

AUSTRALIA AND THE REFUGEE JEWS OF EUROPE, 1933-1954: A DISSENTING VIEW

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During the past ten years no issue in the whole itinerary of Australian Jewish history has aroused more discussion and examination than the admission to Australia and treatment by the government and others of Jewish refugees during the Holocaust period and the first post-war decade. Recent historians have been almost totally critical of virtually every aspect of Australia's refugee policy, from the stated intentions of the government to the liberality of its admissions program and the hostility of Australia's authorities, Australian opinion-makers, and even the Anglo-Australian Jewish community to the arrival of the refugees. Recent research has highlighted the plethora of overt and covert regulations by which the Australian government effectively limited the number of Jewish refugees allowed to migrate to Australia during the greatest hour of peril ever faced by Jewry, a period when flight, to an area unreachable by the Nazi barbarians, alone offered safety against an automatic death sentence. In all the world, Australia, with its vast empty spaces crying out for settlement and its remote distance from Europe, seemed to offer the greatest unfulfilled prospects as a haven for European Jewry. A new generation of historians, mainly born after the end of the War and certainly all educated during the post-war era, has re-examined the incomprehensible events of the Nazi period and found the record of Australia painfully and woefully lacking.

Australia's record toward Jewish refugees during the period from Hitler's coming to power in 1933 and the last resettlement of the remaining Jewish Displaced Persons and refugees in the mid-1950s has by now been examined in a significant number of theses and scholarly articles.¹ Three works, however, all published within a few years of each other during the very recent past have probably done more to shape our current impressions of Jewish refugee migration than any others — Andrew Markus' *Jewish Migration to Australia 1938-49*, published in *The Journal of Australian Studies* (November 1983), Michael Blakeney's comprehensive account, *Australia and the Jewish Refugees, 1933-1948* (Sydney, 1985) and the sections (pp. 174-201 and 225-256) of Suzanne Rutland's *Edge of the Diaspora* (Sydney, 1988) dealing with refugee migration, and especially the chapter in her work which examines post-war Jewish refugee migration. Other historians and writers too, such as Cyril Pearl, Paul Bartrop and Charlotte Carr-Gregg, have added further weight to the picture which has emerged.² The picture these historians present is unrelievedly negative. Markus has established the seemingly overtly discriminatory regulations adopted by the Australian government both before and after the War and the pervasive racism and anti-Semitism that underlay its assumptions; Blakeney has added flesh and detail to this picture, focussing as well on the hardships faced by refugees in Australia during the War; Mrs. Rutland has brought to light the covert and duplicitous anti-Semitic restrictions which were seemingly in effect after the War — hinted at by both Markus and Blakeney — which were put in place even by A. A. Calwell, hitherto seen as a friend of the Jews, and by government bureaucrats. No person of good will, and certainly no Jew, can read these works without wishing to scream in outrage at the blind prejudice which

unknowingly condemned thousands of European Jews to the gas chambers and which robbed Australia of the enormous contribution these refugees might otherwise have made to the development of this country.

Given the weight of the negative evidence that recent historical research has seemingly unearthed, it may seem both utterly perverse and a veritable labour of Sisyphus to dissent radically from the now-prevalent view. Nevertheless, it is my firm opinion that the conclusions and implications drawn by these historians are seriously and perhaps fundamentally flawed by, in the case of the treatment of pre-war refugees, an essential ahistoricity running through their accounts, wherein our view of the fate of these refugees is centrally coloured by knowledge we possess but which no one then did or could have possessed, and, in the case of the treatment of post-war refugees, a failure to place the small numbers who came in their proper contextual framework, above all (but not exclusively) in its failure properly to acknowledge the force of Zionist opposition to refugee migration to Australia. Together, these historical failings have engendered a prevalent view of refugee migration that is unduly negative, once the true historical and contextual background is adduced. Needless to say, in putting forward this view I am not gain-saying the high merits of any of these historians, nor am I contradicting, or seeking to white-wash, the appalling fact that a virtually empty continent admitted so few Jews during the Holocaust period; nevertheless, it is fair to say that a very different picture of the Australian response does here emerge.

For a number of reasons, I would like to consider these matters in reverse order, beginning with the response to post-war refugee migration, where both the historical and contextual factors can be seen in the work of recent historians. The seemingly overtly anti-Semitic restrictions on post-war refugee migration, especially the 25 per cent limit on Jewish passengers in refugee ships and planes, and the retention of the 'Are you/Are you Not Jewish?' clauses on Forms 40 and 47 of the immigration form, have been highlighted by these historians. Most recently and most devastatingly, Mrs. Rutland has discovered in confidential and secret government archives explicitly anti-Semitic orders by the Immigration Department which effectively discriminated still further against would-be Jewish migrants. For instance a 'Top Secret' order from L. A. Taylor (27 July 1947), Acting Immigration Officer in Shanghai, classified Jews with drug addicts and prostitutes as thoroughly undesirable aliens; as a result, and despite assurances to ECAJ President Alec Masel, who had gone to Shanghai with Government blessing, no more than 1,500 Shanghai Jews entered Australia, mainly in 1946.³ Mrs. Rutland has also found that Jews were almost systematically excluded from the main I.R.O. (International Refugee Organisation) work contract programme which brought almost 190,000 Displaced Persons to Australia, only about 500 of whom were Jews.⁴ Other forms of anti-Semitic discrimination included the embargo on Iron Curtain migrants — an ordinance aimed chiefly at Jews, it is said — and pervasive discrimination against Sephardic Jews.⁵

No one can claim that this research, especially Mrs. Rutland's, is not both outstanding and important, as disturbing and depressing as it is thorough. It is, however, possible to argue that, however correct this view may be on matters of fact, the context of these arguments is misleading and the picture was neither as clear-cut nor as black as these historians have urged.

There is, first of all, the simple fact that, despite all the discrimination, overt and covert, which may have existed in that period, at least 17,600 Jewish survivors reached Australia between 1945 and 1954.⁶ For a community which numbered only

34,363 persons in 1939, this is plainly not an insignificant number; indeed, it actually represents the largest single increase in Australian Jewish numbers in a short period of time between 1788 and the present.⁷ Somehow a substantial number of Holocaust survivors did migrate to Australia. Indeed, Melbourne's well-known post-war reputation as containing, proportionately, more Holocaust survivors than any Jewish community in the Diaspora plainly sits uneasily with a claim that severe restrictions on their migration did exist.

Nevertheless, the misconceptions here may run much more deeply still and approach what philosophers term a 'category mistake.' One must, first of all, avoid the insidiously tempting tendency to conflate the situation of the pre-war refugees with that of the post-war survivors. (The pre-war situation will itself be discussed below). Jews in pre-war Nazi-occupied Europe who were unable to migrate to Australia — or to America, Britain, Palestine, or any other place outside the Nazi sphere of influence — would have perished in the Holocaust or, if they survived at all, as living skeletons in Dachau or by hiding out for years in cellars and forests. It is our knowledge of the unspeakable tragedy of their fate which makes today's historians so critical of the pre-war immigration policies of the democracies. Post-war survivors were, however, in an entirely different situation. Their world had been destroyed, they had known horrors beyond human comprehension, but, after the liberation of Nazi Germany, they were in no physical danger, and it is conceptually mistaken to compare their situation with that of European Jewry while the Nazi regime existed. While they existed, the Jewish D.P. camps were, especially after 1946, extremely well-maintained. According to the World Jewish Congress, by October 1947 'most Jewish camps are conducted by the D.P.'s themselves and perform all the necessary services of a community . . . They re-established the institutions, maintain 80 schools for about 10,000 children . . . publish newspapers, magazines and books.'⁸ Even if this confuses a D.P. camp with a holiday resort, it still remains a distortion to compare the lives of the Jewish survivors after 1945 with those caught up in the Nazi hell.

The statistics of survivor immigration to Australia should also be placed in their proper context. There were probably about 1.6 million surviving Jews in the areas of Europe formerly occupied by Nazi Germany.⁹ Nevertheless, the number of Jewish Displaced Persons was far smaller than this figure, while the great majority of the surviving Jews of Europe were either completely out of reach by Western relief agencies, including Australian agencies, or had no apparent wish at the time to come here. At least 500,000 of the surviving Jews of Europe were in the western regions of the Soviet Union occupied in 1941-45 by the Nazis; another 2-3 million Soviet Jews also lived in other parts of that country. It is inconceivable that Stalin would have permitted significant numbers — or, indeed, any — of these Soviet Jews to migrate to Australia.¹⁰ Another 430,000 Jews survived in Roumania, 400,000 in Hungary, and perhaps 100,000 in Poland.¹¹ Again, as the Iron Curtain descended, they had virtually no chance whatever to flee to Australia (which had virtually no contacts with these countries) or anywhere else in the West; it must be emphasised that they were *not* 'Displaced Persons', a term properly applied only to surviving Jews, chiefly from Poland, mainly liberated from the concentration camps, who had fled to the Allied Occupied areas of Germany and Austria after 1945 and were stateless. For most of the surviving Jewish communities of the satellite states of eastern Europe, only the establishment of Israel in 1948, coincident with ever-increasing Stalinist anti-Semitism, made possible the organisation of the evacuation of the bulk of the Jewish population. On the other hand, it

must be emphasised that there is no evidence that the surviving Jews in the former Nazi-occupied western European democracies, such as France, the Netherlands, and Belgium, wished to emigrate.

How many Jewish 'Displaced Persons' in the actual meaning of the term were there? According to the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, there were about 230,000 Jewish Displaced Persons at the peak of the D.P. camps in 1946.¹² In the American Zone of Germany there were 156,646 Jewish D.P.s in June 1947.¹³ They were joined by a trickle of 20-30,000 Jews from Eastern Europe, mainly from Roumania, but by no others. It is against this real total pool of no more than about 250,000 Jewish D.P.s that the Australian figure of 17,600 should be placed, not the spurious figure of 1.6 million. But of course Australia was not the only place to which these Displaced Persons might have gone: there was the United States, and other parts of the English-speaking world like Canada and Britain. There was Western Europe and Latin America. After May 1948 (and before, for the 'illegal' immigrants) there was, centrally, Israel. Can 17,600 out of 250,000 — about seven per cent of the total — really be termed insignificant, given that this was the case?

There are, however, two even more important reasons for viewing the negative interpretation with caution. Not a shred of evidence exists that more than a tiny percentage of Jewish survivors wished to migrate to Australia — a country whose very name was synonymous with remoteness and, although a prosperous democracy, not a world leader like the United States. A poll conducted by UNRRA for the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry showed that 96.8 per cent of Jews in D.P. camps wished to settle in Palestine. About two-thirds of the D.P.s eventually settled there, with only one-quarter migrating to all other countries, including the United States and Canada.¹⁴

Once Israel was established in May 1948, it was natural that Jewish refugees would go there. According to Mrs. Sophie Caplan of Sydney, who has interviewed ninety Holocaust survivors in Sydney, the most common reason for migrating to Australia is that a relative sponsored them. The second most common was the desire to get as far away as possible from Europe, especially as the possibility of a Third World War grew, and because of miserable conditions in Palestine and Israel in 1948-55.¹⁵ Apart from those with relatives (or, in Melbourne, *landsmanshaften* sponsors) few had any positive or specific reasons for coming to Australia. It is well-known, too — as documented, for instance, with many now celebrated Jewish tycoons interviewed by Ruth Ostrow in *The New Boy Network* and in other refugee memoirs — that many D.P.s put their names down for settlement in several countries — America, Canada, Argentina, Australia — and came here because Australia gave them visas *ahead* of any other country, a fact once again surely inconsistent with the claim that insurmountable barriers to migration, overt or covert, existed.

From the first, post-war refugee migration was centred upon family reunions, not around the admission of homeless refugees as such, except in the case of the Shanghai refugees. The test of close relationship came as a result of a specific request that this be the criterion for admission, made by Alec Masel, Paul Morawetz, and Frances Barkman in a meeting with Arthur Calwell in 1945. According to Calwell — who, of course, may not be entirely accurate — the 'pathetic letters . . . from relatives overseas who had survived the Hitler terror campaign' formed the substance of the Jewish spokesmen's conversations with Calwell.¹⁶ Calwell 'stressed that applications be limited in the first instance' to immediate relatives. In other respects, Jewish leadership was — again, according to Calwell — allowed

remarkably free reign in submitting and processing migrant applications, unquestionably more than any other non-British minority would have been permitted.¹⁷ It is very difficult to know what the effect actually was of the announcement by Calwell, in January 1947, that the refugee migration programme on humanitarian grounds negotiated by the ECAJ was to end, to be replaced by one tailored to Australia's economic needs.¹⁸ The Welfare Society recorded — and presumably assisted all — 700 Jewish refugee migrants in 1946, but 2,000 in 1947, 3,000 in 1948 and 3,800 in 1949.¹⁹ Many of these were relatives of Australian Jews. Similarly, *landsmanshaften* reunions appear to have increased after January 1947 and the Bialystoker *landsmanshaften*, the largest in Australia, expressed no dissatisfaction with the pace of migration.²⁰ It would clearly appear that this decision did not create new insurmountable barriers, and that refugee migration rose when the doors at last opened wide elsewhere.

This last consideration takes us to the most central point of all. Once Nazi Germany had been defeated and the true scale of the catastrophe that had overcome Jewry was known, the overwhelming existential necessity of the Jewish people was the creation and maintenance of a Jewish state in Palestine. Above everything else Israel needed Jewish migrants, and every Jewish refugee who came to Australia, was, after May 1948, one less to take part in the building of the new Jewish state — a state containing, at the time, only 600,000 Jews and in mortal peril from the Arabs. This was widely recognised within the Australian Jewish community and the truth of the matter is that no significant group within the Jewish community desired post-war survivor migration which was substantially greater in volume or different in composition from that which actually occurred — that is, migration primarily based upon the reunion of relatives and *landsmanshaften* — sponsored migration, but including only a limited flow of migrants with no pre-existing Australian associations, and no unlimited migration. This position was, moreover, a *maximalist* one; very significant and powerful groups in the Jewish community wanted *even less* Jewish refugee migration than actually occurred. Certainly no group within the Jewish community wanted *more*. Surely the old Anglo-Jewish elite did not: obviously it had not in the past, while the *Australian Jewish Outlook* of 1947–48, a journal which specifically reflected the elite Anglo-Jewish anti-Zionist position in Australia, specifically went on record as believing 'particularly in child and British migration, including a proportion of Englishmen of the Jewish faith. [*The Outlook*] is opposed to all forms of racial minority group settlements.'²¹ Rabbi Jacob Danglow was still as truculently antipathetic to migrants in the first post-war years as during the 1930s. In 1946 he challenged recent migrants to 'shake the dust off their feet and leave, if they don't like it here.'²² Nor, it should be realised, did the Jewish left of the time wish for large-scale refugee migration in excess of that which actually occurred. Although leftist groups like the Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism contributed pamphlets extolling the merits of refugees *already here* and fought discrimination by bigoted Australians, no leftist group or publication, so far as one can now discern, called for significantly greater survivor migration than that which actually occurred, and none attacked the Government for its restrictions. Most left-wing Jews were Zionists, wishing for the survivors to migrate to Palestine; most fiercely attacked British policy in the Mandate until independence. Many others, too, believed that a renewed Jewish life was possible in eastern Europe, now that these countries had become 'democracies'; this viewpoint was espoused in left-wing Jewish periodicals like the *Voice* and *Unity*. Although it now seems to us the very epitome of sadism to wish the survivors of the gas chambers to return to the

cemetery of their civilisation in Poland (now, moreover, under a left-wing anti-Semitic government), it should be remembered — as noted above — that the surviving Jewish communities in western Europe have largely remained where they were, although they, too, had been decimated by the Nazi death machine. Increasing Stalinist anti-Semitism, poverty, and repression, as well as the positive lure of Israel, finally brought Jewish life in eastern Europe to its close.

Apart from these two groups, it is self-evident that the Zionist movement would prefer as from its very *raison d'être* Jewish migration to Palestine/Israel rather than to Australia. Paradoxically, the demographic nature of Jewish migration here, as well as changes in the Jewish community's methods of governance and the struggle for and final triumph of the Zionist dream in May 1948, meant that the Zionist movement was, in the post-war period, central and virtually all-powerful within the Australian Jewish community. Although the Zionist movement did not vocally oppose the post-war Jewish migration which actually took place, there was increasing opposition from Zionist quarters at any marked increase in Jewish refugee migration here; increasingly, after May 1948, there was opposition to any further refugee migration to Australia. The most often-quoted expression of this view was probably Paul Morawetz's statement, made in January 1949, that 'in view of the cold reception Jewish migrants have had here and the fact that Israel needs migrants badly, Jewish migrants should all go to Israel.'²³

In fact, although Morawetz was perhaps the best-known exponent of this viewpoint, he was far from being the only one. In March 1949, the *Zionist* magazine, the official mouthpiece of the Australian Zionist involvement, explicitly attacked large-scale survivor migration and broadly hinted that the ECAJ, with its significant Zionist leadership, fully shared this viewpoint.

It has been stated in several quarters that children and orphans should not be encouraged under any circumstances to come to Australia, and there is no doubt that Jewish leaders owe it to those migrants — who may not be in a position to comprehend fully all the factors affecting their future — to encourage their immigration to Israel.

Some controversy may be aroused by the interpretation of the term 'encourage' migration to Australia. We believe that migrants who have no family ties in this country, and who have no friends who would undertake the responsibility involved in sponsoring migrants, are in fact being encouraged to come to Australia through the facilities offered at the present time by overseas relief organisations in conjunction with Australia.

We view with grave misgivings the expenditure of large sums of money to meet travelling and transportation costs of such migrants, who will continue to be a charge in some form or another on the funds of the general community even after their arrival in this country. We believe that the financial resources of world Jewry, strained as they are by years of extraordinary exertion, should be husbanded at every turn, and moneys which could be made available to Israel should, in this critical period, not be diverted to other causes, in the field of migration.

The [ECAJ] has not yet made any pronouncement on the subject of immigration. It appears from the result of the recently concluded conference on immigration, that most responsible leaders favour an attitude on the part of Australian Jewry which would make it clear to intending migrants that Australia will not compete with Israel and will not hold out any hopes or promises in this regard.²⁴

The columnist known as 'Sentinel' in the *Jewish Herald* — probably the editor, Newman Rosenthal — also echoed these views:

For years I have been a most outspoken advocate of Jewish immigration to Australia . . . I was never deterred, as some were, by the prospect that additional Jewish immigration might increase anti-Semitism.

It is because the circumstances have changed so dramatically in 1949 that I have changed my mind on this question. As I have said before, a migrant pool exists which will never recur. There is no 'unworthy pressure' in arguing that this pool must be placed at the disposal of Israel. Australia does not need these migrants . . . This Journal is saying that with the exception of close relatives only, all Jews leaving Europe should go to Israel. This is something absolutely demanded by Jewish survival.²⁵

Perhaps the only organised group in the community which would seemingly have favoured greatly increased immigration was the Freeland League, which still existed after the war, and whose monthly journal, the *Australian Jewish Forum*, was published until September 1949. Prior to the end of the war the Freeland League had called for the settlement of 50,000 European Jews in the Kimberleys. Yet in the post-war issues of the *Forum*, there is an evident ambiguity by the League about its continuing aims. On only a few occasions did the League criticise Australian immigration policy, and never specifically called for more Jewish migrants.²⁶ From 1947 on the League turned increasingly from the Kimberleys to Surinam (Dutch Guiana, in South America) as a possible haven for refugee Jews, after the Dutch government apparently made an offer of Surinam for the settlement of Jewish refugees.²⁷ Many Freeland League members were also increasingly Zionist in outlook; in any case the League had little real influence in Jewish governing circles.

Other groups which might have been expected to support an increase in refugee migration were, similarly, either silent or unimportant. The Social Democratic Bund was, at the time, so little known that Joseph Linton, Israel's first Minister to Australia, was astonished to find them still in existence in Melbourne and did not encounter them until months after he arrived and met the Jewish community's leaders.²⁸ Yiddish speakers were, in any case, more often and more keenly Zionist in outlook than others, while the *landsmanshaften* had little or no difficulty, it would seem, in obtaining visas for its sponsored migrants. In 1949, the Bialystoker Centre in Melbourne — the oldest and largest *landsmanshaft* — was 'opposed to any migration scheme of [orphan Jewish] children to this country.'²⁹

The special Conference of the ECAJ in February on Immigration Policy in effect endorsed the existing policy, its final statement, after nine hours of deliberation, resolving that 'whilst recognising the priority of Israel with respect to manpower obtainable by immigration and whilst encouraging emigration to Israel by Jews willing to go there . . . the ECAJ adheres to its policy of extending help to those Jews who desire to migrate to Australia . . . subject to the immigration policy of the Commonwealth government and the resources at the disposal of the ECAJ and the Federation of Jewish Welfare Societies.'³⁰ It also recommended that would-be migrants be informed 'of the serious delay that must be anticipated before they could expect to reach Australia.'³¹ The obvious implication of this latter recommendation is that the refugees should go to Israel, where they would not encounter these 'delays.' It is significant that these 'delays' were in no way criticised; indeed, if anything, they were viewed as — at worst — fortuitous. At the conference, the case against *any* further refugee Jewish migration was argued by leading Zionist spokesmen like Samuel Wynn, Benzion Patkin, and Israel Kipen.³² Paul Morawetz was, in fact, only one of many speakers putting this view while, it must be reiterated, no-one argued for significantly *more* refugee Jewish migration than was actually permitted.

It is not unfair to say that the recent historiography of the period has fundamentally distorted what actually occurred. Zionist and other mainstream opposition to refugee migration — let alone the strength of this opposition — has been totally ignored by Markus and is virtually ignored by Blakeney. The account by Mrs. Rutland — a historian whose work is normally hallmarked by its realism, cogency, originality, and painstakingly thorough research — is here strangely incomplete and inadequate.³³ Morawetz alone is presented as being opposed to further refugee migration, leaving one to wonder why on earth the ECAJ would call a special conference to debate the views of a lone eccentric, and why anyone bothered to

attend.³⁴ Zionist opposition to further migration is similarly ignored.

The question remains, however: who was excluded, and why? Certainly many Jews from Shanghai were excluded after the initial bout of liberalism, although even here about 2,500 out of 19,000 managed to come to Australia.³⁵ The veracity of the covert, let alone the overt, restrictions, on Jews can obviously not be questioned. Yet everywhere there is ambiguity and room for a quite different interpretation of events.

Very considerable weight to the argument put here has recently been added by Anne Andgel's history of the Sydney Jewish Welfare Society, *Fifty Years of Caring* (1988). Mrs. Andgel (p.96) has revealed the important fact that the Society 'submitted 7075 applications to the Department of Immigration' and 'met . . . 6745 persons on their arrival in Sydney' between 1946 and 1953 — a success rate of 95.3 per cent. When those applicants for immigration here who migrated elsewhere or who died subsequent to applying are taken into account, it is clear that *virtually every single application submitted by the Welfare Society for refugee Jewish migration here at this time was approved.*

Yet there were also clearly areas where discrimination existed. One notable example of this is the exclusion of virtually any Jews from the I.R.O. migration programme, the main vehicle — indeed, the only vehicle — of non-Jewish refugee migration to Australia, which was initiated by Calwell in July 1947 and brought 170,000 Displaced Persons to Australia by 1954.³⁶ It seems undeniable that Jews were covertly excluded from the programme, and that only (at most) 500 Jews entered under the scheme.³⁷ Yet Jews already had a scheme of migration here, financed by JOINT and ILIAS, and centrally assisted in Australia by the Welfare Society, which, it could be argued, was manifestly more humane than that experienced by non-Jewish D.P.s.³⁸ It is probably not fully appreciated just how inhumane the I.R.O. scheme was. As Catherine Panich documents in her devastating account of I.R.O. refugee migration here, *Sanctuary?* (1988), assisted migration was bifurcated into British migration — first-class citizens — and D.P. refugee migration — second-class citizens, if that.³⁹ The indignities suffered by D.P.s included inhumane and primitive reception camps — former army camps hundreds of miles from any city run by uncaring Australian officials — followed by two years of forced manual work (for men) or domestic work (for women) at subsistence wages in remote areas, generally in hard labour for which these refugees were often totally unsuited. No I.R.O. refugee was ever shown the contract he or she signed.⁴⁰ Worst of all, families were frequently separated, husbands and wives often sent hundreds of miles apart for their two years of forced labour.⁴¹ Exactly the same problems encountered by Jewish migrants, of non-recognition of overseas professional and academic qualifications, were encountered by gentile D.P.s.⁴² In July 1952 one of the worst cases of civil unrest in modern Australian history occurred at the Bonegilla migrant camp when 2,000 unemployed Italian migrants rioted. The riot was put down by 200 armed troops and five armoured cars.⁴³ After the two years of forced labour, D.P.s were then left in effect to begin life in Australia in earnest, generally in a big city hundreds of miles from their original venue, without contacts or a welfare network.⁴⁴ Catherine Panich has termed these I.R.O. refugees 'the last convicts.'⁴⁵ The most recent and thorough historian of I.R.O. migration, Dr. Egon F. Kunz, has claimed that the reason the Jewish proportion was so low was not overt discrimination but because

Jews on the whole avoided the Mass [i.e. I.R.O.] Scheme with its contract obligation, relying instead on assistance given by Jewish organisations . . . to provide passage.⁴⁶

With all the possible overt and covert discrimination in selection imposed by the Government, the I.R.O. Scheme must thus be contrasted with the reception of Jewish refugee migrants at the same time. Jewish migrants were typically met at the dock by Jewish Welfare Society personnel, taken to Jewish hostels in Sydney or Melbourne, and integrated into normal life as quickly as possible. In Melbourne, the network of *landsmunshafte*n provided, in effect, mutual aid and assistance societies, as well as advice and contacts so invaluable for future success. The Welfare Society, ten years old in 1948, had experience with thousands of Jewish refugees; although its Sydney branch may have been officious in its behaviour at first, by the early 1950s the reception it gave to refugees was recalled with nostalgia thirty-five years later.⁴⁷ The fact that Jewish refugee migrants could begin to integrate into Australian society from the moment they arrived and were often privy to a continuing mutual assistance network, may account in part — but only, of course, in part — for the extraordinary success enjoyed here by many Holocaust survivors, especially in the economic sphere.⁴⁸ Refugees also found a Jewish community with an increasingly diverse range of religious practices, the beginnings of a Jewish day school system, at least in Melbourne, and a Yiddish culture which had already produced luminaries like Pinchas Goldhar and Yosel Bergner.

In view of all this, despite the accusations of bigotry and discrimination aimed at the Australian government, exactly the opposite viewpoint seems more plausible: the reception given to Jewish refugees represented a third stream within Australian migrant policy of the day, certainly better than the treatment accorded to non-Jewish D.P.s, and better in some respects than that accorded to British assisted immigrants. The essential reason for this was primarily because Jewish refugee migration was organised and funded by the Jewish community and Jewish refugee agencies, rather than by either the Australian government or a bureaucratised and impersonal international refugee agency.

There is conflicting evidence on whether the Jewish community realised that it was being deceived. Certainly the very fact that there was a steady flow of migrants argued against this view, while the two overtly biased aspects of Australia's policy, the 25 per cent limit on ships and the 'Are you/Are you not Jewish' clauses, were of course public knowledge. The format of survivor migration, with its emphasis on the reunion of families and *landsmanshafte*n, had the effect of minimising rather than maximising communal unrest. Mrs. Rutland has noted the considerable success of the ex-Bialystoker Jacob Waks in obtaining visas, based upon his long-standing connections with the ALP.⁴⁹ The Bialystoker Centre, in particular, seems to have been highly successful at obtaining visas. In August 1947 its Vice-President, A. Zbar, wrote to Saul Symonds, President of the ECAJ, asking for more funds:

We do not undertake immigration matters generally but limit our activities to Bialystoker people. As a result of our efforts we have obtained over 500 permits, have contributed portions of passage money in 169 cases and have provided accommodation for 40 people at our property . . .⁵⁰

There is simply no hint in this of dissatisfaction at the pace of migration. It might not be irrelevant to add that in researching the new history of Australian Jewry I am co-authoring with Dr. Hilary L. Rubinstein, I asked many refugees of the time whether they knew of anti-Semitic restrictions. Without exception, they denied knowing anything at all about these suggestions, and often appeared quite disturbed when I explained the evidence for this claim. I heard the same response — 'But we didn't have the slightest trouble getting visas!' — many times. Of course this is not necessarily evidence of anything — those who were excluded from Australia altogether aren't here to be sampled, while my interviewees were mainly

in Melbourne, whose *landsmanshaften* appear to have been very successful in bringing in other migrants. Certainly, too, some Jewish observers were aware that covert discrimination existed. In July 1951 Joseph Linton, Israel's Minister in Australia, heard that 'those coming from enemy countries and Jews' constituted an official 'sub-group' among assisted immigrants. He also stated in his diary that short-term Israeli visitors — students and *shlichim* — had trouble obtaining visas, and 'Doron [Linton's assistant] has had to intervene on many occasions.'⁵¹ According to this Diary entry, 'sponsored migrants' (e.g. by the Welfare Society) were not in this category and the 'sub-groups' among 'assisted migrants' did not apply to them. Significantly, he heard this report from the American Consul-General of the time (who was Jewish) rather than from any Australian Jewish leader — with whom, of course, Linton was in continuous contact.⁵²

What, then, do we have? There were a variety of overt mechanisms to limit refugee Jewish numbers; these were public knowledge and were at least acquiesced to by the Jewish community; they were gradually liberalised. The two major types of refugee immigration on which a consensus existed in the Jewish community — the reunion of relatives and *landsmanshaften* migration — do not appear to have raised any difficulties, probably because the cost and responsibility for these immigrants was borne by the well-respected Welfare Society and other Jewish bodies. Beyond that, there was clearly some Jewish refugee migration since refugee Jews in neither category did arrive at this time.

Above and beyond this lies the major area of controversy. Jews were virtually excluded from the I.R.O. programme, and both Markus and, in particular, Mrs. Rutland have discovered secret and confidential internal memoranda that were clearly anti-Semitic. But here lies the most controversial — and, to many, shocking — point of all: these areas were those where, after May 1948, no consensus existed at all within the Jewish community, and the obvious inference is that in its exclusionary policies the government may well have been responding to perceptions of Jewish communal attitudes, or even to explicit Jewish pressures from Zionist leaders. In her Shanghai article, for instance, Mrs. Rutland has discovered that former White Russian refugees from Shanghai (among whom were some Jews), who had then gone to the Philippines, were, in early 1949, being selected as to their suitability for migration here. Jews were excluded.

In February 1949 B.K. Lawrey was chosen as selection officer in charge of selection teams in the Philippines. It was decided that 'in view of the refuge provided by Israel for the Jewish people, no Jews are to be selected other than exceptional cases where they will contribute to Australia's economy.'⁵³

Unfortunately, many aspects of research into this question remain to be explored. We do not know, for example, the degree of liaison, if any, between Arthur Calwell and his Cabinet colleague, Dr. H.V. Evatt. Recent historians are in agreement that Evatt was arguably the most important Western statesman in bringing about the establishment of Israel, being President of the *Ad Hoc* United Nations Committee which decided on Partition in 1947 and then President of the U.N. General Assembly in 1949 when Israel was admitted as a member. Evatt always used his influence behind the scenes to facilitate Israel's creation.⁵⁴ Evatt was certainly in close contact with many Zionist leaders and spokesmen like Abe Landa and Professor Julius Stone, although he dissented from the Zionist programme in certain matters such as the future of Jerusalem (where he favoured internationalisation).⁵⁵ Evatt was apparently converted to Zionism in 1945 because of the Holocaust; it may be that he understood that it was more important for Jewish survivors with no obvious ties here to go to Israel rather than Australia; of course this is speculation.

Similarly, we do not yet know to what degree Calwell's policies were altered by Harold Holt, his Liberal successor, in 1949. Two still more crucial questions also remain to be explored. First, who, precisely, was excluded? Who was kept out by the secret memoranda recently discovered? What force did they have in practice? Where did these Jews then go? Secondly, what degree of pressure, if any, was exerted by Zionists upon the government to see that, after May 1948, refugee Jews went to Israel? Did Zionist concerns play any part in government policy or government perceptions of Jewish community attitudes? To what extent was the undoubted anti-Semitism of many government officials exercised independently of Jewish community attitudes? It is clear that the recent historians of this subject have opened, rather than closed, a major debate on recent Australian Jewish history; when the debate is concluded, some may well prefer that it have remained closed.

Two defences were always given by the Australian government to charges of post-war restrictions on Jewish refugee migration. The first is that large-scale Jewish refugee migration would not have been politically possible in the climate of the time where significant anti-Semitism existed and nearly a decade of British migrancy had ceased because of the war.⁵⁶ In a democracy, any government operates in a real political world in which public opinion, no matter how misconceived, must be taken into account. It clearly appears that the period 1946-48 saw a temporary but significant increase in anti-Semitism in Australia and also in Britain, fanned by post-war austerity, populist-inspired perceptions of refugee 'queue-jumping' and 'profiteering', and the independence campaign in Palestine, waged by groups like the Irgun in ways which led to a tremendous backlash. In Britain the destruction of the King David Hotel and the hanging of the two sergeants led to a rash of anti-Semitic violence unknown even during the Oswald Mosley period.⁵⁷ This hostility was fully reflected in at least the populist Australian press of the period. It is pointless to argue now that Chifley and Calwell should have ignored this backlash; they could not have, in the climate of the times, and nor was the Jewish community of the day pressing them to. The fact that Jewish refugee migration actually rose after 1946-47 is evidence that the Jewish community was able to negotiate successfully in very difficult circumstances. Once again, it is simply ahistorical to argue that the Jewish community of that day, only three years after a national roof body had been formed, operating at a time long before multi-culturalism, and one which was both divided on the very issue of refugee migration and which increasingly regarded the creation of Israel as a much more important issue on which to lobby the government, could or should have attempted dramatically to change government policy on this issue, in the manner of today's community.

The second defence by the government to charges of anti-Semitism was made to Mrs. Joy Guyatt who was, in 1967, researching her pioneering M.A. Thesis on Australian attitudes to Jews in 1938-48.⁵⁸ According to a letter from R.B. Armstrong, Acting Secretary of the Department of Immigration to Arthur Calwell (who was contacted about the matter by Mrs. Guyatt),

Mrs. Guyatt is quite right in her assumption that the question 'Are You Jewish?' on Forms 40 was meant to discriminate in favour of the Jews before the war, whereas after the war the same question was used to limit to 25 per cent the number of Jews carried in any foreign ship; this was done upon the request by the Australian Jewish welfare authorities which had undertaken responsibility for Jewish arrivals, and wished to avoid the need to place very large numbers at short notice.⁵⁹

In another letter from the same man to Mrs. Guyatt, it was claimed that the 'Are You Jewish?' clause was inserted in Forms 40 and 47 'for the benefit of the Jews, and its insertion had the approval of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society', while after the war its retention 'enabled us to discriminate in favour of Jews who were of

ex-enemy nationality. Under the policy at the time, ex-enemy nationals were not eligible for admission; but if the application form showed that they were Jewish, they were eligible for admission . . .⁶⁰

Although these claims sound both self-contradictory and disingenuous to a degree, they probably cannot be dismissed out of hand without a careful examination. It is a fact that the Jewish community, including the Welfare Society, made no objection whatever to the 'Are You Jewish?' clause, which could be used both to discriminate in favour of Jews or against them. This is further evidence both of the ambiguity of the situation and of the need for much fuller research.

A final point to bear in mind is that whatever overt and covert discrimination existed applied only to refugee Jews from Europe. It did not apply to British Jews who were, of course, treated just as any other British nationals. Australian immigration policy was designed to keep Australia 98 per cent Anglo-Celtic, but the definition of 'Anglo-Celtic' always included and embraced British Jews. The fact that Britain was never invaded by Nazi Germany should not make us less aware that Britain's 300,000 Jews did have a place of refuge far beyond Nazi lines if the need had arisen. In the post-war period, there was evidence of increasing liberalisation for non-native-born British Jews. In June 1946 free passage provisions to Australia were extended to naturalised British subjects who had served with British forces in the war, while non-naturalised British ex-servicemen would be 'favourably considered to enter Australia in due course.'⁶¹ Expired landing permits issued before the war would be replaced 'without difficulty', it was also announced.⁶²

Turning to the situation of the pre-war Jewish refugees, there is in my view a similar if not greater degree of confusion about their position which flows not so much from a failure to place Australia's stance in its proper contextual context as a basic ahistoricity about the course of events which led to genocide that makes Australia's stance seem far more inhuman than it was. Specifically, this ahistoricity takes the form of forgetting the great historian Frederick Maitland's very pertinent advice that historians should always remember that events now long in the past were once far in the future. There was (in the words of one historian) a 'twisted road to Auschwitz' which meant that no-one at the time (apart from the top Nazis themselves) could have foreseen the programme of mass murder of the Jews which only began, at the earliest, in June 1941, nearly two years after Australia and Germany had gone to war.

Without going to excessive length about the chronology and course of the Nazis' persecution of the Jews, it is imperative to realise that the ultimate aim of the Nazi murder machine — the murder of every Jew in Nazi-occupied Europe — was not the immediate goal of the regime, nor did Nazi Germany have immediate access to most of Europe's Jewish population. Australian refugee policy toward European Jewry was developed exclusively during the period when the expulsion of Germany's Jews appeared to be the aim of the Nazi regime, and was not a response to the immediate and ultimate threat of genocide, nor to the situation facing Europe on Jewry outside of Germany (and, briefly in 1938-39, Austria and Czechoslovakia). It is, therefore, ahistorical to judge or assess Australia's response, contrived to deal with the problem of refugee expulsion (or enforced emigration) by what we now know to have been the ultimate fate of those Jews caught up in the Nazi hell, however difficult it may be to keep the pre-war situation of the Jews separate from the wartime genocide. Similarly, and even more significantly, it is equally important to keep the situation of the Jews in Germany and the other German-speaking areas which were seized by Hitler and became part of the Reich separate from the non-Germanic parts of Europe occupied by the Nazis between 1939 and 1945,

which contained a vastly larger Jewish population and where the bulk of the killings occurred.

Overt and legalised discrimination visited by the Nazis upon the Jews when they took power in January 1933 consisted first, of course, of the removal of all Jewish office-holders, of dismissal of virtually all Jews from the civil service and all government positions, including university posts (in April 1933), together with non-Jewish opponents of the regime. An officially-organised Nazi-boycott of Jewish businesses (lasting three days) occurred at the same time. Jewish lawyers were debarred from practicing and Jewish doctors sacked by state institutions. The infamous Nuremberg Laws, enacted over two years later in September 1935, deprived all Jews of German citizenship, forbade intermarriage, and defined 'Aryan' and 'non-Aryan' status by 'racial' descent. These moves were accompanied, from the start, by many other abominations, unknown to any civilised society in modern times, including book burnings, beatings, looting of Jewish shops, and a continuing stream of violent and loathsome anti-Semitic propaganda.⁶³

Nevertheless, it is absolutely crucial to keep in mind that Auschwitz was still far in the future, and, to most, still unimaginable. It still seemed entirely possible that the Nazi regime would permit a form of Jewish life in the new regime. Jewish businesses were not as yet affected, nor were some Jewish free professionals. Indeed, since the Hitler regime ended the worst ravages of the Depression, many Jewish businesses were, paradoxically, flourishing at this time. Jewish civil servants either in place in 1914 or who fought for Germany, were actually exempted from the ordinances removing Jews from the civil service.⁶⁴ German schools and universities were restricted to admitting 1.5 per cent among 'non-Aryans', a figure which, however small, suggested that some normal Jewish life would continue.⁶⁵ Apart from specific anti-Nazi activists (Jewish and non-Jewish alike) Jews were not sent to concentration camps, nor was the Jewish religion prohibited, apart from *shechita*.⁶⁶ However unpleasant and barbaric the regime, what happened to Germany's Jews until 1935 or even 1938 was a pale shadow of what would be visited on the Jews of occupied Europe after mid-1941, and it is imperative to keep in mind that virtually no-one foresaw what eventually occurred or even that the regime would become a thousand times worse. Indeed, many, perhaps most, German Jews expected the worst aspects of the Nazi regime to 'blow over' (as one eminent refugee put it to me) as the regime became institutionalised. Many Jews also imagined that Hitler would continue to exempt 'patriotic' Jews of long ancestral residence in Germany from the worst anti-Semitic restrictions. There was, in fact, probably a power struggle within the Nazi hierarchy with 'moderate' Nazis like Hermann Goering, as well as the non-Nazi politicians originally part of Hitler's 'Cabinet' gradually marginalised during the later 1930s, in favour of policy-making toward the Jews by the hellish and genocidal S.S.⁶⁷ It should also be kept in mind that, as an absolute dictator, Hitler might have simply reversed his anti-Semitic policies out of the blue one day, while the original Nazi programme was also aimed at non-Jewish Marxists, socialists, pacifists, democrats, and cultural bohemians, who were also sent into exile and whose books were also burned. Gentile liberals like Thomas Mann and Erich Maria Remarque (author of the anti-war best seller *All Quiet on the Western Front*) became symbols of hatred to the Nazi regime as much as Einstein and Trotsky.

For all of these reasons, amazingly few Jews left Nazi Germany during the first few years of the regime; obviously, if any could foresee what lay ahead, not a single

Jew would have remained in Germany, or anywhere else in continental Europe. About 59,300 refugees (including up to 15,000 non-Jews) had left Germany by December 1933, out of a total of 500,000 German Jews.⁶⁸ Of course many Jews found it impossible to obtain a visa for another country or lacked the finances to leave; nevertheless, these figures seem remarkably low. Indeed — astonishing as this may seem — from 1934 onwards a trickle of migrant Jews began to *return* to Germany, whose economy was increasingly prosperous.

It was only with *Kristallnacht* in November 1938 that it became the aim of the Nazi regime to make Germany *Judenrein*, although even then there was some doubt about Jewish war veterans and certain other categories. Apart from the terrorism, physical destruction of Jewish property and synagogues, and the levelling of an indemnity of one billion marks on the German Jewish community, Jews were now effectively excluded from business life, trade unions, the free professions, and higher education.⁶⁹ It was only in this period that the majority of Germany's Jews now left, about 150,000 emigrating in the ten months of peace that remained.⁷⁰ About 193,000 Jews remained in Germany in September 1939. Incredibly, according to this estimate, 83,000 Jews apparently survived the war in Germany.⁷¹

Two crucial facts emerge from this discussion. First, paradoxically, the majority of Germany's Jews survived the war through emigration to America, Britain, Palestine, and elsewhere outside of the limits of Nazi occupation. Martin Gilbert puts the number of Germany's Jews who had survived, anywhere in the world in 1945, at 330,000 or 66 per cent of the 1933 total of 500,000.⁷² Extraordinary as this may sound, this was a higher percentage of survivors than in any but a handful of occupied countries, probably only Bulgaria, Denmark, and France having a higher percentage of survivors. This was, of course, solely because Germany's Jews had six years in which to emigrate; nevertheless fitful and inadequate as efforts to assist Germany's Jewish refugees were, they were at least partially successful. Another year or two of peace would probably have seen the rescue of virtually all of Germany's Jews. But the possibility of resettling all Jewish refugees was greatly aggravated by Nazi Germany's conquest of Austria and the Sudetenland in, respectively, March and September 1938. About 26,000 Jews were able to emigrate from Austria (out of 185,000) between the *Anschluss* and the outbreak of the war.⁷³

The second point which must be understood is that Australia formed almost no part of the rescue scheme for Germany's Jewish refugees until the later 1930s. Refugee migration to Australia was insignificant in the early period of Nazi rule — less than 100 in 1933-35, about 150 in 1936, and about 500 in 1937.⁷⁴ There were a number of reasons for this. At least from 1934, nominally, unlike the situation in America, there was no quota system, and any alien (i.e. non-Empire citizen) could migrate to Australia if he or she possessed £500, or relatives in Australia, or was an expert in a special industry, and was literate in a European language.⁷⁵ The required landing money was, in March 1936, reduced to £50 in the case of would-be migrants with guarantees from a person or association (such as the Jewish Welfare Society), or £200 for those without such guarantees.⁷⁶ Although the government had widespread powers to refuse permission to migrate, and certainly contained its component of anti-Semitism,⁷⁷ it is simply not clear why so few refugees came here. We simply do not know how many applied and were turned back, were deterred by financial, language, or cultural constraints, or simply assumed that the whole thing would eventually 'blow over.' Certainly most pre-1938 refugees settled either in Palestine, in America, or in an adjacent country to Germany.⁷⁸ Without this

research, and given the lack of legal barriers to settlement here, one simply cannot assume that bigotry on the part of the Australian government was the major reason for this striking absence of refugee numbers. The vast distance (and concomitant expense) between the two was an obvious factor.

There are, however, three other important elements on the Australian side which were certainly of major importance. Probably the most important was the complete absence of an Australian tradition of accepting refugees or as acting from its very *raison d'être* as a haven for refugees in the manner of the United States. This point is not properly appreciated, in my view. While America took millions upon millions of the 'huddled masses yearning to breathe free' (though shamefully closing its doors to Jewish refugee migration in the 1930s), Australia always saw itself as, overwhelmingly, a place of Anglo-Celtic settlement whose high living standards were, quite deliberately, maintained by excluding most non-British migrants (including virtually all Asians and Melanesians), high tariff walls, and enforced trade union power. In retrospect, Australia responded inadequately to the needs of Germany's Jewish refugees, but it is crucial to remember that she did not respond at all to any other wave of refugee suffering. In the late 1930s, German Jewish refugees were actually outnumbered by Armenian refugees made homeless during the First World War massacres (225,000), by Russians fleeing Communism (450,000), and, during the early 1920s, by perhaps one million Greeks expelled from western Turkey by Kemal Atatürk.⁷⁹ Australia did not lift a finger to assist even a single one of these refugees; nor did she take in any Spaniards uprooted by the Spanish Civil War, in which one million people were killed and hundreds of thousands uprooted. Millions upon millions were made homeless in China by the Japanese invasion of the 1930s, and tens of thousands by Italian aggression in Abyssinia. It was absurdly improbable that even a single person uprooted in China or Abyssinia would be offered refuge in Australia of the 'White Australia' policy; in fact, it would have been illegal to offer refuge. Because we view the situation of European Jewry with post-Holocaust eyes, we know the need for refuge among all of Europe's Jews transcended the plight of any of these groups, with the possible exception of the Armenians, by an infinite extent, but this was not known at the time by contemporaries, who operated in an Australia totally without such a tradition and who viewed the problem of Europe's refugee Jews as being much more limited and soluble than we now do — a point to which we shall return.

Hand-in-hand with the traditional attitude of Australia towards refugees was the lack, initially, of any Jewish roof body or other group specifically responsible for the reception of Jewish refugees. There was, of course, no national Jewish roof body until the establishment of the ECAJ in 1944 (in contrast to, for instance, Britain and South Africa), nor any State Boards of Deputies. Clerical leaders who spoke on behalf of the community and well-to-do secular leaders reflected the conservative, anti-Eastern European views of the Anglo-Jewish establishment, as is well known.⁸⁰ Although tentative steps in the direction of the creation of bodies to assist refugees had been taken in the 1930s, only in 1937 was the Australian Jewish Welfare Society actually formed.⁸¹ Most recent historians of the subject have attacked the highly conservative attitude of the early years of the Society and of its leaders, especially the blatantly anti-immigrant Sir Samuel Cohen, a doyen of the Anglo-Jewish elite.⁸² Whatever the obvious truth of this critique, these historians may well have overlooked the long-term (and, indeed, short-term) gains that accrued to establishing an ultra-conservative, blue ribbon refugee body in terms of acceptability to and the ability to negotiate with the government, and in establish-

ing the *bona fides* of this body with the government, such that the Welfare Society became perhaps the first non-Anglo-Celtic communal group to be officially given privileges in the nomination and sponsorship of migrants. Its case-by-case approach and deliberate slowness appears incomprehensible if not sadistic to post-Holocaust eyes; at the time, given the apparently limited and soluble nature of the problem, the deviant and pioneering nature of its aims, in terms of Australia's consensual Anglo-Celtic immigration policy and its complete lack of a tradition of receiving immigrants, and the fact that most of the costs of migration and settlement were borne by the Welfare Society, this attitude was perhaps more understandable. This point, frequently overlooked, has recently been argued well in Anne Andgel's history of the Sydney Welfare Society, *Fifty Years of Caring* (1988). In this totally novel field, 'matters were best entrusted to communal figures who were well respected at Government levels' (p.33).

An even more important point which has received insufficient attention is that the refugees were Germans — the former enemy, whom Australian Jewish soldiers had cheerfully shot to kill only fifteen years before Hitler came to power, receiving medals from their Australian Jewish Commander-in-Chief if they were sufficiently successful. A tremendous amount of anti-German prejudice persisted among the Anglo-Jewish elite, as well, of course, as throughout the whole of Australian society. When Brigadier Harold Cohen heard that his daughter Barbara planned to marry a German Jewish refugee in Britain, David Falk, 'his instantaneous response was, 'you can't marry a German! I fought against them in the War.'⁸³ Because of the insane whims of a deranged dictator in Berlin, Australian Jews, loyally British, were asked to redefine their identity to include a group of Germans as their beleaguered kinsmen. For many this redefinition of identity was extremely difficult. Moreover, for many Australian gentiles, of course, it was even more difficult to demonstrate compassion for any Germans. This point, too, is insufficiently appreciated: it is unreasonable to expect that anyone who lost a son, brother, or many close friends in the war would fall over himself to accommodate a section of the German population that may well have included their killers, however unfair their suffering.

There is also a perhaps more subtle point which the fact of the German nationality of the refugees occasioned, and which has also been overlooked: there was no separate or identifiable pre-existing German-Jewish community in Australia to lobby on behalf of their beleaguered kinsmen, German-origin Jews quickly becoming, in general, part of the Establishment Anglo-Jewish community. Thus Australian Jews of Germany ancestry like Sir John Monash or Sir Archie Michaelis quickly assimilated to the mainstream and are invariably regarded as a part of this elite. The heavily-German St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation, with an outstanding German minister, Rev. Elias Blaubaum, during the late nineteenth century, became a major pillar of Anglo-Jewry under Rabbi Jacob Danglow after his arrival in 1905. The development of a specific German-Jewish lobby was thus very sudden and *ad hoc*, and, indeed, had to await the first wave of German Jewish refugees who began to take up, in some cases, leading positions in the community, most notably Rabbi Herman Sanger of Temple Beth Israel, younger activists like Walter Lippmann, and recent arrivals with salient German-Jewish connections, like the German-educated Rabbi Israel Porush of the Great Synagogue.⁸⁴ These developments closely coincided with the formation of the Welfare Society in 1937. Australian Jewry thus had only, at most, two years to create a viable refugee lobby to work on behalf of German arrivals. In reality it had even less time, for the *Anschluss* and *Kristallnacht* occurred in the year before war was declared and the sea links were closed.

Another point, often overlooked, which should be remembered is that Australia had no direct facilities abroad, outside of Britain, for processing immigration applications; indeed, it had no Department of Immigration until 1945. Virtually all such applications were handled by British embassies and consular officials, which made the task of those intending to migrate here much more difficult.

The most central and painful question of all is the extent to which anti-Semitism was a significant factor in the limitation of Jewish refugee numbers by the government. There is little doubt that many government officials regarded immigrant non-British Jews as especially 'unassimilable' and foreign, and were blunt in saying so; there were also fears that a sudden influx of refugees would create an anti-Semitic backlash and lower 'standards' and employment. Additionally, the 1930s saw a variety of extreme right-wing ultra-nationalist and authoritarian movements emerge in Australia; often these were fascist or quasi-fascist in ideology.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, there are other considerations which must also be considered. It is doubtful if to more than a small minority of Australians anti-Semitism was ever a part of their 'construction of reality' — wherein Jews were spontaneously blamed for 'killing Christ' and for much of the world's ills ever since — as was plainly the case in much of central and eastern continental Europe. Anti-Semitism as a factor in Australian politics was plainly minor (even non-existent) compared with the continuing religious and ethnic divisions between English and Scots Protestants and Irish Catholics, and the pervasive fear of the 'Yellow Peril.' There is the ineluctable fact that in 1933, when Hitler came to power, Australia had a Jewish Head of State and two years before had buried its universally-admired Jewish Commander-in-Chief with full State honours. Anglo-Australian Jews had always been considered totally Australian, and were almost always differentiated from 'foreign' Jews, even by blatant anti-Semites. Monash, for instance, was repeatedly asked to head conspiratorial, ultra-right-wing veterans groups aimed at suppressing 'Communism.' (He always declined such offers.) In Europe, it is obviously inconceivable that a Jew would be asked to lead groups of this kind. Jews never knew any legal discrimination; middle-class Jews had always been educated at Christian private schools, meeting no discrimination, and — in contrast to America — had never been excluded from residency in 'gentile' neighbourhoods, although they were, allegedly, blackballed from some exclusive clubs. Australian politics (just like British politics at this time, and in striking contrast to the continent) never left the mainstream, and ideological anti-Semites like Eric Butler were considered, then as now, clearly to belong to the lunatic fringes. There is also no doubt whatever that Hitler's treatment of the Jews inspired universal loathing among all opinion-makers and people of good will from the moment he came to power, and was certainly the major obstacle to any kind of recognition or friendship to Hitler by British or Australian conservatives, despite Hitler's anti-Communist, anti-trade unionist, and anti-modernist ideology. A conservative Australian Prime Minister, it should not be forgotten, declared war on Nazi Germany on the same day that Britain did. There always existed a significant vein of Australian philo-Semitism among many Christians, especially Calvinists, and among left-wingers and anti-fascist activists in the 1930s.⁸⁶ The complexities entailed in Australian attitudes to Jews in this period have been skilfully drawn in Bartrop's important essay on this subject.⁸⁷ Finally, it was improbable that any large group of refugees would have been admitted during the Depression, with its mass unemployment.

It thus seems most plausible that although opposition to German Jewish refugee migration did contain a major component of anti-Semitism, the failure to admit

more migrants was mainly a function of Australia's long-established immigration policies, with its long-standing and unquestioned policy of refusing non-Anglo-Celtic migration in any significant volume. Indeed, this central point can be greatly extended, and, in my view, is properly the way in which the admission of 7-10,000 German Jewish refugees should be viewed by historians. The admission of these refugees was the first time in history that Australia had deliberately admitted any refugees as a matter of government policy. It was the first time that any 'group settlement' of non-Anglo-Celtic migrants had been permitted since Australia's then-current migration policies had been set. It was, almost certainly, the first time the Australian government had officially brought a non-Anglo-Celtic community group into any aspect of immigration decision-making policy, as it did when the Welfare Society was officially given the right to nominate 2,250 migrants in January 1939.⁸⁸ As such, Jewish refugee policy of the latter 1930s ought surely to be seen as the first significant breach in Australia's traditional policy which led after the war to multi-culturalism. This break with traditional policy, representing one of the most fundamental shifts in Australian refugee policy in this century, was accomplished in a period of only a few years and in a hostile economic climate; in so far as Jews were favoured, while the plight of Armenian, Greek, Spanish, Russian etc. refugees had been ignored, this policy change was probably motivated, at least in part, by philo-Semitism and by universal revulsion at Hitler's manic persecution of Germany's Jews. In all likelihood, too, had war not broken out in September 1939, numbers of permitted refugee migrants would have steadily risen as confidence grew in the success of the programme and a German-Jewish lobbying constituency became more experienced. It is only because we now know what occurred to the Jews of Europe between the beginnings of the mass murders in mid-1941 and the defeat of Nazi Germany in May 1945 that Australia's refugee policy appears to pitifully inadequate and, to many, wilfully and deliberately so. But this is to judge men and women of the time according to knowledge which we have but that no-one at the time possessed or could possibly possess; it is thus entirely ahistorical, no matter how much we may now wish the past could have been altered decisively for the better.

The third aspect of this question, and one even more poignant than those we have already considered, is whether anything could have been done by Australia or Australian Jewry to rescue any part of European Jewry murdered during the war. This question has also been considered by several historians.⁸⁹ Before considering this question, it would also be useful to spell out precisely the sequence of events which occurred in Europe. The Nazi policy of expelling Jews from the Reich largely ceased with the beginnings of the Second World War in September 1939; at this time, too, any possible official contact between Australia and Germany also ceased, as Australia was at war with Germany.⁹⁰ Germany now found itself — following the victory over Poland and the division of Poland with the USSR — with a further two million Jews under its hegemony. In 1939 and 1940, they were increasingly concentrated in ghettos in former Poland, under increasingly harsh conditions. However, the actual policy of genocide only began first, in June 1941, with the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen* in the Soviet Union following the German invasion of 22 June, and, secondly, with the construction of the gas chambers and the decision at the Wannsee Conference of 20 January 1942 to annihilate European Jewry. It should also be realised that until mid-1941 or later most of European Jewry was not under German domination; this only occurred in consequence of the invasion of Russia in June 1941 (which had itself occupied the eastern half of Poland, contain-

ing over one million Jews, and the Baltic republics, in consequence of the Nazi-Soviet pact), Rumania (occupied by German troops in October 1940, and fitfully subject to Nazi anti-Semitism from early 1941), and Hungary (subject to Eichmann only after the Nazi coup of March 1944.) When Germany invaded Russia, Australia had been at war for nearly two years.

News of the 'Final Solution' began to trickle out to the West by mid-1942 but was not actually confirmed by any government spokesman until Anthony Eden's famous speech to the House of Commons in December 1942 announcing that systematic extermination was occurring; by that time, however, most Polish Jews and those in Nazi-occupied Russia were dead.⁹¹ It is thus difficult, with the best will in the world, to see what could have been done, given that the Nazis decided secretly to exterminate European Jewry and had substantially implemented this plan by the time news of it had reached the West. As is well-known, Hungarian Jewry (of whom about half survived the war, many through the efforts of Raoul Wallenberg) was the only large Jewish community in an occupied country still completely intact by the end of 1943.⁹²

Apart from the question of the fate of the Jews is the question of numbers; again, the precise sequence of events is not always understood. The unco-ordinated but largely successful international attempts to find sanctuary for Germany's Jews was aimed at Germany's Jewish population of 500,000. This was swollen by another 200,000 with the *Anschluss* and the absorption of the Sudetenland. However, the maximum extent of the Nazi empire in late 1942 included a pre-war population of probably about 7.5 million Jews. If the task of absorbing the 500,000 refugee Jews of Germany had been extraordinarily difficult, it is obvious that the international resettlement of another seven million Jews would have been virtually impossible, given the political realities of the 1930s and early 1940s. In any case, few of these Jews could have expected either a successful Nazi invasion of the whole of Europe nor, still less, a programme of deliberate extermination. Finally, up to three million of these Jews lived, in June 1941, in Stalin's Russia (in addition to another two million Soviet Jews east of the limits of Nazi expansion), and could never have emigrated in any case.

It seems absolutely self-evident, given these realities, that it is utterly fanciful to suppose that remote and tiny Australia, its transport and communications links with Nazi-occupied Europe totally broken as a result of the war, could have taken in any significant number of Jews — or any at all, for that matter — caught up in the Nazi hell, even if either precognition of their fate or the political will to admit large numbers existed, or if somehow Hitler altered his policy of genocide to accommodate Australia's generosity. It is equally difficult to see how any Australian government could have influenced any policy of the Nazis in Europe. Indeed, strikingly, no recent historian has offered any concrete suggestion as to how any portion of European Jewry might have been rescued.

The best-known proposal to settle refugees in Australia at this time was the Freeland League, the organisation devoted to settling 50,000 Jewish refugees in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.⁹³ The League was founded in 1935, but only became seriously interested in Australia in 1938, when it received a concrete proposal from J. B. Cramsie, ex-head of the Australian Meat Council, to settle Jews in the Kimberley area. As with so many other aspects of this topic, a combination of historical misconceptions and wishful thinking have led some to overvalue the lost opportunities represented by the League. The League received an invariably cool reception by both Australian Jews and the government prior to the arrival in Aus-

ustralia of the charismatic Secretary of the League, Dr. I.N. Steinberg, in May 1939.⁹⁴ Steinberg was, of course, strongly opposed by both the Anglo-Jewish elite and the Zionist movement. Landing in Fremantle, Steinberg secured tentative approval for the scheme from J.C. Willcock, Premier of Western Australia; unfortunately, the letter containing Willcock's approval was dated 25 August 1939, nine days before war was declared and the Jews of Nazi-occupied Europe became unreachable by any rescue efforts. The final opposition of the government to the Kimberley Scheme, not forthcoming until June 1945, is thus irrelevant: most of the Jews it was designed to save were dead and relief for the survivors now had to compete for approval with the overwhelming drive for a Jewish state in Palestine; naturally most Jews regarded the Kimberley Scheme as wholly quixotic and divisive when placed against the utterly fundamental Zionist goal, while the government did admit 18,000 survivors — to Melbourne and Sydney, and not to the remote Kimberleys where virtually no Europeans, let alone Jews, had ever lived. In any case, even if the Kimberley Scheme had somehow been allowed to proceed, it would only have saved 50,000 Jews — two-thirds of one per cent of those eventually under the Nazi yoke — while it should clear-headedly be kept in mind that the main Jewish population centres of Europe, in Poland, Hungary, Rumania, and the Soviet Union did not contain any refugees (only Germany's Jews were stateless) or were locked up behind Stalin's iron curtain. During the war, it is clear from reading the *Australian Jewish Forum* — the movement's journal — that the scheme was centrally designed to be a post-war plan of settlement here, not a wartime programme of rescue. But, after the war, Jews were in no danger from the now-defeated Nazis and the scheme, as noted, had to compete with the Zionist dream, a competition it would inevitably lose. The *Forum* had, in fact, no concrete wartime proposal for saving any European Jews. Perhaps the closest approximation to any concrete proposal to admit wartime refugees was made in its October 1941 issue, when it suggested that those Jews who fled Poland and were then in Japan should be permitted to migrate here.⁹⁵ (Australia and Japan were at peace until the Japanese attack on Singapore in December 1941; hence the proposal was theoretically feasible, unlike any rescue plan for European Jewry.) Ironically, too, Steinberg's arguably most significant legacy in Australia was substantially to spark the wave of communal reform leading to the democratisation of the community's leadership on 1942-44; this had the paradoxical effect of permanently entrenching committed Zionists in all significant Jewish leadership positions from that day to this.

Many other public requests for generosity in admitting refugees were made by persons of good will, gentile and Jewish, during the war.⁹⁶ The government was always sympathetic. The Australian Jewish community's most considered and comprehensive resolution to the government on the plight of the refugees, presented in November 1943, called for increased refugee migration 'as the needs of this country demand' and rescinding of the Palestine White Paper. Once again, it seems impossible to say concretely what Australia could have done, with the best will in the world, to have saved any significant number of Jews, given the apparently unswerving goal of the Nazi death machine, the lack of Australian contacts with Germany, and Australia's remoteness, marginality to the world's great powers, and central concern with the threat from Japan. This is recognised for instance by Professor Kwiet, who nevertheless implicitly criticises Australian inaction.⁹⁷ There is also the further point that once the Nazi's ultimate aims became known in Australia, they were, by definition, already carried out, at least in countries where the Nazis ruled directly.

Could anything at all have been done? It is difficult to see what, although several things have been repeatedly suggested. Had Roosevelt and Churchill made ending the Holocaust a central aim of the war, focussing maximum publicity on the Nazi genocide, bombing the train lines to Auschwitz, and bargaining secretly for the lives of the remaining Jews, this might conceivably have had some effect, although it is difficult to believe that even this would have fundamentally affected Nazi policy and, of course, it is even more difficult to see what Australia could have done. The notorious failure of Pope Pius XII to condemn Nazi atrocities publicly also eased the process of extermination. Perhaps, too, Hitler could have been assassinated, and it is extremely difficult to see why this was never assiduously attempted. It has been argued that the Second Front could have been opened a year earlier, in 1943 rather than with D-Day in June 1944; this could, conceivably, have saved Hungarian Jewry, who perished only after March 1944.⁹⁸ More, too, could arguably — but not definitely — have been done to bargain for Jews in those countries at the periphery of the Nazi empire, especially Hungary and Roumania, where the Nazi yoke came later and less comprehensively. Essentially however, the only country which would, from its very *raison d'être*, willingly have absorbed every Jew in Europe, bringing them outside of the furthest range of Nazi expansion, was the one state that, until 1948, did not exist, the State of Israel, and it is to Britain's diabolical renegeing on the Balfour Declaration that we must look for the failure of Israel to exist, and hence, the failure of these Jews to be saved; of course, Australia played no part in this, although in 1947-48 it became crucial to bringing Israel into existence. In our efforts to understand the incomprehensible, it is important that we not assign guilt to those who were, essentially, innocent.⁹⁹

NOTES

1. Articles include e.g., David J. Benjamin, 'Australia and the Evian Conference', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society* (JAJHS), Vol. V, (1961); Wolf S. Matsdorf, 'New Jerusalem in Australia — The Kimberley Plan', *Wiener Library Bulletin*, Vol. 27 (1981); S. Stedman, 'Dr. Steinberg in Australia', *AJHSJ*, Vol. V (1963). Theses include J. Guyatt, 'A Study of Attitudes to Jews and of Jewish Stereotypes in Eastern Australia, 1939-1948', M.A. (Qual.), University of Queensland (1967); Beverley Joan Hooper, 'Australian Reactions to German Persecution of Jews and Refugee Immigration, 1933-1947', M.A., A.N.U. (1972); and Ursula Wiemann, 'German and Austrian Refugees in Melbourne, 1933-1947', M.A., University of Melbourne (1965).
2. Cyril Pearl, *The Dunera Scandal, Deported by Mistake* (London, 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). 'The Australian Government's Liberalisation of Refugee Immigration Policy in 1938: Fact or Myth?' *Menorah*, Vol. I, No. 2 (June 1988); and 'Enemy Aliens or Stateless Persons? The Legal Status of Refugees from Germany in Wartime Australia', *JAJHS*, Vol. X, No. 4 (1988); Charlotte Carr-Gregg, 'The Work of the German Emergency Fellowship Committee, 1938-1941', in Rubinstein, ed., *op. cit.*
3. Rutland, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-38. See also her "'Waiting Room Shanghai": Australian Reactions to the Plight of Jews in Shanghai After the Second World War', *Leo Baeck Year Book*, 1987 (London, 1987). This outstanding article may have been missed by some scholars because of its place of publication.
4. *Edge, op. cit.*, pp. 238-240.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 240-243, and pp. 400-404. See also Michael Blakeney, 'The Australian Jewish Community and Post-War Mass Migration from Europe', in W.D. Rubinstein, ed., (1987), *op. cit.*
6. Figures supplied by Walter Lippmann. This figure excludes Jews who migrated from Britain who may have previously been survivors, or post-1954 survivor migration (e.g. from Hungary in 1956-58).
7. December 1939 figures from unpublished figures compiled by G. de Vahl Davis (ECAJ Papers, Archive of Australian Judaica, Sydney University). De Vahl Davis estimated Jewish numbers at 35,435 in 1947 and 53,759 in 1952 — an extraordinary 52 per cent increase in only five years. (This figure would, of course, include British Jewish migrants as well.)

8. Press Release by World Jewish Congress Organisation Department, October 23, 1947.
9. Martin Gilbert, *Atlas of the Holocaust* (London, 1982), Map. 315.
10. Although Stalin did allow 250,000-300,000 Polish Jews who had fled to the Soviet Union between 1939 and 1941 to return to Poland shortly after the war. Nearly all these would eventually have left Poland.
11. Gilbert, *op. cit.*
12. 'Displaced Persons (D.P.s)', *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, Keter Publications, 1972), Vol. 6, p. 78.
13. World Jewish Congress Press Release, *op. cit.*
14. 'Displaced Persons (D.P.s)', *op. cit.*, pp. 77, 79.
15. Interview with Mrs. Sophie Caplan, Sydney, 2 December 1987. This seems to parallel the findings of Naomi Rosh White's interviews with Holocaust survivors in her *From Darkness to Light: Surviving the Holocaust* (Sydney, 1988).
16. Arthur Calwell, *Be Just and Fear Not* (Hawthorn, Vic., 1972), p. 101.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102.
18. Rutland, *Edge, op. cit.*, p. 236.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 399.
20. Unpublished letter from A. Zbar to Saul Symonds, 5 August, 1947, ECAJ files, E-5, Archive of Australian Judaica, Sydney University.
21. Cited in W.D. Rubinstein, 'The Australian Jewish Outlook and the Last Phase of Opposition to 'Political Zionism' in Australia, 1947-1948', in W.D. Rubinstein, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 314.
22. *Jewish Herald*, 11 October 1946.
23. Blakeney (1985), *op. cit.*, p. 311, citing *Australian Jewish News*, 28 January 1949. See also Rutland, *Edge*, p. 241. Morawetz had MHR Henry Gullett's notorious anti-Semitic remarks in mind.
24. 'Editorial: Immigration to Australia', *The Zionist*, March 1949.
25. 'Sentinel', *Jewish Herald*, 28 January 1949.
26. For instance, in December 1947 when its editorial '25% Only' strongly attacked the Jewish ship quota.
27. See 'Memorandum' between the Governmental Commission of Surinam and the Freeland League, *Australian Jewish Forum*, June 1947.
28. Linton Diary, 28 November 1951 (copy in Archive of Australian Judaica, Sydney.)
29. *Australian Jewish News*, 15 February 1949.
30. *Jewish Herald*, 18 February 1949 (my italics).
31. *Ibid.*
32. *AJN, op. cit.*
33. Rutland, *Edge*, pp. 240-41.
34. The Conference 'debated Morawetz's proposals' (*Ibid.*, p. 241). Moreover, when Morawetz 'publicly stated his position on his return to Australia, he was accused by leaders of the Jewish community of wishing to undermine Australian Jewry and of being disloyal to ECAJ policy.' (*Ibid.*) This is seriously misleading, in view of the powerful voices agreeing fully with him.
35. Rutland, "'Waiting Room'", *op. cit.*, p. 433. The majority went to Israel.
36. Catherine Panich, *Sanctuary? Remembering Postwar Immigration* (Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1988), p. xv.
37. Rutland, *Edge*, pp. 238-240.
38. Transport costs of the I.R.O. scheme were paid for jointly by the I.R.O. and the Australian government.
39. Panich, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
41. No other country besides Australia which participated in the I.R.O. scheme separated families. (*Ibid.*, p. 117).
42. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
43. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 July 1952 in *Ibid.*, p. 136.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 182-186.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
46. Egon F. Kunz, *Displaced Persons: Calwell's New Australians* (Canberra, 1988), p. 45. Jack Lang claimed in 1947 that Australia had three migration schemes, one for Protestants, one for Catholics, and one for Jews. This is not at all wildly inaccurate.
47. Paul Kraus, *The Not So Fabulous Fifties: Images of a Migrant Childhood* (Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst, NSW, 1985).
48. As is well-known, the *Business Review Weekly's* annual surveys of Australia's 200 richest persons, begun in 1983, have consistently found that 20-25 per cent were Jews; of these, at least two-thirds

were Holocaust survivors who arrived at this time.

49. Rutland, "Waiting Room", *op. cit.*, pp. 414-415.
50. Unpublished letter from A. Zbar to Saul Symonds, 5 August 1947, *op. cit.*
51. Linton Diary, 3 July 1951 (Archive of Australian Judaism).
52. There appears to be no other reference to immigration in Linton's outstandingly perceptive Australian Diary.
53. Rutland, "Waiting Room", *op. cit.*, p. 431, citing Memo of A.L. Nutt, 8 February 1949.
54. Rodney Goutman, 'First Principles: H.V. Evatt and the Jewish Homeland', in W.D. Rubinstein, ed., (1987), *op. cit.*
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 291-293, and 'Follow the Leader: The Australian Catholic Church and the Establishment of Israel', *Menorah*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (August 1987).
56. This is stated by Calwell with amazing frankness in Calwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.
57. David Leitch, 'Explosion at the King David Hotel', in Michael Sissons and Philip French, *The Age of Austerity, 1945-1951* (Harmondsworth, 1964), pp. 58-85. The explosion at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem occurred on 22 July 1946. Nearly 100 persons, mainly British military and administrative personnel, were killed. The two British sergeants were hanged by the Irgun on 29 July 1947. Their hanging was followed by anti-Semitic mob violence and looting of Jewish shops in Liverpool, Manchester, Eccles, and Bethnal Green (*Ibid.*, pp. 74-75).
58. Joy Guyatt, 'A Study of Attitudes to Jews and of the Jewish Stereotype in Eastern Australia, 1938-1948', unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Queensland, 1967.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 198, in a letter dated 9 June 1967.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
61. Government announcement, ECAJ paper, June 1946, *op. cit.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. See, e.g. Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York, 1976), pp. 63-92; Karl A. Schleunes, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz: Nazi Policy Toward German Jews 1933-39* (London, 1970).
64. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 80. See also Nora Levin, *The Holocaust* (New York, 1973), pp. 59-73.
67. Dawidowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-116; Levin, *Ibid.*, pp. 95-112; Schleunes, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-262.
68. Sir John Hope Simpson, *The Refugee Problem: Report of a Survey* (Oxford, 1939), Appendix VI, pp. 562-63.
69. There is a comprehensive list of anti-Jewish legislation of this period in Simpson, *op. cit.*, pp. 617-620.
70. Dawidowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 506.
71. This is the estimate of Jacob Lestchinsky of the American Jewish Congress, 1946, who put the number of Jewish victims of the Holocaust at 5,957,000 (Levin, *op. cit.*, p. 718). Other estimates of German Jewish losses are somewhat higher, e.g. 160-180,000 by Gerald Reitinger in *The Final Solution* (1953). (*Ibid.*, p. 715). Similarly, other estimates of Jewish survivors in Germany are much lower, e.g. 28,000 by Dawidowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 507.
72. Martin Gilbert, *Atlas of the Holocaust* (London, 1982), Map. 315, p. 242.
73. Dawidowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 506-7.
74. Rutland, *Edge*, *op. cit.*, p. 399. The figures given in Simpson (*op. cit.*, p. 492) of 'German immigration for permanent residence' are 1934: 40, 1935: 33, 1936: 93 and 1937: 428. German 'alien immigrants' in Australia increased from 55 in 1936-36 to 571 in 1937-38 (*Ibid.*).
75. Blakeney, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
78. Francis L. Carsten, 'German Refugees in Great Britain 1933-1945', in Gerhard Hirschfeld, ed., *Exile in Great Britain: Refugees from Hitler's Germany* (Leamington Spa, 1984), p. 11.
79. Simpson, *op. cit.*, pp. 551-561.
80. See, e.g. Blakeney, p. 106.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
82. See, e.g. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113; Rutland, *Edge*, p. 185; Hilary L. Rubinstein, *Chosen: The Jews in Australia* (Sydney, 1987), p. 176. Sir Samuel Cohen was a Zionist and much more Jewishly conscious than many imagine; his position should probably be re-examined.
83. Barbara Falk, *No Other Home* (Ringwood, 1988), p. 197.
84. On Rabbi Sanger's role in welcoming German Jewish refugees at this time, see John Foster, ed., *Community of Fate* (Sydney, 1986), esp. pp. 102, 141, 148. On Rabbi Porush's role see his *The House of Israel: A Study of Sydney Jewry and a History of the Great Synagogue of Sydney, 1878-1978* (Melbourne, 1977).

85. Blakeney, *Ibid.*, pp. 53-70; Rutland, *Ibid.*, pp. 197-201.
86. Serge Liberman, 'Gentle Champions of Jews in Australia', in W.D. Rubinstein, ed., *op. cit.* Liberman's valuable essay probably neglects the important cultural philo-Semitism among left-wing figures, trade unionists, social realists, etc., during this period.
87. Paul Bartrop, 'Good Jews' and 'Bad Jews', *op. cit.*
88. Bartrop, 'Australian "Liberalisation"', *op. cit.*, p. 78.
89. Godfrey Lee, 'Rescue or Rhetoric? Australian Jewry's Reactions During the Holocaust', *Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society*, Vol. X Part 4 (1988); J.M. Machover, 'Towards Rescue: The Story of Australian Jewry's Stand for the Jewish Cause 1940-1948', *Ibid.*, August 1971; Konrad Kwiet, 'Responses of Australian Jewry's Leadership to the Holocaust', in W.D. Rubinstein, ed., *op. cit.*
90. About 15,000 German Jews were deported to internment camps in the French Pyrenees in October 1940. (Gilbert, *Atlas*, *op. cit.*, p. 48). This appears to have been the last significant expulsion of Jews apart from their concentration in ghettos and subsequent annihilation.
91. On war-time knowledge of the Holocaust, see Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret: An Investigation Into the Suppression of Information About Hitler's "Final Solution"* Weidenfeld, London, 1980.
92. With the exception of the 50,000 Jews of Bulgaria, who survived the war unscathed.
93. See Solomon Stedman, 'Dr. Steinberg in Australia', *AJHS*, Vol. V, Part 4, 1961; Isaac N. Steinberg, *Australia — the Unpromised Land: In Search of a Home* (London, 1948); Blakeney, *Australia*, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-277.
94. Blakeney, *Ibid.*, p. 262.
95. *Australian Jewish Forum*, Number 8, October 1941, p. 2.
96. Lee, *op. cit.*, *passim*. A mass meeting of the Council of Christians and Jews in Sydney (10 November 1942) called for the government 'to admit the remaining Jewish refugees under the Evian agreement'. (Rabbi Israel Porush, 'The NSW Council of Christians and Jews (1943-48)', *AJHS*, Vol. VI 1968), p. 191. The government was 'non-committal'. The problem, as always, was that endangered Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe were either dead or unreachable. Similarly, the proposals made by the Australian chapter of the Committee for Rescue from Nazi Terror (Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 290) — for instance, 'the sending of blocks of visas to British Consuls in neutral countries in Europe for allocation to Jewish refugees' — was equally a *non sequitur* since Jews in neutral countries (Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey) were not threatened by the Nazis.
97. Kwiet, *op. cit.*, p. 213.
98. John Grigg, 1943: *The Victory That Never Was* (Eyre Methuen, London 1980).
99. In a remarkably short time, exaggerated accounts of the barriers faced by refugee migrants of the 1930s and 1940s have become common currency in the Australian Jewish community. In mid-1988 Colin Golvan, the Melbourne lawyer and playwright, presented an excellent series on ABC radio about the refugees, based significantly upon Suzanne Rutland's work (she was research consultant to the series). In an article appearing in the *Australian Jewish News* (7 October 1988) based upon this series, Mr. Golvan stated *inter alia* that 'hundreds of thousands of Jews applied for entry [to Australia] from the period of the late 1930s to the early 1950s.' In a letter to Mr. Golvan, I asked the source for this statement, and was told this 'was based on inferences drawn from the work of Suzanne Rutland'. The only statement in *Edge* which seemed to provide any evidence at all for this claim is on p. 178, where it is stated that '200,000 application forms were distributed on the Continent' after March 1938 (my italics). Correspondence with Mrs. Rutland elicited as a source for this claim a story in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 17 March 1938, which stated that '200,000 applications [were] distributed on the Continent through British consular authorities.'

There the matter rests, leaving more questions unanswered than answered, the most obvious of which is why 200,000 application forms were distributed if Australia was trying to bar Jewish refugees. There is simply no evidence from this that 'hundreds of thousands' of Jews actually applied to migrate here, and no evidence that, if they did, they were denied admission due to anti-Semitic restrictions rather than because they found haven elsewhere or because the war intervened. We do not know how many refugee Jews actually applied for admission here, and why those who were turned down were turned down. According to correspondence with Paul Bartrop, no figures exist as to the number who applied in this period. Of course, it may be surmised that it was greater than the figure of 15,000 set as a result of Evian: but how much greater remains unknown.

The *ne plus ultra* of exaggeration was, however, reached by two stories in the *Australian Jewish Times* in August 1988 which claimed that Einstein applied to Australia for admission as a refugee in the 1930s and was turned down. The story, needless to say, is sheer nonsense; see my article on the matter in the *Jewish Times* (30 September 1988, 'Einstein and Australia: An Impossible Legend'.)

It is extraordinary how Australia's barriers to 1933-54 refugee migration have grown ten kilometres higher than they actually were during the past five years.