WOMEN OF VALOR
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON
THE UNDENIABLE TRUTH OF THE HOLOCAUST

ILANA APELKER, AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM

This year’s Annual Spring Luncheon had the distinct honor of welcoming Professor Deborah Lipstadt as our guest speaker. Professor Lipstadt is Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish and Holocaust Studies at Emory University in Atlanta. Her book Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory (Free Press/Macmillian, 1993) was the first full-length study of those who attempt to deny the Holocaust. One of the individuals in that study was David Irving, whom Lipstadt called “one of the most dangerous spokespersons for Holocaust denial.” Irving’s response to this claim was to file a libel suit against Professor Lipstadt which was the subject of her latest book and the topic of her speech at this year’s luncheon.

The book, History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving (Ecco/Harper Collins, 2005) is the story of the libel trial in London. In her remarks at Cipriani, Professor Lipstadt recounts her reaction to first learning of the libel suit. Thinking that it was nothing and would just go away on its own, almost brushing it off as insignificant by sticking it under a pile of other papers to be looked at later. Once the realization hit that this was a real case that meant she had to prove her findings (since British courts are different than ones in the US) she knew she had to fight Irving and not just make the allegations go away, even though some told her to. Her early life, growing up in an active Jewish community in New York, prepared her for the fight she was about to endure. With help from the Jewish community, her university, and the personal reputation, but the record of history itself, the record of the Holocaust.

The trial, as Lipstadt says, was a victory for history and historians. And survivors heaped their praise on Lipstadt as being their heroine. She described that it was only after the trial that she understood their meaning. That she had done something, had stood up against these false allegations. Where sixty years ago, so many people did nothing. At the end of her remarks, Lipstadt read various passages from her book, letters that survivors had written to her. "I fought to defend myself, to preserve my belief in freedom of expression, and to defeat a man who lied about history and expressed deeply contemptuous views of Jews and other minorities." (pg. 286)

Professor Deborah Lipstadt spoke out against Holocaust denial when few knew what the meaning of those words were. She is an example to young scholars and deemed a heroine by those she vowed to fight for. But perhaps the strongest words to describe her are her own: "I fought to defend myself, to preserve my belief in freedom of expression, and to defeat a man who lied about history and expressed deeply contemptuous views of Jews and other minorities." (pg. 286)
Israel – Holocaust Remembrance Day is set down with a solemn ceremony attended by Israeli officials, Holocaust survivors and foreign dignitaries. It took place at Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem to reflect on one of the darkest chapters in Jewish history.

Flags were lowered to half-staff across the country. Places of entertainment were closed and radio and TV broadcasts were devoted to the event. The commemoration is dedicated to the Holocaust.

A cantor chanted a mournful prayer as Holocaust survivors lit six torches in memory of the six million Jews killed by the Nazis during World War II.

The memorial started with an official ceremony Wednesday evening in the presence of Richard Prasquier, head of CRIF, the umbrella group of French Jewish organizations. His ambassador to France, Daniel Shek, Serge Klařífský, president of the association of Sons and Daughters of Jews deported from France, and Anne-Marie Revenuocés, director of the Foundation for the memory of the 11th and 12th arrondissements in Paris, lit a flame.

Earlier that week, France’s Defense Secretary of State, Jean-Marie Bockel, called for “the most extreme firmness” against the desecration of graveyards and revisionist statements, during a ceremony in Paris commemorating the Shoah. The French capital’s mayor, Bertrand Delanoe, attended the event.

“As soon as there is desecration or revisionist comment, it is necessary to react with the extreme firmness,” Bočel said in a reference to Jean-Marie Le Pen, National Front leader, who, in an interview, and in private, has expressed gas chambers “a detail of the history of World War II.”

A Flame is lit by a Holocaust survivor at Yad Vashem, marking the beginning of official ceremonies on Yom Ha-Shoah.

Israel’s President Shimon Peres said the world could have faced destruction if Adolf Hitler had acquired nuclear weapons.

Peres charged that the world woke up too late to eliminate the threat from Hitler’s Germany and he warned that must not happen again.

Aides said Peres was urging the world to take action to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons before it is too late.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert also addressed the gathering. Mr. Olmert said today the Jews can defend themselves in their homeland, and therefore, he said, the Holocaust will never happen again.

France – From April 30 evening and during 24 hours the names of the Jews who died after being deported by the Nazis in France during WWII were read in a loud voice, to mark the crimes of Nazis in France during WWII.

The 76,000 names are engraved in the Wall of Names at the Shoah Memorial located in the 4th district of Paris.

Shimon Peres, one of the most prominent Holocaust survivors, celebrated his 89th birthday, April 30 evening.

“Each year we move closer to the moment when the Holocaust will cease to be a living memory and become history,” the President said.

The annual event carried a sense of urgency, with speakers noting there are fewer and fewer of the Jews today’s survivors experienced it as children or as teenagers.

They recognized the current Holocaust survivor, the late California Congressman Tom Lantos, who died in February, as the only survivor of the Nazi campaign to have served in the US Congress. His widow and daughter spoke at a candle in his honor.

At the same time, speakers voiced concerns over recent remarks by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran calling genocide against Jews “a myth,” and offered pleas for support of Israel.

“Today, May 1, is the same day in the same month in which the state of Israel marks its 60th anniversary,” Mr. Peres said.

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“The generation of survivors is dwindling,” said Rabbi Moshe Waldoks, chairman of the Treblinka Initiative, calling on the young to keep Holocaust remembrance alive.

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May/June 2008 - Iyyar/Sivan 5768

Polish People Not Responsible for Holocaust

MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE

Polish President Lech Kaczyński addressed the audience: “We are standing in a place where 800,900,000 Jewish citizens of Poland were exterminated, and why? Only because they were Jews. This was the only reason behind their deaths and it was a sentence delivered regardless of age, sex or anything else.”

The 3,000 Jews of the ghetto in Warsaw, one of the largest Jewish cities in the world, were murdered here. What more can we say in the face of such a crime except ‘never again.’ Never again will there be such horrors that we can be moved by. The generation of survivors is dwindling, which means that the history of the Holocaust is dwindling, which means that the history of the Holocaust is left to the young. The generation of survivors is dwindling, which means that the history of the Holocaust is left to the young.

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A force jets streaked across the country's coastline as sailboats bobbed in the sea below. Spectators packed the shores, climaxes for a better view of the air show as Israel came out to celebrate 60 years of its existence.

The nation's mood shifted from mourning to celebration the night before as Memorial Day gave way to Independence Day. City squares were filled with revelers who came to hear concerts and watch fireworks and light shows.

Kicking off Independence Day events, Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik tried to strike an upbeat note, despite the rather grim political mood in the country.

"The State of Israel is an unequal success story, a wonder by any historical standard," Itzik said.

"We had no miracles. We built this splendid achievement with our own hands."

POLAND WANTS HOLOCAUST PROPERTY RESTITUTION LAW BY END OF YEAR

After years of delay, the Polish government aims to complete the issue of Holocaust property restitution by the end of the year, Polish Ambassador to Israel Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska said.

The core of a bill, which was accepted by the Polish parliament in draft form two years ago, is ready, and the Polish government hopes to reach a resolution by the end of the year, she said in a briefing with Israeli journalists.

The bill passed its initial reading in the previous parliament, but it needs to be reintroduced due to the recent change of government. The bill would pay 20 percent compensation to former property owners – both Jewish and non-Jewish – whose property was expropriated during the Nazi occupation.

Polish officials estimate that the Jewish-owned private property makes up nearly 20% of all property taken.

Moreover, many of the areas populated by Jews ahead of World War II – the so-called Galicia region – are now located outside the boundaries of present-day Poland and fall in Ukraine.

Magdziak-Miszewska said it was important for Poland to finalize the agreement for both historical and economic reasons, since claimsants who have not received compensation to date would have lost their rights.

"It is [both] moral justice and the real economic interest of Poland to end this issue," she said.

The total value of seized property is estimated to be around $21 billion, according to the Polish government, who is working to finalize the compensation.

A new exhibit in Gaza portrays the Jewish state burning Palestinian children in ovens.

A group called the National Committee for Defense of Children from the Incitement of Hatred portrays Israel as the perpetrators of the Holocaust.

Rather than teach about the Nazi genocide of European Jewry, the exhibit portrays Israel as the instigators who have been "burned in a mobile crematorium by Israelis."

According to the Roman Catholic daily Aayam daily, "The exhibit includes a large oven and inside it small children are being burned. The picture speaks for itself."

The Zionist Organization of America condemned the exhibit, saying in a statement that "there seems to be no limit to the depravity of Palestinian hate education and incitement."

"We have seen over the years every sort of perversion, including educating children to become suicide bombers and honoring mass murderers. Here, the Palestinians, both Hamas and PLO, depict Israelis as exterminating Nazis, while teaching nothing about the actual Holocaust in which the wartime Palestinian leadership of Haj Amin el-Husseini was in fact very active."

Husseini not only orchestrated campaigns against Jews in the British Mandate, but also became an ally of the Nazis, and worked hard to speed up the deportations. ZOA President Morton Klein.

"The depiction of Israelis as exterminating Nazis essentially sends the message to Jews that evil people who should, like the Nazi regime, be destroyed. It is a travesty to compare the two and it sends the wrong message to the world," Klein said.

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BEYOND JUSTICE: THE AUSCHWITZ TRIAL


REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN

There is one incident I can never forget: it must have been around November 1944. A truck, carrying Jewish children, drove into the camp. The truck stopped by the barracks of the Political Department. A boy – he must have been about four or five years old – jumped out. He was playing with an apple that he was holding in his hand. Boger took the child by the arm, lifted him and examined his head against the wall . . . Later, I was called in to do some translation for Boger. He was sitting in his office, holding the boy’s apple.

The above is but an excerpt from the testimony given by Dona Wasserstrom, given during the Auschwitz Trial. Interestingly, it all began in March, 1958, when Adolf Rögener, “a prisoner in the Bruchsal penitentiary convicted of fraud” complained about his heart medication in a letter to the prosecutor’s office in Stuttgart. In this selfsame letter, he also began to talk about an SS Obersturmführer Boger, known as “the Devil of Birkenau.”

Rebecca Wittmann’s, exceptionally well-documented in The Auschwitz Trial,rowing in his hand. Boger took the child by the arm and lifted him straight up. He was playing with an apple that he was holding in his hand. Boger took the child by the arm, lifted him and examined his head against the wall . . . Later, I was called in to do some translation for Boger. He was sitting in his office, holding a boy’s apple.

Interestingly, it all began in March, 1958, when Adolf Rögener, “a prisoner in the Bruchsal penitentiary convicted of fraud” complained about his heart medication in a letter to the prosecutor’s office in Stuttgart. In this selfsame letter, he also began to talk about an SS Obersturmführer Boger, known as “the Devil of Birkenau.”

He said Boger was alive, that he had been a mass murderer in Auschwitz, where Rögener was once a prisoner, and that he wanted to press charges against Boger and did. Thus the prosecutors heard Rögener out . . . and his charge would lead to “the largest most public and most important背后 of trial of its kind” ever to take place in West Germany using West German judges and West German law.

It is at this point that the author, Wittmann, makes us privy to the West German legal way of doing things — quite different from our own way. It is here, too, that Wittmann makes me wary to the fact that “some four hundred witnesses . . . interrogations, and the investigation as many as eight hundred perpetrators at Auschwitz” was part of this trial. In the end, twenty SS-men — almost all SS-men — faced the court of three judges and six jurists.

Evidence testimony was most important at this trial, which began December 1963. Hence, there was the testimony of Dr. Tadeusz Pacula, a Polish surgeon who “witnessed the results of the most heinous book — by defendant Josef Klehr.” He characterized Klehr as a “sadist” and a “lusty killer” as he injected prisoners with phenol, murdering them on his own volition. Then there were the Jewish women, secretary for the Political Department, who saw Wilhelm Boger’s “swing the ‘and the uncontrollable state in which most prisoners appeared after being brutalized on it’ They spoke. There was evidence against Oswald K a d u k . T e s t i m o n y against him showed him “fond of drowning, beating, whipping, shooting, running over, or in any other way killing prisoners.” As far as SS private and block officer Stefan Baretski, “a soft-spoken Austrian Jewish doctor named Otto Wolken” testified about his witnessing Baretski’s “fancier ritual, a ‘rabbit hunt.’”

By the hundreds and then thousands, Prague’s Jews are transported away. To Petřín, the numbers are people, the Levituses, the Poppers. Finally, in August 1942, a final diary entry: “In the morning at home.” Petřín is an area of Theresienstadt. The Germans claimed it was a spa town; in reality, it was a Jewish ghetto and transit camp where Petřín continued to grow. The prison, drawing and painting and writing for a secret newspaper.

There, the story might have ended. But some of Petřín’s art and writings survived. In 2003, Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon took a piece of the Holocaust into space — a copy of Petřín’s drawing of a moonscope. Ramon and the other members of the space shuttle Columbia crew died when the ship broke up in the sky on Feb. 1, 2003 — what would have been Petřín’s 75th birthday.

News of the tragedy reached a man in Prague, who realized he was in possession of a most unusual item in his attic. From tragedy came a remarkable discovery: Petřín’s long-lost war diary was found.

WHAT HAPPENED TO “THE LOST”? Sweden and elsewhere, to talk to survivors of the Nazi “aktionen” in Bolechow. The personal, and his family lived and died — is poignant — and not only because of the horrific historic events. A classicist and literary critic, Mendelsohn overcomes the reader, early on, easily on, with extravagant details, digressions, repetition and a self-indulgent style he describes as “Heliodorus,” likening it to his grandfather’s story-telling.

To draw parallels to the book’s themes of origins, family, betrayal and a death, Mendelsohn weaves in italized medieval Jewish interpretations of the biblical stories of Creation, Cain and Abel and the Flood. That proves more exhausting than enlightening for the reader. But the powerful ending — that final visit to Bolechow and the streets where Shmuel and his family lived and died — is poignant and an understanding ending. To edit the excesses and turn The Lost into a memorable, insightful book about what can be terribly and — and ultimately, with persist-
It was the spring of 1943 when Otto Ernst Duscheleit, a Hitler Youth leader, received the call: Join the Waffen-SS or be sent to a penal battalion. “I was 17 and I knew little about what was happening,” Duscheleit recalls. He would spend two years on the front. Duscheleit helped set Russian villages ablaze during the retreat of German forces, and though he says he did not commit atrocities, he watched as Jews were loaded onto trains for deportation to death camps.

“They were wearing the yellow star,” Duscheleit says. “I saw them, but I didn’t think about what was happening.” Some 40 years later, Duscheleit had a dream in which someone called him an “SS pig,” and the former Nazi began to reflect on his past. Overcome by shame, he soon started meeting with students and children of survivors to tell them his story. In 2006 he published an autobiography.

“When I tell my story to older people, some start to tell what they remember,” he says of fellow Germans. “I give them courage to speak about their past.”

“But sometimes it’s such a torture that they cannot speak about it. And then, after a short time, they die.”

Duscheleit, who lives in Berlin, is among a small group of former Nazis relating their stories. Their stories represent a fast-disappearing opportunity to record the history of the Holocaust based on recollections of former perpetrators, collaborators or sympathizers.

Still, most living ex-Nazis do not want to share their stories, and those that are willing often offer unreliable accounts. Unlike Duscheleit, few are confronting their pasts critically.

“Many who had such experiences won’t talk about it, or they will try to turn themselves into victims, or they will lie,” said German filmmaker Malte Ludin, who wants to launch a project to record the ex-Nazis’ stories and build an archive of perpetrator testimony.

“It’s not that Ludin expects any earth-shattering revelations. He hopes the interviews help teach the world how crucial it is to oppose genocide.

Ludin’s 2005 film, “2 or 3 Things I Know About Him,” shows how his family buried the truth about his father, an executed war criminal.

While tens of thousands of Holocaust survivors have recorded personal testimonies of their experiences, no comparable collection exists from Nazi perpetrators or sympathizers.

In recent years, however, several projects have been established to collect Nazi pasts of their parents or grandparents have published their stories.

Psychotherapist Ute Althaus started probing her father’s Nazi past in early 1994 after he died. Her father, Ernst Meyer, had been sentenced to 10 years in prison after the war, but she said his war crimes were never discussed in the family.

After Meyer’s death in 1993, Althaus read his prison letters. Her research was recorded in her 2006 book “I was Father’s Testimony.”

“After the war, committed Nazis like my father presented themselves as nonsoldiers, as victims of Hitler,” Althaus told JTA.

In the postwar letters, Althaus said her father wrote that Hitler and his people “committed genocide without the knowledge of the Germans.”

“I don’t find any empathy with the victims in my father’s letters,” she added. “We children of Nazis grew up in a fraudulently deceptive relationship” with the Third Reich, says the author of “Followers of Adolf Hitler, left, with Nazi henchman, had a ‘kind of addictive relationship’ with the Third Reich, says the author of "Legacy of Silence."

“We children of Nazis grew up in a fraudulently deceptive relationship” with the Third Reich, says the author of “Legacy of Silence.”

“The more a perpetrator has to say, the less important the testimony, says Efrain Zuroff, the Holocaust director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

“It is incredibly rare that perpetrators own up to their crimes,” Zuroff told JTA. “If they can talk about their crimes, they have nothing interesting to tell us.”

Even in trial testimony, “most thought they were innocent and had done the right thing,” Zuroff said. “That can teach us about the nature of people who have been brainwashed about Nazi ideology.”

“They were not persons who came from outer space or Mars,” said Micha Brumlik of the Institute for General Pedagogy in Frankfurt am Main. “It is important to prove to the younger generation that moral evil is very close to us.”

Marks says it’s important to explore how well-educated and intelligent people could be so excited by the Nazi movement.

“The emotional understanding that many persons possess is something we have hardly started to touch,” he said.

Sometime after Duscheleit began speaking publicly about his years in the Waffen SS, he was confronted by several right-wing youths after a speech.

“Young man came to me and said, ‘How can you speak that way as a former SS man and Hitler Youth leader?’”

But when the ships reached Marseilles, the refugees refused to disembark and tried to escape to the south of France. The British had identified one of the ships as the Exodus 1947 refugee ship Exodus.

The British response to that was to fire a warning shot into Exodus’s bow, immediately followed by the dispatch of a boarding party.

The passengers and crew resisted, and fierce fighting broke out on the Exodus. Three passengers and a soldier died, and many were wounded. The British then
towed the Exodus into Haifa harbour, from where it was planned that the passengers would be sent back to France on three separate transport vessels.
For decades, Marek Edelman has said it was painful to talk about his time as a leader in the likéfied 1943 struggle by a handful of scrappy, poorly armed Jews in Warsaw to rise up against the Nazi’s trained and equipped army. If he ever returns to the traumatic memories of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, it is only to bring a word of warning to the contemporary world. “Man is evil: By nature, man is a beast,” the Rev. Andrzej Zbikowski, head of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. “We have worked to recover and rehabilitate Torahs that disappeared or were destroyed during the Holocaust, return- ing them to use in synagogues.

Rabbi Menachem Youlus removes dirt from a Torah that had been buried in a Polish cemetery to keep it from the Nazis. This Torah remained hidden for more than 60 years, buried where the sexton had put it, until Rabbi Menachem Youlus, who lives in Wheaton, Md., and runs the nonprofit Save a Torah foundation, began searching for it about eight years ago. Over the last two decades, Rabbi Youlus said, the foun- dation has found more than 1,000 dese- crated Torahs and restored them, a painstaking and expensive process. This one was elusive. But Rabbi Youlus was determined.

He had heard a story told by Auschwitz survivors: Three nights before the Germans arrived, the synagogue sexton put the Torah scrolls in a metal box and buried them. The sexton knew that the Nazis were bent on destroying Judaism as well as killing Jews. But the survivors did not know where the sexton had buried the Torah. Others interested in rescuing the Torah after the war had not found it. As for what happened during the war, “I personally felt the last place the Nazis would look would be in the cemetery,” Rabbi Youlus said in an interview, recall- ing his pilgrimage to Auschwitz, in late 2000 or early 2001, in search of the missing Torah. “So that was the first place I looked.” He described the finding to the congregation, because, if the story was correct, he was hunting for a metal box in a cem- etery in which all the cas- kets were made of wood, according to Jewish laws of burial. The metal detector did not beep. “Nothing,” the rabbi said. “I was discouraged.” He went home to Maryland. One of his sons, Yitzchok, then 13, wondered if the cemetery was the same size as in 1939. They went online and found land records that showed that the present-day cemetery was far smaller than the original one.

Rabbi Youlus went back in 2004 with this metal detector, aiming it at the spot where the gniezna — a burial plot for damaged Torahs, prayer books or other papers containing God’s name — had been. It beeped as he passed a house that had been built after World War II. He dug near the house and found the metal box. But when he opened it, he dis- covered the Torah was incomplete. “It was missing four panels,” he said.

“The obvious question was, why would the sexton bury a scroll that’s missing four panels? I was convinced those four pan- els had a story themselves.” They did, as he learned when he placed an ad in a Polish newspaper in the area “asking if anyone had parchment with Hebrew letters.”

“I said I would pay top dollar,” Rabbi Youlus said. “The response came the next day from a priest. He said, ‘I know exactly what you’re looking for, four panels of a Torah. I couldn’t believe it.’

He prepared the lettering and the pagi- nation, and paid the priest. The priest “told me my panels were taken into Auschwitz by four different people,” Rabbi Youlus said. “I believe they were folded and hid- den.” One of the panels contained the Ten Commandments from Exodus, a portion that, when chanted aloud each year, the congregation sings, “This Torah contains a sim- ple passage from Deuteronomy.”

Andrzej Zbikowski, who was born Jewish, was himself an Auschwitz survivor. He told Rabbi Youlus that the people with the four panels “are the people they put in the gas chambers, before they were put to death. ‘I kept all four pieces until I put that ad in the paper,” Rabbi Youlus said. “As soon as I put that ad in the paper, he knew I must be the one with the rest of the Torah still alive in Israel and Canada.’ (Andrzej has since died.)

Rabbi Youlus said that nearly half the Torah’s lettering needed repair, work that the foundation has done over the past few years.

Rabbi Youlus called it “a ‘good story’ Torah, even if it hasn’t been used in 65 years. It is to make it available every other year to the March of the Living, an international educational pro- gram that arranges for Jewish teenagers to go to Poland on Holocaust Remembrance Day, to march from Auschwitz to its companion death camp, Birkenau.

“This really is an opportunity to look up to the heroes of the past and ask who laughs last, laughs best,” Rabbi Youlus said. “The Nazis really thought they had wiped Jews off the face of the earth, and Judaism. Here we are taking the ultimate symbol of hope and of Judaism and rededicating it and we’ll take it to Auschwitz. You can’t beat that.”

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WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING LEADER SPEAKS OF STRUGGLE

Mark Edelman

Edelman, then 24, took command of one of the revolt’s three groups of fighters, all between the ages of 13 and 22. His brigade included 50 so-called “brush men” because their base was a brick factory. They adopted hit-and-run tactics. With time, as supplies and forces began to run low, they resorted to attacks at night, for more safety.

“Every moment was difficult. It was two or three or 10 boys fighting with an army,” Edelman said. “There were no easy moments.”

“It lasted for three weeks, so this great German army could not cope so easily with those 220 boys and girls,” he said with a grain of pride.

The uprising ended when its main lead- ers — including Edelman — were com- mitted suicide on May 8, 1943. The Nazis then razed the ghetto, street by street.

About 40 surviving fighters escaped through the city’s sewers and joined the Polish partisans.

“Now everyone knew Edelman was alive,” Edelman said. “We knew the struggle was doomed, but it showed the world that there is resistance against the Nazis, that you can fight the Nazis.”

Edelman and a few others remained in Warsaw to help coordinate and supply the Jewish resistance groups. Some fighters soon emigrated to the United States, including the last one in Poland.

Despite the ghetto struggle’s ultimate failure, “it was worth it,” Edelman said. “Even at the price of the fighters’ lives.”

After the war, Edelman chose to remain in Poland, becoming a social and a demo- cratic activist, and guardian of the ghetto fighters’ memory.

“When you were responsible for the life of so many, you couldn’t take time to reflect, and abandon the memory of them,” he said.
“NAZI GERMANY HELPED ESTABLISH ISRAEL”

BY JONATHAN BECK, THE JERUSALEM POST

Twenty five German professors co-signed a manifesto published in the Frankfurter Rundschau calling on Germany to stop giving Israel “preferential treatment,” because, among other reasons, the country “helped establish Israel by expelling Jews from Germany during the rule of the Third Reich. Approximately 160,000 Jews who were expelled from Nazi Germany ended up in the British mandate of Palestine and strengthened the Jewish presence here at the expense of the Arab population, they claim.”

Visiting in Israel as guests of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the Academic College of Netanya, four professors and co-signatories on the manifesto were debating their claims with Israeli academics who opposed them. They claimed that approximately 160,000 Jews who arrived in mandatory Palestine from Germany during the rule of the Third Reich. Approximately 160,000 Jews who were expelled from Nazi Germany ended up in the British mandate of Palestine and strengthened the Jewish presence here at the expense of the Arab population, they claim.

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They admitted that the Holocaust was, nevertheless, an indelible stain in Germany’s history. The professors called on the German government to deplore the deaths of those murdered in Arab countries by adopting an “even-handed” approach to both Israelis and Arabs. They cited the example of Ben Meir, one of the heads of the Center for Strategic Dialogue at the college and formerly chairman of the Knesset. Prof. Moshe Zimmerman, an expert on German history, was also sitting on the Israeli side. Ben Meir published his own counter-manifesto, rebuking the German’s claims one by one.

First and foremost, unchecked data was stated as fact has led the Germans to reach conclusions which, were unjustified. For example, regarding Dr. Aribert Heim, who was a POW in American Mauthausen camp, he was listed as having a different state of origin. In 1950, he was noted as belonging to the Baden Baden state court, where Heim was said to be living. The 60% of land controlled by Jews were unjustified. For example, regarding the reparations agreement, stressing that these funds should not be construed as special treatment. This, he also said, was the case in 1941 when the country as “a different Germany.” He said Israel purchased from Germany ten times more merchandise than what the Germans offered as part of the Reparations Agreement. Stressing that these funds should not be construed as special treatment, should be considered the “duty of a rogue to his victim.” Ben Mer warned about Germany returning to the “black days” of Hitler if the country would stop its special treatment towards Israel.

Fritk Krell, a retired professor of International Relations at Frankfurt’s Johann Wolfgang Goethe University who specialized in international relations during East Europe, admitted after the panel finished its discussions that the manifesto was “well meant but not good enough.”

If you don’t think anti-Semitism is rising in Europe, look at the political cartoons. A Greek cartoon suggests Israelis kill Christians on Easter. An Italian cartoon shows the baby Jesus worried that the Israelis are going to kill him again. And then there are the cartoons that compare the Jews to the Nazis. It reminds Jews of another period: the 1930s, the time before the Holocaust. Investigations in Europe today, most Jews are at least anxious. Some are scared, and many have already left for Israel or the United States. Because, even though many European governments have condemned the new rise in anti-Semitism, there is a clear perception among many Jews that Europe’s terrible history is somehow coming back to life. “Jewish communities around the world are under more pressure now than at any time since 1945,” Prof. Robert Wistrich of Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Wistrich is the son of Polish Jews who fled the Holocaust. “Here we are 60 years after that and what lessons have been learned? Not enough.”

Throughout Europe, distorted and one-sided news coverage has created an israel that is aggressive and evil. “It’s a demonization based on a radical de-contextualization, de-legitimization that’s been going on,” Melanie Phillips, a British author, says. “If you get an averagely ignorant Brit, watching your TV, listening to your radio, you believe it. That’s your world view.”

In France, a court is deciding whether a government TV channel, France2, showed a fake footage of the supposed death of a Palestinian boy, Mohammed al-Durah, during the second intifada in 2000, which it looked like was killed by Israeli soldiers. When the judge ordered France2 to turn over all of its footage of the inci- dent, it also showed the boy moving his arms and peering through his fingers after he was supposed to be dead.

But Muslim rage at the original France2 news story led to countless reprisals against Jews around the world. It was even mentioned by terrorists as a reason for the beheading Daniel Pearl.

The EU says Muslims are responsible for half of all attacks on Jews in Europe. In France, Muslims outnumber Jews 10 to 1. Nidra Poller, an American writer and commentator in Paris, says the government and media are afraid of the Muslims.

But for the Muslims, allowing the express, this vicious and violent, murderous Jews hate them, and they use this old fashioned anti-Semitism,” Poller said. “The whole Lebanon war was shown from the Israeli point of view. Israel was the vili- lain. And Hezbollah were the innocents who were suffering. So all the Muslims in France got another dose of Jew hatred.”

And when Israel invaded Lebanon in 2006, anti-Semitic violence in Europe surged.

Anti-Semitism is by no means just a European phenomenon. But it is in Europe, the place of the Holocaust, where the return of anti-Semitism is so surprising. As a boy in the Netherlands, Manfred Gerstendorf hid from the Nazis in an air raid shelter. He may have never believed it could happen again. But he now believes Europe is re-living the 1930s.

“A senior Dutch politician told me a few months ago, ‘Look, the Jews have to understand that in the Netherlands, they have no future,’ he said.

In large part because Israel lost the most recent war, the Muslims feel angry, and the Jews are still paying for it.
I am honored to be here today, but this honor is as much for my parents – Sol and Gloria Silberzweig, as it is for me. They both grew up in Warsaw and were survivors of the Holocaust. They met when my mother was 12 and my father 17. Their families vacationed together in the summer. They fell in love in the Warsaw Ghetto. Both my parents fought in the uprising, and were later transported to concentration camps. They lost and found each other many times. Sol and Gloria experienced unspeakable atrocities in the camps. My mother lost her entire family. The only one of my father’s six siblings that survived was his brother, who had left Poland before the war. The story of the Holocaust was told to me in snippets by my mother. Even as a child, the Holocaust was part of my life. I did not realize it then, but I was one of the lucky ones, because the Holocaust was not kept as a dark secret. As the oldest child, more details were shared with me than my two siblings. Survivors always question why they were spared death and never forget their family members and friends who were not so lucky. So many of the stories she told me were about her parents, siblings, and others in her family. She knew how lucky she had been because, with green eyes and blonde hair, she was often spared because she looked like a beautiful Polish woman. She died before she could write her story. Gloria was a wonderful caring mother and grandmother, who always gave me unconditional love. My parent’s story inspired my husband, an American-born Jew, to study the Holocaust and he has written a book, Rethinking Poles and Jews, about Polish-Jewish relations then and now which was published last summer.

My father did not really talk about the Holocaust until after my mother’s death in 1979. Just before his death in 2004, he wrote his memoir, Mama It Will Be Alright, which was published by Yad Vashem.

After the war my parents found each other, got married, and had me. I was the first person in my family to go to college, and then graduate school. I became an audiologist because I always wanted to help people. I have taught students who wanted to be audiologists at Brooklyn College for the last twenty-eight years. And I have tried to instill in them the respect for patients and a desire to help them that has motivated me.

I grew up hearing about the Holocaust, and how one group of people wanted to destroy another only because they were Jewish. The lesson I learned was to treat all people with respect and not judge them based on race, religion, or class. Intolerance must be fought wherever and whenever it appears.

“INTOLERANCE MUST BE FOUGHT WHEREVER AND WHENEVER IT APPEARS”

DR. ROCHELLE CHERRY, 2008 ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON HONOREE
I am deeply honored to be selected as an honoree at this beautiful Yad Vashem luncheon, an institution which not only documents the history of the Holocaust, but preserves the memories of the six million victims and enables their legacy to be passed on to our children and our children’s children.

As someone who experienced that dark hour of Jewish history, I accept this honor with humility, and with a sense of responsibility to the memory of those who did not survive to tell their own stories.

As a young woman who was liberated from Auschwitz, after witnessing the most horrific crimes to our people, I had no idea what the future would bring. So many questions – so many emotions. It is hard to imagine how surviving the atrocities that we witnessed would make us feel closer to G-d – but we did. We felt Him guiding us every step of the way.

After sixty years, we are all here as testimony. Those who survived came out of Europe with nothing – no family, no possessions, no home. But we persevered. We had faith – and we dedicated our lives to rebuilding the Jewish people. Our lives and our children’s lives are a vibrant demonstration of what the lives of six million Jews could have been. I have so much to be thankful for, but first and foremost, I must thank G-d for being with me all of my life, guiding me, giving me strength and courage, and blessing me with a wonderful husband and magnificent family, of whom I am so proud.

To even imagine, that after going through unspeakable horrors, we would not only survive, but build a beautiful home and have so much nachas. That is something words cannot express. It is certainly evidence of the eternity of Am Yisrael. May we merit to continue imparting this message to future generations until we experience the ultimate salvation.
The gray walls of Yad Vashem have long documented the horrors of the Holocaust. Now an oddly vibrant exhibition at the official Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority is telling a less-known story of the resilience of the survivors in Israel, and the extraordinary role they played in shaping the character of the new state.

“My Homeland: Holocaust Survivors in Israel” opened at the end of April week to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Jewish state in 1948, and for Holocaust Memorial Day, which was held May 1. But instead of gas chambers and ghettos, it showcases models in design, architecture and boldly colored posters that launched such potent Israeli symbols as the national airline El Al. Each exhibit is dedicated to the survivor who created it. Of more than 90 artists and innovators who feature, about only half have lived to see the day.

In the past, a dominant image of survivors in Israel has been that of frail citizens, in their nineties, brooding and battling the state bureaucracy for monthly stipends. Of the roughly 250,000 survivors in Israel, as many as 80,000 are said to be living on or near the poverty line.

Last August survivors took to the streets of Jerusalem in protest; a few wore yellow stars reminiscent of the ones the Nazis forced Jews to display. But experts say that the suffering of those left behind in their old age does not negate an immigration success story they describe as unparalleled anywhere in the world.

“The story of the Holocaust can be told from many different angles,” said Hanna Yablonska, a historical consultant to the museum. “They were acting as a normal part of society, in their own families, in their lives through their writing. Others discerned regarding their circumstances and their fate, and how they were treated during the time.”

Many more such accounts and documents over the years. Will this body of first-hand, contemporary descriptions of the Holocaust and of human behavior in extreme adversity ever be full? Much more such books are promised during the coming years. Will this body of first-hand, contemporaneous accounts ever be full? Of course not. But their contribution to our understanding is immense; without it we understand very little indeed. And with that in mind, Yad Vashem publications will continue to try to retrieve those voices from the oblivion to which the Nazis sought to confine them, in their camps and the ghettoes, or who were they addressing their accounts and documents over the years. Will this body of first-hand, contemporaneous descriptions of the Holocaust and of human behavior in extreme adversity ever be full? Much more such books are promised during the coming years. Will this body of first-hand, contemporaneous accounts ever be full? Of course not. 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A dedication of the Monument to the Murdered Jewish Citizens of Dvur Kralove was held on February 16, 2008, to commemorate the 57th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp by the Soviet army. Rabbi Norman R. Patz, a missionary to Eastern Europe, delivered the account of the event.

The dedication of the monument was attended by about 10,000 people, including students, schoolchildren, local officials, and community leaders. The ceremony was held in front of the remains of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, where thousands of Jews were killed during World War II.

The ceremony began with a moment of silence, followed by a reading of the names of the victims. Then, a wreath was laid at the base of the monument, which was dedicated to the memory of the Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

The ceremony was attended by the mayor of Dvur Kralove, as well as representatives of the Jewish community. The event was covered by local and international media, and was widely praised for its solemnity and significance.

The dedication of the monument was a reminder of the importance of remembering the past and preventing such atrocities from happening again. It was a powerful reminder of the need for tolerance, compassion, and understanding in our world today. The ceremony was a fitting tribute to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and a call to action for all of us to work towards a more just and peaceful future.
In an explanation of its policy, a Foreign Office document states: "Those who refuse transport to France and choose to remain in Germany will be accommodated in camps prepared for this purpose." "Those who volunteer to return to France will continue to receive the present generous ration of 2,500 calories per day up to and including the time of their departure. Those who choose to remain in Germany will receive the same basic scale ration as that received by the normal concentration camps."

Only two Jews chose to accept the offer of the transfer.

In the end, written by Jewish leaders of the camps on 20 October 1947 makes clear the determination of the refugees, mostly displaced from Germany and eastern Europe, to find a home in Palestine.

"Nothing will deter us from Palestine. Which jal we go to be up to you (the British). We did not ask you to reduce our rations, we did not ask you to put us in Poppendorf and Am Stau."

Britain’s impossible position was later summed up by John Coulson, a diplomat at the British Embassy in Paris.

He pointed out: "The pros and cons of keeping the Exodus camp inmates there is one point that should be kept in mind in deciding whether to release them from their camp or not."

It was obvious that it was not convenient to keep them in camps any longer. I suggest that we should make public play that we are releasing them from this kind in accordance with their wishes and that they were only put in such accommodation for the preliminary necessities of screening and maintenance."

In the end, the Government decided to follow this advice, and the Jewish migrants were set free. The vast majority of them continued to help in the struggle to create and secure the state of Israel.

ISRAEL'S HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL OPENS PHOTO ARCHIVE ON THE INTERNET

BY JULIE STAHL, CNSNEWS.COM

Ovaa Mendel looked worried as she and her husband Salomon Finding and their four children walked down the street of Stropkov, Slovakia, with other members of the Jewish community in May 1942. We'll never know what she was thinking, but a picture of the family carrying their belongings as they were being deported by the Nazis to Auschwitz-Birkenau is now part of Yad Vashem, Israel's main Holocaust memorial.

In honor of Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Day Yad Vashem expanded its internet presence by opening an online database containing nearly two-thirds of the 200,000 photos it has in its archives.

Tova's picture is one of 130,000 photos that can now be accessed online. Another photo shows Jewish women and children at the Auschitz-Birkenau concentration camp. "Deemed not fit for work," they are sitting on the grass before being gassed.

It is part of the ongoing effort to harness technology to further the cause of Holocaust remembrance,” said Estee Yaari, Yad Vashem's foreign media liaison. Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev said that putting the photo collection on the Internet would make the vast collection easily accessible to the public.

"We are hoping that it will increase public awareness of the archives' tremendous importance and encourage more people to view the photographs and documents to send them to Yad Vashem for safekeeping," Shalev said.

Refugees arriving at Haifa, where they had been toed in by the British Navy after it had fired a shot at the ship.

HUNT ON FOR NAZI DOCTOR

(Continued from page 7)

The U.S. Army intelligence file on Heim could shed light on his wartime and postwar activities, and is among hundreds of thousands transferred to the U.S. National Archives. But the Army's electronic format is such that staff have so far only been able to access about half of them, and these don't include the file requested by the AP.

Heim was relatively well-known, however, having been a national hockey player in Austria before the war, and there were plenty of witnesses from his time at Mauthausen.

Austrian authorities sent the 1950 arrest warrant to American authorities in February 1979 when the building was confiscated by German authorities.

Heim continued to live off the rents collected from the Berlin apartments until 1979 when the building was confiscated by German authorities.

He told me that he has no clue about him, and that he has no idea where to look for him. In 1961 German authorities were alerted and began investigating when they finally arrested him in September 1962, but he apparently died before he was arrested.

In 1961 German authorities were alerted and began investigating when they finally arrested him in September 1962, but he apparently died before he was arrested.

In Frankfurt, Heim’s lawyer said he still officially represents the fugitive, but has not heard from him for 20 years and has "no clue" to his whereabouts.

Aster a telephone interview if Heim was asked if he had been located, Heim said: "I don’t know."

Ruediger Heim, one of the sons, would not comment about his father, and that is absolutely false," he said. "The rest is speculation, and I can’t enter into that."
Fifty years ago, Michael Maor returned to his native Germany on behalf of the Mossad, and photographed documents that led to the conclusion of Holocaust mastermind Adolf Eichmann. On April 30, he lit a torch at Yad Vashem in memory of those who perished in the Holocaust — including his entire family. “I’ve never seen a day of peace in my life,” Maor, 75, told The Jerusalem Post. “Of course it is a big honor to be at Yad Vashem.”

Attending photography school in Germany in the 1950s, Maor was asked by the Mossad to gather evidence on Eichmann. Under the cover of darkness, he sneaked into the office of the general prosecutor in Baden Essen to steal documents proving Eichmann’s involvement in the murder of Jews. “The assignment almost got him caught. At one point, a cleaning lady was about to enter the room, but he shouted, allowing Maor to leave unnoticed,” Eichmann was executed by Italy in 1945. The guards informed the American ambassador that the body was not present in the container. “I saw doctors say that he never thought you would see it,” he said. 

“I think I found all the existing documents proving Eichmann’s involvement in the murder of Jews,” according to Nika Nir, a former Mossad agent who reported Eichmann’s death. Eichmann’s death certificate was in the possession of the Mossad. Despite dozens of books and hundreds of documents on Wallenberg, much remains hidden. The KGB’s conclusion: “Shot in 1947.”

One of the six survivors selected to

The families of the six million who perished in the Holocaust Remembrance Day in honor of the six million Jews who perished. B orn in 1933 in Halberstadt, Germany, Maor — an only child — and his family fled the Nazis, first to Italy and then to Yugoslavia, where both of his parents were murdered while hiding in the woods. “It was running for my life in the forest,” Maor said. Hiding with various foster families and at an orphanage, he finally made his way to Mandatory Palestine, ending up on Kibbutz Kfar, near Haifa, in 1945. One of the six survivors selected to

B udapest, November 1944; Another German train has loaded its cargo of Jews bound for Auschwitz. A young Swedish diplomat pushes past the SS guard and scrambles onto the roof of a cattle car. Ignoring shots fired over his head, he reaches through the open door to out-stretched hands, picks up dozens of bogus “passports” that extended Sweden’s protection to the bearers. He orders everyone with a document off the train and into his caravan of vehicles. The guards look on, dumbfounded.

Raoul Wallenberg was a minor official of a neutral country, with an unimposing appearance and gentle manner. Recruited and financed by the OSS, he had been recruited for his work with the Jewish underground, communists working for the Soviets, and British, U.S. and Canadian diplomats. “One hundred and thirty thousand Christian, Muslim, and Jewish refugees were under Russian escort to collect some personal effects, then was never seen in public again. And what did his country or his influential cousins do about it?” 

Looking back a half century later, the Swedish government acknowledged that it’s own passive resistance and lack of information about any of its diplomats was astounding, and that it had missed several chances to win his freedom. “It is unconscionable”, says Wallenberg’s half-sister, Nina Lagergren “Here is a man who fought so that we would get out of there and make new families, to spit in the Nazi’s eyes. Our babies are our revenge.”

Elsa grew up with nine siblings, and she was the sole survivor of her family. After the war she fled to England, settled in Brooklyn.

Wallenberg’s rescue mission inevitably placed him in a vortex of intrigue and espionage. “I never thought I would live to see the day when I could set foot on the spot where I once worked,” says Elsa Wrobel. 

Whether or not he himself was passing on intelligence, Russia had plenty of reason to suspect him of spying, either for the Allies or Germany, or both.

Wallenberg had ties to all the major actors in Hungary,” says Susanne Berger, a German researcher who collaborated with the Swedish-Russian research project. The Stockholm chief of the War Refugee Board, Iver C. Olsen, was also a key member of the 35-man OSS station in the Swedish capital, and it was he who recruited Wallenberg, who in turn kept the OSS informed by sending his communications through Swedish diplomatic channels.

The story is denied to the CIA that Wallenberg ever spied for the OSS, and Mesinai and Berger offer a different likely scenario: the idea was a source for the Pond, which was a rival to the OSS known only to Roosevelt and a few insiders in the White House.

A small clandestine intelligence- gathering operation, the Pond relied on contacts in private corporations and hand-picked "friends and colleagues with access to private corporations and hand-picked "friends and colleagues with access to secrets, a network of there and he would get out of there and make new families, to spit in the Nazi’s eyes. Our babies are our revenge.”

Elsa Wrobel was a part of one of the first meetings that was held in the Stella and Sam Skura’s home, where a handful of the Jewish Society for Yad Vashem was established. Elsa was also an active and vocal member of the new Jewish Museum in Jerusalem, “The Holocaust Survivors and Their Descendants.”

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in a German-speaking area of Austria-Sudetenland, of an enigma to the end. 

Ironically, the rise of Hitler and his annexation of the Sudetenland — the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia — saved Schindler’s neck at this point. He was an officer in the German army and in September 1939 became a card-carrying member of Adolf Hitler’s National Socialists and moved to Poland, where he acquired a formerly Jewish-owned factory in Krakow at a knock-down price.

Most of the employees from the factory were Jewish, at first simply because they were cheaper but as Schindler began to be horned by the increasing brutality of the Nazis, something changed in his mind, and he began protecting them.

Schindler managed to convince the authorities, including concentration camp commander Amon Goeth, that his factory was essential to the war effort and that even though it was owned by a Jew, he would not get away with it. He put the lives of the workers first in the factory. Schindler had no connection to either of his parents, who were both anti-Semitic, but he was a Jewish convert and his wife was a Catholic, and he married her in 1936.

After years of ill health and a string of failed business ventures, Schindler died a bitter man said, ‘Yes, that is me,” recounts Emilie Schindler, whom he never saw again until 1965. In 1962 he bought a concrete factory that went bankrupt in less than 12 months. When he tried to get it again, he suffered a heart attack that nearly killed him. His war heroes had won him recognition in Israel — he planted a tree at the Yad Vashem memorial — back in West Germany, however, he was long forgotten despite receiving a medal in 1956, something which left him bitter. Trautwein told AFP.

It was her late husband, Dieter Trautwein, a provost, who tracked Schindler down after learning of his story through her. The Schindlers were married and had three children. The Schindlers were married and had three children. The Schindlers were married and had three children. The Schindlers were married and had three children.

“Never to Forget.”

OSKAR SCHINDLER, FROM HOLOCAUST HERO TO OBScurity

Oskar Schindler saved more than 1,000 Jews from the gas chambers, but after 1945 he fell into obscurity and poverty and died without the recognition he deserved, a new exhibition in Frankfurt shows.

After years of ill health and a string of failed business ventures, Schindler died a bitter man aged 66 in 1974, two decades before Steven Spielberg’s 1993 film “Schindler’s List” made him famous worldwide.

A Holocaust survivor saved by Schindler.

“He was an unusual man for an unusual time. But [the war] was a high point of his life, and afterwards, things went downhill,” says Ursula Trautwein, a friend of Schindler in Frankfurt, where he lived from 1957 until his death. His beginnings and early life were hardly promising and he remained something of an enigma to the end.

Born in 1908 into a middle-class family in a German-speaking area of Austria-Hungary, which after 1918 became part of Czechoslovakia, Schindler’s father, a lawyer and his marriage, in 1928, to Emilie, was childless and not a happy one. He was fond of a drink, was aὺρφωσηρ μαζευτική and fathered two illegitimate children. He was also no angel in other ways, and his activities before the war suggested another business acumen nor any readiness to let his conscience get in the way of making a profit.

After several years that included various jobs and periods of unemployment, which did nothing to temper his penchant for fast cars and the high life, he was arrested in 1938 by the Czechoslovak police.

Perhaps he only knew how to run a loss-making factory, making things no one needed, because when it came to running a going concern, Schindler struggled.

He tried various ventures, helped by friends in India, in the US and Brazil, at first simply because they were cheaper but as Schindler began to be horned by the increasing brutality of the Nazis, something changed in his mind, and he began protecting them.

Schindler managed to convince the authorities, including concentration camp commander Amon Goeth, that his factory was essential to the war effort and that even though it was owned by a Jew, he would not get away with it. He put the lives of the workers first in the factory. Schindler had no connection to either of his parents, who were both anti-Semitic, but he was a Jewish convert and his wife was a Catholic, and he married her in 1936.

After years of ill health and a string of failed business ventures, Schindler died a bitter man said, ‘Yes, that is me,” recounts Emilie Schindler, whom he never saw again until 1965. In 1962 he bought a concrete factory that went bankrupt in less than 12 months. When he tried to get it again, he suffered a heart attack that nearly killed him. His war heroes had won him recognition in Israel — he planted a tree at the Yad Vashem memorial — back in West Germany, however, he was long forgotten despite receiving a medal in 1956, something which left him bitter. Trautwein told AFP.

It was her late husband, Dieter Trautwein, a provost, who tracked Schindler down after learning of his story through her. The Schindlers were married and had three children. The Schindlers were married and had three children. The Schindlers were married and had three children.

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JEWISH REMAINS DUG UP IN BELARUS

W orkers rebuilding a sports stadium on the site of an 18th century Jewish cemetery in Belarus say they have no choice but to consign the bones to city dumps. It's impossible to pack an entire cemetery into a bag, said worker Mikhail Gubets, adding that he stopped counting the skulls when the number went over 105. But critics say it is part of a pattern of callous indifference towards Belarus' Jewish heritage that was prevalent when the country was a Soviet republic and hasn't changed.

The stadium in Gomel, Belarus's second-largest city and a center of Jewish life until World War II, is one of four that were built on top of Jewish cemeteries around the country.

The Gomel cemetery was destroyed then the stadium was built in 1961, but the remains lay largely undisturbed until this spring when reconstruction began and a bulldozer turned up the first bones. A Jewish leader in Gomel, Vladimir Gershankov, says he asked the builders to put the bones in a separate area at a cemetery that has a monument to Holocaust victims.

"We knew we can't stop the construction but we're trying to minimize the destruction," Gershankov said. But some say they have ruled that the construction can go ahead because the bones are more than 50 years old. Igor Poluyan, the city official responsible for building sports facilities, says he doesn't understand the problem. "If something was not destroyed there, we'll collect it and take it away," he said.

A history professor, Yevgeny Malikov, said he was upset by the destruction of the city's heritage. He has filled three sacks with bones and pulled aside two of the unearthed marble gravestones. Other gravestones are piled near a trash bin or already carry t paradise. He has filled three sacks with bones and put aside two of the unearthed marble gravestones. Other gravestones are piled near a trash bin or already carry

A few years later the Soviets sent out feelers into perspective: "Whether or not Wallenberg's death in 1947 was a suicide has been a matter of conjecture for decades," said former CIA analyst Mark Stout who wrote a brief unofficial history of the Pond.

When shown a gallery of photographs, Larina immediately picked out Wallenberg's one who could have been Wallenberg. "I recognized him. He had a license for the pistol he bought but never used. I also have his passport, a stack of currency, a Swedish passport, and a Swedish driver's license that he used," she said.

Some stories, like Larina's, ring particularly true.

One compelling account came in 1961. Swedish physician Nanna Svartz reported, "came spontaneously. He went home. I was later told that Wallenberg was at a psychiatric hospital at the time. A Russian, Alexandr Myasnikov, later claimed he had been misunderstood, but in 2003, he, in turn, insisted he had told lies, the question remains: Why was he never freed?"

If indeed Wallenberg's death in 1947 was a suicide, the explanation remains: Why was he never freed? The 2001 Swedish report speculated that the suicide may have been planned for the Soviet.ru to release him. Still, "It would have been exceptional to order the execution of a diplomat from a neutral country. It might have appeared simpler to keep him in isolation," the report said. Berger, the independent researcher, has e-mailed a new, detailed request to Moscow to release files on prisoners who shared cells with the missed diplomat and video that Ben Gurion and "the Satanic Jews thought up an evil plot to rid the burden of disabled and handicapped in twisted criminal ways."

The map that Jews made to the Holocaust and blamed the Nazis in order to "benefit from international sympathy.

The Holocaust was a joke, and part of the perfect show that Ben Gurion put on," said Amin Dabur, head of the Palestinian Center for Strategic Research, in the video. Dabur added that the "Jewish plan" focused on developing a "terrorist youth [for Israel]", and that the figure of six million Jewish victims is a mere prop.
Two hundred people gathered at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, California for the American Society for Yad Vashem event at the end of February. The event, which was organized together with the Jewish Life Foundation, saluted Hollywood and the films that were made about the Holocaust. Among the participants were David and Fela Shapell; Barry and Marilyn Rubenstein; Jan and Suzanne Czuker and their son Ed with his wife Elisaa; Jack Belz and son Gary with his wife Shelly; Barbara Kort, Jona Goldrich, Maria Herskovic and daughters Patricia and Suzanne; Bernie & Hanna Rubenstein; Marilyn Ziering; Beryl Grace & Jonathan Rosenberg; Lou and Trudy Kestenbaum; Geoffrey Rotat, Sam Delug, Moshe and Helen Sassover, Jarow Rogovin, and many others.

Honorees included director Arthur Hiller for his film *The Man in the Glass Booth*; director Paul Verhoeven for his film *The Black Book*; violinist Miri Ben Ari for the music in the film *Freedom Writers*, and others. Actresses Valerie Harper, Lainie Kazan, Millie Perkins and Mare Winningham, and actor Jon Voight read from the Diary of Anne Frank and the last letters of Holocaust victims compiled by Yad Vashem.

Actress Millie Perkins (left), who portrayed Anne Frank in the film *Diary of Anne Frank* with Yad Vashem Benefactors, Marilyn and Barry Rubenstein.

Standing from left to right, Gary Belz, actor Jon Voight, Cheryl Simon, Yad Vashem Builder, Jona Goldrich, Gary Belz's wife, Shelly. Sitting from left to right, Yad Vashem supporter, Barbara Kort, violinist Miri Ben-Ari, and Yad Vashem Benefactor Jack Belz.

Susanne and Jan Czuker, Yad Vashem Benefactors.

Yad Vashem Benefactors, Fela and David Shapell (middle) with Branko Lustig, Academy Award-winning producer of *Schindler’s List* and his wife, Mirjana Lustig.

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