also no stranger to valor. As you will later Bielski’s courage to screen. unparalleled bravery in their own lives, and Jewish resistance during the war, through tions, helped show the world the role of Emmy, and Golden Globe nomination, Liev Halpern — thank you for a job well done. The sight that we saw from above on that September 4, 1943, 1000 Jews, who had been transported from Drancy in France to Auschwitz-Birkenau, were murdered and cremated, as had so many been murdered just before and still after them. Precisely 60 years later, I led a formation of three F-15 fighter jets of the Israeli Air Force, in a symbolic flight over the skies of the death camps in Poland. The cockpits were manned exclusively by pilots who were the children or grandchildren of Holocaust victims and survivors. Most of my own mother’s family was brutally murdered by gunfire in the death gul- lies in eastern Poland, today Belarus. For it was because of Eli’s vision and determination that we are able to stand here today, proud of what we have accom- plished in the area of Holocaust commemo- ration and education, in Israel and throughout the world. Eli made it his life’s mission to honor the memory of our heroes and martyrs and ensure that it be held for eternity. We will miss Eli dearly, but it is our commit- ment to continue in the path he forged. We will carry out the work of the American & International Societies for Yad Vashem, and continue to be dedicated to the cause of remembrance. At these fraught times of terrorism and anti-Semitism, it is important that we renew our pledge to educate our children and grandchildren and indeed the world about the perils of intolerance and hate, those which gave birth to our biggest catastrophe, the Shoah. As your chairman I pledge to you that the torch held by my predecessor will continue to illuminate our sacred mission and burn bright. I now wish to extend my deepest grati- tude to Marlyn Rubenstein, for her role as director of our International Representatives Network. And thank you all for being here tonight.

AMIR ESHEL, Major-General, Commander of Israel’s Air Force

Six months ago I was privileged to receive the command of the Israel Air Force. The responsibility for the most central defensive and offensive force for the protection of the State of Israel was given to my hands. In my office, in the headquarters of the Israel Air Force, hangs a single picture. The picture is not very large, but to me, it says it all. On September 4, 1943, 1000 Jews, who had been transported from Drancy in France to Auschwitz-Birkenau, were murdered and cremated, as had so many been murdered just before and still after them. Precisely 60 years later, I led a formation of three F-15 fighter jets of the Israeli Air Force, in a symbolic flight over the skies of the death camps in Poland. The cockpits were manned exclusively by pilots who were the children or grandchildren of Holocaust victims and survivors. Most of my own mother’s family was brutally murdered by gunfire in the death gul- lies in eastern Poland, today Belarus. For

Cesia and Frank Blaichman displayed unparalleled bravery in their own lives, and ignoring Jewish history. Ignoring a woman’s history.

In that photograph on my wall, one can see two of those jets, with their blue Magen David, the Star of David. Behind them see the remnants of the crematoria, the selec- tion platform, the remaining huts, and that terrible, infamous gateway into the camp. From above, the concentration camp looks like a peaceful park, green fields in a village-like pastoral setting. The thought that this was the appearance of the cemetry of the Jewish people, a hell on earth created by human beings, where Jews had been murdered simply for having been Jews, had a profound effect on all of us in the air above. We stared down at the camp, thinking how, in this place, had flourished the death factory created by the nation that previ- ously had taken the leading role in the cul- ture and science of Europe. We saw but could not comprehend. From above, we could imagine seeing the small figures of people marching along the selection platforms straight to their deaths. We, the Sabras, who had been educated in our youth on the ethos of the New Jew, had often looked with disdain upon the so-called “Jews who went to the slaughter like sheep.” How many trials and tribulations did the Jews of Europe endure in the ghettos, in the transports, and in the camp, until their final annihilation by overwhelming forces? What bravery did it take to undergo all this? I understood how wrong we were about our attitude to the victims and to the survivors. The sight that we saw from above on that September 4 in 2003 was identical to the sight seen by thousands of Allied pilots who flew over the camps in 1944. They saw but did not know. They did not realize. But their leaders knew. Nevertheless, Auschwitz and the rail lines leading to the camp were not designated as military tar- get! The thought that a relatively small bomb- ing attack could have prevented the deaths of Hungarian Jewry and the Jews of ghetto Lozit arouses difficult thoughts, feelings, and questions. Questions that have no good answer.

I thought to myself about the amazing (Continued on page 16)
ANTI-SEMITISM IN EUROPE ON THE RISE

The levels in Austria and Germany were lower, but compared to the rates in 2009 a sharp rise was revealed. While the survey found 10 percent of the population held anti-Semitic attitudes in 2009, 17 percent do today.

The survey is disturbing by the fact that anti-Semitism remains at high levels across the continent and infects many Europeans at a much higher level than we see here in the United States," Foxman said. "In Hungary, Spain, and Poland the numbers for anti-Semitic attitudes are literally off the charts and demand a serious response from political, civic, and religious leaders.

BULGARIA TO JOIN HOLOCAUST INTERNATIONAL BODY

Bulgaria's Cabinet has approved a proposal for the country to join, as an observer, the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF), the Government's press service said in a statement.

This decision reflects the importance that the German government attaches to the subject of the Holocaust. The commemoration of the Holocaust is an endless task," Avner Shalev said.

German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle, during his visit to Israel in February, signed an agreement granting 10 million euros (13 million dollars) to Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Center for the next five years.

"We know that anti-Semitism has not been eradicated in Europe," Monti said at a ceremony night marking the 69th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and deportration of 1,024 Roman Jews to Auschwitz. "We will not leave you alone."

"There are states also agree on the importance of ensuring that minorities are protected and not discriminated against," Monti added.

GERMANY DONATES $13 MILLION TO YAD VASHEM HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

Germans who committed murder during World War II, he said, "means also assum- ing the responsibility to combat every form of anti-Semitism and racism, and to work so that minorities are protected and not discriminated against."
HUNGARIAN NAZI CAPTURE PLOT “MADE IN ISRAEL”

Ladislaus Csizsik-Csatary, accused of committing atrocities in the internment and deportation to Auschwitz and other Nazi death camps. Authorities said Csatary was present at the time part of Hungary.

In May 1944, Csatary was named chief police officer in the Slovakian city of Košice, a region in the present-day Slovakia.

Peter Sachs holds up a book with some of his father, Hans Sachs’ favorite posters. The court acknowledged that Peter Sachs “was ‘made in Israel.’ It’s the product of our Jerusalem office. "This whole operation was 'made in Israel.' It’s the product of our Jerusalem office."

The trial concluded seven years of legal battles over a vast collection dating back to the late 19th century that is now being returned from the German Historical Museum’s collection in 1990 after the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall.

The case ended up with the German marks (then worth about $50,000) seized from Hans Sachs’ father, Hans Sachs' favorite posters. The court acknowledged that Peter Sachs “was ‘made in Israel.’ It’s the product of our Jerusalem office. "This whole operation was 'made in Israel.' It’s the product of our Jerusalem office."

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Pension Gesner, 88, said “we were in Košice until we were transferred to Auschwitz in April 1944. I don’t remember Csatary clearly, but I’ve heard his name. Why does God give these people such long lives?” Gesner wondered. “It’s too late because he has already lived his life. As it is you don’t have much of a life at that age.”

Holocaust survivor Mariana Boaz was not consoled by the news either. “It’s a disgrace for humanity that he has only been captured now and what happened with Demjanjuk may happen again,” she said. “It might be better than never, but the world is still silent because he got to live his life, unlike others whose deaths are his fault,” Boaz noted.

Eva Franick seemed more content, saying “I’m happy for her feel because it’s nice to know that there are people out there who still care about serving justice to humanity that he has only been captured now and what happened with Demjanjuk may happen again,” she said. “It might be better than never, but the world is still silent because he got to live his life, unlike others whose deaths are his fault,” Boaz noted.

FIRST HOLOCAUST HISTORY BOOK IN FARSİ PUBLISHED FOR IRANIANS

While Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad continues to deny the Holocaust, lending his anti-Semitic rhetoric to the already reprehensible trend, a 65-year-old Jewish-American-Iranian from Orange County, California, has decided to write a four-volume book in Farsi, in an attempt to reveal the truths and indisputable facts of the time in a language which, thus far, has virtually no record of them.

An Babaknia’s book entitled Holocaust, while his fate and possible compensation are unclear, is being released in Farsi, a language which, thus far, has virtually no record of them.

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W

utshell about seeing the posters or even bringing them back from the German Historical Museum. He wrote the Communist authorities who still care about serving justice to humanity that he has only been captured now and what happened with Demjanjuk may happen again,” she said. “It might be better than never, but the world is still silent because he got to live his life, unlike others whose deaths are his fault,” Boaz noted.

Evren Franick seemed more content, saying “I’m happy for her feel because it’s nice to know that there are people out there who still care about serving justice to humanity that he has only been captured now and what happened with Demjanjuk may happen again,” she said. “It might be better than never, but the world is still silent because he got to live his life, unlike others whose deaths are his fault,” Boaz noted.

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In January of 1943, the World Jewish Congress in Geneva asked “the most senior American diplomat in Switzerland, the minister of the legislature,” to relay a report “to the State Department for transmis-

sion to Jewish leaders in the United States.” This document, known as cable 482, “reported on both a step-up in the im-
plementation of the German government’s plan to murder all Jewish men, women, and children on the European continent . . . and the dying Romanian Jews who had been deported to the nighmarch time land of Transylvania in the Nazi-conquered Ukraine.” In “February of 1943 in cable 354, the State Department, in reply, referring to cable 482, closed the American consul for even having sent” the cable.

The story of America’s activity, or rather inactivity, as regards any type of aid to the helpless and hopeless Jews of Europe dur-


**REVIEWED BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN**

A ward-winning British author and biog-

rapher A. N. Wilson offers us a must-

read, breathtaking interpretation in concise form of the enigma called Hitler, whose un-

paralleled modern bloodthirsty ended with the murderous destruction of six million Eu-

ropean Jews in the context of World War II’s 50 million victims.

Wilson argues, though it is contestable, that what is so frightening about Hitler is not so much about Adolf Hitler, the leader who murdered and maimed millions, is so much about his usual, that he was malevolent. He cut changing times, with sci-

ence replacing religion and Darwinism, which supported hundreds of children in

in the Balance: The Holocaust. FDR’s State Department, and the Moral Disgrace of an American Aristocracy. makes it plain that many who worked in the State Depart-

ment have a lot to answer for.

According to Wallace, a major role in the State Department’s “dis-

grace” was undoubtedly played by “Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long, in those years respon-

sible for illegal books, visa is-

sues, and special war problems, among others.” In fact, a clue to the man and his prejudices can already be seen in 1938 when, after reading Adolf Hitler’s Mein Kampf, commented in his Diary in the book way “eloquent in opposition to and Jewish expul-

sion” and, in keeping with the above — we discover how, but short after, Long, now assistant secretary of state, wrote in a 1940 in-house State Department memo-

randum that “We can delay and effectively stop for a temporary period of indefinite in-
TROVE OF EVERYDAY ITEMS REVEALS LITHUANIA’S DARK HOLOCAUST SECRET

BY OFER ADERET, HAARETZ

On the shiny glass table lie jewelry, coins and metal utensils — similar to those found in one of the 10 fortresses, built surrounding the city in the 19th century, that were used as prisons. In the summer of 1941, 4,000 Jews from the city were quickly gathered in the seventh fort and murdered. Some were shot using machine guns and others were killed by hand grenades.

Over the past several decades, the personal belongings of the Jews killed there — eyeglasses, rings, pen knives, scissors, and coins — were hidden by the dirt. Hebrew letters decorated some of the items, and are the only testimony as to the identity of the victims.

Orlov said he located the items based on historical documents and pictures that indicated the location. Some were found in a nearby well at a depth of three meters. Over the years, the rain and snow had swept the items into the well. “We pumped out the water and sifted what we found,” said Orlov.

The items found among the sand and stones were “the personal items of the victims,” he said. A Jewish prayer book and a shtreimel were included in the items, but also found were prayer shawls and a prayer book for children.

The weather was not the only thing that made discovering the items difficult over the past 70 years. After the Soviet Union took over Lithuania following the Second World War, the site was covered over with asphalt and was also used as a garbage dump. The stories about the site were forgotten as the generations passed. Only a few in Kovno knew the truth about the site, but they never spoke about it, said Orlov. It didn’t interest anyone and no one researched it. There was barely any information available, he added.

Belongings of Jewish victims were buried under asphalt and garbage for seven decades.

O ften overlooked by scholars, sometimes privately referred to FDR as “a great and influential of Jewish leaders of the 1930s Zionist movement, was the most prominent and vocal supporter for accepting the refugees — but no one knew the names of the victims. “It’s insane that the murderers live on while the victims remain anonymous,” said Orlov. “We only found a few of the names, but that’s better than nothing.”

Germans did not carry out the mass murder at the site — that was organized and carried out from the beginning to the end by local Lithuanians. The provisional government in Lithuania, which existed between the end of the Soviet occupation and the time of the German occupation — after Germany attacked the Soviet Union — decided the concentration of the camp at the site.

Many carried out by local residents. “Not everyone was a criminal or from the lower class. Some were educated people,” said Orlov. Dr. Irshki Abramski of Yad Vashem accompanied Orlov on his visit here. They speak the language as Abramski was born in Lithuania and her mother was a Holocaust survivor of the Vilna ghetto. “All the families are still alive,” she said. “Orlov discovered something completely new, which was unknown, and it is impossible to overestimate its importance.”

The importance of the research is in who is conducting it: “Not us, the Jews, are telling the story, but an independent Lithuanian researcher who revealed the role of the Lithuanians and their responsibility for the murders,” said Abramski.

JEWISH LEADER TO FDR: DON’T SEND NEW YEAR GREETINGS

BY RAFAEL MEDDOFF, THE JERUSALEM POST

Every year, on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, Jewish political leaders, candidates for office, and other VIPs send the Jewish community their wishes for a happy new year in a catalog of antiquity.

Although these boilerplate messages consist of general platitudes, without reference to any of the actual issues or problems troubling American Jewry, Jewish leaders respond with fulsome expressions of gratitude. But in 1943, one Jewish leader decided that sympathetic words and no accompanying action would no longer do. A Holocaust was raging. Enough was enough.

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, leader of the American Jewish Congress, the World Jewish Congress, and the American Zionist movement, was the most prominent and influential of Jewish leaders of the 1930s and 1940s. He was also deeply attached to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the New Deal, and the Democratic Party. Wise sometimes privately referred to FDR as “the All Highest,” “the Great Man,” or other terms of reverence.


But by 1943, there was a growing sense of disappointment in the Jewish community over the Roosevelt administration’s in-sistence that nothing could be done to rescue Jews from Hitler.

FDR’s aids claimed, for example, that no ships were available to transport refugees — but a Baltimore Jewish Times editorial pointed out that empty troop-supply ships were “frequently going out of their way to find ballast” to weigh them down on their return trips, and that the Allies had managed to find ships to bring tens of thousands of Polish refugees to Iran, Uganda and Mexico.

The administration asserted that refugees would take jobs away from Americans — but Congressmen Samuel Dickstein revealed in a radio address that the Department of Agriculture was spending $30 million “to import into this country Mexican workers” and other residents of this hemisphere to help to relieve our labor shortage.

US officials said that the immigration quota system prevented admitting more refugees — but immigration “has for years been held below the legal quotas” by the administration as a matter of policy, the World Jewish Congress charged. “[The] admission of immigrants has been obstructed by the piling up of formalities, observations, [and] inquiries.” The whole thing could be summarily dropped, fully or in part, by a simple order of the chief executive.

On May 1, 1943, American and British officials were concluding the proceedings of their conference in Bermuda on the refugee problem. It was clear that no concrete rescue plans would emerge. That evening, at a Zionist conference in Philadelphia, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver of Cleveland delivered the sharpest public challenge yet to President Roosevelt’s Jewish refugee policy.

A rising star in the American Zionist leadership and an advocate of greater action for Jewish persecution, Silver complained. “When pressed to do something about it, they gracefully remind us how difficult it is to do anything for these unfortunate people under present war conditions.”

Silver’s letter was critical of Rabbi Wise and other FDR supporters for accepting the White House’s excuses on rescue. In his keynote address at the United Palestine Appeal’s national conference, Silver pulled no punches.

“Our former friends in government circles — note Silver’s use of the term ‘former’ — ‘content themselves with sending us pro forma expressions of sympathy on Jewish persecution,’ Silver complained. “When pressed to do something about it, they gracefully remind us how difficult it is to do anything for these unfortunate people under present war conditions.”

The writer is director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies.
Survivors' Corner

Saved in Shanghai

By Michael Shmilovich, The Times of Israel

During World War II, some 20,000 Jews fought from that camp in the far
Chinese city. David Kranzler, a noted
Holocaust historian, calls it the "miracle of Shanghai." — a rare bright spot in the
dark tragedy of that era.

Wealthy Jews from Baghdad had been
living in Shanghai since the 19th century.

A young Jewish refugee and her Chinese girlfriends in Shanghai

PROUDLY BEARING ELDERS’ SCARS

BY JODI RUDOREN, THE NEW YORK TIMES

When Eli Sagir showed her grandfa-
ther, Yosef Diamant, the new tattoo
on her left forearm, he bent his head to
kiss it.

Mr. Diamant had the same tattoo, the
number 157622, permanently inked on his
own arm by the Nazis at Auschwitz. Nearly
70 years later, Ms. Sagir got hers at the
tattoo parlor downtown after a high school
trip to Poland. The next week, her mother
and brother also had the six digits in-
scribed on their forearms. This month,
her uncle followed suit.

"All my generation knows nothing about
the Holocaust," said Ms. Sagir, 21, who
has had the tattoo for four years. "You talk
with people and they think it's like the Ex-
odus from Egypt, ancient history. I decided
to do it to remind my generation: I want to
tell them my grandfather's story and the
Holocaust story..."

Mr. Diamant's descendants are among
a handful of children and grandchildren of
Auschwitz survivors here who have taken
the step of memorializing the darkest days
of history on their own bodies. With the
number of survivors here dropping to
about 200,000 from 400,000 a decade ago,
institutions and individuals are grap-
pling with how best to remember the Holo-
cust — so integral to Israel's founding and
identity — after those who lived it are
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The Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem in
Jerusalem and other museums are trying to
make exhibits more accessible, using in-
dividual stories and special effects. Argu-
ments rage about whether that approach
trivializes symbols long held as sacred and
whether the primary message should be about
the importance of a self-reliant Jew-

Livia Ravek was branded with the number 4559. Now her grandson, Daniel Philosoph, has the same
number 157622, permanently inked on his
chest and more commonly on the left fore-
arm and after World War I to escape pogroms, anti-Semitism, and the Soviets.
The third influx of Jewish immigrants,
from Germany and Austria, arrived in the
1930s, fleeing the rise of Adolf Hitler and
the Nazis.

And soon after this impoverished group
arrived, it was followed by the next:
refugees from Poland and Lithuania in
mid-1941. At least they were able to bring
some of their possessions with them. Nina
Wartens belonged to this group.

SHANGHAI, AN OPEN CITY

Still an active woman who wakes up
at 6 a.m. each day at her home in Tel
Aviv's Ramat Aviv Gimmel, Admoni, now
79, headed the Israel-America Chamber of
Commerce for 26 years. She looks back
on her experience in Shanghai fondly, even idyl-
ically. "The Chinese people in Shanghai were very
kind," she said softly.

"That's what I remember."

"The idea, when the war first started, was to go to
Vilnius," she said, because that's where her mother
was from and where her grandfather was a leader in
the Jewish community.

So the family drove to Vil-
nius, "bombs falling on the
way."

But the Soviets en-
tered the area fairly soon afterward. My
father was considered a capitalist, and it
was not terribly nice for him. He was con-
cerned, but he was more concerned that
the Germans were coming soon."

"They looked for a way out, and heard
that a Japanese consul in Kaunas, Lithua-
nia, a man named Chune Sugihara,
was issuing transit visas for Jews through
Japan. By going against orders and issu-
ing Jewish visas such as Sugihara saved more than 3,000 people.

But in order to get a transit visa, you
need an end visa. "My parents received a
paper from the Dutch consul that stated
that in order to go to Curaçao (a formerly
Dutch island off the coast of Venezuela),
one did not need an entry visa." This doc-
ument essentially served as an end visa
for her family, and others, because it pro-
vided them with a destination.

On the basis of that piece of paper, the
Japanese consul gave us a transit visa (in
1940), and we also got an exit visa from
the Soviet..." not a small feat at the
time because people could not "come and
go as they pleased," she added.

"My father bought tickets from intourist
[the travel agency] and we took a train to
Moscow, and then the Trans-Siberian Rail-
way to Vladivostok, a 10-day trip. You had
to pay in dollars," Nina said. And it was ex-
tremely dangerous to be found with dollars at
that time.

When the train stopped along the route
people banged on the windows, begging
for food. "It was a very sad sight," Nina
said.

The family then took a ship from Vladi-
vostok to Suruga, a Japanese port. From
Suruga they went to Kobe, one of Japan's
main cities, where she entered first grade
at St. Marie's School. It was run by nuns,
but she was excused from "crossing" her-

(Continued on page 14)

The United States Holocaust Memorial Mu-
seum's Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, and at the adjacent Birkenau the next
March. They were the only camps to em-
ploy this practice, and it is unclear how
many people were branded, briefly on the
chest and more commonly on the left fore-
arm."

"Only those deemed fit for work were tat-
tooed, so despite the degradation, the
numbers were in some cases worn with
pride, particularly lower ones, which indi-
cated having survived several brutal win-
ters in the camp. Lieutenant Primo Levi wrote in his seminal memoir, Survival in Auschwitz,
"describing the tattoos as part of "the demolition of a
man."

After the war, some Auschwitz survivors
rushed to remove the tattoos through sur-
gery or hid them under long sleeves. But
over the decades, others played their num-ers in the lottery or used them as pass-
words.

Dana Doron, a 31-year-old doctor and
dauhter of a survivor, interviewed about
50 tattooed survivors for the new Israeli
documentary Numbered, which she di-
rected with Uriel Sinai, a photographer; it
will make its premiere in the United States
next month at the Chicago International
Film Festival.

When she asked survivors whether lovers
kissed the number as they might a scar, Ms.
Doron said, "some of them looked at me like, 'What? No, it's not a tattoo! And
"It's shocking when you see the number
on a very young girl's hand," Ms. Sagir
said. "It's very shocking. You have to ask,
Why?"

Tattooing was introduced at Auschwitz
in the autumn of 1941, according to the
United States Holocaust Memorial Mu-
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said. "It's very shocking. You have to ask,
Why?"
WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO BURN JEWS?

In the spring of 1944, Martin Hecht and his family were sent to Auschwitz from their village in Transylvania. "The people were dying like flies and we took comfort in the fact that there would be more room on the trains," he says. "How did we survive and reach Israel?"

Martin Hecht turned 80 last December 10. This date has a special meaning for him: until several years ago, his birthday was marked on a completely different date — March 2, 1931. He pulled this random date out of his head in 1945, when he was asked for his personal data a moment before boarding a ship from Germany to Southampton, England, as part of a group of orphaned children who survived the war.

"Britain's condition was 1,000 orphans under the age of 16," he tells Ynet. "I was a little boy who survived the camps, I had no idea when I was born, so I made up a date. Thanks to the Romanian archives, I recently discovered my real date of birth."

WHAT’S SS?

Hecht was born in the village of Ruskova in Transylvania into a well-established family which owned land in a village where most of the population was composed of traditional Jews. "The Jews were financially established compared to the non-Jews who worked our land," he says. "There was a main street with Jewish houses on both sides, and synagogues at the start and end of the street.

There was no radio and no newspapers, ever. There was no cinema, either. The adults may have known about the war, but the children had no idea what was going on."

The first time he was exposed to modern civilization, he says, was a Friday. Hecht remembers, "Several hours before the start of Shabbat. The force set up barriers on both sides of the main street, and brutally entered the houses one by one, clearing out the inhabitants who gathered outside the synagogue.

"Raus!" (Out) The German soldiers shouted and removed the Jews out of their homes. No one understood why they were doing it.

Hecht and his family were transferred with thousands of village residents to the nearby town of Viseu de Sus, where the Jews of the area were all executed in a gas chamber and held in ghettos. It was the first time he had left his village, the first time he was exposed to modern life and saw a light bulb with his own eyes. The shock, he says, was huge.

"Three weeks later, the SS soldiers ordered us to form lines again and led us to the railway station. The Hecht family boarded the second transport out of four. That was the moment when 12-year-old Martin realized that something bad was about to happen."

JAN KARSKI: MEMORIES OF THE HOLOCAUST HAUNTED HIM TO THE END

I n May President Obama bestowed the nation’s highest civilian honor — the Presidential Medal of Freedom — on 13 individuals. One of them was Jan Karski. Karski was an institution at Georgetown University. For years, his classes were favorites among upper-division students in the School of Foreign Service. He was visibly striking, handsome, always finely dressed and standing rigidly straight. He had the air of nobility — an air exuded by his thick Polish accent and unusual facial features, with eyes that betrayed a life of tragedy.

He was born Jan Kozielewski in 1914 in Lodz, Poland. He was a Polish communist and a young diplomat in the autumn of 1939, he was called to active duty as a Polish cavalry officer with the storm clouds of World War II on the horizon. For Kozielewski, the war as a soldier in uniform was short-lived. Germany overran Poland in the west. In an often forgotten episode, Russia also invaded Poland from the east, in an alliance with a secret pact between Hitler and Stalin.

He escaped from the Soviets, barely avoiding the massacre of Polish officers at the Katyn Forest, then from the Nazis. Returning to Warsaw to join the Polish resistance, he adopted the nom de guerre that he would keep for the rest of his life — Karski.

Karski undertook many missions as a courier for the Polish government-in-exile. The Gestapo captured and brutally tortured him — the reason for those unusual facial features. He escaped again, and his final missions included dangerous visits to the Warsaw ghetto and a Nazi death camp.

Karski made his way to London, where he delivered the first eyewitness reports of the Holocaust to Allied leaders. In 1943, he went to Washington, where he gave personal testimony to members of Congress and President Franklin Roosevelt. He tried in vain to convince the Allies to take direct action to stop the genocide. He was a living refutation of the claim, "We did not know."

Karski was tormented throughout his life by what he had witnessed. He tormented himself with the notion that he had not done enough. In 1981, at a conference organized by Elie Wiesel, Karski reflected on his agon: "The Lord assigned me a role to speak and write during the war when, as it seemed to me, it might help. It did not."

"What more could one man have done?"

In 1944, Karski wrote Story of a Secret State, his autobiographical account of the war years. Then, in some part due to his having buried the past, for decades he did not talk about the war. In the late ’70s, director Claude Lanzmann approached him to offer testimony in his Holocaust documentary, Shoah. Karski carried it out. The episode seemed to spark in him the desire to open up about his wartime experiences. Not long afterward, I went on to interview him.

Unlikely Schindler’s List, Story of a Secret State and the rest of Karski’s life had no uplifting conclusion. He faced death threats throughout his life from unrepentant Nazis and his sympathizers. Tragedy stalked him until his final days. His wife jumped to her death from the balcony of their apartment in 1992. They had no children.

Perhaps the final tragedy is that Karski received the Medal of Freedom posthumously — he died 12 years ago — and the ceremony that should have recognized his bravery to an unknowing and often uncaring world has become overshadowed by an international dispute prompted by White House affronts to Poland.

In Karski: How One Man Tried to Stop the Holocaust, E. Thomas Wood and Stanislaw M. Jankowski give an account of Karski’s last visit to the Warsaw ghetto, during which he met with one of the Jewish resistance leaders. "Remember this," he implored them. Karski never forgot. His memories of the Holocaust haunted him to the end. 
CELEBRATING RESISTANCE: ARMED RESISTANCE, ANNUAL TRIBUTE DINNER OF THE AMERICAN & INTERNATIONAL SOCIETIES FOR YAD VASHEM

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, and Leonard Wilf, Chairman of the American & International Societies for Yad Vashem.


Boaz and Lolly Zborowski, Major-General Amir Eshel, and Dr. Lilly and Avner Naveh.

Mark Moskowitz, David Halpern, Barry and Marilyn Rubenstein, Cesia and Frank Blaichman, Liev Schreiber, and Leonard Wilf.

Adina and Lawrence Burian with Major-General Amir Eshel.

More than 600 people attended the annual tribute dinner of the American & International Societies for Yad Vashem.

Red Army World War II Jewish veterans.

Alexandra Lebovits and Morris and Caroline Mauld with Liev Schreiber.

Leonard Wilf, Liev Schreiber, and Barry and Marilyn Rubenstein.

Sam and Gladys Halpern, Sharon Halpern, Jeremy and Abbi Halpern, and Brianna.

Left to right front row: Rose Hohm, Celia Blaichman, Frank Blaichman; left to right back row: Debrah Charatan, Ann Zygelman, Charles Blaichman, Bella Sekons, Noah Blaichman, Aviva Blaichman, Micah Blaichman.
Maria Stahl and Judith Kuner, Kneutsch, Switzerland, 1933.

1934; the place — Sanary-sur-Mer; a Mediterranean coastal town on the French Riviera. The individuals in the photograph who were an escape route they had seen their appearance, the two shared Brecht's fate: they were forced refugees — German Jews — when they were exiled and expelled from German society. Along their escape route, many of the exiles passed through Zurich and Paris. They met as brothers in fate — not just as intellectuals, but also as former Berliners who shared a common language. Stahl, an artist born in 1908 and a student of Klöthe Kollwitz and Emi Orlik, documented these meetings with his delicate pencil. Intellec- tuals from the literary world, artists, violinists, musicians, filmmakers, artists — every one of them influential and prominent in their forums — found themselves exiled in a foreign land, at a crossroads demanding a deci- sion: where to now?

They first found safe harbor in the countries bordering Germany; how- ever, as the danger increased, many con- tinued on in search of calmer shores, far from the eye of the storm. Those depicted in the drawings are a faithful reflection of the meandering journeys of many. Miserably, only two of the wanderers were murdered in the Holocaust (Paul Morgan and Theodor Wolff). Of the rest, a mere handful set their sights on Eretz Israel (Else Lasker-Schüler, Arnold Zweig, Hermann Vellanti) or Britain (Sibylle Binder, Lucie Mammheim); the majority settled down in two scenic coastal towns, sepa- rated by the expanses of the Atlantic. Many of those who managed to obtain US visas (Marianne Oswald, Janoschino, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Max Simon Ehrlich, Alfred Doblin, Claire Gott, Emil Ludwig, Ludwig Herold, Felix Bresset, and Albert Brech- man) joined the diverse community of Pa- cific Palisades, California, a pastoral town surrounded by mountains to the west, Sea Ocean. Here, the Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger, himself a refugee, estab- lished a gathering place and a dwelling, Villa Aura, home to a community of Ger- man émigrés. Of those German-speaking exiles remaining in Europe, most directed their steps to the coastal town in the French Riviera, Sanary-sur-Mer.

Here, too, was the destination of Stahl. Despite his elegant appearance, a drawing of his living quarters speaks of a very modest existence, apart from the times that had befallen him. From the south of France, Stahl fled to Italy, where he survived the Holocaust. At the end of the war, he immigrated to Sweden, the birthplace of his future wife. In the town of Malmo, Stahl gradually regained renown as a painter, holding numerous exhibitions. In 1975, aged 67, Mario Stahl passed away, leaving behind a set of drawings dating back to the time of his escape from Nazi Germany.

The Voice of a Young Girl in the Ghetto

Rywka’s diary was found in the ashes of the crematorium at Auschwitz-Birkenau in early 1945 by Zinaida Berezovskaya, a doc- tor who arrived at the camp with the liber- ation Red Army. The diary (in Polish, Yiddish, and Hebrew) documented Rywka’s daily life, along with her hopes, dreams, and deepest emotions. Berezovskaya stored it in an envelope, along with a newspaper clipping of the liberation of Auschwitz. For over half a century it remained un- touched, until Berezovskaya’s granddaugh- ter discovered it among her father’s effects in June 2008 and brought it to the Jewish Family and Children’s Services (JFCS) Holocaust Center in San Francisco.

Archivists at the center immediately began to investigate the identity of the diary’s author, which ultimately led them to discover the Page of Testimony commem- orating Rywka submitted by Mina Brecher in 1955 (updated in 2000). With the assis- tance of Yad Vashem staff, the family was contacted through Hadassah Halaim. Mina’s daughter, who was deeply moved to learn of the diary’s discovery so many years later.

For Esther and Mina, reading the diary reawakened painful memories of the wartime experiences, but also pro- vided them with the strength to share the rich legacy of their family’s faith, expressed so poignantly in Rywka’s diary.

“I tried to cut myself off from it, but then suddenly it came back,” said Mina. “I had a few sleepless nights, because I was re- living everything. But I will not give [the Nazis] the satisfaction that I cannot sleep. That I will never do.”

Esther, the oldest of the cousins, took on the responsibility of relaying Rywka after her parents’ deaths. She revealed how cen- tral the diary was in Rywka’s young life. “It took me right back. It’s even a section in the diary where she writes that I should...”
ARCHIVE REVEALS NEW DETAILS OF HOLOCAUST IN MOLDOVA

BY RICHARD SOLASH

There is only the history of the Holocaust that is on display in Israel's Holocaust museums. It's also the history of the Holocaust in Israel, and that's an important difference. The Holocaust is a story of anti-Semitism and resistance, ranging from an escape by prisoners to a deportee's story of survival, but rather on rebellion. The Association between the Holocaust and the state initially had a very different significance, highlighted in the themes of the Ghetto Fighters’ House and Yad Vashem. Both were established during the early decades of a nation left with only intermittent episodes of peace. At the time an element of shame was associated with the seeming passivity of Jews who were murdered in Europe. So the emphasis of these institutions was at first placed not on survival, but rather on rebellion.

Exhibitions at the Ghetto Fighters’ House, for example, focus on Jewish resistance, ranging from an escape by prisoners to a deportee's story of survival, but rather on rebellion.
accompanied by 20 adults; and Mandel's transports: an initial group of 260 orphans, a thin folder known as the Kenneth X. Rob-
HOLOCAUST MUSEUMS IN ISRAEL EVOLVE

By David M. Cohen, Huffington Post

Sigmund Freud was 82 years old and near the end of his life when he fled to London from Vienna in 1938. Freedom gave him a final burst of creative energy, and for the last 18 months of his life he finished a book, Moses and Monotheism, which he had hesitated over for years, and completed a summation of his life’s work, An Outline of Psychoanalysis. When asked about his productivity at the time, he was known for a rather curious response: “Thank the Führer.”

After Hitler came to power, many Jews writing on the history of the Holocaust, most notably the Museum of Tolerance in the United States. Most of the current generation of survivors dies. But it is the Nazis who saved Sigmund Freud, by helping him to leave. Sigmund Freud was 82 years old and near the end of his life when he fled to London from Vienna in 1938. Freedom gave him a final burst of creative energy, and for the last 18 months of his life he finished a book, Moses and Monotheism, which he had hesitated over for years, and completed a summation of his life’s work, An Outline of Psychoanalysis. When asked about his productivity at the time, he was known for a rather curious response: “Thank the Führer.”

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WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO BURN JEWS?

(Continued from page 7)
"I couldn’t understand what he was talking about. You family was already burned a long time ago," he said. 'Look outside, do you see the chimney? This is where Jews are burned,' and I, a 12-year-old boy, didn’t understand anything. Who’s burning? Who’s being burned? Why would they want to kill their own children?"

"WE CARRIED ROCKS, BUT DIDN’T BREAK DOWN"

Several days later, Martin and his three brothers were put on a train again. This time it stopped at the Dönhau forced labor camp. "A slaves' camp," he noted.

"We carried rocks, but didn’t break down. City children wouldn’t have survived, but we were strong in the village and knew what manual work was all about. I was a fighter," he says.

Under unbearable conditions, without food and in the terrible cold, they worked like slaves. "People were dying like flies, and we took comfort in the fact that there would be more room on the stoves in the hut, which were always overcrowded."

"On April 25, 1943, my father arrived and announced that the small children who could no longer work would be transferred to a children's home. The older ones, my brothers and I, had to collect 500 children for shipment."

"My brother Jack and I were told to stand with the group of children who stood suddenly, miraculously, one of the kapos, who must have pilled me because I was the smallest one there, pulled Jack and me back to the hut and took two other children instead of us. The group was taken to the gas chambers and we were rescued."

The four brothers worked at the Dönhau camp for about half a year. One morning, SS soldiers ordered the prisoners to form lines and begin marching. The Russians were already beating the Nazis, who began transferring the remaining Jews to Theresienstadt — where orphaned children, some of whom arrived from the Theresienstadt concentration camp in the Czech Republic, who boarded a ship to Shanghai.

SAVED IN SHANGHAI

S

(Continued from page 6)

Hanghai, an international city, was di-

Avoided by arranging housing, and they got some

assistance from Jewish groups. Life in the
designated area — the ghetto — was harsh. But it proved safe.

Nina, as a young girl, was free to leave the area and play with her friends; her fa-
thor, on the other hand, was not allowed to move around. She finally decided to continue the work he had found as an engineer. People needed passes to leave the des-

igned area and passes which became in-
creasingly difficult to obtain.

With hours of free time on his hands, he

taught his daughter geography, history, mathemat
ics, and literature. "We had a large map on the wall, and he followed the war closely, using pins to mark the progress of the war... That’s how I learned."

Nina was young, and I really enjoyed play-

ing with my Chinese friends — although I didn’t speak a word of Chinese. You had to be funny to talk to them.

Nina attended the excellent Shanghai Jewish School — "with the best teach-
ers." As the war progressed, though, some of her teachers were interned at con-
centration camps on the way and knew exactly who we were.

And so, in one moment, Martin and Jack turned from Muselmänner (prisoners suf-
f ering from a combination of starvation and exhaustion) into free men.

"The American soldiers didn’t know what to do with us. They tried to help and even gave us chocolate and sweets, but that was the worst — people who survived the death march suffocated after swallowing the candy because they were so hungry."

Hours after the release, the soldiers moved on, leaving the survivors free but lost. "Suddenly we were alone, free, and had no idea what to do," says Martin. "Where does one go from here? Where are we anyway? We saw a distant house and ap-

proached it. The landlord saw us, panicked and ran away. We entered the house, ate whatever we could find, and changed our clothes, but we mostly just slept."

Several days later, additional American soldiers arrived and took the survivors, in-
cluding Martin and his siblings, to a nearby tent of the horrors at the start of the

Nina Admoni must have particularly re-
called the time shortly after the war, aged 14, carry-
ing mostly memories, Nina parted with her Chinese neighbors and her classmates, and came to California to join her mother. "I loved Jewish life. I hated my father's pinko chinaman, but I didn't have enough American history background." Nevertheless, she graduated high school at age 16.

When asked where she feels most at

home, Nina answered without missing a beat — "Israel."

But when asked where she feels that she grew up? "Shanghai... and maybe Berke-

ley..."

It was at Berkeley that she met her hus-
band, Nahum Admoni — an Israeli student born in Jerusalem, who whisked her away to Israel, where he later rose through the ranks of the country's intelligence estab-
lishment.

From 1982 until 1989, Nahum served as the head of the Mossad — the clandestine Israeli organization that helps safeguard Israelis and Jews around the world. Nina Admoni must have particularly rec-
ognized her own family's story of wartime survival.
IGNORING JEWISH HISTORY

BY YOCHANAN VISSER, JETNEWS

Fresh manifestations of European anti-Semitism raised their heads once again when Jewish religious leaders were physically attacked by thugs in Berlin and Vienna at the end of August. Recent data show that anti-Semitism in Europe is on the rise again, especially in Eastern Europe. The situation seems to be worst in Hungary, Poland, and Ukraine. A recent Anti-Defamation League poll carried out in Hungary revealed that a majority of Hungarians regard Jews as a threat to the nation and that a majority also express anti-Semitic views.

One depicts the biblical incident of the Sin offering. The biblical text offers the following: “And Aaron took the censer, filled it with coals of fire from the altar, and a shovel of incense, and put them in the censer, and flung them on the fire, and there rose up from the censer smoke like the smoke of the altar before the Lord, and the angel of the Lord appeared to the Hebrews in the smoke of the censer.” The smoke of the censer is, in my eyes, a sign that we’re still in contact with them.

It is encouraging that some in Europe and the Jewish state have realized that something must be done to stop this rising tide of anti-Semitism. The recent hate crimes in Paris, which resulted in the death of a number of Jews, has led to increased awareness and action. The Jewish community has declared it is time to take a stand against anti-Semitism and to raise the voices of those who have been powerless for too long.

(Continued from page 6)

(Continued from page 6)

PROUDLY BEARING ELDER’S SCARS

Toward a New Jewish Presence in Prague

The Třebíč ghetto, founded in the 15th century, is advertised by the Czech government as the best-preserved Jewish historical site in Europe. In stark contrast to the wall of names at the entrance of the Warsaw ghetto and the memorial in the Lodz ghetto in Poland, there is no memorial of any kind to the ghetto’s Jews.

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TORAH TRAVELS FROM HELL ON EARTH INTO OUTER SPACE

BY LAUREN MARKOE
THE WASHINGTON POST

Nearly a decade ago, Dan Cohen set out to make a film about the Holocaust and dead astronauts, a story some told him would be too depressing to tell.

Released last year, An Article of Hope unflinchingly delves into two tragedies—one almost too massive to contemplate, the other fresher in our minds.

“It’s some very, very dark and depressing subject matter, but really the message of the movie is hope,” said Garrett Reisman, a Jewish former astronaut who is helping to promote the film. “Embedded in these two incredibly tragic events, of a completely different scale, there is the story of the constant human desire to achieve goodness.”

An Article of Hope takes us to the launch site at the Kennedy Space Center on January 16, 2003, with intimate footage of the astronauts’ faces as they ride and then walk toward the space shuttle Columbia.

On board the Columbia is a crew of seven—six Americans and Ilan Ramon, Israel’s first astronaut and the son of a survivor of Auschwitz. Also aboard, in Ramon’s care, is a Torah, given to him by another Holocaust survivor.

Joachim Joseph, an Israeli physicist, was born in the Netherlands, and deported as a boy to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp with thousands of other Dutch Jews. There, at 13, he was secretly bar mitzvahed with a small Torah—the scrolls of the Hebrew Bible—that had been smuggled into the camp.

As Joseph recounts in the documentary, his dying rabbi pressed the Torah into his hands, and asked him to promise to protect it, to say, to tell the story of what happened here.

“WE CAN DEAL WITH ANY CHALLENGE”

(Continued from page 1)

journey the Jewish people have traveled in 60 years, from the horrors of the Shoah to a proud, strong, and independent State. A State that now has these powerful fighter jets returning to the Valley of Death of the grandfathers and grandmothers of our pilots. At that moment, I felt in my very being, the strength and power residing within our lots. At that moment, I felt in my very being, the strength and power residing within our people, which demonstrated the ability to overcome and build itself anew. I pondered our ability to overcome any and all of those who seek to destroy us and to remain a free and proud people in its land forever.

After this most symbolic flight, we flew directly home to Israel without landing again.

We learn that Ramon, a decorated fighter pilot, was a hero in the Israel Air Force before he became an astronaut, in addition to Joseph’s Torah, he brought to space a picture of the Earth, from the perspective of the moon, drawn by a Jewish boy killed at Auschwitz.

We learn that Joseph was a Holocaust survivor who worked on an experiment Israel’s had prepared for the Columbia, and that he had never, until Ramon asked him about the little Torah in his home, figured out how to fulfill his boyhood promise to the rabbi.

For more than a year, the documentary has made the rounds of film festivals, both Jewish-oriented and not. Synagogues and Jewish community centers have organized special showings, often inviting Cohen and others involved with Holocaust remembrance and the space program to speak on panels afterward.

“They said, Nobody wants to see a film about a dead astronaut.” But, as Elias predicted, the audience voted to award it first prize.

While An Article of Hope has resonated among Jewish filmgoers, Cohen wants to show it nationally, on television.

The Public Broadcasting Service is eager, but requires financial support from the producers. Cohen has to raise $35,000 more to guarantee it an airdate. He wants to time it to mark the 10th anniversary of the last flight of the space shuttle Columbia, which exploded on February 1, 2003.

As a Jewish director, Cohen was moved to create a documentary that would teach about the Holocaust. But he aimed for a universal story, and decided the best way to achieve one was to focus on the Columbia crew, and how they became a family.

“They are a shining example of the magnificence of diversity and what diversity brings to the world,” said Cohen. “And woven around them is the story of the Holocaust and this little Torah scroll, in this horrific moment in our history, in which there was an attempt to stamp out diversity.”

A bequest to the American Society for Yad Vashem helps keep the memory of the Six Million alive...

Please remember us in your trust, will, estate plan or with the planned gift. It’s your legacy... to your family, and your people.

For more information, or for help with proper wording for the bequest to ASVY, please contact us at 212-220-4304.