about the ability of Jews as agriculturalists. They viewed Jews through the concave lenses of experience — as an urban commercial people — and they were convinced that Jewish settlers would not long remain in the Kimberleys. Inevitably, such doubters were convinced, the settlers would drift to the large cities of the Australian seaboard, particularly of the crowded south-east.

Barrett evidently resisted such doubts, if indeed they crossed his mind. Perhaps he was influenced by the prominent British Cabinet minister, Leo Amery, with whom he had been in fairly frequent correspondence for years. Amery, who was also well-disposed towards Jews, certainly assured Prime Minister Menzies that the settlers would be sufficiently isolated in the Kimberleys for their drift to the cities not to occur.⁴¹ Of course, it is entirely possible that Amery's remarks to Menzies were made at Barrett's prompting.

One of Barrett's abiding concerns was the provision of medical services in rural districts. In 1910, with his sister Edith, who was also a physician, he established the Bush Nursing Association. By the time of his death in 1945, as a result of the Association's efforts, there were sixty-seven bush nursing hospitals and fifteen nursing centres in Victoria: their existence has been described as his 'greatest and noblest memorial'.⁴² Barrett was a firm believer in rural development: 'it is abundantly clear,' he wrote

that in Australia the destruction of country life, or the diminution of its importance, is a disaster of the first order. Any check on rural development, any relative inferiority on the part of the farmer, must be followed by grave results in the cities. The best way to help Australian civilisation is to develop country life.⁴³

The arrival of Jewish refugees, then, presented Australia with an opportunity as well as a moral obligation so far as Barrett was concerned. We see this not only in his championship of the Kimberley scheme but in his support for Jewish refugee doctors. Barrett had served as President of the British Medical Association of Australia

(BMAA) in the mid-1930s, and in 1939 he became foundation President of the Ophthalmological Society of Australia. But on the question of the admission of refugee doctors he was at odds with many if not the majority of his colleagues, at any rate in the BMAA. It did not escape the BMAA's notice that Jews comprised about eleven per cent of Germany's medical profession. As early as 1934 (the year preceding Barrett's election as the organisation's President) the General Secretary of the BMAA, ostensibly concerned that 'Jews would lower standards', asked the Department of External Affairs whether Jewish doctors from Germany 'could be prevented from landing in Australia . . . through failure to pass a language test.' Upon learning from the Department of the Interior that the acceptance of immigrant doctors depended upon their eligibility to practice in the relevant state, the BMAA embarked on a largely successful campaign to in effect tighten controls on the admission of foreign doctors. The BMAA was one of the most vociferous professional bodies in Australia in agitating for restrictive practices when faced with an influx of Jewish refugees.⁴⁴

Barrett, however, did not share his colleagues' undisguised antipathy: again, he appears to have been influenced by humanitarianism mixed with an awareness of what constituted Australia's opportunity for advancement. He had been in contact with Sorsby, the Harley Street specialist, and had promised what aid he could muster on behalf of refugee doctors seeking a haven in Australia. 'I am very much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in exploring the possibilities in Australia,' wrote Sorsby. 'I have passed on the information you gave me to the committee dealing here with the placing of doctors.'⁴⁵

Barrett, meanwhile, vigorously admonished members of the medical profession whose letters deploring the immigration of refugee doctors had appeared in the *Medical Journal of Australia*:

Your correspondents should read the White Paper [*Treatment of German Nationals in Germany 1938/39*] published recently by the British Government relating to the treatment of Jews and non-Jewish political and religious critics in Germany before the outbreak of war. It gives an account in official language of the merciless treatment received by them at the hands of the Government.

Anyone knowing the facts would have been mad to have stayed in Germany. I have not advocated the admission of all and sundry into Australia, but simply that the few who have been admitted should be treated with humane consideration and courtesy. I have myself placed one M[edical] D[octor] (Vienna) as a waiter at a seaside resort, and have helped others to become partially trained nurses *et cetera*.⁴⁶

Clearly, waiting on holidaymakers at tables was a waste of valuable skills, to say nothing of the practitioner's decline in status and almost inevitable feelings of resentment, his relief at being out of danger notwithstanding. Barrett knew this; he knew, too, that outback Australia had need of such doctors.

And so he advocated the settlement of refugee doctors in remote areas. Such a policy was at least tolerated by the BMAA, since it removed competition with doctors in cities and — so long as refugees were placed in the outback — with doctors in desirable country towns too. Furthermore, it tended to accord with the strategy of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, which also advocated placing refugees away from urban centres, and with the recommendations of many Australian Jewish leaders. The Jewish leadership felt that if refugees were placed in positions away from the large towns, a visible concentration of foreign Jews would be avoided and anti-Semitism contained.⁴⁷

Thus we find Barrett, in 1939, strenuously urging the registration of refugee doctors in order to serve remote areas. Risking the wrath of some of his more unbending colleagues, he asserted in 1941 that 'any statement that there is no

shortage of doctors in this country is unfounded.' He added that 'There are normally 1700 practitioners in Victoria. The fourteen aliens available in the country do not warrant the complaint of taking away the work of our own men.'⁴⁸

Sir James Barrett died in 1945, too early to view the harrowing newsreels of Belsen and other liberated habitats of evil which brought the full extent of the Jewish catastrophe in Europe graphically before the world. Had he lived, he would surely have been in the forefront of those calling for the admission of Holocaust survivors to Australia. He had already proved himself a firm friend of Jewry. His friendship was fixed not only in his deep humanitarian instincts but in his personal knowledge of Jews, his appreciation of them as colleagues, companions and citizens, his admiration of what they had achieved and what they contributed to society. Such a friendship is surely more steadfast in the long run than one which is predicated solely on the image of Jew-as-victim.

NOTES

1. D.I. Freedman, 'Australia', *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1902, p. 319.
2. Hilary L. Rubinstein, *Chosen: the Jews in Australia*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987, pp. 82-91.
3. W.D. Rubinstein, 'The Politics of Anti-Semitism: the Australian Experience', in *Anti-Semitism and Human Rights*, Melbourne: Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1985, p. 131.
4. Serge Liberman, 'Gentile Champions of Jews in Australia', in W.D. Rubinstein (ed.), *Jews in the Sixth Continent*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987, pp. 76-100.
5. Barbara Falk, *No Other Home: an Anglo-Jewish Story 1833-1987*, Ringwood, Vic. Penguin, 1988, pp. 62-63.
6. For Eggleston see Warren Osmond, *Frederic Eggleston: An Intellectual in Politics*, North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985.
7. I am grateful to Isidor Solomon for this information. Apparently, Barrett's niece married, as his second wife, the apostate Henry Hamilton Jacoby: one of their children born in 1932 received the given names 'James Barrett'. (In middle age H.H. Jacoby had embraced the Church of England.) See Beverley Davis, *Be Fruitful and Multiply*, Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1977, p. 229.
8. Sermon on Commonwealth Sunday, 6 January 1901, in J.H. Landau, *Sermons Delivered in the Great Synagogue, Sydney ... in Celebration of the Inauguration of the Commonwealth of Australia*, Sydney: Board of Management of the Great Synagogue, 1901, p. 13.
9. Sermon on Inauguration of the Commonwealth, 31 December 1900, *ibid.*, pp. 3, 5.
10. A.A. Phillips, 'Cultural Nationalism in the 1940s and 1950s: a Personal Account', in Brian Head and James Walter (eds.), *Intellectual Movements and Australian Society*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 129-44; quotation at p. 129.
11. See Falk, *No Other Home*, especially Chapters 3-6.
12. Advertisement in *Australian Quarterly*, 3 September 1929.
13. See Barrett Papers, University of Melbourne Archives (hereafter abbreviated UMA).
14. *The Woman's Paper*, 24 May 1907.
15. See Sir William Harrison Moore Papers, 6/1/8, 'Why the Empire?', and 6/1/11, P.D. Phillips, 'British Commonwealth Relations Conference: The Empire and the League', UMA.
16. See Hilary L. Rubinstein, 'From Jewish Non-distinctiveness to Group Invisibility: Australian Jewish Identity and Responses, 1830-1950', in W.D. Rubinstein (ed.), *Jews in the Sixth Continent*, North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986, pp. 22-50.
17. See, for example, *The Vigilant* (organ of the Victorian Protestant Federation), 1920s and 1930s, and the various pamphlets issued by the Loyalty League of Victoria. Incidentally, one of the principal anti-Irish pro-conscriptionists during World War One was Critchley Parker Senior, whose son was another notable philo-Semite, as seen in Hilary L. Rubinstein, 'Critchley Parker (1912-42): Australian Martyr for Jewish Refugees', *AJHSJ*, vol. 11, part 1, 1990, pp. 56-68. It is not without significance that *Sane Democracy*, a rabid anti-Communist journal of the 1930s and 1940s, organ of the Sane Democracy League (often assumed to have been anti-Semitic) used Soviet anti-Semitism as a propaganda weapon against Communism. See *Sane Democracy* (Melbourne issues), vol. 2, no. 1, January 1938 and vol. 4, no. 2, February 1940.
18. See the *Vigilant*, 14 February 1933 and 14 December 1936.

19. Geoffrey Serle, *John Monash: a Biography*, Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press in association with Monash University, 1982, p. 463.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 148, 187, 420, 424, 434, 478, 482.
21. *Australian Dictionary of National Biography* (ADB), vol. 8, p. 188. Barrett's second wife was the sister of Sir Bernard Heinze. See also Sir James Barrett, *The Twin Ideals: An Educated Commonwealth*, vol. 2, London: H.K. Lewis, 1918, pp. 195–211. See also, for instance, Barrett's warm tribute to his 'personal friend', the late Dr. Alexander Sydney Joske, a Jew, *Medical Journal of Australia*, 4 November 1939, p. 702.
22. Reproduced in *Twin Ideals*, vol. 1, pp. 289–316.
23. See Viscount Sydenham, *Russian Soviet Intrigue in England ... and Soviet Financing Red Drive Abroad*. New York: American Defense Society, n.d. [ca. 1925]; Viscount Sydenham *My Working Life*, London: John Murray, 1927.
24. Viscount Sydenham to Sir James Barrett, 18 September 1920, Barrett Papers, UMA.
25. Same to same, 27 May 1921, Barrett Papers, UMA.
26. It should be clearly understood that anti-Semitism was not a factor in the Australian Empire loyalists' campaign on this issue, not even on the part of Sir Hugh Denison, president of the Royal Empire Society in Sydney, who was later to deplore Jewish refugee settlement in Australia.
27. *Hebrew Standard*, 19 May 1933.
28. [Signature illegible] to Barrett, 6 November [1938?], Barrett Papers, UMA. The year 1938 is suggested by internal evidence, although 1939 is an alternate possibility.
29. Chisholm to Barrett, 4 January 1940, Barrett Papers, UMA.
30. Giblin to Barrett, 4 May 1937, Barrett Papers, UMA.
31. McMahon Ball to Barrett, 14 March 1939, Barrett Papers, UMA.
32. See, for instance, his articles in the *Argus* 1910 and 1911, reproduced in *The Twin Ideals*, vol. 2, pp. 280–91.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 280. See also Barrett's letter in the *Times* (London), 9 February 1937, and Sir James Barrett, 'The Peopling of Tropical Australia by the White Races', *United Empire*, vol. 38, no. 7, July 1927, pp. 395–97.
34. Sir James Barrett, 'Tropisches Australien', in *Die Auslese: aus Zeitschriften aller Sprachen*, August 1934, Berlin: Luken & Luken, pp. 614–16.
35. See I.N. Steinberg, 'Territorialism', in B.J. Vlavianos & F. Cross (eds.), *Struggle for Tomorrow: Modern Political Ideologies of the Jewish People*. N.Y.: Arts Incorporated, 1954, pp. 112–29; I.N. Steinberg, *Australia — The Unpromised Land*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1947; Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Australia: a Thematic History*, Vol. 1: 1788–1945, Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia, 1991, pp. 180 et seq., 504 et seq.; Leon Gettler, *An Unpromised Land*, South Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1993.
36. Steinberg to Barrett, 25 April 1939, Barrett Papers, UMA.
37. Sorshby to Barrett, 28 February 1939, Barrett Papers, UMA.
38. See Steinberg, *Australia — The Unpromised Land*, pp. 78–80. Denison was editor-in-chief of the *Sydney Sun* which carried an anti-Kimberley article on 14 December 1939.
39. Barrett, *The Twin Ideals*, vol. 2, p. 51; see also pp. 75–78.
40. Walter Murdoch, 'Our Opportunity', *West Australian*, 15 July 1939.
41. L.S. Amery to R.G. Menzies, 11 April 1939 Department of Immigration, 'Proposed Settlement East Kimberley District', Australian Archives CRS A433 44/2/50. Cited in Gettler, *An Unpromised Land*, p. 70.
42. ADB, vol. 8, p. 188. See also 'Bush Nursing', *Argus*, 19 April 1911 reproduced in Barrett, *The Twin Ideals*, vol. 2, pp. 165–68.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.
44. See Michael Blakeney, *Australia and the Jewish Refugees 1933–1948*, Sydney: Croom Helm Australia, 1985, pp. 188–93.
45. Sorshby to Barrett, 28 February 1939, Barrett Papers, UMA.
46. *Medical Journal of Australia* 19 February 1940, p. 212. See also *ibid.*, 16 December 1939; 13 January 1940.
47. Blakeney, *Australia and the Jewish Refugees*, p. 190, citing *Medical Journal of Australia*, 21 January 1939, 4 March 1939, 4 October 1941. Blakeney has transformed Barrett into 'Barnett'.
48. *Ibid.*

THE ATTITUDE OF THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY AND OF NON-JEWISH OPINION LEADERS TO THE RISE OF NAZI GERMANY AND NAZI ANTI-SEMITISM IN 1933.

W. D. Rubinstein

During the past ten or fifteen years, considerable historical attention has been given to Australian responses to the plight of European Jewry during the Holocaust period, as well as Australia's response to the post-war migration here of Jewish survivors. Virtually all of this research, however, has, it is fair to say, chiefly examined the years between about 1937 and 1953, especially in the context of addressing the question of whether Australian barriers to Holocaust refugee and survivor migration were high or low, a question on which there is now a considerable debate. In contrast, very little research — virtually none at all, in fact — has been conducted on the effects of the Nazis coming to power in 1933 upon Australian opinion, either Jewish or mainstream. The neglect of this very early period is evident in the general histories of Australian Jewry, for instance by Suzanne Rutland and Hilary Rubinstein, and also in the particular accounts of the Nazi period, for instance by Paul Bartrop, Michael Blakeney, John Foster and others. So far as I am aware, the only previous published research on the topic was an article by M.B. Hayne, 'Australian Reaction to Hitler's Accession to Power', published in the *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* in June 1985. This article certainly does not concentrate on either the response of the Jewish community itself or on Nazi anti-Semitism, though it does discuss the latter topic.¹ It is obvious that this is an important omission, for much in the subsequent Australian response to the Nazis and to the Holocaust was evidently encapsulated by the response to the earliest days of Nazism, with its book-burning, its concerted terrorism against Jews and others, its exile of Einstein and other leading intellectuals, its assaults on Jewish property, its torchlit marches by storm troopers, and the Nazi wrecking of Weimar democracy. My aim here is briefly to spell this Australian reaction out, discussing first the Jewish response and then the general response. This essay, it will become clear, is also intended as a contribution to the debate among historians of Australian Jewry as to whether Australia was in any sense an anti-Semitic society at this time and whether Australian policy towards Nazi Germany and towards Jewish refugees was motivated by anti-Semitism. Those who have followed this debate will be aware that my own opinion inclines towards one viewpoint rather than another, and the research carried out for this paper has only served to confirm the accuracy of my previously expressed views.²

The topic examined here must also be set in the context of an international debate on the response of the democracies to the rise of the Nazis and to the Holocaust which itself comprises part of a larger analysis of the reception of the Jews and the strength of anti-Semitism in the Western democracies, especially in the English-speaking world. Before turning to the Australian scene, it would perhaps be worth examining briefly the historiographical situation in the study of modern British Jewry, for the evolution in the major trends of historical analysis of Anglo-Jewry offers many fruitful parallels with the Australian situation. As anyone who has followed the development of the historiography of modern Anglo-Jewry will be

aware, the current thrust of much modern Jewish historiography and research has completely altered the tone and balance of our knowledge of Jewry in the English-speaking democracies. To take the example of English Jewry as typical of this evolution, whereas a generation ago the best historians portrayed the story of modern Anglo-Jewry as a continuing success story founded in the continuing strength of liberalism and tolerance — Cecil Roth's *A History of the Jews in England* (Oxford, 1941) is, of course, the archetypal example — within the past two decades most academic historians of modern Anglo-Jewry have focused almost exclusively upon its dark side, for example on the heightened anti-Semitism which arose during the period of large-scale migration in 1881–1914, on the lurid right-wing depictions of 'Judeo-Bolshevism' which proliferated in Britain from 1917 to 1925 or so, on the allegedly meagre response of Britain to the plight of the Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany, on the pervasive undercurrents of Social Darwinist eugenics, with its 'master race' implications, significant in much British thought from around 1880 to 1945, and so on. Thus, in place of Cecil Roth's liberal success story, have been works such as Colin Holmes' *Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876–1939* (London, 1979), Tony Kushner's *The Persistence of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in British Society During the Second World War* (Manchester, 1989), A. J. Sherman's *Island Rescue: Britain and the Refugees from the Third Reich, 1939–1939* (London, 1973), and Geoffrey Alderman's recent history of post-1858 Anglo-Jewry strongly reflecting this negative viewpoint, *Modern British Jewry* (Oxford, 1992).

Nearly all of these recent works reflect scholarship of the highest standard and reflect a seriousness and depth of research which only a few scholars of the past, like Roth, could attain; they have, in the Anglo-Jewish case, completely transformed the nature of Anglo-Jewish historiography from the antiquarian, amateur level at which it was largely conducted even thirty years ago. It is perfectly natural, too, that the post-Holocaust generation of Jewish historians would seek to understand how, even in the democracies, seemingly reasonable and civilised people could create a climate of opinion and hostility which elsewhere led to genocide and, in the democracies, apparently led to an apathy towards the victims removed in evil from genocide only in degree and just as incomprehensible. For many of the younger historians whose work has highlighted anti-Semitism in the democracies, there is also clearly a more general concern with racial prejudice, evidently from a standpoint adversarial to established society.³

While all of these studies are highly valuable and have greatly extended our knowledge of the seeming pervasiveness of anti-Semitism in modern Britain, there are two reasons for believing that they systematically exaggerate the strength and centrality of British anti-Semitism. First, the mere act of documenting or highlighting anti-Semitic incidents or activists in a society where anti-Semitic policies were virtually unknown, and anti-Semitic ideologies virtually unknown, must *ipso facto* take these anti-Semitic occurrences out of their proper context and exaggerate them.⁴ Mere highlighting of anti-Semitic incidents cannot serve accurately to gauge the depth or significance of anti-Semitism in that society (or any other) without a comparative framework in which these should be placed — a 'control' group, to use the jargon of the social sciences. When considered from a relative and broader societal perspective, it is, however, very difficult to view British anti-Semitism of the period 1880–1945 as a truly significant phenomenon. It is, for instance, very difficult to see British right-wing or conservative thought in the period 1870–1940 (when anti-Semitism became pervasive in much continental right-wing ideology) as centrally anti-Semitic or even tangentially anti-Semitic. No policy adopted by

the Conservative Party ever affected Jews or even bore upon any aspect of the Jewish situation. Perhaps a dozen Jews were members of Tory governments in this period. No Conservative minister can fairly be described as anti-Semitic. On the other hand, and in contrast, the matrix of ideology and action of the British Conservative Party between 1886 and 1922 was dominated by hostility to Irish Catholic claims for Home Rule. The British Conservative Party *was* officially known in these years as the 'Unionist' Party — because its members favoured maintenance of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland. British army officers, backed more or less by the Unionist Party, mutinied at Curragh in early 1914, and most historians are in agreement that, but for the entry of Britain into World War One in August 1914, a civil war would have broken out between Catholic Irish Nationalists and Protestant Ulster Unionists, the latter openly supported by the Conservative Party. A bloody civil war certainly did occur in Ireland between 1916 and 1923. If the British Conservative Party had renamed itself, say, the 'Christian Party' or the 'English People's Party', one could convincingly argue that Jews were viewed as a negative force, but both its unifying myths and targets were simply irrelevant to Jews.⁵ Similarly it is undeniable that Conservative foreign policy in this period was aimed, centrally, at the maintenance of the Empire, especially the continuance of British India and the routes to India, which necessarily entailed the continuing subjugation of the Empire's non-white majority. Jews simply did not figure prominently in the world-view of most British Conservatives in this period, the only arguable exception being the immediate post-1917 years when there was some heightened anti-Semitism in the wake of the Russian revolution, allegedly masterminded by Jews, a phase which passed within a few years. While Jews were central to much right-wing ideology on the continent, they simply were not central — or even, perhaps, peripheral — to conservative thought or doctrine in Britain or (in my view) anywhere in the English-speaking world, including Australia.

The second reason why many of the recent historians of the Jewish situation in England — and, arguably, in Australia as well — distort the place of Jews in the world-view of the 'Establishment' in this period is their failure to take philo-Semitism into account, as well as the genuine hostility among the 'Establishment' and among right-wing forces to extremists, demagogues, and totalitarians, especially those in Germany and their British imitators. In particular, and in complete contrast to what many observers might now retrospectively imagine to be the case, it appears that the overwhelming reaction among British conservatives to both Nazi anti-Semitism and to the rise of Sir Oswald Mosley in Britain was one of horror and outrage. When Mosley held his famous Fascist rally at Kensington Olympia in June 1934, Geoffrey Lloyd, M.P., Conservative leader Stanley Baldwin's Parliamentary Private Secretary, was sent along as an observer. Appalled, he recorded that

I could not help shuddering at the thought of this vile bitterness, copied from foreign lands, being brought into the centre of England. I came to the conclusion that Mosley was a political maniac, and that all decent English people must combine to kill his movement.⁶

In April 1933, just after Hitler came to power and the first anti-Semitic atrocities occurred in Germany, Leo Amery, the very right-wing Conservative M.P. and minister, recorded in his diary the following incident at the annual meeting of the Birmingham Conservative Party:

Austen [Chamberlain, former Conservative Foreign Minister] was in the chair . . . and delivered a survey of foreign affairs, rising to considerable eloquence on the subject of Hitlerism and the Jews, and warning Germany of what other nations might feel about the recrudescence of the old Prussian spirit. I followed with a speech attempting to contrast the chaos in the outside world with the soundness of the position in the Empire. Hannon and Locker-Lampson [Sir Patrick Hannon and

Oliver Locker-Lampson, two long-time Conservative M.P.s] both expanded on the subject of the Jews in Germany, amid much applause, an interesting fact, for after all we have not got many Jews in Birmingham and it was not specific Jewish sympathy but general feeling about fair play that influenced the audience.⁷

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this question to appreciate for historians of the post-Holocaust generation, viewing the subject of anti-Semitism with post-Holocaust eyes, is that attitudes like these were not merely not uncommon but, I would argue, the norm: virtually everyone in the political mainstream in the English-speaking world, including virtually all conservatives, were repelled rather than attracted by Hitler's anti-Semitism, which seemed at once both an incomprehensible obsession, manifestly unfair to a minority unable to protect itself, and a reversion to barbarism of a kind not seen in the civilised world since medieval times. While many recent historians have focused on the handful of activists who were (to use the title of a recent book) 'fellow travellers of the right', it might be more accurate to say that Hitler's treatment of the Jews made philo-Semites out of anti-Semites once the implications of putting into practice what they had called for in print became clear. An English example here is that of G.K. Chesterton, renowned for decades as a pro-Catholic, pro-Medievalist anti-Semitic publicist of a genteel but determined kind, despite his unquestionable genius and humanity. By the mid-1930s, however, the experience of the Jews under Hitler had led to a fundamental re-evaluation of his former position. At some time before his death in 1936, Chesterton wrote:

In our early days Hilaire Belloc and myself were accused of being uncompromising Anti-Semites. Today, although I still think there is a Jewish problem, I am appalled by the Hitlerite atrocities. They have absolutely no reason or logic behind them. It is quite obviously the expedient of a man who has been driven to seeking a scapegoat, and has found with relief the most famous scapegoat in European history, the Jewish people. I am quite ready to believe now that Belloc and I will die defending the last Jew in Europe.⁸

Similar, too, was the total lack of appeal of Mosley or of fascism to the British voter. In the General Election of 1931, Mosley's 'New Party' — not yet quite, but almost, a fascist party — polled exactly 36,377 votes out of 21.7 million cast, or 0.2 per cent of the total vote. Every one of its twenty-four candidates lost his deposit with the exception of Mosley himself (who was not elected). In contrast, the National government polled 14.5 million votes and the opposition Labour Party 6.6 million. It should be noted, too, that the Communist Party polled 74,824 votes at the 1931 General Election, only 0.3 per cent of the vote. A.J.P. Taylor summarised the British situation very aptly when he noted that 'the Nazi treatment of the Jews did more than anything else to turn English moral feeling against Germany'.⁹

Turning now to Australia, the situation of the Jewish community when the Nazis came to power was, I would argue, *a fortiori* better and more positive even than that of Anglo-Jewry. Like America, but unlike England, Australia was a secular society whose Constitution forbade any religious establishment. Australia had a long-established egalitarian tradition which deprecated discrimination based on religion, at least among white men. It was, obviously, a democracy. Religious and ethnic conflict in Australian society revolved around the split between Protestants and Catholics, or aimed at excluding and ostracising Asians and Melanesians. As in Britain, Jews were simply peripheral and unimportant to these central lines of division; in so far as most mainstream Australians had any opinions on Jews, they were probably more likely to be positive than negative and certainly did not extend to persecution or overt discrimination. Indeed, Australia appears to have had much less in the way of social discrimination aimed at Jews — in the purchase of housing,

or entry into 'elite' schools or universities, for example — than in the United States, where this was extremely widespread. Most of all, perhaps, was the fact that Jews had risen to the highest places in the land in a way arguably without parallel anywhere in the world. As all readers of this *Journal* will know, of course, when Hitler came to power in 1933 Australia had a Jewish Head of State, Governor-General Sir Isaac Isaacs, and had, two years before, given a state funeral to perhaps its only genuine national hero, Australia's Jewish Commander-in-Chief in World War One, Sir John Monash. Perhaps the best account of the esteem in which Monash was universally held lies in the remarkable account of his funeral, in September 1931, in Geoffrey Serle's outstanding biography:

The funeral was the most impressive and largely attended Australia had known. If the King had died, he could not have been shown more respect than that given to the boy from Richmond and Jerilderie of Jewish-Prussian parentage. The Commonwealth arranged a state funeral on Sunday the 11th. A move to have him buried at the Shrine was thwarted, for he had said, 'The Shrine should be no man's tomb'. The body lay in state, with a military guard, in the Queen's Hall, Parliament House, from 5 p.m. on Friday the 9th. Hour after hour a steady stream shuffled in and around the bier, including many wounded diggers and bereaved wives and mothers, leaving their wreaths or bunches of home-grown flowers. 'Comrade and friend, farewell' was the message from the boys at Caulfield. Till 3 in the morning they came, 'workers whose duties held them late in the city; police from their beats; solitary figures who might be kinsmen of soldiers lost, . . .' At 7 a tramwayman headed the queue of workingmen, followed by many young shop assistants. By mid-morning there were city business men. Clerks and assistants. The squatter and the farmer. The wife of the rich. The wife of the poor. Elegance and beauty of dress. Sombreness and shabbiness. Many folk of the Jewish race. Returned soldiers. Police constables. Members of the Salvation Army. Schoolboys and schoolgirls. Parents and little children.

There was mourning in the synagogues. That afternoon at the football grand final between Richmond and Geelong the teams, wearing black armbands, lined up and, as not always on such occasions, the crowd of sixty thousand observed a 'remarkable hush'. Many cricket matches were abandoned . . .

The body was carried down the steps and placed on the gun-carriage. For nearly an hour, in grey chilly weather, some fifteen thousand returned soldiers, sailors, airmen and nurses marched past. About 2 the procession began — returned soldiers leading; the official military escort, detachments of the Scotch College Cadet Corps and the Melbourne University Rifles; the gun-carriage, farewelled by the plaintive chants of the rabbis . . .

Never, perhaps, had Melbourne seen so many flags, at half-mast but stiff in the breeze. Down beautiful old Collins Street in leafy spring, past the Naval and Military (the old German) Club, left into Swanston Street opposite the Town Hall, scene of so many balls, receptions, University council meetings and confrontations with the civic fathers. Approaching St. Paul's the M.U.R. band broke into 'The Dead March in Saul'. Past Flinders Street station whence he had travelled many thousand times — home to Richmond, Hawthorn and Heyington; to Gippsland for walking tours and bridge-building; again and again to Yallourn. Over Princes Bridge which he had helped to build forty-five years before. He was departing the city, whose most famous citizen he had been. On past the blue-stone Barracks where he had never been quite at home. Aero Club and R.A.A.F. Moths and Wapitis were escorting overhead. Then to the scaffolded Shrine whose dedication he had desperately wanted to live to hear. The official escort and the main body of ex-servicemen turned off for a service at which Chauvel, G. W. Holland of the R.S.L. and 'fighting Mac', chaplain McKenzie of the Salvation Army, gave addresses; 'Lead Kindly Light', 'Nearer My God' and 'O God our Help in Ages Past' were sung.

The cortège moved on down St Kilda Road followed by hundreds of cars and thousands walking, determined to follow all the nine miles to Brighton cemetery. The crowd remained deep; blinds on the route were drawn. At Gardenvale another naval and military escort joined. A huge assemblage was waiting on North Road, as minute-guns sounded out. Eight Jewish ex-servicemen carried the coffin to the chapel where Rabbis Danglow and Brodie conducted the first part of the service. Later, as the body was lowered to the grave, next to his wife, the Last Post sounded, followed by a 17-gun salute and the Reveille. The police estimated that the crowd had numbered 300,000, 250,000 at least; fifty thousand had been at Brighton. The funeral had been broadcast. Services and ceremonies were held all over Australia and in London at Hampstead synagogue; that Sunday afternoon at the University of Sydney hundreds of people stood bareheaded as Chopin's funeral march rang out from the war memorial

carillon. In the following days patriots objected to the inappropriate Union Jack shrouding the coffin and flying over Parliament House. The *Age's* special writer found a Kipling association: Monash had 'acquired an extraordinary Imperial prestige without favor and without fawning. [There had been] unfathomable respect to one who had talked with crowds and kept his virtue; had walked with kings nor lost the common touch'.¹⁰

To those whose knowledge of the Jews and anti-Semitism in this period has been conditioned and fashioned chiefly by the Nazis and the response to Nazism, this description may well seem utterly incredible.

There was, of course, another side to the picture. Plainly, there was a certain amount of anti-Semitism in Australia, emanating both from the extreme right, with its fears of a 'Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy', and from the Populist left, with its fears of 'Jewish finance capitalism'.¹¹ There was certainly some social prejudice against Jews, as in the Melbourne Club, although certainly far less than in America. There were shadowy extreme right-wing and anti-'Bolshevist' movements in inter-war Australia, although these invariably claimed not to be anti-Semitic, and Monash was repeatedly asked to head such movements of the 'White Army' type.¹² There was, of course, a generalised Australian hostility to southern Europeans and to virtually all non-whites, reflected in the White Australia immigration policy. While of course relevant to Australian perceptions of Nazism, it is the contention of this article, first that Australian racism was wholly or largely irrelevant to Jews, who were normally not perceived in a negative light or as an inferior, undesirable ethnic minority and, secondly, that the response of virtually all Australian gentile opinion-leaders to Nazi anti-Semitism was horror, revulsion, and outrage.

Hitler came to power on 30 January 1933. It is important to understand what his accession to power actually meant for Jews in Germany and elsewhere during the earliest days of the Nazi regime. It is, especially, very necessary for the sensitive historian not to look at the early period of the Nazi regime with post-Holocaust eyes. There was indeed a 'twisted road to Auschwitz', as the title of one important book puts it. It was simply not the case that the obvious intention of the Nazi regime was, from the start, genocide, and, indeed, in the initial period of Nazi rule, the regime's anti-Semitism was by later standards, relatively mild. This relative moderation (by subsequent standards of genocide) must be kept squarely in mind in assessing the surprisingly strong response of near-universal outrage and revulsion which Nazi anti-Semitism inspired from the very start. Initially, Jews were excluded from the German civil service and universities, while the percentage of Jewish students at German universities was limited to one per cent. The Nazi regime initiated a boycott of Jewish-owned businesses and professions. The most dramatic and shocking aspect of the initial period of Nazi rule was the torrent of violent and frightening anti-Semitic propaganda, book-burnings, terrorism, and random violence against individual Jews, often ordinary persons chosen at random. These acts — captured on newsreels and seen around the world — seemed extraordinarily disturbing at the time. They were deliberately organised and carried out by the apparatus of a modern state rather than by a mob, and were aimed at very respectable and indefensible persons — shopkeepers, academics, the elderly. They were unarguably anti-Semitic in nature, being aimed at Jewish targets *per se* in a manner which most persons of good will in the English-speaking world found both unfair and incomprehensible. They seemed to be a reversion to medieval savagery and persecution and, perhaps most importantly of all, to presage a revival of German aggression and militarism only fifteen years after the Armistice.

On the other hand, compared with what came later, Nazi persecution of the Jews during the first years of the Nazi regime was light. There was as yet no official policy

of driving all Jews out of Germany — which came only with *Kristallnacht* in late 1938 — and, it must be re-emphasised to non-specialists in this subject — no policy of killing Jews as such, or even of physically harming them. The synagogues remained open and some Jewish newspapers remained. Jewish businesses in private hands were not yet expropriated and, indeed, because the Nazis had stimulated the German economy during the Depression, were often actually doing well. Jewish war veterans and a number of other categories of Jews were excluded from some of the regime's anti-Semitic enactments. Few Jews did not believe that the 'excesses' of the early period of Nazi rule would not 'blow over' as the regime became institutionalised, and, while 50,000 Jews left Germany in the first year of the Nazi regime only 23,000 emigrated in 1934, while — extraordinary as this sounds — some 10,000 Jews actually returned to Germany from abroad by early 1935. In 1937 about 365,000 Jews still remained in Germany, compared with about 500,000 in early 1933. Only *Kristallnacht* in November 1938 led to the hurried exodus of most of Germany's remaining Jews. It is also worth making the point that, until the *Anschluss* with Austria in 1938, Nazi anti-Semitism applied only to Germany. Few in 1933 could foresee that Hitler's reign of terror and genocide would be extended first to the other German-speaking areas in Central Europe and then far beyond, to an empire stretching, at its zenith in mid-1942, from the border of Spain to the gates of Moscow. Another related point which needs to be made (and which is often forgotten) is that Nazi Germany was not the only overtly anti-Semitic regime in Europe at this time. This needs to be carefully kept in mind when assessing the response of both non-Jews and Jews in Australia to the initial phases of Nazism. Poland, where 3.5 million Jews lived (compared with only 500,000 in Germany) instituted, from the mid-1920s onward, a wide-ranging series of anti-Semitic measures aimed at restricting Jewish admission to the universities, the civil service, and the professions. Virtually every observer of Polish Jewry at this time has noted the pervasive anti-Semitism in much of Polish gentile society, and of the near-universal belief that Poland had far too many Jews for anyone's good. Elsewhere in eastern and central Europe the situation was much the same. Hungary's Prime Minister in 1933, Julius Gombos, was an avowed anti-Semite. Rumania was wracked by significant anti-Semitic movements and anti-Jewish rioting at its universities and harboured its own fascist, anti-Semitic terrorist political movement, the Iron Guard. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Stalinist dictatorship in Russia was in the process of systematically destroying Jewish culture in the Soviet Union, killing or imprisoning a vast number of Jews in the process. Even in the European democracies, organised anti-Semitic movements, like *Action Française* in France, flourished at this time, while many conservative intellectuals were overtly anti-Semitic, as well as anti-democratic and anti-modernist. From one end to the other, the European continent in the early 1930s was witnessing a recrudescence of anti-Semitism, especially organised anti-Semitism, probably without parallel in modern times.

Australians were kept reasonably well informed about these developments, and especially about the Nazi seizure of power, in the media of the day, especially in newspapers, but also in newsreels which, one suspects, played a major role in the mobilisation of attitudes and public opinion that emerged. Weekly newsreels were now shown at most cinemas, and millions of Australians, at a time when film-going was the most popular and ubiquitous form of entertainment, would have seen and heard Hitler's hysterical demagogic speeches, the torch-lit Nazi rallies, the book-burnings of writings by Jewish, socialist, and 'anti-nationalist' writers, and the

terror campaigns carried out against Jewish properties and ordinary Jews. Radio, too, must have been significant, but would probably have lacked the immediacy of cinema newsreels. It is worth re-emphasising that, to hundreds of thousands of Australians, Germany was the recently-defeated enemy, and expectations of 'Hun atrocities' and of 'Prussian' militarism were widespread. Virtually every Australian family had lost a relative, or certainly, a neighbour or friend in World War One. Although many historians and observers today have an almost instinctive feeling that Anglo-Celtic Australian society would be at least disguisedly anti-Semitic and sneakily pro-Nazi, the opposite is a more accurate description of what was the case: most Australians had long been conditioned to expect the very worst of Germany and of Germans, and had personally suffered at their hands, or were close to those who had. There is ample evidence from newspaper and other sources of the response of both the Australian Jewish community and of Australian opinion — leaders and 'elites' to the early phase of Nazism. It is the contention of this article that the response of the Australian 'Establishment' to both the Nazi dictatorship and to Nazi anti-Semitism was unremittingly and outspokenly hostile, while the rise of Nazism — despite the fact that genocide or even forced exile was still far in the future — had a traumatic and galvanising effect upon Australian Jewry, engendering many of the changes which led to the Jewish community we know in the post-war world, with its unhesitating defence of the Jewish people against anti-Semitism, its largely secular leadership, and its highly visible group identity.

Probably the most important evidence of the hostility and outrage engendered among Australia's elites were the mass rallies of April-May 1933, organised by the Jewish community but attended by as many prominent gentile speakers as the organisers could muster, held in Melbourne, Sydney, and other state capitals, specifically to protest against the persecution of the Jews under Nazism. The Melbourne rally, held at Melbourne Town Hall on 27 April 1933, was attended by 2,000 persons and raised £8,000 for Jewish relief. Presided over by Brigadier Harold E. Cohen and Rabbi Jacob Danglow, a virtual 'who's who' of Melbourne's elites and opinion-leaders either attended or sent messages of support.¹³ Those present included several state Cabinet ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, the Speaker of the Victorian Legislative Assembly (Sir Alexander Peacock), the President of the Victorian Legislative Council (Sir Frank Clarke), key Melbourne businessman and future Lord Mayor Councillor Frank Beaurepaire, the Chancellor (Sir James MacFarland) and Vice-Chancellor (Sir James Barrett) of Melbourne University, the presidents of the Melbourne R.S.L. and Rotary Club, the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, the President of the Baptist Union of Victoria, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the Mayors of Essendon, South Melbourne, Fitzroy, St. Kilda, and Prahran, the President of the Australian Woman's National League, and literally dozens of others of similar position. It is, indeed, difficult to imagine a more impressive cross-section of the Victorian Establishment of the time, and it is not easy to see what motive any of these people might have had in attending, besides sincere repugnance towards Nazi anti-Semitism. Nor is it very easy to find a parallel, during the inter-war period in Australia, of so wide a cross-section of the 'Establishment' protesting at any aspect of foreign policy or, indeed, over any domestic matter. A resolution was passed 'deploring the revival of religious intolerance' in Germany as well as another, moved by Rabbi Danglow, 'that a fund be now opened for the relief of distressed German Jewish refugees who have been forced by cruel persecution to flee from the land which owes them protection to

other countries, there to endeavour to begin life anew, and that this meeting pledge itself to give its full support to this movement.¹⁴

Of those who spoke or sent messages of support, a number stand out as especially notable. Sir James Barrett, the Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University, compared Germany's Jews with the French Huguenots, a very apt analogy which it is surprising was not made more widely at the time. A letter of support was read out from Victoria's young Attorney-General of the time, none other than R.G. Menzies, Q.C. As the Prime Minister who took Australia into war in 1939, and who presided over the post-war period of expansion and anti-Communism as a right-wing figure of international renown, Menzies' attitudes are of course of very great interest, and his letter ought to be printed in full:

I very much regret that I will be absent from Melbourne this evening and will therefore be unable to attend the meeting which has been convened to protest against the ill-treatment of Jews in Germany.

I think I may say that in common with Australians generally, I am astonished to discover that at this period of the world's history, measures of violent repression and injustice should be adopted by any civilised country towards a section of its population on the grounds of race or religion. Our experience has been that the Jew who settles in a British community, while naturally retaining his own characteristics, speedily becomes a good British citizen. Indeed, it must be a source of legitimate pride to the Jewish community in Australia to realise how many men and women of Jewish birth have become prominent in the political, social, artistic, and industrial activities of the country. As an admirer of the keen intellect, marked industry, generosity, and domestic loyalty which the best Jews in the community have constantly exhibited, I hope that I may be associated with the protest of the meeting tonight against the barbaric and medieval persecution to which their fellow Jews in Germany are apparently being subjected.¹⁵

Perhaps the only discordant, or more precisely, curious note on this occasion was struck by the famous Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Daniel Mannix, who was also present. Mannix stated that 'I assure you that I sympathise fully with the Hebrew community in their distress and alarm at the tidings reported from Germany'. But 'one must remember that Germany is writhing under the humiliation and injustice of the Treaty of Versailles ... the reported action of the Freemasons make the situation, if possible, still more perplexing to the outsider'.¹⁶ Roman Catholic attitudes, in Australia, as elsewhere, to Nazism were often quite contradictory and equivocal, although basically hostile, as Ursula M. C. Bygott has documented in her history of the Jesuits in Australia, *With Pen and Tongue* (Melbourne University Press, 1980). As elsewhere in the English-speaking world, most Catholic leaders and intellectuals were centrally anti-Communist and anti-modernist, and, therefore, often supportive of fascism in its Italian and Spanish phases, but drew the line at Nazism, especially once it began attacking and undermining the Catholic Church. Nevertheless — as is well-known — the Catholic church notably failed to oppose Nazism with all its vigour and only fitfully condemned Nazi anti-Semitism. These ambiguities are clearly evident in Mannix's rather bizarrely obscurantist remarks.

Very similar rallies were then held in Sydney and elsewhere. The Sydney rally, held at the Great Synagogue on 2 May 1933, was attended by an equally distinguished array of local notables, including the Premier of New South Wales and the Lord Mayor of Sydney.¹⁷ An appeal for German Jewry raised £10,000. Rabbi Francis L. Cohen of the Great Synagogue noted that the events in Germany were 'the worst outbreak of anti-Semitism in history' since the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. All of the monies raised were sent to the Board of Deputies of British Jews for German relief, and Cohen claimed that 'the offering might be regarded

more in the nature of a thanksgiving that Australian Jewry has been spared the brutal holocaust that has overwhelmed its co-religionists in Germany' thus both initiating a familiar theme in the attitude of Australian Jewry's leaders towards these events and just possibly being the first person in the world to use the term 'holocaust' to describe the treatment of Jews by the Nazis.¹⁸ Protest rallies were also held in Brisbane and elsewhere. The Brisbane rally heard Roman Catholic Archbishop Duhig denounce Nazi anti-Semitism as a 'disgrace to a barbaric age'.¹⁹

The Jewish community was naturally anxious to see if Nazism and Nazi anti-Semitism would attract any Australian defenders or apologists, and such as appeared in the mainstream press were commented upon in the Jewish press of the day. Only one or two voices, however, were raised in the mainstream press or in public life which were in any way sympathetic to the Nazis. One, Associate Professor Ludewyckx of Melbourne University, a Belgian-born anti-Semite, wrote to the Melbourne *Argus* condemning the 'sinister factor of international Jewish finance' and several anonymous articles appeared in the mainstream press defending Germany's attempt to rid itself of Communists.²⁰ In its *Rosh Hashanah* editorial of 15 September 1933 the *Hebrew Standard* noted that 'a prominent party leader has been most ambiguous in his statements' about the Nazis — a reference which is unclear, but might refer to Jack Lang, the populist Labor leader in New South Wales who subsequently veered to a quasi-fascist position.

On the other hand, innumerable letters and statements also appeared attacking Nazi Germany and defending the Jews. When a correspondent to the Melbourne *Herald*, Baron Von Ettis Atter, wrote stating that 'no Jew in the German army actually took part in the fighting' the Official Commonwealth Historian of Australia's participation in World War One, C.E.W. Bean, responded that this statement 'is so ludicrously untrue that one wonders that none of his own countrymen has hastened to contradict it.'²¹ German anti-Semitism was condemned by virtually the entire Australian press. An editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald* attacked this

recrudescence of hatred and intolerance against a race that has prevailed through the utmost adversity for nearly twenty centuries. The story of the Jews is one of the most remarkable in history... No barbarities of persecution could obliterate this immortal race... It is a saddening reflection that in the changes which are now disturbing civilisation, there should still exist the spirit of the malevolence of old...²²

As Hayne rightly notes in his article, 'It was [Hitler's] senseless persecution of the Jews' which led to blanket Australian condemnation of the Nazi regime, an attitude summarised in an editorial (25 March 1933) in the *Australasian* newspaper as 'Nordic nonsense and reversion to barbarism.'²³

The rise of Hitler to power and the shocking anti-Semitic rhetoric and terrorism of the regime also had the most profoundly traumatic effects upon the Australian Jewish community, despite the relative mildness of Nazi Germany's initial actions (by late standards), the fact that anti-Semitism was on the rise throughout Europe, and Australia's great distance from these events. 'The appalling calamity has stirred world Jewry. Nothing approaching the German disaster has ever shaken the people', editorialised the *Australian Jewish Herald* on 30 March 1933, only two months after Hitler took power. It is absolutely clear that the rise of the Nazis and Nazi anti-Semitism had the most profound and far-reaching effects upon Australian Jewry and its self-perception. Both Jewish newspapers of the day, the *Hebrew Standard* and the *Australian Jewish Herald*, ran story after story on Nazi Germany and the persecution of the Jews. From the start, Nazi anti-Semitism dwarfed all other stories and events, foreign and domestic, affecting Jewish life. The Australian Jewish community seemingly foresaw, in quite an uncanny manner, the

utterly evil and fanatical nature of the Hitler regime, and the rise of Hitler was instrumental in transforming Australian Jewry from a congregational-based community, uneasy with public proclamations of separate Jewish identity, to the multi-faceted Jewish 'peoplehood' we know today, ever ready to proclaim its heritage and defend itself against all manifestations of anti-Semitism. On the other hand, Australian Jewry had neither an explanation for Nazi anti-Semitism nor any cogent suggestions for dealing with it. In its issue of 17 March 1933, for instance, the *Hebrew Standard* noted:

We scan the cable news each day hoping against hope that the position in Germany may become normal and the promise 'that the German government is earnest and determined in its desire to guarantee safety and order for all its citizens.' A government such as that of Hitler is one of those recurring extraordinary phases of history which cannot hope for stability — rather it is likely to precipitate a world war — with all the horrors of war intensified.

Two weeks later (31 March 1933) it returned to the Nazi atrocities in a major editorial:

The plight of the Jews in Germany is not one jot less serious than it was last week. It is shocking to observe that Modern Civilisation . . . should be capable of burlesque to such a degree through political conditions. The remedy is not apparent. The only hope seems to be that those responsible for the tragedy will speedily come to their senses . . .

We have not reprinted the dreadful news which has been cabled to the daily press, nor have we gathered the gruesome stories for reproduction. The majority are too harrowing, and reminiscent of the darkest days of savagery and godlessness.

Summing up the year 1932–33 in its *Rosh Hashanah* edition in September 1933 the *Standard* asserted:

In attempting a review of the closing year, at once the German Jewish debacle overshadows every other serious consideration. The appalling suppression of minorities points to the likely bankruptcy of civilisation. Ruthlessness and cunning are enthroned with power over the lives of the people. How futile is protestation in such a case. No remedy in the form of joint action is possible . . .

Even in mid-1933, the Jewish press expected that the Hitler regime would soon pass from the scene. The *Hebrew Standard* of 18 August 1933 expressed the hope that

It is not a folly of despair, however, which assures us the Jews of Germany will outlive Hitler, because within the next 12 months the people of Germany will find their idol has feet of clay. The murmurings are already being heard . . . We see the writing on the wall and believe that surely if slowly Nemesis will over take the Hitler regime . . . The Jews have stood at the grave-sides of all their oppressors.

As time went on, however, the Australian Jewish press gave way to resignation and a measure of despair at the fact that the Hitler regime did not moderate in any way, much less disappear. Even before, in April 1933 the *Hebrew Standard's* editorial 'History and Now' (28 April 1933) noted that 'when first the Nazi outrages upon Jews were reported, the news was received with astonishment and the hope encouraged that it was an outburst due to some psychological extravagance. As time goes on the worst fears are confirmed. The inhumanity and terrorism practised appears appalling to believers in German culture, . . .' The Australian Jewish community was, of course, almost completely powerless to help the Jews of Germany at this stage, and was totally bewildered at what could be done. Throughout, Australian Jewry explicitly looked to British Jewry, especially the leaders of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, to institute a policy towards Nazi Germany which Australian Jewry would then follow. Over and over again in this period spokesmen for the Jewish community and the Jewish press pointed to the British Board of Deputies to lead the way. On 31 March 1933, for instance, the *Hebrew Standard* reported on a motion carried by the New South Wales Jewish Congregational Advisory Board that

Representing and on behalf of N.S.W. Jewry [it] expresses its abhorrence at the Nazi campaign of Anti-Semitism which has culminated in violence against so many of our co-religionists; and this Advisory Board emphatically supports the Board of Deputies of British Jews, as the official mouth-piece of all Jews throughout the British Empire, in its efforts to secure the early and complete correction of the abuses which now unhappily prevail.

In the same issue, the *Standard* noted editorially that:

It is comforting to know that the Board of Deputies of British Jews . . . is evidently active with the British Imperial Government on behalf of the outraged Jews of Germany . . . every shade of opinion is very unanimous. Sympathy is expressed in unmistakably sincere terms as the British instinct rebels against Satanic devilry.

The Jewish Advisory Board and the *Jewish Herald* also agreed with the policy of the British Board of Deputies in refusing to agree to a trade boycott of Germany, believing that this would do more harm than good and would only lead to even more extreme measures against Germany's Jews without being able in any way to alleviate their plight.

'We understand,' it noted at the end of March 1933,

that the Advisory Board first carefully considered propositions for a public meeting and for a local trade boycott and its members rightly came to the conclusion that no good purpose could be served by giving public vent to our own righteous indignation by any method which would either hurt innocent Germans or give new causes for the libel that Jews are an international force bent on damaging that country.

For the *Hebrew Standard* the remedy lay in:

Our unbounded faith in the equity of British government which is such that we cannot even anticipate anything like the German terror arising but nevertheless, must demand of Jewry it shall consolidate and show that it appreciates the world position. Germany persecuted Einstein — whereas subsequently his being noticed in the gallery of the House of Commons he was cheered. Hilaire Belloc, long an aggravating critic, has begun to write in defence of Jews . . . We know it may appear a confession of impotence to say [that] there is nothing which can be done at present that will influence conditions in favour of the victims of German persecution [but] a way out will assuredly be found, as in every previous Jewish tragedy, if only Jews pull together.

There is also evidence that as early as April 1933 Australian Jewry foresaw that it might well have to take in its share of German Jewish refugees, as Britain was beginning to do. A sermon in April 1933 by Rabbi Francis Lyon Cohen at the Great Synagogue, reprinted in the *Hebrew Standard* on 14 April 1933, stated that

last week the Council of Jewish Women received from the headquarters in Paris of that organisation, which advises Jewish immigrants . . . a cabled request for the removal of the restrictions upon the immigration of refugees from German oppression. Consulted on the matter, we strongly urged the reply that the actual conditions in each case might be more advantageously submitted to the Australian Minister resident in London and the suggestion of an interview with Mr. Bruce was accordingly called back. This morning brings the intimation that our advice will be acted upon and meanwhile that considerable funds for emigrating sufferers to other parts of the world will now be required. This is the greatest crisis in Jewry since 1492, and it is a case for the uttermost generosity . . . from both rich and poor alike.

While this was a start, it is well-documented that very few refugee Jews arrived in Australia until 1937–38. According to Michael Blakeney, 'net German and Austrian immigration into Australia was only 45 persons in 1934 and only 8 persons in 1935', as incredible as this may seem. These extraordinarily low figures had several causes. From 1930 to 1936, because of the Depression, non-Commonwealth migrants had to produce £500 in landing money, a figure reduced to £50 in 1936 for those who could provide guarantees from Australians. There was no central Jewish coordinating body for German refugees coming to Australia until the creation of the Welfare Society in 1937. Australia had no direct representatives in Germany or only the most minimal ones, and Britain continued to act as an interlocutor for much of Australia's foreign policy, including immigration. It must also be reiterated, how-

ever, that only a minority of German Jews actually left Germany until 1938, and there is no evidence that remote Australia was perceived as a possible destination by any significant number until desperation and panic set in after *Kristallnacht*. However, even the very conservative Rabbi Cohen was, as early as 1933, envisioning Australia as a recipient country and, as Dr. Rutland notes, lobbying by official Jewish groups to the government for the reception of more German refugees got under way in 1934. The trauma produced by the rise of Nazism was, in my view, of central significance to the subsequent evolution of the Australian Jewish community in the 1930s, just as the vastly greater shock occasioned by the arrival here of knowledge of Nazi mass murder of European Jewry from mid-1942 onwards was perhaps the central motivating factor in the formation of Australian Jewry's contemporary modes of governance and its highly visible efforts at fighting anti-Semitism.²⁴ Within a few years of the rise of Nazi anti-Semitism, Australian Jewry would have taken the first steps at reorganising the community's modes of governance with the formation of Advisory Boards in Victoria and New South Wales. It initiated the Welfare Societies in New South Wales and Victoria, perhaps the most consistently successful immigrants' aid bodies in Australian history. From 1938 onwards they were granted unique and unprecedented powers by the federal government to admit such German and other central European Jewish refugees as they wished to sponsor.²⁵ While many recent historians have focused on the allegedly niggardly and ungenerous attitude of the Australian government towards German Jewish refugees, an attitude occasioned, in their view, by anti-Semitism, no one has ever answered the critical question of just how many would-be German Jewish refugee migrants to Australia were denied permission to come because of anti-Semitism, and I can only reiterate my view that, when this question is comprehensively researched, the number is likely to be seen as very few, with the relatively low number (7,500–9,000) of German Jewish arrivals here from 1933–39 the result of Australia being viewed as a preferred destination by only a very limited number of refugees until panic set in after *Kristallnacht*. But by that time England and a number of other countries significantly liberalised their refugee policies.²⁶ As noted, when, after 1937, the Jewish Welfare Societies were functioning at full steam, with a competent infrastructure, they were granted wholly unprecedented privileges of nominating and sponsoring refugee arrivals, privileges which continued in the post-war period of Holocaust survivor and 'displaced person' migration.²⁷ These extraordinary privileges should, in my view, be squarely linked to the essential philo-Semitism of Australia's elites and opinion-leaders and to their detestation of Hitler's enormities, which proved stronger than those factors such as the Depression and unemployment, the presumption of 98 per cent British migration, and whatever Australian anti-Semitism there was weighing on the other side.

NOTES

1. M.B. Hayne, 'Australian Reaction to Hitler's Accession to Power: June 1933', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 71(1), June 1985. This is a curious, even bizarre and offensive article, although it covers much ground. While the author states, of Australia's response to the rise of Nazism that 'if anything the response was favourable' (p. 59) the article closely shows the reverse. The author's comments are, often, most extraordinary and regrettable. According to him (p. 65) 'Reports from press agencies such as Reuters (controlled by Jewish interests) sensationalised atrocities.' Goebbels could hardly do better than this. Hayne also notes (p. 63) that 'in the United States, where the Jewish element was far more predominant than in Australia' hostility to Nazism was more sharp than here. According to Hayne, too (p. 65), 'The bitterness of the Jewish issue

- overshadowed equally important matters'. The only equally important matter (equally important to the start of genocide) cited by Hayne is 'the thrust and rebuttals of Noskowski and Telemachurs against Von Skerst in the Sydney press over the Polish corridor.' (*ibid.*). It is good to see such an acute moral sensibility in one of our leading historical journals. For a well-researched discussion of another Australian aspect of this subject, see G. Kinne, 'Nazi Stratagems and their Effects on Germans in Australia up to 1945,' *ibid.*, 66 (1), June 1980.
2. On this question see, e.g., Suzanne Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora* (Sydney, 1988), pp. 174–201 and 225–256; Michael Blakeney *Australia and the Jewish Refugees, 1933–1948* (Sydney, 1985); Andrew Markus, 'Jewish Migration to Australia, 1938–49,' *Journal of Australian Studies* (November 1983); Paul Bartrop, "'Good Jews" and "Bad Jews": 'Australian Perceptions of Jewish Migrants and Refugees, 1919–1938,' in W.D. Rubinstein, ed., *Jews in the Sixth Continent* (Sydney, 1987); Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History, Vol. I, 1788–1945* (Melbourne, 1991) pp. 145–234; W. D. Rubinstein, *ibid.*, Vol. II, 1945–Present, pp. 51–69; and my articles 'Australia and the Refugee Jews of Europe, 1933–1954: A Dissenting View,' *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society* X, Pt. 6 (May 1989) and 'The Revolution of 1942–44,' *ibid.*, XI, Part I (November, 1990).
 3. See, for instance Colin Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British Society, 1871–1971* (London, 1988); T. Kushner and K. Lunn, eds., *Traditions of Intolerance: Historical Perspectives on Fascism and Race Discourse [sic] in British Society* (Manchester, 1989).
 4. There were official British policies or legal acts which might well be termed anti-Semitic — the Aliens Act, British policy towards Palestine after the mid-1930s, although there were, equally, other policy considerations in both, and, at a local level, the policy of the London County Council in the early 1920s of refusing to provide university scholarships to the children of foreign-born parents, changed after an outcry.
 5. Although Disraeli was virtually deified in Conservative hagiography as the party's Jewish prophet.
 6. Cited (without date or source) in Michael Wharton, 'A Few Lost Causes', in John Raymond, ed., *The Baldwin Age* (London, 1960), p. 89. The original appeared in the *Yorkshire Post* in 1934.
 7. 7 April 1933, from John Barnes and David Nicholson, eds., *The Empire at Bay: The Leo Amery Diaries, 1929–1945* (London, 1988), p. 292.
 8. Quoted in Michael Coren, *Gilbert: The Man Who Was Chesterton* (London, 1989), p. 211, but without source or date. It is apparently drawn from the file on Chesterton at the Wiener Library, London. Chesterton died in 1936, so this quotation must come from the 1933–36 period.
 9. A.J.P. Taylor, *English History, 1914–1945* (Oxford, 1965), p. 420. The most sensible examination of British Conservative attitudes towards fascism is John Stevenson, 'Conservatism and the Failure of Fascism in Interwar Britain', in Martin Blinkhorn, *Fascists and Conservatives: The Radical Right and the Establishment in Twentieth-Century Europe* (London, 1990).
 10. Geoffrey Serle, *John Monash: A Biography* (Melbourne, 1982), pp. 526–7.
 11. See Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History, Vol. I, 1788–1945* (Melbourne, 1991), pp. 471–528.
 12. Michael Cathcart, *Defending the National Tuck Shop* (Melbourne, 1988); Serle, *op. cit.*, pp. 469, 517.
 13. See the *Hebrew Standard*, 5 May 1933 and the *Australian Jewish Herald*, 11 May 1933, for detailed descriptions.
 14. *Australian Jewish Herald, Ibid.*
 15. *Ibid.* A full account of Menzies' attitude to Jews would be an interesting project. Contrary to what one might expect in advance, Menzies was a thorough-going philo-Semite.
 16. *Ibid.*
 17. *Ibid.*, 25 May 1933.
 18. *Ibid.* The first use of this term is often credited to a speech by Herbert Samuel during World War Two.
 19. *Hebrew Standard*, 16 May 1933.
 20. See, e.g., the article by 'Tacitus' in the *Bulletin* 24 May 1933.
 21. Cited in the *Hebrew Standard*, 28 April 1933.
 22. Cited in *ibid.*, 14 March 1933.
 23. Hayne, *op. cit.*, pp. 59, 65.
 24. W.D. Rubinstein, 'The Revolution of 1942–44: The Transformation of the Australian Jewish Community', *ibid.*, XI, Pt. 1 (1990).
 25. W.D. Rubinstein, 'Australia and the Refugee Jews of Europe, 1933–54: A Dissenting View', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society* X, Pt. 6 (1989), p. 517.
 26. A.J. Sherman, *Island Refuge: Britain and Refugees from the Third Reich 1933–1939*, (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 259–272.
 27. Rubinstein, 'Australia and the Refugee Jews, . . .' *op. cit.*

THE CARLTON UNITED HEBREW CONGREGATION: A SHORT HISTORY

Malcolm J. Turnbull

The Museum of Victoria exhibition *Bridging Two Worlds* has underlined both the long tradition of Jewish residence north and north-east of the Melbourne city centre, and the vital role played by the Carlton area in settling and acclimatising waves of Jewish newcomers over the course of a century.¹ Situated at the edge of the central business district (in close proximity to factories, stores, markets and warehouses), Carlton and environs (including Fitzroy) hosted a visible Jewish presence as early as the 1850s. As population numbers multiplied (and parallel with the steady drift of the Anglo-Jewish establishment and acculturating migrants into the more affluent southern suburbs), a distinctive 'Eastern European' sub-community had developed in and around Carlton by the turn of the century.² Succeeding decades saw the evolution of the Carlton *kehilla* as 'a vibrant, dynamic, functionally independent centre',³ the revitalisation and transformation of Melbourne Jewry by interwar and post-war migrant groups, and the ultimate disappearance of the northern community as the population relocated south of the Yarra.

This article traces the history of the Carlton *kehilla*'s leading religious institution. Established just before World War One, the Carlton United Hebrew Congregation became Melbourne's fourth major synagogue, and served local Jewry for nearly sixty years. Thus its lifetime encompassed the heyday and decline of the northern community. In examining the evolution and progress of the congregation (henceforth abbreviated as CUHC), I have highlighted the contribution of significant individuals to its development, and their impact on broader inter-congregational and communal politics.

Prior to CUHC's foundation, organised Jewish worship in Melbourne revolved primarily around the three established synagogues in Bourke Street, Albert Street and Charnwood Grove. Hilary Rubinstein notes that these institutions had tended to develop along national lines, with the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation dominated by Anglo-Jews, and St. Kilda by Jews of English or German origin. East Melbourne (by virtue of both geography and its determined religious traditionalism) had always attracted a solid core membership of Russian and Polish immigrants, and was popularly known as the 'foreigners' *shul*.⁴ In addition, a minority of strictly observant northern Jews who desired supplementary services or more conveniently located facilities (or who judged even East Melbourne insufficiently traditional for their tastes), established several alternative *minyanim* around the turn of the century. These groups included the Fitzroy-based *Chevre Sha'ari Tikvah*, Rabbi Abraham Hirschowitz's *Chevre Torah* (both of which functioned briefly in the 1890s), and the *Woolf Davis Chevre* (which, as 'Stone's *Shul*', ultimately lasted three generations). There are indications that a number of other minor congregations emerged and disappeared during this period; one such *minyan* (now long forgotten) is reported to have been the immediate forerunner of CUHC.⁵

CUHC, dubbed *Beth HaKnesseth Agodath Achim*, was formally established at a meeting held at the Guild Hall (in Swanston Street) on 27 July 1913. Its principal

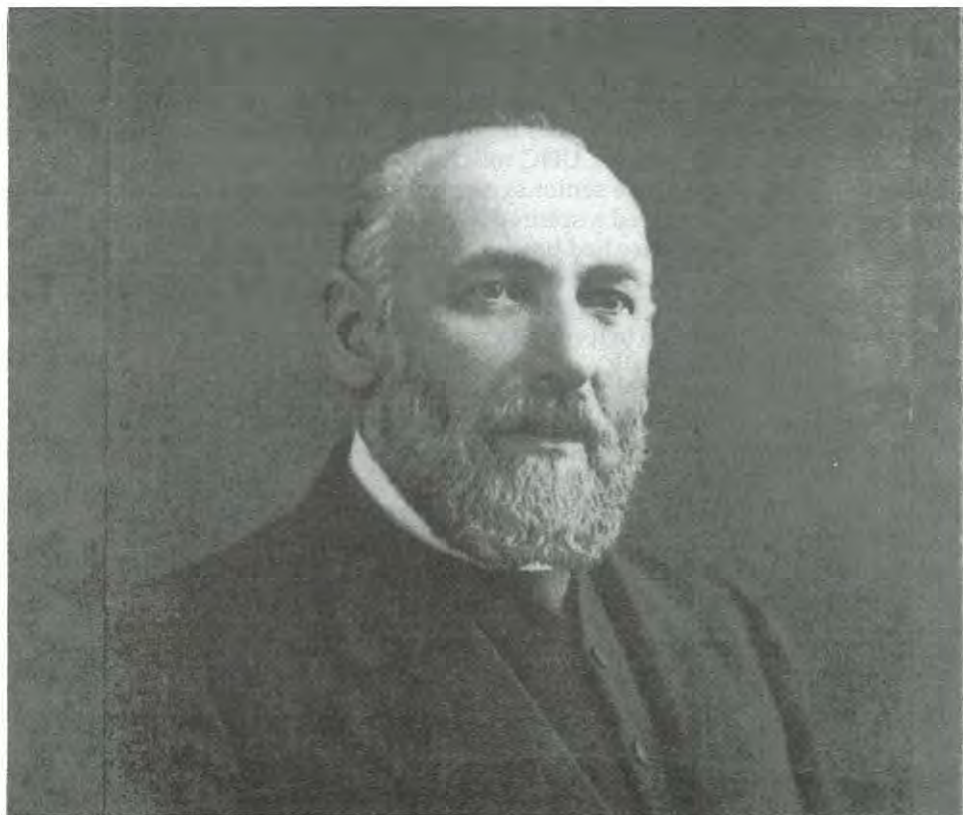
founders were Jacob Ruschin, who had been president of the *Chevra Sha'ari Tikvah* twenty years earlier, and three brothers, Jacob, Isaac and Abraham Dabscheck.⁶ They argued that the 'significant growth' of the local Jewish population had rendered such an institution 'absolutely necessary', and they trusted that the venture would ensure 'the cultivation of a true brotherly feeling among the Jewish residents in and around Carlton'.⁷ Ruschin, elected the infant congregation's first president, donated its first *Torah* scroll, *Yod*, Ark and Reading Desk; local premises were rented for services, and the institution was registered as a Place of Worship.⁸ The Laws and Regulations of the congregation stressed that CUHC was to work on 'traditional and proper lines'; the form of prayer was to accord strictly with the *Minhag Ashkenazi*, and the ritual was to conform unreservedly to Orthodox practice.⁹

The congregation's first year of operation reinforced the confidence of its founders. Within a month of the inaugural meeting, sixty members had been enrolled. Subsequently a site for a permanent synagogue was found in Palmerston Street and a deposit paid. (The architect Nahum Barnet described it as an 'ideal spot' for the purpose.)¹⁰ CUHC formally confirmed its status as a new communal institution by appointing delegates to the recently formed United Shechita Board, establishing a close working relationship with the *Chevra Kadisha*, and securing burial space at the Fawkner and Coburg cemeteries. Most promising of all was the appointment of a spiritual leader; indeed, obtaining the services of the experienced and respected Rev. A.T. Chodowski (as *mohel*, Reader and Preacher) was seen as a significant 'coup'.¹¹

In the course of some twenty-five years ministering to congregations in Britain and the colonies, Adolphus Treitel Chodowski had led the Leicester, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Brisbane synagogues and, at one point, had also considered an offer of the Fremantle pulpit. He boasted an impressive genealogy and educational background, as well as a demonstrated commitment to religious traditionalism. (In 1909 he had publicly challenged the dedicated modernist Isaac Jacobs to a debate on Reform Judaism). The descendant of eight generations of rabbis, and the son of a revered Talmudic scholar known as the 'Wittkower Rav', he was born in Posen, Prussia in 1863, educated at home and the local *Gymnasium*, Rabbi Hildesheimer's Seminary in Berlin, and Jews' College, London (the last at the recommendation of Dr. Hermann Adler). Chodowski came to Melbourne in 1909 after a decade in Dunedin, and earned his living as a *shochet* for Ogdens butchers until he was invited to head the infant CUHC.¹²

With a minister of Rev. Chodowski's calibre and reputation, as well as the prospect of soon building a permanent *shul*, CUHC's founders were understandably optimistic. As it was, the institution's formative years were fraught with problems; Chodowski left Melbourne under unpleasant circumstances after only two years and, as a result, a permanent synagogue building did not materialise for another decade.

The cause was a fund-raising fiasco. To aid its building fund the congregation mounted a Charity Fete and Art Union in 1915, as part of the 'All Nations Exhibition'. Unfortunately the fete failed badly due to poor weather and conflicting wartime functions, and CUHC found itself heavily in debt. Its woes were compounded by sensational allegations of a swindle in connection with the Art Union; charges were brought against the organiser, Abraham S. Gordon, and Chodowski appeared as 'informant' in a well-publicised court case.¹³ The minister came out of the debacle badly, amid suggestions that he had acted maliciously and unjustly in taking Gordon to court. Counsel for the defence, N.H. Sonenberg, argued that he



Polish-born Rev. Adolph[us] Treitel Chodowski, who served the Carlton United Hebrew Congregation from 1913–15, also ministered in Brisbane, Dunedin, and Newtown, N.S.W., and founded and edited the pro-Zionist *Australian Jewish Chronicle*. (A.J.H.S. Collection)

and consecrated three months later.²⁷ Rabbis Brodie and Mestel, Rev. Danglow and representatives of 'all leading Melbourne Jewish institutions' participated (although the absence of East Melbourne's executive from the Opening ceremony suggested a degree of resentment on the part of the Albert Street congregation).²⁸ Unfortunately the spirit of co-operation and *bonhomie* which marked these services was soon undermined; a furore over proselytism highlighted the persistence of the north-south tensions of Chodowski's time, and brought CUHC's new minister, Rev. Goran, into conflict with the *Beth Din*.

Leopold Goran was born in Lithuania in 1893, and studied there before emigrating to England around 1911. He enlisted in World War One, was gassed and was subsequently advised to leave England for his health. Electing to settle in Australia, he travelled first to Tasmania (with his wife and young family) and (Chodowski) had mismanaged the whole enterprise and that the Art Union had become a 'Chodowski family concern' with the minister and his children employed at 'remunerative wages'. (Gordon was found 'not guilty'.)¹⁴

The whole affair was singularly unfortunate. A major blow to the congregation's finances, it also did nothing to promote harmony with the Jewish establishment. In a letter to the *Argus*, Edward Hart dissociated Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, East Melbourne and St. Kilda from the scandal; as spokesman for 'the three recognised Hebrew congregations of the metropolis', he had earlier protested to the Attorney-General for allowing CUHC to hold this type of fund raising activity.¹⁵ His letter was indicative of the senior synagogues' lack of enthusiasm for the new congregation, and it prompted a spirited response from Chodowski. The minister noted wryly that no assistance had been rendered CUHC by 'the many prosperous Hebrews of Melbourne', and he stressed 'The Hebrew congregations of Melbourne are not limited to three recognised bodies, as alleged, and any number of our body coming together are justified in forming a congregation or centre. Such a centre was needed in Carlton and Fitzroy. . .'¹⁶

We shall see that the Art Union affair was merely the first in a series of *contretemps* between CUHC and its sister congregations. Chodowski resigned shortly after the court case — a disappointing and premature end to what should have been a fruitful partnership.¹⁷ He moved to Sydney where he was appointed to the Newtown Hebrew Congregation; five years later he retired and, in 1922, founded and edited a new journal, the *Australian Jewish Chronicle*. The paper reflected both the minister's strong Zionist leanings and his unyielding dedication to religious Orthodoxy.¹⁸ Sadly, he only stayed at the helm a few years, dying after a long illness in 1926.¹⁹

CUHC took several years to recover from the scandal. For a time the Palmerston Street property seems to have been in jeopardy, and it was actually taken over by the Judaeon League in the early 1920s.²⁰ Immigration came to a temporary standstill because of the war, membership waned, and the executive repeatedly bemoaned the lack of outside support for the organisation.²¹ In addition, the premature death of Jacob Dabscheck in 1918 was a serious blow to the group's morale. (A founder member and office-bearer, Dabscheck had regularly led services following Chodowski's departure.)²²

Still, the group was filling a void in the northern community and managed to continue. Thanks to the zeal of its founders, services were maintained each week-night as well as on Shabbat and the Festivals.²³ Renewed immigration eventually ensured increased demand and, by 1926, CUHC's leaders were again campaigning to erect an appropriate building.²⁴ (President Israel Dabscheck cited the recent emergence of a number of independent *minyanim* as evidence of the need for a more formal provision in the district.)²⁵ Despite objections that the existing *shuls* were virtually empty most of the year, and that CUHC would be better employed giving practical assistance to local immigrants than in adding to the number of ill-attended places of worship, the building fund was revived. (Jacob Ruschin, the 'father of the synagogue', donated an initial £50.)²⁶

The executive conceived the new centre as a 'Cathedral Synagogue' for the north, comparable to St. Kilda's new edifice. Financial considerations modified the project somewhat, but the end result was described by the press as a 'magnificent building' in 'the Zantine style', able to seat five hundred, and boasting a *shul*, a council chamber, a secretary's office, a 'beautifully appointed minister's room', and ample land space to add a hall and schoolroom in the future. It was opened in June 1927, served the Hobart Hebrew Congregation for two years (1920–22). He then spent four years as assistant minister to Sydney's Newtown Hebrew Congregation, and a year as minister, *shochet*, teacher and collector with the Ballarat Synagogue. Money

worries dogged his time in Ballarat, so he responded eagerly to a call from CUHC, and commenced duty there with the opening of the new building.²⁹ By all accounts a talented and versatile worker (although he may not have been formally ordained), Goran began his Carlton ministry in an atmosphere of optimism and goodwill — like Chodowski before him. Similarly, he survived there less than two years.

Nine months after being appointed, Goran committed the major public relations blunder of forming his own *Beth Din* and admitting a proselyte who had previously been rejected by authorities in both Sydney and Melbourne. It is hardly surprising, in view of the intense emotion which surrounded the whole issue of conversions in the 1920s, that his action made headlines in the Jewish press and brought down the wrath of the senior congregations (particularly East Melbourne). Obviously concerned at what it believed were emergent challenges to established (that is, Anglo-Orthodox) authority from north of the Yarra (described as 'fast becoming a turbulent incoherent mass, a collection of hostile units . . . steeped in petty *cheder* politics'), the *Jewish Herald* cautioned CUHC: ' . . . if it proposes to ally itself with the forces of disruption, upon its own head be the consequences'.³⁰

A rumour circulated that Palmerston Street was considering the admission of a second applicant, and the Melbourne rabbinate found itself with little choice but to respond. CUHC had so far failed to acknowledge the official *Beth Din*'s jurisdiction (indeed, the congregation's spokesmen were arguing that Jewish Law enabled them to form their own court), and Goran's action stood in direct challenge to the community's constituted authority. In a letter to the press he suggested that Melbourne Jewry perpetuated a double standard; no such outcry had occurred when St. Kilda and MHC had made proselytes. He declared: ' . . . our religion cannot, and will not be monopolised by a privileged few.'³¹ (Another Carlton correspondent bluntly demanded that the senior synagogues 'mind their own business'.)³² Accordingly, the *Beth Din* stepped in and summoned Goran and president Israel Dabscheck to a conference on the issue.

The outcome was a nominal victory for the *Beth Din*; CUHC undertook to forward any future applications for conversion to the *Beth Din*, and thus align itself with other Victorian congregations in this regard.³³ Nonetheless, the whole incident was a demonstration of budding northern independence and a growing discontent with the status quo (which would culminate in the formation of an alternative *Beth Din* a few years later). Goran was not to figure in subsequent developments, however. Only two months after the resolution of the proselyte dispute, the *Jewish Herald* reported that CUHC was 'sorely troubled', this time over its minister's finances.³⁴

With the responsibility of a growing family (including seven children by 1928), Goran appears to have been hard-pressed to make ends meet throughout his time in Australia. The quest for an adequate salary had prompted his moves from Hobart, Newtown and Ballarat, and a year into his Carlton ministry, he found himself seriously in debt. The circumstances remain unclear (both the press and the congregation's minute books are notably coy about the situation), but they resulted in a debate over retaining Goran's services.³⁵ In a quandary (and notwithstanding its earlier independent stance), CUHC's executive went so far as to request the *Beth Din* to arbitrate 'whether a Jewish minister should be dismissed because he was in debt.' The *Beth Din* replied guardedly, obviously embarrassed, and stopped short of recommending that Goran be discharged. Still, the general view seems to have been that a minister should be bound by more rigid codes than ordinary individuals ('He preaches, and must therefore live an idea'), and the committee ultimately asked him

to resign — ‘for the benefit of the synagogue.’³⁶ He did so upon receiving £150 compensation.³⁷ (Two weeks later, he again outraged opponents of conversion by making a ‘lady proselyte’ and accepting £200 for doing so.)³⁸

Rev. Goran’s ignominious exit was a glaring instance of how salary constraints could undermine the ministry. His experience was by no means unique; the motif of inadequate clerical remuneration runs through the community’s history. In the colonial era, for example, Emanuel Myers had been forced into bankruptcy, and Abraham Ornstien compelled to resign, because of outstanding debts. More recently, a struggling Rev. Lenzer had had to threaten to step down after thirty years of service at East Melbourne! Not long after Goran’s departure, Rev. Danglow, Rabbi Brodie and Rabbi Mark (of the Liberal synagogue) would all weather significant pay cuts due to the Depression, and Rabbi Mestel would resign rather than do the same. No doubt their plight was universal among Jewish and non-Jewish clergy both in Melbourne and abroad, yet — at times — the local synagogues seem to have neglected their duty to their paid officers. In Goran’s case, he was an



Russian-born Rev. Leopold Goran, minister at Carlton from 1927–29, launched Yiddish journalism in Australia with his shortlived *Di Yiddishe Pioner* (1928). (A.J.H.S. Collection)

unlucky victim of CUHC's ongoing financial headaches. The synagogue building had cost £10,000 and meeting the repayments proved a severe burden as the world economic state worsened.³⁹ A drop in membership aggravated the situation — in 1927 the congregation claimed an enrolment of 400; of only 145 seat holders two years later, half were unfinancial.⁴⁰

In seeking a successor, therefore, CUHC elected the less expensive option of engaging a *chazan*. The appointment was essentially a stop-gap measure, with musician David Krass contracted for an initial twelve months; a local tailor, Michael Frankel, rendered assistance as Second Reader, and Rabbis Mestel and Brodie obligingly officiated at marriages and other special occasions.⁴¹ Chazan Krass eventually stayed for three years and then resigned after a dispute with the committee.⁴² Frankel took over his duties temporarily, but the members wanted a more formal arrangement, and they seized on the presence locally of a widely respected European teacher and Talmudist. The appointment of Rabbi Gurewicz revitalised the congregation, and served to consolidate the 'right wing' religious position in Melbourne.⁴³

Born and raised in Vilna, Joseph Lipman Gurewicz (1885–1956) came from an intense rabbinical background which included family links with the Vilna Gaon. He served as rabbi and teacher within that community prior to World War One, and then as principal of several *Yeshivot* in Poland and Lithuania. He undertook a number of overseas missions to raise funds for the *Va'ad HaYeshivot* organisation in the 1920s, and on one of these he first visited Australia in 1929.⁴⁴ While in Melbourne, he made a profoundly favourable impression on northern Jewry and a mass meeting was convened at Monash House to discuss ways and means of keeping him in Carlton permanently.⁴⁵

Gurewicz returned to Europe in due course but several Carlton groups continued to vie for his services in one capacity or another. Some Melbourne Anglo-Jews also recognised the rabbi's calibre and endorsed the movement to enlist him. The anglophile *Jewish Herald* pointed to the disunion afflicting Carlton and environs (much of it probably a result of the Depression), and called for a 'Unifier' — 'of the type of Rabbi J.L. Gurewicz, only recently in this city.' Melbourne Hebrew Congregation's Rabbi Brodie visualised a London-style Federation of Synagogues north of the Yarra, with Gurewicz as its overall spiritual leader.⁴⁶

Gurewicz responded to the general enthusiasm and, without making a commitment to any particular organisation, he returned to Melbourne permanently in 1932. As the northern community's premier institution the Carlton Synagogue successfully enlisted him as its *Rav*, but his activities ranged further afield, and included the honorary principalship of the *Talmud Torah Hascola* in the 1930s, and — in time — leadership of the North Carlton *Beth Din*.

All reports indicate that Rabbi Gurewicz was a charismatic figure. Former Carlton residents describe him as 'a saintly man', 'a judge steeped in Law', and 'an inspired leader' possessing 'the aura of the *Tzadik*.'⁴⁷ Sam Lipski remembers him as 'a straight-backed figure in an Edwardian coat with a wide-brimmed hat. His long, grey beard framed a face which always beamed with kindness.'⁴⁸ Leon Freedman recalls the rabbi as always immaculately attired and groomed ('a glorious man to behold') and meticulously observant. Allan Wynn has called him 'the prototype of the Rabbi . . . His hold over his congregation was absolute: his power derived emotionally from one quality, his purity of spirit.'⁴⁹ Without doubt, Gurewicz made a deep and lasting impact on both congregation and community and his first ten years in Melbourne can be cited as CUHC's 'golden' period.⁵⁰ Notwithstanding the

persistence of the financial problems which had dogged the congregation since Chodowski's time, and which were compounded by the Depression, CUHC was at the centre of local Jewish life, and a hub of activity during the 1930s and early 1940s.⁵¹ The Carlton community itself was at its peak; apart from the Palmerston Street *shul*, religious institutions in the area included the Woolf Davis *Chevra* ('Stone's *Shul*') in Pitt Street, the *Talmud Torah Hascola* in Rathdowne Street, and a range of *shtiblech* (Rabbi Levine's Chassidic *minyan* in Amess Street, 'Aryeh Kaplan's *minyan*', the *Machzikei HaDas* Society, and the forerunner of Melbourne Mizrahi, for example.)

Worship at Palmerston Street was enthusiastically traditionalist, well-removed from Anglo-Orthodoxy, and stamped with the personalities of the Lithuanian rabbi and his Russian assistant, Rev. Frankel.⁵² In contrast with Melbourne Hebrew Congregation and St. Kilda, CUHC disdained the introduction of a choir and placed considerably less emphasis on decorum.⁵³ A *minyan* was available morning and evening of each weekday.⁵⁴ Regular sermons were a feature of Shabbat services, but at CUHC they were delivered in Yiddish, and the committee resisted calls for Gurewicz to preach in English.⁵⁵

At the outset the Carlton *Rav* appears to have been on cordial terms with the Melbourne rabbinate, particularly Rabbi Brodie, whose traditionalist sympathies enabled him to bridge north and south more readily than his anglophile colleagues. Certainly the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation leader held Gurewicz in the highest esteem and he studied Talmud with him for several years. As chairman of the *Beth Din*, Brodie welcomed the senior man's membership (thus ensuring the Carlton Synagogue's recognition of the court's jurisdiction.) Gurewicz, in turn, diplomatically preferred to give a nod to the status quo and take his place on the community's formally constituted religious authority, rather than join the 'fundamentalist' alternative recently set up by members of the Woolf Davis *Chevra* and the *Machzikei HaDas* Society.⁵⁶ However, the situation altered dramatically when Brodie left Melbourne in 1937 and Rabbi Danglow was appointed acting *Av Beth Din* pending selection of a new Chief Minister for Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. Subsequent events were a telling indication of growing northern influence and the vulnerability of the hitherto unassailable Anglo-Orthodox establishment.

Danglow, the definitive Anglo-Jewish 'clergyman', was viewed with tremendous respect and affection by the Melbourne establishment, but with distinct reservations by many members of the Carlton community. His knowledge of *Halachah* and Literature was deemed by some to be inferior (much more credence seems to have been accorded Brodie, for instance). As well, his emulation of non-Jewish clergy in dress and style, his preparedness to compromise on matters of observance, and his recent elevation to the honorary title *Morenu*, were viewed with considerable scepticism.⁵⁷ Given Gurewicz's own intense *Yeshivah* background and his undisputed *Halachic* expertise, Aron and Arndt argue that he was probably justified in refusing to serve under Danglow.⁵⁸ Instead, he reconvened the North Carlton *Beth Din*, now called the 'Beth Din of the United Congregations' (representing East Melbourne, CUHC and the Woolf Davis *Chevra*); similarly, he ended his association with the United Shechita Board.⁵⁹

Up to this point in Victorian Jewry's history all bids to mount alternatives to the Melbourne *Beth Din* had failed to make any real impact or endure. Non-aligned or 'rebel' *Batei Din* set up by Rev. Moses Rintel in 1873, Rabbi Abraham Hirschowitz in 1892, and Rev. Goran in 1928, had disappeared quickly; a proposed East Mel-

bourne court, under Rabbi Mestel, had not come to fruition, and the North Carlton body had so far had little influence other than to help regularise *shechita* arrangements in Carlton.⁶⁰ Gurewicz's move was quite another matter — and was seen as such. St. Kilda and Melbourne Hebrew Congregation promptly and formally confirmed their loyalty to Danglow; Chief Rabbi Hertz notified Gurewicz of his strong disapproval of the northern court, and urged the errant rabbi to co-operate with its senior counterpart.⁶¹ The press stressed the importance of the Melbourne *Beth Din*'s allegiance to London and the Chief Rabbinate, and argued that any alternative institution in so small a community would have problems making impartial decisions — and hence, must fail to retain public confidence.⁶²

The protests were to no avail. Even though Israel Dabscheck claimed the quarrel was having a bad effect on CUHC, Gurewicz enjoyed sturdy northern backing. (For instance, president Mendel Slonim publicly asserted that the rabbi was the only person in Victoria qualified to judge religious questions).⁶³ Gurewicz soon proved he was a force to be reckoned with by his dogmatic stand over *shechita*.

In 1936 Norman Smorgon and Sons, butchers, obtained a contract to export Kosher meat to Europe and Palestine. They had the full approval of the United Shechita Board and the *Beth Din* to do so. However, by the time a second shipment was needed, Rabbi Brodie had departed and the Melbourne *Beth Din* reconstituted without its Carlton representative. When Gurewicz subsequently voiced reservations about the ritual purity of the meat, and questioned the disinterestedness of the *dayanim* and Shechita Board (chief *shochet* I.J. Super was a *Beth Din* member), the Palestinian rabbinate demanded his personal *hechsher* before it would accept any further exports. Smorgons had no option but to accept Gurewicz's conditions, and their association with the Shechita Board, and empower him to select *shochtim* and *shomrim*.

The issue became public when excerpts from a letter Gurewicz had sent to Palestine (containing aspersions on Danglow, the *Beth Din* and the Shechita Board) were displayed on a printed Hebrew poster in the streets of Tel Aviv — and then reported back to Australia. A combined meeting of Melbourne Hebrew Congregation and St. Kilda formally protested the allegations and demanded that the Carlton rabbi withdraw his insinuations or risk exclusion from future communal functions.⁶⁴ Rabbi Freedman (Brodie's successor at Melbourne Hebrew Congregation and as *Av Beth Din*) visited the abattoirs, examined the Board's *shochtim*, and proclaimed the meat identical in standard to the shipment Gurewicz had approved when he was still a *Beth Din* member. Freedman met with Gurewicz in an attempt to smooth the situation, but with no effect; Gurewicz remained obdurate, and there was little Melbourne Anglo-Jewry could do about it.⁶⁵

Gurewicz's refusal to be intimidated by the *Beth Din* and Anglo-Orthodoxy's lay spokesmen was a milestone in north-south relations. The establishment's failure to curb him was of key significance; unlike earlier challengers to Anglo-Jewish hegemony, Gurewicz was an indisputably respected figure on both sides of the Yarra, and he enjoyed solid grass-roots support from the increasingly vocal and visible immigrant sector.⁶⁶ Nor had he any intention of fading quietly into the background. In retrospect, his tenure as CUHC's *Rav* and leader can be seen as a primary factor in the growth and strengthening of right-wing Orthodoxy in Melbourne; it was a logical extension of the nascent resistance to the status quo apparent during the ministries of Chodowski and Goran. Significantly, Gurewicz's alternative *Beth Din* remained active for another two decades (until his death), by which time its senior counterpart was headed by Rabbi Izaak Rapaport — an even



The grand old man of religious Carlton Jewry, Lithuanian-born Rabbi Joseph Lipman Gurewicz (at right), with his Bialystoker chazan, Rev. Frankel, at the synagogue in 1952. (Courtesy Rita Krass)

more zealous proponent of Strict Orthodoxy than Gurewicz had been.⁶⁷ *Shechita* remained a recurring problem. A *Kashrut* Commission, comprising the two *Batei Din* and lay delegates of all congregations, was formed in 1949, in an attempt to regularise proceedings. It was disbanded five years later due to repeated conflict between laymen and Gurewicz and Rapaport. (Gurewicz countered accusations that he was deliberately uncooperative by insisting that certain actions of the Commission violated Jewish Law.⁶⁸

Long-term *Kashrut* controversies and the formation, and continued functioning, of the non-conformist Eastern European *Beth Din* highlight Gurewicz's considerable influence in Carlton and beyond. Sadly, however, his impact was diluted by

more than a decade of ill-health. For most of his life he was blind;⁶⁹ lengthy treatment overseas resulted in only temporary recovery, and from the mid-1940s CUHC found it necessary to employ a number of interim replacements.⁷⁰ The rabbi's decline paralleled the synagogue's — by 1946 twice-daily services had been reduced to mornings only, and £4 a week was being spent on the hire of *minyán men*. (Two years later, the *minyán* was described as 'a constant source of worry' and Rev. Frankel was regularly obliged to scour the neighbourhood in search of a quorum.)⁷¹

Given that the Carlton district was still an area of significant Jewish settlement at this date, it seems a little surprising that congregational support eroded so rapidly. By 1952 attendances had dwindled so badly that *Erev Shabbat* services were threatened, and members admitted that the *shul* no longer filled an important role in the community.⁷² The situation was partly ascribable to the rabbi's incapacity and the makeshift worship arrangements of recent years. Of course, the synagogue also fell victim to demographic change.⁷³ Some recent newcomers preferred to join other facilities while many others were distinctly uninterested in religious matters.⁷⁴ Obviously many post-war migrants rejected religious affiliation in favour of secular and political manifestations of Jewish identity.

Following Gurewicz's death in 1956, CUHC seriously considered closing down. A sentimental decision was made to carry on — old members retained fond associations with the synagogue, as demonstrated by the still substantial attendances on the High Holydays.⁷⁵ A Polish-born tenor, Abraham Adler, was recruited as *chazan* on the strength of his 'wonderful voice'. Unfortunately, he came into conflict with the committee when he accepted outside singing engagements (apparently to make ends meet). He resigned immediately prior to *Rosh Hashanah* 1958, and took up a better-paid position with the Elwood congregation. President Mendel Balberyszki appealed to the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies, insisting that Adler had been 'poached' by the southern synagogue. Suggesting that Elwood was like a rich man who appropriated a poor man's 'ewe lamb', Balberyszki argued that the resulting loss of revenue could well endanger CUHC's very existence. The VJBD compelled Elwood to pay £750 compensation, but CUHC found itself hard-pressed to find a suitable replacement for Adler. (He stayed with Elwood several years before accepting a post in Vienna.)⁷⁶

An attempt to recruit a suitable, 'Gurewicz-like' rabbi, who could serve all the northern congregations came to nothing. In the absence of a more permanent arrangement, the congregation imported an Israeli *chazan*, Itzhak Bregman, for the 1959 High Holydays and again the following year. Subsequently, the congregation's secretary, Rev. Moses Sher (formerly with East Melbourne), was engaged as *chazan* for the Festivals and special occasions.⁷⁷

Despite its decision to stay open, CUHC faced a relentlessly uphill battle to retain its viability. A *Talmud Torah* was established at the *shul* in a bid to stimulate local interest, but lack of support forced its closure in its second year.⁷⁸ President Mendel Balberyszki lamented that all efforts by its Board to keep the congregation in existence could not overcome the population drift away from Carlton and the northern suburbs.⁷⁹ The death of Assistant Reader Rev. Frankel in 1962 was symbolic of the erosion of the congregation and local community; he was not replaced. Survival through the 1960s was due solely to the earnest endeavours of a handful of 'old timers'. By 1967, when Rev. Sher left to take up a post in England, it had become obvious that the synagogue's days were numbered.⁸⁰ Finding a *minyán* for *Shabbat* had long been a problem; only five members of the nineteen-man Executive and

Committee still lived in either Carlton or North Carlton. (Of the others, two had addresses in Brunswick, the rest were in the south, from Toorak to St. Kilda.⁸¹)

In addition, members faced the task of moving and rebuilding when the Victorian Government compulsorily acquired the property as part of a Housing Project in Carlton. With demolition work proceeding all around it, the *shul* fell victim to vandals in mid-1968. All the windows were broken, brass and silver fittings stolen, pews smashed open and light fittings destroyed in what president Abe Kleiman labelled the worst case of synagogue desecration in Australia to that date.⁸²

Pending resolution of the institution's future, a handful of members attempted to maintain services at nearby Stone's *Shul* (itself vacant since 1965). CUHC finally bowed to the inevitable, decided not to re-establish itself on a new site, and formally dissolved in December 1970.⁸³ Its assets (£80,000 from the sale to the Housing Commission) were divided equally between the *Yeshivah Gedolah* and the North Eastern Jewish War Memorial Centre. A further £2,000 was donated to the *Talmud Torah Hascola*, the sole surviving *minyan* in the suburb.⁸⁴

To a great extent, the flowering and decline of the Carlton synagogue matched that of the Carlton Jewish community. From 1927, when the Palmerston Street *shul* was opened, it served as the central religious focus for Northern Jewry (superseding the increasingly marginalised East Melbourne as the 'foreigners' *shul*).⁸⁵ Like Albert Street had been — although to a more marked degree — CUHC was essentially a poor 'newcomer' congregation; this was reflected in its recurring financial headaches. However, what it lacked in revenue seems to have been made up for in zeal. During its heyday (the 1930s and early 1940s), Melbourne's fourth major synagogue perpetuated a vibrant and intense Eastern European *minhag* which catered to a (largely) tradition-oriented immigrant population.⁸⁶

As we have seen, its existence was viewed ambivalently by the senior synagogues from the beginning. In turn, Rev. Chodowski and Goran both questioned Anglo-Orthodoxy's pre-eminent position in the community. Later, under the individualistic Rabbi Gurewicz, CUHC proved itself a serious challenger to the religious establishment; along with the Liberal synagogue *Beth Israel*, it successfully sought representation on the Melbourne Jewish Advisory Board (forerunner of the Board of Deputies), and the rabbi unequivocally asserted northern independence by presiding over a wide-ranging alternative *Beth Din* for twenty years. The Carlton United Hebrew Congregation ultimately became redundant as its population dispersed itself geographically. However, its legacy was abundant, and its principles and traditions were carried on by a multiplicity of newer traditionalist congregations South of the Yarra.

NOTES

In tracing CUHC's history, I relied primarily on the contemporary Jewish press, the congregation's Minute Books and miscellaneous Annual Reports (held by the AJHS Archives, Victoria), and several interviews. A number of people either shared their own memories of the synagogue and the Carlton community, directed me to appropriate contacts and resources, or made available pertinent material. I am particularly grateful to Leon Freedman, Abe Kleiman, Rita Kras, Faye Wompan, Harry Mond, Beverley Davis, Helen Bersten and Deborah Zimmerman.

1. *Bridging Two Worlds: Jews, Italians and Carlton*. A joint exhibition of the Jewish Museum of Australia, the Italian Historical Society, Co.As.It., and the Museum of Victoria, 1992.
2. According to census figures, 23 per cent of Melbourne Jews lived south of the Yarra by 1901. Charles Price, *Jewish Settlers in Australia*, Canberra, 1964, Appendix IXa.
3. Yankel Rosenbaum, 'Religiously Carlton: Jewish Religious Life in Carlton, 1919–1939', unpublished typescript (1984), p. 10. AJHS Archives, Victoria.

4. Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Victoria, 1835–1885*, Sydney, 1986, p. 70; *Jewish Chronicle*, 20 February 1874.
5. H. Freedman & A.N. Super, *One Hundred Years: the Story of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, 1841–1941*, Melbourne, 1941, p. 27.
6. German-born Jacob Ruschin (c1854–1933) emigrated to Australia in the 1880s, and established himself as a 'ladies' tailor' in Fitzroy. Following his involvement with the *Chevre Sha'ari Tikvah*, he was associated with the East Melbourne Synagogue. The Dabscheck brothers were natives of Kiev. Abraham (c1859–1927) came to Australia in 1883; Isaac (c1853–1928) and Jacob (c1865–1918) arrived in Melbourne together in 1906. Like Ruschin, the brothers were active in the Fitzroy 'rag trade', as tailors and costume manufacturers, and Jacob, at least, seems to have had a better-than-average Jewish education. (On one occasion he deputised for an ailing Rev. Lenzer when that cleric was unable to lead *Yom Kippur* services at East Melbourne, and he was one of the instigators of the Melbourne *Chevre Kadisha* in 1909). Also prominent in the early running of CUHC were Abraham Meyer Dabscheck (Isaac's son) and Israel and Nahum Dabscheck (Abraham's sons). Information from Victorian civil records; *Jewish Herald*, 2 November 1906; 30 September 1910 and 24 January 1919; and the 'Dabscheck Family Papers' (AJHS Archives, Victoria). [Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Australia: a Thematic History*, Vol. 1, p. 261, describes Ruschin as Russian-born; he was, however, born in Germany, whence he went to London and subsequently to Melbourne, where he opened a tailor's shop in Nicholson Street, North Carlton, and advertised as an 'Anglo-German tailor.' We owe this amended information to an undated letter from Ruschin's nephew, Abraham Redapple of Perth, W.A., sent to Hilary Rubinstein in 1993 — Ed.]
7. *Jewish Herald*, 15 August and 29 August, 1913; 25 September 1914.
8. CUHC's first services were held at the Freeman's Hall in Drummond Street. Subsequently, the congregation worshipped at 66 Madeline Street and 427 Cardigan Street (an old warehouse), and High Holyday services were conducted at the Political Labour Hall in Palmerston Street.
9. *Jewish Herald*, 29 August 1913; 25 September 1914; *Laws and Regulations of the Carlton United Hebrew Congregation*, 1945.
10. A few years later an adjoining property was bought, both as an asset and to provide the projected synagogue with a bigger frontage. *Jewish Herald*, 19 September 1919.
11. *Ibid.*, 10 October and 7 November 1913; 25 September 1914.
12. *Ibid.*, 10 October 1913; *Australasian Hebrew*, 28 February 1896; *Otago Witness*, 3 April 1901; *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 29 April 1926.
13. *Argus*, 30 December 1915; 11 January 1916; *Age*, 8 January 1916.
14. *Age*, 8 January 1916.
15. *Argus*, 11 January 1916. The Jewish press paid little attention to the ugly situation, other than to reprint and endorse Hart's letter. *Jewish Herald*, 11 January 1916.
16. *Argus*, 11 January 1916. Tensions between the Jewish establishment and Carlton newcomers were also evident in opposition to the migrant-dominated *Chevre Kadisha*. In 1916, MHC notified the Burial Society that it might utilise the *Metahar* House at the Melbourne Cemetery only when a minister of one of the three established synagogues was present. More than one 'Carltonite' questioned MHC's right to take such a stand. (Jacob Ruschin, Jacob and Isaac Dabscheck, and Chodowski's son-in-law, Morris Landau, were prominent in the running of the *Chevre Kadisha* at this time). *Jewish Herald*, 10 October 1913; 21 March 1916.
17. In fairness, Chodowski made an enthusiastic contribution to the Carlton community during his time with the congregation. He was active in the cultural organisation 'Kadimah', served as an examiner for the United Jewish Education Board and the recently founded Zionist Hebrew School, and ministered as required by the *Chevre Kadisha*. He was also among the pioneers of 'Herzlia', a breakaway from the Zionist group 'Hatechiya'. (The details of the Herzlia/Hatechiya schism are shadowy. Some CUHC members seem to have been involved; in 1915 the congregation publicly dissociated itself from Festival services mounted by Hatechiya at the Freeman's Hall). See *ibid.*, 27 February, 10 April, 22 May and 3 July 1914; 27 August 1915.
18. For example, see editorials, *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 18 May and 29 June 1922.
19. The various obituary notices for Chodowski indicate that he was highly regarded in many quarters. Given his more than thirty years in Australia and New Zealand, a detailed examination of the man and his career seems overdue. See *ibid.*, 29 April and 16 September 1926.
20. *Jewish Herald*, 6 September 1918; 6 May 1926. A decade later, the scandal continued to provide ammunition for CUHC's detractors. *Ibid.*, 2 December 1926.
21. *Ibid.*, 19 September 1919; 9 October 1924; 3 June 1926.
22. *Ibid.*, 24 January 1919.
23. Apart from the Ruschin and Dabscheck families, early congregants included members of the Burman, Litvin, Rothberg, Bear, Gorr, Lipman, Mutz, Joel and Goldberg families.

24. Melbourne Jewry increased by an estimated twenty eight per cent in the 1920s; between 1926 and 1928 alone, some 2,000 Eastern European Jews entered Australia, two thirds of whom settled in Melbourne (i.e. the Carlton district). An additional 500 joined them in the 1930s. Pam MacLean, 'Jewish Migration in the Twenties: a Jewish pioneering tradition in Australia', *Meanjin*, 42(1), 1983, p. 48; David Rechter, 'Beyond the Pale: Jewish Communism in Melbourne', unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1986, pp. 9, 63.
25. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 3 June 1926. Israel Dabscheck (1892–1965) served CUHC as president from 1925–30. His predecessors had been Jacob Ruschin, Louis Krakowski, T. Bear, Myer Lipman and Abraham Dabscheck. Subsequently CUHC's Presidents were: Mendel Slonim (1930–34); 1936–39), Morris Plotkin (1934–36); Solomon Komesaroff (1939–42), Joseph Feiglin (1942–49), Aron Lasky (1949–51), Daniel Lissek (1953–57), Mendel Balberyski (1957–66) and Abe Kleiman (1966–70).
26. *Ibid.*, 3 June 1926; 11 August 1927.
27. Interview with Leon Freedman, 17 July 1992; *Australian Jewish Herald*, 16 June and 6 October 1927; *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 13 October 1927.
28. The Albert Street committee's boycott led the *Jewish Herald* to expostulate: 'The members of the East Melbourne congregation . . . do not regard the new institution as in any way hostile to their own. By their absence, their official representatives suggested the very opposite, and we feel that in so doing, they rendered a very real disservice, not only to their own institution, but to the Community of which it is a part.' *Australian Jewish Herald*, 16 June 1927. East Melbourne repaired the omission by sending delegates to the consecration service.
29. Philip Barg, 'History of the Western Suburbs Synagogue', *AJHS Journal*, vol. 7, part 6, 1974, p. 465; Newman Rosenthal, *Formula for Survival: the Saga of the Ballarat Hebrew Congregation*, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 93–4.
30. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 19 April 1928.
31. Goran obviously chose to overlook the intense controversy over *Guerim* which had divided the community a few years earlier. For detail, see my article, 'The Proselyte Debate in Melbourne during the 1920s', *AJHS Journal*, vol. 10, part 7, 1989.
32. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 29 March and 19 April 1928.
33. *Ibid.*, 3 May 1928.
34. *Ibid.*, 26 July 1928.
35. *Ibid.*, 9 August 1928; see also *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 19 Aug 1926; Rosenthal, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–4; Barg, *op. cit.*, p. 465.
36. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 9 August 1928; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 20 March 1929.
37. Carlton Congregation Minutes, 20 March and 3 April 1929. Goran subsequently eked out an existence teaching at the *Talmud Torah Hascola* in North Carlton, writing short stories and radio plays, and serving as a Russian interpreter during World War Two. After the war he re-entered the ministry, occupying the pulpit of the Strathfield Synagogue (Sydney) until his death in 1960. Barg, *op. cit.*, p. 465.
38. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 1 August 1929; 2 September 1937.
39. Fund-raising bids included the usual dances, card and theatre nights, as well as a public meeting convened to acquaint the community with the unsatisfactory state of the congregation's affairs. Nonetheless, in 1931 solicitors Goldman & Co. served a summons on CUHC for non-payment of debts. Disaster was averted only by a hasty collection among the Board members and President Mendel Slonim's personal undertaking to make up the balance. Carlton Congregation Minutes, 4 February and 6 April 1931; Rosenbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
40. *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 13 October 1927; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 1 July 1929. An incident which occurred during this period eloquently demonstrated CUHC's determination to uphold the religious principles which had predicated its formation. Business magnate Sidney Myer offered the beleaguered congregation a £10,000 donation at a particularly critical time. The executive debated whether or not to accept this 'life-saving' contribution from a man who had converted and 'married out', and it regretfully but unanimously agreed to reject the offer. Interview with Leon Freedman.
41. Mestel gave his services voluntarily at such times. MHC initially demanded that the Northern congregation pay Brodie a fee, then later withdrew his services, insisting that 'he had helped enough'. Rosenbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
42. Carlton Congregation Minutes, 7 June and 21 June 1932.
43. The determinedly Orthodox Joseph E. Stone (son-in-law of Woolf Davis) called Gurewicz's appointment 'historic'. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 24 November 1932; see also Sam Lipski, 'Going to Shul', *Melbourne Chronicle*, 1(57), 1988, p. 33.

44. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 26 September 1956.
45. *Ibid.*, 16 October 1930.
46. *Ibid.*, 27 January 1931; 15 September 1932.
47. Interview with Leon Freedman; interviews with Harry Mond, 11 August 1992, and Rita Kras and Faye Wompan, 25 May 1993; Lipski, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
48. Sam Lipski, 'Memories of a Jewish boyhood: Yiddish sounds, Carlton sights', *Bulletin*, 8 January 1966, p. 25.
49. Interview with Leon Freedman; Allan Wynn, *The Fortunes of Samuel Wynn: Winemaker, Humanist, Zionist*, Melbourne, 1968, p. 135.
50. In its first Annual Report after Gurewicz's arrival, CUHC congratulated itself on having employed a man who was 'not only a brilliant Rabbi and spiritual leader, but . . . also a 'Chazzan' with a sweet, melodious voice.' Carlton United Hebrew Congregation, 20th Annual Report, 1933.
51. Carlton United Hebrew Congregation, 25th Annual Report, 1938; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 24 May 1938.
52. Michael Frankel (1886–1962) arrived in Melbourne in 1927, worked in the 'rag trade' for two years in order to bring his family out, and accepted the position of Second Reader, *Ba'al Koreh* and Collector to CUHC in 1929. He served the congregation for more than thirty years, and reportedly trained some ninety per cent of local Bar Mitzvah boys. Rev. Frankel's daughters remember that he dedicated himself to the *shul* and persistently lobbied the community for its financial support. He enjoyed a particularly warm friendship with Rabbi Gurewicz. Sam Lipski recalls Frankel: '... everything about him was Bialystok, his Yiddish, his Hebrew, his *nusach*, and when he spoke it, his English . . . in more than twenty years of reading the *Torah* and every *Megillah* there was no-one who could ever recall him making a single mistake in the Hebrew or the cantillation.' Interview with Rita Kras and Faye Wompan; Lipski, 'Going to Shul', *op. cit.*, pp. 33–4.
53. When worship became too fervent, order was generally restored by one or other congregational officer (usually Rev. Frankel) banging his hand on the Reading Desk or table. Interview with Leon Freedman.
54. Carlton United Hebrew Congregation, 20th and 25th Annual Reports, 1933 and 1938.
55. Carlton Congregation Minutes, 5 August 1945.
56. The North Carlton Beth Din was founded in 1932, and consisted of five *dayanim*, under the leadership of Rev. Adler, a local *mohel* and *shochet*. Joseph E. Stone (the 'leading light' of both Stone's *Shul* and *Machzikei HaDas*) cited the Talmud and *Shulchan Aruch* in defence of the rebel court's establishment. Although Brodie and Danglow dismissed the body's rulings as 'insignificant' or 'irresponsible', its creation represented a direct criticism of the Melbourne rabbinate and, thus, an open challenge to the status quo. The North Carlton *Beth Din* came into its own five years later when Gurewicz assumed its leadership. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 4 August and 18 August 1932; Rosenbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
57. Interview with Harry Mond.
58. Joseph Aron and Judy Arndt, *The Enduring Remnant: the first 150 years of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, 1841–1991*, Melbourne, 1992, p. 319.
59. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 5 August 1937; 29 September 1938.
60. Rosenbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
61. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 28 October 1937; L.M. Goldman, Secretary of MHC, Letter to Rabbi Jacob Danglow, 16 June 1937; Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz, Telegram to Rabbi Danglow, 6 September 1937. Danglow Papers, LaTrobe Library, ms.9352.
62. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 2 September 1937.
63. *Ibid.*, 21 October 1937; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 24 May 1938.
64. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 8 September and 15 September 1938; *Australian Jewish News*, 23 September 1938.
65. For full details of the controversy, see *Australian Jewish News*, 23 September, 30 September and 7 October 1938; *Australian Jewish Herald*, 9 September 1937; 8 September, 15 September and 23 September 1938.
66. Mendel Slonim articulated northern sentiment when he condemned the audacity of St. Kilda and MHC in daring to sit in judgment on 'a Rabbi of such international standing.' *Australian Jewish News*, 23 September 1938.
67. When Rapaport was appointed in 1952, an attempt was made to effect a meeting between the two men and, hopefully, bring about amalgamation of the two *Batei Din*. However, conflict between the two over *shechita* (and, possibly, Rapaport's personality) militated against any such *rapprochement*. Carlton Congregation Minutes, 14 September 1952; Suzanne Rutland, 'The History of Australian Jewry, 1945–1960', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Department of History, University of Sydney, 1991, p. 241.

68. Rutland, *ibid.*, pp. 240–1; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 10 May and 25 October 1950; 15 January 1951.
69. Gurewicz's blindness did not hamper his leading worship or preaching as he knew the services (including those for the Days of Awe) by heart. However, by the early 1950s, his health had deteriorated so badly that he was no longer capable of fulfilling his duties. Interview with Leon Freedman; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 30 August 1953.
70. These replacements included Moshe Kantor, who had previously worked as a teacher for the Brunswick *Talmud Torah* and later helped found the Caulfield *Beth Hamedrash*, and S. Althaus, one of a group of Lubavitcher *Chassidim* who came to Australia in 1949. Carlton Congregation Minutes, 10 November 1946; 28 April 1949; 10 September 1950; *Australian Jewish Herald*, 12 September 1947.
71. Executive Council of Australia Jewry (ECAJ) Synagogue Survey, 1958. AJHS Archives, Sydney; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 26 August 1946; 19 September 1948; Interview with Rita Kras and Faye Wompan.
72. Carlton Congregation Minutes, 14 September 1952. Friday evening services had been discontinued by 1957. See Carlton United Hebrew Congregation, *45th Annual Report*, 1958.
73. David Rechter notes that upwardly mobile Carlton Jews typically progressed from rented accommodation in the more 'down market' southern streets (south of Princes Street) to more prestigious bought accommodation in the suburb's north (below Park Street), and from there across the Yarra. Rechter, *op. cit.*, p. 21. In its heyday, the Carlton community's residential 'core' was around the northern ends of Rathdowne and Drummond Streets (some walking distance from Palmerston Street).
74. ECAJ Survey; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 23 September 1951. Throughout its history, economic and attendance pressures forced CUHC to consider mergers with East Melbourne and the *Talmud Torah Hascola*. Ultimately each bid failed because the institutions preferred to retain their autonomy. See Carlton Congregation Minutes, 31 June 1932; 24 May 1938; 25 November 1945; 28 April 1946; 10 March 1959; *Australian Jewish Herald*, 1 September and 15 September 1932.
75. ECAJ Survey; *Australian Jewish News*, 5 December and 19 December 1958.
76. Interview with Deborah (Balberyski) Zimmerman, 10 May 1993; interview with Leon Freedman; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 30 May 1957; 22 October 1958.
77. *Australian Jewish Herald*, 13 February 1959; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 17 November 1959; 18 May 1960; 26 November 1961; interview with Deborah Zimmerman.
78. Carlton United Hebrew Congregation, 46–48th Annual Report, 1959–61. The *Talmud Torah*'s headmaster was Rabbi J. Kraucz of the Montefiore Homes *Beth HaKnesseth* Congregation.
79. Carlton United Hebrew Congregation, 46–48th and 49–50th Annual Reports, 1959–61, 1962–63. Mendel Balberyski came to Melbourne from Vilna in the late 1940s. Unable to use his professional training as a chemist, he worked for some time at the Victoria Market, and then as a bookseller in Carlton (later St. Kilda). He died in 1966. Interview with Deborah Zimmerman.
80. Information from Abe Kleiman, 26 July 1992; Carlton Congregation Papers (Courtesy of Abe Kleiman).
81. *Ibid.*
82. *Ibid.*; *Melbourne Herald*, 1 July 1968.
83. Information from Abe Kleiman; Carlton Congregation Minutes, 13 December 1970.
84. The North Eastern Jewish Centre in Doncaster served a sizeable number of old 'Carlton boys' who expressed a keen desire to perpetuate CUHC's name and traditions. Accordingly, the foundation stone, seats and *Sifrei Torah* were also donated to the NEJC. Similarly, CUHC elected to endow the *Yeshivah Gedolah* because the college would provide rabbis, *shochtim*, teachers and youth leaders for Australian Jewry. Interview with Leon Freedman; Carlton Congregation Papers.
85. Hilary L. Rubinstein, *The Jews in Australia: a Thematic History from 1788 to the Present*, vol. 1, Melbourne, 1991, p. 259.
86. For alternate assessments of the varying levels of observance which characterised Carlton Jewry (specifically, between the wars), see Rosenbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 30–5; and 'The Carlton Collection', a series of interviews with former Carlton Jews, conducted by the Department of History, University of Melbourne, 1984.

NORTH CARLTON: MY NATION STATE

Miriam Kuna

Living in North Carlton before 1939 was like being part of a highly centralised mini-nation state, with boundaries stretching east to the provinces of Nicholson Street with its cable tram, west to the very *goyische* Princes Park and its organised Saturday afternoon sport, and tailing off in the north at Park Street, where our close friends Noyech and Gitl Kowadlo lived on the border of the railway line and the foreign country of Brunswick. The southern frontier of our territory was the Melbourne General Cemetery, where some of us (never me) used to go and remove flowers from the graves and bring them home hidden in bloomers or up the fronts of tunics. Violets were easy but lilies presented a problem, as did the glass jars they came in.

On the corner of Brunswick Road and Lygon Street stood my father's knitwear factory, Brilliant Knitting Mills, purpose-built and proud and productive of Jacquard jumpers and woollen socks with a made-in-Australia tag on them, a rarity in those days when most manufactured goods were imported from England, usually known as 'the old country'. A block away was our roomy Edwardian house at 643 Lygon Street, on the corner of Holtom Street. Dad always liked corner positions: more space and light, better aspect, and less interference from neighbours. Nearby was the RSL hall where I thought all the wars were fought, and the kindergarten, where we hunted for Easter eggs in the vast grounds and slept away the afternoons on green mats rolled out on the floor.

Everyone we knew lived within walking distance — the Lipshuts, the Plotkins, the Sniders, Houseys and Chapmans. Next door were the Bursteins; across the road were the Rothbergs, the Pushetts, Lasicas, and Hillers, the Grosses and the Berkovs. The Carricks lived on the other corner of Holtom and Lygon Streets, and Josie the dressmaker who made all my clothes to measure for as long as I could remember, lived diagonally opposite, next door to the factory which burnt down in the middle of the night and made a spectacle which none of us will ever forget.

Mum didn't like it at all when Fetters built their enormous factory directly opposite us in Lygon Street. This was one of the reasons we eventually moved upmarket to Caulfield, where there were no factory whistles and no overbearing yellow stuccoed factory facades to spoil the outlook from the front verandah.

Our best friends the Hoffmans lived next door to firstly the Zents and then the Cebons in semi-detached houses with minuscule bay windows, and near them, on the corner of Garton Street and Holtom Street lived Rose and Alick Mushin, a stone's throw from the Renards and Bar Cohens in their quarter share of a very non-Jewish-looking Victorian house dripping with iron lace, and overlooking the very un-Jewish cricket and football of Princes Park.

My aunt and uncle, Sutch and Israel Sher, lived in a prosperous-looking house similar to ours on the corner of Park Street and Sydney Road, a little off the beaten track because Auntie Sutch was one of Dad's six artistic sisters and always liked to do things a little differently. Uncle Israel, my favourite uncle, manufactured Holsmor suitcases in Bouverie Street, Carlton, and did very well out of them, so that a friendly rivalry-cum-togetherness existed between my auntie and my mother in domestic issues.

When Mum chose Edward Billson to be her architect for her new house in Caulfield, Auntie Sutch asked him to design her new house in Armadale. When Mum

and Dad built a new house in Aspendale, Auntie and Uncle bought the one we had rented for the previous ten Christmases. When Dad bought a new Buick (navy blue) in 1938, Uncle bought one too, a later model, with narrower bars in the front grille.

And when the Shers went to Japan in 1936, the Brilliants went to Europe in 1937. When the Brilliants went to Europe in 1937, the Shers joined them in Paris and went to America with them to visit more aunts in New York.

And when an infantile paralysis epidemic broke out late in 1937, we Brilliant and Sher children were billeted with friends in a kind of medical house arrest, seeing no-one and confined to barracks until our parents were finished with their travelling and ready to come home and rescue us. But overseas tripping was rare then, and a sure mark of social superiority, and so we took it for granted that there was no need for our parents to return until they were ready, epidemic or no epidemic.

It goes without saying that our parents weren't always prosperous. Like just about everyone else, Mum and Dad arrived in Melbourne broke, optimistic, and carefree. They left Lodz in 1913. At first Dad worked with his friends Shloyma (Sammy) Wynn, Eli Wynn, and uncle Israel in a cork factory as this was a trade Dad knew from home as his father was in corks. Mum, who was good at sewing, worked as a machinist for twenty-five shillings a week, dreaming desperately of home and her family, and waiting for the war to end so she could return to Lodz and be with her family of many siblings. But a trip home in 1923, alone with my three-year-old sister, cured her of all homesickness. Henceforth she was to be totally devoted to Australia.

Our house was called *Migdalor*, Hebrew for 'tower of light'. For me it was not only a tower of light but also the centre of the world. Anyone who lived outside the pale, which for us was Pigdon, MacIlwraith, Wilson and Arnold Streets, was regarded by us as a species of foreigner. The streets we disliked most were Nicholson, Drummond and Rathdowne Streets; McPherson Street was the dividing line between north and south, and anyone who lived in the alien territories was definitely suspect even if they were Jewish, and sometimes especially if they were Jewish, and made the mistake of coming from Bialystok or Cracow or somewhere that wasn't Lodz. Not that we actually disliked the inhabitants of these inferior areas — it was just that we felt they should know their place, particularly if they'd made the mistake of going to second-rate schools such as Lee Street or Faraday Street State, when everybody knew that the only school that mattered was Princes Hill.

In this 'them' and 'us' society, the 'us' consisted of my family, their friends, and my relatives, some of whom were of course more desirable than others, and all of whom came from Poland. To this day, I can't for the life of me imagine what it would be like to have a parent who spoke with the same accent as me and didn't regard lamingtons, sausage rolls and fish-and-chips as foreign foods. And I still wish Mum hadn't referred to everything non-Jewish I liked as 'rubbish'.

Our childhood Mecca was Vicki's corner shop, diagonally opposite the big gabled house of Dr. Ashkenasy, who seemed prosperous and burly and always wore double-breasted striped suits. Vicki sold any kind of 'rubbish' you could possibly want, but the best were white chocolate frogs, white knights, raspberries, licorice blocks and black cats, which we used to take into our exams for luck. The lollies were six a penny (three a halfpenny) and frogs a penny each. Actually, a penny was quite a popular price point — you could get a small bar of Nestle's milk chocolate for a penny, or a small ice cream cone, or a licorice strap. When malted milks went up to fourpence we nearly died of shock. Once my need for 'rubbish' was so great that I stole a penny out of my Monday morning's bank money (we always put

money into our State Savings Bank account during morning class, to encourage us in financial management and to replenish the State's depression-emptied coffers) and bought six raspberries. Mum was furious when she found out. There was the evidence smack bang in my passbook, with no attempt at concealment; eleven-pence paid in, and not a shilling, and a daughter who'd stuffed herself full of 'rubbish' after she'd cleaned her teeth, and didn't even feel guilty about what she'd done.

Business was, of course, a major activity for my father and his friends. The Lasicas, Hoffmans, Grosses, Cebons, Mushins, Renards, Warhafts and Shers all did well and were proud of their achievements, their increasingly comfortable homes, and their well-dressed wives. They bought expensive cars and enjoyed owning them. Women didn't drive, of course — that was strictly men's business — but that didn't stop ours from being a two car family. Dad loved his little Fiat convertible with the dickie seats in the back, and kept the Buick for more formal occasions. Unfortunately, however, the Fiat couldn't make it up steep hills, especially with four or five of us jammed in the dickie seat, so we always had to pile out and push it up the Devil's Elbow en route to Sherbrooke Forest.

Although women didn't drive cars or own cheque books or go out alone, they often helped their menfolk in their businesses. Chavele Wynn helped her husband Shloyma (Sammy), of Wynvale wines, to run their wine shop in Bourke Street, which later became the Florentino Restaurant. Then there was my Auntie Nacha, who had a stall at Victoria Market together with my Uncle Meyer, and Mrs. White, who sold us stockings at home and arranged invisible mending, and Manka Gust who worked with her husband Itzhak, and Isa Renard, a Paris-trained seamstress, who was in business with her husband Mundak.

Some women were prominent in their own right — my mother, Rose Brilliant, who was president of the Kadimah, and my aunts Fredda and Ruth Brilliant, who sculpted and acted and got written up in the *Herald*, with pictures, and finally ran away from Melbourne with Mr. Newmark because they couldn't stand the provincialism and materialism, even then.

And there was Rachel Holzer, the actress, Isa's sister, and Ruth Bergner, the dancer, and Rose Mushin who became an Academic at Melbourne University, and Rivkah Bar Cohen who went back to Palestine after her husband's death from a heart attack in 1936, and became a teacher of English in Tel Aviv. And then, Mrs. Newmark, not to be outdone by her husband's achievements, became the first woman in our community to drive a car, a baby Austin. Strictly speaking, however, Mrs. Newmark was not one of us, owing to the fact that she lived in Fairfield, but we liked her a lot nonetheless, and besides, she gave very good garden parties with a vast assortment of cakes and let us eat as many as we liked.

Mostly, however, I remember the *Yiddishe* wives of North Carlton in their roles of mothers-who-always-did-the-right-thing and wives-who-were-always-there. Loyalty — personal, family, tribal — counted for much more than individual ego-directed activity. Every wife cooked a big meal for her family at night — three courses minimum, soup, main course, and dessert, and baked for afternoon tea on Sunday. She slaved for a week preparing for a family get-together or for a little party with a few friends and a million things to eat. Sometimes she had paid help; or even a live-in housekeeper and a woman once a week to do 'the heavy work', and she usually had a gardener because Jewish husbands weren't used to gardening. The house was always in a state of utmost cleanliness, the silver polished, the washing brought in before it rained, the mending done in plenty of time.

Yet those were the days before rubber gloves and washing machines and Mix-

masters and powdered soap, let alone detergent. You boiled up the water in the copper, grated your Velvet soap, starched and ironed the sheets and pillowslips and your husband's shirts, and never allowed anyone in the house until the beds were made and the piano dusted. Moreover, you never made a bed without putting on the bedspread. Omissions of this kind were tantamount to a public avowal of domestic ineptitude, as damning as any loss of moral virtue or neglect of wifely duties.

The pay-off for all this devotion lay in the recognition given to the roles of wifehood, motherhood, hospitality-provider, and homemaker, and to the inalienable right of every woman to grow older and fatter without feeling guilty or unloved. Women felt secure because their roles were so clearly defined — there was a kind of unwritten and all-embracing social contract which guaranteed a lifelong sense of fulfilment and job satisfaction in return for services rendered.

However, despite the value placed on family life, some people did live as singles. My Auntie Chana, an invalid crippled by arthritis, lived in a room close to the Kadimah, the *Yiddishe* Cultural Institute, about four blocks away from our house in Lygon Street. Every Friday my mother would send me up the street with a white enamel container with a heatproof black handle and a loosely fitting lid, full of hot chicken soup and *lokshen* (noodles) and boiled wings and breasts and vegetables for my bedridden aunt whom I loved so much, and my aunt would eat alone in her bedroom, helpless and deprived of the love she needed so much.

Auntie Chana died in 1939, while I was in Fairfield Hospital for a seven-week encounter with scarlet fever, caught, so we thought, in the City Baths pool during School Sport. So much for compulsory sport, the result of which was my first experience of correspondence school and a twenty-bed ward and a world I had thought ceased to exist with Charles Dickens, a world in which patients had less value as individuals than even supermarket customers today.

Another boarding house was run by Mrs. Wirr, next door to my Uncle Loozer, who dealt in socks and whose single-fronted terrace in Lygon Street was filled with merchandise and rising damp and a million cats. The cats used to lie all over the hessian sacks of merchandise stored under cover in the back yard, and looked rather like a mass of blowflies let loose over a piece of old meat.

Uncle Loozer's wife, my great-auntie Ratza, who was really my mother's aunt on her mother's side, used to make *chulent* [a meat dish-in-one], which she regarded as a delicacy — why, I could never for the life of me understand. Even the smell made me sick. However, Auntie Ratza also gave us tinned peaches and jelly for dessert, served on what seemed to be rather common glass saucers, a sort of Myer's Bargain Basement special, and used no doubt for feeding the cats once we had gone. But as I adored everything that SPC ever produced, being denied tinned food at home owing to my mother's disdain of factory-made products, I was happy to overlook the horror of the *chulent*, thankful to escape the high-class and nutritious rhubarb sponge, bread-and-butter custard, and pudding with maple syrup, and stewed apple flavoured with passionfruit that were Mum's specialities.

For in those days instant food and take-aways were unheard of, except for pies, pasties, sausage rolls and fish-and-chips. Lunch was never bought; you made your sandwiches the night before and took them to work or to school wrapped up in greaseproof paper and a brown paper bag saved from the shopping. I don't think my father ever went out for lunch in his life: if he did, we didn't know about it.

The lunch in the brown paper bag was as much an institution as the Buick and Mum's American-bought mink coat and the book of tram concession tickets. Once Dad held up the traffic at the intersection of Swanston and Flinders Streets for the

duration of a whole green light while he searched for his book of tickets. He was dropping me off so I could catch the Swanston Street tram for a single city section. 'You see what I mean?' he said, amidst a cacophony of irate drivers. 'Give that to the conductor. Why should you waste a halfpenny when you can pay with a concession ticket? It's a crime to charge twopence for such a short distance.'

Anyway, getting back to Mrs. Wirr, whom I liked a lot as she was always kind and had a jolly manner and a hearty, definite voice: Mrs. Wirr had a spare room entirely devoted to copies of the *Women's Weekly*, saved for years and piled up from floor to ceiling in an atmosphere of gloomy and neglected glory. I spent hours there in the semi-dark with Mandrake and Narda and Lothar and Wep and the latest fashions from Paris and household hints and short story after short story after short story.

The air was heavy with the fragrance of jasmine and a soft breeze whispered in the pines, and the setting sun cast golden shadows on Rosita's silken brown hair. Paling beneath his tan, Hal drew Rosita towards him, his heart beating with an intensity he had never hitherto experienced.

'Dearest', he whispered, his voice barely audible in the soft and balmy air. 'Dearest, will you — dare I ask you to be my wife? Could you ever learn to love me?' And as his lips met hers, and . . .

Bliss, perfect bliss. Would that that 'and . . .' had gone on for ever. The joys of true romance, to be equalled only by the *Girls' Crystal*, or *True Confessions*, or a novel from the Myer Lending Library or the library down the street, or the *Girls' Own Annual*.

The *Girls' Crystal* came out weekly at threepence a copy and was frowned upon by my parents as another form of 'rubbish', and my sister was prevailed upon to bribe me not to read it. Influenced by this concern for my moral integrity and intimidated by the strength of the forces aligned against me, I promised to keep away from this degrading literature. Stupidly, I could not bring myself to accept the offered bribe, so lost out on both counts, foregoing the bribe money as well as *Crystal* magic. It was evident, however, that God, or the Devil, was with me, because someone had left a copy of *Truth* down the beach at Aspendale, and there was a wonderful story in it, with pictures, about an all-night beach party during the course of which two girls went swimming in their underwear, and later on there was dancing on the beach. And when interviewed about how they felt about stripping off, the girls said 'We only wish we'd worn our best scanties. The pants we had on were awful.' Enthralling stuff and very different from the *Girls' Crystal*.

At Mrs. Wirr's house I gave lessons in Yiddish to a male boarder. (Why my mother permitted this I will never know.) I think his interest in me was anatomical rather than cultural, despite the fact that I had just turned eight and was very undeveloped for my age. I drew pictures of the Hebrew alphabet for him, and he drew pictures of stick figures copulating for me. Being as yet untutored in the ways of the world, I understood his pictures less than I did my own. But as he seemed a nice enough person, and I had always been conditioned to please my elders and betters, I did not complain about his being more interested in his own activities than in mine.

My own teacher in Yiddish was Mr. Giligich, co-headmaster of a Jewish school in Riga. In his tiny dining room with its small corner window I studied Jewish history and literature and vocabulary and syntax and became familiar with some of the works of Peretz, Scholem Asch, and Sholem Aleichem. The lessons cost £1 an hour, but seemed to be a good investment in prestige all round, as Mr. Giligich said I was his star pupil, and my parents were proud of their *Yiddishe* literate daughter, even though I was learning from a Litvak, and was taught to say *dos*, not *dus*, and *vos*, not *vus*, and didn't enunciate my vowels in the manner of my parents and their friends.

I also learned Yiddish from Mr. Janovitch, tall, balding and overweight, and smelling a little in his dark brown suit of fried food and a badly ventilated wardrobe. Mr. Janovitch taught us on Sunday mornings in the upstairs room of the Kadimah, which was for us one of the capitals of the world, even though the toilets smelled a bit, and there was always an unstylish mixture of domestic and intellectual activities. Portraits of all the past presidents, serious-looking men with high collars and studied gazes, hung in the library and the hall; my father was there, and my uncle, and both Wynns, and probably later on my mother, unusual as it was for a woman to hold office along with the men.

There were lots of plays and concerts and speakers in the main hall at the Kadimah, and numerous readings and political discussions and arguments for and against the establishment of a Jewish state. There was a great deal of socialist talk and communist sympathising, but very little religion, for the Jews of the Kadimah were humanist and sociologically oriented rather than spiritual. Their Jewishness was cultural and closely connected with the living of life here and now. They tried for the best of both worlds, enjoying the comfort, freedom and fair play of Australian Anglo-Celtic society, enriched by the habits and attitudes of the Jewish life in Poland they had left behind for ever, but the emphasis was consistently secular. I suppose some Jews in North Carlton retained their religious affiliations, but my family and their circle certainly didn't. Even my uncle, the Reverend Ephraim Kowadlo, seemed to me to be worldly and jolly rather than spiritual, and my father, despite his intensely religious upbringing and years of *yeshiva* education, rarely prayed in public here in Melbourne, though I know for a fact that he resorted to reciting the Psalms when at the dentist's.

The Kadimah held an annual picnic in the countryside close to Melbourne, rather in the manner of the traditional traders' annual holiday. This picnic was probably as close to being 'really Australian' as we Jews could get. We all piled into the back of a great furniture van, sitting on long wooden benches, in the manner of trade unionists going off on their annual picnic. We spent the day sitting around under trees, exploring the bush, drinking Marchant's lemonade and creamy soda, eating the piles of food prepared by the catering committee, having our pictures taken, participating in egg-and-spoon races, and generally feeling Jewish-rustic.

But what I liked best about the Kadimah was the annual bazaar. Preparations began months before the actual event. There was a great deal of meeting and arguing and discussing, and writing down of names, and making of lists. This highly animated preparation led to a collecting of everything that people no longer wanted and felt too guilty about throwing out unless it was for a good cause, and there was a general clean-out of the *Yiddishe* manufacturers in Flinders Lane, who felt compelled by their Jewish consciences to donate in spite of the protestations of their business 'vibes'.

The actual merchandise, when it was finally sorted out, priced, and presented to the public, was very exciting. It was a sort of illustrated guide to the factories and homes of Jewish Melbourne. All the chairs were taken out of the auditorium and stacked upstairs in our schoolroom, and in their place came tables piled high with every kind of artefact you could think of, much as I imagined the mediaeval fairs of France or Nijni Novgorod to be. You could buy stockings and laces and rolls of cloth, and hankies or jumpers and purses and slippers and combs and suitcases and skirts and trousers and cheap cotton dresses, and cakes, and kewpie dolls and colouring books, or garden hoses and bottles of wine and shoelaces and shaving cream, all for a tenth of the normal price, and for practically nothing if you hung around for long enough.

Afternoon tea was served on the stage by fat willing ladies in aprons who in their non-bazaar lives were all devoted mothers and cooperative wives. The tea service used was made in England and covered in gay orange and blue and green flowers, kept in its millions in the cupboards upstairs and inspected wonderingly by us during our Jewish-school playtime, when we had ten minutes' freedom from Mr. Janovitch's herring-flavoured teaching. I don't know the circumstances of that never-ending set of china, but it must have been a good buy from somewhere or other, because there was so much of it, and my mother and her friends all had identical sets, so that eating at our friends' places offered no surprises crockery-wise.

Getting back to the bazaar: for sixpence (or was it a shilling?) you could have a cup of tea and a choice of *honig lekach* (honey-cake) or date rolls or shortbread or sponge cake with jam and cream, served up to you on the bustling stage with the good-natured furore of the market place spread out before you in the auditorium, and everybody smiling and happy and knowing who you were and calling you by name and saying how you had grown and what a credit you were to your parents and how nice it was that you understood a little Yiddish so you could remain one of us and not become completely a part of the big alien *goyishe* world outside.

I suppose that if North Carlton were to be regarded as a state in miniature, then tea drinking would surely have to be ranked as a national activity. Social life seemed to revolve around the ubiquitous cup of tea and its associated paraphernalia — the teapot, the tea cosy, the cork mat to prevent heat marks on the table, the strainer, the slices of lemon, the jug of milk, the loaf sugar, the plates of savouries and small cakes and biscuits always served on handmade lace doyleys, the larger cake lording it over the others by being served whole and uncut and usually on a comport. And of course, our national catchcry: 'Shall I put the kettle on and make a cup of tea?'

We always had our cups of tea at the dining room table, never in the sitting room, and never at a side table. For this was the occasion for true social intercourse among people who enjoyed each other's company and gave repartee as good as they got, and for this they needed to sit upright at a proper table.

In addition to the perpetual dropping-in unannounced for morning tea, afternoon tea, or simply for a cup of tea after tea (never dinner), we went to each other's places for meals, always spontaneously, and rarely arranged in advance. There was an abundance of goodwill, a plenitude of welcomes. We sought each other's company not to impress but for the pleasure and stimulus of being together. Thus the planned formal dinner party hardly existed, if at all. We asked people 'over for the evening', so they arrived a little after eight p.m., had supper around ten, and left about eleven.

It was taken for granted that hospitality was always available, and on a generous scale, both on a personal and a gastronomic level. It was a matter of pride for the inviter to provide everything — food that was always fresh and good tasting and plentiful, served on the best china, on the best cloth, usually hand-embroidered by the lady of the house, with matching serviettes and hand-crocheted doyleys, the house dusted and polished and swept and all the ornaments in their proper places, and vases full of flowers from the garden, with the water changed and all the dead leaves removed.

And afterwards everyone helped with the washing up, and the gossip flowed thick and fast around the soapsuds and the tea towels and the shaking of the crumbs off the cloth and the sweeping of the kitchen floor and the removal of dining room crumbs with the Ewbank carpet sweeper. And when all the cleaning up was done, it

was time again to put the kettle on for yet another cup of tea, another piece of cake and another *shmiess* (chat). People thought it natural to get fatter and slower as they got older. Age was not yet regarded as a crime, and slenderness had not yet become the tyrant of womankind. Maturity was still regarded as an asset rather than a liability, and our models were the French film stars such as Danielle Darrieux and Martine Carol who seemed experienced and super-sophisticated, and to whom the perfection of youth was a sign of ignorance of the true meaning of life.

Sometimes there were parties that went on until dawn, often fancy dress affairs, with lots of laughing and singing, and on Sundays there were drives to the country — Sherbrooke and Sassafra, the Maroondah Dam, the Great Dividing Range, Woodend, Phillip Island. School holidays were spent with our mothers at Warburton, Woori Yallock, Launching Place, Marysville, and Somerleigh Lodge and Gracedale House at Healesville, and Government Cottage at Mount Macedon.

Every summer we rented houses at Aspendale. All the friends were there — the Hoffmans, the Cebons, the Shers, the Kowadlos, and the Mushins, who stayed at a rambling place called *Bohemia*. Those who didn't live at Aspendale for the summer came out for visits in the weekends, so there were more cups of tea by the thousand and washing up that never stopped.

Eventually my parents built their own holiday house at 52 Point Nepean Road just after the beginning of World War Two. Whereupon my Auntie Sutch, not to be outdone, promptly prevailed upon Uncle Israel to buy the house we'd been renting for the last few Christmases at 5 Gladstone Avenue. In those days Aspendale was regarded as a true holiday place. Queensland had hardly been heard of and Surfers Paradise was still nothing more than a few old timber houses on stilts and a little deserted street called Cavill Avenue. Very few people went overseas, and certainly not from North Carlton. If they were adventurous, they travelled as far afield as Queenscliff or Frankston, and a couple of aunts were keen in Hepburn Springs because of the waters.

What else is there to say? That we subscribed eagerly to the *Jewish News* even then, and the arrival of the postman on Friday afternoon with the little bundle of papers in English and Yiddish was a major event for all of us? We revelled in the births and deaths and gossip columns, and submitted contributions to the children's pages as we did to 'Corinella' in the *Sun* and the children's sections in the *Argus* and the *Herald*, intensely proud of our green certificates (four points), red certificates (three points), and stoically acceptive of blue (two points only).

That lounge rooms all had picture rails and wirelesses and no one had ever heard of security systems, en-suites, central heating, or long playing records? That you still wound up gramophones and cranked up cars, that hardly anyone had wall-to-wall carpet and it took six weeks to get to Europe, that penicillin hadn't been discovered and nylon didn't exist? That you kept your food in an ice chest and you had to iron everything you washed if you wanted to get rid of the creases, and did your shopping at Victoria Market or had it delivered by the local butcher, fruiterer, or grocer? That the baker and milkman called every day, that supermarkets and boutiques and shopping malls were still unknown, and a trip into town was a special event? That all the emporiums — Myer, Buckley, Georges, Hicks Atkinson, Ball and Welch, the Mutual Store and Foy and Gibson gave you goods on approval and delivered and picked them up free of charge, and took pride and delight in wrapping things up in piles of tissue and firm brown paper and tying up their parcels in smooth obedient string with little handles for our comfort?

Should I say that Krimper and Prager hadn't been heard of and Berkovitz was the 'in' furniture man, that Sussan and Sportscraft were still infant almost one-man

businesses run by their founders, whom I knew as Mr. Gandel and Mr. Bardas, and that practically all imported goods came from England, still known to the majority of Australians as 'home'? Should I also mention that we used to go to the Florentino for tea and have a three course meal for two-and-six, including a half bottle of Sauterne? The owners, Shloyma and Chavele Wynn, were close friends of my parents and the restaurant had a lot of style, even then. And sometimes we ate *en famille* at Cohen's *Yiddishe* restaurant in Carlton, or at Chung Wah's, in Heffernan Lane, central city, and we used to get into the Carlton Theatre for nothing because Dad owned it. That we learned dancing from Madame Saranova (in private life the wife of Jewish band-leader Harry Jacobs) on the eighth floor of a building directly opposite Myer in Bourke Street, and piano from Miss Fishelsohn, Ada Freeman, and Eric Clapham, Miss Freeman's protégé? That the more ambitious and talented of us graduated to learning ballet from Madame Borovansky herself and piano from Jascha Spivakovsky, higher than which no Jewish mother dared at that time to aim? That Princes Hill State School suffered from over-large classes, too much use of the strap, and a total lack of understanding of the needs of the children with whom it was entrusted? That the cold impersonality of the place, with its indifferent teachers and bleak school yard and primitive shelter sheds like human cattle pens, scarred us for life, and did nothing to breach the gap between the two societies of home and the outside world?

I guess what I remember most fondly from those soulless school years was the singing of 'Do you know the land where the wattle grows?', sung to the tune of 'John Peel' as we sat on the floor of the hall, with sunshine pouring in all around us. And the maypole and those wonderful weaving dances when we made such complex patterns to the music of 'Come Lasses and Lads'. Every Monday morning the whole school assembled in the yard and we took the oath of loyalty in unison: 'I love God and my country, I honour the King, and cheerfully obey my parents, teachers, and the laws'. Then up would go the flag as we watched in breathless brainwashed silence, and, puffed up with pride, the drummer would begin his all-important drum roll. Then, bang, we exploded into the magnificence of 'God Save the King'. Who cared about the Depression while the King still reigned and we could be part of his domain? What did a few chilblains and freezing feet matter as long as we were associated by implication with Buckingham Palace?

Every Empire Day, on May 24th, there was another celebration of the Empire on which the sun never set. We sang 'Land of Hope and Glory' and listened to speeches about the greatness of our English heritage, and indeed about the greatness of England itself, with never a mention of Australia, let alone the people who actually lived in it, or even of peace as being a more desirable state than war. When the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester came to Melbourne in 1934, we all dressed up in crinolines and bonnets and long pants with frills made of pink crepe paper, and morning suits with top hats, and danced the *gavotte* on the Melbourne Cricket Ground with scores of thousands of schoolchildren from all over Victoria. My partner was Gideon Givoni, and I have the picture to prove it.

And on Anzac Day, our headmaster, Mr. Milreagh, looking both dapper and dignified in his best double-breasted pin-striped suit, his moustached Errol Flynnish face suitably solemn, stood on a dais in the yard next to the flag at half mast, while the school trumpeter played 'The Last Post' and we observed our minute's silence — or maybe that was for Armistice Day. Anyway, on Anzac Day, the highlight of the programme was the pseudo-military march past, with Mr. Milreagh standing-in for the High Command and all the children whose fathers had been to the war marching proudly round the yard with their fathers' medals pinned smugly on their breasts. My father was never in the war (that was one of the reasons he had

come to Australia, to avoid military service and unpleasant activities such as fighting) but my friend Hymie Hoffman, whose father had been gassed in 1915 and had a bad stomach the rest of his life as a consequence, marched to glory with all the pride of General Monash himself.

For in spite of being so far away from Europe, war, the threat of war, and the commemoration of it, was always with us. Then as Hitler became more powerful, we boycotted all German goods, and Mum gave away all her German books and forbade me to take German as a subject at school, even though she herself had gone to a German school in Lodz. I even returned a present my father had brought me from one of his business trips to Adelaide, a gorgeous doll with all the blonde and blue-eyed ethnic yuppiness Hitler ever dreamed of, but with the dreaded 'Made in Germany' stamped smack between her legs. Yet we were permitted to keep playing our Beethoven sonatas and Bach preludes and fugues and my aunts kept singing their Schubert *lieder* and their Brahms lullabies, and Mum hung on to her Bechstein piano and Dad kept his Edison gramophone record of 'Wann die Schwalben Heimwarz Flichen'. The inconsistency worried me even then.

And the refugees kept arriving from Germany and Austria, with their long belted overcoats and suede shoes and leather briefcases and their guttural voices, and we started hearing German spoken as well as Polish and Yiddish, and learned about a whole new culture. Our Viennese friend, Elsie Pollack, introduced me to the beauty of the German language and to Goethe and Heine as well as to the Viennese sense of humour.

So — more confusion. On the one hand, the Germans were bad, bad, bad; and on the other, they seemed to have a monopoly of great music, poetry, science and philosophy, not to mention Marx and Engels and Theodor Herzl and the Bauhaus and a close connection with our own Royal Family. So accustomed did I become to the idea that all contemporary Germans and Austrians were Jewish, that it was not until after the war that I realised the truth — you didn't have to be Jewish to be German.

How Hitler fitted into this misconception I really don't know. All I can say is that the German-speaking 'reffos' made an enormous impact on our lives here in Melbourne. This was a new urban strain of Jews, cultured, educated, more emancipated than their Polish counterparts. Most were highly competent professionals and business people, and so had already attained the social status which our parents could only hope for in their children. These Jews spoke no Yiddish, and regarded us Yiddishists as provincial, small-town, over-emotional, manipulative, too dependent on each other, and lacking in style and dignity. If it hadn't been for Hitler, they would never have descended to associating with us.

Thus our community became at once enriched and further divided. The territorial 'them' and 'us' of Carlton and North Carlton expanded to include a German-speaking 'them' and a Polish Yiddish-speaking 'us', a colder, more austere and dignified and professional 'them' and a noisy showy excitable money-loving 'us'. These new divisions were superimposed on the existing strains of educated and ignorant, city versus small town versus village, successful entrepreneur versus business no-hoper, Zionist versus Bundist, Orthodox versus Reformed, religious versus agnostic, agnostic versus atheist, capitalist versus socialist, communist versus everyone. Although of course most of the Germanic arrivals tended to live south of the Yarra round East St. Kilda rather than in Polish-dominated North Carlton, because they didn't care for our socialist and humanist tendencies, and preferred a middle-of-the-road political conformism and a Reformed religion to our adherence to cultural Polish Yiddish traditionalism.

So now we had the Germans with their sense of achievement and *Kultur* looking down on the Austrians with their chic and tradition of Hapsburg greatness. The Austrians in turn looked down on the Poles and the Hungarians and the Rumanians and the Czechs, and the Czechs looked down on the Slovaks, and to complicate matters there were the Litvaks and a smattering of new arrivals from Palestine who had come originally from all over the place. Yet the strange thing was that the non-Jewish community, the *goyim*, or the English as we called them, lumped all Jews together as one strangely indivisible force, irrevocably bonded by this mysterious power that ensured Jewish strength and survival against seemingly overwhelming odds. They couldn't understand how this supposedly inferior group of people could have their own internal hierarchy, their own power struggles, their own elite, and their own no-hopers.

But getting back to the issues specific to North Carlton: as the children of the *Yiddishe* migrants from Poland started to grow up in the late 1930s and go to University High School, there were more complications — the problems of non-Jewish girlfriends and boyfriends, and the ruptures caused by affiliation with the Australian Communist Party, and the conflict with parents caused by this excess of political idealism on the part of the younger generation.

This move to the political Left was fanned by the popular front movements in Western Europe and the wars in Abyssinia and Spain, particularly the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War which had its own particular kind of tragic glamour. Russia, the only Communist country in the world, was seen as God, the only truly principled opponent of Fascism. The rationalising that occurred with the advent of the Soviet-Nazi pact was, of course, nothing short of political romancing.

Besides, it was not surprising that many of the younger generation became ardent Socialists and Communists, because they had grown up in an atmosphere of political idealism combined with material success, and so theorising was quite a comfortable non-risk activity. Many of the Carlton businessmen, brought up to regard themselves as social underdogs, were bound by conscience and a history of personal persecution to revolutionary movements as a matter of course. Thus they supported the Communist Party both morally and financially on emotional as much as rational grounds. In actual fact, their political sympathies were more often than not in direct opposition to their business interests, and if the ideal society for which they were supposedly working were by some stroke of good fortune to actually come about, then they would have lost all the material and social advantages accumulated during their years in Australia.

It was ironic that many of the North Carlton capitalists voted Labour while giving considerable sums of money to the Communist Party and paying their workers not a penny more than was necessary. They bought investments in real estate and pushed rents in properties they owned as high as they could, going to court to fight protesting tenants, and cheating on the government left, right and centre by avoiding taxation and selling 'on the black'. They rationalised these practices by using the Party argument that kindness in a capitalist society merely served to postpone the advent of the Revolution, that charity was therefore self-defeating, and you were actually helping the cause by making things as bad as possible for the workers in order to drive them into rebellion. And it naturally followed that the more you cheated the government the sooner you would bring about its downfall. Thus you had the best of both worlds, knowing full well that, as things stood, a real revolution was as far away from placid bland Australia as the moon, or Hitler himself.

So it was no wonder that those Jewish idealists with their political fantasies and

economic ambitions, produced children of principle who turned their backs on comfort and social standing and became Party functionaries for half the basic wage. There was no need to worry about money because parents always had plenty. If the pound notes didn't grow on trees, they certainly proliferated under the floorboards in designated hiding places, hidden from taxation inspectors and government record keepers. And to this day many Jews vote Labour as a matter of principle, and in direct contraindication of their own interests, and because they can't accept the philosophical implications of their profit-oriented activities.

The houses I knew in North Carlton are still there, mostly untouched. For some strange reason, the developers have passed them over. 643 Lygon Street remains unchanged, except that the cypress hedge has gone and they've installed a new kookaburra/gum-nut genre of letterbox which Mum wouldn't have liked at all. The stained glass window with its purple water-lilies is still there in the bathroom overlooking the Burstein's bedroom, and so is the outsized canary cage outside the back door, just as Dad had left it.

Dad's factory looks better than ever, with bigger windows and brand new signage, and the Kadimah has become a Greek cultural centre. The Lasicas' house has been sold for refurbishment as a Buddhist retreat, and Mrs. Wirr's house remains untouched, except for new railings and a coat of paint. Fetters' factory is being converted into luxury apartments, which Mum would have liked a lot.

But the Jews have moved on, mostly south of the Yarra. They're different now — settled, secure, proud, not ashamed of being Jewish, and many of them are returning to religion for security and a sense of identification; a kind of bulwark against assimilation. Today's Jews take many things for granted; the television has replaced tea drinking as the national activity, and public functions have replaced the old spontaneous get-togethers. My father's dream, a Jewish school and a Jewish radio programme, has eventuated many times over. People drink coffee rather than tea, and even the banks have changed beyond all recognition, not to mention interest rates and yields and foreign travel and the willingness of women to shut up and obey. The talk around the dining room table is different these days. Yes — the past is indeed another country, and although North Carlton still looks very much the same, it is a community bonded by memory only.



The Carlton United Hebrew Congregation's synagogue at 150 Palmerston Street, photographed in the 1960s with high-rise public housing jostling the traditional terraces. (A.J.H.S. Vic. Collection)

A SPY WITHIN: SECURITY, ZIONISM AND THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

Rodney Gouttman

The world of spooks, moles, and national paranoia is never more in evidence than in wartime. Protecting the body politic from national internal corrupting influences is concomitant with protecting it from without. Both aspects are engaged in with a passion. Hence, soon after Australia's Prime Minister, Robert Gordon Menzies, declared his nation at one with Great Britain's entrance into World War Two, the Australian War Cabinet tightened security surveillance throughout the continent. The ultimate responsibility for this was centralised in the Department of the Attorney General. Among its numerous contributing agencies were such bodies as Military Intelligence, state police forces, and pertinent civil authorities.¹ The categories of individuals or groups targeted were those deemed sympathetic to Australia's wartime enemies, those with pro-Communist leanings, and those whose views could in any way be construed as anti-British.

When Great Britain declared war against Germany in September 1939, Australia was also technically at war because of her failure to sign the Statute of Westminster of 1931. In this context, even a hint of an anti-British feeling was swept automatically into the un-Australian basket. Thus anyone who supported the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, which was something opposed by Great Britain, if only because it put the maintenance of her League of Nations Mandate there at great risk, was deemed to be potentially seditious.²

For this reason alone, Australia's small but scattered Jewish community attracted the concerned scrutiny of the Security Services. This position was exemplified in the surveillance of the minuscule and profoundly assimilated Adelaide Jewry. Here, as elsewhere, the principal focus was on anyone who supported either 'New Zionism' or Communism. What is astounding is that much of the data on the Adelaide Jewish community came from a spy from within its own ranks (whose identity remains a mystery.)

Much effort was exerted to ascertain the degree to which 'New Zionism' may have penetrated Jewish communities throughout Australia. Such knowledge about its presence was sought in South Australia in March 1942.³ The Australian Security Services' information about 'New Zionism', not unexpectedly, had come from British sources, and was specifically based on an article in the highly secret 'Overseas Security Bulletin'.⁴ According to this, 'New Zionists' or Revisionists, as the followers of the thoughts of Ze'ev Jabotinsky were called, were painted as the latest extreme element in Zionism and Jewish politics. These people sought a sovereign Jewish state in territory originally touted as Palestine, an area that included the current British Mandate plus the land appropriated by Great Britain to form Transjordan. Inimical to the British White Paper of 1939, Revisionists were reputed to have a ten year plan to establish in Palestine a political, economic, and social infrastructure that would accommodate one and a half million Jews, mainly from Europe, thereby rescuing them from a life that had become utterly unbearable under Nazism. This new breed of Zionists, unlike their older counterpart, had refused to accept the notion embodied in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 of merely

a Jewish homeland in Palestine, did not wish to conciliate the Arabs, and had vowed to meet Arab violence with violence. Indeed, the 'New Zionists' accused the old-guard Zionists under Chaim Weizmann of being too 'subservient to the wishes of the British Government, and indifferent to the fate of European Jewry.' The 'new' contended that a national home without the security of Jewish political sovereignty held no attraction. Against the wishes stated in the White Paper, the Revisionists were intent on encouraging and organising the illegal immigration to Palestine of desperate European Jews.

Perhaps the most unsubstantiated charge made against the 'New Zionists' which sealed their anti-Britishness, and established them as a possible fifth column, was one that declared that before and after the outbreak of the War, Revisionists' efforts to save Jews by sending them to Palestine were helped by the Gestapo.⁵ The implication was that some Jews who had managed to reach Australia prior to the war may have been similarly helped by Nazis, and thereby some positive payback was undoubtedly pending. Thus such Jews and their co-religionists had to be closely watched for any connection with terrorism both in Australia and Palestine.

While it was pointed out that the strength of 'New Zionism' was always difficult to assess, and its followers probably never large in numbers, there were branches of the Movement in London, New York Buenos Aires, and Tel Aviv. However, their political potency was restrained by internal dissension, each branch refusing the other the authority to control the Movement. Despite this, 'New Zionists' were said to be vocal in their campaign for a discreet Jewish army and for a Jewish National Committee formed from all factions of international Jewry. Their purpose was to mobilise finance and manpower worldwide for the Zionist cause, and to be a vociferous voice at any future Peace Conference.⁶ The reluctance of the British government to comment on the establishment of a Jewish army was the butt of 'New Zionist' criticism. Such *angst* was interpreted as a deliberate frustration of the Allied war effort, since the formation of such an army had the potential to antagonise the Arabs whom Great Britain had long favoured over their Zionist foes.⁷

While the 'New Zionism' was not currently a strong political force even in the Jewish world, it was said to have its hotheads in all countries. The article suggested that though Revisionists had temporarily suspended all their aggression against Great Britain, and had joined with her and her Allies against the common enemy, Nazi Germany, when this emergency was over they would most likely revert to their anti-British stand over Palestine.⁸

On 10 April 1942, Army Intelligence of Southern Command stationed in Adelaide notified its superiors that no branch of 'New Zionism' existed in South Australia.⁹ The Inspector of Police in Broken Hill indicated the same, though he added that several Jewish residents of the town had financially supported the 'Old Zionists' on some occasions.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the search for these possible subversives would continue via postal and telephonic monitoring.

An example of this was the interception of a missive from David Tabor, Chairman of the Youth Department of the Zionist Federation of Australia and New Zealand situated in Melbourne, to the Keren Kayemeth Le'Israel in Jerusalem, concerning the training of Zionist youth leaders in Australia. This letter noted that Zionism had been mainly promoted in the youth through HaBonim, a body foremostly situated in the 'foreign section of the community' recently arrived in Australia from Germany and Austria.¹¹ The Intelligence unit involved reported that the organisation to which Tabor was attached was a 'religious body of the Jewish persuasion' that had long been established in Australia, whose interest was in all forms of Jewish

welfare. And the details of David Tabor's immigration to Australia were also provided.¹²

A branch of the Revisionists was also discovered in Melbourne. It had been formed by Simon Roth, formerly Szaja Rotkopf, a Polish immigrant who while in London in 1923 had joined the 'New Zionists'. On his arrival in Melbourne in 1933, he had contacted 'Old Zionists', and had liaised with them until 1937 when he formed his group with six members. In 1942, this group had expanded to forty-five, with its youth wing, Betar, with a membership of twenty-four. They met at Herzl Hall in Carlton.¹³ However, another branch was founded in Sydney by Rabbi Leib Falk of the Great Synagogue.¹⁴

The happenings in the South Australian Jewish community were observed from without, but primarily from within. An example of the former concerned Dr. Michael Traub, an emissary from Palestine seeking funds from Australian Jewry for brethren there, and said to be a member of the New Zionist movement. En route by train from Perth to Adelaide, Michael Traub's constant concentration on typing something caught the attention of two servicemen on board, who reported their observations to Military Intelligence. The latter questioned Dr. Edmund Traub, a registered 'enemy alien', a Jewish refugee from Germany and an analytical chemist. Ironically, Edmund Traub and his wife were to become lifelong supporters of the Zionist movement. From Rabbi Dr. Fabian of the Adelaide Hebrew Congregation they found out what was common knowledge in Jewish communities across Australia, that the mysterious gentleman was Dr. Michael Traub, who had actually already been in Australia for twelve months, and who previous to his detection had been on assignment in Perth. His intended speaking engagement in Adelaide was cancelled simply because the train from Perth to Adelaide was thirty hours late. What Michael Traub had been typing was his diary, something he did to occupy himself on the long train trip.¹⁵

The name of the informant inside the Adelaide Jewish community will never be released. Number 453, as he was officially known, was as well-credentialed locally as he was with Jewry Australia-wide. This person reported that there was no trace of 'New Zionism' in South Australia but agreed to make enquiries interstate about a rabbi in Sydney who was alleged to be connected with it. However, he did assure his Intelligence masters that this rabbi would never be involved with any pro-Fascist organisation.¹⁶

All organisations in the Adelaide Jewish community, both religious and secular, came under scrutiny. The eye fell not only on those who might exhibit 'New Zionist' tendencies, but also those who were left-wing sympathisers. The Adelaide Jewish Club was organised by L.E. Saunders, a member of the Rationalist Association and Socialist League, the latter having possible links with the Communist Party. The Migrant Coalition Committee of the Jewish Welfare Society was also watched for any anti-Australian activity. It was reported that moves by the Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism to form a branch in South Australia were scotched by the Adelaide Hebrew Congregation, the fulcrum of the Jewish community, on two grounds — that drawing attention to the issue of anti-Semitism might prove counter-productive, and that some members of the Council were also members of the Communist Party.¹⁷

The activities of the Australia/Palestine Committee formed in South Australia were also not overlooked. Its membership was small but it embraced both Jews and non-Jews, and was presided over by the Anglican Bishop of Adelaide. Not surprisingly, the South Australian Zionist Organisation, the Women's International

Zionist Organisation, and Rabbi Fabian's tiny Adelaide Zionist Youth group, were all mentioned.¹⁸ Later, an intercepted letter from the Rabbi's wife, Mrs. Ilse Fabian, to a correspondent in the United States describing the place, frequency and popularity of these youth meetings was stamped 'not to be divulged'.¹⁹

The visits of Zionist emissaries from overseas and interstate were also reported. However, the general view of Zionist activity in South Australia was that while Adelaide Jews were willing to provide funds, they rejected an aggressive political movement 'lest they lose the confidence of their gentile neighbours and fan the dormant fires of anti-Semitism into activity'.²⁰

The human sniffer dogs were ever alert for even a whiff of Communism and any association of it with Zionism. In this context, the Intelligence authorities recorded the address of the minuscule Jewish faction of the Communist Party of Australia to the Zionist Conference of Australia and New Zealand in 1943, in which it stated that

We Jewish Communists of Australia . . . send to you our warm greetings . . . In the present plight of the Jewish people, when our enemies are striving to annihilate us completely, it is our elementary duty to invite all groups and classes of our people in the struggle for our existence. We therefore propose the following basis of Jewish unity:

1. to support the Government War Policy
2. to exterminate anti-Semitism and to expose it as a fifth column
3. to establish close friendship with the Jews of the Soviet Union
4. to help build up the Jewish settlement in Palestine and to bring brotherly relations towards the Arabs there.²¹

According to this submission, Jews had a right to settle in Palestine, and Jews ought to have full politico-legal rights in the countries of their current domicile, and even in those countries from which they had been driven. The Jewish faction was utterly opposed to the British White Paper of 1939 which had kept hapless Jews in the claw of Nazism, by denying many their escape from Europe to Palestine. All people turning to Communism would in the long run resolve the Jewish Problem. However, in the short run, the common goals of support for Allied War effort and opposition to the White Paper were powerful bases for Jews and Communists to link hands and unite.²²

The surveillance of the post and telegraph services trapped its unsuspecting victims. A letter of a serving RAAF officer to his mother in Adelaide expressed his view that 'Zionism was a laudable but short range' solution to alleviate the current Jewish Problem; the only long-term answer was World Communism. He argued that Palestine had been a pawn in a British Imperialist game, and that when the war was over, there was no reason to expect this situation to change. He felt the small and weak Jewish community in Palestine would be at the mercy of some bully nations wishing to use the Holy Land for their own ends. Also, the hostility of the surrounding nations would be ever-present. Any benevolence from Great Britain would be for appearances only. And so, not until World Communism took hold could Jews everywhere be comfortable that they would be treated with equanimity.²³

Even post-war, and subsequent to the General Assembly of the United Nations' recommendation of 29 November 1947 that Mandated Palestine be partitioned into a Jewish state, an Arab state, and an internationalised Jerusalem, the surveillance of 'New Zionists' continued. Prompted from Great Britain, the Commonwealth Security Services branded the now United Zionist Revisionist Organisation of Australia as the spearhead of extreme Jewish nationalism in the Australian Zionist movement. It was alleged that Revisionist groups in the United Kingdom and France had

raised funds for, and were implicated in, terrorist acts in Palestine. However, it was acknowledged that although Melbourne's Revisionists had sent £1500 to their Keren Hai fund in Palestine, the money had been earmarked for 'rescue relief purposes' not terrorism.²⁴

The manifesto of the Melbourne group's anti-Britishness with regards to Palestine undoubtedly worried top officers of the Commonwealth Investigation Service. Issued in December 1947, its sentiments included

- a. that the projected Jewish State was too small to absorb the harassed and endangered Jews of the Middle East and Europe.
- b. that the economic and military security of the proposed new entity would be at the behest of a 'special commission of the U.N.'.
- c. that Revisionists should work for the re-absorption of Transjordan and the other truncated parts of Palestine in the Land of Israel.
- d. that Jewish Resistance in the Land of Israel had forced the world to attempt to resolve the problems of Palestine but the victory had not yet been guaranteed.
- e. that the UNO decision was but a first step towards the ingathering of Israel within its ancient boundaries 'stretching from the sea beyond the Jordan and from the River of Egypt to the frontiers of Lebanon and Syria.'²⁵

At this time, though Great Britain had indicated its intention to leave Palestine, she had stated her unwillingness to co-operate with the United Nations in the Partition exercise.²⁶

Undoubtedly, the historically close relationship between the bureaucracies and Intelligence services of Great Britain and Australia shored up the disdain held in official circles for Zionism and, in particular, Revisionist Zionism. This was certainly manifest in the behaviour of those who placed obstacles in the way of post-war immigration of Jewish Displaced Persons into Australia. Parallels were drawn between the immigration of Jews to Palestine and the subsequent terror then, and what might happen if Jews of similar background and experience were allowed to enter Australia.²⁷

NOTES

1. C.D. Coulthard-Clark, *Australia's War-Time Security Service*, Defence Force Journal, No. 16, May/June 1979, pp. 23-24.
2. Frank Cain, *The Origins of Political Surveillance in Australia*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1983, p. 296.
3. Australian Archives, South Australian branch (hereafter AASA), Series D1915, item SA 19621, 21 March 1942, to Australian Military Forces, Southern Command.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, 10 April 1942, Intelligence Branch, Keswick Barracks.
10. *Ibid.*, 15 April 1942, Inspector of Police, Broken Hill, to Keswick Barracks.
11. *Ibid.*, 30 January 1942, M.P.I. section, Sydney.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*, extract, Special Branch file No. 1689/42, April 1942.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, 3 March 1943, Security Services, Adelaide.
16. *Ibid.*, 8 April 1942, Special Branch, No. 119. [This rabbi is almost certainly Rabbi Leib Falk, of Sydney's Great Synagogue, who was closely associated with the Revisionist movement — Ed.]
17. *Ibid.*, on file, 1943/44.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, 19 December 1944, Ilse Fabian to W. Sternberg.
20. *Ibid.*, on file, 1943/44.

21. *Ibid.*, Post & Telegraph Censorship Bulletin, No. 51, June 1943, signed 'Mauri' to Editor of *Forward*, NSW.
22. *Ibid.*, No. 57, July 1943, signed 'Hyam' to L. Donald.
23. *Ibid.*, 31 August 1944, D.L. Waxman to L. Waxman.
24. Australian Archives, 1969/224, Item 81, 48/240, 12 February 1948. Director of the Commonwealth Investigation Service to Attorney-General's Department.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, Shocken Books, New York, 1976, p. 583.
27. R.M. Gouttman, 'The Two Faces of Furhman', *Menorah*, Vol. 4, Nos. 1&2 December 1990, p. 68.

INCOMPATIBLE WITH SECURITY: ENEMY ALIEN INTERNEES FROM SINGAPORE IN AUSTRALIA, 1940-45

Paul R. Bartrop

In the aftermath of World War One the British government saw a need to reinforce its South-East Asian empire. The war had exposed a number of weaknesses in the British imperial defence network, and in South-East Asia the trade routes on the China-India, Australia-India and Australia-South Africa routes had more than once been threatened by German raiders and submarines. Strategic sea lanes had now to be defended and guaranteed, and after a series of detailed military studies had been completed it was decided that the island of Singapore, at the tip of the Malayan peninsula, would be the best place to establish an impregnable fortress to command the entire region and serve as the principal British base in Asia east of India. Work proceeded throughout the 1920s, and by the mid-1930s it was felt that Singapore had indeed become the impregnable fortress it was intended to be: the 'Gibraltar of the East' in the popular consciousness.

Singapore found itself performing a dual role, however, for although it was now a military fortress it was also the civilian seat of government for the British-controlled Straits Settlements (Singapore, Penang and Malacca) as well as the major port for the rest of the Malayan states. It had a cosmopolitan population, was clearly the largest city in British Malaya, and, for those Europeans living there, offered a lifestyle founded on privilege and racial dominance.

Most of the Europeans living in Singapore were, not surprisingly, British. Very few 'foreigners' lived there, primarily because Singapore was not considered to be an area in which white settlement was desirable. Climate and the size of the colony were both important criteria here. With few exceptions, prior to 1933 the only non-British Europeans in the colony were diplomatic officials or trade representatives of large European firms. Following the rise to power of Adolf Hitler in Germany, however, their ranks were swelled by Jewish refugees seeking sanctuary. A good many of these, towards the end of the 1930s, were in transit through Singapore on their way to Shanghai — the only place in the world which did not require an entry visa or landing permit. As a Jewish community developed, an attraction for German and Austrian Jews to terminate their voyage in British Singapore was presented. Many sought to do so, and the colonial authorities were not as negative as in other British territories around the world. The major criterion, other than health and character standards, was that any Jews accepted would not become a burden on the public purse. They therefore had to demonstrate that they had a guarantee of employment in the colony. For many, this was relatively easy to obtain through contacts within the growing Singapore Jewish community. Success thus bred success, and a point of critical mass was reached.

With the outbreak of war in September 1939, the situation for the new arrivals changed, though not dramatically. Although now possessing the nationality of a state at war with His Majesty, German and Austrian Jews were registered, placed under the same restrictions as pertained to all other white civilians, and put on probation — free to go about their daily business. In this position they remained until the war began to deteriorate for the Allies in May and June 1940. Britain

rounded up all its 'enemy aliens' and began to deport them to Canada and Australia (the latter on the ill-fated *Dunera*). Other British Empire countries intensified measures against 'enemy aliens' for fear of saboteurs or (a new word) 'fifth columnists' infiltrating military and civilian installations. Singapore, a military fortress dominating an entire hemispheric strategy, was placed in a position of having to do something urgently. By the end of June, the authorities had decided on their approach: they, like the government in Britain, would round up all their 'enemy aliens' and deport them.

On 24 June 1940 the Governor of the Straits Settlements addressed a cable to the Australian Governor-General for despatch to the Prime Minister.¹ In it, he asked whether the Australian government would be prepared to accept for internment a German-born woman then being detained in Singapore. The reason he gave was that the local internment of this woman, Amalie Luise Basu, had created logistical problems. Internment facilities for European women were lacking in Singapore, but as the Straits Settlements government was committed to Mrs. Basu's internment, a prison had to be found for her somewhere. The Australian authorities were informed that any such internment agreed to would take place 'at the expense of [the] Straits Settlement Government'.²

The next day, before a decision had been reached or a reply had even been made, the Governor of Singapore despatched a second cable to the Australian authorities. His request this time was far more extensive. In full, the cable read:

Should be grateful for your assistance with regard to internment German [and] Italian nationals now in Singapore. These number 145 males, 120 females German mostly non Aryan refugees and 18 males 14 females Italian. Climate Malaya unsuitable for prolonged confinement European[s]. Other reasons connected with safety of Fortress Singapore make removal very desirable. Earnestly hope that it will be found possible to accept them for safe custody in Australia. All expenses transportation and maintenance will be borne by Malayan Government. I would much appreciate early reply.³

This cable was quickly copied and circulated throughout a number of government departments in Australia. First sent to the War Cabinet for consideration, it was also forwarded, for advice, to the Departments of Defence Co-ordination, the Army, External Affairs and the Interior.

It did not take long for an Australian reply to be forthcoming. It was favourable. In a cable dated 3 July 1940, the Officer Administering the Straits Settlements government was informed that the Commonwealth was prepared to accept for internment all the people referred to in the two telegrams of 24 and 25 June.⁴ The government also sought information concerning the marital status of the people involved, and when they were likely to be sent to Australia. This was a reasonable request in light of the preparations that would be needed in order to receive the internees.

Surprisingly, however, nearly two weeks passed before anything more was heard from Singapore. The Australian Army, anxious to ascertain the state of affairs, arranged for another cable to be sent on 16 July; for good measure, the same cable was sent to the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs in London.⁵ News from Singapore arrived the next day, but it was vague: only approximate figures were given of those to be sent to Australia, and no accurate date for sailing had yet been fixed — though it was anticipated the internees might depart sometime in August.⁶ It was only three weeks later that the Straits Settlements government came forward with final figures, a total of three hundred Germans and Italians, men, women and children. It was noted that all were internees, and none were prisoners of war.⁷

Their status as non-combatants was again referred to in another cable from Singapore on 28 August 1940. While asking the Australian authorities whether the

internees might be permitted to bring with them heavy baggage containing their tools of trade, the cable stated that the majority of those being sent 'are Jews who originally came here as refugees'. The inference was that they were harmless, notwithstanding the fact that, as enemy aliens bearing German or Italian passports, they had to go.⁸

By early September the proposal was beginning to look a little more definite, though the Australians were still waiting for the next move to take place at the Straits Settlements end. On 4 September it did. The Australians received a cable from Singapore asking whether there would be any objection 'to the inclusion of a few persons not enemy aliens', but who had been detained anyway. These people included a Dane, a Latvian, two Russians (with dependants), and 'one German born female British by marriage detained on account of undesirable activities'.⁹ Forwarded to the Department of the Interior for advice, the proposal was approved by Secretary J.A. Carrodus on the condition that the admission of these people was of a temporary nature only.¹⁰ Once further information was received from the Army, Navy and the Department of Defence Co-ordination, the government in Singapore was notified that the extra people could be included among those for internment in Australia — 'provided they are sent to Australia as internees, accompanied by personal records including photographs and fingerprints, and particulars from Dossiers as to reasons for detainment'.¹¹ Clearly, if the Singapore government wished to dump these people onto Australia, it was going to have to justify doing so and demonstrate a commitment to their internment.

Yet indications are that the Straits Settlements government had not thought through the full implications of what it was asking the Australians to do. In a cable dated 16 September the Singapore authorities replied to the Australian demand with the news that they did not have any power to take fingerprints. The interned enemy aliens were not criminals, and there were 'no allegations against them of hostile actions'. Their detention was 'precautionary', and, having been carried out 'to meet public clamouring' (!), was no reflection on their personality or character. Having firstly said there was 'no power' to fingerprint the internees, the Administrator then said that he would prefer to spare them 'ignominious treatment' and avoid having to fingerprint them.¹² The whole attitude must have come across to the Australians as confused and woolly. Ultimately, the Australian authorities agreed to take all the internees without fingerprints, 'provided that photographs, personal descriptions and other evidence is supplied to enable positive identification of internees on arrival'. Once they had arrived in Australia, however, they would be fingerprinted in accordance with Commonwealth regulations.¹³

Another example of Straits Settlements confusion regarding Australian policy came in the form of a despatch concerning a certain Mr. and Mrs. Wentcher (referred to as Wentschler by the Australian authorities). They were in Singapore, but had not been subjected to internment there — the single precondition required by the Australian authorities prior to acceptance for transportation to the Commonwealth. Information was received in Canberra that the Wentchers had been ordered to leave for Australia along with everybody else, and they were understandably unsure whether that meant they were now to be interned or were merely transmigrating to another part of the British Empire. The Canberra authorities were unimpressed, to say the least, and in a cable to Singapore on 17 September 1940 demonstrated their feelings:

Commonwealth Government desires that all persons transferred for internment in Australia should first have been made subject to internment by Straits Settlements Government and should be sent only as internees. Such persons will be kept in custody while in Australia. Commonwealth Govern-

ment is moreover not prepared to receive non-interned wives and families of internees even though prepared to come to Australia at their own expense.¹⁴

This last point, thrown in for good measure, was essentially pre-emptive, and intended to alert the Singapore authorities that Australia was not contemplating any sort of long-term future for these internees. Neither they, nor their families, would be wandering around in Australian society. Internment meant precisely that. Australia was only going to house, feed and guard those whom Singapore did not want. It was up to the Singapore authorities to do their own dirty work.

Given the degree of maladministration accompanying the proposal to send enemy aliens to Australia, it is a wonder any of them ever left Singapore. Not only did they do so, however, but the ship on which they departed — the *Queen Mary* — ensured their passage would be a comfortable one. On 18 September 1940 a party of 267 internees, accompanied by a guard of 42 troops, sailed from Singapore. They were bound for Sydney. Although the Australian authorities had hoped the internees would be sent to Melbourne (on account of their ultimate destination, the camps at Tatura, being in closer proximity to that city than was Sydney), shipping could not be diverted. Arrangements therefore had to be made to transport the internees by train once they berthed. The estimated arrival date was Wednesday 25 September 1940.

While the *Queen Mary* was in transit, the Officer Administering the Straits Settlements government, S.W. Jones, sent a long letter to Prime Minister Menzies clarifying and explaining the situation as it was understood by him. Earlier confusion was, Jones wrote, 'unavoidable' in view of the secrecy surrounding the movements of the *Queen Mary* (this is understandable given that the ship was also then being employed on troop-carrying duties). In a lengthy paragraph, Jones then sought to reaffirm to the Australian authorities that the people then being transported to Australia were not dangerous enemies:

If it were not for the special circumstances obtaining in the Straits Settlements it is probable that the majority could without detriment have been allowed to remain at liberty. Chief among the reasons by which this Government was constrained to take the action which has been taken is the fact that the islands of Singapore and Penang are fortresses in which the presence of persons of enemy nationality, however harmless they may appear, is regarded as incompatible with security. If excluded from these areas there is no place in which, while remaining at large, they could suitably be absorbed.¹⁵

As a consequence, 'internment was the only course open'. Moreover, the reason Australia was asked to take the internees on board was essentially one of environment: 'the tropical climate of Malaya is unsuitable for the prolonged confinement of Europeans', and there was a certain undesirability at keeping Europeans in custody 'in a country of which the population is so largely Asiatic'.¹⁶

Seemingly as if to absolve the Singapore government of any moral responsibility for locking up and then deporting people who were — by its own acknowledgment — innocent of any crimes against the State, Jones then invited the Australian government to employ its own discretion as to their ultimate future:

You will observe . . . that the reasons which make necessary the internment of these persons so far as Malaya is concerned may not necessarily be binding when they have been removed to more suitable surroundings. This matter I am of course prepared to leave entirely to your discretion. Being of enemy nationality, interned in the exercise of prerogative right, they are liable to be kept in internment for the duration of the war, but if in any particular case you felt inclined to grant them a measure of liberty, on parole or under such other restriction as seemed suitable, no objection would be raised by the Malayan Governments.

No objection, indeed; but the Australian government's position, particularly in light of the *Dunera* affair, was that no releases would take place into Australia under any circumstances. Were the Straits Settlements government to have a change of mind,

it was perfectly at liberty to remove the internees from Australia and release them back in Singapore. But no-one would be released into Australia, circumventing the existing migration process and compromising Australia's own security arrangements. What prevailed for the *Dunera* internees would be also the case for those from the *Queen Mary*: they would stay under internment for as long as they remained in Australia.

The ship duly arrived in Sydney Harbour as planned, on Wednesday 25 September 1940. The Australian Army officer responsible for their reception was Captain A.R. Heighway, the same officer who had overseen the arrival of the *Dunera* internees in Fremantle a short time before. With a small staff of clerks, interpreters, female warders and civilian police, Heighway began the task of interrogating, searching, fingerprinting and otherwise creating full dossiers on the internees. In his report on these activities, Heighway later commented with interest on the age mix of the internees:

Nearly all the children are very young, many of them babes in arms. Perambulators, push carts, etc., were very much in evidence at disembarkation.

The fact that the children were so young and that a few of the old people were in indifferent health, I thought it would be advisable to consult the Medical Authorities and ask for a trained nurse to accompany the internees by rail; this was agreed to.¹⁷

This was a good move: as it turned out, the youngest of the internees was one month old, and the oldest was seventy-eight. It seemed as though the entire German and Austrian Jewish community, as well as all the Italians who could then be found, had been lifted up in Singapore and transported to Australia in one fell swoop. There appeared to be no exceptions.

In the early evening of Friday 27 September the internees arrived at Tatura. Within two days they had organised themselves sufficiently to be able to send a letter to the Commandant — and through him, to Army authorities higher up — seeking release from their confinement. The Camp Leader, Gerhard Seefeld, recounted a number of thoroughly justifiable reasons as to why the internees should be allowed out of the camp on parole, but on no occasion did he seem to grasp the essence of the Australians' position concerning releases. Instead, he confined himself to explaining that the Singapore authorities had until recently allowed the internees to remain at large. His assumption was that the Australians would behave the same way. Besides, Seefeld wrote, nobody expected an internment camp such as Tatura:

We were . . . utterly surprised to find ourselves upon arrival in an ordinary camp for prisoners of war — which was not even completed — and to see that nothing did correspond with those assurances given to us in Singapore. The huts built from corrugated iron are not able to give shelter from the cold and heat.¹⁸ Our small children in the age from six weeks onwards and our aged people up to more than 80 years are definitely not able to stand the hardship of living under such conditions.¹⁹

While there was of course full justification for Seefeld's concern, this should nonetheless be placed into context. After nearly a year of freedom following the outbreak of war, during which time the Singapore authorities had *de facto* acknowledged that the German-Jewish population in the Straits Settlements were refugees from Nazism and not dangerous enemies, they were plucked from a life of white colonial privilege and sent to a country where they were no longer free, no longer privileged, indeed, not even members of a racially-superior group. (Ironically, their 'race' would have been held against them had they sought to gain entry to Australia as refugees prior to the outbreak of war.) The condition of their new accommodation at Tatura was not the main issue here, though it did serve as a useful focus for all the frustrations the deportation had fostered. The quest of release from this condition

hereafter became the major ongoing interest of the internees, who saw themselves as the victims of injustice at every turn in the weeks and months following their arrival in Australia.

It would seem as though the Singapore authorities, just as much as the internees they sent, failed to appreciate the mood or legal position of the Australians. In another letter to Prime Minister Menzies, dated 9 October 1940, S.W. Jones again referred at length to the Straits Settlements' attitude regarding releases from internment:

I should be glad to be informed in due course if the Commonwealth Government should see fit to release any of these persons on parole. So far as this Government is concerned there would be, as I have said in my earlier letter, no objection to such a course in the large majority of cases, nor any need to refer individual cases to me. Their internment was ordered on general security grounds for reasons which are mainly of local application.²⁰

In other words, if the Commonwealth, having accepted these people for internment because Singapore could not handle them, wished to effectuate their release into Australia on parole, the Singapore government would not raise any objection. It was a complete misreading of the Australian stance. No circumstances could be foreseen whereby the Australians would countenance release, as this would have been viewed as a circumvention of the migration laws. Jones did not seem to appreciate this, and applied the standards of colonial Singapore to Dominion Australia. For the Australians, the issues were cut more clearly: if a person was eligible for internment on security grounds in one British country, there was no reason to suppose that the same person would be anything less of a security threat to or in Australia. If the person in question was not a security risk in the interning country, let them be sent back there and released. There was no release-into-Australia option.

That was a firm and fixed legal position, appreciated neither by the Singapore authorities nor the internees. The Australians held that any releases should take place in Singapore, and that therefore all communications on the matter should be directed by the internees to the government of the Straits Settlements. A letter to the Colonial Secretary at Singapore dated 28 October 1940, signed by 146 of the Jewish adults (and proxied on behalf of 25 children), testifies to a total misreading of the situation. It is worth quoting at length:

Two days after our arrival in this Prisoner-of-War

Camp, i.e. 29th September 1940, we addressed a letter to the Commandant of this Camp, copy of which is enclosed herewith. Nearly one month later, on 21st October, we were notified, as per copy of Notice attached, that no applications of internees sent to Australia from Overseas could be considered, but that all applications had to be addressed to you, Sir.

There is hardly anything to be added to our letter of 29th; only the fact remains that up till now none of the promises made to us in Singapore were fulfilled. On the contrary, we suffered disappointment after disappointment which hurt our very innermost. May we recall the final interview Mr. G. Seefeld had with the Secretary of Defence, Mr. Dawson (Mount Rosie) a few days before being removed to Australia. Mr. Seefeld was told that H.E. The Governor would send a manifest to the Australian Authorities pointing out that we were the most unfortunate people, people without leaning to Nazism and people with a clean record in Malaya. He was further promised that our personal files (i.e. our Police Records) held by the Special Branch would be sent with us and that on their merits we would be released and paroled by the Australian Authorities.

It is therefore inconceivable to us that within a few hours of our arrival here on Australian soil the Authorities felt obliged to stamp up till then harmless, unfortunate and juridically stateless Refugees into such dangerous enemies that they must be kept — men, women, children, babes and very old people all alike — behind barbed wire in a surrounding far away from habitation on a small hill with actual Savanna climate.

We acknowledge with gratitude the endeavours of our Camp Commandant and his Staff to ease our

present sufferings, but the little that can be done under the Military Restrictions we are subjected to hardly influences our position.

We address you, Sir, with the request to kindly intervene on our behalf and to see that the manifest of H.E. The Governor and our Police Records referred to above are now forwarded on the quickest possible way and without further delay to the Australian Authorities together with your proclamation that as far as your Government is concerned we could be released on parole.²¹

The final paragraph of this letter expressed the best bit of common sense thus far:

In conclusion we may add that pending the arrival of these documents we shall approach the Australian Authorities with a view to obtain Permits necessary for us to settle in Australia.²²

This last point realised that the departure from Singapore may have been a permanent one, and that, if this were the case, the internees could not stay locked up for ever. It acknowledged, moreover, that the Australians might only allow release if the people in question sought to enter Australian society in the same way as all other Jewish refugees had done, namely, through the approved immigration procedures. As 1940 drew to a close, the so-called 'Singapore internees' were no closer to parole, release or any other form of liberation than they had been upon their arrival in September.

Those acting on their behalf — and there were many — also failed to comprehend the true state of affairs. Thus, the Chairman of Singapore's Jewish Relief Committee (J.V. Landor), in a letter to the Australian Minister of the Army dated 11 January 1941, asked whether the Australian government could see its way clear to release those individuals 'against whom there is no suspicion'.²³ In Australia, Gerhard Seefeld (Camp Leader at Tatura) engaged a leading firm of Melbourne solicitors to take up his case with the Minister for the Army. In writing to the Minister, the solicitors, Oakley, Thompson and Co, noted that some enemy aliens, previously detained in Singapore but not deported to Australia in September 1940, had now been released in the colony. Conveying Seefeld's request, Oakley Thompson informed the Minister that:

these families are now living free on parole in Singapore and [Seefeld] submits that if they can be freed there, there is considerably more reason for his release here where the military situation is different.²⁴

Again, we see evidence here of the point being entirely missed. Release into Australia was not an option: it never had been.

Finally, the doyen of the Australian Jewish religious establishment, Rabbi Jacob Danglow, stepped into the picture with a direct plea to Prime Minister Menzies. Writing on behalf of both the *Dunera* and Singapore internees, Rabbi Danglow referred to them as 'nobody's children', who were 'without hope of any amelioration of their sad lot'.²⁵ The rabbi requested that Aliens Tribunals be set up to hear these people, along the same lines that internees apprehended within Australia had been heard. Failing this, the Prime Minister was urged to take up the matter with the Home Office in London during the Prime Minister's forthcoming trip to the United Kingdom.²⁶ Nothing same of these suggestions, though they did show a little more imagination (and awareness of reality) than anything that had gone before.

Then, on 7 February 1941, a bombshell arrived in Canberra in the form of a new letter from S.W. Jones in Singapore. His message, dated 15 January, was blunt: the Straits Settlements government did not want the internees back under any circumstances, and the Australians were free to do with them as they wished:

This Government would have no objection to the release of these persons in Australia should the Commonwealth Government see fit to permit this, but this Government realises that their release or otherwise with permission to reside in Australia is entirely a matter for the Commonwealth Government to decide.

This Government does not wish to re-admit these persons, or any of them, into Malaya, and, if their re-admission here is the only condition upon which they can be released, it is suggested that they be informed that further petitions cannot be considered.

It is believed that certain of the internees who are not recorded as definitely suspected of enemy sympathies would be able to remove themselves to neutral territory (e.g., Shanghai) if their release were granted. In such cases, if the Commonwealth Government sees fit to release the persons concerned, it may be taken, without reference to me, that this Government would have no objection to offer.²⁷

In other words, the Straits Settlements government had 'dumped' its unwanted enemy aliens onto Australia, which could henceforth adopt all or any measures towards them as it saw fit. The internees no longer existed as a matter for Singapore's interest.

As the Australians saw it, therefore, the internees could not be released, nor could they be returned. The only realistic option remaining was to somehow secure their admission into another country — no easy matter at a time of war and in a world which did not want to accept Jewish refugees anyway. The search for this third option nonetheless became the preference of the Army once it had absorbed the shock of Singapore's cheeky action.²⁸ In March, Rabbi Danglow was informed that 'the internees may submit for consideration applications for permission to proceed at their own expense to any other country to which they can secure admission'²⁹; the next day, the Adjutant-General determined that this would henceforth be the major thrust of the Army's policy — though applications 'may not be granted in all instances'.³⁰ There was still a war on, and it would achieve nothing to allow truly dangerous or suspect enemy aliens the opportunity of regaining their liberty and migrating to another country from where they might engage in activities harmful to Australia's war effort.

Concerned as ever with legality, the Australian Army cabled the authorities in Singapore of its decision. 'When considered necessary', the cable stated, 'applications will be referred to you before being approved'.³¹ In light of its earlier attitude, it is probable that the Straits Settlements government couldn't have cared less, but the Australians could at least point to the propriety of their own behaviour as a way of bringing home to S.W. Jones the impropriety of his.

In the meantime, early 1941 had seen the arrival of Major Julian Layton, a British Army officer seconded to the Home Office and sent to Australia for the purpose of dealing with the release requests of the *Dunera* internees. His authority did not extend to the people from Singapore; he had been despatched from Britain to deal with British internees, and those from Singapore fell under a separate jurisdiction. Nonetheless, the Commonwealth government sought to capitalise on his presence (and expertise) to facilitate their further migration. In a cable to the High Commissioner's Office in London, therefore, the Secretary of the Army sought approval to employ Layton in this capacity.³² Approval was forthcoming from London within two days.³³

Responding to the Australian suggestion of 17 May — that the Australian army would forward all applications for transmigration to Singapore for approval — the Straits Settlements government made a strange announcement:

It is not possible to give assurance that persons now interned in Australia will be re-admitted into Malaya at the end of the War.

The remainder of your telegram [has been] noted, but I suggest that each case be referred here. In some cases, additional information has been collected regarding activities prior to internment.³⁴

This brought to light some interesting questions. Did the Singapore government think its earlier message concerning the non-return of the internees had not been

accepted by the Australians? Were they incapable of understanding the gist of the Australian message of 17 May 1941, which had already declared that all cases would be referred to Singapore? And what of this 'additional information'? Had the Straits Settlements authorities been holding out on the Australians? At a time when as much information as possible was being sought by the Commonwealth, why had the 'additional information' not been passed on? The Army authorities would have been well justified in thinking that they were dealing with a bunch of inept amateurs.

As happens in human affairs from time to time, it was the plight of the children which helped to break the *impasse* and soften the hearts of inflexible bureaucrats. At first, efforts were not all that encouraging. Towards the end of February 1941 Gerhard Seefeld had brought to the Army's attention the fact that many of the children then interned, having been born in Singapore or Penang, were British citizens and therefore not enemy aliens. Seefeld requested that the Australian authorities forward the names of these children to the Home Office in London, and that such information be accompanied by a statement that they were 'British subjects being interned at No. 3 Camp, Tatura'.³⁵ A handwritten minute from the Adjutant-General's office a few weeks later gave a clear indication as to the bureaucrats' position. It was submitted that no action be taken: (i) because the British government was seen to have no direct concern with Straits Settlements internees; and (ii) because, technically speaking, children under the age of 16 were not interned (they were, rather, dependents of *adults* who were interned).³⁶ It was a fine legal point, which proved nothing and ultimately led nowhere.

One person, however, in picking up the plight of the parents, inadvertently opened the way for a reconsideration of the whole situation. Dr Herbert Vere Evatt, former High Court Justice and current spokesman on legal matters in the Federal Labor Opposition, did not refer directly to the children in a letter he wrote to the Minister for the Army on 28 June 1941. In raising the question of the internees' ultimate fate, however, Evatt's was a voice which could not be ignored or passed off with some weak excuse. His suggestion, that Aliens Tribunals be established to investigate the internees on a case-by-case basis, had to be addressed by the Army authorities, if for no other reason than that a change of government seemed to be on the cards and that if Labor took over the question would be raised in any case. By pre-empting this, the Army could be seen to be cooperating with both sides of politics — and thus retain control over its own affairs.³⁷

Percy Spender, the Minister for the Army, was not particularly interested in his department's attempt at placating the Opposition, but in an Army memorandum prepared as a response to Evatt he minuted his apprehension at the situation facing the internees' children:

I am concerned with the young people included in this batch, some I am informed of tender years. Nothing is said as to their particular problems. I would be glad if . . . reference is made to these internees from the Straits Settlement [sic], and in particular to what action is proposed (a) generally (b) in relation to very young internees. It seems heartless that they, i.e. the young people, should be held within present captivity during the rest of the war.³⁸

With this a ray of light pierced the darkness. Not only was there talk for the first time of a precise future for any of the internees — even if that only dealt with children and offered nothing other than the Minister's concern — but the document on which Spender made his minute was a measured consideration of the possibilities relative to internee release provided the circumstances were right. Prompted by Evatt's letter of 28 June, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff posited whether

releases could be effectuated if the Straits Settlements government was more forthcoming with further information. Although clearly by now it should have been obvious that Singapore had signed over its interest in the internees, the proposal was put that the Straits Settlements government be consulted over the question of releases, and informed that the release of internees into Australia could take place if the following conditions were met:

- (a) approval of the Straits Settlements Government;
- (b) that those released should be assured of employment which directly or indirectly assists the national effort;
- (c) that releases may be subject to restrictions on residence, employment and movement;
- (d) that internees would not be released for employment in areas such as those in Queensland or South Australia, where there is a large population of enemy origin, or in sparsely populated areas of strategic importance;
- (e) that release would not imply in any way that the individuals concerned will be allowed to remain in Australia after the war.³⁹

This was the first time serious consideration had been given to the idea of releasing the internees in Australia. The proposal ran on quite happily, suggesting that it be put to the Singapore government and that, on receipt of the further information sought, a security opinion could be expressed as to the feasibility of the whole idea. It was a remarkable admission that something might be done after all.

As if to underscore the point, on 28 July 1941 the Adjutant-General informed the Chief of the General Staff that a number of the internees had possessed substantial funds and other assets prior to coming to Australia. In the event of their release, it was felt, 'it would appear likely that they would use their funds to establish themselves'. This information would normally have worked to the advantage of the internees, but on this occasion the capital outlay would have seen the internees establishing themselves 'in commercial enterprises in competition with Australian citizens'. The Adjutant-General observed that this factor 'seems to be of importance in relation to the possible release of some of these internees in Australia'.⁴⁰ In reply, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff informed the Adjutant-General that this was not a security matter, and that the departments concerned would no doubt take the necessary steps only if and when the Minister decided.⁴¹ It was a neat and efficient dismissal of an argument which had no place in the Army's considerations.

The Minister, as it turned out, was giving serious thought to the proposal that the Singapore internees be released. A full draft Cabinet Agendum was prepared in August 1941, which took in not only the Singapore internees but also such of the *Dunera* internees who had not as yet applied to return to the United Kingdom. (Such a proposal, in the view of the Secretary of the Army, might not be successful. The *Dunera* alone would involve the release of up to 1,500 Jews into the community — a move which was seen as 'contrary to the present Immigration Policy of the Commonwealth'.⁴²) A number of conditions would of course be laid down, principally that of seeking Straits Settlements approval in each case.⁴³ For some time thereafter, nothing happened: the Agendum did not go forward; the Army bureaucrats did not further discuss it; there were no more communications on the matter from Singapore. A hiatus set in while events on the wider stage were being played out.

Principal among these was the political instability in Canberra between the end of August and early October 1941. Owing to internal strife in the ruling United Australia Party, Prime Minister R.G. Menzies resigned on 29 August in favour of the leader of the Country Party, Arthur Fadden. This did nothing to ease the uncer-

tainty surrounding the coalition government. On 3 October the two Independents upon whom the government depended for its Lower House majority withdrew their support. Fadden, with no other alternative, resigned as Prime Minister, and on 7 October John Curtin led the Labor Party into the government benches. As portfolios were distributed, the Army fell to F.M. Forde, the Deputy Leader of the ALP.

For the Army bureaucrats, this represented a great deal of work, as the new Minister had to become apprised, from scratch, of a great deal. It was only on 17 November 1941 that the question of releases could again be examined by Cabinet; the earlier draft Agendum was dusted off, presented and approved, subject to two definitive clauses:

- (a) that all releases are to be approved by the Minister for the Army;
- (b) that all releases are to be subject to such residential and other restrictions as the Minister for the Army considers it necessary to impose.⁴⁴

The discretionary powers thus placed on the Minister were considerable, and a complex procedure was developed in order to achieve any releases he might approve. These included:

- (a) a formal application by the internee;
- (b) a security report from the Camp Commandant and the Command;
- (c) an investigation by the Department of Labour and National Service in the case of those seeking employment;
- (d) a means investigation in every case;
- (e) a security enquiry of the . . . Singapore authorities;
- (f) a careful check by the Department of the Army to guard against a concentration by aliens in particular areas.⁴⁵

Once releases got underway, furthermore, they would be gradual. A decided order of preference was laid down: children first, followed by people with specialist skills of benefit to the Australian war effort, then the aged and infirm, women, and finally — the majority — men of military age.⁴⁶ A last point needing to be resolved concerned a timetable for the releases. The Secretary of the Army recommended that the press should be briefed thoroughly on the matter, and as early as possible, in order to allay any public concerns should the issue receive a premature airing in parliament. Once the public had been prepared, the releases could take place.

There is no doubt that security concerns were paramount in the Army's thinking. Racism may have played its part at the local level, but there were also genuine worries as to the trustworthiness of the internees. In the Army's view, as we shall see, they had already been found wanting. It seems out of place to consider interned Jewish refugees as fomenters of strife, but that is exactly how the Army authorities saw the Singapore people after a riot — 'disturbance' was the official term — broke out at the end of September 1941.

Before proceeding, it is worth noting that there were in fact a number of compounds at Tatura. These were contiguous, and contact between compounds was both possible and frequent. On the evening of 28 September 1941 the Commander of the Guard reported to the Commandant of No 3 Camp that there was a disturbance in 'D' compound, then occupied mostly by Jewish families from Singapore. The Commandant, Major James Sproat, made an inspection of the compound, and there found everyone 'very excited'.⁴⁷ It was only with difficulty that the internees were persuaded to return to their huts, and to desist from their agitation in the compound. Major Sproat later reported that the internees responded to his orders 'slowly and very grudgingly'.⁴⁸ The cause of this disquiet was the presence of a

number of young Nazi internees, transferred to Australia from Palestine and then situated in 'C' compound, milling about along the adjoining fence, singing Nazi songs, drilling and giving the Hitler salute. Reports beyond this are conflicting. One reported the Jewish prisoners as testifying that the songs were 'provocative and anti-semitic and that the nazis [*sic*] marched in formation', while the Nazis held that 'there was no marching', that 'only young people participated', and that the songs being sung 'were harmless folk songs'.⁴⁹ Major Sproat noted that the Jewish internees 'objected to the songs' and worked themselves 'into a state of intense excitement'.⁵⁰ He later concluded that:

there was no organized marching and that young children and others in their teens, with arms linked, moved around the camp singing. No member of the Guard with a knowledge of German language heard the words of the songs, consequently there is no acceptable evidence of their nature or wording.⁵¹

The question was whether or not the songs had been anti-Semitic, and whether or not the Nazis had marched in military formation. The Nazis in compound 'C', when ordered, returned to their huts prior to an investigation; the Jews in compound 'D' remained excited and agitated, and did not (predictably, given that they were civilians) emulate the Nazis with the same degree of military efficiency when ordered to by Major Sproat. Their antagonism was further aroused when an Australian Nazi, recently arrived in compound 'D' where he had joined his wife, called across to the German singers with words of encouragement, shouts of 'Bravo, Bravo', and 'Heil Hitler', and raising his hand in the Nazi salute.⁵² Under these circumstances, with a man in their own compound so clearly identifying with the Nazis, it was understandable the Jews should remain 'excited'. They did, nonetheless, ultimately return to their huts to await Major Sproat's investigation. Upon arrival, he addressed the Jewish internees and promised that their concerns would be brought before the Group Commandant, Lieutenant-Colonel Tackaberry. Extra night sentries were then posted, and the camp settled into an uneasy sleep.

The next morning saw two further disturbances in compound 'D'. The first concerned the actions of one of the women, Tilly Heimann, who took a prominent part in publicly chastising the wife of the Australian internee over his action in supporting the Nazis the previous evening. (In a fascinating example of Australian Archives access policy, all reference to the name of the Australian Nazi has been expunged from the documents available for public view, while the names of the Jewish internees have not been restricted in any way. This is the more surprising when it is considered that most of the Singapore internees remained in Australia after the war, the majority settling in Melbourne. It would appear a reconsideration of access policy is in order here.) Earlier, the Australian internee had appeared before Lieutenant-Colonel Tackaberry and Major Sproat and 'freely admitted having acted as previously explained'. The Jews, the internee stated, had called the singers of the previous evening 'Nazi swine'.⁵³ Mrs. Heimann, it seems, was particularly upset, not only at this man's actions the night before, but at his general attitude towards what had previously been a closed community of anti-Nazi refugee Jews. She was, Major Sproat later reported, 'talking loudly, waving her arms and pointing to [the wife of the Australian Nazi], obviously using insulting terms towards her'.⁵⁴ Seeing this, Lieutenant-Colonel Tackaberry immediately ordered that Mrs Heimann be arrested and placed in a cell in order to cool off. She was released about an hour later, once the crowd had dispersed and the disturbance had been quelled.

No sooner had this happened than another disturbance broke out in compound

'D'. Three of the Jewish men — later identified by name as internees Beer, Liebrecht and Bratspies⁵⁵ — allegedly attacked the Australian Nazi internee, 'inflicting a slight head wound'.⁵⁶ One of the soldiers on guard in the compound, Private Sharpe, saw what was happening and fired into the air in order to deter the assailants from continuing their attack. They immediately released the Australian Nazi and ran for cover. The German Nazis in compound 'C', observing this, themselves now became agitated. One actually began climbing the fence in order to get into compound 'D'; two shots were then fired from a watchtower in order to turn him back. (These shots, ironically, were made at the order of a Captain Sharpe. Whether or not he and Private Sharpe were related is unrecorded.) The shots seemed to demonstrate to all internees that this was no game; or, if it had been, that the game was now over. No further disturbances were to take place in or between compounds 'C' and 'D'.

In the days which followed, recriminations flew thick and fast. Major Sproat argued that the soldiers of the guard 'showed great common sense and forbearance in dealing with the situation'.⁵⁷ An investigation by the Adjutant-General's staff, however, found that 'there was no justification for the firing of shots over the heads of women and children'.⁵⁸ The Adjutant-General's report made some interesting observations which could act as worthwhile precedents in the future:

It would appear that the first shot was fired by Private Sharpe because three internees were assaulting internee [name expunged]. Prior to the assault guards had been posted within the Compound and it should have been possible for them to have handled the matter satisfactorily and to have identified the assailants with a view to their punishment.

It is stated that the two other shots were fired by Captain Sharpe to prevent a single internee from 'C' compound from climbing the fence into 'D' Compound. Unless there were circumstances which are not recorded in the report, this also was a case which could have been more effectively handled by the guards within the Compound.⁵⁹

Summarising his criticism, the Adjutant-General was particularly harsh on the officers for allowing the shots to be fired in the first place:

While it is desirable that firm action should be supported where the circumstances call for it, it is equally essential that anything in the nature of loose or panic measures should be sternly suppressed.

It is most undesirable when a state of excitement exists as it evidently did at the time in question that soldiers should be permitted to use their firearms in connection with individual incidents not related to the safety of members of the guard or attempted escape.⁶⁰

The garrison members, needless to say, were unimpressed by the indictment directed towards them by the Adjutant-General. Lieutenant-Colonel Tackaberry, keen to defend his troops, had already given his interpretation of events in a memorandum of 29 September, and his account left no room for doubt as to who was at fault:

The compound concerned has given a great deal of trouble during a period of several months, and the Jews therein are continually asking for the removal of the Nazis and Fascists who are interned with them.

I am of the opinion that the disturbance of last night and today was a planned demonstration in order to advance their case for the removal of the Nazis and Fascists.

None of the Jews, including the Compound Leader, evinced any desire to help the Camp Commandant to restore order.

On the other hand, the Internees in the other Compounds dispersed quickly when ordered to do so, and the Compound Leaders were very helpful.

From my enquiries I am of the opinion that the people in 'C' Compound singing the German songs, were doing so merely in relaxation and not with any intent to 'bait' the Jews.⁶¹

The General Officer Commanding, Southern Command, responded in a confidential memorandum to the Secretary of the Military Board:

As to the report of Lt.-Col. Tackaberry, the first point is conceded, but not the second; although the conduct of [name expunged] undoubtedly aggravated the disturbance. As to the third point, it is considered that whether the singing in 'C' Compound was motivated by levity or not, it was the primary cause of the resultant bad feeling and displays.⁶²

As a concession, and possibly to soothe damaged sensitivities, it was added that the shots fired by the guards *were* justified in the circumstances.

On 29 September 1941 the government-appointed Official Visitor to the Internment Camps, the Honourable Mr Justice Gavan Duffy, received telegrams from internees on all sides at Tatura, outlining what had taken place there. He launched his own, independent inquiry into the matter, and on 7 October reported as follows:

Both sides are ready to swear to the most contradictory stories with the utmost assurance and it would require, in our opinion, a Solomon to arrive at any really satisfactory conclusion. The truth of the matter probably is that both parties detest one another so much that when they are placed in proximity the slightest incident will provoke an altercation, and if circumstances permit, a riot, and in the present cases the probability is that whoever gave the first provocation it was most willingly accepted and that substantially both sides are to blame for what happened.⁶³

This was perhaps the most accurate estimation of the situation. The Army, which was clearly upset at the whole incident, soon thereafter made a decision concerning the internees' fate: to prevent a recurrence of such disturbances, instructions were issued to remove all Nazi and Fascist internees from compound 'D'. It would henceforth be an exclusive camp for Jews only. The leaders of compounds 'A', 'B' and 'C' were instructed to preserve peaceful relationships between the compounds, and this order was promptly carried out.⁶⁴

The disturbances of late September 1941 had been foreseen. The Army was informed as early as December 1940 that trouble might occur, yet nothing was done until a near riot had broken out and shots were fired. On 17 December 1940 the High Commissioner's Office in London had sent a cable, intended for the Army's attention, to the effect that refugee organisations in the United Kingdom were 'rather concerned' that a number of anti-Nazis (for which read 'Jews') were confined in the same camp as Nazis. The camp was specified as Tatura. The High Commissioner's Office had given the refugee organisations an assurance — wrongly, as it turned out — that the Australian authorities were fully aware of the gravity of the situation, 'and would place anti-Nazis in separate sections'.⁶⁵ This was fine; but the High Commissioner's Office did not say (nor did it know) that some Nazis moved across with them.

The Army realised its mistake by removing all Nazis from compound 'D'. It was entirely possible that they felt a greater mistake had been made by allowing the internees to be sent to Australia in the first place. The Department of the Interior, responsible for the migration function, came under fire for not having said no to the introduction of the internees — though this was not an immigration matter, as the internees had not been released into Australian society. Neither Interior nor the Army felt disposed to taking any further internees from the Straits Settlements. After the entry of Japan into the war in early December 1941, the government at Singapore sought to evacuate women and children from what was likely to become a war zone, and asked permission to send some of them to Australia. The Department of the Interior, forecasting the Army's position, agreed to take in such evacuees 'provided that no enemy alien women or children are included'.⁶⁶ We are left with an image of 'thus far, no further' on the part of the responsible Australian authorities.

By the time the government was discussing whether or not to release the Sing-

apore internees, there were thus mixed feelings about what sort of a risk they might pose. The Japanese entry into the war served to quell such concerns. By 7 January 1942 the Prime Minister was cabling the British Dominions Secretary the confidential news that fit men of military age were being considered for voluntary enlistment into a labour unit of the Australian Army.⁶⁷ Hereafter, it was just a matter of time, of waiting for the bureaucratic inertia to catch up with the decisions made at the government level.

For the men, the story now became subsumed within the larger *Dunera* saga, for by this time — early 1942 — the *Dunera* internees had already long been settled alongside the Singapore people at Tatura, and their larger numbers effectively swamped any separate identity held by those from the Straits Settlements. The story is by now well known. From early 1942 certain of the male internees were permitted to volunteer for work outside the camp as labour engaged in the fruit harvest. Release for fruit picking acted as a precedent for a more general enlistment of the men into a specially formed Army labour corps. This had been speculated upon for some time, and now the Japanese threat forced a revision of the internees' status. The fruit-picking detachments were reformed in April 1942 to become the Eighth Employment Company of the Australian Military Forces. With this the men could obtain their release. They were now part of the Australian Army, though anomalously they were not Australian or British citizens (nor, by virtue of the enemy alien status which was not resolved until 1944,⁶⁸ eligible to become so). As soldiers, they were free to enter Australian life: some married Australian women, some began a university education, some purchased property. Nearly all formed ties in other ways to what was rapidly becoming a new homeland. When on leave, they were not bound by any of the restrictions reserved for other enemy aliens, freeing up enormously their ability to travel. The men from Singapore in the Eighth Employment Company had effectively become — within the limits imposed by military service — free residents of the Commonwealth of Australia.

For a time, therefore, a bizarre situation prevailed. Male Singapore internees of military age were released from captivity, joined the armed forces, and were to all intents and purposes welcomed into the mainstream of Australian life. Their wives and children, where applicable, had to remain in internment as enemy aliens, still subject to an arrangement with a Straits Settlements government which — after the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942 — no longer existed. All sides saw the need to rectify this incongruity as rapidly as possible, and thus throughout 1942 a steady stream of ex-Singapore women and children were released from internment. Nearly 40 were released on 24 April 1942, a little over two weeks after the formation of the Eighth Employment Company.⁶⁹ The next three months saw almost the same number released in like manner. In July 1942 the Minister for the Army appointed an Overseas Internees' Investigation Board to enquire into all those who remained in internment, and by 20 February 1943 some 115 wives and children of men enlisted (or otherwise engaged on work of national importance) were recorded as having been released. Eighty-five ex-Singapore men were then in the Eighth Employment Company, seven were otherwise engaged, and twelve aged or infirm men had been released. A further twelve had not been recommended for release by the Investigation Board for various security reasons.⁷⁰

The problems facing the released women were of a type both different from and, it could be argued, harsher than those confronting the men. Not only was there a problem with language — Army service is a great integrative force in this regard — but major difficulties had to be overcome concerning housing, utilities, provision of

the necessities of life and, where applicable, schooling for the children. As the current article is mainly concerned with the relationships between the Army and the internees, this is not the place to discuss the social aspects of the Singapore internees' experiences. A study of the post-internment encounters of the women and children from the Straits Settlements remains to be done. Their position, as a group, was unique in the history of Australian internment policy and practice; because the *Dunera* was comprised only of men and boys, most of whom joined the Eighth Employment Company or were repatriated to Britain for Army service there, the women and children from Singapore were the only body of ex-overseas Jewish internees released into Australian civilian life during World War One.

As with the *Dunera* internees, ultimate permission was granted to allow the Singapore internees to remain in Australia at the end of the war. For many, it was a welcome invitation. The vast majority saw that returning to Singapore would be a backward step, not only because of the cost of re-establishment but also owing to the fact that by now Australia had become home. In January 1946 it was estimated that at least one-third of the released Straits Settlements internees had received landing permits from the Australian government, thereby confirming their new status as permanent immigrants.⁷¹ Many more would follow throughout the rest of 1946. All the ex-internees had to do was apply, and, depending on such matters as Army service, conduct while interned, and degree of security risk (which would have been negligible in view of their having already been released), the coveted landing permit would be granted. As Australia was about to embark upon its new large-scale drive to recruit immigrants from Europe, it was felt that no better start could be made than to accept for permanent residence people who were known and had already served Australia. The fact that they were almost all Jews was at this stage overlooked as a factor determining the government's attitude.

All in all, what broad conclusions can be drawn concerning the Australian government's relationship with the internees sent from the Straits Settlements in September 1940? As I see it, four main themes stand out, and make the Singapore internees' experience a unique one.

To begin with, although this was not the only transport which included women and children sent to Australia for internment — the *Queen Elizabeth* and other ships brought German women and children from Palestine and Iran during the war — the *Queen Mary* was the only ship to bring a large number of Jewish women and children. It had been anticipated that the wives of the *Dunera* men would follow them from Britain in 1940, but in the aftermath of that ship's horrible voyage the Australian government decided that no further ships containing internees from the United Kingdom would be agreed to. The female and juvenile Jewish internees from Singapore thus introduced a new dimension to the question of overseas internment: the Australian authorities had to devise a means to humanely satisfy their requirements while incarcerated, and then, later, to find a way of arranging for their absorption into Australian society at a time of total war. On the whole, it could be said that the Army was moderately successful in meeting those needs.

It needed to be. The second major theme brought out by the Singapore affair demanded it. Of all the overseas internees accepted by Australia — whether from Britain, Palestine, Iran, New Caledonia or wherever — only Singapore refused to take its internees back once they had been deported. This refusal took place, it must be emphasised, not in the aftermath of enemy conquest and liberation, but well before it. The internees were abandoned by the Straits Settlements government, and dumped into the lap of an incredulous Australian Army. Just what Australia

was to do with the internees at the end of their captivity was unknown, at first; the Australians held firm to their original position of not making any commitment that the internees could stay in Australia. In the meantime, they would be held in internment pending any decision from Canberra, or, in the unlikely event that the Straits Settlements government had a change of heart, from Singapore. They would not be released into Australia, but if the Straits Settlements government wished to release them, they could be transported back to Singapore and released there. In this 'Catch-22' situation, the internees had no room for manoeuvre. They were, as Rabbi Danglow had rightly described them, nobody's children.

Little wonder, given this, that massive frustrations built up. To rub salt into those wounds, Nazis were placed into the same compound with the Singapore Jews, who for obvious reasons had nothing in common other than German or Austrian citizenship. Almost all of the Jewish internees were refugees from Nazism who had escaped the Third Reich and had found a haven in Singapore (or were in some cases on their way to one in Shanghai). This insult, coupled with the frustration of their internment, bubbled over in the 'disturbances' of late September 1941 — surely the only case on record of Jews engaging in riotous behaviour while under internment in Australia. This third key aspect of the Singapore experience is not a minor one. Jews had for long been viewed in Australia, as elsewhere, as people who were passive, who did not fight back in the face of perceived injustice, and who relied on others to do their dirty work for them. In the aftermath of the September disturbances, the Australian Army was alerted to the fact that at least this group of Jews was not prepared to lay down quietly and submit to the dictates of those who would oppress them. While it would be going too far to suggest that this forced an overall change in the perceptions held by Australians toward Jews, it nonetheless demonstrated to one sector of the Australian polity that previously-held views may be fallacious. The extent to which this may have influenced the Army's reception of a viable and strong State of Israel after 1948 awaits further study.

Finally, it is worthy of note that the vast majority of the Singapore internees, who had been released in Victoria to join the Army (if men) or had been sent to Melbourne to enter civilian life (if women and children), stayed where they were after the war. Again, this phenomenon had no parallel in any of the other groups of overseas internees sent to Australia. Of the original two-and-a-half thousand *Dunera* internees, more than two-thirds had left Australia by the end of the war. Most of those sent from Palestine and Iran had been repatriated by 1947, with hardly any applying to stay in Australia or being offered the opportunity to do so. (The one major exception was that group known as the Templers, members of the Temple Society religious order from Germany. Deported from Palestine in 1941, they remained in internment until 1946. It has been estimated that 95 per cent of those sent to Australia remained.⁷²) Nearly all the Singapore people, however, settled in Melbourne and remained there for good. There were, of course, some who did not, but in general terms we are looking at a discrete community within the larger Melbourne Jewish community. Ironically — unlike their better-known *Dunera* counterparts — the ex-Singapore community never assembled for a reunion until September 1990, exactly fifty years after their deportation on the *Queen Mary*. One of the contributing reasons for this may have been the close informal contact maintained between many members of the group over the years.

The story of the Singapore internees has not, until now, been chronicled. A number of reasons account for this, not the least of which has been the production of a vast amount of material on the much larger *Dunera* experience. As stated

earlier, once the *Dunera* internees had been transferred to Tatura the *Queen Mary* group became absorbed into this numerically greater company of overseas internees. There can be no doubt, however, that the Singapore internees, with a history at once unique and dramatic, are deserving of their own place in the Australian Jewish record. It is hoped that future studies of their experience will shed further light on what has until now been in danger of becoming a lost episode in Jewish and Australian history.

NOTES

NB In these notes, the following abbreviations will be used:

AA A Australian Archives, Canberra

AA MP Australian Archives, Melbourne

1. AA A1608, file J20/1/3, 'Transfer to Australia of Internees from the East. Malaya etc.', Governor, Straits Settlements, to Governor-General of Australia, Canberra, 24 June 1940.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, Governor, Straits Settlements, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 25 June 1940.
4. AA MP 729/6, file 63/401/173, 'Internees from Abroad. Internment Camps', Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, to Officer Administering the Straits Settlements government, 3 July 1940.
5. AA A1608, file J20/1/3, 'Transfer to Australia of Internees from the East. Malaya etc.', Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, London, and Officer Administering Straits Settlements government, Singapore, 16 July 1940.
6. *Ibid.*, Governor, Straits Settlements, Singapore, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 17 July 1940.
7. *Ibid.*, Governor, Straits Settlements, Singapore, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 7 August 1940.
8. AA MP 729/6, file 63/401/201, 'Straits Settlements', Officer Administering the government, Singapore, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 28 August 1940.
9. AA A1608, file J20/1/3, 'Transfer to Australia of Internees from the East. Malaya etc.', Officer Administering the government, Singapore, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 4 September 1940.
10. *Ibid.*, J.A. Carrodus (Secretary, Department of the Interior) to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, 5 September 1940.
11. *Ibid.*, Prime Minister's Department to Officer Administering the government, Singapore, 10 September 1940.
12. *Ibid.*, Governor, Straits Settlements, Singapore, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 16 September 1940.
13. *Ibid.*, Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, to Governor, Straits Settlements, Singapore, 18 September 1940.
14. *Ibid.*, Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, to Officer Administering the Straits Settlements, Singapore, 17 September 1940. The Wentchers, Julian and Tina, were artists from Germany who had lived and worked in Malaya since about 1933. I am grateful to Eva de Jong-Duldig for this information.
15. *Ibid.*, S.W. Jones, Officer Administering the Straits Settlements, Singapore, to Prime Minister Menzies, 20 September 1940.
16. *Ibid.*
17. AA MP 729/6, file 63/401/201, 'Straits Settlements', Captain A.R. Heighway to Director of Personal Services, AHQ, Melbourne, 30 September 1940.
18. At least one senior Army officer felt the same way. Major-General Starke, the Adjutant-General, wrote after an inspection of the huts at Tatura — prior to the internees' arrival — that 'the accommodation provided was very meagre, the dimension of each compartment being 15' x 9' with masonite or walls of similar material separating the cubicles from each other'. It was felt that 'the size of each room (which necessarily must include some furniture for women, and particularly if there should be a small child that has to sleep with its parents) is too small'. This, it was noted, was 'quite apart from the fact that the thin partitions in between the cubicles give very little privacy'. See AA MP 729/6, file 63/401/173, 'Internees from Abroad. Internment Camps', Major-General Starke (Adjutant-General), minute on file to 2 Military Group, 23 September 1940.

19. AA MP 385/4, file 1940/242, 'Internees from Abroad. Applications for Release', G. Seefeld (Camp Leader, Tatura Internment Camp) to Camp Commandant, 29 September 1940.
20. AA A1608, file J20/1/3, 'Transfer to Australia of Internees from the East. Malaya etc.', S.W. Jones, Officer Administering the Straits Settlements, to Prime Minister Menzies, 9 October 1940.
21. AA MP 385/4, file 1940/242, 'Internees from Abroad. Applications for Release', Mr K. Arndt and 170 others, Internment Camp No 3, Tatura, to the Colonial Secretary, Government House, Singapore, 28 October 1940.
22. *Ibid.*
23. AA MP 508/1, file 255/702/1046, 'Jewish Refugees in British Malaya Sent to Australia for Internment', J.V. Landor (Jewish Refugee Relief Committee, Singapore) to P.C. Spender (Minister for the Army, Canberra), 11 January 1941.
24. AA MP 508/1, file 255/742/334, 'Paul Ernst Gerhard Seefeld [and Family] — Internees from Straits Settlements', Messrs Oakley, Thompson and Co, Melbourne, to the Minister for the Army, Melbourne, 15 January 1941.
25. AA MP 508/1, file 255/702/981, 'German and Austrian Internees mostly of Jewish Faith', Rabbi Jacob Danglow (St Kilda, Victoria) to Prime Minister R.G. Menzies, Melbourne, 17 January 1941.
26. *Ibid.*
27. AA A1608, file J20/1/3, 'Transfer to Australia of Internees from the East. Malaya etc.', S.W. Jones (Governor's Deputy, Singapore) to Prime Minister R.G. Menzies, 15 January 1941 (emphasis mine).
28. In fact, the Army had for some time already been showing its displeasure at Singapore's general attitude. In an internal document written for the Minister on 6 February 1941, the Acting Secretary of the Army noted that:

The Government of the Straits Settlements is . . . fully aware of the policy of the Commonwealth. These internees are nearly all enemy aliens and information concerning them as supplied by the Government of the Straits Settlements is considered inadequate for the purpose of determining which of them may be harmless.

See AA MP 508/1, file 255/702/1046, 'Jewish Refugees in British Malaya Sent to Australia for Internment', Acting Secretary, Department of the Army, Minute for Minister (*Straits Settlements Internees*), 6 February 1941.
29. AA MP 508/1, file 255/702/981, 'German and Austrian Internees Mostly of Jewish Faith', Secretary, Department of the Army, to Rabbi Jacob Danglow (St Kilda, Victoria), 13 March 1941.
30. AA MP 729/6, file 63/401/272, 'Straits Settlements — Internees Applications for Release', internal Army memorandum (*Straits Settlements Internees — Applications for Release*) undated (March 1941?).
31. *Ibid.*, Secretary, Department of the Army, to the Officer Administering the Government, Singapore, 17 May 1941.
32. *Ibid.*, Secretary, Department of the Army, to High Commissioner's Office, London, 22 April 1941.
33. *Ibid.*, Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, to Secretary, Department of Defence Co-ordination, 26 April 1941 (conveying contents of cable received from High Commissioner's Office, London, 24 April 1941).
34. AA A1608, file J20/1/3, 'Transfer to Australia of Internees from the East. Malaya etc.', Governor, Straits Settlements, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 6 June 1941 (emphasis mine).
35. AA MP 508/1, file 255/702/1063, 'Children of Internees, Personal Particulars', Gerhard Seefeld. (Camp Leader, Tatura) to the Commandant, Internment Camp 3, Tatura, 24 February 1941.
36. *Ibid.*, handwritten minute from Adjutant-General's Office, 12 March 1941. This was confirmed formally in a memorandum one week later, when the Director of Personal Services added the point that signing any Red Cross or other forms to the effect that the children were British would not be of any use in the matter, as 'Status or nationality of internees is not affected by signing the form concerning the communication of names to enemy governments and International Red Cross'. See *Ibid.*, Army memorandum (*Children of Straits Settlements Internees*), Director of Personal Services, 15 March 1941.
37. AA MP 729/6, file 63/401/335, 'Overseas Internees Pt 1', H.V. Evatt to Minister for the Army, 28 June 1941.
38. *Ibid.*, Ministerial Direction from P.C. Spender, Minister for the Army, 8 August 1941.
39. *Ibid.*, Major-General J. Northcott, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, to Secretary, Department of the Army (*Proposals for the Release of Certain of the Internees sent to this Country from the Straits Settlements and the United Kingdom — Dr Evatt*), 18 July 1941.
40. *Ibid.*, Major-General Starke, Adjutant-General, to Major-General Northcott, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, 28 July 1941.

41. *Ibid.*, Major-General Northcott, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, to Major-General Starke, Adjutant-General, 4 August 1941.
42. *Ibid.*, Secretary, Department of the Army (Canberra) to Assistant Secretary, Department of the Army (Melbourne), 27 August 1941.
43. *Ibid.*, draft Cabinet Agendum (*Internees from the United Kingdom and Straits Settlements — Release in Australia*), August 1941.
44. *Ibid.*, memorandum for the Secretary, Department of the Army, from Frank Strahan, Secretary to Cabinet, 17 November 1941.
45. *Ibid.*, Army memorandum (*Overseas Internees*) prepared by the Secretary, Department of the Army, for Minister, Department of the Army, November 1941.
46. *Ibid.*
47. AA MP 70/1, file 36/101/45, 'Internees — Disturbances 1941', Army memorandum (*Disorders at No. 3 Camp, Tatura*) for General Officer Commanding, Southern Command, no date (October 1941?).
48. *Ibid.*, *Report of Disturbance 'D' Compound* by Major James Sproat, Commandant, No 3 Internment camp, Tatura, 29 September 1941.
49. *Ibid.*, Army memorandum (*Disorders at No. 3 Camp, Tatura*) for General Officer Commanding, Southern Command, no date (October 1941?).
50. *Ibid.*, *Report of Disturbance 'D' Compound* by Major James Sproat, Commandant, No. 3 Internment Camp, Tatura, 29 September 1941.
51. *Ibid.*, Army memorandum (*Disorders at No. 3 Camp, Tatura*) for General Officer Commanding, Southern Command, no date (October 1941?).
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*, *Report of Disturbance 'D' Compound* by Major James Sproat, Commandant, No. 3 Internment Camp, Tatura, 29 September 1941.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*, Acting Adjutant-General, Southern Command, to Headquarters, Internment Camp Tatura, 16 October 1941.
56. *Ibid.*, Army memorandum (*Disorders at No. 3 Camp, Tatura*) for General Officer Commanding, Southern Command, no date (October 1941?).
57. *Ibid.*, *Report of Disturbance 'D' Compound* by Major James Sproat, Commandant, No. 3 Internment Camp, Tatura, 29 September 1941.
58. *Ibid.*, Director of Personal Services for Adjutant-General, to Southern Command Headquarters, 7 October 1941.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*, confidential memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel W.T. Tackaberry (*Disturbance in 'D' Compound. No 3 Camp*), 29 September 1941.
62. *Ibid.*, General Officer Commanding, Southern Command, to Secretary, Military Board (Confidential), no date.
63. *Ibid.*, Army memorandum (*Disorders at No. 3 Camp, Tatura*) for General Officer Commanding, Southern Command, no date (October 1941?).
64. *Ibid.*
65. AA A433, file 45/2/6093, 'Enemy Alien Internees from U.K. and Malaya — Transfer to Australia', High Commissioner's Office, London, to Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, 17 December 1940.
66. AA A433, file 49/2/8518, 'Admission to Australia of European Women and Children Evacuated from Straits Settlements (Policy File)', Department of the Interior memorandum (*Admission to Australia of European Women and Children Evacuated from Penang*) prepared by John Horgan, 22 December 1941; handwritten minute by T.H. Garrett, Assistant Secretary, 22 December 1941 (emphasis in text).
67. AA A981, file Defence Aliens, 36B, 'Aliens. General. Internees Transported from British Countries. General', Prime Minister's Department, Canberra, to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, London, 7 January 1942. Documents concerning the bureaucratic discussions held to determine the fate of both the Singapore and *Dunera* internees can be found in Paul R. Bartrop with Gabrielle Eisen (eds.), *The Dunera Affair: A Documentary Resource Book*, Melbourne: Schwartz and Wilkinson/Jewish Museum of Australia, 1990, pp 96–124.
68. For a discussion of the absurdities accompanying Australian policy towards the issue of 'enemy alien' status during the war years, see Paul R. Bartrop, 'Enemy Aliens or Stateless Persons? The Legal Status of Refugees from Germany in Wartime Australia', *AJHSJ*, vol X, part 4, 1988, pp 270–80.

69. AA A373, file 11525/123, 'Lists of Alien Internees ex Malaya — Italians and Germans', *Nominal Roll of German Internees Straits Settlement [sic]*, no date (April 1947?). This roll is a complete list of all internees interned from Singapore, and includes the date of their release into Australia (or, in the case of four internees, their repatriation to the Middle East or Europe). One internee, Franz Rosenthal, was listed in this post-war roll as being 'still interned'. An attached nominal roll lists the respective fates of the Italian Straits Settlements internees, many of whom remained in captivity until 1945 and 1946 — presumably because they, unlike the Jewish internees, could not be released for army service (or its corollary, dependence upon those undergoing army service).
70. AA A373, file 8296, 'Release of Overseas Internees', confidential report (*Memorandum on Overseas Internees Transferred to Australia*) prepared by Major Julian D. Layton (Home Office Liaison Officer) for Brigadier W.B. Simpson (Director-General of Security), 20 February 1943.
71. AA A445, file 258/1/5, 'Question of Release or Deportation of Overseas Internees from Iran, Palestine and Straits Settlements and Appointment of Justice Hutchins', Department of External Affairs, Canberra, to High Commissioner's Office, London (from Department of the Army), 23 January 1946.
72. Joyce Hammond, *Walls of Wire: Tatura, Rushworth, Murchison*, Rushworth, Vic.: The Author, 1990, pp 110–111.

THE VAJEX STORY: ACHIEVEMENTS IN WAR AND PEACE

Walter Jona

The Victorian Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, more familiarly known as VAJEX, is much more than just another organisation in the Jewish community of Victoria. Its historic role and that of its predecessor associations distinguishes it from most of the other 150-plus organised Jewish groupings in Victoria, for it is the only Jewish organisation which singularly perpetuates and honours the memory of Jewish men and women in the Armed Services of Australia in the world wars and in all the other conflicts in which Australia has been engaged.

In more recent years, VAJEX has welcomed to its active membership large numbers of Allied servicemen and women of World War Two, including many Jews from the former USSR now residing in Australia.

VAJEX has vigorously and persistently endeavoured to ensure that succeeding generations should know of the Jewish record in Australia's wars. It is a record of immense pride. The statistics of Jewish war service in the armed forces of Australia reveal a remarkably disproportionate response from a tiny section of the general Australian community. The sacrifices of Jewish service personnel and the level of personal achievement of servicemen and women far exceeded proportionately the comparative statistics for the rest of Australia.

Furthermore, the contribution made to Australia by the Jewish survivors of Australia's wars and the services rendered by them to the well-being of Australia and its citizens is as remarkable and distinctive as the war-time service itself.

VAJEX is the symbol and torch carrier of the Jewish spirit which permeated the Allied fight for survival and freedom. It is the beacon which has focused on the Anzac spirit which flowered in abundance through the blood of Australian Jewry. As a fully identifiable but integrated part of the total Australian population, the Jewish community has a record which is literally second to none in its services and sacrifices for the preservation of the highest Jewish and Australian ideals and in the safeguarding of freedom and peace in times of both peace and war.

Therefore, it is proper that some of the highlights, notable achievements and landmarks in the history of VAJEX be permanently recorded in the annals of Australian Jewish history. In so doing, it is appropriate to recollect some of the great personalities who served VAJEX and its predecessors over the years.

As a result of the large-scale Jewish immigration to Australia in the post-war years, many people think of the Jewish community in Australia as a relatively new community. This, of course, is not the case, for vibrant Jewish life in this country and the Jewish contribution to the development and security of the Australian nation goes back to the earliest days of settlement. It began with the arrival of Jews in the First Fleet in 1788, later to be joined by numerous free settlers from England and thousands of freedom-seeking immigrants, including refugees who had fled the various waves of anti-Semitism in Europe.

As the population in Australia increased, so did Jewish community life. Australian Jews were not only keeping alive and practising their ancient faith and

customs, but they were also accepting their full responsibilities as citizens in the community life and affairs of the land of their birth or their adoption.

One of these responsibilities was to defend this country whenever its citizens were called on to do so. In the Boer War and in the subsequent two world wars, as well as in other conflicts, Australian Jews have always rallied to the national cause with a great spirit of loyalty and genuine patriotism.

The statistics of Jewish enlistments in the 1914–18 war reveal that out of a total Australian Jewish population of less than 18,000, more than 2300 or in excess of twelve per cent enlisted voluntarily in the AIF, as against 9 per cent for the whole nation.

A total of 176 Jewish soldiers held Commissioned Officer rank, the most distinguished of course being that great Jewish citizen soldier, lawyer and engineer, General Sir John Monash. Sixty-one Jewish soldiers from Victoria alone were killed in action.

In World War Two more than 3800 Jewish men and women served in the Australian Armed Forces representing a significantly higher percentage than the national enlistment rate. Of these, 134 paid the supreme sacrifice, including 58 from Victoria.

In both world wars, the death toll of Australian Jewish servicemen was slightly higher than that of their non-Jewish fellow Australians.

The remarkably high rate of enlistment in the 1939–45 War had a unique impact on Jewish communal life in Victoria. For example, of the seventy-two male members of the Youth Group of the Liberal synagogue in Melbourne, fifty-nine enlisted in the forces. From the 3rd St. Kilda Scout Group (later to be known as Danglow's Own), 129 or twenty-five per cent of all former scouts enlisted, of whom ten paid the supreme sacrifice. Almost one hundred per cent of the male membership of Jewish sporting clubs joined the services.

Australian Jewry's very high numerical proportionate contribution to the armed services, together with its high level of inspiration and leadership within the Forces, as well as the many recorded accounts of gallantry, provide an illustrious chapter in Australian history of which every Australian — both Jewish and non-Jewish — should feel proud. Australian Jewish servicemen and women received no less than one hundred and twenty war-time awards for bravery and conspicuous service, a remarkable achievement for such a small percentage of the Australian population.

Following the end of World War Two, Jewish returned servicemen and women, inspired by the ideals for which they had fought and determined to ensure that their dear comrades and their families would not be forgotten, together with returned servicemen and women of all faiths, joined the RSL and other general community organisations committed to the remembrance of the fallen, the welfare of the living and the preservation of their sacred ideals. In addition to their participation in the Remembrance and Anzac commemorations held within the general community, the Jewish returned men of Melbourne in the early 1920s began to meet informally as a group on occasions such as Remembrance Day in order to form a *minyán* and recite the mourner's prayer or *Kaddish* in memory of those killed in action in the 1914–18 War. All of these men were later to hold office in or give strong support to the Jewish Returned Soldiers' Circle, established under the presidency of Colonel Isadore Isaacson in 1929. With Isaacson at these early meetings were such well-known personalities as Arthur Groenwoud, Louis Orbuck, Harold Cohen, Sam Crawcour, Mannie Eilenberg, Bert Blashki, Archie Michaelis and many others.

In 1924, the Chevra Kadisha — the Jewish Burial Society — in Melbourne

undertook the erection of an obelisk in the grounds of the Melbourne General Cemetery. The initiative and driving force for the erection of the obelisk, which was unveiled and consecrated by Chaplain Rabbi Danglow, Rabbi Joseph Abrahams and Chaplain Rabbi (later Sir) Israel Brodie on 14 December 1924, largely came from the then President of the Chevra Kadisha Joseph Waxman and its Honorary Secretary, Casper J. Perlstein.

Interestingly, Joseph Waxman was the grandfather of VAJEX stalwarts Meryl Slutzkin and David Cohen, whilst Casper Perlstein was the father of former VAJEX president Lou Perlstein.

The obelisk, a memorial to the sixty-one Jews from Victoria who paid the supreme sacrifice with Australia's armed forces in World War One was, in 1947, to have added to it a further fifty-eight names of those Victorian Jews who were killed in action with Australia's forces in the 1939–45 War.

The Victorian Jewish Returned Soldiers' Circle, founded as I mentioned in 1929, and with Sir John Monash amongst its members, continued under Isadore Isaacson's presidency until 1937, when Brigadier Harold E. Cohen took the chair until the end of the war in 1945.

During those war years, the Circle worked strenuously for the war effort. It provided comforts for the troops overseas, despatched a regular supply of food parcels to Britain, assisted the Jewish chaplaincy and kept the interests of serving and returned Jewish servicemen and women above all else. A close liaison was maintained with the senior Hebrew Chaplain, Colonel Rabbi Jacob Danglow, whose chaplaincy service in all Australia's wars from 1905 until his death in 1962 had earned him a high reputation. Regular contact was maintained with Rabbi Major L.M. Goldman, whose six years' active and energetic service had brought him the endearing respect of Jewish troops in both the Middle East and Pacific theatres of war. Chaplain Goldman's premature death in the 1950s was undoubtedly accelerated by his war service, whilst Rabbi Danglow continued to render service as the beloved senior patron and chaplain until his death in 1962. By 1946, the membership of the Victorian Jewish Returned Soldiers' Circle had naturally reached a record level and there were several unsuccessful attempts to amalgamate with the Victorian Jewish Ex-Servicemen's Association, which in 1945 had been formed to cater for those Jewish servicemen and women who had not seen service overseas.

An amalgamation of interests did eventually take place on 11 July 1949, with the constitution of the Returned Soldiers' Circle being widened to permit membership of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and women with at least six months war-time service. Philip Opas, the President of the Returned Soldiers' Circle, continued on as President of the newly constituted organisation known as the Victorian Jewish Returned and Ex-Servicemen's Association. The Victorian Jewish Ex-Servicemen's Association then disbanded and by 1950 sixty-five of its members, including its President, Ben Green, and its Honorary Secretary, Arnold Blashki, had joined the Victorian Jewish Returned and Ex-Servicemen's Association.

In later years, the constitution was to be further widened to include servicemen and women who served in any of the allied forces against the common enemy. The ranks of VAJEX membership accordingly grew to embrace a very wide and representative group of veterans from many lands who had now made Australia their new home.

In fact, by 1986 just on sixty Jewish veterans who had fought with the Russian Army against the Nazis and who had managed with courage and determination to get out of the Soviet Union, had joined the membership of VAJEX.



*VAJEX patron-in-chief Sir Zelman Cowen (centre, left) with VAJEX president Dr. Sol Rose at a Remembrance Day service in the Jewish section of Melbourne General Cemetery, Carlton.
(Courtesy Sol Rose & Walter Jona)*

During the 1950s, World War One stalwarts who had so magnificently formed and led the organisation for nearly thirty years, whilst still retaining active interest and providing guidance, decided to hand over more reins of office to the younger men and women from World War Two.

The Australian Federation of Jewish Ex-Service Associations, comprising Jewish ex-service organisations from the five mainland states of Australia was formed in 1948, and provided a great impetus for the development of national programmes during the important periods of post-war rehabilitation. One of these programmes was the British Ex-Service Immigration Scheme, under which scores of British Jewish Ex-Servicemen and their families were sponsored to Australia under the Australian government's immigration programme.

In 1956, the Victorian Jewish Returned and Ex-Servicemen's Association changed its name to the Victorian Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, more familiarly known as VAJEX. This name change followed a recommendation by the name of each state association and as a result we saw adoption of the names VAJEX, NAJEX, SAJEX and QAJEX respectively, with the federal body becoming known by the abbreviation FAJEX.

The Victorian Association, VAJEX, continued to thrive and to carry out the vital services entrusted to it. Its welfare and helping hands fund aided scores of its members and their families on a confidential basis, whilst the hospital visitation teams serviced Jewish ex-service patients in all hospitals as well as providing

regular monthly visits to the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital. The VAJEX blood bank teams under the leadership of such people as Clive Rose, Frank Slutzkin and the late Eric Ciddor donated thousands of pints of blood in their quarterly visits to the Repatriation Hospital.

In addition to the VAJEX initiatives and participation in the Remembrance and Anzac Day services over the years, it has also ensured that funeral honours would be available at the funeral of every deceased Jewish ex-serviceman and woman.

One of the most honoured possessions of VAJEX and the community itself is the Book of Remembrance, containing in the first instance the names of the Australian Jewish fallen of the two World Wars and later the names of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and women who have subsequently passed away. This book was dedicated by Senior Chaplain Rabbi J. Danglow on 18 April 1944, and the first names to be dedicated to its pages were those of Sir John Monash, Colonel Isadore Isaacson, W.S. Abraham, Lawrence Orbeck, Athol Harlem, Merton Ciddor and Issy Smith, one of the two Australian Jewish Victoria Cross winners and one of a total of seven Jews to win that decoration.

The Book of Remembrance is formally the possession of the entire community but has been permanently placed in the safe custody of VAJEX. It was for years regularly displayed, by rotation, within the various synagogues of Melbourne, and on all ceremonial VAJEX occasions. The book continues to be one of the most revered possessions of VAJEX and is an essential ingredient of all VAJEX remembrance functions.

The vibrant VAJEX membership and the desire to proclaim and practice the Association's ideals and objectives led to the formation of an eastern suburbs sub-branch of the Association in 1959. With more than one hundred members, this sub-branch complemented the parent organisation in all activities, and amongst its pet projects was the traditional VAJEX Annual Legacy Picnic and the donation of a recreation hall to the Legacy Home, Harelands, in Kew. Such was the type of community service undertaken by VAJEX for the benefit of all ex-servicemen and women and their families.

The close VAJEX link with the Third St. Kilda (Danglow's Own) Scout Group, whose Elwood headquarters houses the VAJEX headquarters, goes back to a basic and common interest since the Group was first formed in 1924, the same year as the obelisk was erected in the Melbourne General Cemetery.

In 1952, VAJEX established a scholarship fund at Mount Scopus War Memorial College for children and, later, grandchildren, of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and women. In the same year, the Association's official publication *Parade* was launched and has continued its unbroken forty-one years of regular publication to this day.

Since the end of World War Two, VAJEX has involved itself in many significant debates and issues of both a Jewish and general community nature. Many large and sometimes controversial meetings have been held, but none have been so well attended and so enthusiastically unanimous as was the occasion in January 1960 when several hundred of its members attended or pledged their support to a special meeting of members called at short notice, under the chairmanship of Jack Lipshut, to take appropriate action in response to the wave of swastika and anti-Semitic daubings which had suddenly plagued synagogues and other Jewish buildings in Melbourne.

Within hours of that meeting and with the full co-operation and support of the Victoria Police, a series of inspection patrols — all comprising VAJEX members —

were organised and put into action throughout the whole of the Melbourne and Metropolitan area. The Police force not only commended this swift response and co-operation but acknowledged the counter-effect it had to the daubing campaign.

I have purposely detailed some of the activities in which VAJEX has been engaged over the years because they highlight, in very practical terms, the real meaning and purpose of VAJEX existence: Remembrance, Vigilance, Welfare, Service and Ideals. This is why we have and need ex-service organisations to reflect and to remember, to be vigilant and caring, and above all to ensure that those who made the greatest sacrifices in war did not die in vain.

As Jews, members of VAJEX share all the aspirations and responsibilities of the ex-service cause. They also through VAJEX provide the opportunity for Jewish men and women to apply their faith and their religious practices in the ceremony of remembrance.

Any reflection on the role and influence of VAJEX in the community would be incomplete without reference to what surely must be a unique contribution of public service to the general community from the membership of any one organisation of the modest size of VAJEX, Jewish or non-Jewish. It should be emphasised that this remarkably high level of public service relates to the membership of just one state organisation whose membership during its most active years in the 1950s and 1960s was in the range of 400–500 men and women. In the subsequent years, as



VAJEX members at the obelisk in Melbourne General Cemetery, Carlton, which commemorates Victorian Jewry's fallen (consecrated on 14 December 1924 and, following World War Two, on 9 November 1947).

(Courtesy Sol Rose & Walter Jona)

World War Two moved further into the background, the membership, of course, was to decline from its peak of the earlier post-war years.

Let me mention just some of the prominent members of the Victorian Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women who over the years have distinguished themselves in public office or in notable community positions:

Maurice Ashkanasy C.M.G., Q.C.	A former Chairman of the Victorian Bar Council
Arnold Blashki M.B.E.	Past President VAJEX; State and Federal President Australian Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women
Brigadier the Hon. Harold Cohen C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D.	Foundation Member; Former Victorian Cabinet Minister; First President of Melbourne Legacy; Former Chief Commissioner of Scouts in Victoria
Senator Sam Cohen Q.C.	Former Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate of the Parliament of Australia
Rt. Hon. Sir Zelman Cowen A.K., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., Q.C.	Patron-in-Chief VAJEX; Former Governor-General of Australia; Former Chairman of the British Press Council
Rabbi Jacob Danglow C.M.G., O.B.E., V.D.	Former First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Chapter of Freemasons in Victoria
Bert Harlem	Foundation Member of VAJEX; Former Deputy Commissioner of Repatriation in Victoria
Matthew Harrison M.B.E.	Past State and Federal President Australian Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women
Arthur Heymansson	Former Presidents of Carry-on Club, Victoria
Leslie Hyams	
Louis Hyams	
Peter Isaacson A.M., D.F.C., A.F.C., D.F.M.	Chairman of Shrine Trustees; Past President of the Air Force Association
Dr. Jacob Jona	Former Senior Vice-President, Victorian Football League; 20-year President Hawthorn League Football Club
The Hon. Walter Jona A.M.	Patron of VAJEX; Former State and Federal President; Cabinet Minister in several governments during his 21 years in the Victorian Parliament
Ernest A. Joseph	Former President of VAJEX; Past President Fitzroy League Football Club

The Hon. William Kaye A.O., Q.C.	Former Senior Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria; Past Chairman of the Victorian Bar Council; Past President of the Australian Bar Association
Leigh Masel	Former Chairman National Companies and Securities Commission; Past President Law Institute of Victoria
Hon. Sir Archie Michaelis	Foundation Member VAJEX; Former Speaker, Minister and Member of the Victorian Parliament
General Sir John Monash G.C.M.G., K.C.B., V.D.	Foundation Member of Association; First Chairman State Electricity Commission of Victoria; Chancellor, University of Melbourne
Philip Opas O.B.E., Q.C.	Past President VAJEX; Former Judge Advocate-General RAAF
Lou Perlstein	Senior Vice President (and President-elect) Carry-On Club, Victoria
Colin Pura	Past President VAJEX; Past President Rats of Tobruk Association
Judge Trevor Rapke	Former Judge Advocate-General RAN; Judge of the County Court of Victoria
Judge Martin Ravech	Judge of the County Court of Victoria
Dr Sol Rose	President of VAJEX; Past Federal President; Former Deputy Director of Repatriation of Victoria
Reuben Sackville A.M.	Past President St. Kilda League Football Club
Frank Slutzkin V.R.D.	Past State and Federal President; Former Grand Master, United Grand Lodge of Mark Master, Masons in Victoria

These are but a few examples of the public services rendered to the community by VAJEX members over the years. Added to it are numerous mayors, municipal councillors, members of statutory and public authorities and holders of other community offices which have contributed greatly to the well-being of the state. It is a record in which the Victorian Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, as an organisation, can rejoice and be justly proud. As it was in time of war when Jewish men and women rallied in disproportionately large numbers to serve Australia, so it has been in times of peace that these same men and women have been disproportionately prominent in ex-service welfare organisations and in their public service to the state and its people.

VAJEX and its predecessor organisations were born out of a desire to remember and to serve. In both these respects it has earned high marks of distinction. Within

the Jewish community and, notably, during the years when its membership age group was conducive to active communal affairs, VAJEX played a very prominent role in the forums of Jewish debates and in the organisational structure of the Victorian Jewish community. During the past fifty years, five of its members have served as President of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria or its predecessor organisations, the Board of Deputies and the Victorian Jewish Advisory Board.

Whilst VAJEX will inevitably cease to exist as an organisation primarily founded out of and for Jews who served in war-time armed forces, it will still continue for many years to come as a service organisation with new challenges and new responsibilities. Whatever the future role of VAJEX might be, it is proper that history should record the unique and proud accomplishments of it and its members both within and outside of the Jewish community over an unbroken period of almost seventy years.

These reflections on the VAJEX past are designed to contribute further to the recorded rich history of the Jewish community and of the total Australian society of which we are all an integral part.

THE KADIMAH YOUTH ORGANISATION IN MELBOURNE: REMINISCENCES, 1942-53

Lou Jedwab

Between 1942 and 1953 there was a spurt of political involvement by young Jewish people in Melbourne. A number of these young people were inclined to adopt a position which could best be explained as being 'pro-Soviet Left.'

One of the features of the work of this group and those they influenced was their commitment to the struggles and campaigns of the Jewish community. Despite strenuous efforts by some Jewish leaders to isolate them from the community, they remained active at all times in the defence and welfare of their people, and showed keen interest in Jewish history and culture, as the following material will show.

Within the Jewish community, particularly in the Carlton area, a number of men and women (migrants from Russia and Eastern Europe) were supporters of the ideas of Marxism and communism. As early as 1927-28 radical Jews, including Bundist, communist and left-wing Zionists, formed the 'Yiddishe Polische Cultural Society', which within a year became the 'Jewish Socialist Group.'

The Jewish migrants had been influenced by the events that had taken place in Europe, particularly the socialist revolution in Russia in 1917. They had been organised in Europe into political parties and trade unions, they had emancipated themselves from the stultifying influence of religion, and were readers of the Yiddish classical writers such as Peretz, Mendele and Sholom Aleichem. In migrating to Australia they brought with them their new-found philosophies and ideas.

In 1925 the Soviet Government established 'Der Gesellschaft far Ainordening Oif Ard Arbeitendike Yiden in USSR' (OZED in Russian; the Society for Settling Jews on the land in the USSR.) In line with other Jewish centres all over the world, a branch of OZED was formed by the Jewish Socialist Group, giving itself the Yiddish name 'Gezerd.' In 1931, it was located in Rathdowne Street, North Carlton.

The stated aims of the Gezerd were: to assist morally and materially the settling of Jews on the land in Russia; to spread proletarian culture amongst the Jews of Melbourne; to assist in the reconstruction of Jewish life in the USSR; and to work with fraternal organisations in the defence of the USSR. 'We stand for a solution to Jewish problems, which are national in form and socialist in content,' they said.

In April 1933, to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the founding of the Gezerd, the government of the USSR proclaimed the formation of the Autonomous Jewish Region of Birobijan on the eastern frontier of the USSR.

Marxist ideas, which had a profound effect on the thinking of many people all over the world, found willing adherents in far-flung Australia. The strikes and political struggles before the turn of the century ushered in the formation of the Australian Labor Party, and by 1921 the Australian Communist Party was formed. By 1940 half the nation voted Labor, and by 1945 the influence of the Communist Party was considerably in excess of its membership of about 20,000.

Gezerd members found warm friends amongst Australian left-wingers, who were mindful of the importance of internationalism, and Jews were welcomed into the ranks of the Labor movement, in particular the Communist Party.

Gezerd members joined the Friends of the Soviet Union (FSU), trade unions, and

the Workers' Art Club in Melbourne. They also participated in the great fights against eviction during the Depression years, when unemployed workers and their families were protected by organised workers' groups against eviction from their homes. The Gezerd had a small youth group which held lectures and functions, but its influence was very small, and it was isolated from the rest of the youth in the Carlton area.

As early as 1933 the Gezerd organised public meetings against Nazi brutality towards Jews in Germany. They were amongst the thousands of peace activists who demonstrated against the Australian government's attempt to ban Egon Kisch from landing in Australia.

Egon Kisch, the anti-war and anti-fascist writer and activist, had spent time in one of Hitler's concentration camps. He came to Australia in November 1934 to attend the Melbourne Congress Against War and Fascism. Despite government attempts to ban him from landing by subjecting him to a 'dictation test' in Gaelic, he jumped ship, broke a leg, and through litigation in the courts was able to remain in Australia until March of the following year, campaigning against the growing threat of war and Hitlerism.

In August 1935 the Gezerd formed a committee to conduct a campaign to boycott German goods coming to Australia. On 13 October 1935 a public meeting was held to launch the boycott. Ten thousand leaflets were distributed outside the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday afternoon. In July 1935 Jews swelled the ranks of many hundreds of Australians who demonstrated against the German U-boat commander, von Luckner, who was Hitler's emissary on a goodwill mission to Australia.

The economic depression which hit Australia in the late 1920s also affected the Jewish community in Carlton, where the majority of Jews were workers, small shopkeepers, market stallholders, and hawkers of clothes and household goods. Seasonal layoffs in the clothing industry were common. Jewish workers on the wharves worked under the 'Bull System', which meant that regular work was seldom available.

These events of the 1930s had some influence on the school children within the Jewish community. Although I was only a small boy in 1936 I can still recall people's anger at the attack by Franco's fascists on the elected Spanish government, and their horror at the bombing of Spanish towns by planes delivered to Franco by Hitler and Mussolini. Left Book Club publications could be found in a number of Jewish homes, and the communist paper, the 'Workers' Voice', was freely available in the Carlton area. Young people were reading such outspoken American writers as Upton Sinclair, Jack London, Dos Passos, O. Henry and others, who presented a class approach to the events of the times. I can remember standing at the back of the 'Culture House' (the new premises of the Gezerd) at 717 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton, and listening to the discussion in Yiddish by a rather small audience. For the first time I heard words like 'fascism', 'anti-Semitism', 'Raten Farbund' (Soviet Union).

But the most important factors that influenced young Jewish people were the events in Europe which led to the outbreak of war in 1939 and the war years themselves. In the high schools, such as University High, Melbourne High, MacRobertson Girls' High and the Melbourne Technical College, young Jews were in the forefront of the animated discussions that took place around the events in Europe. In 1942 an Open Forum group was formed, made up of Jewish boys and girls from these schools, about sixteen in number. They felt they needed more

information, more discussions, particularly when the facts about the mass killing of Jews in Europe started to filter through in the early 1940s.

The group met in the 'Culture House' in North Carlton, and some joined the Eureka Youth League when it was formed. Many young Jews joined the military forces or were conscripted; those still at school participated in campaigns to collect aluminium scrap and 'Sheepskins for Russia', and collected signatures for a petition calling on the Allies to open a second front in Western Europe, to relieve the beleaguered Russian armies slogging it out with the Germans in Stalingrad and other Russian cities.

In our house we were brought up in an atmosphere in which Yiddish culture played a very important part in our everyday life. Large portraits of Yiddish writers adorned our walls. My father told us stories about the Yiddish theatre in Poland; his heroes were the theatrical groups like the famous Vilna Troupe and the American theatre giants like Jacob Adler, Maurice Schwartz and others.

The war in Europe created new heroes for me and other Jewish youngsters. The Warsaw Ghetto fighters were revered. The British fighter pilots who defended England against the Nazi bombers were cheered whenever they appeared on the newsreels; likewise the partisans in occupied Europe, and of course the Red Army, which was delivering death blows to the Nazi invaders.

The comic books and children's stories started to reflect the thinking of the vast majority of people, a determination to defeat Hitler and his Japanese allies in the Pacific, and to create a new world free from war and racial discrimination of any kind: a world which would no longer judge anyone by his nationality or the colour of his skin, a world free from exploitation, a world of equality, freedom, democracy and socialism. The fight against Hitler had united all political opinions in the defence of humanity. Surely the coming peace would usher in a period of cooperation and mutual assistance between the anti-Hitler forces; many young Jews in those days were determined not to be side-tracked from this honestly held belief.

The Jewish National Library Kadimah was a large Yiddish-speaking cultural organisation, well established in Carlton since 1911. It had within its ranks a youth organisation called the Kadimah Younger Set (KYS). It had been active for many years, and was made up of young Jewish men and women in the Carlton area. It conducted many social and cultural functions, and some members participated in the Yiddish Theatre Group. Towards the end of 1944 most of the young men were in the forces, and the KYS was unable to function effectively. They approached the Open Forum group to join the KYS. These new members brought with them a large number of young students and workers, and in 1946 the name was changed to the Kadimah Youth Organisation (KYO).

The KYO was made up of youngsters ranging from about ten to about thirty years of age, in three separate groups: the KYO, the Kadimah Younger Group, and the children's Group, named after the Australian Yiddish writer Pinchas Goldhar. It was a unique organisation in its day. Of course, the Kadimah premises were used almost daily. With the assistance of the senior body it funded a paid secretary. It reached a membership of about 250 and was active until 1952-53.

In 1946 the KYO published the first of seven journals, called *Jewish Youth*. It was published in English, Yiddish and Hebrew, and dealt with cultural topics and the political problems and interests of young Jewish people. It was warmly welcomed by the community and the Jewish press gave it very good reviews.

Jewish Youth commenced publication in July 1946, and ceased in March 1947

with the ninth issue. The first issue carried several messages from prominent communal figures under the heading 'The Vanguard of our Youth'.

Some idea of the contents of *Jewish Youth* (subtitled 'a tri-lingual monthly') is appropriate here. The editorial board consisted of Y. Birstein, Senia Rosenberg, A. Millgrom, Judah Waten, and M. Kronenberg, while Alex Rosenberg was business manager. The first issue, dated July 1946, carried, *inter alia*, an interview with Professor M.D. Goldman of the University of Melbourne, an appraisal of the painter Yosl Bergner by Vic O'Connor, an article by Sol Encel on discrimination against Jews, and a survey of Jewish art in Australia. It contained several literary items, including the opening of a serialisation of Herz Bergner's *Between Sky and Sea*, 'In Alien Lands' by I.L. Peretz, 'Another Page to the Song of Songs' by Sholom Aleichem, 'Reward and Punishment' by David Bergelson, a poem by H. Leivek and Y. Birstein and another by A. Klein. Other items were 'Begin the Beguine' by W. Kaufmann, 'Counter-Attack' by A. Millgrom, 'Introducing Jewish Literature' by M. Kronenberg, 'Theatre and Films' by Senia Rosenberg, and 'Glimpse' by P. Freedman. There was also editorial commentary, topical items, and KYO news.

Some highlights of other issues should be itemised. The second issue (August 1946) contained twenty-two pages in English and fourteen in Yiddish and Hebrew. It carried articles on the songs of Chaim Nachman Bialik (to commemorate the twelfth anniversary of his death); 'My First Meeting With Peretz' by Sholem Asch, and continuing chapters of *Between Sky and Sea*.

The September issue contained twenty-four pages, all in English, and carried articles on anti-Semitism in the Australian press, two stories by Peretz, drawings by Yosl Bergner, and 'New Light on Yehuda Ha-Levi.' The following month's journal was also entirely in English (twenty-three pages). It carried an article entitled 'How the Kadimah Was Born', a story by Sholom Aleichem, 'Paintings by Chagall', and 'Notes on Palestine.'

Fifteen pages of Yiddish and Hebrew accompanied eighteen pages of English in the next issue, which combined numbers five and six (November/December 1946). It contained the 'Ballad of Two Roses' by Zalman Shneour; 'Bards of Yiddish Language' by Y. Birstein; a commemoration of the seventieth birthday of Avrom Reisen; a review of a concert to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the death of Sholom Aleichem; and another chapter of Herz Bergner's novel.

The following issue, for January/February 1947, contained twenty-eight pages in English and ten in Yiddish and Hebrew. The journal had become the official organ of the Melbourne Jewish Youth Council (MJYC). It contained a tribute to Pinchas Goldhar, who had just passed away, a welcome from the American and Canadian Jewish press acknowledging *Jewish Youth* as the first journal of its kind; a new story by Sholem Asch, 'Paintings by Y. Bergner' and 'Characterisations of Palestine Youth' by E. Spector.

Owing to lack of funds, the editorial board ceased publication with the ninth issue (March 1947). That last number of *Jewish Youth* contained twenty-four pages in English and ten in Yiddish and Hebrew. It carried Goldhar's story 'Cafe in Carlton', and articles by J. O'Regan ('Mr. Gullett's Anti-Semitism'), N. Shindler ('Habonim Camp'), and R. Banchewska ('Melbourne Jewish Youth Council.')

Regular Friday night functions were held by the KYO on all sorts of topics, ranging from Yiddish classical literature to political discussions on the war, the Middle East, sex, Australian art and literature, music and drama. Large attendances were frequent on Friday nights in the upper Kadimah Hall in Lygon Street, North

Carlton, sometimes with as many as 100–120 young Jewish people listening intently to the guest speaker.

Musical evenings and dances were held on Saturday or Sunday nights, and Wednesday nights were club nights, with table tennis. Special interest groups were a whole-year occurrence. A dance group was conducted by Ruth Bergner. Jacob Waislitz held frequent drama classes, and Joseph Giligitch held Yiddish classes from time to time. Regular basketball and volley ball teams competed on behalf of the KYO. The two younger groups met at weekends, discussing topics of interest for teenagers and children. Frequent picnics and camps were held, and the KYO participated in the various concerts and drama festivals inside and outside the Jewish community. The Friday night functions were reported in the Jewish press, and establish themselves as cultural high points within the community.

In the years 1945–48 the following functions took place, the speakers and topics being: J. Giligitch (Series of lectures: works of I.L. Peretz, Sholem Asch); Evelyn Rothfield (Palestine); Yosl Birstein (Jewish Humour); S. Rosenkranz (National Question: Jewish Life); M. Kronenberg (Book review: 'A Jew Comes to America'); Herz Bergner, Judah Waten, Y. Birstein (Australian Jewish Writers); Discussion on Yiddish Play *Unser Ard*; Vic O'Connor (Australian Art); Bert Williams (World Youth Festival in Prague); Joseph Giligitch (Jewish Writers: H. Levick, I. Manger, M.L. Halpern, Dr. A.L. Patkin, J. Giligitch, J. Waislitz, P. Rosenkrants, E. Pinkus); Welcome to Journal *Jewish Youth*; Chaim Gurt (Lecture: Chaim Nachman Bialik); Capt. Shimon Hacohen (Youth in Palestine); Judah Waten, Alan Marshall (Great Australian Short Stories); Joseph Giligitch (The Hascola Movement); Y. Birstein (Jewish Life in the Middle Ages: Italy); Dr. A.L. Patkin (Jewish Socialist Movements in Russia); Alan Marshall (Short Story Reading); Symposium (Best Way to Educate Jewish Youth); I. Gust (Situation in Palestine); Digest of World Press; Simon Max (Jewish Contribution to Science); Digest of Jewish Literature; J. Rappaport (Jewish Youth and its Future); a Jewish Brigadier from Palestine Speaks; J. Birstein (Sholem Asch); Chaim Gurt (Jewish Contribution to World Art and Literature); Joseph Giligitch (Child Psychology); Walter Lippmann, H. Stein (Anti-Semitism); M. Potashinski (Concentration Camps); Y. Birstein (National Question); Noel Counihan (Realism in Art); Combined Function with Jewish Young People's Association (JYPA); J. Solvey, A. Pearl (A Bi-national State in Palestine); Dr. M. Weyman (Are the Jews a Race?); Nina Christesen (Russian and Soviet Literature); Sholem Solomon (My Impressions of Europe and Palestine); Jack Morrison (Australian Writers in Indonesia); O. Rosenbess (Chinese Jews); S. Goldbloom (Anti-Semitism); Sholem Solomon (India); KYO Participates in an Avrom Raizen Function with Kadimah; I. Roseby (Justice in Palestine); J. Birstein (Jewish Humour); Echud Lederberger (Histadrut); Public Celebration (22 December 1947) for all Jewish Youth at Kadimah on the UN Declaration of the Formation of Israel; H. Stein, Rachel McClaren, Rabbi Dr. H. Sanger (Public Meeting for Youth. Debate: 'That Socialism and Democracy are Incompatible'); Warsaw Ghetto Memorial Function; Vic Arnold, Secretary, Actors' Equity (Australian Theatre for the People); W. Lasica, J. Lurye (Anti-Semitism); Sender Burstin (50 Years of *Bund*); Norman Rothfield (Anti-Semitism); Open Forum (*Brothers Ashkanasy*: I.B. Singer); Hirsh Muntz (Aims and Objects of Australian Jewish Cultural Conference); Rex Mortimer (Social Realism in Art); B. Rosen (Works of Sholem Asch); Kath Bacon (Conditions in S.E. Asia); Open Forum: Role of Jewish Youth in Australia; Discussion on Assimilation.

The KYO was a large organisation, dealing mainly with the topics which interested the young Jewish people of those days. The KYO was made up mainly of young Jews in the Carlton area, although a few were attracted from other suburbs like Brunswick, Kew, Caulfield and St. Kilda. They were the sons and daughters of Jewish workers, small shopkeepers, stallholders and professional people. Only a few were politically oriented towards Zionism, communism or Bundism, but they were all concerned with the future of mankind, and in particular the future of Jews after the terrible Holocaust.

The KYO held frequent open discussions and conferences about its activities and there was ample opportunity for every point of view to be expressed. The general meetings were held regularly, and discussions were well attended and orderly. Despite attacks from young Bundists, the pro-Soviet left-leaning leadership was re-elected time and again. Their views were well-known and often expressed, and in most cases accepted by the members, who were influenced by the political events of the time — the war against Nazism and fascism, the need to mobilise against racism and anti-Semitism, the importance of Jewish survival in all its forms after the death of six million; and, in the latter part of the 1940s, vocal support for the establishment of the Jewish State.

The KYO delegates played an important part by their representation on the Melbourne Jewish Youth Council, where their point of view was given considerable recognition. In fact, their delegates at the MJYC were, in the main, responsible for making that organisation a vibrant Jewish youth body, whose voice was clearly heard in the community. The MJYC was made up of about thirteen youth organisations — Zionist, student, cultural and social youth groups in the Melbourne community, and was very active in the 1940s and early 1950s.

In the latter part of 1947 a number of KYO members and youth from the other side of the Yarra helped to form the Jewish Youth League for the Promotion of Racial Tolerance, with the assistance of the Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism. By the end of 1947 the former group became the Youth Section (YS) of the Jewish Council, and was actively involved in combating racism and anti-Semitism in Australia. Its executive and committee met about twice a month between 1948 and 1955. It concerned itself with contacting many non-Jewish youth groups, by letter, leaflet and speakers, informing them of the danger of anti-Semitism and racism. It had direct contact with the Associated Youth Committee (AYC), a body made up of a large number of youth groups in Victoria, and the Democratic Youth Council (DYC), a left-leaning group composed of trade union and migrant youth. Many thousands of leaflets exposing racism were distributed by these two bodies. A number of resolutions sponsored by the YS were passed at meetings of these two organisations.

The YS sponsored free tickets for young people to see the film *Gentleman's Agreement*, which was the earliest film after the war to deal with anti-Semitism in the USA, and a leaflet publicising the film was distributed far and wide in Melbourne. Speakers were sent to organisations like the university Arts Association, the Housewives' Association, the Cairns Memorial Presbyterian Girls' Fellowship, the YWCA, the Church of England Fellowship, the Young Methodists, the Unitarian Youth Group, trade union branches, ALP branches, and to Jewish youth organisations.

In 1949 YS delegates were part of a delegation to Canberra organised by the DYC, which dealt with the problems of peace, democratic rights and free speech, which were being threatened by the cold war atmosphere in the Australian community.

Letters and leaflets were sent to many others, including the Aboriginal Rights Group, and after 1949, Liberal Party branches.

The YS organised a series of lectures at the University of Melbourne. It helped to publish a survey on anti-Semitism, conducted by the university's Psychology Department. It also made a number of press statements defending Jews from anti-Semitic attacks, in particular defending the Zionist Youth Department from attacks by the Catholic youth press.

The formation of Israel in 1948 was welcomed by large sections of the Australian community, but it also incurred violent attacks from a number of sources. The YS distributed leaflets defending the Jewish State. A public meeting was held in the Assembly Hall with the cooperation of the MJYC, and the speakers were both Jewish and non-Jewish.

Eric Butler and his League of Rights continued to distribute the anti-Semitic *New Times* publication. The YS letter-boxed leaflets exposing this well-known anti-Semite. Additionally, a series of articles dealing with racism was printed in the University of Melbourne student newspaper, *Farrago*.

In 1950 the YS formed in Carlton a committee of young Jews and non-Jews. It concerned itself with the problems of German rearmament and mass German migration to Australia. On 19 November 1950 there was a large meeting in the Kadimah Hall, at which the main speaker was Wilfrid Burchett, who had been a war correspondent in Europe. There were further meetings at the Assembly Hall, in the Moorabbin area, and in private homes, warning of the danger of mass German migration. A leaflet entitled *Dare We Gamble?* was distributed in many thousands, and the campaign culminated in the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) holding a public meeting on German migration in Melbourne on 21 November 1950.

In 1952 the YS demonstrated at Essendon Airport at the arrival of the German pianist Walter Gieseking, and on the night of his concert in the Melbourne Town Hall some fifty young people distributed a leaflet which exposed his collaboration with the Nazis. Among the demonstrators were a number of Zionist youth, who smuggled pigeons into the Town Hall and released them during Gieseking's performance, which, coupled with a pre-arranged walkout of a number of Jews in the audience when his performance commenced, caused quite a stir.

When the first West German ambassador, Dr. Hess, landed in Australia, the YS organised a demonstration at the wharf, and banners were unfurled, reminding him of the atrocities committed against Jews. A leaflet was also distributed outside the film theatres which were screening a film whitewashing Rommel, the German war hero. Members of the YS and others participated in the all-night vigils calling for the Rosenbergs to be reprieved from the death sentence which had been imposed on them in the USA.

The ECAJ suddenly dropped its opposition to German migration, owing to intense pressure by the Minister for Immigration, Harold Holt. (One of the threats made by government sources was that funds for Israel would be prevented from leaving the country.) The YS and the Jewish Council intensified their campaign, because they believed that many war criminals were coming into Australia under the migration scheme. In 1952 the Annual Report of the YS noted

The main principle of our organisation is our opposition to any form of racialism. Therefore, when opposing the Nazis, be they German, Balts, or others, we make it quite clear that we oppose them because they are Nazis.

We ourselves, being a minority, know only too well the attempts that will be made, and in fact are being made already, to play off one minority group against another.

Therefore, while we always oppose and expose with all our might Nazis and fascists, we must be extremely careful to isolate those elements from ordinary new arrivals to this country.

Attempts were constantly made to work together with non-Jewish groups, in order to promote racial tolerance. In 1952 a concert was held with the participation of Greek, Irish, Indian, Dutch and Israeli youth. At the Youth Festival for Peace and Friendship in Sydney, in which the YS participated, a large poster dealing with the history of anti-Semitism was displayed.

The YS actively participated in the work of the MJYC, and on many occasions was able to involve the latter's constituent members in protesting against anti-Semitic acts. The MJYC sponsored a number of public meetings and publications arranged by the YS, which acted as its Public Relations committee for a number of years. The YS made frequent use of the MJYC camp at Beaconsfield for its members, and organised the annual Warsaw Ghetto commemorations for the MJYC. The YS published a regular bulletin, and printed sheets to be handed out at various factories, where anti-Semitic leaflets had been distributed.

In the early part of 1950 about eight young members of the YS were questioned by the State police and the security organisation. The interrogation took place in the YS members' homes and places of work. It caused considerable apprehension in the Jewish community, and the matter was made public by the Jewish Council in the daily press. The headlines in the press aroused a flood of opposition and protests from a large section of the general Australian community. A meeting in the Kadimah Hall on 25 June 1950 protested against the police interrogation.

This was the same year that the Communist Dissolution Bill was introduced. The YS opposed this bill strenuously. As reported in the *Jewish News* (30 June 1950), Rabbi Sanger, speaking at the YMHA, said:

Australia itself is at the crossroads, our civic rights even at this moment are under fire, and every Jew, as well as any freedom-loving citizen, is affected by the Bill which is at present being debated in Parliament.

'It is a bad Bill', he continued, 'because it reverses a fundamental principle adhered to in British law, that a man is innocent until he is proved guilty. The "onus of proof" clause', he contended, 'must be changed. One other thing is the fact that the Bill makes communists, at the moment, fair game, but who knows that it will be allowed to stop there?'

After the Communist Dissolution Bill had been defeated in the High Court, the Menzies government introduced a referendum to ban the Communist Party. The YS supported the 'No' campaign, which was led by Dr. H.V. Evatt, and also supported by many leading Australian personalities and academics. Large numbers of YS members spent weeks campaigning for a 'No' vote, distributing thousands of leaflets in the Carlton, St. Kilda, Caulfield, Bentleigh and Carnegie areas. The referendum was defeated.

By 1953 the 'Cold War' had intensified, and the hiring of halls was prohibited to left-wing organisations, both in the Australian and Jewish communities. The YS campaigned for democratic rights and free speech in both directions.

A number of YS members were involved in political activity outside the organisation. Some were members of the Jewish Students' Study Group, and of Zionist organisations. A number participated in trade unions, peace groups, and the left-wing theatre. A number were adherents or members of the Labor Party and the Communist Party, or the Eureka Youth League.

Between 1945 and 1954 the pro-Soviet left-minded youth influenced the Kadimah Youth Organisation (KYO) and the YS, despite the attacks upon them from both inside and outside the community. Their prime task was to defend Jews against racism and wars. World War Two had decimated nearly one-third of world

Jewry, and had left the survivors frightened and demoralised. They believed that Jewish survival, Jewish rights, and the fight against anti-Semitism was not just a Jewish problem. They believed that Jews, because of their history, would never cease to campaign for human rights for all people, and therefore they must act together with non-Jews. It is a two-way street, and will always be so, despite the fact that some Jewish leaders wanted to create ideological ghettos for Jews.

The young people made considerable sacrifices for what they believed would be a better world. Only those involved can understand the feelings of the youth at that time. There were no rewards sought for the difficult work carried out; the reward was the feeling of purpose and achievement.

After the 1950 interrogations by the police a number of young Jews' jobs and careers were seriously affected. Despite that, many of the young activists of those days now have leading and important positions in education, medicine, the judiciary, and other fields; clearly, there is something to be said about the Australian democratic system.

The information in 1948 about the wrongful arrest of Yiddish writers and the destruction of Jewish cultural life in the USSR was not believed by these young Jewish people. How was it possible that a country which had suffered so much from Nazism and had lost twenty million people in the war would carry out such terrible crimes against Jews? The criticism of the USSR was interpreted as part of the 'Cold War' attacks on the Left; they were not prepared to participate in the chorus of hate directed against Communism and the USSR. They still had hopes for a new Socialist order in the world.

The demise of the pro-Soviet young Jewish Left in the community by 1953-54 was brought about by a number of factors. First, after about eight years of activity many of them were married and raising families. The anti-fascist mood of the 1940s began to wane. The establishment of the Jewish State had as one of its side effects the weakening of the importance of the fight against racism in Australia, although the racists continued their work.

The Cold War succeeded in isolating them within the community. They kept defending the USSR when it was no longer defensible. They alienated themselves from the community, by labelling every criticism of the USSR as Cold War, anti-Communist hysteria (much of this undoubtedly existed), but they were not prepared to distinguish between those who were genuinely concerned with Jewish rights in the USSR and those who were war-mongers. For not boldly, and in good time, exposing anti-Semitism in the USSR, they paid a heavy price.

AUSTRALIAN UNION OF STUDENTS MIDDLE EAST DEBATES 1974-75

Philip Mendes

In January 1974, Australia's national student union, the Australian Union of Students, passed a series of controversial anti-Israel motions which called for support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the elimination of the State of Israel. The motions set in train a furious debate that was to dominate campus life over the next two years. The debate was marked by unprecedented polarisation, bitterness and violence and was to have serious long-term ramifications for both the Australian Left (particularly the student Left) and the Australian Jewish community.

Superficially, the AUS Palestine campaign appeared to parallel the earlier student struggle against the Vietnam War. Once again, Australian students seemed to be supporting the struggle of a third world nation fighting for national liberation against an ostensible puppet regime representing the interests of western imperialism.

Yet, in reality the Arab-Israeli conflict was always far more complex than just a struggle between 'imperialist' and 'anti-imperialist' forces. If anything, it was a clash between two equally legitimate national entities fighting for control of the one piece of land. And just as most anti-Vietnam activists had endorsed peace *per se* rather than the radical aims of the National Liberation Front, so most supporters of peace in the Middle East endorsed a compromise two-state solution which recognised the legitimate claims of both Israelis and Palestinians rather than the radical eliminate-Israel aims of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

In endorsing the PLO's call for the destruction of Israel, AUS adopted a minority vanguardist position which was similar to the pro-NLF position adopted by a small number of anti-Vietnam War activists in the 1960s. And just as the pro-NLF position had divided the anti-war movement and alienated moderates, so AUS' extreme viewpoint divided the student movement and ruptured ties between the radical Left and the broad mass of progressive-leaning students. Not surprisingly, many Vietnam-era comrades ended up sitting on this occasion on the opposite side of the barricades.

My concern here is not so much to produce a history of the AUS debates *per se*, but rather to examine the prime motives and ideologies of the various actors involved. In particular, I will examine the historical development of the AUS position on Israel-Palestine, the political arguments advanced by both AUS and the Australian Union of Jewish Students (AUJS), the major events in the debate such as the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS) tour, the broad Australian Left's attitude to the debates, the impact of the debates on the political orientation of the Jewish community, and the presence (or otherwise) of anti-Semitic motives in the debates.

From 1967 to 1974, the AUS (or the National Union of Australian University Students as it was originally known) gradually moved from a pro-Israel position to a pro-Palestinian position on the Middle East conflict. At the time of the Six Day War, for example, the NUAUS identified the 'Arab refusal to recognise the State of

Israel as the major obstacle to peace in the Middle East' and called on the Arab countries to assimilate the Palestinian refugees.¹ During 1968, the then NUAUS International Vice-President, Richard Walsh, expressed some mild criticisms of the Israeli Government's attitude towards the Palestinians as did commentators in the NUAUS newspaper, *National U*.²

But until 1973, the motions passed at AUS Councils reflected an essentially 'even-handed' position. In 1970, for example, NUAUS condemned 'the interference by big powers in the Middle East crisis, in particular their supply of arms to both sides; and affirmed its belief that the problem demands a regional solution, divorced from Power Politics.'³

Whilst involved in some political activism such as support for the anti-Vietnam War and anti-Springbok Tour campaigns, AUS had traditionally been dominated by aspiring Australian Labor Party politicians of the moderate Left.⁴ However, in 1973, AUS moved to the radical Left, coming under the control of activists from the Communist Party of Australia, the Maoist Worker/Student Alliance and the Trotskyist Socialist Youth Alliance. AUS declared its commitment to 'the building of a socialist Australia' and its support for 'the struggle of groups and nations fighting for social justice and the need for them to resort to violence where all other peaceful means have been exhausted.' Campaigns were launched on racism, sexism, homosexual rights, education and international questions.⁵

Not surprisingly, the growing radicalism of AUS also affected that body's attitude to Israel. In 1972, for example, AUS had voted for the admission of the Israeli Students' Association (NUIS) to the Asian Students' Association, following which the Malaysian Students' Union withdrew. NUIS was then dominated by conservative students whose political ties were with Israel's hawkish opposition parties, a fact which contributed to a cooling in relations between AUS and NUIS.

In 1973, AUS changed its policy and declared that the General Union of Palestinian Students — which was affiliated with the PLO — or 'any non-Zionist student organisation' should be recognised in place of NUIS. AUS also passed a motion moved by Israeli-born anti-Zionist Sol Salby condemning the 'recent arrests and torture' of Jews and Arabs in Israel. An AUS activist who had attended the International Union of Students Conference reported: 'Australians and the Australian press have been very pro-Israel and it was certainly refreshing to hear the other side of the story. The general position was anti-Zionist, but certainly not anti-Jewish and the Palestinian students particularly emphasized this'.⁶

By 1974, support for pro-Palestinian views had become almost hegemonic on the Australian Left.⁷ The Palestinian cause was viewed as particularly important by the young Trotskyists and Maoists who dominated AUS. As noted by political scientist Dennis Altman, Palestine had become an issue of 'central purity' and 'one by which leftist credentials can be measured. Among the small groups who are active in radical politics in Australia today, 'Zionist' has become a term of abuse, barely distinguished from 'racist', 'imperialist', etc.'. ⁸

At the AUS Council in January 1974, Ken White, a prominent Maoist from La Trobe University, submitted the following motions on the Middle East: AUS informs the National Union of Israeli Students that it does not recognise the existence of the State of Israel or of NUIS as the official students union in that region; that AUS recognise the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS) as a legal student union in that area of the Middle East known as Israel, (in reality, occupied Pales-

tine); that AUS having met in full council no longer believes that NUIS should be recognised as a member of the Asian Students' Federation and rather believes that the GUPS and Arab student unions or any non-Zionist student organisation should be recognised in their place; AUS condemns the exploitation and degradation of the Palestinian people as carried out by the Arab nations and by Israel; that AUS opens a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation in Beirut with a view to disseminate literature on the resistance through the organs open to AUS; that AUS examine the student unions of the Arab regimes to ascertain whether they are progressive organisations or simply apologists for their various reactionary regimes; the AUS calls for the release of all members of the Palestinian resistance held in jails in occupied Palestine (Israel), and other Arab countries and Greece. This includes all Jewish political prisoners not officially members of the PLO held in occupied Palestine; that AUS support the liberation forces of Palestine; that the Palestinian people have the historical, cultural and moral right to the land of Palestine presently embraced by Israel; that any realistic settlement of the Middle East problem must accommodate the rights of the Palestinians in order to have any chance of resulting in permanent peace; that copies of these motions re NUIS be sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Israeli Embassy Australia and the PLO.⁹

In support of his motions, White stated: 'I feel that AUS as a body — that has a history of supporting the struggles of oppressed peoples e.g. Vietnam, Africa — must come out strongly in support of the struggles of the Palestinian people and must voice total opposition to the existence of the State of Israel founded on racist chauvinist lines whose leaders from Herzl to Ben Gurion to Golda Meir to Dayan have tied themselves to alliances with imperialist powers.'¹⁰

White's motions were strongly opposed by Arnold Roth, president of the Australian Union of Jewish Students, who stated: 'What is required is a realisation that in the Middle East there has been a head-on clash of two justifications, one Jewish, one Arab. Neither claim for national self-determination must be allowed to be ignored.' Roth called on AUS to 'reject the anti-Israel resolutions totally.'¹¹ Roth's motion was overwhelmingly defeated, as was Sydney University Jewish activist Jack Herman's motion calling for a two-state solution.¹²

The passage of the anti-Israel motions at this time reflected not only the need for AUS to define its position in relation to NUIS' membership of the Asian Students Association, but also the high international profile enjoyed by the Middle East issue. As noted by AUS activist Diana Auburn: 'AUS Annual Council fell only a few months after the October War of 1973; a war which once again brought world attention to the vexed question of the Israelis and the Palestinian refugees. Oil diplomacy was beginning to make its impact and several western countries were becoming more critical of Israel as a result. The third world bloc in the United Nations was more vociferous than ever in their condemnation of Israel and the stage was being set for the admittance of the PLO as an observer in the UN and its various associated organs such as UNESCO and the ILO . . . There can have been few times in the past decade when the issues of the Middle East were being discussed more widely by the population as a whole.'¹³

What was surprising, in fact, was not that the motions were passed (since AUS had passed similarly radical motions on a wide range of international issues)¹⁴, but rather that unlike the other motions they attracted such significant attention and opposition. Both supporters and opponents of AUS agree that the motions would probably have been quietly ignored by all if AUJS had not decided to mobilise

in opposition.¹⁵ What extended interest in the motions beyond the radical Left leadership of AUS and the Jewish student community was the AUJS campaign to defeat their ratification by students.

Following the passage of the motions, AUJS announced a campaign to dump AUS. In a January 20 press release signed by Arnold Roth, AUJS threatened that Jewish students would withdraw their membership from AUS en masse and give \$1.00 per head to the cause of fighting the AUS motions. Roth stated: 'AUS had decided to wish Israel out of existence. It chooses to take an absurdly unrealistic view of the Middle East, to reject the only democratically elected and representative student body in the Middle East, namely the National Union of Israeli Students, and in it place recognise the General Union of Palestinian Students, an Egyptian "front" organisation'.

Further on, the press release stated, that having accepted the aims and activities of the PLO, including terrorism, AUS had 'placed itself beyond any reasonable resemblance to representing the views of the mass of Australian students'.¹⁶

According to Auburn, Roth's announcement of a 'dump AUS' campaign had been made without consultation with the AUJS executive. Under pressure from left-wing Jewish students, Roth later modified AUJS' position and announced that AUJS would seek to debate and defeat the anti-Israel resolutions.¹⁷

The AUS motions were subsequently passed onto Australian campuses for ratification or rejection. They were overwhelmingly rejected on all campuses with the exception of a couple of small country venues. Approximately 95 per cent of students voted against, only 5 per cent in favor.¹⁸

AUS activists attributed their defeat to the alleged pro-Israel bias of the media, the identification of Palestinians with terrorism, sympathy for Jewish suffering during the Holocaust and their almost exclusive reliance on the tiny 'radical Left' for support.¹⁹ Probably far more important was the simple fact that the passage of such black and white motions on a problem that was seen as irrelevant and distant by most Australians was considered anathema by the mass of ordinary students.²⁰

A further set of anti-Israel motions were passed at the January 1975 AUS Annual Council. The motions urged the adoption of the following: first, 'AUS supports the establishment of a democratic secular state of Palestine (encompassing the area of mandate territory) wherein all people presently residing in Israel and all Palestine Arabs forcibly exiled from their homeland will have the right to Palestinian citizenship. This motion embodied the right of Palestinian citizens of all religions, race, colour, creed and sex, to the protection of the new State and rejected racist legislation such as the present Zionist Law of Return'. Secondly, 'AUS concurs with the UN Resolution 3236 and the decision of the United Nations to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Thirdly, 'to counter the present media bias, AUS should continue to use its resources to publicise to both students and the general community the plight and continuing oppression of the Palestinian people by both Israeli and Arab nations'.²¹

The anti-Israel motions were once again defeated, but by a greatly decreased majority. Support for the pro-Palestinian viewpoint rose from five per cent to 20-25 per cent of Australian students.²² The increase in student support for the motions probably reflected increased student awareness of the Middle East and the seemingly positive nature of the proposal for a democratic secular state for both Arabs and Jews, rather than the simple replacement of one national state by another.²³

In January 1976, the AUS Council elected not to adopt a policy on the Middle East.²⁴ Despite various controversies, it was to be another seven years before the Middle East conflict would again be formally debated on campuses.²⁵ Eventually, an alliance of Jewish and centre/right students based primarily on the Middle East issue would succeed in destroying AUS.²⁶

At the August 1974 AUS Council, the union unanimously passed a motion in favour of inviting a representative of the General Union of Palestinian Students 'to do a speaking tour of campuses early in 1975 in order that membership can directly seek clarification of various aspects of the Palestinian movement.' Shortly afterwards, the then AUS president, Neil McLean, wrote to the GUPS headquarters in Cairo, issuing an invitation. In February 1975, AUS activist Rod Webb personally delivered the invitation during a visit to Damascus. The invitation was accepted and made public by a press release written by Rod Webb and the new AUS president Ian MacDonald at the end of February. The Australian Government (which was still opposing the admittance of PLO members to Australia) then investigated links between GUPS and the PLO. Having satisfied itself that the GUPS, whilst affiliated with the PLO, would not be officially representing that organisation, the Australian government granted approval for the visit, and the two GUPS representatives Ada (Eddie) Zananiri and Samir Cheikh arrived in Melbourne on May 4, 1975.²⁷

AUJS opposed the GUPS tour on a number of grounds: the affiliation of GUPS to the PLO, which was officially committed to the destruction of Israel; the overwhelming rejection of the earlier AUS motions concerning the recognition of the GUPS by students in 1974; and the tour's potential for increasing tensions within the university community. AUJS also maintained that Zananiri was a PLO Fatah branch leader at the American University of Beirut and was responsible for the recruiting of students for overseas terrorist operations.²⁸

Although AUJS opposed the tour, they organised a student conference for the same day as the tour's opening and made no attempt to disrupt the opening press conference. In fact, vocal opposition to the tour was organised by a right-wing splinter group called Action for Israel. Action for Israel was created by Yossi Steiner, a charismatic former leader of the right-wing Zionist youth movement Betar,²⁹ who had arrived in Australia from Israel only a few weeks earlier. Steiner raised some money and allegedly tried to 'buy off' AUJS without success before setting up Action for Israel in opposition.³⁰ As noted by Joe Gersh, Action for Israel represented that 'extremely small quarter of the Jewish community who felt that violence was the only means whereby the PLO could be excluded from the Australian shores.'³¹

On the day of the arrival of the GUPS students, AUS organised a press conference inside their headquarters in Drummond Street, Carlton. Outside the AUS offices, forty young Jewish students and members of Zionist youth movements, led by Betar activists associated with Action for Israel, demonstrated against the tour. A similar group had demonstrated earlier at Tullamarine Airport as the Palestinians flew in. The students chanted and displayed cardboard placards. It appears that some students made threats against the GUPS students and attempted to enter the building, but there is no evidence that any violence took place.³²

While the press conference was taking place, some members of the Arab community rang the Trades Hall Council and alerted the nearby May Day marchers to the Jewish demonstration. The callers suggested that the GUPS students were being threatened with violence. A group of 150-200 May Day marchers (mostly La Trobe University Maoists and local members of the Arab community) then ran

towards the AUS offices armed with clubs, flagpoles and other weapons and attacked the Jewish demonstrators.

A La Trobe University student, John Herouvim, who allegedly made an impassioned speech to the crowd³³ recalls: 'people came running downhill from Drummond Street and said the GUPS students were being besieged. We were stationary, waiting for the May Day march to begin. When they came down, there was quite some excitement. It was an opportunity for action. I remember people reporting that the Palestinians were in danger and being surrounded by Zionists. We thought these were formidable people, ex-Israeli army soldiers, etc. We ran off and the first wave had hit when I arrived. The fight was taking place on the nature strip. It was pretty clear that the physically dangerous Zionists weren't the people involved. I don't think anyone was in danger of being seriously injured. It was too wild and disorganised.'³⁴

The Jewish community viewed the matter somewhat differently. The *Australian Jewish News*, for example, reported: 'Arabs and pro-Palestinian supporters savagely attacked Jewish students peacefully demonstrating against an Australian tour by a Palestinian student delegation . . . Dozens of people, including an elderly Jewish passer-by, were injured when about 150 PLO supporters armed with long sticks attacked the demonstrators who numbered about 60'. The *Jewish News* quoted one Jewish student who had seven stitches inserted into a head wound as saying: 'They came from all sides and attacked us with sticks and poles. Rocks were also thrown. I saw one student with blood pouring down his face, and another student with a piece of his leg bitten out.'³⁵

That night, Steiner's Action for Israel group held a protest meeting attended by an estimated 1000 people at Caulfield Town Hall. During the meeting, a number of the Jewish students injured earlier in the day turned up with bloodied heads, directly inciting the crowd.³⁶

The following day, a crowd of over 700 Jewish students staged an Israel Solidarity demonstration outside the Union Building at Melbourne University in opposition to a nearby pro-Palestinian rally addressed by the GUPS students. At the rally, Jewish Melbourne University AUS Secretary Michael Danby resigned, citing 'the fascist, racist actions and attitudes taken by AUS towards Jews, and the scandalous abuse of AUS resources.'³⁷ AUJS subsequently sent a telegram to various ministers in the Australian Government demanding the immediate deportation of the GUPS delegation, pointing out that under the Commonwealth Crimes Act any people dedicated to the overthrow of an established government could immediately be deported.³⁸ An attack on the tour was also launched by Liberal Party leader Malcolm Fraser who blamed pro-PLO sympathisers within the Labor Party for bringing Middle East violence to Australia.³⁹

Following the May Day events, the GUPS tour was marred by further violence (at Macquarie University and the NSW Institute of Technology) and systematic attempts by Jewish students to disrupt the tour. Opponents of the tour engaged in large-scale organised heckling of the GUPS students' public addresses which made it almost impossible for them to be heard, staged demonstrations outside several of the travel offices of AUS, placed a 'stink bomb' device in the AUS Travel Office in Carlton, and allegedly threatened supporters of the Palestinians.⁴⁰

Perhaps the high point of the tour for AUS was the debate on the ABC current affairs program 'Monday Conference' between Eddie Zananiri and AUJS political officer Peter Wise. Most observers agree that Zananiri was victorious in the debate.⁴¹ The Palestinians also met with a number of leading politicians including the

then Acting Premier of NSW (Mr John Mason), the then Deputy Prime Minister (Dr Jim Cairns), the Liberal Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs (Mr Andrew Peacock) and Federal Labor's Foreign Affairs Committee.⁴²

Over the past 150 years, Jews all over the world have been disproportionately involved in movements of the political Left.⁴³ This Jewish/Left connection also extended to Australia. In the 1950s and 1960s, Australian Jews contributed significant political and financial support to the Australian Labor Party and the Communist Party of Australia.⁴⁴ Of even greater importance was Jewish support for the anti-Vietnam War movement in the late sixties and early seventies. Jews were prominently involved in opposition to the Vietnam War, both on campus (particularly at Monash and Melbourne Universities) and in off-campus peace groups such as the Campaign for International Co-operation and Disarmament (CICD). They were also prominent in opposition to apartheid in South Africa.⁴⁵

Although overall Jewish support for the Left declined in the early seventies, most Jewish student leaders continued to regard themselves as 'broadly left-of-centre'.⁴⁶ The AUS motions, therefore, confronted a significant number of young radical Jews with a 'crisis of identity'.⁴⁷ Left-wing Jews were faced with an invidious choice between loyalty to the Left and loyalty to the Jewish community. The hardline approach adopted by AUS meant that there was little middle ground left for those who saw merits in both the Israeli and Palestinian positions.

The evidence would suggest that the overwhelming majority of left-wing Jews opposed the AUS motions, or at the very best remained neutral. Most left-wing Jewish students believed that it was possible to find a political solution (i.e. the two-state solution adopted by AUJS) that would satisfy the needs of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Amongst the prominent left-wing critics of the AUS motions were Mark Taft, Karen Milgrom and Doug Kirsner. Taft, a CPA national committee member, opposed the AUS motions at La Trobe University as a 'socialist' and attacked other left-wing groups for a 'lack of understanding' of the State of Israel.⁴⁸ Milgrom, a CPA activist at Monash University, expressed her bemusement at the common belief on the Left that all Zionists were 'fascist and imperialists'.⁴⁹ Kirsner, a philosophy tutor and a former leader of the controversial 'Aid for the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam' at Melbourne University in the late sixties, was even more candid. In a letter published in both *Farrago* and *National U*, he stated:

It is often assumed, but is in fact by no means obvious, that those taking a neutral or pro-Israeli stance on the resolutions are to be considered automatically as reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries . . . The Left itself is scarcely united about its attitudes to the Palestinians' situation. In addition to a very sizeable number of social democrats and world Communist Parties, there is a good deal of new left criticism of the Arab stand and sympathy for the continued existence of Israel . . .

Such prominent anti-imperialists as Jean-Paul Sartre, Herbert Marcuse and Noam Chomsky by no means hold with the AUS position on Palestine, yet are these leftists to be seen as agents of U.S. imperialism? Trotskyist comrades should be made blissfully aware of Isaac Deutscher's regrets in *The Non-Jewish Jew* about his former anti-Israeli position . . . Perhaps AUS needs to be reminded that Palestine is not Vietnam, the Israeli government is not the Thieu government and that the United Arab Republic scarcely resembles the Vietnamese NLF.⁵⁰

Supporters of the AUS motions were well aware of 'the high proportion of Jews in Socialist organisations'.⁵¹ Some expected or at least hoped that the Left's 'revolutionary Marxist ideology and dedication would induce a large number of left-wing Jews to defect from the Zionist cause, as had happened in other parts of the world'.⁵² When this defection failed to occur, the response of a number of AUS activists was to denounce their former Jewish comrades for breaking ranks.

Melbourne University activist Simon Marginson was a particularly vigorous critic of left-wing Jewish supporters of Israel. Marginson acknowledged that many Jews had supported 'the cause of oppressed people' in Vietnam, Cambodia and Bangladesh, but claimed that they displayed 'a state of moral schizophrenia' when it came to the question of the oppression of Palestinians by Israel. Marginson complained that they were liberals rather than revolutionaries since their support was restricted to issues 'which did not touch them personally'.⁵³ Similar views were expressed by Macquarie University activist John Bechara (a Lebanese Maronite) who accused left-wing supporters of Israel of engaging in 'clannish loyalty'.⁵⁴

A particularly nasty attack was launched on left-wing Jews at Monash University. A correspondent in *Lot's Wife* claimed that Jewish candidates for the Public Affairs Committee such as Stan Rosenthal, Michael Frankel and Karen Milgrom were engaged in dishonest manipulation of student elections because they had failed to declare their alleged Zionist sympathies. The writer (who preferred to remain anonymous) suggested that Rosenthal and Frankel 'should look seriously at the contradictions to left-wing politics posed by Zionism as an oppressive, racist, colonialist, expansionist ideology responsible for the reduction of the Palestinian people to a nation of refugees in exile'.⁵⁵

In response, Rosenthal pointed out, 'Many people with impeccable left-wing credentials, both locally and internationally, have supported and do support, Israel's right to exist as a Jewish homeland. I refer to Mark Taft (CPA) locally, and Allende and Dubcek internationally'.⁵⁶

Another AUS response was to claim that a growing number of Jews were rejecting Zionism.⁵⁷ AUS pointed particularly to Sydney University activist Jack Herman who renounced Zionism and Israel in a controversial article in *Honi Soit*.⁵⁸ Other prominent Jewish supporters of the AUS motions were Socialist Youth Alliance activists Sol Salby, Deborah Shnookal and Diana Auburn, and Maoist Albert Langer. Yet, the evidence would suggest that only a miniscule number of Jews supported the AUS position.⁵⁹

In the end, the AUS debate served primarily to alienate left-wing Jews and to erode their ties to the Left.⁶⁰ Friendships were shattered; activists observed people literally walking away from the Left.⁶¹ Melbourne University AUS secretary Michael Danby summed up the anger of many: 'It is sad that a word describing the national liberation movement of the Jews is uttered in the same breath as fascist and Nazi. The bitter anger of Jewish activists described thus by one-time associates and even friends, is clearly understandable'.⁶²

The issue of anti-Semitism (hostility to Jews *per se*) versus anti-Zionism (hostility to Jewish nationalism and the Jewish State of Israel) on the political Left has been debated at length.⁶³ Most authors agree that rationally argued opposition to Israeli Government policies or to the manner in which Israel was founded at the expense of the indigenous Palestinians does not constitute anti-Semitism in itself. Anti-Zionism becomes anti-Semitism, however, when this criticism is extended to include stereotypical descriptions of Jewish behaviour, when deliberate attempts are made to diminish the extent of Jewish suffering in the Holocaust by comparing Jews to Nazis or by alleging Jewish collaboration with the Nazis, and when campaigns against Israel are carried out with such relish and such obsessiveness that they cannot help but create an environment in which anti-Semites and anti-Semitism thrive.⁶⁴

Throughout the AUS debates, supporters of Israel alleged that the AUS campaign was inspired by anti-Semitic motives. Melbourne University AUS secretary

Michael Danby, for example, resigned from his position after the May Day events, citing alleged 'fascist, racist actions and attitudes taken by AUS towards Jews.'⁶⁵ Similar views were expressed by AUJS activist Judi Stimmler who argued that the AUS campaign had inspired an anti-Semitic backlash against Jewish students.⁶⁶

AUS and its supporters strongly denied charges of anti-Semitism, dismissing them as a 'red herring'.⁶⁷ AUS' standard argument was that anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism were entirely different concepts. AUS President Neil McLean, for example, stated: 'Anti-Semitism is a racist ideology directed against the Jews. Unlike the Zionists, I do not believe that anti-Semitism is inevitable. Anti-Semitism is simply one variety of the many forms of racism, which I believe is a product of a class society . . . On the other hand, anti-Zionism is the struggle against the Zionist movement, a political tendency which, in practice, projected the gathering of the Jews in Palestine to establish an exclusively Jewish state there at the expense of the native Palestinian population . . . The struggle against the policies and structures of the Zionist state of Israel is an anti-colonial struggle to restore to the Palestinians their national rights in their country.'⁶⁸

Similarly, the Socialist Youth Alliance stated: 'In no way can our opposition to the state of Israel, which is the cause of the oppression of the Palestinians, be equated with anti-Semitism. For similar reasons that we have supported Jews against the persecution they have experienced, we support the just cause of the Palestinian people today.'⁶⁹

The evidence I will present here suggests that the AUS campaign involved two types of anti-Zionism. One was a legitimate form of anti-Zionism based on a humanitarian distaste for Zionism as an ideology that had caused great suffering to the Palestinians. The second type of anti-Zionism was neither legitimate nor humanitarian. This anti-Zionism sought to incite hatred against all local supporters of Israel, namely the Jewish community. In so doing, it undeniably promoted the growth of anti-Semitism in the Australian community.

Let me begin by examining briefly the first type of anti-Zionism. Most observers agree that the official AUS pro-Palestinian literature sought primarily to draw attention to the plight of the Palestinians and contained little or no traces of overt anti-Semitism.⁷⁰ Political scientist Dennis Altman, for example, states: 'students involved in the 'vote no' campaign have mentioned several persons prominent in pushing the AUS motions they consider anti-Semitic as well as anti-Zionist . . . it is my view, after talking with a number of those involved on both sides, that anti-Semitism has been virtually non-existent as a motive, but equally, that most of the pro-Palestinians within AUS have been quite unaware of the dangers of anti-Zionism becoming anti-Semitism, as it has in both Eastern Europe and the Middle East.'⁷¹

Yet the second type of anti-Zionism was clearly present in the arguments of the pro-Palestinian side and took a number of forms. One was the comparison of Jewish students with Nazis. In *National U*, for example, reporter Geoff Tanks (an SYA member) compared a Jewish student rally to the anti-Semitic Nazi torch rallies in 1930s Germany: 'In all the talk of the sacred right of the Jewish people to the land of Palestine one could hear the echoes of a Hitler cry for "lebensraum". In the continued representation of the Palestinian as a gun-wielding, bomb-throwing maniac who delights in destruction one can catch a reflection of all the Nazi lies about the Jewish people.'⁷²

According to Mungo McCallum, the theory that ' "Zionists" (i.e. Jews) collaborated with Hitler in order to further the Zionist cause was widely prevalent in AUS

and pro-AUS literature.⁷³ This claim was acknowledged by AUS President Ian MacDonald who expressed the view that the question of Zionist collaboration with fascism was 'well-documented'.⁷⁴

A more virulent form of 'illegitimate' anti-Zionism was the direct incitement of hatred against Jewish supporters of Israel. For example, an article published in the La Trobe University student newspaper *Rabelais* by the Maoist Radical Student Movement identified Zionism 'as part of the growing Fascist movement in Australia'. The article argued that Zionists had collaborated with Nazism and that Zionism was 'a fascist ideology which consciously promotes fascism'.⁷⁵ It is not surprising that the authors of this article were prominent in the May Day Maoist attack on Jewish students during the GUPS tour.

The third form of 'illegitimate' anti-Zionism was AUS' rigid association of all Jews with Zionism and consequently with racism and other offensive labels. Although 99 per cent of Jews support Israel's right to exist, many (if not most) Jews would reject the Zionist notion that all Jews should live in the Jewish nation-state of Israel. Most would probably prefer to be known as symbolic supporters of Israel and the concept of a Jewish homeland, rather than as committed supporters of the Zionist political movement *per se*.

In theory, AUS recognised this distinction between Jews and Zionists, if only via the use of Marxist terminology concerning 'false consciousness' to suggest that Jews and Zionists are not objectively one and the same thing.⁷⁶ Yet, in practice, AUS identified all supporters of Israel's right to exist (that is: virtually all Jews) as Zionists and subjected them to constant vitriol and abuse.⁷⁷ Certainly when AUS operatives referred to 'Zionist influence in the ruling circles of society'⁷⁸ and 'disproportionate Zionist influence'⁷⁹, it was hard not to conclude that they were talking about Jews. The term 'Zionist' simply seemed to be used as a euphemism to hide or cloud overt hatred of Jews.

An intimate insight into AUS' muddled thinking on this matter was provided by Lyn Biner, a Jew who served as AUS secretary from 1971 to 1980. Biner was shocked by the pervasive anti-Jewish feeling that filled the corridors of AUS at the time of the Middle East debates. She recalls:

I've known very little rampant anti-Semitism here, but I was shocked at how easily it was triggered by that first AUS Conference in January 1974. The Jewish students came in to debate the issues and anyone who had a *yarmulke* on was derided and commented on. The amount of hatred that I saw absolutely freaked me out. I didn't know where it came from or how easily it had been tapped. It seemed fairly widespread amongst Australian students...

I only met a couple of people who knew the difference between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism and practised the difference, although they all used anti-Zionism very strongly because it made them feel profoundly radical rather than racist.

Shortly after the January Conference, Lyn resigned in horror at the anti-Jewish hatred she had experienced. She returned one month later: 'When I came back to AUS quite openly to be of nuisance value, I constantly reminded them that they were supposed to be anti-Zionists, not anti-Semitic because they'd been standing around talking about "bloody Jews". Suddenly, Jewish people were off-limits.'⁸⁰

Lyn stressed in discussion that not all AUS leaders were anti-Semitic or held anti-Jewish prejudices. Yet, clearly little or no attempt was made by sympathetic AUS leaders to oppose or condemn anti-Semitism within their own ranks. In fact, AUS president Neil McLean specifically rejected a request to campaign against anti-Semitism. In March 1974, Jewish student activist and former leader of the Victorian Secondary Students' Union Danny Masel called on AUS to take a stance against anti-Semitism which he alleged had in part been encouraged by the AUS campaign

on the Middle East. McLean responded that anti-Semitism was simply not an issue with which AUS could become involved.⁸¹

Whatever the original motives of AUS in initiating the Palestine campaign, the debates led to the rigid classification of Jews into good (anti-Zionist) and bad (Zionist) categories, the depiction of the overwhelming majority of Jews *per se* as the enemy and to the virtual exclusion of Jews from the political Left.

From the 1967 Six Day War onwards, an intense debate took place within the Australian Left between adherents of pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian positions. By 1974, the pro-Palestinian position was virtually hegemonic on the Left. All major Left tendencies were represented on the Palestine Australia Solidarity Committee: the Socialist Youth Alliance, the Communist Party of Australia, the Socialist Party of Australia, the Communist Party Marxist/Leninist, and the Socialist Left faction of the Australian Labor Party.⁸² However, divisions still existed between those groups which adopted relatively moderate pro-Palestinian positions and those which adopted a more hardline pro-Palestinian stand.⁸³

The most vocal local supporters of the Palestinians were the Trotskyist Socialist Youth Alliance, an organisation with which many leading AUS activists such as *National U* editor Frans Timmerman were associated.⁸⁴ The SYA offered strong support to the AUS Palestine campaign, drawing a 'distinction between support for the oppressed Palestinian people struggling for their self-determination and support for the racist and colonialist-settler State of Israel, the bastion of imperialism in the Middle East'. SYA activist Sol Salby strongly attacked left-wing organisations such as the SPA, CPA, Spartacist League and the Socialist Labour League which allegedly opposed the AUS motions.⁸⁵

The Maoist CP-Marxist/Leninist adopted an equally strident position in favor of the Palestinians, identifying the Zionists as the 'Nazis of the Middle East'.⁸⁶ The Maoists incited and directly initiated much of the violence that occurred during the AUS debates.

Following the 1975 May Day attack on Jewish students outside the AUS offices, for example, the Maoist newspaper *Vanguard* proudly proclaimed:

The presence of these Zionists outside the press conference cannot be viewed in isolation from the general trend to fascism within the reactionary elements in Australia . . . Nearby, a group of Arabs and their supporters, who had assembled about 200 metres away for the annual May Day march, heard of the Zionist provocation and decided to rush to the aid of their Palestinian comrades and teach the fascist mob a lesson. The blame for the ensuing fight lies squarely with the Zionist provocateurs. Their very presence on the streets, as proud representatives of an imperialist-backed military occupation force, is an insult to all progressive people. As occurred in Melbourne a few years ago, when Nazis (wearing swastikas rather than the 'Jewish Star') appeared in the streets of Melbourne, this scum was quickly dealt with.⁸⁷

The CPA, in contrast, adopted a far more moderate approach to the AUS campaign, reflecting the divisions between the CPA's pro-Palestinian Sydney Branch and the even-handed or pro-Israel Melbourne Branch.⁸⁸ The CPA's newspaper *Tribune*, for example, endorsed the Palestinians' 'right to return to their land in a secular, democratic state', but also gave space to contrary views.⁸⁹ *Tribune* made only a couple of brief references to the AUS debates, noting that 'a significant confrontation between AUS and the Zionists would take place in March and April'.⁹⁰

CPA activists lined up for and against the AUS motions in line with their individual viewpoints. Whilst some prominent New South Wales CPA activists such as Greg Giles, David McKnight, Denis Freney and Peter Murphy campaigned in favor of the AUS motions, a number of prominent Victorian CPA activists including Mark

Taft, Ralph Gibson, Ian Fehring and Dave Davies opposed the AUS motions and defended Israel's right to exist.⁹¹ Their stand led to criticism from the SYA which accused the CPA of adopting a 'Zionist' viewpoint.⁹²

Similarly moderate positions were adopted by the SPA and the miniscule Spartacist League. The SPA affirmed the right of Israel 'to exist as a free, independent state giving equal rights to all nationalities with the opportunities for the Palestinian refugees to return to their land and homes with full compensation'⁹³, whilst the Spartacists recognised the right to self-determination for both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and stated that they would 'take no side' in the struggle between the 'bourgeois' Israeli and Arab states.⁹⁴

The Australian Labor Party was divided between a primarily left-wing pro-Palestinian faction and a primarily right-wing pro-Israeli faction.⁹⁵ The pro-Palestinian faction was lead by prominent left-wingers Bill Hartley, a member of the Federal Executive of the ALP and an Education Officer with AUS, and NSW MLA George Peterson. In a controversial article in the *Melbourne Herald* titled 'This Arab Voice Must Be Heard', Hartley accused Zionists of collaborating with the Nazis and stated: 'Israel is a huge ghetto founded on a monstrous injustice. It is not especially radical thinking to hold the view that the exclusive Jewish State should be replaced by a state containing virtues which Israel has never had, and never could have: an open society, equality, political and religious pluralism, freedom, democracy and amity with its neighbors.'⁹⁶

The pro-Palestinian position received extensive coverage in a Victorian ALP Socialist Left newspaper *Scope*, which argued vigorously in favor of the AUS motions⁹⁷, whilst also granting occasional coverage to alternative views.⁹⁸

Scope became notorious for employing blatantly anti-Semitic stereotypes to buttress its pro-Palestinian stand. Examples of anti-Semitic references included: 'Pro-Israeli communities appear to extend their loyalty more to Israel than to the nation of their residence';⁹⁹ 'Israel of course starts out with the overwhelming advantage of a substantial Jewish community which holds political, economic and media influence disproportionate to its numbers';¹⁰⁰ and 'A call from the Israeli Embassy is enough to set in train a campaign to stand over advertisers in newspapers (like *Scope*) which disagree with their viewpoint, to manipulate the internal affairs of the ALP, to smear decent Australians many of whom have rendered outstanding service to the Labor movement and the nation . . . The Federal Executive has been dealing with a problem of alien influence in its consideration of manifestations of NCC penetration into the ALP. It will one day come to the realisation that manipulation can originate from more than one external force.'¹⁰¹

Scope also published a letter by George Peterson which stated: 'It has always amazed me that so many of the persecuted Jews of Europe have accepted the criteria of their persecutors and that they repeat the Nazi myth of a Jewish race . . . Despite the socialist intentions of many of the founders of Zionism they have created a State in which the Arab Christians and Moslems are the equivalent of the Nazi "untermensch".'¹⁰² CPA activist Dave Davies accused *Scope* of 'fanning' anti-Semitic prejudices and portraying Jews as 'outcasts' and potential 'traitors'.¹⁰³

In contrast, the pro-Israel faction led by ACTU president Bob Hawke stressed that there could 'be no peace until the Arab States recognise Israel's sovereignty and right to exist'.¹⁰⁴ In response to Hartley's article in the *Herald*, Hawke argued that Middle East peace would 'not be assisted by the unthinking espousal of the PLO-Hartley final solution which ultimately, and simply, means one thing — the elimination of one side of the dispute'.¹⁰⁵ Hawke was accompanied in his pro-Israel

stand by 43 ALP MPs including a number of federal ministers.¹⁰⁶ One of the ministers, Joe Berinson, publicly attacked the support granted by some ALP members to the AUS resolutions.¹⁰⁷

A similar struggle between pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian factions took place within the Young Labor Association. At the 1974 YLA Conference, left-wingers led by a young Palestinian, Ali Kazak, moved a pro-Palestinian motion calling for the creation of a secular independent Palestinian state and condemning the pro-Israel stand of Bob Hawke.

In order to defeat the motion, ALP moderates packed the Conference with 70 newly-recruited young Jews and Israeli sympathizers led by Australian Union of Jewish Students President Arnold Roth.¹⁰⁸ The recruitment drive was organised by prominent Jewish student activist and YLA Henty Branch Chairman John Zeleznikow at the suggestion of YLA leaders Graeme Richardson, Bob Carr and Robert Ray.¹⁰⁹

The 'moderates' defeated the pro-Palestinian motion and then successfully moved a motion endorsing the Whitlam Government's 'neutral and even-handed policy' in the Middle East. The moderate-dominated YLA executive subsequently expelled 32 left-wing members suspected of being associated with the Socialist Youth Alliance.¹¹⁰ However, the 1975 YLA Conference did adopt a motion calling for a 'democratic secular state of Palestine'.¹¹¹

During the AUS debates, AUJS adopted an official policy of support for self-determination for both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples in the form of two separate states. This moderate and apparently reasonable stand typified by the slogan 'Israel Yes, Palestine Yes' clearly contributed to AUJS' victory in the debates.

Support for the two-state solution was articulated by AUJS President Joe Gersh, who stated: 'The solution lies in two co-existing states, Israel for the Jews and another for the Palestinians . . . From a philosophical point of view (I'm not a strategist), all territories within Israel are negotiable as far as we're concerned, given the assurance of peace. I like to see the Israelis as people that are concerned with their existence, not concerned with territorial expansionism.'¹¹²

Similar views were expressed by AUJS activists Alan Bowen-James and Michael Danby. Bowen-James called on Israel 'to hand Gaza and the West Bank over to a Palestinian State',¹¹³ whilst Danby published a pamphlet titled 'Justice for the Palestinians, Peace for the Israelis' which stated: 'Palestinians want an Arab State/ Israelis want a Jewish State. Support Two States. Support Palestine and Israel.'¹¹⁴ AUJS employed critical appreciations of Israel by such varied sources as left-wing Israeli author Amos Elon and the American Black Panthers in support of their two-state position.¹¹⁵

The support of AUJS for a two-state solution was a relatively radical stand which placed it well to the left of the Allon Plan,¹¹⁶ which embodied the official Israeli Government position at that time and in alignment with the small, but growing Israeli peace movement.¹¹⁷ However, relative radicalism of AUJS did not appear to hinder its relationship with more conservative official Jewish communal bodies such as the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies.¹¹⁸ According to Joe Gersh, the ECAJ, ZFA and Boards of Deputies provided financial support for AUJS and 'were not unduly interfering with our political line . . . The Jewish leadership recognised that to deal with the issue on campus required a different approach than might be used in talking to the *Age* or *Sun* newspaper.'¹¹⁹

In opposing the AUS motions, AUJS accepted many of the New Left assumptions

underlying the position of AUJS, in particular support for national liberation movements and opposition to imperialism and colonialism.¹²⁰ AUJS argued that Zionism was a legitimate national liberation movement which had arisen in response to Jewish persecution. For example, Augustine Zycher stated: 'Zionism is the movement by the Jewish masses to free themselves from the centuries of imposed separateness and subsequent persecution and genocide . . . Zionism is the movement to liberate the Jewish people from physical and psychological colonialism.'¹²¹

AUJS activists denied that Zionism was a colonialist or imperialist movement, arguing that Zionists came to Palestine as 'liberating Socialists'. According to Alan Bowen-James, 'Zionism began not as an imperialist plot, but in the words of Ber Borochov, the founder of Marxist-Zionism, as "a people's liberation movement dedicated to the socialist fulfillment of national aspirations"'. The so-called New Leftists forget that Zionism was the only socialist immigration movement in history which sought to proletarianize its bourgeoisie, which told the oppressed *petit bourgeois* Jews of Europe to return to the soil in the sparsely-populated home of their forefathers, to work on kibbutzim not for personal gain but for the betterment of mankind.'¹²²

In spite of its support for a two-state solution, AUJS' argument was often based on conservative preconceptions. For example, AUJS speakers regularly claimed that the true Palestinian State was Jordan, which seemed to contradict the argument that the Palestinians were entitled to a state of their own in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. According to Alan Bowen-James, '70 per cent of Jordan's population is Palestinian, and it is ruled by a feudal monarch. Surely the call for a Palestinian State is a call for the overthrow of a corrupt monarchy, which holds sway over the area agreed upon as the Palestinian homeland in the U.N. partition resolution.'¹²³

AUJS also expressed support for the insensitive claim that the Palestinians were responsible for their own refugee status. 1974 AUJS President Arnold Roth, for example, contended that 'In 1948, the Palestinian Arabs fled on the instructions of their leaders in Cairo, Amman, Damascus and Beirut, including the Mufti of Jerusalem, a notorious collaborator and supporter of Hitler.'¹²⁴ This 'blaming the victim' argument has since been refuted by authoritative Israeli and non-Israeli sources.¹²⁵

AUJS also failed to acknowledge the (at least) partial responsibility that Israel must bear for the injustice suffered by the Palestinians as a result of the events of 1948. No statement was issued recognizing that Israel had played a part (along with the Arab States and the Palestinians themselves who chose to fight rather than accept the United Nations plan to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states) in contributing to the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.¹²⁶ The sole reference to Israeli policy towards the Palestinians stated in a dispassionate tone that the 'Jewish leadership had failed to recognise the emergence of Palestinian nationalism until after the event' and that 'this had created a vacuum in the official Israeli policy which Israel is still attempting to rectify today'.¹²⁷

Critics of AUJS pointed to the inconsistency in the AUJS position and claimed that different viewpoints were expediently presented to different audiences: i.e. an AUJS stall was provided for centre-right students and a 'Peoples Liberation Movement' stall for left wingers.¹²⁸ Yet, this suggestion of deviousness glosses over the simple fact that Jewish students possessed no ideological unity other than their support of Israel's right to exist. As in the rest of the Australian community, their ranks included all sides of the political spectrum from religious conservatives to

atheistic Marxists. The only people who believed that Zionists (i.e. Jews) were all in the same political camp were the AUS leadership. In contrast to the relatively 'even-handed' stand of AUJS, AUS adopted a hardline pro-Palestinian position, arguing that only the Palestinians (an 'oppressed' nation) and not the Israelis (an 'oppressor' nation) were entitled to self-determination.

Many AUS activists drew an analogy between their pro-Palestinian campaign and the activities of the early anti-Vietnam War movement. Sol Salby, for example, argued that just as student opinion had gradually swung in favor of the anti-war movement, so student opinion would inevitably move towards support for the Palestinians.¹²⁹ This analogy was correct in so far as AUS sought to bring the plight of the Palestinian people and their need for a homeland to the attention of the Australian public. It floundered, however, on the rocks of the solution recommended by AUS. For the opposition by AUS to Israel's existence was analogous not with the broad anti-Vietnam War movement which sought peace rather than the victory of one side, but rather with the small militant (mainly Maoist) minority who advocated support for the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam in the mid to late sixties.¹³⁰

Just as support for the NLF never gained the endorsement of the majority of anti-Vietnam activists let alone that of the general student population, so the hardline stand of AUS on the Middle East (an issue of far less importance to the Australian public) was hardly likely to attract significant community support. In fact, all it succeeded in doing was arousing the united and passionate opposition of the whole Jewish community from left to right.¹³¹

A more moderate motion arguing in favor of Palestinian national and human rights and calling for an Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in the Six Day War whilst recognizing Israel's right to exist (similar to the broad approach adopted by the Vietnam moratorium movement in favour of peace in Vietnam) might well have attracted far greater support. Yet, such a moderate motion would have detracted from the determination of AUS to act as the vanguard of the Palestinian cause in Australia.

The pro-Palestinian case postulated by AUS was based on a number of key assumptions or arguments. One was that there is a distinction between 'oppressive nationalism' and 'oppressed nationalism'.¹³² According to AUS, only oppressed nations were entitled to self-determination: 'Hence, we do not call for self-determination of blacks and whites in Southern Africa, but only for blacks. Similarly, we do not also call for national self-determination of Israeli Jews (who are not being oppressed by anyone).'¹³³

That argumentation reflected the views of Matzpen, an obscure Israeli Trotskyist sect based in Jerusalem.¹³⁴ Matzpen argued that self-determination was not an absolute right, but rather that it was to be granted or denied in accordance with 'the interests of the struggle for socialism'. Thus, the Israelis who were an 'oppressor nation' would only be entitled to self-determination after the victorious Arab socialist revolution transferred them into an 'oppressed nation'.¹³⁵ Matzpen's 'socialist' solution was supported by only about 100 Israelis. Yet, it was accepted as gospel and revered by most AUS activists who appreciated having an Israeli group which endorsed their preconceptions. And as noted by Sol Salby, most AUS activists also belonged to obscure organisations such as the SYA, whose membership was similarly miniscule.¹³⁶

An extension of this argument was that Zionists (supporters of Israel's right to exist) were all one reactionary mass. No distinction was made, for example, be-

tween left-wing Zionists who supported a two-state solution and right-wing Zionists who supported a 'Greater Israel' incorporating the territories occupied in the 1967 War. Maoist AUS supporters argued that the concept of left-wing Zionism was equivalent to that of 'left-wing Nazism' or 'progressive fascism'.¹³⁷ Yet, many years later, two former AUS leaders would recognise the need to distinguish between the left (progressive) and right (reactionary) wings of Zionism, and call for the 'recognition of the legitimacy of a left social-democratic Zionism, based on the theoretical possibility of combining socialism and (Jewish) nationalism'.¹³⁸

The second argument put forward by AUS, pointing to the early Zionist cooperation with imperialist powers such as Turkey and Great Britain, was that Israel 'was a product of colonialist conquest'.¹³⁹ AUS claimed, therefore, that 'the struggle against the policies and structures of the Zionist State of Israel was an anti-colonial struggle to restore to the Palestinians their national rights in their country'.¹⁴⁰

A further AUS argument was that Israel (rather than the PLO) was the real terrorist. AUS president Neil McLean claimed, for example, that 'Israel and the Zionist movement have an unrivalled record of terrorism. Israel would not exist today if the Zionist terror groups (Irgun, Haganah and Stern Gang) had not been able to terrorise the Palestinian Arabs into leaving the country'.¹⁴¹ Similar views were expressed by Ken White in presenting AUS' official 'Yes Case' during the debates. White contended that 'the birth of the Israeli State was baptized in terrorism' and referred to a number of examples of Israeli terrorism against the Palestinians.¹⁴² AUS also charged Israel with pursuing a 'pro-imperialist foreign policy'. AUS accused Israel of support for the U.S. 'police action' in Korea; taking part in the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt in 1956; support for French colonialism in Algeria; opposition to the admission of China into the UN; and tacit support for US aggression in Indo-China.¹⁴³

AUS rigidly rejected the two-state solution preferred by AUJS, arguing that an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would merely be equivalent to a South African bantustan.¹⁴⁴ AUS heavily publicized then views of PLO functionary Dr Nabil Sha'ath on this matter. Sha'ath rejected the creation of a separate Palestinian State alongside Israel, claiming that this would 'mean continuation of racist settler-colonialism in Palestine, at the heart of the Arab world and the continuation of imperialist domination with all the racist overtones'.¹⁴⁵ AUS chose not to publicise the fact that prominent Palestinians (albeit a minority) including Said Hammami and DPLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh had endorsed a two-state solution as early as April 1974.¹⁴⁶

AUS supporters often compared the Palestinian struggle with that of the Aborigines for land rights.¹⁴⁷ Yet, the comparison was inappropriate. The Aborigines were campaigning peacefully for land rights within a small section of the white Anglo-Saxon state of Australia. In contrast, the Palestinians were employing violent means in an attempt to destroy the Jewish state of Israel and replace it with another state called Palestine. As noted by the critics of AUS, no members of the AUS executive were willing to pack their bags and leave the country so the Aboriginal people could resume ownership of their property. Yet, this was precisely what AUS was asking the Jewish population of Israel to do.¹⁴⁸

Much of the union's argument was based on very naive notions concerning the attitudes of the Israeli population and the intentions of the Palestinians towards the Israeli people. One argument AUS regularly postulated was that anti-Zionist and pro-PLO sentiment was growing in Israel among the Jewish population itself, citing the protest activities of Matzpen and the Black Panthers.¹⁴⁹ Frans Timmerman, for

example, expounded optimistically: 'Fatah looks forward to the day when several thousand Jews will join its fighting ranks for the liberation of Palestine. Given the recent trend of events, this may happen sooner than most people think'.¹⁵⁰ Similarly, Ken White argued that the 'Palestinian Arabs and other exploited groups, namely the Oriental Jews and the Jewish working class as a whole will unite to overthrow Israel and all the other reactionary imperialist based regimes in the Middle East'.¹⁵¹

Yet, as noted earlier, Matzpen was an obscure sect and there is little or no evidence to suggest that Oriental Jewish groups such as the Black Panthers ever considered supporting the Palestinian struggle. In fact, most Oriental Jews supported Israeli parties of the hawkish Right.¹⁵² The conception that large numbers of Israelis would combine with the Palestinians to destroy their own national state was sheer fantasy. Equally spurious was the claim that the Palestinian struggle presented no threat to the welfare of the Israeli people. Frans Timmerman, for example, argued that the 'Palestinian revolution was not about the slaughter of the Jews, but rather the overthrow of the Zionist system; a system based on the supremacy of one people over another'. Timmerman claimed that the PLO had no intention of committing genocide against the Israeli Jewish population and asserted that a democratic, secular state would offer the Jews in Palestine 'equality and freedom from persecution, discrimination and anxiety'.¹⁵³

It is inconceivable, however, that the Palestinians could have militarily conquered Israel and replaced it with a new nation-state without eliminating most of its inhabitants, who would have defended their country to the death.¹⁵⁴ The AUS position reflected not only a naive misreading of the intentions of the Palestinians (whose less- than- benign intentions towards the Israeli population had already been demonstrated in various acts of terror such as the Munich and Maalot massacres), but also a misreading of the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Israelis and Palestinians were struggling not for quixotic 'isms' such as socialism or imperialism, but rather for national rights. AUS' position reflected not only innocence (as suggested by political analyst Dennis Altman)¹⁵⁵, but also a bizarre ignorance of the political realities of the Middle East region.

One final comment relates to the paternalism inherent in the attitude of AUS to Jews. Throughout the debates, AUS activists professed to know what was best for Jews and alleged that their solution (the destruction of Israel) was in the best long-term interests of the Jewish people. American Trotskyist Peter Buch, for example (whose views were often quoted by AUS), made the remarkable claim that a Palestinian victory would constitute 'a smashing blow against anti-Semitism, wherever it exists' and represented 'the only road for Jewish survival in the Middle East'.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Sol Salby argued that a socialist revolution would 'free all the oppressed people in the region, including Israeli Jews who are bearing the cost of Israeli expansionism at the moment'.¹⁵⁷ Salby genuinely believed that the replacement of Israel with a secular, democratic Palestinian State 'would make the lives of Israeli Jews more secure'.¹⁵⁸

The organisers of the AUS Palestine campaign succeeded admirably in bringing the plight of the Palestinian people to the attention of the Australian public. Yet, they succeeded at a cost. For the radical solution they propounded polarized radical and Jewish students, provoked political violence, hindered sober consideration of the merits of the opposing Israeli and Palestinian cases (particularly the humanitarian aspects), and exerted a negative long-term impact on the politics of both the Jewish and Left communities.

The AUS debates confronted young Jews (many with traditional ties to the Left) with a crisis of identity. The overwhelming majority gave precedence to their Jewish loyalties ahead of their Left loyalties, reflecting the centrality of the State of Israel to modern Jewish identity. Many Jews underwent a cathartic experience and abandoned their ties to the Left. In later years, former AUJS activists such as Michael Danby, Johnny Baker and others were to play a central role in formulating a new conservative consensus that would become virtually hegemonic within the Jewish community. This consensus would overtly exclude Jews of a left-wing persuasion.¹⁵⁹

In a similar vein (but poles apart), former AUS activists would play a prominent role in forging a new hardline anti-Zionist/pro-Palestinian consensus within the Left. This consensus specifically excluded Jews, except for the small minority of anti-Zionist (that is, 'good') Jews who organised themselves into the Jews Against Zionism and Anti-Semitism organisation.¹⁶⁰

This depiction of Jews as the enemy reached its climax in the late 1970s and early 1980s when community radio station 3CR voted to exclude all Jews who supported Israel's right to exist, including those groups such as Paths To Peace which endorsed a two-state solution. At the same time, Paths To Peace activists also found themselves excluded by the hardliners from the Jewish community. A politics of exclusion and inclusion that divided Jews into good (politically acceptable) and bad (politically unacceptable) operated in both the Jewish and Left communities.

Ironically, the two-state solution endorsed by AUJS in 1974–75 was to be reintroduced into the debate in the late 1980s by former supporters of AUS influenced by the PLO's recognition of Israel.¹⁶¹ In contrast, the latter-day AUJS moved rapidly towards a hardline, pro-Greater Israel position. A 1991 study by the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs, for example, found that only a quarter of Jewish tertiary students supported the foundation of a Palestinian State on the West Bank.¹⁶² Seventeen years earlier, support for a Palestinian State alongside Israel had been central to AUJS' political stance. Clearly, the boundaries of the debate have been redrawn over the past decade and a half. Much of the credit or blame for these attitudinal changes must be laid at the feet of AUS.

NOTES

INTERVIEWS: Lyn Biner, 3 June 1992; Joe Gersh, 27 May 1992; John Herouvim, 22 June 1992; Sol Salby, 24 June 1992; Frans Timmerman, 4 May 1992; Rod Webb, 17 October 1992; John Zeleznikow, 30 July 1992. THANKS to David Bierman, Lyn Biner, Miriam Bulwar (*Australian Jewish News*), Marianne Dacy (Archive of Australian Judaica), Dave Davies, Beverley Davis (Australian Jewish Historical Society, Victoria), Joe Gersh, David Spratt, Frans Timmerman, and Rod Webb for their help in acquiring relevant literature.

1. See statement by NUAUS President Bruce Hartnett, 10 July 1967.
2. Dennis Altman, 'A secular democratic Palestine: A new litmus test for the left' in *Politics*, November 1975, p. 171 and *National U*, 28 July 1968.
3. Altman, *ibid*, p. 171.
4. Prominent AUS activists in the late sixties, for example, included John Bannon, Tom Roper and Jim Spigelman. Radical AUS activist Rod Webb refers derisively to these aspiring politicians as 'welfare lobbyists' who opt for the tactics of submissions rather than political action. See *Arena*, 27 February 1974.
5. Martin Shanahan, 'The AUS — Model of Next Year's ALP' in Les Shaw (ed) *The Shape of the Labor Regime*, Harp Books, ACT, 1974, pp 166–168; Dennis Altman, *op. cit.* pp169 and 173, Neil McLean, 'Our Union, An Introduction to the Australian Union of Students', Victoria, 1974, p12. Letter by Martin Shanahan to *Canberra Times*, 8 February 1974 and Stephen Morris, 'Terrorism, the Jews and the Australian Union of Students' in *Quadrant*, August 1974, p. 57. Both Shanahan and Morris were hardline conservatives and vocal critics of student radicalism.

6. Altman, *Op. cit.* p 171, *AUS Annual Council Motions 1973* and Diana Auburn, 'The Middle East Debate 1974–1976', *AUS Annual Council Position Paper*, 1977, p 1.
7. On the campus Middle East debate from 1967–1972, see Philip Mendes, *The New Left, The Jews and the Vietnam War*. 1993. pp 111–122.
8. Altman, *op. cit.* pp 169 and 175.
9. *National U*, 4 March 1974.
10. Ken White, 'A Submission on the Question of Palestine', *AUS Council*, 1974, p. 5 and *Rabelais*, Vol. 8, No.1, 1974.
11. Arnold Roth, 'Submission to AUS on the Middle East Debate', *AUS Council*, 1974.
12. Jack Herman, 'A rational attitude to Palestine and NUIS', *AUS Council*, 1974.
13. Auburn, *op. cit.* p. 2.
14. Shanahan, *op. cit.* p. 167.
15. Interviews with AUJS President Joe Gersh on 27 May 1992 and AUS supporter Sol Salby on 24 June 1992.
16. Auburn, *op. cit.* p. 2 and *The Australian*, 21 January 1974.
17. Auburn, *Ibid* and Simon Marginson in *Farrago*, 10 October 1975.
18. *National U*, 29 April 1974.
19. Auburn, *op. cit.* pp 4–5 and Marginson, *op. cit.*
20. For an expression of this view, see Mungo MacCallum, 'Futile fight obscures Issues' in *Nation Review*, 22–28 February 1974.
21. *National U*, 21 April 1975.
22. *Ibid*, 30 June 1975.
23. Auburn, *op. cit.* pp 8–9.
24. *National U*, 8 March 1976.
25. For a pro-Israel viewpoint on the 1983 Debates, see Steven Klimt, 'Survival', *Australasian Union of Jewish Students*, 1983.
26. For two opposing views on the continuing debate, see Diana Auburn, 'The Palestine Debate on Campus' in *Free Palestine*, April 1979 and David Bierman, 'Sustained Assault on Israel' in *Australian Jewish News*, 26 January 1990. For a brief history of AUS and its final demise, see Brian Pola 'Perspectives On The Australian Radical Left Student Movement 1966–1975', unpublished doctoral dissertation, School of Education, La Trobe University, 1988, pp 273–282.
27. Auburn, *op. cit.* pp 5–6 and Ian MacDonald, 'Information on Tour by Eddie Zananiri and Samir Cheikh', *Australian Union of Students*, 1975, pp 1–2.
28. *Australasian Union of Jewish Students Annual Assembly Report 1976*, pp 19–20.
29. Betar was the youth movement of the Revisionist Zionist tendency associated with the right-wing Israeli opposition party Likud. On the ideology of the Revisionist Movement, see Yaacov Shavit, *Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Movement*, Frank Cass and Co Ltd, London, 1988, and Anita Shapira, *Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881–1948*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992, pp 154–163.
30. Interview with Joe Gersh on 27 May 1992.
31. *AUJS Assembly Report 1976*, p. 21. On conflict between AUJS and Betar, also see *Arena*, 21 May 1975.
32. Interviews with Joe Gersh on 27 May 1992 and Frans Timmerman on 4 May 1992.
33. *AUJS Annual Assembly Report 1976*, p. 20 and MacDonald, *op cit.* p. 2. Herouvim was Secretary of the Palestine Australia Solidarity Committee.
34. Interview with John Herouvim on 22 June 1992.
35. *Australian Jewish News*, 9 May 1975. For the Jewish viewpoint, see also *Executive Council of Australian Jewry Annual Report 1975*, p 64. For a left-wing criticism of the attack as 'savage and unprovoked', see AUS activist Adam Carr in *Lot's Wife*, 30 June 1975. Further reports of the attack can be found in the *Australian*, 5 May 1975, *Adelaide Advertiser*, 5 May 1975, *The Age*, 5 May 1975, *Nation Review*, 9–15 May 1975 and the *Sun*, 5 May 1975.
36. *Australian Jewish News*, 9 May 1975 and interview with Joe Gersh on 27 May 1992.
37. *Australian Jewish News*, 9 May 1975, *The Australian*, 7 May 1975, *Farrago*, 9 May 1975 and the *Age*, 6 May 1975. Danby was also AUJS Political Officer.
38. Auburn, *op. cit.* p. 7 and *Australian Jewish Times*, 8 May 1975.
39. *Sun*, 6 May 1975.
40. MacDonald, *op. cit.* p. 7, *Newswit*, 29 May 1975, *Arena*, 21 May 1975 and *Direct Action*, 29 May 1975.
41. *AUJS Annual Assembly Report 1976*, p. 31 and *Direct Action*, 29 May 1975.
42. Simon Marginson in *Farrago*, 10 October 1975.
43. Robert Wistrich, *Revolutionary Jews from Marx to Trotsky*, Harrap London.1976, p. 1.

44. Mendes, *op. cit.* p. 18.
45. *Ibid.*, pp 39–43, 131–132, and 142–146.
46. Interview with John Zeleznikow on 30 July 1992; interview with Michael Danby in *Australian Jewish News*, 29 August 1975, and *Australian Jewish Times*, 21 February 1974.
47. Altman, *op. cit.* p. 175.
48. *Direct Action*, 15 May 1975.
49. *Lot's Wife*, 14 April 1975.
50. *Farrago*, 15 March 1974 and *National U*, 18 March 1974.
51. Neil McLean, 'Who are the Real Terrorists?' in *Scope*, 28 March 1974 and *National U*, 4 March 1974.
52. Isi Leibler, 'The Escalation of Anti-Israeli and Anti-Semitic Agitation in Australia' in *Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies Annual Report 1974–75*, p. 53.
53. *Farrago*, 10 October 1975 and *National U*, 5 May 1975.
54. *Ibid.*, pp.35–44; 123–124; and 133–137..
55. *Lot's Wife*, 23 June 1975.
56. *Ibid.*, 30 June 1975.
57. *Farrago*, 10 October 1975.
58. Jack Herman, 'A Jew Looks at the Middle East' in *Honi Soit*.
59. Interview with Sol Salby on 24 June 1992. Salby believes that few of the Jewish supporters of AUS had a significant Jewish identity.
60. Interview with John Zeleznikow on 30 July 1992 and article by AUS activist Adam Carr which refers to the 'alienation of left-wing Jewish students'. See *Lot's Wife*, 30 June 1975.
61. Salby interview.
62. *Farrago*, 2 May 1975. See also the angry retort by Jewish University of New South Wales activist John Green in *National U*, 26 May 1975.
63. See, for example, Ellen Cantarow, 'Zionism, Anti-Semitism and Jewish Identity in the Women's Movement' in *Middle East Report*, September–October 1988; Letty Pogrebin Cottin, *Deborah, Golda and Me: Being Female and Jewish in America*, Crown Publishers, Inc., New York, 1991, pp 203–231; Gill Seidel, *The Holocaust Denial: Antisemitism: Racism and the New Right*. Beyond the Pale Collective, England, 1986; *A Word in Edgeways: Jewish Feminists Respond*, Jewish Feminist Publications, London, 1988; Michael Lerner, *The Socialism of Fools: Anti-Semitism On the Left*, Tikkun Books, USA, 1992; Steve Cohen, *That's Funny, You Don't Look Anti-Semitic: An anti-racist analysis of left anti-Semitism*, Beyond the Pale Collective, England, 1984; articles by Lauren Finestone and Philip Mendes on anti-Semitism in *Farrago*, October 1987; Philip Mendes, 'Anti-Semitism on the Left' in *New Outlook* (Israel), September/October 1992; Philip Mendes, 'Left Behind' in *Jewish Socialist* (Britain), September–October 1992; David Cesarani, 'The Perdition Affair' in Robert Wistrich, *Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism in the Contemporary World*, Macmillan, London, 1990, pp 53–60; Jim Allen, *Perdition*, Ithaca Press, London, 1987; and articles by Sol Encel, Rodney Gouttman, Philip Mendes, Bernie Taft and Bill Rubinstein on 'The Australian Left and the Jews' in *Without Prejudice*, February 1991.
64. Philip Mendes, 'The Australian Left and the Jews' in *Without Prejudice*, February 1991, pp 30–31.
65. *Farrago*, 9 May 1975.
66. *Herald*, 7 May 1975. See also *Nation Review*, 5 May 1975.
67. *National U* Editorial, 4 March 1974.
68. *National U*, 4 March 1974. See also Auburn, *op. cit.* p. 4.
69. *Direct Action*, 23 February 1974.
70. Interview with AUJS President Joe Gersh on 27 May 1992 and Auburn, *op. cit.* p. 4.
71. Altman, *op. cit.* p. 174.
72. *National U*, 11 March 1974. See also the cartoon depicting Israel as a Nazi state in *Palestine Forum*, January/February 1976, a bimonthly journal published by the Friends of Palestine with which a number of leading AUS activists were associated.
73. *Nation Review*, 4–10 April 1975.
74. *Ibid.*, 9–15 May 1975.
75. *Rabelais*, Vol. 9, No.8, 1975.
76. Interview with Sol Salby on 24 June 1992 and Frans Timmerman in *National U*, 21 April 1975.
77. Altman, *op. cit.* p. 172.
78. Letter by Frans Timmerman in *Arena*, 24 April 1974.
79. Article by John Green in *National U*, 26 May 1975.
80. Interview with Lyn Biner on 3 June 1992.
81. *Farrago*, 29 March 1974.

82. PASC organized a number of public rallies in support of the Palestinian cause. See *Direct Action*, 13 April 1974, 7 February 1975, and 21 February 1975, *National U*, 10 March 1975 and PASC leaflet 'Hawke — Enemy of the Australian and Arab People', 27 March 1974.
83. Philip Mendes, *The New Left, the Jews and the Vietnam War*, pp 138–150. For an excellent discussion of the reasons behind the Australian Left's shift from a pro-Israel to a pro-Palestinian position, see the article by Doug Fraser in *Griffiti*, 21 July 1975.
84. Altman, *Op. cit.* p 173.
85. *Direct Action*, 23 March 1973, 27 April 1974, 15 May 1975 and 21 February 1975. See also Peter Murphy, 'Defend the Palestinians: A Reply to the CPA', Socialist Youth Alliance, June 1975.
86. Author's interview with John Herouvim on 22 June 1992. See also 'Zionism is part of growing fascist movement' in the *Australian Communist*, no. 70, April 1975. The latter article identifies virtually the whole Jewish community with the 'promotion of fascism'.
87. *Vanguard*, 15 May 1975. See also 22 May 1975 and 1 June 1975.
88. Rodney Gouttman, 'The Communist Party of Australia and Arab/Israel Conflict' in *Menorah*, vol (2), 2, p 8; Craig Johnston, 'The Communist Party of Australia and the Palestinian Revolution, 1967–76' in *Labour History*, Number 37, November 1979 and Isi Leibler, *op. cit.* p 50.
89. *Tribune*, 4 February 1975. For opposing view by thirty-six Jews, see *Tribune*, 4 March 1975 and *Morning Freiheit*, 12 June 1975.
90. *Tribune*, 29 January 1974 and 13 May 1975.
91. *Paths To Peace*, August 1975, *Farrago*, 6 June 1975 and Dave Davies, 'The Australian Left and the Middle East' in *New Outlook*, March 1977.
92. *Direct Action*, 27 April 1974. Also see the Palestine-Australia Solidarity Committee's criticism of the Congress for International Co-Operation and Disarmament's alleged 'support for Israel'. 'Vietnam–Palestine–Australia. Same Enemy — Same Fight'. PASC Leaflet, 1974. CICD was closely linked to the CPA in Melbourne.
93. *Ibid.*, 21 February 1975.
94. *Campus Spartacist*, 28 April 1975.
95. *The Bulletin*, 23 February 1974 and *Nation Review*, 7–13 February 1975. See also debates in *Labor Star*, 14 March 1975 and 18 May 1975.
96. *Herald*, 11 November 1974.
97. *Scope*, 28 March 1974 and 22 May 1975. *Scope* was edited by Bill Hartley and financed by the hard-left unions in the ALP Socialist Left.
98. *Ibid.*, 14 February 1974 and 26 September 1974. Pro-Israel contributors included Norman and Evelyn Rothfield, Bill Adler and Sol Marks.
99. *Ibid.*, 30 May 1974.
100. *Ibid.*, 1 August 1974.
101. *Ibid.*, 24 April 1975.
102. *Ibid.*, 24 October 1974.
103. *Ibid.*, 1 August 1974.
104. *Bulletin*, 23 February 1974.
105. *Herald*, 18 November 1974.
106. *Paths To Peace*, June 1975. See also John Wheeldon, 'The Right to Exist' in *Mid-East Review*, November 1974.
107. *Hansard*, 19 March 1974.
108. *Herald*, 18 February 1974 and *The Age*, 18 February 1974.
109. Interview with John Zeleznikow on 30 July 1992.
110. *Direct Action*, 23 February 1974, *National U*, 4 March 1974, *Lot's Wife*, 29 April 1974 and *Farrago*, 15 March 1974.
111. *Direct Action*, 21 February 1975.
112. *National U*, 26 May 1975.
113. *Farrago*, 1 March 1974.
114. Michael Danby, 'Justice for the Palestinians. Peace for the Israelis', Melbourne University, 1975, p 5.
115. See AUJS leaflet, 'To all Constituents', 1974.
116. The Israeli Labor Government's Allon Plan called for the defense border of Israel to be set along the Jordan River and for 70 per cent of the West Bank to be returned to Jordanian rule. The Labor Party opposed the creation of an independent Palestinian State. See Michael Bar-Zohar, *Facing a Cruel Mirror: Israel's Moment of Truth*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1990, p. 28.
117. See David Hall-Cathala, *The Peace Movement in Israel 1967–87*, Macmillan, London, 1990, pp 29–34; Raul Jean Isaac, *Israel Divided: Ideological Politics in the Jewish State*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1976, pp 73–102; and Yael Yishai, *Land Or Peace: Whither Israel?*

- Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1987, pp 142–172. AUJS was also strongly influenced by the World Union of Jewish Students which adopted a two-state viewpoint. See, for example, *Catalyst* (RMIT), 17 March 1976.
118. *Australian Jewish News*, 16 May 1992 and *News-Weekly*, 10 April 1974. The VJBD had consistently criticised the ALP Government's 'even-handed' policy on the Middle East as unnecessarily compromising the position of Israel. See, for example, the *Age*, 10 May 1974. The policy of AUJS was not dissimilar to that of the ALP.
119. Author's interview with Joe Gersh on 27 May 1992.
120. Stephen Morris, 'Terrorism, The Jews and the Australian Union of Students' in *Quadrant*, August 1974.
121. *Arena*, 13 March 1974. See also articles by Rob Fixler in *Farrago*, 14 March 1975 and Peter Wise in *Tharunka*, 13 March 1974.
122. *Farrago*, 1 March 1974 and *Tharunka*, 13 March 1974.
123. *Tharunka*, 13 March 1974 and the article by John Green in *National U*, 26 May 1975.
124. Roth, *op. cit.* p 3. See also articles by Peter Wise in *Tharunka*, 13 March 1974, Augustine Zycher and B. Sommer in *Empire Times*, vol 6, no.1, 1974 and Lewis Greenwood in *Rabelais*, vol 9, no.10, 1975.
125. See, for instance, Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1987; many other works on this question could be cited.
126. On the internal Israeli debates during the Palestinian exodus, see Joel Beinin, *Was The Red Flag Flying There? Marxist Politics and the Arab-Israeli Conflict in Egypt and Israel, 1948–1965*, University of California Press, 1990, pp 32–39. For pro-Palestinian versions of the allegedly catastrophic impact of Zionism and the creation of the State of Israel on the Palestinians, see David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, Faber and Faber, London, 1984; Beit-Hallahmi, *Original Sins, Reflections on the History of Zionism and Israel*, Pluto Press, London, 1992; and David Gilmour, *Dispossessed. The Ordeal of the Palestinians 1917–1980*. AUJS' version of the Palestinian exodus was also endorsed by most pro-Israel observers of the Middle East at that time. See, for example, Isi Leibler, *The Case for Israel*, Globe Press, 1972, pp 38–43 and also the contribution by veteran Israeli leftist Aharon Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1970, pp 294–302.
127. Peta Jones, 'Middle East — An Alternative View', University of NSW, 1975.
128. *National U*, 29 April 1974 and Auburn, *op. cit.* p. 5.
129. *Direct Action*, 15 May 1975. See also Geoff Tanks in *Direct Action*, 23 March 1974 and Michael Hansen in *Palestine Forum*, July–August 1975.
130. On the division between moderates and radicals in the anti-Vietnam War movement, see Mendes, *op. cit.* pp 37–39.
131. According to Joe Gersh, the left-wing 'Paths To Peace' Group 'were as helpful and concerned as anybody was'. Author's interview with Joe Gersh on 27 May 1992.
132. John Bechara in *Arena*, 13 March 1974.
133. Neil McLean in *National U*, 4 March 1974.
134. On Matzpen, see Carl Gershman, 'Matzpen and Its Sponsors' in *Commentary*, August 1970 and David Schnall, *Radical Dissent in Contemporary Israeli Politics*, Chapter Six.
135. 'Marxism, the Nation and the Jewish Question', Melbourne Discussion Group, Melbourne, 1988, p. 17.
136. Interview with Sol Salby on 24 June 1992.
137. *Rabelais*, Vol 9, No.8, 1975.
138. 'Marxism, the Nation and the Jewish Question', pp 8–9. One of the authors was Frans Timmerman. The pamphlet also attacks the Matzpen position.
139. Sol Salby in *National U*, 4 March 1974.
140. Neil McLean in *National U*, 4 March 1974.
141. *National U*, 4 March 1974.
142. Ken White, 'The Yes Case: Israel is occupied Palestine.' See also the article by Mike Carey on the Deir Yassin Massacre in *Arena*, 9 April 1975.
143. Mike Jones in *National U*, 11 March 1974.
144. Frans Timmerman in *National U*, 11 March 1974, Peter Connor in *Farrago*, 15 March 1974 and Neil McLean in *Farrago*, 2 May 1975.
145. Dr. Nabil Sha'ath, 'The Palestine of Tomorrow', in Solomon Salby, *The Democratic State of Palestine: A Middle East Solution* (NSW, 1975). Salby's pamphlet was organised by AUS and extreme right-wing Sydney businessman, Henry Fischer, through the Reuben Scarf Foundation, an organisation set up by the Australian Arab millionaire Reuben Scarf (a Lebanese Maronite) to organise trade between Australia and the Middle East. See interview with Frans Timmerman on 4 May 1992

- and Fred Gomo and Michael Danby, 'AUS-Fischer-Hartley: from the Student View', Melbourne University, 1976.
146. See article by Steven Stern in *Labor Star*, 14 March 1975; Uri Avnery, *My Friend, The Enemy*, Zed Books Ltd, London, 1986; Mark Heller, and Sari Nusseibeh, *No Trumpets, No Drums: A Two-State Settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, Hill and Wang, New York, 1991, pp 36–37; and Tony Walker and Andrew Gowers, *Behind the Myth: Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Revolution*, W.H. Allen, London, 1990, pp 138–139. According to Frans Timmerman, Yasser Arafat also endorsed a two-state solution at this time, but was in a minority of one on the PLO Executive Committee. Author's interview with Timmerman on 4 May 1992.
 147. Frans Timmerman in *National U*, 21 April 1975; Ian MacDonald and Simon Marginson in *National U*, 26 May 1975.
 148. Michael Marx in *Arena*, 21 May 1975.
 149. Neil McLean in *Farrago*, 14 March 1975 and Ken White, 'The Yes Case . . . '.
 150. *National U*, 21 April 1975.
 151. *Farrago*, 1 March 1974. Also see Mike Jones in *National U*, 11 March 1974.
 152. See Shlomo Swirski, *Israel: The Oriental Majority*, Zed Books Ltd., London, 1989, pp 51–55.
 153. *National U*, 11 March 1974 and 21 April 1975.
 154. This point is noted in 'Marxism, the Nation and the Jewish Question', *op. cit.*, p. 20.
 155. Altman, *op. cit.* p. 175.
 156. *National U*, 4 March 1974.
 157. *National U*, 4 March 1974.
 158. Interview with Sol Salby on 24 June 1992.
 159. Danby was until earlier this year editor of *Australia/Israel Review*, published by the think tank Australia/Israel Publications, which many on the left view as right-wing. Baker is president of the State Zionist Council of Victoria which has gained notoriety in some circles for its hostility to the Jewish Left. Former AUJS president Joe Gersh was president of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria from 1991–93. Prior to Gersh's election as president, the JCCV voted to exclude from membership the Australian Jewish Democratic Society, a left-liberal organisation sympathetic to the Israeli peace movement. Another former AUJS activist, Michael Marx, is currently president of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.
 160. On JAZA, see Steve Brook, 'Jews Against Jews' in *Paths To Peace*, August 1979. JAZA promoted the blaming the victim argument that Zionists (i.e. Jews) had collaborated with the Nazis to ensure their own destruction.
 161. See 'Marxism, the Nation and the Jewish Question', *op. cit.*
 162. See W.D. Rubinstein, *Attitudes of Australian Jewish Tertiary Students to Their Jewish Identity*, Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs (Melbourne, 1991). The validity of this study has come under challenge. Most of the sample seem to be middle-to-upper class Jewish students who attended exclusive Jewish or non-Jewish schools in which conservative values predominated. The question relating to a Middle East solution might also have produced a vastly different response if it had referred to territorial compromise rather than a Palestinian State. The former is now the official policy of the Israeli Government, whilst support for a Palestinian State remains a relatively marginal position inside Israel. [As the chief researcher of the study cited, I should note that forty per cent of respondents did not attend a Jewish day school and that it is difficult to see how anything about the social background of respondents can be inferred from the findings of this survey. Also, I do not believe that Jewish day schools can fairly be described as 'exclusive' as all take students from poor and recent immigrant backgrounds to a far greater extent than other private schools — Editor].

HOW TO WORK FOR PEACE AND COME OUT SMILING: REMINISCENCES

Norman Rothfield

Shalom (peace) is one of the most precious aspirations of Jews, in common with other human beings. Yet the history of peoples is a history of wars, to gain territory, power, wealth or national glory.

I have devoted a good deal of my life opposing war, working for peace, but I am no pacifist. I recognise that at times people have been forced to defend themselves, their homes and their land. However, the claim of self defence is often spurious and deceptively used by aggressors.

I was brought up in a school environment which defended and extolled almost every British war in history, while at evening classes I was taught that Jews also are special — they were God's chosen people. However, by the time I left university, I was ready to support my country or my people if the cause was just. But if I thought they were dangerously wrong I was prepared to react (with others) against them. I rejected the notion 'my country right or wrong.' That, I decided, was a slogan which glorified and justified war. And there was a great deal in British colonial history which, far from being glorious, was in my opinion brutal, racist and exploitative. Pseudo-patriotism enabled unscrupulous leaders to take their people into senseless wars.

In Australia, a massive challenge was mounted against the Vietnam war. I was involved in the early days of protest when we were facing a determined government, backed by a large majority of Australians inspired by 'patriotic' fervour. The going was not easy, but the final withdrawal of Australian forces and the virtual defeat of the United States and its policy of intervention was a vindication of the peace movement, worldwide. For my part, it provided satisfaction and compensation for the gruelling and somewhat difficult period when we had to face the stigma of being unpatriotic, un-Australian, etc. This involved fighting on two fronts and provided a useful preparation for the difficult experience of campaigning for Israel, and for peace in the Middle East.

1967 was a year of traumatic experience — before the war, for Israelis, after the war for the whole Arab nation. Israel's pre-emptive strike which initiated the Six Day War was, in my view, on balance, justified. That war changed the face of Middle East politics and in many ways changed the character of Israeli society. It also intensified the discussion about Israel's place in the Middle East.

I was travelling with my wife Evelyn in Europe when the war broke out and we anxiously followed the news wherever we were. Our Jewish friends in Australia helped to ensure Labor Party support for Israel which was in popular imagination still the David threatened by the Goliath of Arab oil and military power. But the Palestinians looked for allies from the peace activists who were demanding peace and justice in Vietnam. What about a little justice for us? said the Palestinians.

Concepts changed. Terrorists became freedom fighters. Indeed, all over the world there were freedom fighters striking against colonial rule, or the remnants of it. In Australia Jewish students had severe problems at universities which were the centre of intense political activity. Jewish students played their part in the radical

movement against the war in Vietnam. At May Day rallies they carried a banner proclaiming 'Palestine Yes, Israel Yes.' Palestinian and other Arab groups carried a banner saying 'Palestine Yes, Israel No.' I recall once passing by such a banner at a demonstration and the Palestinian group jeered at me, saying 'This is no place for Zionists.'

The Six Day War, for a time, changed the role of the Israeli Peace Movement (with whom, incidentally, I had had a long association.) That movement had consisted, in the main, of activists of left-wing parties. The most prominent of these was Mapam which, for many years, was part of the Labor-led government coalition.

In 1993 'Peace Now' is widely known as the Israeli Peace Organisation, which emphasises the need to recognise Palestinian rights as well as Israeli security needs. Forty years ago the Israeli peace organisation had a much broader programme, a concern for world events. The 'Israeli Peace Committee' was affiliated to the World Peace Council and among its activities it collected signatures, calling on the world powers to outlaw nuclear warfare. The secretary, Jacob Maius, told me with pride that the Israeli 'Ban the Bomb' movement had collected the signatures of a higher proportion of Israeli citizens than any other Western country.

I met some of the Israelis, including a cabinet minister, Mordecai Bentov, at an international peace gathering in 1952. I had the impression that they, unlike most delegates from Western countries, receive encouragement from their government in their activities. Israel needed friends from all quarters. Only a few years previously weapons from Communist Czechoslovakia sanctioned by the Soviet Union had been vital in the battle to create the State of Israel. In November 1952 the Russian press carried a message of congratulations for the National Day of the Soviet Union, received from Ben-Gurion, the prime minister of Israel.

In the 1960s Israeli peace activists joined in the protest against the war in Vietnam and early in 1967 they had arranged to send a delegation to a conference on Vietnam to be held in Stockholm some time in July. By the time the conference was to be held, however, the Six Day War had broken out and had terminated. The international conference then, especially for the Israelis, acquired a new significance.

And so it had for Evelyn and for me. We too had planned to attend the Stockholm conference. I was an accredited delegate from the Australian Peace Movement. As we anticipated, a special session of the conference was arranged to discuss the Middle East war. The Arab countries were well represented and it soon became clear, from the speeches and the general response from the audience, that the mood of the conference was to condemn Israel. Speakers denounced what they called 'Israel's blatant aggression' and demanded an unconditional return of the land captured in the June war as a prior condition for any negotiations or discussions.

It seemed to Evelyn and to me that a delegate other than an Israeli should be the first to present an alternative view of the war, but none seemed to be forthcoming. There was simultaneous translation into three or four languages and, presumably for the benefit of translators, speakers were asked to present their written speech well in advance of being called to the podium.

As a delegate endorsed by an Australian peace organisation, I won the right to speak and I handed up to the translator's office a copy of my speech which, suspicious of censorship, I had delayed as long as possible. After some preliminary references to the desirability of peace and negotiation, I gave an account of the military threat to which Israel had been subject including the closure of the Straits of Tiran and the threatening speeches from President Nasser and others: speeches calling for a holy war of liberation and made before Israel's pre-emptive strike.

Some of the audience began to protest and the chairman, a Bulgarian, wanted to silence me on technical grounds. I told him that I was accustomed to stand up to heckling in Australia when I demanded peace in Vietnam. I did not expect, nor would I agree, to be silenced when I demanded peace and negotiations in a conference supposedly devoted to peace. I finished my speech with little further interference. When finally the resolutions of the conference were drafted the resolution on the Middle East spoke in generalities and the Israeli delegates themselves were not dissatisfied. Before I left the conference I had long conversations with the Egyptian, Syrian and Israeli delegates. They agreed, if there was time, to hold a private meeting together. This was only one month after the war and the agreement was quite surprising. Unfortunately I had to leave Stockholm before it could be realised.

Back in Australia an old colleague, Jack Rezak, of Hashomer Hatzair-Mapam, with whom I had a close relationship, organised a meeting for me to report on the Stockholm conference. Naturally people at the meeting were most interested in the aspect of the conference concerning Israel and the Middle East. And they were interested also in the effects this was having on those on the Left who had, in the past, been traditional supporters of Israel. Much of the left wing in Australia rejected the notion that Israel had fought a war which they could not avoid. The Arab world, including the Palestinians, was by no means united on how to deal with Israel, but the agenda was set by the extremists, the terrorists and their spectacular acts, such as the seizing of hostages and the hijacking of planes. In Australia these extremists obtained a certain degree of support. Their argument was simple: to retrieve your homeland desperate acts are needed, and are justified.

One result of the Stockholm conference was a liaison between the Israeli peace committee and CICD (Congress for International Cooperation and Disarmament), the peace body I had represented. Some correspondence resulted and when CICD heard the World Peace Council was planning a special meeting on the Middle East to be held in Cairo, CICD strongly protested, pointing out the absurdity of proposing a meeting in a location where a significant party would be unable to attend. Over the years I often had conflicts with CICD and these included its attitude to the Middle East conflict. They always maintained, however, in whatever proposal they made, Israel's right to an independent sovereign existence.

On my next visit to Israel, at a reception which the Israeli Peace Committee gave for me, I met an Arab member of the Knesset, Abdul-Aziz Zouabi, a deputy minister in the Israeli government. I was impressed by a number of distinguished people on the committee: not only politicians, but writers and professional people. But I was especially interested in talking to Zouabi. He was unrelenting in his demands for Arab-Israeli peace and Israel's right to exist as a sovereign state. I asked him if he would be able to visit Australia. It occurred to me that such a visit would be a significant answer to some of the wild Arab propaganda being distributed throughout Australia at this time.

In Melbourne Jack Rezak had been having similar thoughts. So an invitation was sent to Zouabi and as he was unable to accept we were glad to host a distinguished Arab journalist, Ibrahim Shebat, the editor of Mapam's Arab language newspaper, *El Mirsad*, published in Jerusalem.

To sponsor the tour we established 'The Australian Committee for Peace in the Middle East.' The committee included, among others, Dr. Max Charlesworth, Gordon Bryant MP, Clyde Holding MP and Max Teichmann. At the time there were a number of Arab organisations actively campaigning against Israel, denying

Israel's right to exist. It was disturbing to notice the growth of support for these Arab views in left wing circles.

A number of us met Shebat at the airport where Shebat gave his first press conference. He was tall, imposing and typically Arab in appearance. He spoke clearly and articulately. He said he was an Arab and also an Israeli. He said Palestinian Arabs must have the right to their own homeland, but he also insisted that Israelis have a right to their homeland. He said in his own special way that there are 'two justifications,' two just causes and the solution is mutual recognition. The press lapped this up. The vision of an Israeli Arab in person coming to Australia was hot news. Doron Ur, who was the secretary of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies, was very impressed. He told me privately afterwards that Shebat was 'too good.'

In a three week period Shebat addressed a number of meetings in churches, universities and political parties. He was heard extensively on the media, particularly press and radio. He also addressed a number of Jewish gatherings including a reception by the State Zionist Council. The *Australian Jewish News* report of his visit was headlined 'Arab Views for Jews.' It went on '... what a scoop for the newly formed Australian Council for Peace in the Middle East.'

The highlight of Shebat's Melbourne visit was perhaps his address at the Melbourne Town Hall. He spoke to a mixed audience which included a number of Arabs. He warned them that Israel was now part of the Middle East and had to be accepted. He warned of the danger of another war and said frankly that Israel must avoid expansionism and must grant justice to the Palestinians. This was not good enough for many of the Arabs in the audience who heckled him. Jews, on the other hand, applauded loudly.

Some of the Arabs denounced Shebat as an Uncle Tom but a number of Palestinians whom he had known and were now living in Melbourne visited him secretly in his hotel. His visit to Sydney was assisted by the Zionist Federation of Australia who helped form a sponsoring committee.

Shebat said people in the Middle East were fed up with war. President Sadat wanted peace. If Israel's prime minister, Mrs. Golda Meir, he said, made it clear that Israel was ready for peace with justice there could be total peace within two or three years. This was the time when Golda Meir dismissed the Palestinian problem with her challenge 'Who are the Palestinians?' (One wonders, after reading Rabin's account of that period, whether the Yom Kippur War could not have been avoided if Golda Meir had been more flexible.)

It was about this time that the Israeli government was resisting various American peace initiatives, such as the Rogers plan. Itzhak Rabin was Israeli ambassador to the United States and he expressed his frustrations at the lack of response of his government to American proposals for peace. It seems that the Israelis were reluctant to accept long term proposals, and it was claimed they were unrealistic in their conditions for short term agreements. Rabin has revealed an Israeli cabinet divided on the issues of 'territorial compromise' versus 'functional compromise.' The result was that Golda Meir's government resisted UN and American proposals for peace.¹

Although some of the Arab states accepted UN Resolution 242 of November 1967, they appeared to be guided by the three 'nos' of the Khartoum conference. And the PLO rejected resolution 242, maintained the strategic importance of the armed struggle, and engaged in terrorism on a wide scale.

With all this as background Shebat's task in Australia was no simple one but he acquitted himself well and we, for our part, felt that a useful contribution had been made.

After the Yom Kippur War (1973), interest in the Middle East conflict increased, but there was a great deal of confusion on the subject, including among politically active circles on the Left. It was time to launch an Australian magazine on the Middle East, for a Jewish and non-Jewish readership.

So in 1974 Evelyn and I decided to publish *Paths to Peace*. Its objectives were: to promote peace in the Middle East; for Israel to be accepted by the Arabs as a neighbour in the Middle East; and for Israel to recognise the rights of the Palestinian Arabs. The magazine was published for twelve years; each year four or five issues were published. The fifty issues have been lodged in various libraries and with the Australian Jewish Historical Society in Melbourne.

Peter Weiniger assisted, in the early days, in editing the magazine. Subsequently we gathered together a committee which furthered its promotion. This article does not attempt to discuss or assess the assistance of those who contributed to the work for peace. I shall however mention Henry Zimmerman, who was a major contributor to *Paths to Peace* and to other publications. He is at the time of writing the valued honorary secretary of the Australian Jewish Democratic Society.

A good deal of the material for *Paths to Peace* was reproduced by agreement from *New Outlook*, an Israeli magazine which presented in broad outline the ideas of the Israeli peace movement. We had a good and close relationship with the editor of *New Outlook*, Simcha Flapan.

One of the first issues of *Paths to Peace* contained an open letter from me to Bill Hartley, an active leader of the Australian Left who took a pro-PLO and anti-Israel stand. He was a former secretary of the Victorian branch of the ALP. He had control of a trade union newspaper called *Scope* and he was a prominent figure running a Left trade union session on radio 3CR. Hartley challenged Israel's right to exist. He referred to Israel as 'the Zionist entity' or 'so-called Israel.' When it was apparent that Yasser Arafat was moving towards a position of compromise, Hartley gave his support to George Habash and the 'rejectionist' camp in the PLO. Because of his position in the ALP and the prevalent mood the champion the underdog, Hartley mustered quite a following on the Left of the Labor Movement.

My letter to Hartley exposed his policy on Israel as a total rejection of ALP policy on the Middle East. What the Middle East needed, I argued, was 'a realistic plan to reconcile the needs of the Palestinian Arabs and the needs of the Israelis.' We needed a plan to end the conflict, not prolong it. The peace movement in Israel, I stated, was ready to support Palestinian self-determination and if a lasting peace were to be proposed the people of Israel would be ready for a generous compromise. However, I concluded, 'if you demand the dismantling of Israel — the turning of Israel into a Palestinian Arab state — then you are encouraging war and helping to postpone, indefinitely, justice for the Palestinian people.'²

Towards the end of 1974, Yasser Arafat delivered at the United Nations General Assembly his historic speech 'Gun or Olive Branch.' Evelyn and I wrote a number of letters to the press, in particular the *Age* and the *Herald*, in which we expressed our concern at the fundamental contradiction in Arafat's plea for peace, while demanding the elimination of Israel. 'An olive branch does not mean the destruction of a nation and a state. An olive branch means recognition of the rights of both Israel and the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination.'³

Arafat, it seems, received an outstanding reception at the United Nations. Some subsequent commentators have said that although he had not spelt it out, he was really offering Israel a deal. Although two of his lieutenants offered conditional recognition of Israel, obviously with his knowledge, it was to be another fourteen

years before Arafat himself, speaking for the whole of the PLO, explicitly recognised Israel and UN Resolution 242.

In an editorial in *Paths to Peace* after Arafat's speech, we noted that the endorsement of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people had ironically been facilitated by Israel's refusal to permit political organisations among the Palestinians of the West Bank. This had left the field open to Arafat and the PLO by default. If there were to be peace, we said, there must be mutual recognition between the PLO and the Arab states on the one side and Israel on the other.⁴

And now to my work in the ALP⁵. In order to promote the case of Israel and minimise the influence of Bill Hartley, I circularised every ALP branch in Victoria. One of the results of this was that I received a number of invitations to address ALP branches or to debate the Middle East conflict with one of Hartley's supporters. In my favour was a recognition by many of the total inhumanity of the early policy of the PLO, represented by the slogan of the first PLO leader, Ahmod Shukairy 'throw the Jews into the sea.' One of the difficulties I had was explaining why Palestinian refugees should be refused the right of returning to their homes in Israel and should be kept in camps in most unsatisfactory conditions. The idea that Palestinian refugees should give way to Jewish refugees was not acceptable. The key to any lasting solution was recognition of the national rights of two peoples, Israelis and Palestinians.

Twenty years ago, the importance of positive affirmation of Israel's right to exist had to be emphasised. I recall that when the late Walter Lippmann and I drafted for Gough Whitlam, through the latter's secretary, Race Matthews, some brief notes on Israel, the first point we made was that Whitlam should affirm Israel's right to exist.

At state conferences of the ALP, where delegates from all over Victoria assembled, I distributed *Paths to Peace* and similar material. I recall a well-known member of the state parliament saying to me with a smile, 'I have never seen you without a bundle of literature.'

After some persistence I managed to break through into the Communist Party publication *Tribune*, which enjoyed wide circulation *outside* Communist circles. *Tribune* gave wide coverage to overseas conflicts, including the Middle East. But some of its contributions were unbalanced, and I welcomed the opportunity of reminding its readers that Israel's national rights and need for security were factors which could not be ignored if a just and peaceful resolution of the conflict was to be achieved.⁶

A problem which had serious consequences resulted from a resolution at a Conference for International Women's Year, held in Mexico in 1975. The resolution equated Zionism with racism and because it was part of a general and otherwise useful resolution, the Australian representative, after failing to have the 'Zionism' removed from the resolution, decided to support it.

Evelyn, who was present, had tried unsuccessfully to persuade the Australian representative, Elizabeth Reid, at least to abstain. Following this, Evelyn and I had a long correspondence with Canberra, from which finally we obtained an assurance that our representations would be borne in mind.⁷ The Mexican resolution was used as the basis for the 1975 UN resolution equating Zionism with racism, with Australia strongly opposing it. This resolution remained on their statute, to the detriment of the UN, for many years until it was, with Australia playing a significant part, rescinded in 1991.

One area where the anti-Israel forces in the Left had the upper hand was radio

3CR, the Melbourne community radio station founded in 1975 by a number of trade unions, clubs and friendly societies with the support and encouragement of the then Minister of the Media, Dr. Moss Cass. Under the terms of its charter, 3CR was to give air time to community groups in Australia which had no ready access to other broadcasting facilities. The station, then, seemed to serve a useful community need.

However, very soon the management of the station became dominated by extreme Leftists and in particular by the 'breakaway' Communist Party (Marxist/Leninist) led by the brilliant barrister, Ted Hill. The Party supported China against their number one enemy, the USSR. Among 3CR's members were a number of Arab groups, the Palestine-Australia Solidarity Committee (PASC), the Australia-China Society, the Australia-Albania Society and many similar bodies. Bill Hartley was given the job of broadcasting for a number of Left trade unions in a session called 'Par Avion.' All these bodies supported the rejectionist line of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), whose leader was George Habash. It would almost seem as if the sum total of the station's output would be extreme left wing politics, particularly Palestinian politics.

Actually this was not so. There were music and cultural groups who welcomed the opportunity to use the air waves. There were conservation groups and many Right and Left trade unions welcomed the opportunity to ventilate their claims for better wages and conditions which were denied adequate expression in the general media.

The very diversity of 3CR appeared to give extensive backing to the blatant anti-Israel propaganda, although many of the members of 3CR were concerned very little about the fine points of Middle East politics.

I was constantly rebuffed in my efforts. I tried many times to get an alternative view expressed on 3CR, but towards the end of 1976, however, I was given the opportunity to present one talk entitled 'Israel and Palestine: A Challenge to the Palestinians.'⁸ I directed my talk to the Palestinians in Australia and their supporters on the Left. I said that self-determination was a right which both Jews and Palestinians should enjoy, and I showed how this was supported by a substantial body of progressive opinion in Israel, as well as a growing number of Palestinians including some prominent members of the PLO. I reported on a recent mass demonstration organised by the Israeli Left in Tel Aviv. Some 20,000 demonstrators had heard speeches by Lova Eliav, a former secretary of the Israel Labor Party, and civil rights activist Shulamit Aloni. The message from the demonstration was peace and justice for the Palestinians.

I presented the argument for a two state solution and repeated the warning of one of the prominent advocates for separate Palestinian and Israeli states. Israeli peace activist and poet, Amos Kenan, 'As long as the PLO speaks in George Habash language, and as long as the Israeli government speaks like Gush Emunim, spilt blood will continue to redden the land . . .'⁹

The Palestine lobby, mainly Australian extremists, criticised radio 3CR for giving air time to 'this well-known Australian Zionist.' In addition to their regular sessions they demanded special time on the station's Friday forum in order to reply to my talk, and they declined the offer to appear in a broadcast debate on the issue. They condemned my views as 'racist.' For a time it seemed that 'Paths to Peace' and Norman Rothfield replaced Israel as public enemy number one.

In December 1976, 'Paths to Peace' applied for formal affiliation to radio 3CR. As a community group whose members had a distinctive viewpoint and had no gen-

eral access to the regular media, we were entitled to membership. Affiliation would give us regular access to air time and, therefore, the opportunity to rebut the rejectionist line expressed by the Palestine-Australia Solidarity Committee (PASC) and others. Our application was supported by representatives of several large Victorian trade unions, including the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union. Its secretary, John Halfpenny, did not fully agree with 'Paths to Peace' but he supported Israel's right to exist and our right to be heard on the air waves. Our application was opposed by invoking the recent UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. We were a 'Zionist' publication and therefore 'racist', and affiliation to 3CR was barred to racists by its constitution!

Despite the intense opposition, our application was rejected by the management by only seven votes to six. The chairperson of the committee, Carol Hosking, who favoured our application, did not vote! She and I were interviewed by the *Herald*. Some time later she resigned.¹⁰

In July 1977 we returned to the attack in the form of an open letter published in *Paths to Peace* and signed by a number of prominent people, including Jim Cairns,¹¹ who had been a deputy prime minister and, perhaps more importantly to some, a national leader of the Moratorium Movement against the war in Vietnam. The letter stated that the views expressed by 'Paths to Peace' were significant and certainly not racist. By this time the control of 3CR was even more tightly held by representatives of numbers of minuscule organisations, some created simply in order to gain an extra vote, each of which carried the same voting power as 50,000 members of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union.¹²

It was always tempting in frustration simply to ignore 3CR, but the fact was that poisonous and at times competent propaganda was heard regularly by thousands and thousands of Victorians. 3CR also commanded considerable manpower potential. In late 1978 they distributed half a million leaflets throughout Melbourne, accusing critics of seeking to censor the station while they were 'defending the rights of the Australian working people!' Throughout the conflict 3CR was supported by the *Age Green Guide*.

In September 1978, the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies (VJBD), which had been seriously concerned about 3CR for a long time, compiled and distributed a dossier, quoting some of the more offensive statements made on some 3CR programmes. These included charges of close collaboration of Zionist organisations with the Nazis, assistance given by top Zionist leadership to the Nazis in the extermination of hundreds of thousands of Jews and common features of 'racism practised in Zionist Israel' and Hitler's Germany. Israel was described as a racist-fascist state which should be exterminated. There were also charges that 'extremist Zionist organisations burn Christian institutions and their cemeteries'¹³ and, of course, distortion of the media 'due to Zionist control.'

The VJBD, in early 1979, made a submission to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal charging that 3CR was broadcasting material which was 'threatening, abusive, insulting, deliberately misleading, and likely to incite hatred against racial, religious and ethnic groups,' and that 3CR was denying affiliation to groups it chose to label 'Zionist'.

We, for our part, published a petition, calling on 3CR to ensure freedom of expression for those asking for Israeli and Palestinian rights, essential for a just peace in the Middle East. The petition was signed by fifty well-known writers, trade unionists, clergymen, academics, politicians, and the like. They included Philip Adams, Moss Cass (the minister who had licensed the station), Bob Hawke (then

president of the ACTU), Terry Lane, Clifton Pugh, Senator Evans, Barry Jones and peace activist Reverend Victor James.¹⁴

The effect was immediate and spectacular. Our campaign against 3CR became national news. The *Australian* featured the story on its front page and the *Age* published an editorial warning that 3CR was jeopardising its license by not giving air time to 'Paths to Peace'. Senator Evans, explaining in the *Age* on 12 January 1979 why he had signed the petition, said that our group's 'humane and civilised views on the necessary for a fully independent Palestinian homeland had done infinitely more to promote, in the Australian community, understanding of the justice of the Arab cause than the frothing and raging of the 3CR broadcasters.'

3CR was taken aback by the impressive list of signatories and complained that it had come under 'vicious attack from a gaggle of reactionary elements,' 'agents of Soviet Social Imperialism' and 'Right Wing ALP members.' Unable to find a label for some of the signatories, they questioned 'whether all the people are actual signatories.'

Meanwhile, we had to face the question of appearing before the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal. We shared the concern of the VJBD at the extreme views expressed on 3CR but we were more concerned with having the right to respond, than to impose some form of censorship. We had already succeeded in arousing strong opposition to the sort of obscenities expressed on 3CR and we wanted the right to which we were entitled: to express our view and rebut those obscenities on the station air waves. Now we had to be represented at the Tribunal and accordingly we set up a 'fighting fund' for the purpose.¹⁵ The Tribunal, which sat several times between March and August 1979, called for written submissions from interested parties. Many groups and individuals lodged submissions comprising reams of documents.

Some of the pro-Palestinian groups were concerned at the appearance of 'Paths to Peace' at the Tribunal. They claimed that I had misrepresented the views of Yasser Arafat and Farouk Khadoumi (PLO head of foreign affairs.) I had the advantage of having met and spoken to those PLO leaders in recent months and although I was not enamoured of their performances, I could identify an enormous difference between PLO proposals which, at that time, were looking for compromise, and the pseudo-Palestinian propaganda of Hartley and Neil McLean and the Australian radical Palestinians. Actually, despite many sessions, the Tribunal never got beyond preliminary matters. Changes occurred in the 3CR management, making them more tractable, and the VJBD probably influenced by a Jewish leader just returned from Israel (where the case was well known), was anxious to settle. An arrangement was come to after a number of private negotiations, to which 'Paths to Peace' was not a party.

There was an agreement for 'the inclusion in the station's guidelines of a clause which will inhibit the broadcasting of material which is threatening, abusive or insulting and promotes hatred against or hostility towards groups of persons distinguished by their sex, race, religion, colour or national origin.' It was also agreed that a fresh application by 'Paths to Peace' 'would be considered on its merits by members.'

The VJBD dropped its charges against 3CR, and on 15 August the Tribunal hearing was called off. Arnold Bloch, then president of the VJBD, told me that he was sorry the undertaking for 'Paths to Peace' was the best he could get. It was, in fact, of no value whatsoever.¹⁶ Certain limited changes were made in 3CR, although all the offending broadcasters continued. 'Paths to Peace' was not admitted, nor was it

given the opportunity to reply to the numerous attacks made on it. Not until years later, when the Australian Jewish Democratic Society was formed, was a progressive Jewish body permitted a regular session on 3CR. By that time (1984–85) the Palestinian situation was quite different and, although Hartley's sessions remained, 3CR had changed.¹⁷

Meanwhile, matters of much greater moment had been happening in Israel and the Middle East, to some of which I was a personal witness. The peace magazine *New Outlook* staged a Mid-East symposium in Tel Aviv, in November 1977, commemorating its twentieth anniversary. Its title was 'Can the Guns Fall Silent?'¹⁸

The symposium was significant: its distinguished platform included Lord Caradon¹⁹ (principal author of UN Resolution 242), a former French prime minister, the Jewish Pierre Mendes-France, and two internationally prominent Jews, Dr. Nahum Goldman and Abba Eban. Speakers included a number of prominent Israelis and a number of Arab scholars and intellectuals from Israel and from the West Bank.

The Mayor of Tel Aviv, Shlomo Lahat, and Jerusalem's Mayor, Teddy Kollek, hosted receptions for the delegates and participated in the conference. The overseas delegates numbered some 200 from seventeen countries with an equal number of Israelis participating. Among the special greetings read out was one from President Sadat of Egypt, and most surprising of all, while the symposium was in progress, President Sadat arrived in Israel amid tremendous enthusiasm and excitement.

Evelyn and I were attending the symposium, which I left temporarily to join the press corps gathering at the airport. I also attended a press conference and was one of the few journalists enabled to question Sadat at the conference.

I reported the symposium and Sadat's momentous visit in succeeding copies of *Paths to Peace*.²⁰ Here I shall only report some lighter moments. As we were awaiting Sadat's arrival (on specially erected stands), there was a great deal of preparation to be seen. The guard of honour was practising its drill, but as someone commented 'an Israeli soldier is an Israeli soldier: what do you want, a performance like the British Grenadier Guards?' An American Jew near me replied 'The Guards they are not, but for an occasion such as this they don't have to look like Puerto Ricans.'

An English television crew was rehearsing its lines. 'This *momentous* occasion opens up a new chapter in the history of Israel and the Arab world!' The television director waned perfection, and so we had to hear the refrain about this *momentous* occasion several times before Sadat's plane actually touched down.

When it did, all the Cabinet and the leading members of the Opposition were lined up to receive Sadat, together with rabbis, judges, and other dignitaries including the top military. Somebody said: 'if this were a plant and instead of Sadat a team of Egyptian commandos landed, they could wipe out the entire Israeli establishment.'

Sadat did land, however, and the Egyptian national anthem was played, followed by Hatikvah. And Sadat was greeted by the Israeli president, Ephraim Katzir, the prime minister, Menahem Begin, and then there was a stir as Sadat moved towards Golda Meir and bowed his head. There was a murmur of voices. An American journalist near me asked out loud: 'Did he kiss her? Did he kiss her?' You could imagine him preparing the headline 'Sadat Kisses Golda!' Finally, he appealed to a member of the Israeli television crew on its elevated platform, who responded slowly with a shake of the head, and with a smile. An Egyptian journalist ahead of us looked back and said 'never mind, there will be peace.' That expressed the mood in the airport and Israel — euphoria, complete euphoria.

Naturally, security provisions were intense. Arriving the next day to the press conference I was told that a special press card was required. I had left the symposium unaware of this. It was already late; I managed to grab a taxi (I recall it was driven by a fair-skinned Arab) and I kept it until I had moved from one office to another to get the necessary credentials. Finally, I arrived back at the press conference to be told I should need an extra pass issued inside and the desk for that was now closed. The fact that I had come all the way from Australia did not worry the officials over much.

After going, in vain, from desk to desk to get an entry pass, I asked where the toilet was. Somehow, from there, I managed to gain admission. I had a pocket camera and, with that, I joined the large camera installations which, fortunately, were near the microphones, from which questions to Sadat were directed.

The auditorium was packed with hundreds of media personnel from all over the world. My relatives in Tel Aviv were amazed to see me on television asking Sadat a question. This was a great day for Israel, and in a special way, for me too.

Notwithstanding Sadat's arrival, the work of the symposium continued. Arrangements were made for a few of the delegates, Nahum Goldman, Simcha Flapan and some others, for a private meeting with Sadat, but all sessions for the symposium were completed. At its conclusion, messages were sent to President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin and a call for the PLO and Israel for a cease fire and an ideological review.

As early as 1975, Said Hammami, PLO representative in London and Sabri Jirvis, a member of the Palestine National Council, spoke of the Palestine state alongside (and not instead of) Israel and an end to the armed struggle. (When I quoted Hammami at a Melbourne 3CR meeting, a Palestinian shouted out 'Hammami won't last long.' A year later Hammami was killed by an Iraqi gunman.)²¹

In early 1976, Jordan's King Hussein visited Australia and I attended a reception for him at Government House. He was well aware of these changing ideas in the PLO, which he said was 'the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.' He seemed, at the time, optimistic of positive changes in the PLO thinking, but he made it clear that any discussion of a separate Palestine state was up to the PLO.

The following year Isam Sartawi, a leading PLO official, met Bruno Kreisky in the latter's capacity as chairman of the Socialist International and told him that the PLO was ready for a state on the West Bank and Gaza and to live in peace alongside Israel.

I made the point in an article in *Paths to Peace* that for this statement to be effective it required some positive response from Israel. Without that Sartawi would be disowned. The response did not come.

Some time later Evelyn and I had the opportunity of meeting Sartawi in Paris. I was struck by his complete informality. He seemed to move around without any security precautions. Hearing of Evelyn's leading position in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), he said he would be happy to participate in a discussion organised by WILPF with an Israeli Zionist such as Matti Peled.

A meeting was held in Geneva with Israeli Reserve General Matti Peled, from Tel Aviv University. Evelyn helped to organise it and felt it to be both useful and interesting. It broke new ground. At the meeting, Sartawi said he could understand the role of Zionism in Jewish aspirations. For a leading member of the PLO to say that was revolutionary.

1977 and 1978 held great possibilities for Israel. Looking back over fifteen years,

one must wonder if the best use was made of these opportunities. In the 1970s, the notion of talking to the PLO and of a two state solution did not carry the taboo which the Likud government later imposed on it. Jewish student bodies, including the World Union of Jewish Students, supported by Australian students, passed resolutions involving these ideas.²² Among adult bodies, not only the ALP but on occasion the Liberal Party in Australia expressed the idea that the PLO could not be excluded from negotiations and from discussions on establishing a Palestinian homeland.

In the Jewish community too, this was not exceptional. I recall speaking on a platform at Beth Weizmann with Shmuel Rosenkranz, when he answered a question by saying 'Of course Israel will have to talk to the PLO.' Nathan Jacobson, when president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry in 1975, in a letter to the *Age* wrote: 'Jews in Australia share the view, often expressed by Israeli spokesmen and Jewish leaders all over the world — and for that matter by the Australian government — that the Palestinians have a right to a state of their own alongside and not instead of Israel . . .'²³

The irony is that such statements were made here and overseas when the PLO was delaying recognition of Israel, hoping that mutual recognition could be achieved. The closer the PLO came to recognition of Israel, the greater became Israel's reluctance to recognise Palestinian rights.

In January 1979, Evelyn and I were in the Middle East on a study tour of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Israel, organised by the Australian Institute of International Affairs. In Egypt we met with Butros Ghali, Egypt's foreign minister (later to be appointed the secretary-general of the United Nations.) I was struck at the time by his very sharp mind and his ability to answer succinctly and clearly any questions put to him.

In Syria we met some of the leading members of what they called their parliament. While we were in Damascus, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (it was a Liberal government at that time) organised meetings for us with the PLO. One of the senior officials of the PLO was Farouk Khadoumi, the man in charge of Syria's foreign affairs.

I asked him why the Palestinians had not taken the opportunity of establishing an independent state in 1947. In his reply, he blamed Jordan. He might have been right. It may also have been that, at that time, the Palestinians did not contemplate a nationality separate from Jordan or separate from other Arab states.

I then questioned him on his demand for a Palestinian state. I asked him whether there would be mutual recognition between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Khadoumi replied that the Palestinians were ready to set up a Palestinian state in any part of the occupied territories which Israel may vacate. I said to him that PLO supporters in Australia were saying that there had to be a Palestinian state in the whole of Palestine. 'That is not correct,' he replied. 'That is the way of George Habash' (the leader of the minority group PFLP.) 'I am,' he said, 'the PLO foreign minister, and you can quote me as saying that we want to set up a state in any part of Palestine from which Israel withdraws.' Although he 'ducked' my question, his response showed the change in thinking in the PLO top leadership. They were preparing to drop 'the secular democratic state.'

Just before we were due to leave Damascus, we were told that Yasser Arafat had rushed over from Beirut and would be willing to see a small number of us. We were asked to be ready that evening.

It was almost midnight when we were told that there were cars waiting for us outside the hotel. There were a few four-wheel-drive/Land Rover-type vehicles. We all piled in, to be driven off a 'break-neck' speed through the streets of Damascus. Tyres screeched round corners, traffic signals were ignored; the traffic seemed to melt before us. Eventually we arrived at a dimly lit building and after passing through the armed guards at the entrance, we were ushered into a small office, and there on a high swivel-chair, behind a large desk, was a small stocky man, wearing his familiar *keffiyeh* and sporting a scruffy beard.

Arafat greeted us cordially and then began talking quietly in good English without the assistance of a translator, although, as the evening proceeded, his lieutenant seated beside him helped him occasionally with a word here or there. His quiet mood did not last long. As he warmed to his theme he became more animated, his voice grew louder; he seemed to imagine that his small office was a large theatre, while he lost himself in his emotional rhetoric. None of us were very far from him but I was right in front of him and, as his voice rose, I held up my hands in mock surrender. He responded, for the first time, with a smile.

His main theme was that the Palestinians had been deprived of their homes and that they wanted to go back. He directed his remarks mainly to the United States and to the West. He said the West was 'burying its head in the shifting sands of the Middle East' by ignoring the central reality, that of the Palestinians. He said it was nonsense to believe that a deal could be made without the Palestinians — and the PLO represented the Palestinians.

I put a similar question to him which I had put to Khadoumi: 'If Begin were to recognise a Palestinian state in part of Palestine, would he recognise Israel and agree to make peace?' He replied: 'Has Begin made any such offer?'

I continued to press him and he responded: 'We accepted the joint Soviet American declaration.' This referred to the detailed plan involving a peace based on recognition of Israeli needs for secure boundaries and Palestinian 'legitimate rights.'²⁴ I looked straight at Arafat and asked: 'What do you understand by this joint statement?' As quick as a flash he shot back to me 'What do you understand by it?' At this point, Evelyn, who was at the side, called out 'You're just like a Jew. You answer one question with another!'

Arafat was a bit taken aback. As for me, I nearly fell through the floor. But he soon recovered his equilibrium and he went on. What I did not know was that a little while before our meeting he had spent some five hours with the American senator, Paul Findley, and in the course of that meeting, which was taped, Arafat said specifically that he was ready for a deal, including the end of violence, mutual recognition between two states and a negotiated settlement. It seems that President Carter, for whom the taped interview was intended, was too busy with the negotiations between Israel and Egypt to deal with what might have been a fresh complication; possibly another opportunity lost!

The probable result of that failure was Arafat's decision not to risk a conflict with his extreme wing with proposals for a compromise with Israel, likely to be rejected.

Towards the end of his address, Arafat got back onto familiar ground and asked what was wrong with a secular democratic state in which two peoples could live side by side as equals. He added a little colour by saying that if his own late father could hear what he was saying now he would jump out of his grave in despair.

Looking back on that period of Arafat's acceptance of the joint America-Soviet

plan and his recorded statements to Paul Findley, it is hard to resist the conclusion that the negotiations proceeding in 1993 could, if Israel had wanted it, have taken place in 1980 without the trauma of Lebanon and the *Intifada*.

Our experiences with Arafat aroused considerable interest and I was invited to address a number of Jewish organisations including two meetings at Beth Weizmann. The Israeli paper *Ma'ariv*²⁵ published a full page article about 'Paths to Peace' and its role in Australia, but the centre of the article was my meeting with Arafat. There is a world-wide interest in the man which cannot be explained simply by calling him the leader of a terrorist organisation.

For Jews, he has acquired the status of appearing as public enemy number one, a role which he is quite inadequate to fill. President Sadat and President Nasser, before him, had the capacity to declare Arab war against Israel. And President Assad of Syria has twenty times the fighting power which Arafat could muster at any time of his career. Assad was and is more ruthless. His human rights record is appalling and he has often supported the extreme wing of the PLO and thereby inhibited efforts of Arafat and the moderates. When Sadat invited the PLO to join the Middle East talks in Cairo in 1978, after the Camp David conference, Arafat delayed his response for some days, during which he was subjected to intense pressure from Syria to refuse the invitation, which finally he did. This incidentally saved Begin from having to make a difficult decision, whether to refuse Sadat's invitation to Cairo or sit with the PLO.

Arafat has had to fight the extremists, George Habash, Abu Nidal and the Hamas while at the same time trying to maintain the unity of his organisation and the respect of his followers.

Probably Arafat's weakness is that he has always sought a consensus in his organisation which has reduced its effectiveness. We do not know, however, whether Israel's response would have been different if Arafat had made his statement recognising Israel and UN Resolution 242 not in December 1988 but December 1978.

Arafat has, of course, made gigantic blunders. He shielded *Achille Lauro* vacationer Leon Klinghofer's murderers. He expressed support for the rebels in the Soviet Union when they attempted to overthrow Mikhail Gorbachev and — although he objected to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait — when the United Nations attacked Iraq he expressed solidarity with Saddam Hussein. For that he earned the animosity not only of the West, but of much of the Arab world.

Over the years I have argued, in *Paths to Peace* and elsewhere (as Amos Oz has done more effectively), that Israel should talk to Arafat for one good reason — because he is the enemy. He requires one credential — only one. Does he speak for the Palestinians with whom Israel needs to talk? We know that he does.

There are many very articulate Palestinian leaders: Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, Nabil Sha'ath, Faisal al Hussein. We know who gives them their instructions — Yasser Arafat. We have quoted many statements made by Arafat long before he formally recognised Israel: that he was ready for a deal, ready for mutual recognition, ready for negotiations.²⁶

The reason why to date [written before September 1993 — Ed.] no Israeli government has yet *openly* negotiated with PLO leadership has nothing to do with terrorism (or the past rejection of Israeli sovereignty.) Terrorism has been a convenient excuse but is, by no means, the reason why Israel has opposed direct talks with the PLO. And this is supported by Shamir's admission.

I often pointed out that Israel's former Prime Minister, Itzhak Shamir, explained



Norman Rothfield (second from left) at the March 1993 meeting of the International Center for Peace in the Middle East when the annual Rothfield Prize for Peace was presented. Also pictured (left to right): Dr. Majid Al Haj (winner, Haifa University), Israeli lawyer Avigdor Feldman (winner), and Walid Sadek (chairman of selection committee). (Courtesy Norman Rothfield)

his government's position well. In 1981, he negotiated a cease fire with the PLO (using the United States as an intermediary) which held good for eleven months. He also negotiated a prisoner exchange with the PLO using Lova Eliav, a prominent Israeli Labor peacenik. Shamir's explanation for doing the unmentionable — negotiating with the PLO — was simple. 'This is different', he said. 'This is in Israel's interest.' And quite simply, in Shamir's view, Land for Peace was not in Israel's interest.²⁷

I have often then tried to make the point that the reason for Israel's refusal to talk to the PLO has nothing to do with the PLO Charter or its terrorist record.

I have pointed out that the Labor government prevaricated on the question of negotiating withdrawal from occupied territory, but in the fifteen years of Likud rule there was a clear determination to reject any serious negotiations which involved withdrawing from any part of the West Bank or Gaza. And during this fifteen year period the taboo against the PLO, who were recognised world wide as

the representatives of the Palestinians, became strengthened to the extent that it became difficult to remove it even though Shimon Peres, among others, attempted to do so.

In the latter part of his rule as Prime Minister of Israel, Shamir, under pressure from United States President George Bush (\$10 billion worth of pressure), agreed to negotiate with the Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, but meanwhile, he intensified his efforts to settle Jews in the occupied areas, thus sabotaging the unwelcome negotiations.²⁸

Shamir gives a clear explanation of this in a statement made to the Israeli newspaper, *Ma'ariv*, after the Israeli elections in June 1992. He intended, he said, to string out the negotiations for ten years while he settled half a million Jews in Judea and Samaria. He added that as there was no majority in favour of his programme for a Greater Israel, his deceit was justified.²⁹

Mark Leibler's comment was as revealing as was Shamir's. He defended the previous Likud government and denied that it had tried to 'place obstacles in the path of peace.'³⁰

It seems that Shamir is to be denied his last wish before his political extinction — his desire to confess. The statement by Mark Leibler matches one made ten years earlier, in reference to the policies and objectives of Shamir's predecessor, Menahem Begin. As I was very much involved, I shall, in due course, report that event.

Looking back on the last twenty-five years, it seems that in the first half of the period, my main concern was to win acceptance (particularly in the Labor Party and in the Left) of Israel's right to exist. Gradually the position changed. The Arab world in general reluctantly came to realise that Israel was there to stay and their tone changed, as did in, some measure, their supporters in Australia.

In November 1980, 'Paths to Peace' joined with the United Nations Association in staging at Melbourne University a two-day seminar on the Middle East. An interesting diversity of political opinions were exchanged before an audience of over two hundred. This article can do no more than refer the reader to *Paths to Peace* (February/March 1981) for a substantial report, which should be of special interest to students of the period.

In Israel the Peace Movement³¹ was becoming more strident, demanding Israeli recognition of Palestinians' rights as well as Arab recognition of Israel. And the Left, in Australia, paid increasing attention to what the Peace Movement in Israel was saying. Bill Hartley was not numbered among those who saw the light, but he was becoming largely irrelevant.

In 1981, and more so after the invasion of Lebanon in 1982, I clashed with Mark Leibler. But I was in excellent company. Jewish leaders throughout the world (but not openly from Australia) were becoming restive with the politics of Israel's Likud government. They warned that the policies of the government of Israel were endangering Israel's future. In the United States, advertisements appeared, signed by dozens of prominent Jews, calling for change in Israeli policies. Dr. Nahum Goldman, Philip Klutznik, Pierre Mendes-France, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, Rabbi Arthur Herzberg and Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits were some of the internationally known people who were deeply concerned with the danger to Israel of its government's policies, and who publicly called for a change.

The contribution of Australian Jewry was quite extraordinary. Mark Leibler challenged these Jewish leaders, not only contesting their opinions, which was his right, but challenging their right to speak, challenging their right to question the

policies of the Israeli government. Naturally, I opposed the notion that Leibler was entitled to assume the role of universal censor. In 1981 Leibler was invited to address the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA). The Institute is a prestigious organisation. It organises, in depth, study tours for its members and regular lectures as its premises in Jolimont. The Institute held a discussion on the Middle East with Andrew Mack, then of Flinders University, and Mark Leibler as speakers. By agreement, the discussion was taped.

Andrew Mack had proposed as an important part of any peaceful solution, the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza, but he said Israel rejects this and therefore there is no peace. Mark Leibler responded: 'Mr. Mack [is wrong when he] said the Israelis reject the idea of a Palestinian state . . . if the Palestinians come and sit around the negotiating table . . . and genuinely come to a peace agreement, I believe it is possible to achieve the goal of the Palestinian state' Subsequently answering a question, Leibler said: 'If there is a genuine desire for peace, autonomy could mean sovereignty.'

I commented in *Paths to Peace* that Begin had said precisely the opposite to what Leibler declared. Begin said that Judea and Samaria are and must perpetually remain part of Israel. Leibler responded with a letter published in the next issue of *Paths to Peace* (February 1982) in which he said that his remark, that a Palestinian state is a possibility, does *not* contrast with Begin's. He wrote that there is no difference between his view and Begin's on the issue of a Palestinian state.³²

I pointed out that if Begin would say what Leibler said, that a Palestinian state was a possibility (provided Arab and Palestinian attitudes change, and so on), it would make an enormous impact on the Arab side and could have very useful consequences. I wrote: 'If either Israel or the PLO would move to accept the other . . . the cause of peace would gain immeasurably.'

Looking back on the discussion, I find it hard to believe that Leibler was not as aware, as many in the audience certainly were, that Begin relentlessly fought Labour proposals to withdraw from part of the West Bank and was determined, at all costs, to retain all of 'Judea and Samaria.' Why then did Leibler say (if the Arabs and the PLO would change) 'a Palestinian state is possible', 'autonomy could mean sovereignty'? It seems that as on other occasions he was unable to admit he had blundered and felt compelled to defend the Israeli government even though the defence particularly before that audience, well versed in international affairs, was ridiculous.

This is no place to scrutinise current community problems. Both Mark and Isi Leibler are significant figures in Australian Jewish communal affairs. For more than ten years Mark and I have clashed in the Jewish press and elsewhere.³³ Yet I recognise that he expresses the feelings of many in the Jewish community who carry forward the emotions of the past when Jews were always the victims. While this explains the extent of his support, it does not relieve him of the obligation to respect the opinions of others.

Isi's basic philosophy is quite different from mine, yet I recognise that particularly in recent years his ideas have broadened and he has adopted a tolerance of opposing philosophies. A broad-minded tolerance is an essential requirement for a leader of a diverse community, the pluralist nature of which is an important feature.

Sometime before the invasion of Lebanon, I was in Israel and called on the Australian embassy where I discussed the outlook. The view in the embassy was that the large number of tanks which had moved down to the Lebanese frontier suggested only one thing — war.

The forecast was correct, for at the first pretext, provided by the shooting of the Israeli Ambassador in London, Shlomo Argov, by followers of Abu Nidal (Arafat's bitter enemy), those tanks immediately moved into Lebanon. Thus began what Begin admitted was 'our war of choice,' the war which Begin said would be over in forty-eight hours because the attack would cease when the Israeli Army reached forty kilometres.³⁴

Later Sharon's true plan became known, but not before many hundreds of Israeli soldiers were killed and thousands more maimed and countless thousands of Lebanese civilians decimated, mostly by bombing. 'Peace Now' posted the daily count of Israeli dead outside Begin's home. In 1983 he collapsed and left the political scene. Some thought that the death of his wife contributed to his collapse.

If Begin was deceived by Sharon, he was not the only one. From the outset 'Peace Now' opposed the war and demonstrated against it but it was some time before they were given substantial mass support. They were helped by academics and others who, despite all the deceit, revealed the true situation. Professor Yehoshua Porat, whom I quoted in *Paths to Peace*, but in this way. He said: 'The war did not break out because the Galilee Towns were threatened — but because they had not been threatened.' 'For almost a year', Porat pointed out, 'the PLO had scrupulously observed the cease fire it had concluded with Israel in Southern Lebanon.' This he said worried our leaders.³⁵

Abba Eban wrote a scathing denunciation of the war in the *Jerusalem Post* in August 1982. He concluded: 'the past six weeks have been a dark age in the moral history of the Jewish people.'³⁶

In Australia the Liberal government and the Labour opposition condemned the invasion. At Labour Party State Conferences there were intense debates. The Hartley faction delighted in the opportunity to claim that their rejection of 'so-called Israel' had been vindicated. The more responsible section of the party, however, was not prepared to be railroaded by extremist absurdities.

I was myself involved to a minor extent, first in the finalisation of a motion to be put to the state conference by Clyde Holding and Gareth Evans, which was finally adopted, and secondly in correspondence with Jean McLean MLC, who moved the amendment for the Hartley faction. Her amendment said (surprise, surprise), that, yes, Australia should recognise Israel — but we should recognise Israel only in the boundaries set by the United Nations 1947 partition proposal. The anger at the invasion of Lebanon was such that Jean McLean's amendment received substantial minority support.

Subsequently, I wrote an open letter to Jean McLean, pointing out that her amendment, intending to harm Israel, would in fact harm the Palestinian cause and the cause of peace. I pointed out that whoever her advisers were, she seemed unaware that both the Soviet Union and the PLO were discussing proposals for Israel to withdraw to the 1967 boundaries in exchange for recognition and peace as per Resolution 242.³⁷ Her reply was brief: 'I am very happy with my own ideas. I don't need yours', hardly a model response for an aspiring politician.

But at this time, although there were still occasions when I clashed with Hartley and company, my main worries were in the Australian Jewish community. In Australia, feeling against Israel's war in Lebanon was very strong and so Israeli top journalist Hirsh Goodman was invited to Australia by the Zionist Federation, to help explain the war. He tried, but it seemed that he learned more in Australia than he taught, for back in Israel his reservations about exposing the Sharon adventure

dwindled. As time proceeded, he became among the most vigorous of the Israeli journalists who denounced the war as unnecessary and the reasons advanced for it as deceitful.³⁸

Reviewing the situation, Hirsh Goodman wrote, in a historical survey, that never in Israel's history had the geo-strategic position looked better than in the summer of 1982. War, even a limited war, seemed a long way off. 'On the Lebanon front . . . a cease fire with the PLO had held for a year.'³⁹

In September 1982 came Sabra and Shatilla, the massacres which brought 400,000 Israelis on to the streets of Tel Aviv and resulted in a judicial commission which recommended that Ariel Sharon be removed from office while his Chief of Staff, Raphael Eitan and the Foreign Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, were found guilty of gross negligence. Begin received a lesser but still substantial criticism.⁴⁰

But Australian Jewish leaders were determined to control dissent. The Zionist Action Plan of March 1981 called for the domination by Zionist organisations and Zionist ideas in Australian Jewish affairs. The Plan also called for an end to 'dissent', not only by Australian Jewry but by Jewry overseas. (I have already given the names of some of the Jewish leaders attacked by Mark Leibler.) Now the challenge was within Australia. Accordingly, the representatives of the State Zionist Council put a motion at a meeting of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies (on 2 August 1982) which must rank as one of the most extraordinary resolutions put and passed by any similar body.

An atmosphere was created as if Israel was in dire danger while, in fact, its armies, despite casualties, were advancing and were threatening Beirut. The resolution called upon 'all members of the Jewish community and other people of goodwill to give their full support to the government of Israel and to desist from critical public statements.'⁴¹

To demand that Jews in Australia refrain from expressing any support to the growing opposition in Israel against the war in Lebanon was a gross interference with the rights of Australian Jews living in a free and democratic society. It attempted to restrict their rights, not only as Jews but also as Australians. And that is treading on dangerous ground.

The absurdity of the resolution becomes more apparent if you ask such questions as, what about a Jewish MP? What about a Jewish journalist? What does a Jew do when he attends a meeting of his political party? When this is discussed, should he put his conscience in the freezer and oppose his colleagues, while he gives obedience to the VJBD (I have a letter on file which indicates that the resolution was not endorsed by the ECAJ!.)

However, what goes beyond any semblance of rationality was the notion that a Jewish communal body (inspired or bludgeoned by its Zionist delegates) could call on non-Jews to support a foreign government, a government condemned by the Australian government and by governments throughout the world, for an act of aggression regarded as illegal.

Needless to say, 'Paths to Peace' and its supporters had plenty to do to cope with this outbreak of hysteria, which in my opinion had overtaken sections of Australian Jewry. I argued that 'if you are concerned about the real welfare of your country, and you see it traversing a dangerous, mistaken course, you join with others in attempting to reverse it.'

The slogan 'My country right or wrong', to which I referred in the beginning of this article, has perpetuated the curse and the horror of war on this planet. Had the

volume of protest in 1982 been greater, many Israeli and Lebanese lives might well have been saved. The refusal to permit dissent was sometimes blamed on the war: 'While Israel is fighting, etc., you do not attack her.'

Rejection of dissent, in fact, the total rejection of dissent was planned long before the invasion of Lebanon. As I pointed out, the Zionist Action Plan of March 1981 (recently given publicity in the 1993 effort of the ZFA to replace the ECAJ) was proposed to the State Zionist Council by Mark Leibler, and included a demand to stop all public dissent, not only within Australia but from world Diaspora leaders. In September 1981, Dr. Nahum Goldman, a former president of the World Zionist Federation and of the World Jewish Congress, a man who played a major role in securing for Israel significant reparations from Western Germany, wrote a series of articles on Israel's policy. Mark Leibler attacked Goldman, denying his right to express criticism of the Israeli government.

I have pointed out that Goldman was not alone in hoping that questioning of certain actions of the Begin government may help to bring progressive change in Israel. I pointed out that these leaders of world Jewry are no less concerned and caring of Israel than are Mark Leibler or his colleagues in Victoria.

I often compare my battles with Hartley and the 3CR group to the later struggles within the Jewish community and I do not pretend that either was pleasant. In the 1970s and at the height of our battle with 3CR, Evelyn and I would not infrequently be woken up at 3am with a threatening phone call, or, more often, just the sound of breathing with no voice on the other end of the line. In the 1980s, I would get anonymous poison-pen letters from Jews, not much different from the threatening letters I received during the Vietnam war from Australian 'patriots'. In some respects more painful was the attitude of (a very few) friends of long standing, whose homes we had visited for thirty years or more. Such invitations now ceased.

But there have been compensations: the appreciation from very many for our stand for peace and justice. As I look back at the records, I see with pleasure the numbers of congratulatory letters and cards which I have received from students whom I lectured at the Council of Adult Education, and from others including ministers of the past and present Australian government. I have a Certificate of Appreciation from Rotary International, for I participated at their International Peace Forum in 1989. I was grateful, too, for the Certificate of Appreciation awarded by the Peace Research Programme of the United Nations Association (UNA) 'for work recognised as a contribution towards the building of a peaceful society.'⁴²

Looking overseas, I was proud to be appointed a Fellow of the International Centre for Peace in the Middle East, and to know that the annual Rothfield Prize, awarded to a Jew and an Arab for their contribution to peace and Arab/Israeli relations, is well appreciated. It is indeed possible to work for peace and come out smiling.

The concept that a person or organisation may claim authority to dictate to others what they may or may not do or say worried me, and still worries me. There are many similar concepts. The Right to Life Organisation determines that abortion must be prohibited, not just for its adherents, but for all women. The Catholic hierarchy forbids contraception for all. Some Orthodox Jews in Israel (and elsewhere) demand that other Jews abstain from football or the cinema on the Sabbath. More seriously, they determine that Jews who do not measure up to their standards are not Jews. Some Moslem men demand that women dress and behave in a special way.⁴³

The notion 'I know better' is related to the notion I *am* better. It is a similar principle which gives rise to the theories of racial superiority. Jews raise their hands in horror at the racial or religious bigotry in Bosnia, resulting in deportations. Yet the notion of deporting Palestinians from their land and their homes has been supported by a frightening percentage of Israelis, and an arch advocate of this racial cleansing, *Moledet* member Rehavam Ze'evi was elected to the Israeli Parliament and made a member of the Shamir government. Once, in Tel Aviv, Evelyn and I saw a government (Likud) display offering houses on the West Bank at something like half the price of a small Tel Aviv flat, and with easy government finance provided in addition.

One thing that follows a campaign against dissent is a numbing conformity and a fear to speak about such matters. I have sometimes, at Jewish gatherings, questioned the Israeli government's policy of creating Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. I have listened while my comments were denounced, and I have watched Jews, whom I know to be sympathetic to what I was saying, remain impassive like stone. I have heard a popular Jewish figure reporting on a recent visit to Israel at a public Jewish gathering, and afterwards I have heard him speaking to friends and giving a totally different account. You do not need dictatorships to produce timid 'yes' men (or women.)

Those who claim the right to dictate to others what they shall say or do, invariably claim or imply a moral superiority and then there are no limits to the iniquity which may result. It was a claim for the moral superiority of Communism which enabled the Russians to march into Czechoslovakia and Hungary and Afghanistan, and it was something not much different that prompted the Americans to invade Vietnam and Panama (a recent BBC television film showed how the CIA opened a school for torture in Vietnam. Another excellent film, 'Panama Deception', exposes the reality of the Panama invasion.) The removal of the democratically elected Allende in Chile, while an important reason may have been economic, the reason given for the United States' role was the 'moral superiority' reason, namely the danger of Leftism or Communism. A democratic forum of government is in itself no guarantee of moral rectitude.

Many of the brutal intrusions which have taken place in the last twenty years by Americans and Russians have been corrected, but at what cost in human life and suffering? My conclusion to all this is simple. We have no evidence that Jews or the Israeli government are immune from the blunders which others have committed, and there was nothing about Israeli blunders such as the settling of Jews on the West Bank and Gaza which should have inhibited other Jews, whether they lived in Israel or not, from discussing it or denouncing it as an injustice, as a danger to peace and as harmful to Israel's future.

Nor was the invasion of Lebanon a 'Holy War' which entitled it to be immune from questioning. The United Nations' Security Council demanded that Israel withdraw from Lebanon, as did the Australian government and most governments of the Western world. International consensus may not be a perfect indicator of right and wrong, but it is probably the best we have. If one man is a regiment is out of step, you don't blame the regiment, nor for that matter do you blame his brother if he tells him to change step.

Israel has had a difficult history since its establishment. Her right to exist has been denied and she has been subject to terrorist attacks and to wars. Naturally this is a factor which influences Israelis and the policies of the government. It is not a reason to ban discussion of that policy. The harsh experience suffered by Israel or by any

people is no guarantee of political wisdom, the best test of which is open, free discussion. (I suppose these thoughts which I am presenting represent an epitome of 1000 pages of *Paths to Peace*.)

I shall refer to two or three events of recent years. I was involved in the formation in Australia of 'Friends of Peace Now.' One of its acts was to advertise support for a call by 'Peace Now' for a moratorium on Jewish settlements and land expropriation in the occupied territories. The advertisement was to appear with the support of 200 members of the Australian Jewish community. Pressure was exercised against the *Australian Jewish News* and against some of the signatories, to prevent publication of the advertisement. Due to the pressure, the advertisement was delayed for several months. Finally, the *Australian Jewish News* refused to be intimidated and proceeded to publish the advertisement.⁴⁴

I was also involved in the establishment of the Australian Jewish Democratic Society (AJDS) which has made, and I believe is making, a useful impact on Australian Jewish life, not only because of the challenge of its ideas but because of its extensive activities.⁴⁵

Recently I have detected some changes in the Australian Jewish scene of 1993. The Israeli elections which returned a government prepared to negotiate land for peace changed the criteria of Diaspora standards.⁴⁶

A conference in Sydney on the future of Australian Jewry held in June 1993, organised by the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs, and, to all intents, boycotted by leading Zionist bodies, provided a platform for changing concepts.

Valuable information, quoted at the conference, was provided by the survey sponsored by the Jewish Welfare Society *The Jews of Melbourne: a Community Profile*. It challenged some old perceptions as to who is a Jew. The most significant factor linking Jews was found to be neither their religion, nor Israel, but a common history and culture, and in fact the percentage of those who declared themselves to be non-religious was 43 per cent.

It was also noted that the vast majority of Jews were deeply concerned for Israel's welfare and future, and that the vast majority regarded Australia in a positive way and declared that Australia would remain their permanent home. A testing question was put as to where Jews would choose to live if not in Australia. The vast majority selected the United States or Europe. Twenty-five per cent chose Israel.⁴⁷

While this article is not the place for any detailed analysis of this survey, it adds support to the thinking of the AJDS. The future of Australian Jews lies in Australia and accordingly they should participate in Australian life to the full, as in fact many do. Of course, the study of Jewish history, culture and tradition must be encouraged and the strong link with Israel maintained. But the old concept, that the essence of being Jewish is a combination of religion and Zionism, while it may suit some must not be regarded as a universal concept.

For my own part I expect to retain my special concern that Israel establish peaceful relations with Palestinians and with its other neighbours. Looking back over the years, I see an improvement of the general understanding, in Australia, of Israel's problems, its needs for security and recognition. I am particularly pleased to see that this applies in the Labor Party and that the extreme sections of the Party, which battled against Israel so vigorously, are now on this issue, for the most part, irrelevant. The Left is led by responsible people, such as Brian Howe, Gerry Hand, and Caroline Hogg.

As I conclude this article (July 1993), the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan are slowly proceeding. There have been

hiccoughs and I have no doubt there will be more. Whatever the outcome, history has taken another step forward.

NOTES

1. See Yitzhak Rabin's memoirs. Rabin has, at different times, made interesting revelations. He revealed that he was instructed by Ben-Gurion to remove Arabs from the Lod area during the war of independence. Previously, only Left-wing Israelis had admitted that Arabs had been driven out from Israel.
2. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 2.
3. A typical letter was one published in the *Age*, November 1974.
4. In 1976, municipal elections were held on the West Bank. PLO supporters won 96 out of 116 seats. After that result, Israeli governments were less keen on holding elections there. See also the editorial on PLO, *Paths to Peace* No. 4 p. 3. See also Noam Chomsky on PLO, *Paths to Peace* No. 5 p. 11.
5. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 22, p. 23.
6. On one occasion a letter was published under the signatures of Henry Zimmerman and myself, and 38 readers of the *Tribune*. The letter condemned 'the ill-informed editorial' (4 February 1975) which we claimed distorted 'present Middle East realities.' The letter was taken up by the New York Jewish Daily, *Morning Freiheit* of 18 June 1975, in English and in Yiddish, and also in *Kol ha'am* of 12 June 1975. Our challenge created a stir in left wing circles. For additional CP attitudes, see an interesting debate in *Paths to Peace* No. 6, p. 4.
7. See our leading article 'What does the Minister mean?' in *Paths to Peace*, No. 6 p. 3. See also *Paths to Peace*, No. 8, p. 20, '220 Black leaders oppose Anti-Zionist Resolution.'
8. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 12, p. 12.
9. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 12, p. 12.
10. See article in the *Herald*, 11 March 1977. The feature article by Paul Ormonde describes the whole event, with pictures of Carol Hosking and myself.
11. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 16, p. 13.
12. A meeting was held in Melbourne by the AMWU, addressed by Henry Zimmerman and some members of the Palestine Workers' Union. In the course of the debate, the Palestinian gave his solution to the problem with the words 'Kill all the bloody Zionists' (*Paths to Peace*, No. 25, p. 9.) In fairness, it must be added that so far as I am aware, these Palestinians have accepted the revised PLO line of recognition of Israel within a two state formula.
13. 'Palestine Speaks' (3CR), 26 February 1978. Other broadcasts quoted in dossier were made in July, August and September 1977.
14. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 23, p. 12. See also Sam Lipski in the *Bulletin*, 'Radio Scandal', 27 June 1978.
15. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 25, p. 24.
16. See, for example, our letter of November 1979 reported in *Paths to Peace*, No. 27, p. 23.
17. The AJDS broadcast regularly for two to three years and discussed without any restriction its range of views on Israel, international and Australian affairs. We ceased broadcasting because of the difficulty in manning our session and mounting costs.
18. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 18, p. 12.
19. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 12, p. 19, 'Breakfast with Lord Caradon' for an interesting interview with Lord Caradon, who was a member of the famous Foote family. See also his Middle East impressions in *Paths to Peace*, No. 9, p. 24. See also *Paths to Peace*, No. 21, p. 3.
20. See *Paths to Peace*, Nos. 18 and 19.
21. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 9, pp. 9 and 13.
22. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 15, p. 20.
23. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 5. The issue was the objection to a proposed visit to Australia by the members of the PLO who, at that time, were campaigning against Israel's existence. I supported Nathan Jacobson with a telegram to Jim Cairns. Previously, I had criticised Jacobson and some of his colleagues for their reluctance to protest against anti-Semitism in the Liberal Party and its tolerance of Eric Butler and the Ustashi movement in Australia. Our relationship however was cordial and when Whitlam won office Jacobson said to me: 'You're on top now.'
24. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 15, p. 20.
25. *Weekend supplement*, July 1979.
26. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 23, p. 16, quotation from Palestinian journals, *Palestine Forum and Events*.

27. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 32, p. 20.
28. For a good laugh, see the cartoon on Settlements in *Paths to Peace*, No. 25, p. 1.
29. See the *Age*, 29 June 1992.
30. See *Australian Jewish News*, 26 June 1992.
31. Among those who switched support to the peace movement was Middle East expert, formerly a Major General in charge of Intelligence, Professor Yehoshaphat Harkabi (*Paths to Peace*, No. 21, p. 5).
32. See *Paths to Peace*, Nos. 34 and 35.
33. For example, *Australian Jewish News* of 10 October 1986 contains a long letter in which I regretted the offensive attack made on the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, David Penman, who had invited to Australia an Israeli Catholic priest, Father Elias Chakour. Meetings were arranged, including one by a rabbi, to hear Father Chakour, whose message was to promote a Palestinian state to live at peace together with Israel. Mark Leibler attacked the Archbishop for daring to invite Chakour to Australia.
34. Abu Nidal's hit list included also the PLO representative in London. The Israeli Ambassador, Shlomo Argov, when he recovered, was among those who rejected the validity of Israel's invasion of Lebanon.
35. See *Paths to Peace*, Nos. 37 and 38, p. 3 for a detailed analysis of Israeli government claims.
36. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 38, p. 13.
37. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 37, pp. 8 and 9.
38. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 38, pp. 10 and 11.
39. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 47, p. 2. By that time 80 per cent of Israelis, an opinion poll showed, regarded the invasion of Lebanon as a mistake.
40. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 38, p. 22 for an interview with Ariel Sharon, which in my opinion contains a damning exposure of his guilt.
41. We wrote to the VJBD on 30 August asking them to reconsider their resolution, and on 1 September I wrote to the President of the ECAJ, Dr. Schneeweiss, whose response on 14 September was encouraging and very cordial.
42. See *Paths to Peace* No. 26 pp. 1 and 2.
43. See Henry Zimmerman's scathing denunciation of the position of women under Islam in *Paths to Peace*, No. 25, p. 18.
44. See *Paths to Peace*, No. 42, p. 17.
45. See *Paths to Peace*, Nos. 45 and 47.
46. Norman Podhoretz is a prominent American Jewish right-wing editor of *Commentary*. He was most insistent, 1977-1992, that there should be no criticism of the government of Israel. Now that the government is Labor led and has a policy of negotiating land for peace, Podhoretz says 'Now its different!' (see Chaim Bermant's article, *Australian Jewish News*, 18 June 1993.)
47. See John Goldlust, *The Jews of Melbourne: a Community Profile*, Melbourne: Australian Jewish Welfare Society, 1993. In a contemporary publication, *The Melbourne Jewish Community: a Needs Assessment Study*, a reply is given to the question, which apparently offered a restricted choice. 'If you couldn't live in Australia would you live in Israel?' To this question most replied positively. Forty-two per cent said 'No'.

JEWS IN THE 1991 FEDERAL CENSUS: THE WELFARE SOCIETY'S SURVEY The Jews Of Melbourne: A Community Profile

W.D. Rubinstein

The first part of 1993 has seen the release of the 1991 Federal Census, detailing the number of Jews by religion, and the Jewish Welfare Society's comprehensive survey of Melbourne Jewry, *The Jews of Melbourne: A Community Profile*. In keeping with a long tradition, this *Journal* will report on the main findings of the 1991 Federal Census concerning Australia's Jewish population, and will also briefly summarise the most important conclusions of the Welfare Society's survey.¹ The main findings of the 1991 Census are that the number of Australian Jews rose by 7.7 per cent between 1986 (the last Census) and 1991, from 69,089 to 74,386. These were extraordinary gains in the smaller states, especially an increase of an incredible 62.6 per cent in Queensland, from 2,631 to 4,278.

The table below shows the number of Jews in each state and capital city in Australia in April 1991, according to the Census, together with figures for each state (not capital city) in 1986, and the percentage increase in each state over the five year period.

While Victoria still has the largest Jewish community (33,862 declared Jews), closely followed by New South Wales (29,614) — each of the two large states growing at the same rate — really phenomenal rises in Jewish numbers were reported in the smaller states. The number of Jews in Queensland rose by an astronomical 62.6 per cent, from 2,631 to 4,278, while significant increases were reported in all of the other smaller states. In South Australia, for instance, the Jewish total rose by 14 per cent.

The extraordinary rise in Queensland Jewry is almost certainly due in part to the significant Jewish population on the Gold Coast and other resort areas on Census Day in April 1991; most of these should probably be reassigned to the other states, especially to Victoria and New South Wales.

All demographers who have studied Jewish population trends in Australia believe that Census figures grossly understate the actual size of Australia's Jewish population, with many Jews (including religious Jews) declining to answer this question. For instance, the Jewish Welfare Society in Melbourne maintains a confidential master list of all Jews in Victoria, which is continuously updated, and currently has about 47,000 names on it, indicating a Census undercounting of about 38 per cent. About 23.4 per cent of all Australians — Jewish and non-Jewish — declined to give a response to the religious question on the 1991 Census. If the Jewish rate of non-response equalled the national rate, the actual number of Australian Jews in April 1991 was about 97,084. If Jews overseas on Census day — who are not included in the Census figures — (believed to number about 3 per cent of the total) are added to this, Jewish numbers rise to almost precisely 100,000 (99,997) in April 1991, although the degree of undercounting in Melbourne suggests that Jewish numbers are even higher than this, perhaps as high as 125,000. According to the official Census returns, Jews totalled about 0.44 per cent of the entire Australian population of 16,850,138, although in Victoria and New South Wales their per-

centages were higher, respectively 0.8 per cent in Victoria and 0.5 per cent in N.S.W.

One notable result of the 1991 Census is that the Muslim population of Australia in 1991 was significantly larger than the Jewish population, totalling 147,507 (chiefly in New South Wales, which is over one-half of the national total), although the gap here narrows considerably if sources of Jewish undercounting are taken into account. Most Australian Muslims are Turks, Malays, Yugoslavs, and Indonesians rather than Arabs.

Over the following months the Australian Bureau of Statistics will release figures on such topics as the birthplaces and age distribution of religious groups and rates of inter-marriage. These promise to provide an important insight into Australian Jewry as it is at present. One thing which can be said with some certainty is that Australian Jewry is one of the Jewish Diaspora communities which is clearly still growing in size.

		1991	1986	1986-91 Increase — %
A.C.T.	Canberra Total	530 530	501	5.8%
VIC.	Melbourne Total	33,337 33,862	32,385	4.6%
N.S.W.	Sydney Total	28,521 29,614	28,197	5.0%
S.A.	Adelaide Total	1,239 1,304	1,144	14.0%
W.A.	Perth Total	4,221 4,221	3,919	12.8%
TAS.	Hobart Total	132 234	160	46.3%
N.T.	Darwin Total	54 143	98	45.9%
QLD.	Brisbane Total	1,212 4,278	2,631	62.6%
AUSTRALIA	Total	74,386	69,089	7.7%

This year also saw the release of a major survey of Melbourne Jewry, carried out by the Jewish Welfare Society, whose main findings have been reported in two monographs written by La Trobe University sociologist Dr. John Goldlust, *The Melbourne Jewish Community: A Needs Assessment Study* and *The Jews of Melbourne*

— *A Community Profile: A Report of the findings of the Jewish Community Survey, 1991*. Both are available from the Jewish Welfare Society in Melbourne.

The survey — the first undertaken on Melbourne Jewry since 1966 — consisted of lengthy interviews and questionnaire information drawn from a random sample of 640 Jewish households in Melbourne taken from the Welfare Society's master list of all Melbourne Jews. An enormously wide range of socio-economic and attitudinal data was collected, which will prove of immense interest to sociologists today and to historians in the future. Dr. Goldlust, Prof. Ron Taft, and Dr. Jonno Morris, who chiefly headed the survey, are to be warmly congratulated, as are their colleagues and staff.

This article can do little more than to summarise the most striking findings of the survey, which, however, are very striking indeed — extraordinary might be a more accurate term. They reveal a Jewish community probably without any parallel in the whole Diaspora for the satisfactory nature of its Jewish commitment and fortunate demographic statistics.²

Among the most notable findings: the fertility rate among Melbourne Jews is, apparently, above the replacement level, with the cohort of 40–49 year-old women (those just completing their reproductive years), including unmarried and childless women, having, on average, 2.5 children each; the intermarriage rate among Melbourne Jews is only 8.5 per cent; 94 per cent of respondents claim to have attended a synagogue at least once over the past year; 91 per cent of the children of those surveyed have attended a Jewish day school for at least a part of their education, with 62 per cent having received *all* of their education at a Jewish day school.

The *Report* also revealed a number of areas of concern, including an unemployment rate of 12 percent for the community as a whole even in 1991, and, in particular, extremely worrying socio-economic statistics for very considerable numbers of post-1970 Russian and Soviet Jewish immigrants. Nevertheless, Melbourne Jewry and its post-war evolution unquestionably has much to teach the whole Jewish world, especially those other communities in the Diaspora which are notable for their ever-higher rates of intermarriage, assimilation, and indifference to Jewishness.

One would, too, also like to know what a similar study would find today of Jewish life in Sydney and in the smaller states. With its British and Hungarian origins, in a society notably more hedonistic than Melbourne, Sydney Jewry has always had 'worse' statistics than has Melbourne Jewry on matters like intermarriage and Jewish day school attendance. Yet perhaps the most notable feature of Sydney Jewry's evolution during the past decade has been an enhanced Jewish commitment in areas where Melbourne led the way, especially Jewish day school attendance, which grew during the 1980s at the remarkable rate of 12 per cent *per annum*. As to the smaller centres of Jewish life on this continent, perhaps their most notable recent feature has been, equally, an enhancement of Jewish life with, for instance, Jewish day schools now existing in all mainland capital cities except Canberra. Perth, in particular, with 6000 Jews, has recently emerged as virtually the third centre of Jewish life in Australia, while the Tasmanian community, long virtually on the point of total disappearance, has been reinvigorated over the past decade. No similar study has been made of Sydney Jewry since 1970, while no such survey has ever been made of any of the smaller communities. If any such are ever undertaken, they are likely to show less satisfactory statistics of Jewish identity than the Melbourne survey, but statistics which are not that much less satisfactory.

NOTES

1. Previous Federal Censuses and what they say about Jewish numbers in Australian have been analysed in this *Journal* by Walter Lippmann, Rabbi Israel Porush, and Dr. Charles Price.
2. Some of the more remarkable of these findings have been discussed by this author in an article in the *Australian Jewish News* for 16 July 1993, 'Too Good To Be True?'

100 YEARS AGO: EXTRACTS FROM THE JEWISH HERALD

Compiled by Lorraine Freeman

The Jewish Herald.

MELBOURNE, FRIDAY, 31st OCTOBER, 1863-1899.

THE four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, which has just been celebrated, is, in many respects, of significance to us Jews. It is not generally known, but a fact, nevertheless, that amongst those who were instrumental in making this and other trans-oceanic discoveries the Jewish element was not wanting. PROFESSOR GRATZ points out that when, in the fifteenth century, the burning desire to discover unknown countries seized Portugal two sciences proved of special usefulness—mathematics and astronomy. And it was just in these that the Jews of the Pyrenean Peninsula excelled. In order to attain their purpose navigators had to abandon the track along the coasts and venture out on the open sea. This, however, required reliable charts of the heavens, and Jews supplied them. A certain ISAAC IAN SAID, Chassan in Toledo, prepared celestial tables, which were known as the "Alfonsonian Tables," and which were in use amongst navigators of all nationalities. We have this statement not only on the authority of ZACUTI, the author of "Juchassin" (edit. Filip., page 221), but also HUMBOLDT (*Kosmos* II., p. 205) corroborates it. By means of these tables VASCO DI GAMA was enabled to discover the route to India round the Cape of Good Hope, and COLUMBUS, in all probability, availed himself of the same tables. "As in many other cases so in this," observes the before-mentioned historian, "Jews used their brains, and Christians got the credit for it." We also know that the King of Portugal, JOAN II., had an Astronomical Board, consisting of three members, one of whom was a Jew, and that amongst the men who served under COLUMBUS on his memorable expedition there was also a Jew, though it is not quite certain in what capacity he served.

There is another circumstance of even greater interest—a curious coincidence indeed—in connection with the discovery of America. It was on the 9th of Ab, in the year 1492 of the common era—the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem—that the Jews of Spain, numbering 300,000 souls, were compelled to leave their native country. It was on the same day that COLUMBUS set sail for the West. In less than three months the country was discovered which has since proved a haven of rest and a paradise of liberty to

thousands and thousands of our co-religionists, and for the matter of that, to followers of other denominations also. In that country intolerance and persecution arising from religious grounds have never been known, and although anti-Jewish feeling has now and then been shown by an insignificantly small section of the population, probably hailing from countries where the disgrace of such feeling is not sufficiently realised, yet the true American spirit, as well as the Government of the country, have always been opposed to it. American soil is not congenial to religious animosities. American citizens apply themselves to practical objects, to anything and everything that tends to the good of the country and its people. A man's religious convictions may have a great deal to do with his form of worship, or with his keeping holy either the seventh or the first day of the week, but they have nothing whatever to do with the discharge of his duties as a citizen, nor are they allowed to weigh when his fitness for any public position comes to be considered. Much the same was the position of the Jews in Spain and Portugal prior to their expulsion, and many of them, either in the capacity of finance minister to the rulers, State counsellors, men of science or leaders of commerce, made a good return for the privileges granted to their people. The same result has been experienced in America. Men of the Jewish persuasion, who have been ambassadors to foreign courts have in every instance proved themselves worthy of the position. Indeed, from experience in the past, it may be safely asserted that the friendly shelter which America has given, and which she may yet give, to the victims of Russian barbarity will, in due time, pay a handsome return. By their natural ability, their thrift and industry, these exiles have in them all the makings of useful citizens, and which the free institutions of their adopted country are bound to bring to maturity before long.

NOTES AND NEWS.

Our English Correspondent's letter has reached us too late for this issue.

Mr. W. Davis, of this city, believes in סתר בסתר, "a gift in secret." We do not think there are many people in Melbourne who know—and we ourselves have learned it from outside sources—that that gentleman has given to the authorities at Jerusalem a sum of money sufficient to build two almshouses, with a "house for prayer and study" attached. The gift is in memory of the late Mrs. Davis, and will perpetuate her name.

Mr. J. Jacobs, the head teacher of the Fitzroy Hebrew School, informs us that owing to want of support he has been compelled to close the school. We are very sorry that it has come to this, and all the more since we were in hopes that one of our congregations would take this school under its auspices.

DURING the recent holy days the Divine services of the *ryur mprn* Society were conducted by the Rev. J. Levy, who was assisted by Mr. J. Jacobs and Mr. Morris Myers. On *Kol Nidri* evening Mr. Jacobs read a special prayer, which was composed for the occasion, and which gave general satisfaction to the worshippers.

A SPECIAL choral service in aid of the hospitals will be held at the Bourke-street Synagogue on Sunday next at half-past three in the afternoon. The Rev. Dr. Abraham will officiate and deliver a sermon, while Messrs. A. Israel, A. E. Israel, N. Bentwitch, I. Pinkus, F. H. Mendoza and L. Collins will take part in the choral portions of the service.

AMONGST the new Justices of the Peace appointed on Monday last we notice the following co-religionists:—Mr. Daniel Barnett Lazarus, West End Hall, Bendigo, for the Midland Bailiwick; Mr. Phares Phillips, Warracknabeal, for the Western Bailiwick; and Mr. Henry Josephs, 30 Eastwood-street, Ballarat East, for the Southern Bailiwick.

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The Jewish Herald.

MELBOURNE, FRIDAY, 10th DECEMBER, 1893.

FOR the last few weeks the question of admitting *Gairim* and *Gayuroth* has once more agitated the Melbourne Jewish community. No other question has, for the last 25 years, been so frequently discussed by our people in these colonies, and has on each occasion produced a greater diversity of opinion, some holding that no proselytes at all should be admitted, others that they should be admitted only under certain circumstances, and still others maintaining that the doors should be kept wide open, so that any reputable person wishing to come in may do so. The pity is that each view is defended with such vehemence and passion as to make it almost an impossibility to fairly argue the question, and we would not have referred to it at all had it not been that several erroneous impressions have gone forth which we consider it our duty to refute.

Both the Chief Rabbi and the local *Beth Din* have been blamed for making the admission of applicants too easy.

Indeed, some people have in their righteous indignation gone so far as to express the opinion that the *Beth Din* should be dissolved. Now, those who argue thus are very likely quite ignorant of the *modus operandi* which for years past has been followed in admitting *Gairim*. Every application is considered in a twofold aspect—first, from the social, and, secondly, from the religious point of view. With the former only laymen are competent to deal. For this reason every application has to be recommended by the Board of Management of a congregation. And here we would like to point out what seems to us a flaw in the procedure. The application, we think, should be made by a Jew who is most interested in the case, for such a one is never wanting; and it should be made to the congregation of which the interested party is a member. As it is, it is quite possible that one congregation may recommend a case which another has refused—a contingency which, to say the least of it, is undesirable. When the recommendation of a congregation has been obtained, and not until then, the case is placed before the CHIEF RABBI, who considers the religious surroundings, and, finding no impediment, generally gives his sanction. It will thus be seen that the admission of proselytes lies practically in the hands of the congregations, and not in those of the CHIEF RABBI. The congregations, if they think fit, may refuse any application, and if they do the case will not go further; but if they, or any one of them, recommend a case, and the CHIEF RABBI can see no religious impediment, he is almost bound to sanction the admission.

It is now that the local *Beth Din* comes in. They have no voice in the matter whatever. They are merely an executive body, carrying out the recommendation of the congregations, and receiving their instructions from the CHIEF RABBI. Having satisfied themselves that the intending proselyte is thoroughly instructed in the tenets and duties of the Jewish religion, and promises to comply with them, they proceed with the ceremony laid down for the admission of *Gairim*, and then the matter is at an end.

Those that are up in arms against the *Beth Din* will thus perceive that they have no cause for complaint against that body. It would be no difficult matter to dissolve the *Beth Din* as at present constituted, but it will only be at the cost of the communal interests. There are many functions which cannot be performed except by a *Beth Din*. Who, for instance, is to give *Challa* or *Oet*? Or would those who so vehemently attack the *Beth Din* care to see the *Shechita* without supervision? They should pause before questioning the usefulness, nay, the absolute necessity, of that body.

Much has been and may be said both for and against the advisability of admitting *Gairim* and *Gayuroth*. But a few observations may be made without the fear of contradiction. It is certainly not against either the letter or the

spirit of our religion. We do not go out of our way to make proselytes, inasmuch as we are told, and believe, that every man who believes in ONE GOD, and practises the laws of common morality combined with benevolence, has as much hope to share in the future life as any Jew. On the other hand if a person is desirous of embracing Judaism, and there is not the slightest doubt of his or her sincerity, there is no reason why we should turn such a person away from our doors. It would certainly not redound to our credit were it to go forth that we Jews are so exclusive that we refuse admission to a perfectly sincere applicant. It may, perhaps, not be in the interests of our local requirements to admit many proselytes; but this is a question which must be considered regardless of local requirements, and when the Jew has to deal with a question of such magnitude it behoves him to rise to the importance of the matter and, setting aside all selfish considerations, act as his religion and the principles of common fairness bid him.

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M. S. JOSEPH

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The Jewish Herald.

MELBOURNE, FRIDAY, 4th NOVEMBER, 1893.

THERE are at present two Jewish congregations in these colonies which are desirous of engaging a minister. It is certain that neither of these vacancies will be filled in Australia; whether in England is, at least, doubtful. The reason why is easily told. The fact is that each position includes quite a number of offices, which are but seldom combined, and which ought to be distinct. There are but very few men qualified to act as preacher, teacher, Chazan, Shochet and Mohel. And that is just what is wanted. The younger generation of ministers—and as a matter of course every congregation desires to engage, if not a young man, at least one in the prime of life—do not possess all these qualifications. It takes a man quite long enough to qualify himself for the office of preacher. Years of arduous study will have to be passed before he can acquire all the secular and religious knowledge which he requires, and once he has obtained his degrees he need not, and as a rule will not,

trouble himself about other qualifications. He may be gifted with a melodious voice, and therefore able to discharge also the duties of *Ohazan*, but the training he has received will always induce him to devote his best energies to preaching. As for the office of *Shochet*, that, in all likelihood, will not be congenial to him, and he will leave it severely alone. But apart from all these considerations, it would require no small amount of physical strength for one man to discharge all these functions. Just imagine a man being engaged in the slaughteryard on *Erev Yom Kippur* till late in the afternoon, and then hurry home to tidy himself, take his meal and enter upon his duties in the synagogue. Where is the voice that could stand such strain? Where the constitution that has sufficient stamina to overcome such exertions, and especially in an Australian climate?

On the other hand, it goes without saying that smaller congregations cannot afford to separate these offices. It is quite hard enough for them to support one paid officer. All these offices are equally important, and it would ill become a Jewish congregation to fill one and leave the other alone. What, for instance, would be the use of a preacher who expounds to and impresses upon the members the meaning and import of our religious laws, and if no provision were made to obtain *Kosher* meat, enabling everyone to live in accordance with those laws? Or what good could the best-conducted synagogue service do if the religious education of our children were neglected?

We admit, the problem with which smaller congregations are confronted is a most difficult one, but it is not beyond solution. Let us try and suggest a way out of the difficulty. It seems to us that the offices enumerated above must be separated. There is no help for it. The one that offers the greatest difficulties is, undoubtedly, that of the *Shochet*. Let it be given to a layman. That is to say, let a man of a good moral and religious character be found willing to qualify himself, and though it be at the expense of the congregation, as a *Shochet*. In smaller congregations his duties as such cannot make large demands upon his time, and he is therefore able to continue his usual calling. He will consider the *Shochetut* as a welcome means to supplement his income. The cost of his services may be defrayed partly, if not wholly, by the butcher who enjoys the monopoly of selling *Kosher* meat, and who, provided he gets the support of all the Jewish families in the place, will be only too glad to pay the tax. If we have thus supplied the *Shochet* at little or no expense, it will be easier still to find the *Chazan*. There are in almost every congregation some members who, on minor occasions, such as week days, are quite competent to take their stand at the reading desk. Let this be encouraged and,

in course of time, you will have men who are able to perform higher duties of this description. In former days there was, in most congregations, no want of *Baali Tefilloh*, gentlemen who acted as honorary readers on the high festivals, or at any other time when they were called upon to do so. They were, without exception, "self-made" men, or men who had gradually risen from smaller to more important posts, and who were only too glad to serve the congregation at any time. They considered it an honour and a distinction to read the prayers for the congregation. There is no reason why it should not be so now, or why efforts should not be made to bring about a similar state of affairs. An earnest, well-meaning layman may be to the Almighty as acceptable "a messenger of the congregation" as one trained for the position. We do not mean to say that an arrangement of this kind will render the salaried *Chazan* unnecessary, but it will greatly lighten the work of the officer who occupies the combined positions of reader and preacher. And, further still, where such conditions obtain, the congregation will be able to secure the services of an able preacher—a man whose eloquence and earnestness in the pulpit, as well as in his private visitations, will do a world of good, and who will not overlook that most important of all ministerial functions—the religious education of the rising generation.

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE name of Mr. Abraham Hermann, lately of Elizabeth-street, Melbourne, formerly of Hay, N.S.W., and now of Sydney, in, we are glad to notice, in the list of magistrates lately appointed for New South Wales.

MR. PHILLIP JACOBS, son of Mr. Isaac Jacobs, of this city, has successfully passed his final examinations for the B.A. degree.

A SPECIAL choral service was held in the Synagogue, Bourke-street, on Sunday afternoon, the 23rd October, in aid of the hospitals. The Rev. Dr. Abrahams officiated, and preached from Deut. xv. 10—pointing out that charity was not to be grudgingly doled out, but should be given with a good will and spirit. The rev. lecturer clearly set forth the fact of the teachings of charity having been propounded and inculcated in the Law of Moses, long before the Christian era, and that the assumption of charity being an entirely Christian tenet was altogether erroneous. The choral portions of the service were rendered by the choir of the congregation, under the leadership of Mr. A. Mendosa, assisted by Messrs. Abraham Israel, Albert E. Israel, Norman Bentwitch, Fred. H. Mendosa and Lewis Collins. Mr. Norman Bentwitch acted as organist (the organ having been kindly lent by Messrs. Brasch and Co., of Elizabeth-street, Melbourne), and Mr. Salog Pinkus as accompanist. There was only a moderate attendance. The collection taken up on behalf of the charities amounted to £38 1s. 0d.

No special Hospital Sunday service was held this year at the East Melbourne Synagogue; but on the previous Saturday the Rev. J. Lasser preached a sermon on "Charity," taking his text from the 8th verse of the 7th chapter of Ecclesiastes, and exhorting the congregants to contribute liberally towards the support of the hospitals. Prior to Hospital Saturday the rev. gentleman, assisted by Mr. B. Glass, had already initiated a collection in aid of the hospitals, which he continued during the week following, and which amounted to £35, including £3 collected by the school children.

It will be interesting to our readers to learn that the grand sweepstake of £10,000 in connection with the Melbourne Cup race has been won by a party of three co-religionists, Mr. J. Lohr, the *Shochet* of the East Melbourne Congregation, being one of them. Previous to the race the party, not thinking that the horse they drew would win, laid off £3000, so that their net winnings, after deducting 10 per cent. commission, will amount to £7000. Mr. Lohr's share will, therefore, amount to something over £2333.

CYCLISTS' CIGAR DIVAN, M. S. JOSEPH

(Late with Mutual Store and B. H. Altson), Wholesale and Retail Tobaccoist, 321 LITTLE COLLINS STREET (opposite Royal Arcade).

Well-known brands of Havana Cigars, Melachrino, Lucy Hinton and White Oak Cigarettes and Tobaccos. L and Co. and L.M.N. Pipes. Button Hole Pipes, best hand-made Briar for Cyclists, Equestrians and Students. Pipes, &c., Repaired.

MELBOURNE HEBREW SCHOOL.

Applications are invited for the position of ASSISTANT TEACHER. State salary required.

Particulars can be obtained between 10 and 12 o'clock, daily, up to the 27th February.

By order, SOLOMON M. SOLOMON,
Synagogue Chambers, Bourke-street West. Secretary.

The Jewish Herald.

MELBOURNE, FRIDAY, 24th FEBRUARY, 5653 - 1893.

ON Thursday next we shall have *Purim* once more. For many of our people in these colonies, perhaps for the majority, *Purim* does not exist. They have long become strangers to the conviviality, which formerly characterised the day in every Jewish home. As *Tishoh B'Av* was looked upon as the day of national mourning, so *Purim* was regarded as the day of national rejoicing. And yet if ever there was a time when *Purim* should be observed, it is the present. Let anyone read the Book of Esther and say whether the beautiful story enfolded therein does not inspire us with the hope of the ultimate delivery of that large portion of our people that is still groaning under a tyranny which even the intrigues of a Haman could not surpass in severity. The doom which that tyrant had prepared for the Jews seemed inevitable. "The writing, which was written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's seal, no man could reverse." And yet "enlargement and deliverance" came to the Jews "from another place"—from Him whose name is not once mentioned in the whole book, but whose active hand in the course of the historical event could not easily be mistaken. Should then *Purim* not encourage the hope that the sufferings which our

people in Russia and elsewhere have still to bear will, in God's own good time, cease, and all men be equal before the law of the land in which they live? Nay, should not *Purim* teach us that, as in the time of Mordecai and Esther, the Jews stood together fighting for their lives, rights and liberty; so should we, at the present time, feel for our ill-treated brethren though they be far off, and do all in our power to lighten their heavy yoke. Will anyone say that we have no need to learn those lessons which *Purim* so eloquently preaches?

THE announcement of the impending close of the East Melbourne Hebrew School, as far as the congregation is concerned, has been followed by an appeal to the general community for assistance to carry on the school under a separate Board of Management, and unconnected with the congregation. The case is one which should commend itself to the favourable consideration of every well-wisher of the Jewish community. The congregation has never shirked its duty towards its younger members. For many years it has subsidised the school to the best of its ability. But it is, and has always been, a poor congregation, and the present general depression has so crippled its resources as to make it absolutely necessary to stop the subsidy which has been so long and so cheerfully given. Should it be required at some future time, and circumstances permit of it, there is little doubt that the congregation will again subsidise the school.

At a time when retrenchment is forced upon every institution in the land, our congregations may well consider why they should continue to supply *Motzos* to the poor during Passover. That it is done in England is no reason why it should be done here. Those who have plenty of funds can indulge in many things which those who have not must forego. The practice can only be defended on historical, not rational, grounds. It arose in former times when every congregation charged itself not only with the maintenance of the synagogue, but also with both that of the school and that of the poor. Each congregation was a congregation, an educational establishment and a philanthropic society all in one, and thus it came that when the extra expenses involved in the observance of Passover pressed heavily upon the poorer class, the congregation, in its capacity of a philanthropic society, stepped in to relieve the pressure. Time has, however, taught us the advantages derived from a division of labour, and hence separate philanthropic societies have been established wherever Jews reside, and the general establishment of separate Education Boards is only a question of time. It follows, therefore, that inasmuch as the congregations have been relieved of the maintenance of the poor, they ought also to be relieved of the duty to supply the poor with *Motzos*. It is an encumbrance inherited from olden times, but quite out of keeping with present arrangements. That the poor should have their *Motzos* supplied to them free of cost, we admit; but we submit that it is not the duty of the congregations to do it. A few years ago the Melbourne congregations decided that the Philanthropic Society should undertake the distribution of *Motzos* and charge the congregations with the cost, since it was found that amongst those who availed themselves of the opportunity of getting a free supply of the article there were many who would not otherwise seek charitable relief. To make these people understand that the free supply of *Motzos* was simply charity was the object of the change, and, we think, it was a step in the right direction. The next step should be to shift the responsibility entirely upon the charitable societies, and all the more so since it is always easier to get money for charity than for congregational purposes.

As we surmised in our last issue, the cry of "Wolf!" which the Premier of South Australia raised in reference to the reported shipment of 400 Russian Jews from London to Australia has been a little too soon. We have since been informed by cable that our Chief Rabbi, when interviewed on the question, denied the truth of the report. The Jews, Dr. Adler added, are not in the habit of deporting the indigent members of their race. The latter remark should come as a rebuke to those who would add insult to injury in the case of the ill-fated Russian Jews. It is hard enough for them to be cruelly driven from a country that they have as much reason to call theirs as any man in Russia. But to be spurned by any other country which they might feel inclined to ask for a friendly shelter makes their case a thousand times worse. And yet the prosperity of Australia, as an English contemporary observed some time ago, was built up of less promising material than those Russian Jews. But possession is nine points of the law, and the man who enjoys a blessing without remembering how he got it seldom cares to share what he can spare of it with those who have been less fortunate.

THE ST. KILDA SYNAGOGUE.

There was a very large attendance at this place of worship on the first day of Passover, plainly showing the steady growth of the congregation. As usual, the service was performed by the Rev. E. Blaubaum and Mr. J. Fredman, and gave general satisfaction. The singing of the choir under the direction of the last-named gentleman was especially good, furnishing ample proof of long and careful practice on the part of both the choirmaster and the boys. Amongst the worshippers was the Rev. Mr. Haines, of the West End Synagogue, London. The rev. gentleman had received an invitation from the minister and wardens of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation to take part in the service, but in his convalescent state of health, and desirous to conserve his strength, he thought it better to decline the invitation. He consented, however, to read the *Haphtorah*, which he did in such a masterly style as to evoke among the congregation the general desire for more. The sermon preached by the Rev. E. Blaubaum was based on the first verse of the Scripture portion for the day, and dealt with the lessons inculcated by Passover, viz., a healthy home and a vigorous community. The preacher appealed to the congregants to give their homes a thoroughly religious tone, to make them the abode of Jewish life and observance, in which case the future generation of Jews would lack none of those characteristics which had won for us the respect and even the admiration of our neighbours. With regard to the duties of the community, he said it was not enough for a man merely to belong to a congregation, he must identify himself with it, take his share of the communal burdens, and endeavour to work harmoniously with his co-religionists for good and noble purposes. The attendance on the second day was but meagre.

BOOK REVIEWS

AN UNPROMISED LAND

*Leon Gettler (South Fremantle, WA: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1993,
173pp. Illus.)*

The early twentieth century saw the start of a search for a homeland for Europe's Jews. Palestine was the preferred option, but non-Zionists looked for some uninhabited part of the world where Jews would not prove to be bothersome, would be safe from predator nations, and would be able to go about achieving their true potential as a people. The years following 1933 saw the Jews, first of Germany, then all of Europe, become increasingly desperate to find refuge in just such a place. *An Unpromised Land*, by Melbourne journalist Leon Gettler, is an account of the rise and fall of one attempt to realise this concept in an Australian context in the late 1930s and 1940s.

The 'Kimberley Scheme', as it became known, was put forward by an organisation called the Freeland League for Jewish Territorial Colonisation. Established in 1935 in London, this organisation had the ambition of founding a Jewish colony in an uninhabited area under British rule, where a self-supporting agricultural community could be established. It did not take long for branches of the Freeland League to form in Poland, France, the Netherlands and the USA. After considerable study, the League arrived at the conclusion that an area in the Kimberley district of north-west Western Australia would best suit its purposes, and detailed plans were drawn up to be put to the Australian government.

The proposal was first put to the Australian government on 4 April 1938, when the Australian High Commissioner in London, S.M. Bruce, cabled Prime Minister Joseph Lyons that he had been approached by Freeland League representatives regarding the possibility of a large settlement of the kind the League envisaged. Bruce was sympathetic to the proposal, and it soon became clear that he was not alone: groups and individuals in both the United Kingdom and Australia voiced their approval with such gusto that the government in Canberra was forced to take the proposal seriously from an early time.

In spite of this, the Freeland League's plans did not initially meet with the approval of the Western Australian government, thousands of kilometres distant. At the beginning of 1939, therefore, it was decided that a presence would be needed at the scene of the action in order to lobby and provide the kind of information which the written word alone could not convey. The Freeland League's Secretary, Isaac N. Steinberg, a Russian Jew, revolutionary leader and former Minister for Justice in Lenin's coalition government between 1917 and 1918, was chosen to go to Australia.

Steinberg, a human dynamo who barnstormed the country mobilising support from governments, the churches, the trade union movement and many other sectors of society, brought success to every League enterprise in Australia bar one — obtaining final approval for the Kimberley scheme to go ahead. Ultimately, after a time in which it appeared the scheme might indeed have been approved, it was

rejected: not by the United Australia Party government of J.A. Lyons, but by the later Labor government of John Curtin, which was forced to make its decision at the end of World War Two when circumstances were vastly different from those prevailing in 1938 or 1939.

This was no fault of Steinberg or the viability of his suggestions, but rather on account of the ideas which Labor had inherited from early governments. The concept of group settlement of immigrants had not been anathema to Australian migration officials, and repeated plans throughout the 1920s and 1930s for large-scale 'block settlement schemes' of various national groups had been rejected. The Kimberley scheme, though more feasible than most, was nonetheless as undesirable on the 'block settlement' level as were the intended migrants on a presumed racial one.

Leon Gettler's account of the Kimberley settlement scheme could, like the Free-land League's proposal, also have been a great idea. The subject was one crying out for an extended treatment, though large parts of its history had already appeared in works by authors such as Michael Blakeney, Hilary L. Rubinstein, Beverley Hooper and Wolf Matsdorf, to name but a few. It is a story of a dramatic failure, a story which, to the post-Holocaust generation, is filled with possibles and might-have-beens. When one considers the potential of the Kimberley project, one is drawn almost naturally to asking the question historians must never ask: 'what if . . .?'. I shall return to this later.

How has Leon Gettler treated his subject? Despite some glowing tributes from what were presumably innocent fellow-journalists in the mainstream media soon after the book's release in February 1993, *An Unpromised Land* is an extremely disappointing effort which does not do justice to its topic. It would be nice to welcome it as another contribution to the history of the Australian Jewish experience, but there are too many aspects to this book which are half-researched, tangential or just plain wrong. It thus has a problem of credibility, and for this reason cannot be acknowledged as an authoritative version of the Kimberley story.

There are, unfortunately, only too many areas of concern in Gettler's book. It does a major disservice to the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, for example, to refer to that organisation as 'the Jewish establishment's charity arm' (p. 93). The role of the AJWS from the late 1930s onwards was far more than simply one of providing charity; it acted as nothing less than the direct link between the Jewish community and the Australian government. Indeed, the fundamental reason for the Welfare Society being set up in the first place was so that both the Jewish community and the government could liaise directly over the admission of Jewish refugees. Given this, Gettler's statement on p. 95 that 'there is evidence to show it [that is, the AJWS] at least had the ear of the Government' comes across as a very weak appreciation of the true situation.

His treatment of the dynamics of political decision-making is equally suspect, not in the least regard concerning the government department responsible for the migration function, the Department of the Interior. On a number of occasions Gettler diminishes the importance of the head of that department's Immigration Branch, A.R. Peters — the one officer who knew more about the minutiae of Australian immigration policy and procedure than anyone else. Thus, on p. 96, we find a reference to 'Departmental official A.R. Peters'; on p. 107, to 'senior Department of the Interior bureaucrat, A.R. Peters'; and again on p. 125 to 'departmental official A.R. Peters'. Such references play down both the man and his influence in the area of immigration administration. One could not imagine, from these references, that

we are discussing the most senior specialist immigration officer in the Australian public service. It is misleading to suggest otherwise, and in a book of this kind one could have reasonably expected that the author would have established the details of his *dramatis personae* more carefully and accurately.

In a similar vein it would not have been too much to expect that the name of the Minister responsible for immigration, John McEwen, should have been spelled correctly. Throughout the book — in what is clearly *not* a simple one-off typographical error — the Minister for the Interior between 1937 and 1939 is referred to as John *McEwan*. Such sloppiness would be inexcusable in an undergraduate student, and can be no less tolerated in a published work which, by entering the public domain, has a responsibility of getting the basic facts right.

On the question of policy formation, Gettler is again far from accurate when searching for reasons to explain why so few Jews were admitted to Australia during the years of the Third Reich. Identifying the Permanent Secretary of the Department of the Interior, J.A. Carrodus, as a major player in the migration area, Gettler has somehow come to the conclusion that Carrodus was the leading 'bad guy' among all the Australian bureaucrats. His comments here are worth repeating in full: 'Canberra's refusal to accept large numbers of Jewish refugees between 1936 and the end of the Second World War has since been attributed to Carrodus' unwavering stance to refuse them entry' (p. 139). In a footnote to this statement Gettler has cited an entry on Carrodus in volume 13 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. However, that reference does not itself suggest that Carrodus was responsible for keeping Jews out of Australia. Nor could Carrodus have done so, even if he had wanted to. Carrodus did not have the final say over who could get into the country, and in the vast majority of cases it was Peters, as head of the Immigration Branch, who handled the paper work in any case. In doubtful cases, Peters referred to his immediate superior, the Assistant Secretary of the Department, T.H. Garrett. Carrodus was only invoked when a general principle of policy was involved, and on such occasions he more often than not sought advice directly from the Minister involved. This places an altogether different light on the role of J.A. Carrodus, and leaves one surmising that, with a little more depth of research, the author would have drawn different conclusions on Carrodus' role.

One final major issue of concern to me in this book concerns Gettler's speculative and provocative throwaway line concerning the relationship between the local Kimberley Aborigines and the Jews were such a settlement to have been formed. For reasons that are to me obscure, Gettler raises the issue 'of whether the appropriation' of Aboriginal land for a Jewish settlement 'would have created, albeit on a smaller scale, the same kind of tensions that now exist between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East' (p. 143). Discussions of 'what happened' must always take precedence over the ahistorical approach of 'if it had happened otherwise', unless such questioning leads one to further analysis of wider issues. Gettler has not done this here, offering us instead unsupported speculation which ultimately leads nowhere.

The issue thus raised is also dubious on another level. Is there really an equivalence between the Middle Eastern situation and Aborigines in the Kimberley? What does this imply about Jews as settlers in regions where other populations also claim possession of the land? The potential of Gettler's speculation could be addressed for a long time and in many ways, were it in any way relevant to any real situation, but it is not. Jewish refugees did *not* settle the Kimberley district, so we will never know what the relationship between Jews and Aborigines would have been.

There is virtually nothing in this book that was not known before to scholars of Australian Jewish history. Much earlier research on the Kimberley scheme, as mentioned earlier, had already been done, and has over a long period been available through a variety of sources. Isaac Steinberg's own account of the scheme, published in 1948, was entitled *Australia — The Unpromised Land*. In his own acknowledgments, Gettler refers to the assistance he received from the Australian Jewish Historical Society, and such officers within it as Beverley Davis, Bill Rubinstein and Hilary Rubinstein. On the strength of this book it is questionable just how extensive such contact was; the proven archival skills of Mrs. Davis and the previously published works of the Rubinsteins are a certain indication that had their counsel been truly taken we would have been left with a more carefully-crafted book than the volume we have here.

Given all my above misgivings, it should come as little wonder that I was absolutely astounded to read that this book had been awarded the 1993 Lysbeth Cohen prize by the National Book Council. It should be apparent that I consider this book to be inadequately-researched, factually wrong in many areas, and failing to acknowledge much previous work which has already been done on the topic. How such a work could receive a prestigious literary award is beyond me, unless it was given on the basis of writing style by non-specialists in the area who were unaware of its fundamental flaws. As the quality of this book leaves a great deal to be desired, it brings into question the reputation of the award. It is of concern that this book will be held up as a model of Australian Jewish writing (or even worse, scholarship.) The sad fact is that this little volume will henceforth be touted as authoritative, which it is not.

Dr. Paul R. Bartrop

BEHIND BARBED WIRE: INTERNMENT IN AUSTRALIA DURING WORLD WAR II

Margaret Bevege (*University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, 1993, xxi, 314pp.*)

The issue of internment in Australia during World War Two has been long discussed, but only recently debated. At issue are questions of profound importance to all citizens living in a democratic society. At what point, for example, does a state at war have a guaranteed right to remove individuals from its midst, because of their perceived potential to do it harm, prior to any actual misdemeanours having been committed? How can we reconcile arbitrary arrest and confinement with the principles of law upon which our society rests? How close are such actions to the Nazi procedure of *Nacht und Nebel*, whereby people were whisked away to an unknown future, without trace, because the authorities feared their potential? Does our distance in time from the events of World War Two make the recurrence of internment any less likely should Australia again find itself involved in a military conflict?

Margaret Bevege has not addressed all of these questions in *Behind Barbed Wire*, but as it stands there is more than enough material here for concerned Australian citizens to ponder. A generally-held assumption during the 1940s was that those who were interned during World War Two were somehow deserving of their fate. As Bevege shows, however, in a majority of cases this was not only untrue, but also ultimately self-defeating; internment removed primary producers, skilled tradesmen and able bodies from the workforce at a time when they were more needed

than ever. And it was frequently indiscriminate in those whom it targeted; provided they possessed the nationality of one of the States currently at war with His Majesty, they were fair game for investigation and possible internment.

How this impinged upon Jews is discussed in the book, but only in passing. Although readers of this *Journal* may find this surprising, I would not consider as deficient a book which fails to emphasise Jewish internment. While the issue may be of direct importance to Jews (though I would hope others would also have an interest), in a larger study of this kind it is important to keep Jewish internment in perspective. Relative to non-Jewish Germans, Austrians and others, the number of foreign Jews interned by the Australian authorities was small, and their release was effectuated comparatively quickly. It would be easy to look at these cases, knowing what we know now, and say that Jews suffered the same sort of injustices here as in Britain, but that would represent a double misreading of the true situation. In reality, the Australian security authorities were not really interested in the Jewish origins of those to be interned, *unless* it was felt they posed a security threat; the same was true for the United Kingdom. Mistakes were made, but this was far from unique to Jews; as Dr. Bevege shows with crystal clarity, mistakes were made all over the place, and concerning all sorts of people.

Where Jews *did* have a direct interest, of course, was in the fate of the internees sent from the United Kingdom and Singapore during 1940, but these instances, strictly speaking, do not fit into an account of 'domestic' Australian internment policy (though they were to a large degree dependent upon the vagaries of that policy in combination with migration and manpower concerns.) Dr. Bevege has chosen to balance the experience of the so-called 'overseas internees' with those taken in Australia, and on the whole I think this has been done wisely. While it might be tempting to play up the arrival of the *Dunera* or the *Queen Mary*, these did not represent the be-all and end-all of refugee internment so far as Australia was concerned. Of greater concern to Dr. Bevege is the means whereby Australian residents were taken, incarcerated, and then released — not the experience of those who were sent from overseas for this purpose.

Moreover, it should be borne in mind that Jews were not the only people sent from overseas for internment. This book provides a set of superbly-produced figures showing the numbers and origins of all those sent from overseas for internment in Australia. Apart from Britain and Singapore, they hailed from some surprising places: the Netherlands East Indies, New Caledonia, Dutch New Guinea, Iran, New Zealand, New Hebrides and other places. The largest single number came from the United Kingdom on the *Dunera*. Overall, Dr. Bevege has calculated that 7,861 overseas nationals were transported and interned in Australia. This provides an interesting contrast with the 6,982 Australian resident aliens who were interned (that is, the 'local' internees.) Not only could the military authorities argue that they were on top of the situation in Australia, but they could put the position that they were taking care of the problem for the rest of the Empire as well. While this was far from the truth, it served to boost the prestige of the military and reassure the population that matters of internal security were in fact well in hand.

Of course, the veracity of such attitudes is usually found out in the end, and Margaret Bevege has done so here. The process of internment is shown to have been nothing short of a logistical, administrative and legal nightmare, in which the security agencies found themselves under continual pressure for such basic necessities as manpower, finance, buildings and, most importantly, clear directions from above on how to proceed. Any new directives to intern aliens were seen as bur-

densome by the authorities given the task of carrying them out. Even when releases were authorised, the internees did not cease being of direct concern to the security authorities, for the Army still had to keep an eye on those released. While acknowledging that internal security of this kind was an obvious necessity in a time of war, both the Army and the Commonwealth Investigation Branch (the forerunner of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation) would have readily agreed that they always needed more help than that which was forthcoming.

Margaret Bevege's approach in this book has been to outline the nature of Australia's internment policy as it evolved before and during the early days of World War Two, then consider the target population likely to be interned. Following this is a consideration of how the policy of internment was realised, prior to an in-depth investigation of the theory and practice of internment as it pertained to Japanese in Australia after 7 December 1941. A chapter investigating the conditions of camp life follows, the book concluding with a survey of the means whereby the internees were able to achieve their release and repatriation at the end of the war. The picture Dr. Bevege paints is a detailed one, as such a work must be; the period was extremely crowded and confused, and to cogently and intelligently retrieve its history is no mean feat. Dr. Bevege is to be congratulated on her attempt.

Not so good, however, is the fact that she has chosen to completely disregard all (and I mean *all*) the work that has been undertaken by others in the area of internment since 1985. That there is only one reference dated later than this, in a book published in mid-1993 and containing 764 endnotes, is to my mind unsatisfactory. A vast amount of work has been done on the internment question in the last few years, by authors as diverse as Lois Foster and Anne Seitz, Joyce Hammond, Kay Saunders and Helen Taylor, Gerhard Fischer and the present reviewer. Many others have touched on the topic in the course of broader studies, and this applies only to Australian material. Much more that could have been used here has been produced in Britain, Canada and New Zealand. That Dr. Bevege has not sought to avail herself of any of the newer work in the field places her overall analysis at an unfortunate disadvantage. It does nothing to render her book as the most up-to-date volume on its subject. Further, a major omission of this kind does not demonstrate where Dr. Bevege's work is unique within the literature, thereby stamping it with a distinct authority. It can, under these circumstances, be argued that much of the book's content has already appeared, other writers having previously covered such issues as camp life, aliens' classification and the quest for release, public attitudes, and the nature of the internees. The story of the *Dunera*, to take one example, has since 1990 received more than its due share of both academic and popular treatment, yet we see no evidence of this here. That topic is only dealt with through earlier and less complete secondary works, and a few relevant Australian Archives documents. Looked at from the perspective of extant scholarship, Dr. Bevege's book is therefore to be taken to task for its failure to acknowledge recent scholarship in the field; doing so would not only have brought the book up-to-date, but could also have enhanced the conclusions Dr. Bevege sought to make. As things stand, one would not know whether Dr. Bevege is in command of the debates that have arisen over internment since 1985, as there is no reference to any historiographical developments since that time. The book is, in terms of scholarship, in a mid-1980s time-warped.

This major concern — which should not be taken lightly — to one side, I am impressed by Dr. Bevege's book, which I *do* see as authoritative in spite of the obvious limitation to which I have referred. *Behind Barbed Wire* is to my knowledge

the first single-volume academic treatment of the internment issue as pertaining to domestic Australian internees, and it seeks to place this experience into its historical and social context. While at no stage leaving us in any doubt as to where her sympathies lie, Dr. Bevege does not preach, and for this I am grateful. Internment is a contentious and emotional topic, and too much ink has already been spilled on rhetorical or sensationalist accounts. *Behind Barbed Wire* is not one of these. In my view, it is a worthwhile contribution to the literature of Australia's role towards enemy aliens during World War Two. Readers looking for a deeper understanding of the complexities of the internment issue should consider this book an indispensable first port of call.

Dr. Paul R. Bartrop

FROM CABBIE TO CHAIRMAN: LARRY ADLER AND THE STORY OF FAI

Peter Denton (Sydney: Focus Books, 1991)

The day after receiving this book for review I read in the business pages that FAI stock was trading at par and did not indicate a yield, meaning no dividends had been declared. That makes a review difficult because the story of the founder of that insurance giant who died in December 1988 at the height of his achievement deserves a warm, eulogistic tone which might not quite fit the corporate record since then.

Larry Adler was born Lazlo Adler in Hungary in November 1931, son of a wealthy button manufacturer who became a victim of the Holocaust after the Nazis occupied his country in March 1944. Larry escaped and settled in Australia in 1949. After the required two years of labour, cleaning rail cars at Adelaide, he spent ten years in varied businesses (records, automobiles and credit) before incorporating FAI (Fire and All-Risks Insurance) and from that base built a giant financial empire. By 1966 he was ready to take over an established local company, AGI (Automotive and General Insurance), and win a considerable profit from the sale of assets, and also to take over a British company. In 1973 they moved into new corporate offices in Macquarie Street whose doorway was guarded by a statue of Governor Lachlan Macquarie, also noteworthy for his confidence in the country which he served. Almost ruined by Cyclone Tracy, which hit Darwin in December 1974, with reinsurance covering only \$4 million of a payout of \$8.5 million, they emerged more efficient than ever and pioneered new lines such as professional indemnity insurance.

In 1988 he owned nearly half of the FAI group and so controlled assets worth nearly \$1.3 billion. He was a popular and charismatic figure, unusual for a foreign-born entrepreneur late to arrive in Australia, but perhaps due to innovative, anti-establishment and litigious features in his make-up. His views concerning business leadership were sought by a variety of people from ALP Ministers to the Sydney Institute. In the words of a former Prime Minister and admirer, Bob Hawke, 'his daring and astuteness were legendary'.

Essentially this is a readable and engaging story of one of the great corporate achievers and high-flyers of the 1980s. What of the Jewish achievers? Adler is the equivalent of the Fink brothers among the Land Boomers of the 1880s. Of course, in their day there was no *Business Review Weekly* list of the 200 wealthiest Australians

(or families) of whom about a quarter are regularly Jewish. Can we learn about Jewish motivation and character or the sociology of great wealth?

Adler was a fast learner with abundant energy and ambition. This was stimulated by the memory of lost status once enjoyed in a comfortable, cosmopolitan and upper-middle-class world in Hungary. He was a diabetic seemingly aware that he would not reach the span of old age. At home he participated in a close-knit family life which was firmly Jewish, if observing little, and rarely attending synagogue though the Adlers married in the Great Synagogue, Sydney.

In June 1988 he was very proud to receive the award of an Order of Australia. Some months later in his last speech, reproduced in this book at length, he revealed his extraordinary confidence in entrepreneurship and in the future of Australia. Here too are Jewish echoes.

Lionel E. Fredman

THE ENDURING REMNANT: THE FIRST 150 YEARS OF THE MELBOURNE HEBREW CONGREGATION, 1841-1991

Joseph Aron and Judy Arndt (Melbourne University Press, 1992, xxvi, 438pp., illus.)

For literally tens of thousands of non-Jewish Victorians, the best-known public face of the Jewish people in Melbourne is the grandiose, classical edifice of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation at the corner of Toorak Road and St. Kilda Road. Thousands of people pass it every day, many of whom never travel into darkest Caulfield and know nothing of Jewish life or of the Jews in Australia. How many of these, I have often wondered, have thought to find out what sort of building this is, or even, perhaps, ventured timidly inside? This building is, of course, the home of the oldest of our congregations, whose origins go back to the very earliest days of Jewish settlement here. For decades until the arrival of the Eastern European Jews in this century, the MHC was one of only three synagogues in Melbourne. It was the pulpit from which Israel Brodie went on to become Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, where Monash and Isaacs frequently worshipped and were memorialised after their deaths, where Sir Zelman Cowen and scores of other notable Jews were *bar mitzvah*, or celebrated other major events. For decades, in other words, the MHC comprised a major part of Jewish life in Melbourne, and an understanding of its history and evolution is absolutely central to coming to terms with Jewish life on these shores.

While a briefer history of the MHC was published fifty years ago in 1941, only now has a full and comprehensive account of this important synagogue been published. *The Enduring Remnant* by Joseph Aron and Judy Arndt is a fine work, doing suitable honour to the institution and the occasion they commemorate. It is, certainly, the best congregational history which has yet been written of an Australian synagogue, and it breaks new ground in our understanding of many features of Jewish life in Australia. There are, in particular, three areas in which it adds greatly to any previous work on Australian Jewish history. Its account of the rabbis and leaders of the MHC, most of whom were very important figures in moulding the nature of Jewish life here, is totally original and very important, providing, for the first time, comprehensive and well-rounded portraits of figures like Rev. Abraham Ornstien, Rabbi Joseph Abrahams, and Sir Israel Brodie, with far more detail than has ever appeared in print before. It is a particularly admirable feature of the

author's approach that they have made no attempt to disguise the disputes, sometimes bitter, and protracted conflicts, which have sometimes marked relations between the MHC's spiritual leaders and the synagogue's board and congregants.

This frankness is, itself, a novel feature of congregational history and puts a human face on these bygone events. While this is well-handled throughout the whole work, I found the chapter on Rabbi Dr. Izaak Rapaport, the very public minister of the congregation from 1952 to 1979, to be perhaps the most interesting in the book. Rapaport is described by the authors as 'enigmatic'. What is one to make of a man whose Orthodoxy was so strict and whose intolerance of Progressive Judaism was so thorough that he refused (p. 141) to support the Churchill Memorial Fund, founded to commemorate Sir Winston Churchill upon his death in 1965, simply because Temple Beth Israel's Rabbi Herman Sanger was also a signatory to the Fund, and once stated (p. 142) that he could not join the Rabbinical Council of Victoria 'as he considered there are no other proper rabbis in Melbourne', but could also issue a memorandum (p. 146) requesting 'that Board Members and other congregants not park their vehicles outside the synagogue on Sabbath and festivals when driving a vehicle is in violation of Jewish law', thus giving his *hechsher* to driving on Sabbaths and festivals provided that congregants' cars were parked two streets away? The attitude of many other commissioned historians would surely have been the less said of this the better, and the authors are to be warmly congratulated on their refreshing and valuable frankness.

The second area in which *The Enduring Remnant* breaks new ground and is altogether valuable is in its detailed discussion of many aspects of the synagogue's ritual and religious practice — its *minhag*, Torah *aliyot* requirements, marriage and divorce procedures and the like. So far as I am aware, no other history of Australian Jewry deals with the evolution of these matters, certainly not in so much detail. The subject of the synagogue's *mikvah*, for example, whether through the embarrassment of successive authors or because it was not regarded as important, has never been discussed in any previous history in a coherent way. The fact that one of the authors is trained in Orthodox study has certainly been an advantage here. Similarly, the chapter on the vexed question of conversions provides the most comprehensive discussion of this matter (which loomed so large in nineteenth-century Australian Jewry) and breaks much valuable new ground.

Thirdly, the evolution of the synagogue's outlook and ambience from, clearly, a colonial offshoot of the Anglo-Orthodoxy of the United Synagogue to an Australian Orthodox synagogue, but one which has, it would seem, moved steadily to the religious 'Right' in recent years, is also examined in both more detail and in a more specific way than in any other previous history, although the level of detail given for the very recent past is not as great as for the earlier period. For all of these reasons, *The Enduring Remnant* will certainly take its place in the small but growing corpus of genuinely important and valuable works on Australian Jewish history.

The Enduring Remnant does, however, contain a number of important features which must be criticised by the balanced reviewer, but in the context of a work which is outstanding in many respects. The writing style of the book, while it is workmanlike and efficient, is frequently pedestrian and uninspired. The book lacks a sense of the ironic, the paradoxical, or the picaresque, or much of a sense of humour. There is, in particular, little in the way of a 'persona', the personality of the author engaging in a dialogue with the reader and answering our tacit questions and assumptions. Much of the material of the book has been drawn directly from the synagogue's minute books and newsletters; too often, this is presented in an undigested form.

The book also exhibits another very familiar failing of many commissioned institutional histories, especially those written by non-professional historians (as the authors are), namely to present ludicrously excessive detail, including material, obviously drawn from minute books and the like, which is simply too trivial to appear in a cogent history. The authors sometimes forget that it is one of the most important roles of any historian precisely to distinguish between the important and the fundamentally causal, on the one hand, and the background trivialities on the other. Thus, for instance, we learn (p. 89) that at the farewell ceremony for Rabbi Brodie in 1937 'the toast was proposed by the President [of the synagogue] Alfred A. Mendoza, and seconded by the Treasurer, Oswald D. Benjamin'. If the toast had been proposed by Don Bradman and seconded by Archbishop Mannix, this fact might well have been worth recording; that it was done in this case by two of the synagogue's office-bearers makes it the equivalent of saying that the postman delivered the mail that morning. Similarly, when Rabbi Rapaport returned from a six month trip abroad in 1961, we are told (p. 137) that 'a Kiddush was held in his honour'. Surely it would have been more worthy of mention if one were not; recording this is like saying that the Rabbi had breakfast that morning and then proceeded to brush his teeth. Virtually every page of this book contains unimportant details of this type.

The book is also somewhat disappointing in its treatment of the relationship of the MHC to its wider community, especially in the Australian context (although the nexus between the MHC and wider Jewish world is discussed, at least skeletally), especially in the imaginative way which would have made this into a truly outstanding work. Perhaps the most basic question which is not addressed here is that of the synagogue's membership — the rise and decline of its financial members over the years and the parts of the community these represented. One has the feeling that the MHC entered into a long period of both relative and absolute decline in the mid-1930s, a decline which was only reversed in the mid-1980s. In this period one has many hints that the MHC was something of a beached whale, geographically and religiously isolated from the growing Jewish mainstream, a cathedral-like 'mausoleum' (as it has often been described to me) for old Anglo-Jewish families from a bygone age. The authors (pp. 167–197) sometimes hint at this, but not with sufficient directness or frankness, although I can readily understand the constraints in any institutional history. It also seems clear that the last decade has seen a considerable revival of the MHC's fortunes, both figuratively and literally. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of this revival has been an evident broadening of the social bases of the *shul's* membership. The synagogue's current rabbi and at least one recent president were Holocaust survivors from Central Europe; at least six other recent synagogue presidents, according to the excellent Appendix on these matters, were born in Eastern or Central Europe, and today's leaders of the MHC appear to be a nice balance of old and new families, with the Australian-born component naturally increasing.

But none of this is really made clear in the text, and there are no attempts to spell out what this must have meant in human terms. Did recent refugees and migrants feel welcome or unwelcome in this pillar synagogue of the Establishment? Why did they choose it over the possibly more congenial alternatives? It is clear that the MHC has, in its religious orientation, moved perceptibly to the 'Right' in recent years (as have most other Orthodox synagogues) and, again, one would like to know more about this process. The letter accompanying the book from the MHC's current president notes the 'unprecedented co-operation' between the synagogue and the Kollel Beth Ha-Talmud Yehuda Fishman Institute, a connection which

would have been difficult to imagine some decades ago. What do the synagogue's old families think of all this?

Another point which must be mentioned is the strange lack of space given to World War One, which one might expect to loom large in any history of an old congregation. While some space is devoted to this (pp. 210–211, for instance), the photograph of the Scroll of Honour clearly shows that no fewer than eighteen members of the MHC were killed in the War — an appalling and unprecedented slaughter — to say nothing of the dozens of others who were wounded or psychologically scarred for life. Again, one wonders what effect this trauma had for the MHC's members. Did it diminish religious belief or increase it? Did it make the survivors and their families more patriotically Australian or confirm them in the Jewish identity proudly borne by their Commander-in-Chief? Did World War One affect attitudes to German Jewish refugees fifteen years later or to 'political Zionism'? Did the synagogue's veterans form an active and powerful internal lobby, as veterans' groups so often did throughout post-1918 Australian society? It is a pity that such important questions as these are not addressed.

A final word must be said of the work's reference apparatus. The book contains no footnotes at all, although an Appendix (pp. 415–420) lists the major sources and there is a Bibliography. While one can readily understand why an institutional history would wish to dispense with footnotes, their absence is for the researcher a most serious deficiency and it is frankly disturbing that Melbourne University Press would allow this in a scholarly work of history. The purpose of footnotes is to allow future researchers to identify and access the primary sources used in the book, and to ascertain whether they have been used fairly. This is not now possible, and will certainly not be for future historians.

The Enduring Remnant is extraordinarily well-produced. Its illustrations, few of which have been seen before, are invariably well-chosen and interesting. There is an excellent Appendix with biographical information on the *shul's* presidents and other leaders, and a very useful Glossary. The book seems to contain remarkably few factual errors, although it does repeat the myth (p. 378) that the first Jewish marriage in Australia took place in 1832; actually it occurred a year earlier (involving a different couple), as the late Dr. George Bergman found in 1979. *The Enduring Remnant* is an outstanding contribution to Australian Jewish historiography, which should certainly be in the library of everyone interested in our past.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

JUSTICE DELAYED: HOW BRITAIN BECAME A REFUGE FOR NAZI WAR CRIMINALS

David Cesarani (Mandarin Paperbacks, London, 1992)

This is the most authoritative and intelligent account of the efforts to bring former Nazi war criminals to justice in Britain during the recent past. Its relevance for Australian readers flows from the fact that, first, it offers a comprehensive examination of these efforts in a comparable country and secondly, that Australia's own efforts are perceptively discussed from a comparative perspective (pp. 194–195). The British picture is disturbingly negative, with obstacles placed every inch of the way by opponents of war crimes trials, most notably in the House

of Lords debates in 1989–90. A British War Crimes Act was finally passed by the British Parliament in 1991, although there have as yet been no trials.

Dr. Cesarani takes us through these complex developments with great skill and authoritative knowledge: he was Principal Researcher to the All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group and is now Director of the Wiener Library in London. The author is notably fair to opponents of the British War Crimes Act, not attributing anti-Semitism as a motivation for their objections to the Act; he may well be far too even-handed here in his judgements.

The British story is strikingly similar to that in Australia, with attempts at framing a War Crimes Act delayed for decades by the Cold War and by the fact that the Holocaust was not universally internalised as the supreme symbol of evil until the 1970s; by the mid-1980s, when serious efforts began, it was seemingly too late to bring these alleged mass murderers to justice without straining the normal instruments of British justice beyond the credible. Indeed, from a comparative framework, Australia emerges as having done its duty more honourably than Britain, despite the remoteness of the Holocaust from our wartime experiences. Justice delayed was, alas, justice denied.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

LIFE IS A CORRIDOR (AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY)

Shalom Coleman (privately printed, Perth, W.A., 1992, 796pp.)

Rabbi Dr. Shalom Coleman was Chief Rabbi of the Perth Hebrew Congregation from 1965 until 1985, during which time he was one of the best-known Western Australian Jews and personified the Perth Jewish community for very many people, gentile and Jew. He presided over the Perth community at a time of rapid expansion thanks mainly to migration from South Africa and elsewhere. Before coming to Perth, he had a life full of incidents and notable events in England, South Africa, and Sydney. Rabbi Coleman's autobiography is, therefore, a very welcome addition to the limited, but growing, corpus of autobiographical works by Australian Jewry's religious leaders. It is very long indeed — 796 pages! — and therefore provides a wealth of detail on all aspects of his life which will make it an invaluable reference work for future historians.

While Rabbi Coleman comes from a typical Eastern European Orthodox family — his father was born near Minsk and saw pogroms first-hand — he was born in Liverpool in 1918 and the outlook which emerges from *Life is a Corridor* is very much that of a civilised Anglo-Jewish gentleman of the Old School, but one who is intensely Zionist in outlook and thoroughly committed to traditional Jewish values. I certainly do not mean this in any derogatory way, for on virtually all of the Jewish issues of his lifetime, Rabbi Coleman has demonstrated great clarity of thought and wisdom. Indeed, one can go further and regret the apparent decline of those in the Jewish community from Rabbi Coleman's background; it is far from clear that we currently produce anything better.

Rabbi Coleman lived for long periods in three very different English-speaking societies, England, South Africa and Australia, and what he has to say about his life in each will be of great interest to students of contemporary Diaspora Jewry. Although he was not born to affluence, and came of age during the period of Fascism and Depression, Rabbi Coleman's memories of England are strongly posi-

tive, and it is clear that he was able both to live a full Jewish life in the traditional sense and to attend a secondary school and university despite the disadvantage of coming from a provincial Jewish community.

After gallant service in the RAF, Rabbi Coleman mixed freely with Britain's Zionist leaders in London. His autobiographical account of all of these matters is most valuable, and deserves to become better known to today's historians of recent Anglo-Jewry, whose verdict on their own recent past is so often unwontedly negative. Even more interesting and topical, perhaps, is his account of life in South Africa, where he lived from 1947 until 1960, coinciding with the post-war institutionalisation of Apartheid. Rabbi Coleman knew little about South Africa's peculiar difficulties before arriving. He recalls (p. 225) attempting to shake hands with a black synagogue caretaker in Potchefstroom, the village near Johannesburg where he served, upon arriving there in 1947, and having his hand pulled back by someone. 'We don't do that in South Africa' he was told. Rabbi Coleman hints at, but does not directly enlarge upon, the chronic predicament of South African Jewry, whether to protest at Apartheid and risk an anti-Semitic backlash or to say nothing and benefit from a system which most would now say is immoral as well as doomed.

In Australia, Rabbi Coleman served at the South Head Hebrew Congregation in Sydney from 1961 before coming to Perth. He was involved in his full share of controversy in both places, and his autobiography will be fascinating for the insight he provides on these matters, even if they are sometimes described obliquely. In Perth he became one of the best-known figures in the Jewish community, and his advice was welcomed by Western Australia's political and community leaders. Rabbi Coleman was also one of the most impressive scholars ever to hold a rabbinical position here, earning a Ph.D. for his thesis 'Hosea Concepts in Midrash and Talmud', and was the first Australian rabbi to receive a Waley Cohen scholarship.

While *Life is a Corridor* is a very valuable work which should be widely read, it has a number of faults. It is plainly far too long, full of trivial incidents whose retelling is unnecessary. Is it really necessary to recall, for instance (p. 460), that, on visiting the Jewish Publication Society of America in Philadelphia, he was 'presented with a Columbia-Viking Desk Encyclopedia, and the inscription tells me we met on March 4, 1965'? What conceivable point is there in listing by name and date all the Jewish holders of the Victoria Cross (p. 179) or a paragraph (p. 280) on the origins of *Hatikvah*, the Israeli national anthem? A firm but fair outside editorial hand was clearly needed throughout this work, especially as many of these irrelevant anecdotes bear only an approximation to verisimilitude. For instance (p. 180) we are told that 'during the debate in the House of Lords on the matter of allowing Lord Rothschild to take his seat in the Upper House, the Duke of Wellington, speaking in his favour, mentioned fifteen Jewish senior officers fought with him at Waterloo'. A nice story in every respect, except that it could not possibly have happened. There was no 'debate' on Lord Rothschild's creation as a peer in 1885 — which would have been grossly insulting to Queen Victoria, who, as the 'fountain of Honour', could appoint anyone she wished — and, if there were, the Iron Duke would certainly not have taken part as he died thirty-three years before, in 1852!

One might also wish for a considered verdict by Rabbi Coleman, with his vast experience, on such topics as the commonness or otherwise of anti-Semitism or on the religious disputes currently so endemic to the Jewish world. One has the impression that Rabbi Coleman has experienced virtually no discernible anti-Semi-

tism at all during his own lifetime, but encountered, instead, a good deal of philo-Semitic support from gentiles. It would have been good for him to have included some considered thoughts on this important matter. Similarly, Rabbi Coleman's own religious position is not spelled out fully. Where they are touched on — as in his very brief discussion of Liberal Judaism in Perth and of his presidency of the Association of Rabbis and Ministers of Australia and New Zealand (pp. 554–563) — he is full of common sense and good sense, and a considered contribution would again have been valuable.

These criticisms are not meant to detract from the overall merits of Rabbi Coleman's work. This is an impressive and important autobiographical memoir, which will be noted by scholars and historians in the future. It is also another indication of the maturity of the Perth Jewish community, which has recently produced an impressive array of publications and memoirs. Now 6 000 strong, it is certainly emerging as, in every sense, the third centre of Jewish life on these shores, and Rabbi Coleman's own ministry and career there will be seen as instrumental in this process.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

HARRY SEIDLER: FOUR DECADES OF ARCHITECTURE

Kenneth Frampton and Philip Drew (Thames and Hudson, London, 1992, \$95.00)

Harry Seidler is the most important Australian Jewish architect, and this 432 page book, containing 1463 illustrations (181 in colour) is a world-class tribute to this distinguished man. It should be in the library of anyone interested in Australian architecture or Judaica.

Seidler was born in Vienna in 1923 and came to England after the *Anschluss*. He was imprisoned as an 'enemy alien' in 1940–41, continued his education in Canada and at Harvard, but has made an international impact in Australia after migrating here in 1948 to join his parents in Sydney. The celebrated house he built for them at Turramurra in 1948–50 — probably the first significant work of 'modern' architecture in this country — is regularly noted in histories of Australian architecture for the revolutionary impact it had. Commission after commission followed, and Seidler is responsible for such well-known structures as the MLC Centre and the Australia Square development in Sydney, the Shell House in Melbourne, and the Department of Trade Offices in Canberra. Seidler's work has, in my opinion, improved enormously since the late 1960s as he has progressively adopted the isomorphic style, emphasising plasticity and free curvilinear expression in place of the Gropius-influenced 'tall box' style of earlier years. By today's standards, these left much to be desired and I for one do not regret that, for instance, his rather egregious McMahon's Point development in North Sydney of 1957 (pp. 70–71) was never built, if the models and sketches are anything to go by; his more recent works show a remarkable capacity for growth and development.

Seidler is a most notable living example of the gains for Australia from its admission of Jewish refugees during the 1930s and 1940s, and also an interesting, internationally significant case of the grafting of European culture (by way of North America) onto Australian conditions and circumstances. As such, Seidler will continue to be studied and discussed into the future for his importance to these processes, entirely apart from the intrinsic achievement of his architecture.

This stunning, magnificently-produced work, written by two American architects and published in a distinguished British series on renowned artists and architects, is a fitting tribute to the esteem in which Seidler is held internationally. The text, although of course dealing primarily with his architecture, shows a considerable intelligence and perception in discussing the social and cultural history necessary to understand Seidler's work, both in America and in Australia.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

THE NEW LEFT, THE JEWS AND THE VIETNAM WAR 1965–1972

Philip Mendes (Lazare Press, North Caulfield 1993; 236pp. Available from the author at 2/392 Alma Road, North Caulfield 3161, \$22.00)

Philip Mendes' detailed research on the post-1945 Australian Jewish Left will be familiar to readers of this *Journal*; Mendes has probably contributed more material to our *Journal* over the past five years than any other author. He is clearly the expert on this topic, and his first book was awaited with wide expectation. It is an excellent work, and both enhances his reputation and fills a real gap in the historiography of the modern Australian Jewish community.

Most persons who lived through the disastrous and controversial Vietnam War would prefer to forget all about it, an observation which I think can be fairly applied to both supporters of the war and its opponents, as well as to Vietnam's veterans and the politicians of the day. This wilful amnesia has been evidenced, as well, in the lack of attention paid to this subject by previous historians of post-war Australian Jewry, myself included. In my 600 page history of the post-1945 community, there are only fleeting references to the 1965–72 war, in part because I gave far more attention to the earlier post-war years, when the community was transformed; in part, I would now recognise, because of a perhaps subconscious aversion to the subject. Possibly only an author as young as Mendes — he was born in 1964 — has the distance and objectivity properly to study this period.

Mendes' thesis is that Jewish involvement in the Melbourne anti-war movement (Sydney is covered in one page) was far greater and more consequential than historians of the Vietnam era have previously believed. Jews were disproportionately involved in the campus anti-war movement, especially at Monash University, where Albert Langer became a figure of national fame/notoriety. Mendes' point is that there were dozens of Albert Langers and the involvement of radical Jews in the anti-war movement was an important hallmark of that generation. His work is characterised by extraordinarily impressive and detailed research — there are 716 footnotes! — most significantly a series of twenty-eight interviews with former Jewish radical leaders (the names of whom often make very strange reading today). He demonstrates, most significantly, that most of these anti-war Jews came from left-wing immigrant homes; twenty-three emerged from non-religious backgrounds, four were Liberal Jews, and only one was from a traditional Orthodox family. The book also contains many useful insights into the nexus between Jews and the Left both in Australia and internationally, and the lengthy bibliography will be very useful to any scholar in this field.

I personally think that Mendes has proved his point, and that there was a significant younger anti-war Jewish Left in Melbourne during this period. Where I would disagree with his argument is in the neglect of contextualising this insight.

While there were Jewish student radicals in abundance, the representative bodies of the Jewish community did not adopt an anti-war stance, and this generation of Jewish radicals now appears something like the bulge in the snake that swallowed a pig. Why was this? Mendes points to one of the most important reasons, the rise of left-wing anti-Zionism soon after (a very valuable section of this work) in the wake of Israel's conquest of the West Bank in 1967 and the discovery of the Palestinian issue by the far Left, which forced Jewish radicals to choose between Jewry and radicalism: most in the end chose the former. But, regrettably, Mendes does not touch upon the second reason, the socialising influence of the new institutions of the Melbourne Jewish community, above all the day school system, whose effect was, in the great majority of cases, to produce Jews who fully partook in the contemporary non-universalistic Jewish problematic. Nevertheless, this is a fine piece of work, which deserves to be widely known and discussed, and will be extensively noted in the historiography of the Australian Jewish community.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

THE OTHER AUSTRALIA: EXPERIENCES OF MIGRATION

Brian Murphy (*Cambridge University Press in association with the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales, 1993, ix, 274pp., \$45.00*)

This book traces the impact of post-1945 non-English speaking migrants on New South Wales. It is a wide-ranging and valuable general introduction, providing the kind of broad, sophisticated history of this topic which has been produced with surprising infrequency. Brian Murphy, an expert on Irish migration to Australia, regrettably died just before the book's publication earlier this year.

Much of *The Other Australia* consists in part of a number of valuable interviews with migrants from a variety of backgrounds, compiled in the late 1980s. The author traces the evolution of government attitudes towards migrants, describing in a very useful way the major changes — almost all in the direction of greater liberalisation — which have occurred in migration policy since the colonial period. He notes, with excellent common sense, that change often came as a response to 'pressure from below' exercised by the migrants themselves, especially as their numbers grew.

The author's intention is to study all migrant groups, and the material here on Jewish migration is very brief, although there is an interesting account of the migration experience of one survivor family on pp. 117–120. Nevertheless, Murphy's coverage of the story of Jewish migration is inadequate in the extreme. He cites only one work on this subject, Dr. Rutland's 1973 article in this *Journal* on 'Jewish Immigration into New South Wales, 1919–39', and remained in complete ignorance, it would seem, of the very substantial body of research and publications on this topic, including the debate over anti-Semitism in government migration policy.

While this work deals with multiculturalism, neither the Jewish day school system nor any of the other institutions of Jewish communal identity are either mentioned or described; nor is the role of either Zionism and Israel or of the network of synagogues in this process; nor is anti-Semitism and hostility to Jews or how this changed over time; nor is the Jewish press and media; nor are the community's representative bodies and their role. The last chapter of this work, 'The

New South Wales Ethnic Affairs Commission' too often reads like a piece of puffery for the body which, it seems, sponsored this book's publication. Had that chapter been thrown into the waste paper bin, and exchanged for more material on the migrants themselves, this would have been a trade for the better.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

THE FUTURE IS PAST

Evelyn Rothfield (privately printed, Melbourne, 1992, 71pp., \$7.50)

Agree with their highly visible, often very controversial positions on a wide variety of public issues or not, it is impossible for any observer of Australian Jewry (especially Melbourne Jewry) over the past fifty years to ignore Norman and Evelyn Rothfield, and an autobiography by Evelyn is much to be welcomed as an important record of someone who has participated in public debate over Jewish issues here from the days of assisting refugees during the Holocaust to our present time of negotiations over peace between Israel and the Arabs. Evelyn Rothfield's autobiography, *The Future is Past*, is also significant for the light it sheds on the career of middle-class English migrants from London, a stratum in Australian Jewry often very neglected either in accounts of recent Australian Jewish history or in autobiographical works.

Evelyn and Norman Rothfield are, of course, doyens of the Australian Jewish Left, and her work will be of most value to the historian as an account, from the inside, of the Jewish Left here from the early 1940s to the present. Although I have written widely on this subject, I learned much that was new to me. It was not clear to me, until recently, how much of the nomenclature and format of the post-war Jewish Left derives from East End Jewish models rather than European ones, including the term 'Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism', which existed in England before it did here. I am sure that the experience of English Jews in fighting Mosley's Blackshirts in the 1930s deeply coloured their later attitudes. One curious feature of the Australian Jewish Left as it emerged here in the 1940s was that many, perhaps most, of its notable leaders were English-speaking Jews from Britain or Australia rather than (as one might expect) refugees and immigrants representing continental socialist traditions. Evelyn Rothfield's work is significant in giving an account of this tradition, so little noted by our historians.

The greatest blot on the record of the Australian Jewish Left during the 1940s and 1950s was its apologetics for the murderous, anti-Semitic tyrant Stalin, and the egregious double standards by which it judged the behaviour of the West and of the Communist bloc. *The Future is Past* does not, regrettably, shed as much light on this as one might wish. While Evelyn Rothfield notes her discomfort as a social democratic participant in Communist-organised 'peace' conferences, she does not go beyond this to offer a full-scale analysis. One hopes that Norman Rothfield, who is now writing his own memoirs, or some other leading figure of the Jewish Council, will provide this kind of account, as painful as it might well be.

On the other field of continuing controversy in which Evelyn Rothfield was engaged, 'Paths to Peace' and its search for a negotiated peace between the Arabs and Israel, even dedicated Zionists will take a more charitable and balanced view of their activities than they would otherwise have done. It is clear that the Rothfields continuously fought the 'Zionism is racism' resolution from within the Australian Left, and always fought the extreme Left's attempts to delegitimise Israel during the

1970s and early 1980s. They emerge from this book as certainly within the Jewish mainstream, albeit continuously critical of Israeli policy, often in a one-sided manner, in a way which obviously represents a minority view. Claims that 'Paths to Peace' and its successor bodies wish to destroy or undermine Israel are, however, simply false and unsupported by any credible evidence. On other political issues — feminism, for instance — Evelyn Rothfield has always taken an enlightened view, decades ahead of its time, which stands up very well from today's vantage point.

As a personal memoir, *The Future is Past* is always interesting and frequently intimate. It is often notably modest — perhaps, indeed, too self-effacing. Evelyn, for instance, makes frequent references to her English brother Edmund Dell, without hinting at any stage that he was a British Cabinet Minister, the Secretary for Trade under Wilson and Callaghan (and, incidentally, on the Right wing of the British Labour party!). Virtually anyone else would have big-noted this connection on every second page, and this says much about Evelyn Rothfield's engaging personality.

As Communism vanishes into the graveyard of history and as the Arab-Israeli dispute now shows, for the first time, real signs of moving towards a settlement, it is certainly possible to take a more charitable view of the Australian Jewish community's often unpopular figures, including its Left-wing activists. They were frequently wrong, often regrettably wrong (and of whom could this not be said?), but represented a legitimate and necessary stance within the overall Jewish problematic, and Australian Jewry has been the richer for their presence here.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

JULIUS STONE — AN INTELLECTUAL LIFE

Leonie Star (Sydney University Press in Association with Oxford University Press Australia, 1992. xii, 300pp., \$49.95)

Julius Stone's life spanned the poorest parts of Leeds, a northern bastion of Anglo-Jewry where he was born in 1907; the lofty spires of Oxford, where he scored great academic successes and earned the degree of Doctor of Civil Law; and the library of the Harvard Law School, where he was awarded an SJD. He spent most of his life in Sydney, a northern bastion of Australian Jewry, and left indelible impressions on the University of Sydney's Law School and the whole legal community. His death, in 1985, drew scores of tributes attesting to that. He might have been the first Australian to be a Judge of the International Court of Justice, joining Sir Hersch Lauterpacht, who began his life in Galicia and became Whewell Professor of International Law in Cambridge before he was nominated by the United Kingdom to sit in The Hague. For a brief time Julius presided over the Truman Center for the Advancement of Peace in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In the thirteen years of his 'retirement' he taught in the Law School of the University of New South Wales and the Hastings College of Law of the University of California in San Francisco. His name was known throughout the Common Law world. He figured in every table of the most eminent Australian scholars of our time. He occupied a similar place in the lists of the Australian Jewish community.

I read Leonie Star's biography of Julius Stone with special interest — a special, but a shared interest. Everyone who knew Julius Stone has read, or will read, this book with her or his memories of him forming a stage or a setting within which the

author's words are set. Her portrait of Julius is of a man who marches firmly onto my stage of memory, who stands boldly in my setting of recollection. Hers is a book in which the man and his works are greatly admired, but not worshipped. The warts are not painted out, but neither are the radiances dulled.

Julius Stone spent two substantial periods as Visiting Professor of Law in the Monash Law School. The first was in 1972, which was the year he celebrated his sixty-fifth birthday, the age of 'statutory senility', at the end of which he retired from the Challis Chair of Jurisprudence and International Law in the University of Sydney. I saw much of him in those weeks in May and June of that tempestuous year. While he was with us, the Lod Airport massacre occurred. We stood together in the Forum of the University, in a crowd of hundreds, for a Jewish Students' Society memorial service for the victims, Jew and gentile, of the Japanese terrorists. We talked often about law in all its dimensions and in every one of its manifestations. We talked about Israel and its place in the world. We talked about our families and we talked about our colleagues and we talked about our acquaintances in the law schools of Australia and elsewhere. We talked about who might succeed him, or rather follow him, in the Sydney Law School. I had met Julius years before, at Australasian Universities Law Schools Association (AULSA) Conferences, and heard him speak at plenary sessions and in smaller gatherings. But this time, in my own law school, we talked together.

Julius was a wonderful talker. He wove words like threads of bright hues into a fabric of discourse which sometimes seemed to have no edge or margin. If his writings were sometimes dense, and always loaded, or perhaps protected, with extensive references and, on occasions, comments and elaborations of the text, his talk was a joy to hear, and his face as well as his voice was engaged in its production.

Leonie Star's biography, which she has denominated *An Intellectual Life*, has already been described by others as an excellent account of the public career of a great personality. His energy and his breadth of learning, his ambition and his vision, all come forth from her narrative. He was a great jurist; on the evidence of the best witnesses, his students, he was an unforgettable teacher; he was a fiery polemicist. He was also sensitive to slights, prickly about his status and had a memory which retained, sharply, the recollections of every episode in which he had been mistreated. His first years of Sydney left some of the harshest impressions on his mind.

What I remember, however, most clearly from that 1972 visit, and his second several years later, was Julius's generosity. He shared ideas readily. Every day he would talk with younger people about their hopes, their ideas, their plans, their projects. He proposed themes, and fashioned proposals. He read their drafts and wrote copious suggestions on their manuscripts. He suggested where a graduate course might be profitably pursued, and wrote letters of support and endorsement which, I'm sure, often carried the day for the young applicant who wanted to go to a leading American or English law school, or who sought a travelling scholarship. Dr. Star captures this facet of Julius's personality admirably, though her canvas is almost entirely the Sydney Law School. It was a broader, much more ample one.

I first became aware of Julius Stone in 1955, in my final year in the University of Melbourne Law School. Jurisprudence was one of the three major subjects of that crucial year, and I heard my teacher, the late David Derham, Professor of Jurisprudence, speak of Stone's *The Province and Function of Law*. I borrowed his copy,

and asked a friend who was going to Sydney in the August vacation to buy me one. It was one of the most exciting books I encountered as a student. When we met, in 1959, I was not disappointed by the comparison between the real person and the imagined one, formed from my first reading of his masterwork and of a second great text, *Legal Controls of International Conflict*, in that same year, 1955. His place as one of the greatest of this century's jurisprudents could rest on these two books alone. It doesn't of course; the list of Julius's major publications reprinted in this book runs for seven closely printed pages. It includes, poignantly, the book on Evidence (revised by Andrew Wells, once a judge of the Supreme Court of South Australia), which we who had read Julius's articles on themes in that field of law (published in the *Harvard Law Review* and the *Law Quarterly Review* in the late thirties and early forties) had eagerly awaited. Its date of publication is 1991. Even posthumously he produced.

I first became aware of Julius as Jewish polemicist at about the same time as I first read *The Province*. I had, of course, known of and once, as a boy seen Sir Isaac Isaacs, the first Australian to be Governor-General of the Commonwealth, whose anti-Zionism reached its acme in the early years of World War Two. He died on my thirteenth birthday, and Rabbi Jacob Danglow, the minister of my synagogue, interrupted his New Zealand holiday to conduct Isaacs' funeral service. When I got my copy of Julius's renowned Open Letter to Isaacs, *Stand Up and Be Counted!*, I don't remember. I read it in the mid-1950s, when Israel was a living, vibrant, though austerity-straitened country, with a mixture of awed respect for its fierce, uncompromising wedges of prose and the thought that so brief a passage of time — those few short months between his death in February 1948 and Israel's birth and establishment — had shown how wrong Isaacs had been, in every particular. Leonie Star's account of Julius's life is throughout the story of a man who always and ever knew he was a Jew — knew that in his bone and sinew, as well as in his formidable mind. Her chapter titled 'Jewish Consciousness' — a tepid expression — charts major episodes, including the Isaacs saga. But Stone's Jewishness pervaded his whole life.

It was my good fortune to know this man a little, and to be on friendly terms with him in the last decades of his life. I had two opportunities to speak about him, in his presence, in Sydney in 1967 and, when our relationship was much more developed, in Melbourne in 1978. On both occasions I said some of those things of which I have written here, reflecting very briefly what Dr. Star has captured so much more extensively in this book. Julius liked what I said. Once, in Brisbane in 1961, at an AULSA meeting, I heard Julius speak of his work in progress: the revision of *The Province*, which was to result in his great jurisprudence trilogy, with *Legal System and Lawyers' Reasonings* published in 1964, *Human Law and Human Justice* in 1965 and *Social Dimensions of Law and Justice* in 1966. He spoke of what he was doing as a 'richly-woven tapestry'. It was, I think, not just a deserved representation of that endeavour. It was, I think, an accurate enunciation of his life.

Professor Louis Waller

There is virtually nothing in this book that was not known before to scholars of Australian Jewish history. Much earlier research on the Kimberley scheme, as mentioned earlier, had already been done, and has over a long period been available through a variety of sources. Isaac Steinberg's own account of the scheme, published in 1948, was entitled *Australia — The Unpromised Land*. In his own acknowledgments, Gettler refers to the assistance he received from the Australian Jewish Historical Society, and such officers within it as Beverley Davis, Bill Rubinstein and Hilary Rubinstein. On the strength of this book it is questionable just how extensive such contact was; the proven archival skills of Mrs. Davis and the previously published works of the Rubinsteins are a certain indication that had their counsel been truly taken we would have been left with a more carefully-crafted book than the volume we have here.

Given all my above misgivings, it should come as little wonder that I was absolutely astounded to read that this book had been awarded the 1993 Lysbeth Cohen prize by the National Book Council. It should be apparent that I consider this book to be inadequately-researched, factually wrong in many areas, and failing to acknowledge much previous work which has already been done on the topic. How such a work could receive a prestigious literary award is beyond me, unless it was given on the basis of writing style by non-specialists in the area who were unaware of its fundamental flaws. As the quality of this book leaves a great deal to be desired, it brings into question the reputation of the award. It is of concern that this book will be held up as a model of Australian Jewish writing (or even worse, scholarship.) The sad fact is that this little volume will henceforth be touted as authoritative, which it is not.

Dr. Paul R. Bartrop

BEHIND BARBED WIRE: INTERNMENT IN AUSTRALIA DURING WORLD WAR II

Margaret Bevege (*University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, 1993, xxi, 314pp.*)

The issue of internment in Australia during World War Two has been long discussed, but only recently debated. At issue are questions of profound importance to all citizens living in a democratic society. At what point, for example, does a state at war have a guaranteed right to remove individuals from its midst, because of their perceived potential to do it harm, prior to any actual misdemeanours having been committed? How can we reconcile arbitrary arrest and confinement with the principles of law upon which our society rests? How close are such actions to the Nazi procedure of *Nacht und Nebel*, whereby people were whisked away to an unknown future, without trace, because the authorities feared their potential? Does our distance in time from the events of World War Two make the recurrence of internment any less likely should Australia again find itself involved in a military conflict?

Margaret Bevege has not addressed all of these questions in *Behind Barbed Wire*, but as it stands there is more than enough material here for concerned Australian citizens to ponder. A generally-held assumption during the 1940s was that those who were interned during World War Two were somehow deserving of their fate. As Bevege shows, however, in a majority of cases this was not only untrue, but also ultimately self-defeating; internment removed primary producers, skilled tradesmen and able bodies from the workforce at a time when they were more needed

than ever. And it was frequently indiscriminate in those whom it targeted; provided they possessed the nationality of one of the States currently at war with His Majesty, they were fair game for investigation and possible internment.

How this impinged upon Jews is discussed in the book, but only in passing. Although readers of this *Journal* may find this surprising, I would not consider as deficient a book which fails to emphasise Jewish internment. While the issue may be of direct importance to Jews (though I would hope others would also have an interest), in a larger study of this kind it is important to keep Jewish internment in perspective. Relative to non-Jewish Germans, Austrians and others, the number of foreign Jews interned by the Australian authorities was small, and their release was effectuated comparatively quickly. It would be easy to look at these cases, knowing what we know now, and say that Jews suffered the same sort of injustices here as in Britain, but that would represent a double misreading of the true situation. In reality, the Australian security authorities were not really interested in the Jewish origins of those to be interned, *unless* it was felt they posed a security threat; the same was true for the United Kingdom. Mistakes were made, but this was far from unique to Jews; as Dr. Bevege shows with crystal clarity, mistakes were made all over the place, and concerning all sorts of people.

Where Jews *did* have a direct interest, of course, was in the fate of the internees sent from the United Kingdom and Singapore during 1940, but these instances, strictly speaking, do not fit into an account of 'domestic' Australian internment policy (though they were to a large degree dependent upon the vagaries of that policy in combination with migration and manpower concerns.) Dr. Bevege has chosen to balance the experience of the so-called 'overseas internees' with those taken in Australia, and on the whole I think this has been done wisely. While it might be tempting to play up the arrival of the *Dunera* or the *Queen Mary*, these did not represent the be-all and end-all of refugee internment so far as Australia was concerned. Of greater concern to Dr. Bevege is the means whereby Australian residents were taken, incarcerated, and then released — not the experience of those who were sent from overseas for this purpose.

Moreover, it should be borne in mind that Jews were not the only people sent from overseas for internment. This book provides a set of superbly-produced figures showing the numbers and origins of all those sent from overseas for internment in Australia. Apart from Britain and Singapore, they hailed from some surprising places: the Netherlands East Indies, New Caledonia, Dutch New Guinea, Iran, New Zealand, New Hebrides and other places. The largest single number came from the United Kingdom on the *Dunera*. Overall, Dr. Bevege has calculated that 7,861 overseas nationals were transported and interned in Australia. This provides an interesting contrast with the 6,982 Australian resident aliens who were interned (that is, the 'local' internees.) Not only could the military authorities argue that they were on top of the situation in Australia, but they could put the position that they were taking care of the problem for the rest of the Empire as well. While this was far from the truth, it served to boost the prestige of the military and reassure the population that matters of internal security were in fact well in hand.

Of course, the veracity of such attitudes is usually found out in the end, and Margaret Bevege has done so here. The process of internment is shown to have been nothing short of a logistical, administrative and legal nightmare, in which the security agencies found themselves under continual pressure for such basic necessities as manpower, finance, buildings and, most importantly, clear directions from above on how to proceed. Any new directives to intern aliens were seen as bur-

densome by the authorities given the task of carrying them out. Even when releases were authorised, the internees did not cease being of direct concern to the security authorities, for the Army still had to keep an eye on those released. While acknowledging that internal security of this kind was an obvious necessity in a time of war, both the Army and the Commonwealth Investigation Branch (the forerunner of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation) would have readily agreed that they always needed more help than that which was forthcoming.

Margaret Bevege's approach in this book has been to outline the nature of Australia's internment policy as it evolved before and during the early days of World War Two, then consider the target population likely to be interned. Following this is a consideration of how the policy of internment was realised, prior to an in-depth investigation of the theory and practice of internment as it pertained to Japanese in Australia after 7 December 1941. A chapter investigating the conditions of camp life follows, the book concluding with a survey of the means whereby the internees were able to achieve their release and repatriation at the end of the war. The picture Dr. Bevege paints is a detailed one, as such a work must be; the period was extremely crowded and confused, and to cogently and intelligently retrieve its history is no mean feat. Dr. Bevege is to be congratulated on her attempt.

Not so good, however, is the fact that she has chosen to completely disregard all (and I mean *all*) the work that has been undertaken by others in the area of internment since 1985. That there is only one reference dated later than this, in a book published in mid-1993 and containing 764 endnotes, is to my mind unsatisfactory. A vast amount of work has been done on the internment question in the last few years, by authors as diverse as Lois Foster and Anne Seitz, Joyce Hammond, Kay Saunders and Helen Taylor, Gerhard Fischer and the present reviewer. Many others have touched on the topic in the course of broader studies, and this applies only to Australian material. Much more that could have been used here has been produced in Britain, Canada and New Zealand. That Dr. Bevege has not sought to avail herself of any of the newer work in the field places her overall analysis at an unfortunate disadvantage. It does nothing to render her book as the most up-to-date volume on its subject. Further, a major omission of this kind does not demonstrate where Dr. Bevege's work is unique within the literature, thereby stamping it with a distinct authority. It can, under these circumstances, be argued that much of the book's content has already appeared, other writers having previously covered such issues as camp life, aliens' classification and the quest for release, public attitudes, and the nature of the internees. The story of the *Dunera*, to take one example, has since 1990 received more than its due share of both academic and popular treatment, yet we see no evidence of this here. That topic is only dealt with through earlier and less complete secondary works, and a few relevant Australian Archives documents. Looked at from the perspective of extant scholarship, Dr. Bevege's book is therefore to be taken to task for its failure to acknowledge recent scholarship in the field; doing so would not only have brought the book up-to-date, but could also have enhanced the conclusions Dr. Bevege sought to make. As things stand, one would not know whether Dr. Bevege is in command of the debates that have arisen over internment since 1985, as there is no reference to any historiographical developments since that time. The book is, in terms of scholarship, in a mid-1980s time-warped.

This major concern — which should not be taken lightly — to one side, I am impressed by Dr. Bevege's book, which I *do* see as authoritative in spite of the obvious limitation to which I have referred. *Behind Barbed Wire* is to my knowledge

the first single-volume academic treatment of the internment issue as pertaining to domestic Australian internees, and it seeks to place this experience into its historical and social context. While at no stage leaving us in any doubt as to where her sympathies lie, Dr. Bevege does not preach, and for this I am grateful. Internment is a contentious and emotional topic, and too much ink has already been spilled on rhetorical or sensationalist accounts. *Behind Barbed Wire* is not one of these. In my view, it is a worthwhile contribution to the literature of Australia's role towards enemy aliens during World War Two. Readers looking for a deeper understanding of the complexities of the internment issue should consider this book an indispensable first port of call.

Dr. Paul R. Bartrop

FROM CABBIE TO CHAIRMAN: LARRY ADLER AND THE STORY OF FAI

Peter Denton (Sydney: Focus Books, 1991)

The day after receiving this book for review I read in the business pages that FAI stock was trading at par and did not indicate a yield, meaning no dividends had been declared. That makes a review difficult because the story of the founder of that insurance giant who died in December 1988 at the height of his achievement deserves a warm, eulogistic tone which might not quite fit the corporate record since then.

Larry Adler was born Lazlo Adler in Hungary in November 1931, son of a wealthy button manufacturer who became a victim of the Holocaust after the Nazis occupied his country in March 1944. Larry escaped and settled in Australia in 1949. After the required two years of labour, cleaning rail cars at Adelaide, he spent ten years in varied businesses (records, automobiles and credit) before incorporating FAI (Fire and All-Risks Insurance) and from that base built a giant financial empire. By 1966 he was ready to take over an established local company, AGI (Automotive and General Insurance), and win a considerable profit from the sale of assets, and also to take over a British company. In 1973 they moved into new corporate offices in Macquarie Street whose doorway was guarded by a statue of Governor Lachlan Macquarie, also noteworthy for his confidence in the country which he served. Almost ruined by Cyclone Tracy, which hit Darwin in December 1974, with reinsurance covering only \$4 million of a payout of \$8.5 million, they emerged more efficient than ever and pioneered new lines such as professional indemnity insurance.

In 1988 he owned nearly half of the FAI group and so controlled assets worth nearly \$1.3 billion. He was a popular and charismatic figure, unusual for a foreign-born entrepreneur late to arrive in Australia, but perhaps due to innovative, anti-establishment and litigious features in his make-up. His views concerning business leadership were sought by a variety of people from ALP Ministers to the Sydney Institute. In the words of a former Prime Minister and admirer, Bob Hawke, 'his daring and astuteness were legendary'.

Essentially this is a readable and engaging story of one of the great corporate achievers and high-flyers of the 1980s. What of the Jewish achievers? Adler is the equivalent of the Fink brothers among the Land Boomers of the 1880s. Of course, in their day there was no *Business Review Weekly* list of the 200 wealthiest Australians

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(or families) of whom about a quarter are regularly Jewish. Can we learn about Jewish motivation and character or the sociology of great wealth?

Adler was a fast learner with abundant energy and ambition. This was stimulated by the memory of lost status once enjoyed in a comfortable, cosmopolitan and upper-middle-class world in Hungary. He was a diabetic seemingly aware that he would not reach the span of old age. At home he participated in a close-knit family life which was firmly Jewish, if observing little, and rarely attending synagogue though the Adlers married in the Great Synagogue, Sydney.

In June 1988 he was very proud to receive the award of an Order of Australia. Some months later in his last speech, reproduced in this book at length, he revealed his extraordinary confidence in entrepreneurship and in the future of Australia. Here too are Jewish echoes.

Lionel E. Fredman

THE ENDURING REMNANT: THE FIRST 150 YEARS OF THE MELBOURNE HEBREW CONGREGATION, 1841-1991

Joseph Aron and Judy Arndt (Melbourne University Press, 1992, xxvi, 438pp., illus.)

For literally tens of thousands of non-Jewish Victorians, the best-known public face of the Jewish people in Melbourne is the grandiose, classical edifice of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation at the corner of Toorak Road and St. Kilda Road. Thousands of people pass it every day, many of whom never travel into darkest Caulfield and know nothing of Jewish life or of the Jews in Australia. How many of these, I have often wondered, have thought to find out what sort of building this is, or even, perhaps, ventured timidly inside? This building is, of course, the home of the oldest of our congregations, whose origins go back to the very earliest days of Jewish settlement here. For decades until the arrival of the Eastern European Jews in this century, the MHC was one of only three synagogues in Melbourne. It was the pulpit from which Israel Brodie went on to become Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, where Monash and Isaacs frequently worshipped and were memorialised after their deaths, where Sir Zelman Cowen and scores of other notable Jews were *bar mitzvah*, or celebrated other major events. For decades, in other words, the MHC comprised a major part of Jewish life in Melbourne, and an understanding of its history and evolution is absolutely central to coming to terms with Jewish life on these shores.

While a briefer history of the MHC was published fifty years ago in 1941, only now has a full and comprehensive account of this important synagogue been published. *The Enduring Remnant* by Joseph Aron and Judy Arndt is a fine work, doing suitable honour to the institution and the occasion they commemorate. It is, certainly, the best congregational history which has yet been written of an Australian synagogue, and it breaks new ground in our understanding of many features of Jewish life in Australia. There are, in particular, three areas in which it adds greatly to any previous work on Australian Jewish history. Its account of the rabbis and leaders of the MHC, most of whom were very important figures in moulding the nature of Jewish life here, is totally original and very important, providing, for the first time, comprehensive and well-rounded portraits of figures like Rev. Abraham Ornstien, Rabbi Joseph Abrahams, and Sir Israel Brodie, with far more detail than has ever appeared in print before. It is a particularly admirable feature of the

(or families) of whom about a quarter are regularly Jewish. Can we learn about Jewish motivation and character or the sociology of great wealth?

Adler was a fast learner with abundant energy and ambition. This was stimulated by the memory of lost status once enjoyed in a comfortable, cosmopolitan and upper-middle-class world in Hungary. He was a diabetic seemingly aware that he would not reach the span of old age. At home he participated in a close-knit family life which was firmly Jewish, if observing little, and rarely attending synagogue though the Adlers married in the Great Synagogue, Sydney.

In June 1988 he was very proud to receive the award of an Order of Australia. Some months later in his last speech, reproduced in this book at length, he revealed his extraordinary confidence in entrepreneurship and in the future of Australia. Here too are Jewish echoes.

Lionel E. Fredman

THE ENDURING REMNANT: THE FIRST 150 YEARS OF THE MELBOURNE HEBREW CONGREGATION, 1841-1991

Joseph Aron and Judy Arndt (Melbourne University Press, 1992, xxvi, 438pp., illus.)

For literally tens of thousands of non-Jewish Victorians, the best-known public face of the Jewish people in Melbourne is the grandiose, classical edifice of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation at the corner of Toorak Road and St. Kilda Road. Thousands of people pass it every day, many of whom never travel into darkest Caulfield and know nothing of Jewish life or of the Jews in Australia. How many of these, I have often wondered, have thought to find out what sort of building this is, or even, perhaps, ventured timidly inside? This building is, of course, the home of the oldest of our congregations, whose origins go back to the very earliest days of Jewish settlement here. For decades until the arrival of the Eastern European Jews in this century, the MHC was one of only three synagogues in Melbourne. It was the pulpit from which Israel Brodie went on to become Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, where Monash and Isaacs frequently worshipped and were memorialised after their deaths, where Sir Zelman Cowen and scores of other notable Jews were *bar mitzvah*, or celebrated other major events. For decades, in other words, the MHC comprised a major part of Jewish life in Melbourne, and an understanding of its history and evolution is absolutely central to coming to terms with Jewish life on these shores.

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author's approach that they have made no attempt to disguise the disputes, sometimes bitter, and protracted conflicts, which have sometimes marked relations between the MHC's spiritual leaders and the synagogue's board and congregants.

This frankness is, itself, a novel feature of congregational history and puts a human face on these bygone events. While this is well-handled throughout the whole work, I found the chapter on Rabbi Dr. Izaak Rapaport, the very public minister of the congregation from 1952 to 1979, to be perhaps the most interesting in the book. Rapaport is described by the authors as 'enigmatic'. What is one to make of a man whose Orthodoxy was so strict and whose intolerance of Progressive Judaism was so thorough that he refused (p. 141) to support the Churchill Memorial Fund, founded to commemorate Sir Winston Churchill upon his death in 1965, simply because Temple Beth Israel's Rabbi Herman Sanger was also a signatory to the Fund, and once stated (p. 142) that he could not join the Rabbinical Council of Victoria 'as he considered there are no other proper rabbis in Melbourne', but could also issue a memorandum (p. 146) requesting 'that Board Members and other congregants not park their vehicles outside the synagogue on Sabbath and festivals when driving a vehicle is in violation of Jewish law', thus giving his *hechsher* to driving on Sabbaths and festivals provided that congregants' cars were parked two streets away? The attitude of many other commissioned historians would surely have been the less said of this the better, and the authors are to be warmly congratulated on their refreshing and valuable frankness.

The second area in which *The Enduring Remnant* breaks new ground and is altogether valuable is in its detailed discussion of many aspects of the synagogue's ritual and religious practice — its *minhag*, Torah *aliyot* requirements, marriage and divorce procedures and the like. So far as I am aware, no other history of Australian Jewry deals with the evolution of these matters, certainly not in so much detail. The subject of the synagogue's *mikvah*, for example, whether through the embarrassment of successive authors or because it was not regarded as important, has never been discussed in any previous history in a coherent way. The fact that one of the authors is trained in Orthodox study has certainly been an advantage here. Similarly, the chapter on the vexed question of conversions provides the most comprehensive discussion of this matter (which loomed so large in nineteenth-century Australian Jewry) and breaks much valuable new ground.

Thirdly, the evolution of the synagogue's outlook and ambience from, clearly, a colonial offshoot of the Anglo-Orthodoxy of the United Synagogue to an Australian Orthodox synagogue, but one which has, it would seem, moved steadily to the religious 'Right' in recent years, is also examined in both more detail and in a more specific way than in any other previous history, although the level of detail given for the very recent past is not as great as for the earlier period. For all of these reasons, *The Enduring Remnant* will certainly take its place in the small but growing corpus of genuinely important and valuable works on Australian Jewish history.

The Enduring Remnant does, however, contain a number of important features which must be criticised by the balanced reviewer, but in the context of a work which is outstanding in many respects. The writing style of the book, while it is workmanlike and efficient, is frequently pedestrian and uninspired. The book lacks a sense of the ironic, the paradoxical, or the picaresque, or much of a sense of humour. There is, in particular, little in the way of a 'persona', the personality of the author engaging in a dialogue with the reader and answering our tacit questions and assumptions. Much of the material of the book has been drawn directly from the synagogue's minute books and newsletters; too often, this is presented in an undigested form.

The book also exhibits another very familiar failing of many commissioned institutional histories, especially those written by non-professional historians (as the authors are), namely to present ludicrously excessive detail, including material, obviously drawn from minute books and the like, which is simply too trivial to appear in a cogent history. The authors sometimes forget that it is one of the most important roles of any historian precisely to distinguish between the important and the fundamentally causal, on the one hand, and the background trivialities on the other. Thus, for instance, we learn (p. 89) that at the farewell ceremony for Rabbi Brodie in 1937 'the toast was proposed by the President [of the synagogue] Alfred A. Mendoza, and seconded by the Treasurer, Oswald D. Benjamin'. If the toast had been proposed by Don Bradman and seconded by Archbishop Mannix, this fact might well have been worth recording; that it was done in this case by two of the synagogue's office-bearers makes it the equivalent of saying that the postman delivered the mail that morning. Similarly, when Rabbi Rapaport returned from a six month trip abroad in 1961, we are told (p. 137) that 'a Kiddush was held in his honour'. Surely it would have been more worthy of mention if one were not; recording this is like saying that the Rabbi had breakfast that morning and then proceeded to brush his teeth. Virtually every page of this book contains unimportant details of this type.

The book is also somewhat disappointing in its treatment of the relationship of the MHC to its wider community, especially in the Australian context (although the nexus between the MHC and wider Jewish world is discussed, at least skeletally), especially in the imaginative way which would have made this into a truly outstanding work. Perhaps the most basic question which is not addressed here is that of the synagogue's membership — the rise and decline of its financial members over the years and the parts of the community these represented. One has the feeling that the MHC entered into a long period of both relative and absolute decline in the mid-1930s, a decline which was only reversed in the mid-1980s. In this period one has many hints that the MHC was something of a beached whale, geographically and religiously isolated from the growing Jewish mainstream, a cathedral-like 'mausoleum' (as it has often been described to me) for old Anglo-Jewish families from a bygone age. The authors (pp. 167–197) sometimes hint at this, but not with sufficient directness or frankness, although I can readily understand the constraints in any institutional history. It also seems clear that the last decade has seen a considerable revival of the MHC's fortunes, both figuratively and literally. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of this revival has been an evident broadening of the social bases of the *shul's* membership. The synagogue's current rabbi and at least one recent president were Holocaust survivors from Central Europe; at least six other recent synagogue presidents, according to the excellent Appendix on these matters, were born in Eastern or Central Europe, and today's leaders of the MHC appear to be a nice balance of old and new families, with the Australian-born component naturally increasing.

But none of this is really made clear in the text, and there are no attempts to spell out what this must have meant in human terms. Did recent refugees and migrants feel welcome or unwelcome in this pillar synagogue of the Establishment? Why did they choose it over the possibly more congenial alternatives? It is clear that the MHC has, in its religious orientation, moved perceptibly to the 'Right' in recent years (as have most other Orthodox synagogues) and, again, one would like to know more about this process. The letter accompanying the book from the MHC's current president notes the 'unprecedented co-operation' between the synagogue and the Kollel Beth Ha-Talmud Yehuda Fishman Institute, a connection which

would have been difficult to imagine some decades ago. What do the synagogue's old families think of all this?

Another point which must be mentioned is the strange lack of space given to World War One, which one might expect to loom large in any history of an old congregation. While some space is devoted to this (pp. 210–211, for instance), the photograph of the Scroll of Honour clearly shows that no fewer than eighteen members of the MHC were killed in the War — an appalling and unprecedented slaughter — to say nothing of the dozens of others who were wounded or psychologically scarred for life. Again, one wonders what effect this trauma had for the MHC's members. Did it diminish religious belief or increase it? Did it make the survivors and their families more patriotically Australian or confirm them in the Jewish identity proudly borne by their Commander-in-Chief? Did World War One affect attitudes to German Jewish refugees fifteen years later or to 'political Zionism'? Did the synagogue's veterans form an active and powerful internal lobby, as veterans' groups so often did throughout post-1918 Australian society? It is a pity that such important questions as these are not addressed.

A final word must be said of the work's reference apparatus. The book contains no footnotes at all, although an Appendix (pp. 415–420) lists the major sources and there is a Bibliography. While one can readily understand why an institutional history would wish to dispense with footnotes, their absence is for the researcher a most serious deficiency and it is frankly disturbing that Melbourne University Press would allow this in a scholarly work of history. The purpose of footnotes is to allow future researchers to identify and access the primary sources used in the book, and to ascertain whether they have been used fairly. This is not now possible, and will certainly not be for future historians.

The Enduring Remnant is extraordinarily well-produced. Its illustrations, few of which have been seen before, are invariably well-chosen and interesting. There is an excellent Appendix with biographical information on the *shul's* presidents and other leaders, and a very useful Glossary. The book seems to contain remarkably few factual errors, although it does repeat the myth (p. 378) that the first Jewish marriage in Australia took place in 1832; actually it occurred a year earlier (involving a different couple), as the late Dr. George Bergman found in 1979. *The Enduring Remnant* is an outstanding contribution to Australian Jewish historiography, which should certainly be in the library of everyone interested in our past.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

JUSTICE DELAYED: HOW BRITAIN BECAME A REFUGE FOR NAZI WAR CRIMINALS

David Cesarani (Mandarin Paperbacks, London, 1992)

This is the most authoritative and intelligent account of the efforts to bring former Nazi war criminals to justice in Britain during the recent past. Its relevance for Australian readers flows from the fact that, first, it offers a comprehensive examination of these efforts in a comparable country and secondly, that Australia's own efforts are perceptively discussed from a comparative perspective (pp. 194–195). The British picture is disturbingly negative, with obstacles placed every inch of the way by opponents of war crimes trials, most notably in the House

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of Lords debates in 1989–90. A British War Crimes Act was finally passed by the British Parliament in 1991, although there have as yet been no trials.

Dr. Cesarani takes us through these complex developments with great skill and authoritative knowledge: he was Principal Researcher to the All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group and is now Director of the Wiener Library in London. The author is notably fair to opponents of the British War Crimes Act, not attributing anti-Semitism as a motivation for their objections to the Act; he may well be far too even-handed here in his judgements.

The British story is strikingly similar to that in Australia, with attempts at framing a War Crimes Act delayed for decades by the Cold War and by the fact that the Holocaust was not universally internalised as the supreme symbol of evil until the 1970s; by the mid-1980s, when serious efforts began, it was seemingly too late to bring these alleged mass murderers to justice without straining the normal instruments of British justice beyond the credible. Indeed, from a comparative framework, Australia emerges as having done its duty more honourably than Britain, despite the remoteness of the Holocaust from our wartime experiences. Justice delayed was, alas, justice denied.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

LIFE IS A CORRIDOR (AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY)

Shalom Coleman (privately printed, Perth, W.A., 1992, 796pp.)

Rabbi Dr. Shalom Coleman was Chief Rabbi of the Perth Hebrew Congregation from 1965 until 1985, during which time he was one of the best-known Western Australian Jews and personified the Perth Jewish community for very many people, gentile and Jew. He presided over the Perth community at a time of rapid expansion thanks mainly to migration from South Africa and elsewhere. Before coming to Perth, he had a life full of incidents and notable events in England, South Africa, and Sydney. Rabbi Coleman's autobiography is, therefore, a very welcome addition to the limited, but growing, corpus of autobiographical works by Australian Jewry's religious leaders. It is very long indeed — 796 pages! — and therefore provides a wealth of detail on all aspects of his life which will make it an invaluable reference work for future historians.

While Rabbi Coleman comes from a typical Eastern European Orthodox family — his father was born near Minsk and saw pogroms first-hand — he was born in Liverpool in 1918 and the outlook which emerges from *Life is a Corridor* is very much that of a civilised Anglo-Jewish gentleman of the Old School, but one who is intensely Zionist in outlook and thoroughly committed to traditional Jewish values. I certainly do not mean this in any derogatory way, for on virtually all of the Jewish issues of his lifetime, Rabbi Coleman has demonstrated great clarity of thought and wisdom. Indeed, one can go further and regret the apparent decline of those in the Jewish community from Rabbi Coleman's background; it is far from clear that we currently produce anything better.

Rabbi Coleman lived for long periods in three very different English-speaking societies, England, South Africa and Australia, and what he has to say about his life in each will be of great interest to students of contemporary Diaspora Jewry. Although he was not born to affluence, and came of age during the period of Fascism and Depression, Rabbi Coleman's memories of England are strongly posi-

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tive, and it is clear that he was able both to live a full Jewish life in the traditional sense and to attend a secondary school and university despite the disadvantage of coming from a provincial Jewish community.

After gallant service in the RAF, Rabbi Coleman mixed freely with Britain's Zionist leaders in London. His autobiographical account of all of these matters is most valuable, and deserves to become better known to today's historians of recent Anglo-Jewry, whose verdict on their own recent past is so often unwontedly negative. Even more interesting and topical, perhaps, is his account of life in South Africa, where he lived from 1947 until 1960, coinciding with the post-war institutionalisation of Apartheid. Rabbi Coleman knew little about South Africa's peculiar difficulties before arriving. He recalls (p. 225) attempting to shake hands with a black synagogue caretaker in Potchefstroom, the village near Johannesburg where he served, upon arriving there in 1947, and having his hand pulled back by someone. 'We don't do that in South Africa' he was told. Rabbi Coleman hints at, but does not directly enlarge upon, the chronic predicament of South African Jewry, whether to protest at Apartheid and risk an anti-Semitic backlash or to say nothing and benefit from a system which most would now say is immoral as well as doomed.

In Australia, Rabbi Coleman served at the South Head Hebrew Congregation in Sydney from 1961 before coming to Perth. He was involved in his full share of controversy in both places, and his autobiography will be fascinating for the insight he provides on these matters, even if they are sometimes described obliquely. In Perth he became one of the best-known figures in the Jewish community, and his advice was welcomed by Western Australia's political and community leaders. Rabbi Coleman was also one of the most impressive scholars ever to hold a rabbinical position here, earning a Ph.D. for his thesis 'Hosea Concepts in Midrash and Talmud', and was the first Australian rabbi to receive a Waley Cohen scholarship.

While *Life is a Corridor* is a very valuable work which should be widely read, it has a number of faults. It is plainly far too long, full of trivial incidents whose retelling is unnecessary. Is it really necessary to recall, for instance (p. 460), that, on visiting the Jewish Publication Society of America in Philadelphia, he was 'presented with a Columbia-Viking Desk Encyclopedia, and the inscription tells me we met on March 4, 1965'? What conceivable point is there in listing by name and date all the Jewish holders of the Victoria Cross (p. 179) or a paragraph (p. 280) on the origins of *Hatikvah*, the Israeli national anthem? A firm but fair outside editorial hand was clearly needed throughout this work, especially as many of these irrelevant anecdotes bear only an approximation to verisimilitude. For instance (p. 180) we are told that 'during the debate in the House of Lords on the matter of allowing Lord Rothschild to take his seat in the Upper House, the Duke of Wellington, speaking in his favour, mentioned fifteen Jewish senior officers fought with him at Waterloo'. A nice story in every respect, except that it could not possibly have happened. There was no 'debate' on Lord Rothschild's creation as a peer in 1885 — which would have been grossly insulting to Queen Victoria, who, as the 'fountain of Honour', could appoint anyone she wished — and, if there were, the Iron Duke would certainly not have taken part as he died thirty-three years before, in 1852!

One might also wish for a considered verdict by Rabbi Coleman, with his vast experience, on such topics as the commonness or otherwise of anti-Semitism or on the religious disputes currently so endemic to the Jewish world. One has the impression that Rabbi Coleman has experienced virtually no discernible anti-Semi-

tism at all during his own lifetime, but encountered, instead, a good deal of philo-Semitic support from gentiles. It would have been good for him to have included some considered thoughts on this important matter. Similarly, Rabbi Coleman's own religious position is not spelled out fully. Where they are touched on — as in his very brief discussion of Liberal Judaism in Perth and of his presidency of the Association of Rabbis and Ministers of Australia and New Zealand (pp. 554–563) — he is full of common sense and good sense, and a considered contribution would again have been valuable.

These criticisms are not meant to detract from the overall merits of Rabbi Coleman's work. This is an impressive and important autobiographical memoir, which will be noted by scholars and historians in the future. It is also another indication of the maturity of the Perth Jewish community, which has recently produced an impressive array of publications and memoirs. Now 6 000 strong, it is certainly emerging as, in every sense, the third centre of Jewish life on these shores, and Rabbi Coleman's own ministry and career there will be seen as instrumental in this process.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

HARRY SEIDLER: FOUR DECADES OF ARCHITECTURE

Kenneth Frampton and Philip Drew (Thames and Hudson, London, 1992, \$95.00)

Harry Seidler is the most important Australian Jewish architect, and this 432 page book, containing 1463 illustrations (181 in colour) is a world-class tribute to this distinguished man. It should be in the library of anyone interested in Australian architecture or Judaica.

Seidler was born in Vienna in 1923 and came to England after the *Anschluss*. He was imprisoned as an 'enemy alien' in 1940–41, continued his education in Canada and at Harvard, but has made an international impact in Australia after migrating here in 1948 to join his parents in Sydney. The celebrated house he built for them at Turramurra in 1948–50 — probably the first significant work of 'modern' architecture in this country — is regularly noted in histories of Australian architecture for the revolutionary impact it had. Commission after commission followed, and Seidler is responsible for such well-known structures as the MLC Centre and the Australia Square development in Sydney, the Shell House in Melbourne, and the Department of Trade Offices in Canberra. Seidler's work has, in my opinion, improved enormously since the late 1960s as he has progressively adopted the isomorphic style, emphasising plasticity and free curvilinear expression in place of the Gropius-influenced 'tall box' style of earlier years. By today's standards, these left much to be desired and I for one do not regret that, for instance, his rather egregious McMahon's Point development in North Sydney of 1957 (pp. 70–71) was never built, if the models and sketches are anything to go by; his more recent works show a remarkable capacity for growth and development.

Seidler is a most notable living example of the gains for Australia from its admission of Jewish refugees during the 1930s and 1940s, and also an interesting, internationally significant case of the grafting of European culture (by way of North America) onto Australian conditions and circumstances. As such, Seidler will continue to be studied and discussed into the future for his importance to these processes, entirely apart from the intrinsic achievement of his architecture.

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This stunning, magnificently-produced work, written by two American architects and published in a distinguished British series on renowned artists and architects, is a fitting tribute to the esteem in which Seidler is held internationally. The text, although of course dealing primarily with his architecture, shows a considerable intelligence and perception in discussing the social and cultural history necessary to understand Seidler's work, both in America and in Australia.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

THE NEW LEFT, THE JEWS AND THE VIETNAM WAR 1965–1972

Philip Mendes (Lazare Press, North Caulfield 1993; 236pp. Available from the author at 2/392 Alma Road, North Caulfield 3161, \$22.00)

Philip Mendes' detailed research on the post-1945 Australian Jewish Left will be familiar to readers of this *Journal*; Mendes has probably contributed more material to our *Journal* over the past five years than any other author. He is clearly the expert on this topic, and his first book was awaited with wide expectation. It is an excellent work, and both enhances his reputation and fills a real gap in the historiography of the modern Australian Jewish community.

Most persons who lived through the disastrous and controversial Vietnam War would prefer to forget all about it, an observation which I think can be fairly applied to both supporters of the war and its opponents, as well as to Vietnam's veterans and the politicians of the day. This wilful amnesia has been evidenced, as well, in the lack of attention paid to this subject by previous historians of post-war Australian Jewry, myself included. In my 600 page history of the post-1945 community, there are only fleeting references to the 1965–72 war, in part because I gave far more attention to the earlier post-war years, when the community was transformed; in part, I would now recognise, because of a perhaps subconscious aversion to the subject. Possibly only an author as young as Mendes — he was born in 1964 — has the distance and objectivity properly to study this period.

Mendes' thesis is that Jewish involvement in the Melbourne anti-war movement (Sydney is covered in one page) was far greater and more consequential than historians of the Vietnam era have previously believed. Jews were disproportionately involved in the campus anti-war movement, especially at Monash University, where Albert Langer became a figure of national fame/notoriety. Mendes' point is that there were dozens of Albert Langers and the involvement of radical Jews in the anti-war movement was an important hallmark of that generation. His work is characterised by extraordinarily impressive and detailed research — there are 716 footnotes! — most significantly a series of twenty-eight interviews with former Jewish radical leaders (the names of whom often make very strange reading today). He demonstrates, most significantly, that most of these anti-war Jews came from left-wing immigrant homes; twenty-three emerged from non-religious backgrounds, four were Liberal Jews, and only one was from a traditional Orthodox family. The book also contains many useful insights into the nexus between Jews and the Left both in Australia and internationally, and the lengthy bibliography will be very useful to any scholar in this field.

I personally think that Mendes has proved his point, and that there was a significant younger anti-war Jewish Left in Melbourne during this period. Where I would disagree with his argument is in the neglect of contextualising this insight.

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I personally think that Mendes has proved his point, and that there was a significant younger anti-war Jewish Left in Melbourne during this period. Where I would disagree with his argument is in the neglect of contextualising this insight.

While there were Jewish student radicals in abundance, the representative bodies of the Jewish community did not adopt an anti-war stance, and this generation of Jewish radicals now appears something like the bulge in the snake that swallowed a pig. Why was this? Mendes points to one of the most important reasons, the rise of left-wing anti-Zionism soon after (a very valuable section of this work) in the wake of Israel's conquest of the West Bank in 1967 and the discovery of the Palestinian issue by the far Left, which forced Jewish radicals to choose between Jewry and radicalism: most in the end chose the former. But, regrettably, Mendes does not touch upon the second reason, the socialising influence of the new institutions of the Melbourne Jewish community, above all the day school system, whose effect was, in the great majority of cases, to produce Jews who fully partook in the contemporary non-universalistic Jewish problematic. Nevertheless, this is a fine piece of work, which deserves to be widely known and discussed, and will be extensively noted in the historiography of the Australian Jewish community.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

THE OTHER AUSTRALIA: EXPERIENCES OF MIGRATION

Brian Murphy (*Cambridge University Press in association with the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales, 1993, ix, 274pp., \$45.00*)

This book traces the impact of post-1945 non-English speaking migrants on New South Wales. It is a wide-ranging and valuable general introduction, providing the kind of broad, sophisticated history of this topic which has been produced with surprising infrequency. Brian Murphy, an expert on Irish migration to Australia, regrettably died just before the book's publication earlier this year.

Much of *The Other Australia* consists in part of a number of valuable interviews with migrants from a variety of backgrounds, compiled in the late 1980s. The author traces the evolution of government attitudes towards migrants, describing in a very useful way the major changes — almost all in the direction of greater liberalisation — which have occurred in migration policy since the colonial period. He notes, with excellent common sense, that change often came as a response to 'pressure from below' exercised by the migrants themselves, especially as their numbers grew.

The author's intention is to study all migrant groups, and the material here on Jewish migration is very brief, although there is an interesting account of the migration experience of one survivor family on pp. 117–120. Nevertheless, Murphy's coverage of the story of Jewish migration is inadequate in the extreme. He cites only one work on this subject, Dr. Rutland's 1973 article in this *Journal* on 'Jewish Immigration into New South Wales, 1919–39', and remained in complete ignorance, it would seem, of the very substantial body of research and publications on this topic, including the debate over anti-Semitism in government migration policy.

While this work deals with multiculturalism, neither the Jewish day school system nor any of the other institutions of Jewish communal identity are either mentioned or described; nor is the role of either Zionism and Israel or of the network of synagogues in this process; nor is anti-Semitism and hostility to Jews or how this changed over time; nor is the Jewish press and media; nor are the community's representative bodies and their role. The last chapter of this work, 'The

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New South Wales Ethnic Affairs Commission' too often reads like a piece of puffery for the body which, it seems, sponsored this book's publication. Had that chapter been thrown into the waste paper bin, and exchanged for more material on the migrants themselves, this would have been a trade for the better.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

THE FUTURE IS PAST

Evelyn Rothfield (privately printed, Melbourne, 1992, 71pp., \$7.50)

Agree with their highly visible, often very controversial positions on a wide variety of public issues or not, it is impossible for any observer of Australian Jewry (especially Melbourne Jewry) over the past fifty years to ignore Norman and Evelyn Rothfield, and an autobiography by Evelyn is much to be welcomed as an important record of someone who has participated in public debate over Jewish issues here from the days of assisting refugees during the Holocaust to our present time of negotiations over peace between Israel and the Arabs. Evelyn Rothfield's autobiography, *The Future is Past*, is also significant for the light it sheds on the career of middle-class English migrants from London, a stratum in Australian Jewry often very neglected either in accounts of recent Australian Jewish history or in autobiographical works.

Evelyn and Norman Rothfield are, of course, doyens of the Australian Jewish Left, and her work will be of most value to the historian as an account, from the inside, of the Jewish Left here from the early 1940s to the present. Although I have written widely on this subject, I learned much that was new to me. It was not clear to me, until recently, how much of the nomenclature and format of the post-war Jewish Left derives from East End Jewish models rather than European ones, including the term 'Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism', which existed in England before it did here. I am sure that the experience of English Jews in fighting Mosley's Blackshirts in the 1930s deeply coloured their later attitudes. One curious feature of the Australian Jewish Left as it emerged here in the 1940s was that many, perhaps most, of its notable leaders were English-speaking Jews from Britain or Australia rather than (as one might expect) refugees and immigrants representing continental socialist traditions. Evelyn Rothfield's work is significant in giving an account of this tradition, so little noted by our historians.

The greatest blot on the record of the Australian Jewish Left during the 1940s and 1950s was its apologetics for the murderous, anti-Semitic tyrant Stalin, and the egregious double standards by which it judged the behaviour of the West and of the Communist bloc. *The Future is Past* does not, regrettably, shed as much light on this as one might wish. While Evelyn Rothfield notes her discomfort as a social democratic participant in Communist-organised 'peace' conferences, she does not go beyond this to offer a full-scale analysis. One hopes that Norman Rothfield, who is now writing his own memoirs, or some other leading figure of the Jewish Council, will provide this kind of account, as painful as it might well be.

On the other field of continuing controversy in which Evelyn Rothfield was engaged, 'Paths to Peace' and its search for a negotiated peace between the Arabs and Israel, even dedicated Zionists will take a more charitable and balanced view of their activities than they would otherwise have done. It is clear that the Rothfields continuously fought the 'Zionism is racism' resolution from within the Australian Left, and always fought the extreme Left's attempts to delegitimise Israel during the

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As a personal memoir, *The Future is Past* is always interesting and frequently intimate. It is often notably modest — perhaps, indeed, too self-effacing. Evelyn, for instance, makes frequent references to her English brother Edmund Dell, without hinting at any stage that he was a British Cabinet Minister, the Secretary for Trade under Wilson and Callaghan (and, incidentally, on the Right wing of the British Labour party!). Virtually anyone else would have big-noted this connection on every second page, and this says much about Evelyn Rothfield's engaging personality.

As Communism vanishes into the graveyard of history and as the Arab-Israeli dispute now shows, for the first time, real signs of moving towards a settlement, it is certainly possible to take a more charitable view of the Australian Jewish community's often unpopular figures, including its Left-wing activists. They were frequently wrong, often regrettably wrong (and of whom could this not be said?), but represented a legitimate and necessary stance within the overall Jewish problematic, and Australian Jewry has been the richer for their presence here.

Professor W.D. Rubinstein

JULIUS STONE — AN INTELLECTUAL LIFE

Leonie Star (Sydney University Press in Association with Oxford University Press Australia, 1992. xii, 300pp., \$49.95)

Julius Stone's life spanned the poorest parts of Leeds, a northern bastion of Anglo-Jewry where he was born in 1907; the lofty spires of Oxford, where he scored great academic successes and earned the degree of Doctor of Civil Law; and the library of the Harvard Law School, where he was awarded an SJD. He spent most of his life in Sydney, a northern bastion of Australian Jewry, and left indelible impressions on the University of Sydney's Law School and the whole legal community. His death, in 1985, drew scores of tributes attesting to that. He might have been the first Australian to be a Judge of the International Court of Justice, joining Sir Hersch Lauterpacht, who began his life in Galicia and became Whewell Professor of International Law in Cambridge before he was nominated by the United Kingdom to sit in The Hague. For a brief time Julius presided over the Truman Center for the Advancement of Peace in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In the thirteen years of his 'retirement' he taught in the Law School of the University of New South Wales and the Hastings College of Law of the University of California in San Francisco. His name was known throughout the Common Law world. He figured in every table of the most eminent Australian scholars of our time. He occupied a similar place in the lists of the Australian Jewish community.

I read Leonie Star's biography of Julius Stone with special interest — a special, but a shared interest. Everyone who knew Julius Stone has read, or will read, this book with her or his memories of him forming a stage or a setting within which the

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OBITUARY WALTER LIPPMANN

Walter Lippmann, who died in July 1993 at the age of seventy-four, came to Australia with his family around the time of *Kristallnacht* in 1938. Virtually from the moment he arrived, he began to make an impact on the community and at the time of his death was described by the *Australian Jewish News* as the 'grand old man' of Victorian Jewry. He was, assuredly, one of the very few persons who was a very significant figure in the Australian Jewish community in both the 1940s and the 1990s, and was at the time of his death one of the handful of veteran survivors of the period of great communal transformation between about 1938 and 1952 occasioned by the Holocaust, the arrival here of the refugees and survivors, the re-establishment of Israel, and the birth of the day school system.

Walter Lippmann made his special mark here, however, in two particular areas, in the Jewish Welfare Society and in his continuing work on behalf of multiculturalism. He was associated with the Welfare Society for decades and served as its president for many years; his tireless efforts in the multicultural sphere, from 'ethnic' radio to community councils, and, above all, his very successful lobbying of successive governments on behalf of immigrants and refugees, are all legendary. His living memorial will be the gratitude of literally thousands of new Australians, Jewish and indeed non-Jewish, whom he helped to begin a new life here, and the evolution of Australia into a tolerant, multi-cultural society, which he did much to assist. An unreconstructed social democrat, in the past few decades he was frequently somewhat out of sympathy with the mainstream Jewish community and its leadership, for instance over the Arab-Israeli conflict, but here, too, lived to see his views perceived as much more mainstream than a few years ago.

To this *Journal*, Walter Lippmann contributed many studies on Jewish demography, and could be relied upon, after each Census, to provide an intelligent and useful account of what the current Census said about Jewish numbers in Australia. I repeatedly urged him to write his memoirs for this *Journal*, offering to give him up to half an issue to place his career and contributions on record; alas, so far as I am aware, this important work was never written.

W.D. Rubinstein

CORRESPONDENCE

I have read with interest Norman Rothfield's account of the Jewish Council [*Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal*, Vol. XI, Part 6, May 1993, pp. 965–984.] I am happy for him to make whatever personal comments about me he chooses, but I am not happy with the distortions of historical truth.

As you say in your introduction, you expect that future students of the Australian Jewish scene will draw from Norman's account, and I therefore wish to correct some things that he refers to. I find it amazing that he glosses over his inability to see the perils of communism in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when I bitterly complained that the Council was too far left-oriented to serve its main purpose, and that far too many people associated the Council's work with a front organisation for the communists.

It was this perception which caused some members to leave the Council, and others like myself to fight the Executive and seek that they change their ways. I was unsuccessful, and I well remember the meeting in which I was asked to recant my complaints. Refusing to do so I was then expelled. With hindsight I was right and they were wrong.

Also, in 1952, at the time of the Slansky trials, I told the Czechoslovak authorities that I considered the accusation against a number of Jewish ministers to be a crass example of anti-Semitism (their reply was that I was quite mistaken and that these people were enemies of the State.) As a consequence of my assertions I had to surrender the very lucrative position I had as the Australian representative for the whole of the Czech engineering industry.

Seeing that the people the Czechs then killed have been posthumously cleared of any crime, I can say again with hindsight that the Council was completely wrong.

And lastly, in connection with Note 1 on Page 983, regarding my support of the democratic move for change in Israel, I would also like to set the record straight. When Yigael Yadin told a meeting that he was thinking of forming a party to keep Labor 'honest' I told him that I would give him some money to start such a party because I considered it highly desirable for a change to occur in the way the country was governed. I was not concerned about their policy which obviously had not been formulated at the time when Yadin spoke of the possibility of forming a party. Unfortunately Professor Yadin did not have the political foresight to make use of the enormous support which he obtained, and also unfortunately, the party which aroused so much support amongst so many people in Israel went under.

I don't know what Norman's intention is in mentioning my interest in the party, but I stand to this day by my belief that it was an important political event in the history of Israeli politics.

Paul A. Morawetz