President Bush had tears in his eyes during a hour-long tour of Israel’s Holocaust memorial and told Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that the U.S. should have bombed Auschwitz to halt the killing, the memorial’s chairman said.

Bush emerged from a tour of the Yad Vashem memorial calling it a “sobering reminder” that evil must be resisted, and praising victims for not losing their faith. Wearing a yarmulke, Bush placed a red- white-and-blue wreath on a stone slab that covers ashes of Holocaust victims taken from six extermination camps. He also lit a torch memorializing the victims.

Bush was visibly moved as he toured the site, said Yad Vashem’s chairman, Avner Shalev.

“Twice, I saw tears well up in his eyes,” Shalev said. At one point, Bush viewed aerial photos of the Auschwitz camp taken during the war by U.S. forces and called Rice over to discuss why the American government had decided against bombing the site, Shalev said.

The U.S. had intelligence reports about the death camps during the war but chose to focus resources on the broader military effort, a decision that drew criticism years later.

“We should have bombed it,” Bush said, according to Shalev.

In the memorial’s visitors’ book, the president wrote simply, “God bless Israel, George Bush.”

“I was most impressed that people in the face of horror and evil would not forsake their God. In the face of unspeakable crimes against humanity, brave souls — young and old — stood strong for what they believe,” Bush said.

“I wish as many people as possible would come to this place. It is a sobering reminder that evil exists, and a call that when evil exists we must resist it,” he said.

It was Bush’s second visit to the Holocaust memorial, a regular stop on the visits of foreign dignitaries. His first was in 1998, as governor of Texas. The last U.S. president to visit was Bill Clinton in 1994.

Bush, during his most extensive Mideast trip of his presidency, was accompanied on his tour by a small party that included Rice and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. At the compound, overlooking a forest on Jerusalem’s outskirts, Bush visited a memorial to the 1.5 million Jewish children killed in the Holocaust, featuring six candles reflected 1.5 million times in a hall of mirrors. At the site’s Hall of Remembrance, he heard a cantor sing a Jewish prayer for the dead.

Elie Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem was excited to meet President Bush in Yad Vashem. “I could see that he really cares about it.”

El was a member of the Jewish underground. His job was to transfer underground confidential documents to the ghettos. He was hidden, together with his mother and siblings, for 18 months by two Catholic families in the town of Zarki, Poland. “We lived knowing that any minute someone could come and kill us but I had hope. I also had hope that the world would recognize what was done to us and that is really the case.”

Chairman of Yad Vashem Avner Shalev presented Bush with illustrations of the Bible drawn by the Jewish artist Carol Deutch, who perished in the Holocaust. Deutch created the works while in hiding from the Nazis in Belgium. He was informed upon, and died in 1944 in the Buchenwald camp. After the war, his daughter Ingrid discovered that the Nazis had confiscated their furniture and valuables but had left behind a single item: a meticulously crafted wooden box adorned with a Star of David and a seven-branched menorah, containing a collection of 99 of the artist’s illustrations of biblical scenes.

The originals are on display at Yad Vashem. The memorial recently decided to produce a special series of 500 replicas, the first of which was to be presented to Bush.

Debbie Deutsch-Berman, a Yad Vashem employee whose grandfather was Deutsch’s brother, said she was proud that Bush would be given her relative’s artwork.

“These are not just his paintings, they are his legacy, and the fact that they survived shows that as much as our enemies tried to destroy the ideas that these paintings embody, they failed,” she said.
Macedonian plan to resolve outstanding Holocaust property claims was praised by American Jewish Committee. Under the agreement with Macedonia’s Jewish community, Macedonia will allocate $25 million for the construction and initial expenses of a Holocaust Memorial Center under construction in the capital city of Skopje.

The move, long awaited by Jewish property, will recount the story of the Holocaust in Macedonia and will also provide facilities for cultural and communal programs. Macedonia’s tiny Jewish community, now a few hundred people, numbered more than 7,000 before World War II. AJC says it frequently raised the issue of restitution with Macedonia’s leaders, most recently with Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski in October, and with Foreign Minister Antonio Milososki in December.

In 2002, the Macedonian government resolved outstanding Jewish communal property claims. Today, Macedonia is one of only a few countries that has settled claims against private Jewish properties with no apparent heirs. 

**AUSTRIA TO REOPEN CASE AGAINST NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMP GUARD**

The Austrian government has decided to seek new evidence against a former guard at the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria who was found guilty of crimes against humanity in 1991 and is now living in the United States.

Muhamed Mesic, of the institute.

*This project is extremely important because we are dealing with someone whose political will up until now to prosecute someone who was actively involved in the crimes of the Holocaust.*

Erna Wallisch, 85, who ranks fourth on a list of thousands of Jewish survivors emigrated to the United States. She was not compensated more than 7,000 before World War II.

Lublin, Poland.

The center, located on returned Jewish properties with no apparent heirs. That has settled claims against private Jewish properties.

Macedonia is one of only a few countries that has settled claims against private Jewish properties with no apparent heirs.

Erna Wallisch, 85, who ranks fourth on a list of thousands of Jewish survivors who, according to police estimates, is of hate crimes, up some 25 percent from this type of graffiti.”

**JEWISH LEADERS SEEK INFO ON BOSNIANS WHO AIDED JEWS IN HOLOCAUST**

leaders of Bosnia’s Jewish community have appealed recently for help locating Bosnians who aided Jews during World War II and have not been recognized.

The search is aimed at locating people who offered help and documenting their story, said the Bosnian Jewish Community.

The effort is part of a broader project to record the lives of Bosnia’s Muslim and Jewish communities over the centuries.

Project leader Eli Tauber invited people to contact the Jewish Community or Bosnia’s Institute for the Research of Crimes Against Humanity.

This is an extremely important nowadays when Bosnia is full of negative examples of who hates whom. It sends a message of coexistence, and we want to show to all peoples in Bosnia that Bosnians are different with another is sacred and has to be preserved, said Muhamed Mesic, of the institute.

One of the best-known stories of Bosnian involvement in preserving Jewish tradition during World War II involves efforts to safeguard a 600-year-old Jewish manuscript known as the Sarajevo Haggadah. In 1492, when Spain expelled the country’s Jews, a refugee brought the book to Italy. A rabbi later brought the Haggadah from Italy and passed it down through his family until descendants Joseph Kohen, sold it to the National Museum in 1944. The museum kept the treasure in a safe until World War II, when it was destroyed by large Jewish populations.

**SWATIKAS REAWAKEN NIGHTMARES IN ALBANIA WITH MANY HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS**

[Brooklyn Has Highest Number Of Jewish Survivors In Nation. Yet another hate graffiti incident shocked a Brooklyn community Jan 2, when a swastika and an anti-Semitic message were found scrawled on the side door of a Jewish senior citizen center in the neighborhood. The markings were found Wednesday morning on the Brooklyn Senior Citizen Center on Rydell Street in Borough Park. Both neighborhoods have some of the highest percentages of Holocaust survivors in New York City.]

It actually met a Holocaust survivor outside the center when this was all going on,” said Amsterdam Av Hidnik, himself the son of two Holocaust survivors.

“When things like this happen, in particular with survivors, they look at it and say, ‘This is how it is all started in Germany. It didn’t start with violence. It started with this type of graffiti.’

That, said, is why last year’s rise in hate crimes, up some 25 percent from 2006 according to police estimates, is of particular concern to Brooklyn’s, and the city’s, high population of survivors.

Brooklyn is home to close to 20,000 Holocaust survivors, the largest grouping of anywhere in the country, said Max Liebmann, a senior research fellow with the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and their Descendants, a group of over 1,000 survivors.

The group’s registry shows 18,350 survivors living in Brooklyn, more than three times as many as in Manhattan, which is the second-highest population in the city. It’s also about 25 percent of the roughly 73,000 registered survivors in the United States.

“A lot of this community, it’s either sur-

**A canvas of thousands of Jewish survivors emigrated to the United States. They are living longer and healthier than ever before but still face prejudice and discrimination.”

Bosnia’s Assembleman Dov Hidnik stands in front of graffiti that combines swastikas and an obscene hate message (not shown).

Bosnia’s Assembleman Dov Hidnik stands in front of graffiti that combines swastikas and an obscene hate message (not shown).

Brooklyn’s Assembleman Dov Hidnik stands in front of graffiti that combines swastikas and an obscene hate message (not shown).

voluntary registration. Some people choose not to register. Orthodox Jews generally do not register.”

Lieberman is himself a Holocaust survivor. At 19, he was deported from Germany to a concentration camp in Vichy France, where he met his future wife, Hanne. The Liebmanns now live in New York City with their daughter, who has the AGJHS since 1991.

Rabbi Aron Heineman, whose parents fled Germany during the Holocaust, and who now runs the Brookdale Senior Citizen Center, said that neighbors are angry about the graffiti but confident that their neighborhood is still safe.

"This is a multiracial block," said Lieberman, who added that this type of incident is very rare in the area.
BILDERNER CENTER AT RUTGERS PRESENTS TALK BY OMER BARTOV

Professor Omer Bartov (Brown University), one of the world’s leading authorities on German history, the Holocaust, and genocide, discussed his most recent book, Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine (Princeton University Press, 2007), at a public lecture in October 2007 sponsored by the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life, Rutgers the State University of New Jersey. An audience of approximately 200 people from both the local and Rutgers communities gathered for the Raoul Wallenberg Annual Program supported by the Leon and Toby Cooperman Fund. Bartov described how what began as a deeply personal chronicle of the Holocaust in efforts on behalf of the Italian Jews under Mussolini became a journey across the region and back through history to explore the complex interethnic relationships and conflicts that have existed in the area for centuries. Bartov discovered a table that had disappeared from its resting places among the Jews of western Ukraine who were murdered by the Nazis during World War II with help from the local populace. Ultimately, he revealed the complete erasure of the Jews from the area, a blank spot that was long ignored for the service of a fiercely aggres- sive Ukrainian nationalism.

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University’s Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center, fulfills its commitment to the Holocaust survivors and their families, to preventing prejudice and promoting tolerance and inter-group understanding.

HUNTED FOR JEWISH LIBRARY STOLEN BY THE NAZIS TURNS TO RUSSIA

Priceless collection of antique manuscripts and books that has been missing since Nazi Soviets looted it from the synagogue in Rome may be languishing in an abandoned Soviet military archive.

After leads from Italy to Germany, Poland, France, Ukraine and the US, researchers have secured an agreement with Russia to help to find the 7,000-volume library, which dates back to the 16th century.

There is good reason to believe that the collection could be in a warehouse or other undocumented location, Dario Tedeschi, a lawyer who has been leading the search, said. He described the decades-long hunt as trying to unravel a historical mystery.

Enrico Letta, an Italian undersecretary, signed an agreement with Ekaterina Enrico Letta, an Italian undersecretary, signed an agreement with Ekaterina Tedeschi, director of the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow, to pursue the Soviet trail in an effort to bring the collection home. Tedeschi, a lawyer who has been leading the search, said. He described the decades-long hunt as trying to unravel a historical mystery.

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HITLER AS DOORMAT

But in 2004, Romania accepted the finding that there had been a Holocaust in Romania. Today the Jewish community in Romania counts only 11,000 members, in addition to the Roma ethnic group who were deported during WWII. Before WWII, about 800,000 Jews lived in Romania. The report concluded that former Romanian civil and military authorities were responsible for the deaths of between 280,000 and 380,000 Romanian Jews. In addition, 25,000 members of the Roma ethnic group were deported during the Holocaust, about half of whom died. Romania was an ally of Nazi Germany and looked at its own Holocaust as a black spot on its history.

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University’s Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center, fulfills its commitment to the Holocaust survivors and their families, to preventing prejudice and promoting tolerance and inter-group understanding.

Most of the volumes originally from the rabbinical collection were later returned from Frankfurt, said Mr. Tedeschi. But the Jewish Communities collection may have been taken to Raciborz, near Auschwitz, or to Hungen in the Rhineland. As Soviet troops pushed back the German forces, they may have taken possession of the collection.

Mr. Tedeschi said that all the earlier searching had hinted at an eventual destination in Russia. Its a job of looking through archives, he said.
MUSIC IN THE HOLOCAUST: CONFRONTING LIFE IN THE NAZI GHETTOS AND CAMPS


REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN

Distinguished historian, academic, and author Susan Zuccotti combines all her impressive skills and experience to open yet another revealing and enriching window on the tragedy of the Holocaust. Her book is a gripping and poignant exploration of the extraordinary life and fate of those hidden in the ghettos and camps. Her approach is honest and compassionate, and her insights are profound.

Zuccotti explores the ways in which music was a lifeline for the survivors of the Holocaust. She highlights the ways in which music was used as a form of resistance, as a means of communication, and as a way of maintaining hope in the face of unimaginable suffering.

Zuccotti's book is a testament to the resilience and strength of the human spirit. It is a moving reminder of the importance of preserving our history and remembering the lessons of the past.

THE NAZI CONNECTION TO ISLAMIC TERRORISM

Sixty years after the Nazi Holocaust, the anti-Semitic hatred reached another climactic at the horrible anti-Israel hate fest – the United Nations Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa. The Left demonstrated their common cause with Radical Islam by embracing hateful anti-Zionist propaganda, and feverishly supporting the genocidal program against Israel. This evil festival of terror and hate in Durban followed the September 11 attacks, and the anti-Semitic, Holocaust denying Al-Husseini Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. He was a vicious enemy of the Jewish people, in the tradition of Amalek, Haman, Torquemada, Chmielnicki and, of course, Hitler. His legacies continues today in the PLO, Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, PFLP, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, al Qaida, and the regimes of Syria, Libya and Iran, as well as the supporters of the genocidal hate campaign against Israel on the International Left, and soon on the Far Right (like Pat Buchanan and David Duke).

For those, like myself, who are sick and tired of the hate-filled internation campaign to destroy Israel, and annihilate her life, this informative and fascinating book provides an exploration of the roots of Palestinianism and anti-Israel hatred. It outlines how the ongoing genocide against the Jews of Israel is in fact a continuation of the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews of Europe.

Chuck Morse traces the story of Haj amin al-Husseini, the founder of the Palestinian Movement, ally and friend of Adolf Hitler, and a key player in the Holocaust Against the Jews. Al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, was a vicious enemy of the Jewish people, in the tradition of Amalek, Haman, Torquemada, Chmielnicki and, of course, Hitler. His legacies continues today in the PLO, Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, PFLP, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, al Qaida, and the regimes of Syria, Libya and Iran, as well as the supporters of the genocidal hate campaign against Israel on the International Left, and soon on the Far Right (like Pat Buchanan and David Duke).

Author Zuccotti, speaking of the survivors she highlights, shares: “They illustrate the amazing resilience and optimism of young people, often in distinction to their more burdened and devastated parents. They show the indestructibility and capacity of women to take charge, make decisions, and lead their families to safety.”

Rabbi Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, is son of Polish Holocaust survivors. For those, like myself, who are sick and tired of the hate-filled internation campaign to destroy Israel, and annihilate her life, this informative and fascinating book provides an exploration of the roots of Palestinianism and anti-Israel hatred. It outlines how the ongoing genocide against the Jews of Israel is in fact a continuation of the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews of Europe.

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REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN


REVIEWED BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN


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Nazis were transported to the death camps. Germany formally surrendered to the Allies. Germany. Commemoration currently touring at the end of the line, only one man packed with commuters. and hamlets, through suburban stations transporting like cattle across Germany to camps. The last letters of the desperate people to their deaths in the Nazi extermination will end, as it did those 60 years ago, at the German concentration camps. Only a very few survived at all, trampled to death or unable to survive the death camps, but the case was set up collection and deportation camps for Jewish refugees who had sought safety in other countries. But the safety of Holland evaporated for Jewish refugees who had sought safe-havens elsewhere. They and 1,103 other people spent three days on the train in horrific conditions before reaching the Polish camp – where they were killed. On the way, they would have passed through hundreds of small and village rail- way stations in Germany. Many didn’t even make it to its journey’s end, trampled to death or unable to survive the extreme heat or cold with little food or water. Desperate notes were often pushed through cracks in the cattle trucks when they stopped, with the hope the people who had unkindly been their fellow citizens would help. One such note came from Hertha Ausser, a Dutch-Jewish girl who was 17 when she was transported out of Westerbork camp, probably to Auschwitz. She managed to push a letter out of the truck in which she was being held – and someone delivered it to her friend to whom it was addressed. “My dearest little Netty,” wrote the teenager. “You will get this last goodbye card from the train.” “We are sitting here with 40 people and luggage and it is very stuffy in the cattle truck. We are full of hopes for a reunion in our lovely little Holland soon. Farewell, a kiss. Hertha and family.”

The only man ever prosecuted for running the death trains was Albert Gunzenmuller, state secretary in Hitler’s transport ministry and head of the Reichsbahn. His involvement was clearly demonstrated in a letter he wrote to Heinrich Himmler, the architect of the holocaust, proudly listing the regular transports to death camps. He wrote: “Since the 22 of July, each day a train carrying 5,000 Jews is traveling from Warsaw via Malkinia to Treblinka, and twice a week a train with 5,000 Jews is going from Pizemal to Belzec.” Gunzenmuller fled to Argentina after the war, but returned to Germany in 1955. In 1970, he was finally charged for his role in the transport of millions of Jews to death camps, but the case was dropped in 1972 after only three days in court when Gunzenmuller suffered a heart attack that was declared medically inca- pable of facing trial. He died in 1986 in Munich.

 Thousands of other rail employees kept their jobs after the war, helping to build the new German rail system and denying any part in the Holocaust. But the whole controversial subject blew up again last year when Deutsche Bahn - the successor of the Reichsbahn – initial- ly refused to host an exhibition about the mass transportation at its railway stations in Germany. But the transport minister stepped in and a deal was struck. The Train of Commemoration has been on the move since November and will have covered 2,000 miles when in May it will deliver to Auschwitz all the letters, photos and other evidence of the trans- portees collected along the way. But even this current, acclaimed exhibi- tion has not managed to escape contro- versy. Organizers have accused the Deutsche Bahn of endangering the whole project by charging fees to use the tracks. The rail company says: “We are not legal- ly able to waive the track use charges for the Train of Commemoration.”

We are investing in the money in the exhibit and our stations.

As a result, volunteers working on the Train of Commemoration have called for a European-wide protest against Deutsche Bahn. “They are charging us around 50,000 euros for use of the tracks,” says Hans-Ruediger Minow, spokesman for the train organizing committee.

“They have rejected all our appeals to waive the charges and are treating the Train of Commemoration like a commercial opera- tion, as if it is taking a shipment of scrap metal or cement from one place to another. “Deutsche Bahn has a historical responsibil- ity, if not a legal one. It is an international company which operates in a number of European countries, and it should be aware of its historical responsibility.”

“It is now more than 60 years since the end of the war and the horrors of the concentra- tion camps. Only a very few survived at all, and of them, only a tiny number are still alive. “The things are in danger of being forgotten.”
Irena Walulewicz reunited with Golda Bukhansitetz.

A birthday party in 1943, he meets Irena Swieciany, 20-year-old beauty raised in a wealthy diamond manufacturing family, and it’s love at first sight. Soon, the trains started rolling to the concentration camps and in February 1944, Jack and Manja were sent to Bergen-Belsen. Jack says goodbye to Irena with the words, “I hope you will soon follow me.”

Irena is deported to the same place, where the rules allow Jack to spend some time with both wife and girlfriend until the 8 p.m. curfew. After a couple of weeks later, he and his wife are deported to the Dutch transit camp of Westerbork. The story of heroism and bravery in the face of evil began in September 1944, after all the Jews from Sweiciairy, Poland, which is today in Lithuania, and the neighboring villages were rounded up by the Germans, and divided into two groups: some like Bushkanietz and her husband Szymon, were sent to a slave labor camp after being deemed “useful,” while the rest were immediately deported by the Nazis and buried in a mass grave. In early 1943, when the Germans decided to liquidate the camp, the young Jewish couple managed to flee, with Szymon Bushkanietz heading for the woods to join the partisans and his wife fleeing to her home town to search for a hiding place. It was 2:00 in the morning when Bushkanietz knocked on the window of the home of the daughter of the town’s kosher meat vendor, whom her father had known slightly, in the hopes of finding refuge inside. “I really wanted to live,” Bushkanietz recalled in an interview before leaving Israel for the reunion.

Zofia Walulewicz, the daughter of the mayor, who was home alone with her 17-year-old daughter Irena, who was deaf and mute, opened the window.

No neighbors were around, and once quickly hid under a bed in the house for hours when neighbors came by unannounced during the day. Every Sunday, when the devout Catholic family went to church, she was able to sneak out and head to the woods to meet up with her husband, who recounted the Polish mother and daughter who were hiding the young Jewish woman were facing their own difficulties. Inna, a Polish neighbor, had herself been killed by the Nazis while her father, the one-time mayor of the town, was captured by the Gestapo and executed by the Germans in revenge for the killing of a German officer by the partisans. Then one day a Polish neighbor denounced the Walulewiczes for hiding a Jew, but Bushkanietz, who was alerted by Zofia, quickly managed to escape out of the town, running only after the Germans had left empty-handed.

She remained in the Polish home until November 1943, when she joined her husband with the partisans in the forest. A fellow prisoner in Bergen-Belsen was Zofia’s older brother. Today, Jack and Ina carry the action, while never stooping to sly winks or cheap humor. Historical fiction is done and dusted camps and 1940s Holland complement the narration. The Polaks are among the film’s most ardent fans. “We have seen the picture six times, and we always have our handkerchiefs ready when we go,” said Ina. Added Jack, “I like it better each time I see it.”

MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE January/February 2008 - Shevat/Adar I 5768
THE FRENCH ANNE FRANK
BY LIOR ZILBERSTEIN, NY prescriptions, to the lefty press, superlatives aside, the Helene Berr Journal is undoubtedly a harrowing, captivating read. This also true of the diary of Helene Berr, a Jewish student in the Sorbonne who, like Anne Frank, perished in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. She left behind this harrowing account of her life between April 1942 and March 1944, now published 60 years later.

This text diligently guarded by Helene’s brother, Jacques, and was intended for her fiancée, Jean Benoit Morawiecki, who fought in the Second World War, but it is only now that French publishers, Tallandier, have brought it to light.

Helene’s story began in occupied Paris, which was initially replete with romantic walks along the Latin Quarter, tales of first love, conversations in the Sorbonne garden, and quiet afternoons spent lazily at the Luxembourg gardens.

By June 1942, however, the first figures appear in Helene’s formerly picturesque life. She was forced to sew a yellow star onto her clothing, and was relegated to the rear car in a train she caught at the Ecole Militaire Metro Station, a car reserved for those wearing the yellow star alone.

As June drew to a close, Helene’s father, Raymond, was arrested, questioned by the Gestapo and ultimately shipped to the Drancy transit camp. Her father’s detention crushed Helene, who was inspired to join a French Jewish organization that acted as a liaison between families and their families.

As time wore on, Helene’s hitherto neat and orderly handwriting turned into a torn, added scribbled, and her musings became increasingly more morbid and jaded with things that cannot be told and “peoples’ lack of understanding and sympathy.”

Helene was deported from Paris in 1944, and was shipped to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where she died in April, 1945, two weeks alone before Allied liberation.

Ironically, Helene died in the very camp her celebrated predecessor, Anne Frank, had perished a month earlier.

“WITNESS” IS A CHILLING REMINDER OF THE UNIMAGINABLE
BY TY BURR, BOSTON.COM

The place from which you remember, and an event shapes the nature of what you remember, “I maginary Wit ness: Holly that coheres largely thanks to Helene’s archiv al’s sword and his luck in securing interviews. After World War II, one of the few filmmakers that showed the full horror of the death camps was the Army. The Holocaust was every one’s war, of course, and when it was over, US Army Signal Corps filmmakers returned with horrifying evidence of the death camps – footage the made-for-TV “Imaginary Witness” can’t bring itself to show. One of the surprises Anker delivers, though, is that the Hollywood studio chiefs them selves toured Auschwitz, on orders from General Eisenhower, in hopes that they would in turn bear witness to the war.

In this they failed. The Holocaust was rarely treated directly on American screens until the late 1950s. (Continued on page 15)

HOw top Nazis WERE Brought to a Secret Scottish Prison Camp for Brainwashing
BY LIOR ZILBERSTEIN, NY

They helped bring death, destruction and terror on an industrial scale to an entire continent. And as Europe rebuilt itself following the Second World War, they were imprisoned on a desolate Scottish moor.

Newly uncovered documents have revealed that a Cold War prisoner of war camp had an extraordinary secret role as a place where some of the most notorious figures in Hitler’s Third Reich were locked up, interrogated and – where possible – subjected to de-Nazification.

While the existence of Camp 165 at Wattens, near Inverness, is known, local historian Valerie Campbell has obtained recently declassified Government files which reveal the existence of an inner compound with the grim nickname “Little Belsen.”

Inmates included Paul Werner Hoppe, the commandant of Stutthof concentration camp, Poland, Dr Paul Schroder, the man behind the Nazi’s Wiking bomb project, Hitler’s personal aide and SS commander Max Wursche, Nazi propagandist Gunter d’Alquen, and Luftwaffe captain Otto Kretschmer, known as the Wolf of the Atlantic.

As well as interrogation and interrogation rooms, there was a makeshift church, a barber’s, workshops, classrooms and – for the “love letters” permitted to Sorbonne prisoners – even a brothel. Prisoners were given outfits with a distinctive diamond on the back – which it was illegal to lose or to target if they tried to escape.

Campbell said: “Most people associate the village of Wattens with Alexander Bain, the inventor of the electric clock. They would know nothing of its significance as a POW camp that held some of the most infamous men in the Nazi regime.

“South of Wattens, it was doubtful that anyone, with the exception of the military hierarchy, would have even known the camp existed.”

B between 1942 and 1945, Hoppe was in charge of Stutthof concentration camp and personally oversaw the deaths of thousands of men, women and children in the Nazi regime deemed to be “sub-human.” When British forces liberated the camp, many soldiers were physically sick at the enormity of what they discovered.

Hoppe was held at Camp Wattens between August 1947 and January 1948 and expected that he would be executed on his return to Germany. Yet, extraordinarily, the commandant escaped from a British base in Sarovrey and was able to work undiscovered as a landscape gardener. He was finally re-arrested in 1953 and sentenced to just nine years imprisonment, insisting he had been too young to understand what happened at his camp.

Nazi rocket scientist Schroder, who invented the V2 pilotless bomb which killed thousands of residents in London alone, was treated even more mercifully during his incarceration in Caithness in 1947.

Schroder co-operated with intelligence officials on sharing his knowledge on the “technicalities of rocket projectiles” and as such was awarded special status, despite being deemed to be a Nazi zealot and a “public enemy.” He was eventually handed over to the Americans, and became a respected adviser to the US Air Force.

Nazi journalist d’Alquen, who was handpicked by Himmler to pen the official history of the SS and helped popularize the idea of Jews as “vermin,” was sent to Wattens in 1945. He was allowed to publish a monthly magazine for detainees called Der Wetterer.

After the camp closed he was sent to the US, where he became a key member of the CIA, and helped devise its own commercial propaganda strategy during the early Cold War.

Viscountess Margaret Winn, who lived near the camp, was fascinated by the revelations.

In 1944, she decided she would see the nearby Wattens was Britain’s most secret POW camp. Nor did we know that many Nazi officials who were close to Hitler, were imprisoned there.”

The argument that US movie studios downplayed the Nazi threat in the years leading up to World War II is made “very clear but understandable. For every “Confessions of a Nazi Spy,” (1939) or “The Mortal Storm,” (1940) there were ratings from isolationist anti-Semites in Washington about Hollywood Jewish propagandists. The studio heads, assiduous to a man (Harry Warner excepted, perhaps), were loath to call attention to themselves, especially with the Kennedy warning them, “This will be seen as your war.”

First published in Scottish on Sunday.
POLAND – Ceremonies marking International Holocaust Memorial Day were held in Warsaw and the Holodomor Museum. In a letter to participants in the ceremony, Poland’s President Lech Kaczynski said: “We cannot rewrite history, we cannot make the crimes incommensurate with any other in history, according to the standards of our agency PAP.

It took millions of human lives, members of the Jewish nation, millions of European countries, suffering and murdered in death campos created by the regime of the Nazi Germany. All those people were killed because they were Jews,” Kaczynski said. “We want to jointly pay tribute to those people killed by the Nazis.

over aversion, empathy over indifference, “tortured and murdered. To do everything necessary of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945. This day is not only a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, but also a call to the whole humanity to remember the past and use it as a tool for the future.

Young people from 62 countries gathered at Jerusalem’s Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial for a day-long commemoration to mark the 63rd anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, as a reminder that evil exists and a call that we do not tolerate any kind of extremism.

GERMANY – Germany’s parliament acknowledged the country’s special responsibility in the battle against anti-Semitism and racism. “We remember an unthinkable crime against humanity and a systematic mass murder,” President Norbert Lammert said during a commemorative parliamentary session. “After the bitter experiences of the last 63 years, we do not tolerate any kind of extremism, racism, anti-Semitism – nowhere in the world, and especially not in Germany. "We want to do justice to our special responsibility," he said.

Six million Jews were killed in the Nazi Holocaust of World War II. German Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Horst Koehler attended the session, held in advance of international day of remembrance of the Holocaust. Later Merkel said: “Sixty-three years after the liberation of Auschwitz, we must continue to educate ourselves about the lessons of the Holocaust and honor those whose lives were taken as a result of a totalitarian ideology that embraced a national policy of violent hatred, bigotry and extermination.”

He added, “We must continue to confirm the resurgence of anti-Semitism, that same virulent intolerance that led to the Holocaust, and we must combat bigotry and hatred in all forms, in America and abroad. Today provides a sobering reminder that we must never take for granted our freedom.”

ENGLAND – Multi-faith ceremonies, talks, dramatic performances, concerts, guided walks and film screenings were taking place in many of the London’s boroughs. Commemorative multi-faith services were held in Barnet, Harrow, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets and Romford.

Chris Shav, chair explode of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, said: “It is quite established within schools to teach about the Holocaust, but we’re beginning to think it is the slightly older people who know less.”

She said people aged 18 and 40 may not have learnt about the Holocaust in school, but older people had a “more immediate link” with the experiences during World War II.

The trust, which runs the national commemoration event, has made this year’s theme Imagine – Remember, Reflect, React, to challenge people to imagine the unimaginable.

Its website states: “It [the theme] asks us to focus on the lives and experience of victims and survivors of the Holocaust; of Nazi persecution and of other genocides.

"It asks us to focus on the resilience of enterprise, culture and of life itself in the face of destruction."

A guided walk from Aigdgate to the Nelson Street Synagogue featured stories on the lives of prominent East End Holocaust survivors.

An exhibition of paintings and stained glass by Moshe Galil, a Holocaust survivor, was held in Enfield and a documentary on the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria was screened in Norfolk Place.

CZECH REPUBLIC – The extermination of European Jews by the Nazi regime should not be forgotten and should remain an everlasting memento, Czech President Vaclav Klaus said at a meeting in the Czech Senate commemorating Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Today it may be more necessary to recall the crimes against humanity committed by the Jewish population the world over because we have learnt from the efforts to rewrite the past and use its false picture for political purposes, Klaus said.

The Holocaust, an international word that is not quite understandable in the Czech language, is used by Czechs to describe what may be the most awful and shameful crime in human history," Klaus said.

However, I fear whether this one foreign word could complicate our possibility to sufficiently realize and feel the whole depth of monstrosity of what had happened then, the monstrous destruction of European Jews by the German Nazi regime," Klaus said.

Klaus pointed to the significance of the passing of a law by the Czech parliament five years ago that made Holocaust Remembrance Day a memorial day in the Czech Republic.

This day became an opportunity for all to remember the lesson from the tragedy of the Nazi “Final Solution of the Jewish Question,” Klaus said.

ALBANIA – Albania held a ceremony in parliament to commemorate resistance efforts during World War II that helped the country’s tiny Jewish minority escape the Holocaust.

Some 1,200 Jews, residents and refugees from other Balkan collapse of communism, but most have since emigrated to the United States and Israel.

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ARGENTINA – Politicians, Jewish leaders and survivors marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day in Buenos Aires.

David Galante, a Holocaust survivor, told the crowded event at the Buenos Aires Synagogue that he still recalls dying people saying to him: Do not give up, David. At least live to tell the world what the crimes were.

Aldo Donzis, the president of the DAIJA Jewish political umbrella organization, was among the speakers along with the Argentine ministers of education and justice. Graciela Jinch, the director of the Buenos Aires Holocaust museum, stressed that the commemoration is a gesture of respect for the future generations.

Estela Carlotto, the president of a human rights group, said that she tries to find children abducted during the dictatorial government of Jorge Rafael Videla from 1976 to 1983. She was moved by the survivors’ persistence and unwavering determination.
On January 27th, educators from the tri-state area gathered at the Pratt Mansions in NYC for the American Society for Yad Vashem's Tenth Annual Professional Development Conference. Once again, this year's conference was co-sponsored by the Association of Teachers of Social Studies of the United Federation of Teachers.

This year we were once again highlighting the Echoes and Reflections curriculum. This is a valuable education resource developed by Yad Vashem the Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority, the Anti-Defamation League, and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. We were pleased to welcome representative from all three institutions to participate in this year’s conference.

Remarks were also given by Caroline Massel, co-chair of the Young Leadership Associates of the American Society for Yad Vashem; as well as Dr. Romana Primus, the Education Chair of the Board of Directors for the American Society for Yad Vashem. Mr. Eli Zborowski, Chairman of The American Society for Yad Vashem, also welcomed the day’s participants. Mr. Zborowski remarked that the American Society for Yad Vashem’s Educational Department “works to put a face on individual Holocaust victims in order to introduce a human element to the story. Transmitting these messages is our hope for the future.”

The first workshop was held in the morning for all teachers to become introduced to the Echoes and Reflections curriculum. This was lead by Deborah Batiste of the Anti-Defamation League and one of the writers of Echoes and Reflections. This introduction gave the educators a chance to get an overview of the curriculum and the different ways it can be incorporated into their classrooms.

The Echoes and Reflections curriculum is a comprehensive ten-lesson program that focuses on the history of the Holocaust while using a multimedia approach to education. This is one of the first multi-media curriculums to be used in classrooms. Educators can have the voice of those people who lived through the atrocities right in their classrooms by using the DVD or VHS provided with the curriculum.

Workshops in the afternoon were lead by Ephraim Kaye, Director of the Department for International Seminars for Educators and the Jewish World at Yad Vashem Jerusalem; Deborah Batiste, Echoes and Reflections Project Director for the Anti-Defamation League; Dan Tarplin Project Director of the A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute for the Anti-Defamation League; and Chaim Singer-Franks Training Specialist USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education.

They led the following workshops, 1) Jewish Resistance 2) Survivors and Liberators 3) Perpetrators, Collaborators, and Bystanders, and 4) The Children. This year there was also a special workshop for those educators who had previously attended an Echoes and Reflections workshop. This workshop, titled “Revisiting Echoes and Reflections,” gave these educators the opportunity to discuss classroom techniques that have worked for them since getting this curriculum in their classrooms.

Studying the Holocaust is important to students today in a world of growing Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism. A curriculum like Echoes and Reflections will enable students to think about the responsibilities they have as individuals when confronted with prejudice and intolerance. The Holocaust provides a context for looking at the dangers of remaining silent in the face of the oppression of others. The aim of the American Society for Yad Vashem hosting these education conferences is to transmit the lessons of this historical event to present and future generations. Teaching about the Holocaust in an age-appropriate and historically accurate manner will promote greater sensitivity and understanding to reduce hatred, intolerance and prejudice, prevalent in today’s society.
GERMAN ARCHIVES’ OPENING HELPS ISRAELI MAN TRACK HIS FATHER’S DEATH IN HOLOCAUST

BY ANSHELF PFEFFER, HAARETZ

Although relatives of Nazi victims had previously been allowed to examine the archives, the records are now open to researchers around the world, and have been digitally transferred to the Yad Vashem archives, making it easier for family members to conduct more precise searches and find out exactly what happened to their loved ones.

A
fter searching the International Tracing Service records, Bar-Yoda discovered that his father’s name appears on the list of the dead whose bodies were incinerated at the Majdanek death camp in Poland on September 7, 1942, six months after the two last saw each other.

Now, Bar-Yoda said, he can finally commemorate his father’s passing on his yahrzeit the day of his death, instead of on the day newly designated to him who do not know the day of their loved one’s death.

“After having said kaddish for him for 60 years, the general kaddish day on the fast of Asara B’Tevet, now I have a specific yahrzeit,” said Bar-Yoda. “And while it certainly doesn’t make me happy, I think there is a kind of satisfaction there, that I can move forward.”

Yad Vashem chairman Avner Shalev said Bar-Yoda’s tale shows how the newly expanded collection of records can help the families of Holocaust victims.

(Continued on page 14)
HAREDI HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

BY MATTHEW WAGNER, THE JERUSALEM POST

A compilation of rabbinic literature written immediately after World War II that was recently released in CD-ROM form is breaking misconceptions about the haredi approach to the Holocaust.

Called “History of the Shoah in Rabbinic Literature: Introductions,” the CD-ROM contains prefaces and introductions to about 100 books written by rabbis who survived the Holocaust. The Conference on Jewish Claims Against Germany funded the project.

“The common perception among researchers of the Holocaust has been that the haredi community as a whole, and rabbis in particular, remained silent about the Holocaust,” said Esther Farbstein, an educator who teaches Holocaust studies and trains teachers at Jerusalem College (Michila Yerushalayim) and is the author of Hoten in Thunder: Perspectives on Faith, Halacha and Leadership during the Holocaust.

“At first, it was thought that rabbis who had gone through the Holocaust simply refrained from relating their experiences,” she said. “It did not consider it appropriate for a rabbi, who is a public figure, to write a personal memoir.”

But we soon began to discover a hidden treasure of memoirs that were not written as separate books,” she added. “Rather, they were written as a preface or an introduction to legal treatises, exegesis or homiletic.”

Farbstein said some of the memoirs were surprising. For instance, Rabbi Yaakov Avigdor, who eventually ended up in the US, reprinted his halachic treatise Hotel Yaacov in 1950 with a long introduction. A good portion of it is devoted to the Holocaust, over whether it was permitted to pose as a Christian to save one’s life. The rabbis debated whether Christianity was a form of idol worship, and therefore positing as a Christian was forbidden, even at the price of saving one’s life. The conclusion was that not only was it permitted to pose as a Christian, it was also an act of bravery.

In another introduction, Rabbi Moshe Natan Lemberger of Hungary recounts how he risked his life to obtain oil to light a hanukkia. He later debated whether it was permitted to endanger his life for the oil.

Dr. Havi Dreifuss (formerly Ben-Sasson), a Mandel scholar at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem’s Scholion Institute, said study of the Holocaust in the haredi community had developed in recent years.

“Yad Vashem has created a special department for the haredi community and textbooks dealing with the Shoah are being learned in haredi schools,” he said. However, Dreifuss said, the haredi approach to history was fundamentally different from the secular approach.

“Haredi society, history is used as an educational tool,” he said. “As a result, historical truths that have negative messages are not taught. But unfounded or false stories that have positive pedagogical or religious meaning will be.”

Dreifuss said the introductions included in the compilation were written by rabbis immediately after the war, which gave them particular importance.

CHILD HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS MEET IN ISRAEL

BY ARON HELLER, AP

In 1939, 5-year-old Erna Blitzer left France with her parents and older sister for a vacation to visit relatives in Poland. They never made it home.

She was on the run from the Nazis for the next five years. During that time, she watched her mother die. Her father was forced to witness the execution of his wife’s entire extended family and then forced to watch her mother die. Her father was forced to watch her mother die. Her father was forced to watch her mother die. Her father was forced to watch her mother die.

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Early November in Jerusalem, Blitzer, now 80, met dozens of other child Holocaust survivors to share stories and keep the memories alive. Participants at the conference also included the children of survivors, many of whom grappled with their parents’ pain as they grew up.

About 800 survivors, along with their children and grandchildren, attended the annual gathering of the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust.

A cacophony of languages — English, Hebrew, French, Yiddish — filled the lobby of the Jerusalem hotel where participants attended lectures, workshops and discussions aimed at reuniting long-lost friends and guaranteeing their dramatic tales outline them.

“Most of the children did not survive,” said Gorman. “Those of us who did were all helped by a Christian, by someone. Otherwise we wouldn’t be here. At Auschwitz, the children were taken directly to the gas chambers.”

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Dreifuss said the introductions included in the compilation were written by rabbis immediately after the war, which gave them particular importance.

His father died 11 years ago.

“The torch has been passed from my father to me. It’s my job to keep his story, and others’ stories, are not forgotten,” he said.

For Gorman, whose father and sister died years ago, the conference is an opportunity to connect with those who can relate to her childhood memories.

“I needed someone to understand me. I needed someone to fill in the gaps. I needed to mesh my life together,” she said.

Gorman, who lives in the Detroit area, started the Michigan chapter of the child survivors organization and now shares her stories with her family and others. But for years, she kept silent with a long-lost childhood friend with whom she hid in Ukraine, and whose picture she said she keeps in her Purim box.

Before her visit, Gorman tracked down the woman in Israel and they got together for the first time.

“We looked at the picture and we looked at each other and we just knew,” she said, tears welling in her eyes.

A group of Holocaust survivors, and relatives of Holocaust survivors visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.
SECRET DIARY DETAILS HOLOCAUST AND NAZI CRIMES

BY HELEN KENNEDY, DAILY NEWS

F orty years ago, Scott Kellner’s German grandfather gave him a sacred trust: the secret diary he had kept throughout World War II, detailing Nazi atrocities.

Kellner is on a crusade to put a copy in the hands of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has dismissed the Holocaust as a “Zionist myth.”

“I see in him a would-be Hitler,” said Kellner, 67, who spent 40 years translating the diary.

“My grandfather saw it as his duty to write the diary against the terrorists of his time, and I see it as my duty to use that diary in the fight against today’s terrorists. The truth is a weapon,” Kellner said. Kellner’s grandfather, Friedrich Kellner, was an evangelical Lutheran and member of the anti-Nazi Social Democratic Party who risked much by denouncing Hitler at political rallies.

When the war began in 1939, he began keeping a secret diary, including eyewitness accounts of atrocities and numerous newspaper clippings on events of the day finding works that died along with the Holocaust.

“...a soldier on vacation here says he... watched as naked Jewish men, women and children were laid in front of a long, deep ditch and upon the order of the SS were shot by Ukrainians in the back of their heads and then thrown into the ditch. Then the ditch was filled with dirt even as he could still hear screams coming from people still alive in the ditch,” he wrote on Oct. 28, 1940.

By 1945, 676 entries filled 10 notebooks.

To Friedrich Kellner’s distress, his son, Fred, became an ardent Nazi, so he shipped the teenager to New York to keep him out of Hitler’s army. In New York, Fred Kellner married a Jewish woman, but soon abandonned her and their three kids. He eventually killed himself.

Unable to deal with his kids alone, Scott Kellner’s mom left them at a children’s home and became a carnival dancer.

In 1960, Scott Kellner went AWOL from the Navy to go find the German grandparents he never knew. When he located them, his grandfather showed him the diary he had still kept hidden.

His grandfather stood against Adolf Hitler, not enough people stood with him,” he said. “I hope more people will take a stand against Ahmadinejad.”

Anti-Nazi Friedrich Kellner and part of the diary he kept.

Historians dispute the claim by a British journalist that Nazi fanatics attended a party near the Austro-Hungarian border in March 1945 killed 200 Hungarian Jews as an “additional entertainment” laid on by the hosts.

The massacre did happen, though, and the circumstances surrounding it remain unclear.

A new book has been about historians of one of the most spectacular Nazi crimes committed in Austria. On the night of March 24 to March 25, 1945, some 200 Hungarian Jews were murdered in the Austrian town of Rechnitz near the Austro-Hungarian border.

The bodies of the victims still haven’t been found.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper last week published an essay by British journalist David Litchfield, in which he claims that several guests at a party held by Countess Margit von Rechnitz castle offered the chance to murder the Jews as an “additional entertainment” laid on by the Nazi party chief Franz Podezin. The guests accepted the offer, Litchfield wrote.

But several historians are now disputing Litchfield’s version of events. Berlin-based anti-Semitism researcher Wolfgang Benz says Litchfield’s story is spreading “murmurings and hearsay.”

Winfried Garscha of the respected Berlin-based Center for Documentation of Nazi Resistance: “It was indisputably a mass murder, but it didn’t arise from a party scene. People incapable of marching with murdered everywhere at the time.”

The murdered Hungarian Jews were forced laborers on route from Hungary to Austria to build fortifications against the advancing Red Army. But they were too sick and weak to carry on.

Garscha said that according to documents from an official investigation into the case after the war, the victims were among thousands of Hungarian laborers who were forced to work on the “Southeast Wall” fortifications along the Austro- Hungarian border from autumn 1944 onwards.

On March 24 a train brought 600 of these forced laborers from the town of Köszeg in neighboring Hungary to the town of Burg in the Burgenland region of Austria. Some 30 percent of them were sick and weak and were transported to Rechnitz where they arrived in the early evening.

Meanwhile the countess was making the final arrangements for her “followers’ festival” which started at 9 p.m. The advancing Soviet Red Army was close to Rechnitz. It wasn’t unusual for Nazi officials to hold raucous parties before the impending defeat.

The killing of the Hungarian Jews in Rechnitz had already been decided before the party began, according to the testimony by public prosecutors after the 1945 which cited testimony from one of the accused men.

In addition, the driver who was to take the victims to the execution had been ordered for 9 p.m. At 10 p.m. other forced laborers were taken to dig mass graves.

Across the German Reich, Jewish prison- ers were being driven westwards by their captors, who were fleeing Soviet forces. Those incapable of carrying on were killed. The killings at Rechnitz fit in with that pattern.

When the preparations for the execu- tions had been made, at around 11 p.m., local Nazi party chief Podezin gave an account of loyal Nazis who were at the party and ordered them to drive with him to a barn and kill the Jewish prisoners, according to the investigators. His orders were carried out.

Litchfield’s version can only be explained by speculation that those accused of the massacre were lying when they said Podezin had ordered them to commit the atrocity – by way of covering up the alleged connection to the party.

Podezin disappeared in 1945 – presum- ably with the help of the countess. The bodies of the victims were apparently buried by 18 other Jewish prisoners who were themselves murdered the following evening.

The case has been a political issue in Austria for decades because many Rechnitz residents boycotted the investi- gation. One witness was even murdered in 1946, and other witnesses died in mys- terious accidents. In the meantime, a hermetic account known as Rechnitz Case has been established in Rechnitz. Its head, Paul Guida, suspects that Litchfield wanted to attract attention with his sensa- tional account of events.

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FOOTPRINTS OF HOLOCAUST
IN A BATTLE FOR LOST ART

BY PETER APPLEBOME,
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Something wonderful happened to Martha Nierenberg in October 2000, when a trial court in Hungary said something very obvious. A fortune in artwork had been stolen from her family at the time of the German invasion of Hungary in 1944, and by possessing the art for long enough, it had gained protection under “Schindler’s List,” and sometimes, well, Mrs. Nierenberg hopes she is around to see it. She was present at the court that ruled against him. It found that the government, which had acquired the art through “prescription,” the principle that by possessing the property for a long enough period, the state gains ownership of it. It was the fifth ruling in the case. It left Mrs. Nierenberg and her allies convinced that justice would be slow, but when it arrived it was a blessed thing.

But, alas, it never arrived. The Hungarian government, eager to keep the art, appealed the ruling. That led to new trials and new arguments, each more legalistic and arcane than the one before. So when she got more news recently it was no less painful, but it was not unexpected. Another Hungarian appellate court in Budapest, ruled in favor of the government. It found that the government had acquired the art through “prescription,” the principle that by possessing the property for a long enough period, the state gains ownership of it. It was the fifth ruling in the case. It left Mrs. Nierenberg and her allies convinced that justice would be slow, but when it arrived it was a blessed thing.

Sometimes it’s not clear who is right anymore. But the Hungarian government clearly was not.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THIS IS PROBABLY THE GREATEST AND MOST HORRIBLE CRIME EVER COMMITTED IN THE WHOLE HISTORY OF THE WORLD."

In the face of a nightmare of history, what hope does her quest seem like so much to ask. But maybe it is. HUNGARY REFUSES TO PROSECUTE NAZI WAR CRIMINAL

BY ETYAR LEFKOVITS,
THE JERUSALEM POST

The Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center has renewed its call for Hungary to immediately prosecute a top Hungarian war criminal who was never punished for his role in the mass murder of thousands of people during World War II, despite being convicted of war crimes more than six decades ago.

The organization’s chief Nazi hunter, Dr. Efraim Zuroff, has lambasted as “a travesty of justice” the Hungarian authorities’ decision in tracking down a man who was convicted in 1944 for his role in the murder of 1,246 civilians in the city of Novi Sad that July, and not on his previous conviction in a Hungarian court for crimes committed in World War II.

The problem, they are acting as if they have all the time in the world, but we really don’t have time,” Zuroff said.

Zuroff said he was convicted in 1944 for his role in the murder of 1,246 civilians in the city of Novi Sad in January 1944, when he served as a gendarme with an Hungarian army unit, the Wiesenthal Center said.

After details of the massacres in the region—which Hungary had annexed as a prize for its collaboration with Nazi Germany—were revealed, Kepiro was convicted in 1944 to 10 years in jail for his role in the killings. But after the Nazi invasion of Hungary, he was sentenced to death. He was executed in May 1945.

The organization’s chief Nazi hunter, Dr. Efraim Zuroff, has lambasted as “a travesty of justice” the Hungarian authorities’ decision to continue prosecuting Kepiro, despite his past conviction in a Hungarian court for crimes committed in World War II.

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"What is the point of a war trial as having "minimal involvement" in crushing the uprising, but the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Israel is now pressing for him to be retried, claiming the trial did not know of his closeness to Stroop. Mrs. Nierenberg’s quest, narrowed to 11 paintings she inherited, now valued at $15 million to $20 million, of course, is a tiny whisper compared to the horrific roar that was Auschwitz. She is a rich woman in a gorgeous modern home, full of other kinds of art, including her husband’s photographs, taken around the world, African masks, an eclectic assortment of paintings.

But along with other claims large and small, it’s one of the most important remaining claims asking for simple justice in the face of one of history’s most dreadful injustices. As always, there are legal issues as precise as pinpricks. What is the effect of a 1959 payment of $160,827 by the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States for artwork and real property to Mrs. Nierenberg’s mother? Exactly what futile but symbolic efforts should the family have made during Soviet rule to have voided any statute of limitations for filing claims?

Still, the United States Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which has advocated on her behalf, managed to cut to the chase in a letter last week. Why would the Hungarian government insist on retaining custody of artwork stolen by the Nazis when it could return it to its rightful owner? The commission asked in a letter to Hungarian foreign affairs minister, Dr. Kinga Goncz.

"Whether a court actually orders the return of the paintings or not, we urge your government to return to Mrs. Nierenberg without further delay the paintings taken from her family," the letter said.

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“JEW” HAS BECOME CURSE WORD AMONG GERMANS

They dated back to the 1940s and had details of money held in British bank accounts belonging to her grandfather. Yvonne said they explained stories she heard as a child growing up in Israel. “My parents didn’t get any money when they were getting married. It was all spent on the marriage ceremonies.”

Yvonne’s grandfather was a successful businessman living in International Tracing Service archive in Eastern Europe and before war broke out, he had saved much of his money in British banks.

While he survived the war and later emigrated, he, like many Holocaust survivors, never recovered his savings. Wartime trading-with-the-enemy laws meant the property belonging to anyone living in an enemy country was confiscated and would not be given back.

After the war, assets confiscated from affected countries were shared out among British people whose own assets had been confiscated by the enemy countries. In 1999 the British government set up EPCAP to return the funds to victims of the war. Auschwitz made an application for compensation.

In 2007, after years of letter writing she received what she described as “a six figure sum.”

She said the money corrects a mistake of £10,000 gift towards the staging of a numer of events surrounding National Holocaust Memorial Day.

Yoko Ono has donated a pair of her glasses to a Liverpool exhibition to raise awareness of the Holocaust. The artist and widow of murdered Beatle John Lennon has also given a £10,000 gift to the staging of a number of events surrounding National Holocaust Memorial Day.

Yoko Ono said: “It is an honor to be part of such a symbolic piece of artwork which will help people to learn how important it is to forget the horror of the Holocaust and to challenge hatred and prejudice wherever it arises.

The project’s message is that everyone, particularly young people, can play their part in genocide prevention simply by having, showing and insisting on respect for other human beings and for their differences.”

British scheme to return money belonging to victims of the Nazis has paid out more than £21m, or 10 times its original size.

The Enemy Property Rights Assessment panel (EPCAP) was set up to help people living in enemy countries and whose British bank accounts were frozen. It was meant to end three years ago, but is still receiving applications.

The monies include a “six figure sum” paid to a woman whose Jewish grandfather had his savings seized. “When my mother died, we cleaned the house [and I found some papers] that looked very funny,” said Yvonne, who does not want her real name used. The mysterious-looking documents, found by chance, could only be read when held up against a mirror. They were photographed in a mirror, black paper and white letters,” said Yvonne of the papers.

(Continued from page 4)

Tell Aviv and Jaffa, as well as Jews living in the Palestinian Authority, was the ancient Jewish community of Hebron was destroyed. A left the massacre of the Hebron Jews, al-Husseini disseminated photos of the slaughtered Jewish corpses with the claim that the dead were killed by the local Arabs, which killed thousands of Serbs, Roma and Jews. He is reported to have visited Auschwitz and urged the SS guards there to be more diligent in their work of extermination. In 1943, he intercessed with Hungarian authorities to prevent 900 Jewish children from being shipped to Palestine. The children were instead sent to Auschwitz, where they perished. After World War II, al-Husseini escaped to Egypt and organized the Arab war effort to destroy the tiny fledgling state of Israel. He formed a band of Arab terrorists, called the Jihad Muqadas, who launched attacks on Jewish civilians. Until his death in 1974, and his succession by his nephew Yasser Arafat, al-Husseini continued to plan and direct the destruction of Israel.

The evil of Al-Husseini and Hiker lives on in the terror and Propaganda war against Israel.

According to a study commissioned by the Federal Agency for Civic Education, a political education center known by its acronym BBP, history courses no longer manage to teach Germany’s younger generation of the horrors of the Nazis.

The research also examines the role that immigrants have played in the changing attitudes among the young. Experts are quoted in the study as stating that there is a marked rise in the number of Muslims in Germany, many of whom see the teaching of the Holocaust as a veiled endorsement of the policies of the state of Israel.

“Out of fear of the students’ reactions, many teachers avoid teaching this chapter of history in order not to be viewed by some students as supporters of Israel.”

The word ‘Jew’ has turned into one of the most common curse words among students in both east and west Germany,” said Sigel, a Frankfurt-based Holocaust scholar.

Robert Sigel, a historian who con- tributed to the project, said: “Many students are taking a great interest in the Holocaust, but that the methods in which the subject is taught today are in need of improvement.

Susan Orban, a historian at Yad Vashem, says that the Holocaust should be taught using methods that have proved successful in the past.

“Today’s kids live in different times than that of Anne Frank,” Orban said. In order to reach the generation gap, she submits a different approach, “for example, asking them to imagine that they have to abandon their homes and start a new life elsewhere.”

Such a method, according to Orban, would speak more directly to the younger generation’s hearts and minds than descriptions of the horrors of the concentration camp.

GERMAN ARCHIVES’ OPENING HELPS ISRAELI MAN TRACK HIS FATHER’S DEATH

(Continued from page 10)

“This story demonstrates how the tens of millions of documents collected by the Yad Vashem archives, in conjunction with the millions of new documents that have recently arrived, and will arrive from the International Tracing Service archive in Germany over the next two years, will be able to help individuals fill in the picture about the fate of their loved ones in the Holocaust.”

Yad Vashem had previously received many documents from the International Tracing Service, but will be bolstering its collection over the next two years. Bar-Yoda had looked through the Yad Vashem archives, which include microfilm of some 20 million documents received from the tracing service at the end of the 1960s. However, the Majdanek document did not reach the Bad Arolsen archives until the mid-1960s.

Four members of Holocaust victims can request information on the fate of their loved ones at www.yadvashem.org.
Joy in Dachau

February 29, 1945

By Shira Leibowitz Schmer
Thursday, February 28, 2008

There sat in the Holocaust archives of Yeshiva University. I started to cry as I picked up one page from the box labeled “1945” from the section on the Orthodox Yad Vashem Rescue Committee’s activities in the Displaced Persons (DP) Camps. The librarian thought I must have come across a description of starvation, or the death of a child, and came to see what was on the page that I was holding.

“What is so emotional about that?” she asked incredulously.

“That was an order form for books for the DP camps in Germany. But it represented a whole world lost – and the struggle to regain it. I recoiled at this episode as January 27, World Holocaust Memorial Day commemorating the liberation of Auschwitz, approached. Not all Jews were liberated that day. After the liberation of Auschwitz, the war and the atrocities had been delayed for months. Dachau was liberated only on April 29, 1945. Hitler died a day later, and the Axis surrendered on May 8. Auschwitz was liberated early, on January 27, 1945. But the Allies had been forced to approach in stages. And even then, the killing of Jews continued.

The order form of books reflected the tragedy and hope of those survivors. I had embarked on my own archival research of survivors after reading the magnificent opus of Esther Farbstein, Hidden in Thunder: Perspectives on Faith, Haitham, and Survival, a book about the Holocaust. In the final chapters, which dealt with liberation and life in the DP camps, Farbstein quoted a letter written in the summer of 1945 by a survivor in Dachau two months after his liberation. Rabbi Mordechai Slapoborsky had written to his brother in Jerusalem, describing his plight.

"Thank God, I am alive. God has rescued me from the lion’s mouth. But what am I when I am the only one left of my entire family? I haven’t heard from my wife and eldest daughter. My other two children were born in the Amaileikites’ furnace. Of all the rabbis of Lithuania, not one survived. His eldest daughter had been born in the Kovno ghetto “with a birthmark on her back, a yellow Star of David.” He had hidden in a nearby house with his middle daughter, and others. Tragically the infant died in his arms when she cried and was dropped. He was forced to go on for ten days with no one else, and the middle daughter was brutally taken away. His wife and eldest child were murdered elsewhere. While I was a slave labor, he was forced to make tefillin straps into shoe straps.

"All that had happened to me is not fit to write on a page," he said.

The letter from Dachau is an exceptional testimonial of impact that comes when a profound sentence that unlocks the past and future of a people. I implored him to give me this page since I was going to set it to music.

In the other hand, I held the order for books. The books from overseas did not arrive quickly, and if a book did come, hundreds of hands reached out for it. The letter from Dachau rabbi, Shmuel Ringel, the survivors prevailed upon the American authorities, with the assistance of the Joint Distribution Committee, to publish several Talmud tractates for use in the DP camps. The title page was illustrated with a picture of a wagon loaded with bodies for the crematoria, along with a rising sun over Jerusalem, and the phrase: “They almost wiped me out, but I did not abandon your commandments.”

In that modest letter postmarked from Dachau, Rabbi Slapoborsky left us a record of his joy—“great joy”—one book brought him after liberation. In addition, re-instilling the love of learning in the camp, the rabbi became a religious court judge and was especially involved in freeing agunot (women whose husbands had been lost in the inferno), enabling them to remarry. He moved to Israel in 1945, where he married a survivor and served as rabbi in a moshav near Rehovot. He and his second wife did not have children. Rabbi Slapoborsky died 1967.

“Witness” is a Chilling Reminder of the Unimaginable

(Continued from page 7)

and early ’60s, with the release of “The Diary of Anne Frank” and “Judgment at Nuremberg.” A successful commercial venture in pop culture through the ’60s, ’70s, all the way to the inevitable apothecary of 1995’s “Schindler’s List,” Anker switches gears. Can the unimaginable be put on film? Should it be? Elie Wiesel blasted the 1985 film “Holocaust,” made by an image of a wagon loaded with bodies for the crematoria, along with a rising sun over Jerusalem, and the phrase: “They almost wiped me out, but I did not abandon your commandments.”

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An American Society for Yad Vashem Mourns the Death of Miles Lerman

Miles Lerman, who helped found the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and for three decades was a vital contributor to its success, died on January 22 in Philadelphia at the age of 88.

A Holocaust survivor and American fighter during World War II, Lerman was involved with the Holocaust museum almost from its inception. President Carter appointed him to an advisory board of the president’s Commission on the Holocaust, which recommended creating the museum in Washington. Lerman was subsequently appointed to the governing council by three American presidents, and served for a total of 23 years.

Lerman is credited with leading the early fund-raising efforts and negotiating international agreements that helped the museum acquire artifacts for its permanent exhibition.

His initiative also led to the creation of the Miles Lerman Center for the Study of Jewish Resistance, a part of the museum’s Curatorial Department.

Lerman was born in Tomashov, Poland, in 1920. In 1942 he escaped from a slave labor camp by murdering and killing guards with a shovel. Lerman went on to join a resistance group formed by other escapees, and for the next two years waged a guerrilla campaign against the Nazis.

In June 1944, Lerman was liberated by the Soviet army and returned to Poland. He and his wife, Chris, also a survivor, immigrated to the United States in 1947 and settled in Vineland, N.J., where Lerman became successful in the home heating oil business.

By the time Lerman stepped down as chairman of the council in 1995, the museum that had grown into a major Washington tourist stop, having attracted some 14 million visitors in its first 10 years of operation, was overwhelmed by major undertakings of historical importance. “This year’s opening of the commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz will be a major event,” Lerman said at the dedication in January of the museum’s new permanent exhibition hall.

Mourners included American Jewish leaders, friends and family members. In his eulogy, President Bush praised Lerman for his “immeasurable service” to the Jewish community and the nation during his lifetime.
MEMORY OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS HONORED THROUGH SERIES OF UN EVENTS

In Vienna, UN staff marked the Day at a solemn ceremony which brought together representatives of the Jewish community, the Romanis and other affected groups, as well as politicians, the diplomatic community, students and civil society.

A key feature of the event was the unveiling of a reproduction of a series of postcards depicting life in a labor camp,

Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Authority, Jerusalem; American and International Societies for Yad Vashem, New York; Carl Lutz Foundation, Budapest: The Permanent Mission of Albania, Hungary and Switzerland to the United Nations come together to organize an exhibit opening and reception in observance of the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Shoah.

The Holocaust demonstrated that human beings are capable of great cruelty, but also of great courage and strength in the face of evil. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declared today at the opening of BESA – A CODE OF HONOR: Muslim Albanians who Saved Jews during the Holocaust exhibit at the United Nations, New York City, January 29, 2008.

“Today, we honor the victims and survivors of the Holocaust and those who protected and saved lives,” Mr. Ban said in a message, delivered by Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information Kiyotaka Akasaka.

The two-part exhibit, entitled “The Holocaust – Stories of Rescue,” tells the story of individuals who stood up to rescue Jews “when so many others turned a blind eye, or collaborated in the murder of Jews and other minorities,” stated Mr. Ban.

One segment, “BESA – A Code of Honor,” features an account of Muslim Albanians who rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Their courageous actions were grounded in BESA, a code of honor, which still today serves as the highest ethical code in the country. The other segment, “Carl Lutz and the Legendary Glass House in Budapest,” highlights the work of the Swiss diplomat who issued certificates of emigration to tens of thousands of Jews, thus saving many of them from near-certain extinction.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American & International Societies for Yad Vashem, Inc. and Dr. Elizabeth Mundlak Zborowski, Cultural Director at the American Society for Yad Vashem, at the opening of BESA – A CODE OF HONOR: Muslim Albanians who Saved Jews at the Holocaust exhibit at the United Nations.

International Day has become an ongoing process in an outreach program, whereby people worldwide were taught the lessons and horrors of the Holocaust and made to become part of the army of goodwill, committed to the words “never again.”

As part of the activities to mark the Day, General Assembly President Srgjan Kerim took part in an event at the Consulate General of Italy in New York at which he read the names of the Jews deported from Italy and the former Italian territories.

Ambassador Dan Gillerman of Israel voiced appreciation for the fact that the Assembly’s resolution designating the International Day became part of the army of goodwill, committed to the words “never again.”

A key feature of the event was the unveiling of a reproduction of a series of postcards depicting life in a labor camp,

This year’s observance focuses on the connection of the International Day to the United Nations Outreach Program also coordinated a video conference for students with the UN information centers in Antananarivo, Madagascar, and Lome, Togo, and educators at the “Memorial de la Shoah” in Paris. In Tokyo on 29 January, an educational workshop targeting young students focused on the links between the Holocaust and human rights issues.

This year’s observance focuses on the need to ensure the protection of human rights for all, and coincides with the 60th anniversary year of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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*1974-85, as Newsletter for the American Federation of Jewish Fighters, Camp Imannes, and Nazi Victims
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