WE WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP THE FLAME OF REMEMBRANCE SHINING BRIGHT

ANNUAL BENEFIT GALA IN LOS ANGELES

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There wasn’t an empty seat or a dry eye in the Beverly Wilshire Hotel Ballroom as the American Society for Yad Vashem — Western Region and the Jewish Life Foundation hosted their annual benefit gala on June 14, 2017. The evening honored the late Edita and Abraham Spiegel family, represented by daugh-
ter Rita Spiegel; the feature film Denial; and world-renowned music-
cian, singer and famed KISS co-founder Gene Simmons and his mother, Holocaust sur-
vivor Flora Klein.

Karen Sandler served as the gala chair and introduced Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev, who began the program with a powerful message welcoming the guests and recognizing the evening’s honorees. Lenny Wilf, chairman of ASYV, enumerated several of the important areas of Yad Vashem’s efforts, including the ongoing work of the Holocaust History Museum, and the International School for Holocaust Studies, which educates tens of thousands of scholars and educators throughout the world in how to teach the Holocaust to future generations. Lenny recognized the ongoing sup-
port of the Hollywood community, which “has for many years been an essential partner; starting in 1945, the year that marked the end of World War II and the liberation of the concentra-
tion camps, films and docu-
mentaries dealing with the incompre-
hensible reality that was the Holocaust were being produced.” Wilf announced an eight-day international, multigenerational mission to Vienna and Israel in July, 2018 marking Israel’s 70th anniversary year, and invited all to participate.

Consult General of Israel for Los Angeles Sam Grundwerg also noted the contributions of the enter-
tainment community, stating, “We salute Hollywood to show appreciation for those who use their God-given talents and voice to insure that the stories, lessons and truths of the Holocaust will never be forgotten…will never be twisted, dis-
torted or denied. In this room tonight, we bridge a powerful nexus of Hollywood and legacy.”

Bill Bernstein, Western Region direc-
tor of institutional advancement of ASYV, recognized the 40 Holocaust survivors that were in attendance and introduced Max Webb, the oldest Holocaust survivor in Los Angeles, who recently celebrated his 100th birthday. Bernstein stated, “For me, at this challenging time in world history, Yad Vashem takes on a very special meaning and responsibility. It is through the lessons learned from the Holocaust that we must remain vigilant in reminding the world that it is incumbent on us…that without concerted effort from every corner of this earth, this terrible human tragedy will contin-
ue to rear its ugly head.”

Phil Blazer, founder and presi-
dent of JLTV, introduced his long-time friend and a Holocaust sur-
vivor, Jack Nagel, who recited the HaMotzi blessing. Blazer, celebrating over five decades in media, reflected on the powerful platform that JLTV has provided in telling the stories of Holocaust survivors and the deep commitment that these heroes have shown in becoming vital parts of their communities.

As the number of Holocaust sur-
vivors continues to diminish every day, the importance of keeping the memories alive plays a crucial role in educating future generations about the Holocaust. Shaya Ben Yehuda, Yad Vashem’s managing director of the International Relations Division, reinforced this concept in his poignant remarks, when he stated, “We will continue to keep the flame of remem-
brance shining bright.”

Following video messages from Harvard Law Professor Emeritus Alan Dershowitz and from Deborah Lipstadt, author of the book History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier, on which the feature film Denial was based, Jonathan King, execu-
tive vice-president of Participant Media, presented the Vanguard Award to Denial producer Gary Foster. “We have been overwhelmed by the response to the film,” said Foster. “Deborah’s story has moved people to tears and emboldened them to speak out. We live in a world where facts mean nothing and false narratives are everywhere. So how do we differentiate between truth and lies?” He continued, “That is why we need places like Yad Vashem. It gives us our best chance to make an impact on future generations.”

“It would’ve been enough to tell Deborah’s story, but to have a film that elevates an issue that is so much in the news and on our minds these days made it even better,” Foster said. “There is a difference between truth, lies and opinion. There is a difference.”

Ron Meier, ASYV executive direc-
tor, paid tribute to the Spiegel fami-
ly, heralding their building of the Children’s Memorial at Yad Vashem as Edita and Abraham’s “crowning achievement.” He went on to say, “What they built changed the
(Continued on page 16)
THE UNBELIEVABLE HEROIC STORY OF IRELAND’S OVERLOOKED “OSKAR SCHINDLER”

BY MICHAEL RIORDAN, THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

As the Gestapo surrounds the palace of an Italian anti-Fascist aristocrat, an Irish priest dashes to the cellar. He is wanted by the Nazis for his role in the daring rescues of Jews. POWs and refugees, but this time it seems there is no escape.

Miraculously, a coal delivery being made to the palace offers the perfect cover — the cleric blackens his face, hides his cassock and slips away to freedom through the narrow cobbled streets of Rome.

This dramatic scene, recreated in the 1983 movie The Scarlet and the Black starring Gregory Peck as Monsignor Hugh O’Flaherty, is just one of a number of close shaves for the doughty Irish priest and Vatican diplomat during his heroic campaign to thwart the Gestapo in the Eternal City during World War II.

“Monsignor O’Flaherty left the safety of the Vatican to run his escape line,” said Jerry O’Grady, chairman of the Monsignor Hugh O’Flaherty Memorial Society in the priest’s hometown in Killarney, Ireland. “The Gestapo had a price on his head and they tried to kidnap him many times.”

The Society is now preparing an application to Yad Vashem to have its local hero, who is credited with concealing hundreds of Jews from the Gestapo, listed as Righteous Among the Nations.

O’Flaherty grew up the son of a golf steward in Killarney, Ireland, and his skill at the game helped ease his way into Roman society. The priest played with social luminaries such as Mussolini’s son-in-law Count Galeazzo Ciano, as well as the former Spanish King Alfonso. All his connections were to become very useful when he took on the unforeseen mantle of rescuer.

In the last years of the war, as the Italian government collapsed, O’Flaherty organized a group of priests, anti-Fascists and Roman Catholics to help shelter Jews, escaped POWs and refugees. He set up a network of safe havens in rented apartments and religious houses throughout Rome.

Claudio-Ilan Jacobi, now living in Israel, is one of the Jews O’Flaherty saved. He was away from the ghetto when the Gestapo raided it.

“I saw the Monsignor many times,” Jacobi wrote in his statement for Yad Vashem. “He helped my mother, my grandparents and me find refuge from the Nazis.”

“He got false papers for us from the Vatican as well as food cards,” Jacobi said. “I remember the great appreciation my mother had for all he did.”

On one occasion O’Flaherty even threatened the doorman of Jacobi’s apartment with excommunication for speaking too freely about the Jewish family hiding inside.

“The test for recognition by Yad Vashem is very rigorous,” said O’Grady, “so we are continuing to try to trace Jewish survivors or their families from the city.”

As the Nazis began transporting prisoners to Auschwitz, O’Flaherty walked ines Ghiron and her friends through the Gestapo-filled streets using false Vatican papers for safe passage. Ghiron wrote in her memoirs that they all arrived safely at a convent in Monteverde run by Canadian nuns.

After the Gestapo became aware of O’Flaherty’s activities, it painted a white line across St. Peter’s Square, dividing the neutral Vatican from Fascist-controlled Rome. Guards were placed nearby ready to snatch the monsignor whenever he passed.

As a result, O’Flaherty became known locally as the Scarlet Pimpernel because of the many disguises he donned for his forays into the capital.

The modest monsignor only came to public attention in the 1960s when books about his exploits were published.

Holocaust survivor Torni Reichenthal, who was the keynote speaker at the 2013 presentation of the annual humanitarain award named in honor of O’Flaherty, told The Times of Israel that “If he saved one Jew it’s as if he saved thousands.”

O’Flaherty died in 1963 — just as his exploits were becoming the stuff of legend.

NEW WHITELASH OF FDR’S FAILURE TO BOMB AUSCHWITZ

BY RAFAEL MEDOFF: THE JERUSALEM POST

If only Alonzo Hambly had met George McGovern!

Hambly is the author of a new biography of president Franklin D. Roosevelt which defends FDR’s failure to bomb Auschwitz, on the grounds that it was too far away for US planes to reach. McGovern, the US senator and 1972 Democratic presidential nominee, was one of the World War II pilots who actually bombed oil sites at Auschwitz — provoking that it was, in fact, not out of reach at all.

Hambly is a prominent historian and the author of a biography of Harry S. Truman as well as several other well-received books.

Reviewers are already heaping praise on his new FDR biography, as well. Evidently they are unaware of the voluminous account of Roosevelt’s response to the Holocaust.

“The death camps were located in areas largely beyond the reach of American military power,” Hambly writes in Man of Destiny: FDR and the Making of the American Century. And: “Auschwitz was in a Soviet area of operations and at the outer limit of American bomber range.”

And yet American bombers did repeatedly bomb German oil factories that were situated in the slave labor sections of Auschwitz.

On August 7, 1944, US bombers attacked the Trzebinia oil refineries, just 21 km. from the gas chambers. On August 20, a squadron of 127 US bombers, accompanied by the all-African American unit known as the Tuskegee Airmen, struck oil factories less than 8 km. from the gas chambers.

A teenage slave laborer named Ellie Wiesel witnessed the August 20 raid. A glance at Wiesel’s best-selling book Night would have enlightened Hambly. Wiesel wrote: “If a bomb had fallen on the blocks [the prisoners’ barracks], it alone would have claimed hundreds of victims on the spot. But we were no longer afraid of death; at any rate, not of that death. Every bomb that exploded filled us with joy and gave us new confidence in life. The raid lasted over an hour. If it could only have lasted ten times ten hours!”

There were additional Allied bombing of the Auschwitz oil factories throughout the autumn. Allied bombers also flew close to Auschwitz in 1944 to resupply the Polish Home Army forces that were fighting the Germans in Warsaw. On August 8, British planes began air-dropping supplies to the Poles. Their flight route took them within a few kilometers of Auschwitz. They would fly 22 times during the two weeks to follow. In September, President Roosevelt ordered US planes to take part in the Warsaw airlift.

When George McGovern first mentioned publicly, in 2004, that he had been one of the pilots who bombed the Auschwitz area in 1944, interviewers from the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies flew to South Dakota to videotape his recollections.

McGovern described to them how, at age 22, he piloted one of the B-24 “Liberator” bombers that targeted the oil factories at Auschwitz.

“There is no question we should have attempted... to go after Auschwitz,” McGovern said. “There was a pretty good chance we could have blasted those rail lines off the face of the earth, which would have interrupted the flow of people to those death chambers, and we had a pretty good chance of knocking out those gas ovens.”

Even if there was a danger of accidentally harming some of the prisoners, “it was certainly worth the effort, despite all the risks,” McGovern said, because the prisoners were already “doomed to death” and an Allied bombing attack might have slowed down the mass murder process, thus saving many more lives.

McGovern noted that he remained an ardent admirer of President Roosevelt.

“When George McGovern was a great man and he was my political hero,” he said in the interview. “But I think he made two great mistakes in World War II.” One was the interruption of Japanese Americans; the other was the decision “not to go after Auschwitz... God forgive us for that tragic miscalculation.”

It’s a shame Hambly never met McGovern — he would have disabused Hambly of the absurd notion that Auschwitz was out of America’s reach.

But then again, McGovern’s statements about bombing Auschwitz have been widely available on the Internet for more than a decade now. Hambly could have located them with even the most cursory search of the literature on the subject. Thus one suspects that even if Hambly had known of McGovern’s experiences he would have looked for some other way to exonerate the president’s administration for its refusal to bomb Auschwitz.

But FDR and his administration do not deserve to be excoriated. Dropping a few bombs on Auschwitz or the railway lines leading to it would not have undermined the war effort; it simply would have conflicted with Roosevelt’s view that the war against the Jews was a sideshow which was not America’s concern.

The president who presented himself to the public as the champion of the “forgotten man,” as someone who embodied the values of the downtrodden, turned his back on the most compelling moral challenge of our times.
The Holocaust: Who Are the Missing Million?

BY RAFFI BERG, BBC NEWS

Giselie Cyczowicz (born Friedman) remembers her father, Wolf, as a warm, kind and religious man. “He was a scholar,” she says. “He always had a book open, studying Talmud, but he was also a businessman and he looked after his family.”

Before the war, the Friedmans lived a happy, comfortable life in Khust, a Czechoslovak town with a large Jewish population on the fringes of Hungary. All that changed after 1939, when pro-Nazi Hungarian troops, and later Nazi Germany, invaded, and all the town’s Jews were deported to Auschwitz.

Giselie last saw her father, “strong and healthy,” hours after the family arrived at the Birkenau section of the death camp. Wolf had been selected for a workforce, but a fellow prisoner under orders would not let her go to him.

“That would have been my chance to maybe kiss him the last time,” she says. “Every new name we can add to our database is a victory against the Nazis, against the intent of the Nazis to wipe out the Jewish people. Every new name is a small victory against oblivion.”

The institution, a sprawling complex of buildings, trees and gardens on the western slopes of Mount Herzl, gathers details about the victims in two ways: through information from those with knowledge of the deceased, and from archive sources, ranging from Nazi deportation lists to Jewish yearbooks.

Today Giselie has come to dedicate her father’s name, nearly 73 years after he was killed, a small piece in a vast jigsaw.

“We’re interested in seeing a person and who they were,” says Cynthia Wroclawski, deputy director of Yad Vashem’s Archives Division.

“Filling out this page of information saying this was my father, mother, grandfather, nephews and nieces — you cannot bury your relatives who perished, but you can remember them in a way that will commemorate them forever, so this is very important and also therapeutic for many survivors.”

Dear Mummy and Daddy,

Today it has been raining all day.

I am playing with Vitja and Orihsa.

I kiss and hug both of you very tight.

Yours, Edik

Edik Tonkonogi from Sannow in Ukraine was murdered after the Nazis entered the town in 1941.

In Western Europe, the Nazis kept records of victims, such as this Frankfurt in Theresienstadt deportation list. While Yad Vashem has made great strides in identifying victims from Western and Central Europe — about 95% have now been named — far fewer names have been uncovered in Nazi-occupied areas of Eastern Europe, where organized, official process of arrest and deportation further west, in the east whole communities were marched off and massacred without any such formalities.

An estimated 1.5 million Jews alone were shot to death by the Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing squads) in what has become known as the Holocaust by Bullets, after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941.

In Bab’Yar, in Ukraine, for instance, of the 33,000 Jews from Kiev and its surroundings who were slaughtered in a ravine in September 1941 in the largest massacre of its kind, about half are yet to be identified.

Others not murdered by the Einsatzgruppen died, without a trace, from starvation or exhaustion in ghettos and labor camps, or were killed in nearby extermination camps, where they had been herded without any kind of processing.

Yad Vashem is working with Jewish organizations in those countries to try to reach remaining survivors in the former Soviet Union, where the Holocaust was not officially commemorated, who may have little awareness of the memorial’s exis-
Roses in a Forbidden Garden
A Holocaust Love Story

REVIEWED BY ART SHOSTAK

Desperate to improve his family’s chances to avoid Holocaust martyrdom, Carl Katz, a former successful businessman, agreed to help administer a major inebriate facility in Theresienstadt, a Nazi transit camp. His dual role — vulnerable captive and yet also camp administrator — was held in various forms by thousands of respon-sible victims in hundreds of other Nazi camps. Like Carl, many such men and women, to their mortifying credit, became secret resisters.

Inge Katz, Carl’s young daughter, had a tender romance while impris-oned in Theresienstadt, proving that life there, at least for some, although incredibly difficult and precarious uncertain, was not devoid of human experiences. Many decades after captivity, Inge’s account of the entire experience details how resolute prisoners, like Carl and his daughter effectively resisted dehumanization.

We also learn about valiant efforts Inge’s fiancé, Schmuel Berger, made to survive his own horror story. Sent by train with other young men to the Auschwitz death camp, he was spared on arrival for slave labor and not sent to a gas chamber. Later he was transferred to the Dachau concentra-tion camp. When it was evacuated by Nazi collaborators, he escaped from a death oven led by several low-flying Allied aircraft. He sought aid thereafter from German citizens by pretending to be a laborer who had come from the east to work. Before his liber-ation by American forces, Schmuel drew strength from unwavering faith, Inge’s support and his heartfelt desire to be reunited with Inge.

Throughout the book attention is given to life in an forbidden garden, certain Jewish prisoners dared to make to aid others, in defiance of unforgettable and unforgivable evil. Identified now as acts of stealth altruism, these prohibited behaviors involved bravery, compassion, empa-thy, morality and sac-rifice. In bringing stealth altruism in from the shadows, Roses in a Forbidden Garden adds to the conventional horror story an overdue redemptive and inspiring help story. Its combination of honor and help offers a wel-come contrast to a predominantly woeful Holocaust narrative.

Finally, this enlighten-ning and uplifting biography is distinctive in that its author, Elise Garibaldi, is an American-born woman whose experiences, while they tell of much more relativess of aging sur-vivors, especially creative and ener-getic grandchildren, will soon adapt her sample and provide their own engag-ing accounts of ways other Jewish vic-tims — much like Carl, Inge and Schmuel — refused to be victimized.

The holding camp that held the Katz family was best known for its extraordinary cultural life, one complete with a secret “university,” many musical organizations, a teenage-produced magazine, and even hidden late-night cabarets where humor offered invaluable com-fort and distraction. Tragically, it was also an overcrowded, disease-ridden, high-anxiety site from which only about 17,100 of nearly 141,000 Jews held at one time or another survived to liberation. About 33,500 prisoners died in the camp itself from disease, and exposure to the elements, filth, malnutrition, overcrowding, over-work, plagues, starvation, torture, and so on. Almost 80,000 were sent by train to gas chambers elsewhere.

Carl was asked by the Council of Jewish Elders (aka Judenrat), a gov-erning body beholden to the SS, to administer a very large dormitory that housed the frail elderly, the camp’s insatiable and large cooking site. In return, he would receive (Continued on page 11)
Hania Rosenberg was born in Oswiecim, an industrial town in the Galicia region of southern Poland. The concentration and extermination camp the Germans built there after their 1939 invasion, called Auschwitz-Birkenau, would take the lives of 1.1 million people.

"No one was poor, no one was rich: We were all about average, like any small town," Ms. Rosenberg, 82, recalled. "I remember our backyard, with dogs, hens and geese, where we had a cow, which my father bought so that we could have our own milk. It was a happy childhood."

Her father imported and exported straw, hay and coal. He died in the camps, along with most of the town's Jewish community. Ms. Rosenberg and her mother survived the war — she hid with a gentile family, and her mother endured forced labor at a munitions plant. They later made their way to Sweden.

Her grandparents had a three-story house and a general store, farmland and two garden plots in the nearby town of Ledziny. During the Communist era, the plots were expropriated. A shopping mall and new houses stand on what was once farmland. But two garden plots — still in the name of her grandmother — remain, and Ms. Rosenberg is fighting for their ownership, so that she can give them to the family who saved her.

"In Poland, there was no official process for this: You have to go to the courts," she said in a phone interview from Stockholm. "We did go to the courts, but it was like a carousel: You go around and around and around and around. You have to produce the documents that they need, and then it's not enough. There are always more documents you need to provide."

Poland is the only European Union nation that has not established formal procedures to resolve claims made by people whose property was seized during the Holocaust, according to a new report by the European Shoah Legacy Institute, based in Prague.

The report, more than 1,200 pages, was based on three years of research in 47 countries that endorsed a 2009 pledge, known as the Terezin Declaration, to establish a restitution process for "immovable property" like land, homes and businesses.

It found that Poland had only party complied with an obligation to return communal Jewish property like synagogues and cemeteries.

The issue of restitution is especially fraught for Poland, which had Europe's largest Jewish community before the war. About three million Polish Jews were murdered in the Holocaust, along with at least 1.9 million other Polish civilians.

The report says that Holocaust vic- tims across Europe — not only Jews, but also Roma, gays, disabled people and others — "had to navigate a fre- quently unclear path to recover their property from governments and neighbors who had failed to protect them, and often, who had been complicit in their persecution."

It added, "Law was not the sur- vivors' ally; more often it was their enemy, providing impunity for thieves and those who held stolen property."

"On what basis should Poland decide that those with Jewish ances- (Continued on page 7)

JAPAN AND THE JEWS

Japan's attitude and policies toward Jews from 1933 to 1945 — the years that coincided with the rise and fall of Nazi Germany — is the subject of Meron Medzini's fine and fascinating work of scholarship, Under the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Japan and the Jews During the Holocaust Era, pub- lished by Academic Studies Press.

The historiography of the Holocaust is rife with books about the mass murder of European Jews, yet Japan — a member of the Axis alliance and a close ally of Nazi Germany — is rarely mentioned in this grim catalog of terror and mass murder. The reason is clear. While many of the 40,000 Jews living in Japan and its overseas possessions were subjected to restrictions and theft of property due to their status as foreign nationals, they were not humiliated or persecuted because they were Jews. Nor were they single- ged out for extermination. Indeed, one Japanese diplomat single-handedly saved thousands of Jews.

Medzini, a Hebrew University histo- rian, is one of the few scholars who has exhaustively delved into this intriguing topic. Nevertheless, it remains still largely unappreciated. Medzini's wide-ranging book fills the gap quite admirably. He deals with the influx of Jews into Japan from the mid-19th century, the image of Jews in Japanese society, the export of anti-Semitism to Japan, the treatment meted out to Jews in Japanese-occu- pied Manchuria, China and Southeast Asia and the policies Japan formulat- ed with respect to Jewish refugees.

Portuguese conversions — Jewish converts to Christianity — were the first Jews to visit Japan. Jewish traders and entrepreneurs established themselves in Japan in the late 1850s, following the arrival of an American flotilla commanded by Matthew C. Perry. The majority of the newcomers were initially from Southeast Asia, China and Western Europe. Later, Jews arrived from the Middle East, Eastern Europe and the United States. They largely settled in the cities of Nagasaki, Yokohama and Kobe.

The majority of Jewish immigrants were businessmen, but Albert Mosse, a German Jew, played an important role in the development of the 1889 Meiji constitution. Still other Jews, though not residents of Japan, were of immense assistance to the country.

The American banker and financier, Jacob Schiff, was instrumental in securing loans for Japan during its war with Russia.

Medzini claims that The Merchant of Venice, translated into Japanese in the 1860s, had an impact on Japanese perceptions of Jews. "Many Japanese readers thought that the typical Jew was Shylock: clever, sly, untrustworthy, and given to devious intrigues and manipulations," he writes, adding that this stereotype would reappear with greater strength from the 1920s onward. Japan's ruling elites had a keen interest, venging on admiration, for Jews, who they believed poss- essed special talents in finance and international politics and wielded vast influence over governments.

A nti-Semitism seeped into Japan after Japanese forces entered Siberia in 1918. Japanese officers, having been exposed to White Russians who poured scorn on the 1917 Bolshevik revolution and dis- played hatred of Jews, brought back these ideas to Japan. By no coinci- dence, the army officer who translated the Protocols of the Elders of Zion into Japanese had been posted in Siberia. An infantry officer, General Shioied Nobutaka, would become the most well-known and outspoken anti-Semite in Japan during the 20th century. He had been influenced by French anti-Semites while serving as Japan's military attaché in Paris dur- ing World War I.

Nevertheless, the few thousand Jews living in Japan before World War II were never seen as fifth column- ists determined to undermine Japanese culture, says Medzini.

They were, at best, part of the foreign community, and therefore they did not arouse the passionate, often hysteri- cal response [Jews] encountered in Nazi Germany. Since they were never seen as an integral part of Japan, and subsequently were not viewed as enemies of that country, Japan's soci- ety saw no need to destroy them."

Nazi ideas infiltrated into Japan toward the end of the 1930s as Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf and Alfred Rosenberg's The Myth of the Twentieth Century were retranslated and distributed. These turgid tracts may have reinforced the Japanese notion that Jews were disseminators of liberal, secular, universal, demo- cratic and Marxist ideas.

Government support- ed Zionist aspirations for a Jewish national homeland in Palestine and endorsed the Balfour Declaration.
Sweden? It’s not who you thought.

Semitism to new heights in industrial town of Malmö

Philip Riteman saw freight trains stretching as far as his eyes could see. "We took great pride in being part of a nation whose borders had already been gassed," he said, with tears in his eyes. "And we stay, all glued together. Could you imagine? I could not believe it. I was there a month and I still see my sisters, my brothers. Then I didn't believe it. I was there for me to talk about it." Riteman to this day. Riteman’s entire family was exterminated by the Nazis. His father, mother, five brothers, two sisters, grandparents, and nine uncles and aunts were annihilated in Auschwitz.

Riteman was later transferred to Dachau concentration camp. After being liberated by the Americans in 1945, he spent time in a displaced persons camp. He weighed just 34 kilograms. Then, in 1946, he landed in Newfoundland, then pre-Confederation Canada. This is just one gruesome snapshot of the Holocaust, which claimed the lives of about six million Jews during World War II. More than a million Jews survived. The Nazis told them it would be an hour’s ride. The trains, which measured roughly 8 by 20 feet. The Nazis shoved him and his family onto a train bound for Auschwitz.

"Three o’clock in the morning, somebody [yells] and I see the German sitting with a gun and screaming, yelling. ‘Out, out, you Jews!’" Riteman recalled. "The Nazis told them it would be an hour’s ride. The trains, which measured roughly 8 by 20 feet. The Nazis shoved him and his family onto a train bound for Auschwitz. Riteman was just 13 when the Nazis forced him and his family onto a train bound for Auschwitz."

"In the afternoon, my parents already was gassed," he said, with tears in his eyes. "I peed every day in my pants. Everybody [defecates] in their pants and pees, and everybody screaming, crying — unbelievable they could do this to human beings.

"That was such a heinous crime against humanity to try to annihilate our race," Starr added. "But thank God, they didn't succeed. Six million people did not exist. People who committed no crime, they killed nobody, without reason, we were just slaughtered."

The black tattoo ink on Riteman’s arm has faded, the horrific memories of Auschwitz still pour from his time in Auschwitz still echo in his voice.

Nobody, nobody, nobody, don’t do no harm to anyone. Be a good person. Maybe we could make a better world to live for everybody."

BY DANIEL RADOMSKI, HAARETZ

By Dorian Geiger

Why remembering the Holocaust matters more than ever

The clear and present danger facing Sweden’s Jews

MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE

May/June 2017 - Iyyar/Sivan 5777

Who is really stirring up anti-Semitism to new heights in Sweden? It’s not who you thought.

BY DANIEL RADOMSKI, HAARETZ

In 1945, my maternal grandparents were brought to the Swedish sea-side industrial town of Malmö on buses organized by Count Folke Bernadotte’s Red Cross. Recently saved from the unspeakable horrors of Auschwitz, Frajda Rozenzal and Jankel Radomski did not know each other upon arrival in Sweden. They had both suffered dreadful losses — but they had survived.

For Jankel, his parents and siblings, as well as his newly founded young family, had all been executed. Frajda lost her husband, her mother, and all her siblings except one sister, a Zionist, who had left for Palestine before the war, and as a result was considered the black sheep of their small Hasidic village. As was often the case with survivors, Frajda and Jankel, in an act of perseverance and survival, formed a new bond upon their arrival. The first result of this union came in 1946, in the shape of their firstborn — my father, Chaim.

My grandparents worked hard to integrate into Swedish society and to build a new life. The Sweden that offered a new beginning had chosen a self-proclaimed neutrality through-out the war, with the clear and pragmatic intention to protect the country against invasion at all costs. This included allowing the German troops of the Engelbrecht battalion free passage via railroad to Norway, enabling its occupation. Subsequently, over 1,000 Norwegian Jews perished in the concentration camps. Toward the end of the war the tide turned, and Sweden allowed Allied bombers to refuel on its territory, acting as the destination for the extraordinary rescue of Danish Jews across the Straits of Oresund, and as the home for the White Buses that rescued my grandparents.

In 1949, my family again experienced the embrace of Swedish salvation. My mother Dora, a 19-year-old Polish student of chemistry, was given a way to escape from the new wave of anti-Semitism that engulfed Poland in the late 1960s. Sweden’s provision of yet another new future for my family secured my everlasting gratitude. However, the country’s war-time history still soiled its virtue. When compiling a high school essay on Sweden during World War II, I encountered graphic photographs of students of my very own school demonstrating in Stockholm’s Ostermalmstorg Square in 1942. On their placards: “Stop the Import of Jews.” As children of the postwar generation, we were taught to approach our Judaism as a distinctive but guarded bond. Non-Jews were commonly referred to as “Swedes” by my parents, and even though I never knew any other homeland, for many years this paradox seemed natural to me.

We took great pride in being part of a minority that united us and gave us strength as well as a sense of identity — unique features that willingly separated us from the Swedish main-stream. Although the Jews integrated after the war and subsequently excelled both in academia and in a wide array of professional pursuits, the internal will to retain the group’s separate and special standing was always present.

Many Jews who sought either a Zionistic or Jewish lifestyle would seek it elsewhere, in Israel, the U.S. or the U.K. Leaving Sweden was (Continued on page 13)
THE HOLOCAUST: WHO ARE THE MISSING MILLION?

(Continued from page 3)

There is a lot of documentation where there are names that are very scattered," says Dr. Avram. "Names mentioned in a letter here or a report there. This can be very labor intensive. Sometimes you have to go through thousands and thousands of pages just to retrieve a few dozen names."

The difficulty is compounded by the fact that those names can be in 30 to 40 different languages; most are handwritten and can be in different scripts, such as Latin, Hebrew and Cyrillic. "Our staff not only need to be linguists but they need to know calligraphy," says Dr. Avram, himself a language expert.

One of the biggest gaps is with children, of whom some 1.5 million were murdered in the Holocaust. Only about half have been identified.

"It's one of the saddest things," says Dr. Avram. "We have reports where parents are named with say, three or four children, unnamed. They were little children and people just don't remember."

The aim is to turn them from anonymous statistics into human beings again, like seven-year-old Edik Tonkonogi, from Satavan in Ukraine. His childhood innocence and sweetness of character come across in a letter he wrote in 1941 to his parents, "If my time comes to an end, let it mean that the descendants of poor children and people just don't remember."

The campaign generated many new records. Names that are not in our database and trying to find out the information from their family members," says Sara Berkowitz, manager of the Names Recovery Project. "There is another significant, sometimes life-changing, outcome of the growth of the names database, which has been available online since 2004. It has led to emotional reunions of survivors who had lived their lives not knowing there was anyone else from their family left alive. Last year two sets of families belonging to two sisters, each of whom thought the other had perished in the Holocaust, were united after a chance discovery through the Pages of Testimony. It transpired the sisters had lived out their lives just 25 minutes away from each other in northern Israel, but passed away without ever being aware."

In 2015 a pair of half-siblings, neither of whom knew the other was alive, were reunited as a result of searching the database, and in 2006 a brother and sister, one living in Canada and the other in Israel, were reunited 65 years after becoming separated in their hometown in Romania. The project has also brought to light other unfortunate findings. Argentinean-born Claudia de Levie, whose parents fled Germany in the 1930s, believed she had lost four or five relatives in the Holocaust. A search of the database to help with her daughter's homework revealed that in fact 180 family members had been killed.

Further research, however, revealed through a signature on a Page of Testimony the existence of cousins of her husband, living in Hamburg. The families now speak to each other each week on Skype.

Ironically, a chief architect of the Holocaust, Adolf Eichmann, lived as a fugitive in the same neighborhood as Claudia when she was a child in Argentina, as she would later learn.

The importance of the mission to recover victims' names received global recognition in 2013 when the United Nations cultural agency, UNESCO, named the project in its Memory of the World register.

The agency lauded it as "unprecedented in human history," pointing out that the project had given rise to similar efforts in other places of genocide, such as Rwanda and Cambodia.

Despite the millions of names recorded so far, there is still a long way to go if all six million are ever to be recovered, but those behind the project remain determined. "I personally would like that we do reach that goal, that at least among those who perished there won't be a family that remains unknown. It's our moral imperative," says Sara Berkowitz.

"Until I sit in the office and days will pass by and I won't have work to do, I'll know that we've more or less raked the universe to try to get every name and there is no more there."

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS IN POLAND FIND RESTITUTION CLAIMS “LIKE A CAROUSEL”

(Continued from page 5)

A time moves on, the task of finding missing names is getting harder in some respects but easier in others. The availability of source material is greater than ever, and advances in technology mean it can be a less arduous task to gather information and manipulate the data. However, the fewer the names left to uncover, the more activity it takes to find them.

The digital age also means there are more tools at researchers' disposal than ever before. The department searching for names recently took to social media, including Facebook, in a push to reach untapped survivors. The campaign generated many new Pages of Testimony.

"When you're talking about social media, you have the younger generation now understanding that those names are not in our database and trying to find out the information from their family members," says Sara Berkowitz, manager of the Names Recovery Project.

There is another significant, sometimes life-changing, outcome of the growth of the names database, which

Countries, including the United States, to resolve wartime property claims, Polish officials say. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, a historian who has written about restitution issues, said the report focused too narrowly on Jewish victims. While Polish Jews "faced the extraordinary terror of total extermination," he said, Polish Christians "faced the ordinary terror of partial annihilation."

Last year, Poland's constitutional court upheld a 2015 law that significantly limits the restitution rights of those whose property in Warsaw was seized during the war.

"Polish law treats everyone equally," the foreign minister, Witold Waszczykowski, said in Israel last year. "Any legal or natural person, or their heirs, is entitled to recover prewar property unlawfully seized by the Nazi German or the Soviet authorities, or the postwar Communist regime."

However, Leslaw Piszewski, chairman of the board of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland, said current policies made it far too difficult for claimants — effectively denying justice by delaying it. "Attitudes have not changed at all," he said. "Courts issue negative decisions or prolong the process to the extent that the claimant resigns from the process."

The new report was presented at a conference in Brussels organized by Holocaust survivors and groups that represent them, and hosted by the European Parliament.

Gideon Taylor, the operations chairman of one of the groups, the World Jewish Restitution Organization, said he hoped the conference would be a "rallying call" before time ran out for survivors, 72 years after the war's end. "We have a very narrow window of time, while survivors are still alive, to carry out some kind of symbolic justice, some kind of recognition of what has happened," he said.

The issue is not just symbolic but also practical, said Mr. Piszewski, whose group represents nine officially recognized Jewish communities, with an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 members. "Restitution is the only financial tool to maintain Jewish communities as well as the Jewish heritage, including 1,200 cemeteries," he said. Ms. Rosenberg told her story at the conference, after much hesitation. The family that saved her has been recognized by Yad Vashem, the Holocaust remembrance center in Jerusalem, as being among the Righteous Among the Nations, non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews. A house her father owned in Oswiecim has been given to the family.

"Maybe this conference will make a difference," she said. "I really hope so. We have been trying on our own for many years. They say that maybe something will change in 20 years, but the difference is time..."
PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ANNUAL BENEFIT GALA OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM AND THE JEWISH LIFE FOUNDATION

Nathan Sandler, Karen Sandler, gala chair; Beth and Lenny Wilf.

Holocaust survivor Dr. Erica Miller; Bill Bernstein, Western Region director of institutional advancement of the ASYV; Gerri Knilans.

Sheldon and Dr. Miriam Adelson, Patrons of the Mount of Remembrance, Yad Vashem.

Michael Fisher, director of the American Desk of the International Relations Division; Shaya Ben Yehuda, managing director of the International Relations Division; Helmut Biemann; Yossie Hollander, Visionary Member, Yad Vashem.

Gitta and Jack Nagel, donors; Edward and Elissa Czuker, honorary co-chairs.

Feisa Shapell and Rochelle Shapell Buchman, Visionaries of Yad Vashem.
PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

Ron Meier, executive director of the ASYV; Dr. Na’ama Shik, featured speaker from Yad Vashem Jerusalem, Israel; Leonard Wilf, chairman of the ASYV; and Tova Friedman, featured speaker and Holocaust survivor.

Mark Moskowitz, Rose Moskowitz, Spring Luncheon Committee; and Adina Burian, Luncheon Committee.

Merry Cohen, Rebecca Altman, Marilyn Rubenstein, Helene Dorfman, Leslie Adler, Susan Levy, Judy Bloom, Susan Goodstadt.

Shelley Paradis, Sharon Halpern, Gladys Halpern, Mairea Werthenschlag, Luncheon Committee members; and Jaci Paradis, Luncheon co-chair.

Sarita Rausnitz, Shirley Podolsky, Rachel Shnay, Luncheon co-chair; Gabriela Shnay.

Eillene Lesitner, chief development officer, ASYV; Abby Kaufthal, Luncheon co-chair; Goldie Hertz, Luncheon Committee; and Shara Levy.
A MOROCCAN HERO TO JEWS

BY RICHARD HUROWITZ,
LOS ANGELES TIMES

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the release of Casablanca, which immobilized quiet acts of resistance against Fascism at the murkily crossroads that was wartime Morocco.

The legendary scene at Rick’s Cafe in which refugees, led by Paul Henreid, drown out Nazi officers by singing “La Marseillaise” became an instant inspiration to moviegoers as World War II was raging. The location of the film was no accident: Casablanca was a haven for those fleeing for their lives. And it was also the scene of a much greater, and real-life — act of heroism, one far too little known or recognized: the young Sultan Mohammed V.

When Fania Bilkay and her son, Evgeni, stepped up to her desk, Sima Velkovich was winding down an ordinary work day in the archives division of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. She was then suddenly pulled into the center of a complex family drama that reached its climax in mid-December of last year.

For the document that erroneously reported Nisan’s death had been completed in the 1950s by Symcha Borenstein, husband of Nisan’s sister, Jenta. By disputing the record of her father’s death, Bilkay spurred Yad Vashem researchers to discover that Jenta and Nisan both survived the Holocaust, and both spent their lives thinking they were the sole remaining members of their immediate family.

In a tear-filled scene at the Jerusalem museum on December 13, Fania and Gennadi were united with their first cousins, sisters Henia Borenstein Moskowitz and Ryvka Borenstein Patchinik.

“Thanks to Yad Vashem, we discovered that we are not alone,” said Henia. “Thanks to Yad Vashem, we discovered that we are not alone.”

Such a reunion is perhaps the ultimate defeat of Hitler, said Dr. Thomas Kuehne, director of the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University in Worcester, Mass.

“The Nazis wanted to kill the Jews but also to erase the memory of them,” said Henia. “It is difficult to describe how I feel,” said Bilkay. “My father always searched for members of his family and dreamed of finding them. He was alone. But in this meeting today, his dream has finally come true.”

Jenta’s daughters had also grown up believing “that we had no family, that everyone was murdered in Poland,” Henia said. “If someone on the phone told you that you have first cousins who want to meet you, you could be suspicious,” said Lilal Beer, director of Yad Vashem Reference and Information Services. “But the sisters — Henia and Ryvka — were very open and excited. That meeting was so moving. They brought family photos to share and discovered, to their amazement, that they’ve all been living all these years near Tel Aviv.”

“I felt a connection at first sight. My family has grown overnight,” said Henia. “There is a connection for future generations. The two Borenstein sisters — Henia and Ryvka — were very open and excited. The meeting was so moving. They brought family photos to share and discovered, to their amazement, that they’ve all been living all these years near Tel Aviv.”

Among their first acts, the new over- seas sought to impose anti-Semitic laws in Morocco, as per Nazi protocol.

“Submitting this information enables family members to find some peace by knowing they have fulfilled their holy mission to bear witness,” Giberovitch said.

Family members’ names can be added to the database of Holocaust victims by contacting the Shoah Victims’ Names Recovery Project at names.outreach@yadvashem.org. The names are ultimately added to the Pages of Testimony in Yad Vashem’s Hall of Names. The pages, said Giberovitch, “are a paper ceme- tery that provides a final resting place for their loved ones, thereby preserving their memory for future genera- tions. In the world of one survivor, ‘it lessens my pain.’”

For the Band and Borenstein families, this week is less about pain and more about celebrating. When Yad Vashem staffers offered the Borenstein sisters a ride home after the reunion, they politely declined because their newfound cousins insisted on driving them. “The five of them squeezed into the car together,” said Bilkay. “It is good news for Yad Vashem’s Beer. ‘After all these years, they are family.’”

A series of international disputes between France and Germany led to the Treaty of Fez in 1912 and French control of Morocco. Mohammed’s father, Moulay Youssef, replaced his older sibling on the throne when his brother abdicated because of the treaty.

Morocco’s Mohammed V, wearing white robes, walking with the country’s Grand Vizier Si Mohamed El Nikik after he placed a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the Arc de Triomphe during a visit to Paris, France around July 4, 1938. Fifteen years later, upon his father’s death, 16-year-old Mohammed was named sultan largely because the French viewed him as more docile than his older brothers. This turned out to be one of the great misjudg- ments in French colonial history.

When Paris fell to the Germans in July 1940, the sultan, then 30, was put in a precarious position as Morocco came under the rule of the collaborationist French Vichy regime. Among their first acts, the new over- seas sought to impose anti-Semitic laws in Morocco, as per Nazi protocol.

“Jews had lived in that part of the world since well before Carthage fell, and over a quarter of a million called Morocco their home in 1940. Members of the community had served the sultans’ court as ministers, diplomats and advisors. Mohammed V took seriously his role as Commander of the Faithful, which he viewed to include all “people of the book,” meaning everyone belonging to the Abrahamic faiths — Jews, Christians and Muslims. He bravely, publicly declined to assist in the per- secution of his own Jewish citizens.”

“There are 200 Jews in Morocco,” he (Continued on page 13)
JAPAN AND THE JEWS

(Canotinued from page 5) when it was issued by Britain in November 1917. In explaining why Japan backed the Zionist movement, Medzini says, Japanese decision-makers had an inflated view of Jewish power and placed the Middle East low on the totem pole of Japan's priorities. Outside of Japan, Jews found themselves directly under Japanese rule after Japan's occupation of Manchuria in 1931. Many of these Jews lacked any nationality and sought the protection of the Japanese army. Japan acceded to their request, hoping its benevolence would prompt wealthy Jews to invest funds in the development of Manchuria's vital coal and steel industries.

Japan's fixation with Jewish capital gave rise to the Fugui Plan, a scheme hatched in 1934 by the president of the Southern Manchurian Railway, Matsuoka Yosuke, to lure Jews into an important issue for Japan by promising them 100,000 hectares of land, a port, and a railway. The railway alone was worth an estimated 1.5 million yen, according to Medzini's chapter on Shanghai deals, of course, with refugees. From 1938 to 1941, 15,450 Jewish refugees, the bulk from Germany and Austria, streamed into the Chinese city of Shanghai, which came under direct Japanese rule in the summer of 1937. By then, there was already an established Jewish community there. The first wave of Jewish settlers had arrived from Iraq, Persia, and India in the middle of the 19th century, followed by Russian Jews in the wake of the Bolshevik revolution. Jews arriving in Shanghai from the late 1930s onwards did not require entry and residence permits. Japan treated them and other foreigners fairly while maintaining close surveillance over their activities. The situation changed after the arrival of General Colonel Joseph Messinger in July 1942.

In conversations with Japanese army officers, Messinger called for a series of stringent measures to be enacted against Jews in Shanghai. Japan rejected most of his draconian suggestions, but on February 18, 1943, Japanese authorities established a "designated area" for 14,000 stateless Jewish refugees in the working-class district of Hongkew. Russian Jews were excluded from this ordinance. Life was hard for the residents of the Hongkew ghetto, but they were not physically molested. Other Jewish organizations were permitted to send funds for their upkeep. Jews residing in other Japanese-controlled Chinese cities, like Mukden and Tianjin, were not harmed either. But in Hong Kong, Manila, Singapore, Batavia and Rangoon, the local Japanese ruler confiscated the homes and real estate holdings of Jews, froze their bank accounts, and seized their gold and jewelry. In Thailand, an ally of Japan until almost the end of the war, Jews with U.S. and British passports were interned. German, Austrian, Iraqi and Syrian Jews were left alone. In keeping with its stated policy of maintaining racial harmony in the occupied areas, Japan gave short shrift to Germany's genocidal approach to Jews.

When ever possible, however, Japan tried to accommodate the Jewish refugees. The case of Chulie Sughara, the Japanese vice-consul in Kaunas, Lithuania, is indicative of Japan's balancing act. The Japanese government forbade him to issue transit visas to Jews to a group of Polish Jews, but he ignored his superiors' order and issued 6,000 visas for individuals and entire families. Among these Jews he rescued from 1940 onwards were 300 rabbis and yeshiva students. After being transferred to Berlin, he issued 69 transit visas to German Jews.

In Japan itself, American and British Jews were interned, but Jews holding other foreign passports seem to have faced no problems. Neither the emperor nor government ministers ever issued statements about Jews, but in 1944, the home ministry made it clear that Japan's policy was to eradicate discrimination based on race. Still, 170 anti-Semitic documents were published in Japan from 1936 until 1945. Some major dailies, notably Asahi Shimbum, carried anti-Semitic articles, but refrained from publishing stories about Nazi atrocities in Europe. The German embassy in Tokyo disseminated anti-Jewish material to the Japanese public. But the Nazi regime never considered the Jewish Question a high-priority issue in its dealings with the Japanese government. In any event, most Japanese people were oblivious to Jews and, therefore, anti-Semitism. Documents examined by Medzini indicate that Japanese officials had little or no detailed information about the Holocaust. "There were virtually no Japanese reports of the mass killings of Jews," he says. Japanese diplomatic and consular documents relating to Jews focused instead on visas and other matters pertaining to Jewish migration.

In short, as Medzini suggests, Japanese was neutral when it came to Jews nor infected by anti-Semitism.

ROSES IN A FORBIDDEN GARDEN

(Continued from page 4) somewhat better living quarters, along with an implied promise that as long as he performed well, he and his wife and daughter would not be shipped out to a death camp. (Such arrangements existed in many other major Nazi camps.) Only after the family moved in did they learn that a small room was located directly above a ward of insane prisoners, from whom screams and shrieks were endlessly heard. As well, it lacked windows and included insalable bloodsucking bedbugs whose bites left Inge so ill she almost died.

Taking great care, Carl Katz set about making secret desperate efforts to save lives, as when, for example, he learned a particular train soon to leave from the camp, the Jewish immigration camp would not accept bedridden passengers. He rushed about the dorm urging his elderly wards to become and/or stay bedridden, thereby exempting many from at least that particular deadly trip. Had his ruse been discovered, his entire family could have been sent to the gas chamber; the Third Reich was determined to repress evidence that the ranks of the untermensch [subhumans] included some who were compassionat, ethical, and moral human beings willing to risk all to help others.

Little wonder, accordingly, that a survey interview secured by survivor/scholar Alexander J. Groth and his associates from 251 survivors in the late 1990s found that "many mosquitoes [like Carl Katz] as doing what they could to help and ameliorate conditions for fellow Jews rather than the opposite." In a fashion consistent with this research endorse ment, Carl, on returning to Bremen in 1945 after liberation, reestablished the Jewish Community Center he had led before being sent to Theresienstadt.

Inge's participation in stealth altruism had a more direct impact on the character of the Theresienstadt. Her presence was crucial in keeping a separate record of the names and death dates of Jews from her hometown. She thought this "the only way she could think of to honor them; that is, to retain the record of their existence and of their death."

Discovery of her unauthorized illegal record would probably have had the total Jewish society, the entire family sent to the gas chamber.

In sum, then, three memorable profiles distinguish the story of the Katz family. As a survivor, Carl Katz lived on in Theresienstadt. We take away the instructive model of Carl Katz, a man whose integrity as both a prisoner and an administrator has helped save lives. We learn from Inge Katz how to stay human in an atrocious setting. We are inspired by Schmuel Berger's rewards from bravery, prayer, and romantic commitment. Taken together, this artfully told story emphasizes altruism rather than atrocities; care, rather than cruelty; and value rather than victimization. It highlights our ability as care-valuing Jews to transcend the worst if we help one another hold on to the best.

Art Shostak is an academic sociolo gist and a co-chair of the Survivors Network for the Abused Holocaust Survivor. He has taught at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University. He is the author of 34 sociology books and over 160 articles. He is the recipi ent of the Distinguished Career Award for the Practice of Sociology. Since 1971, Art Shostak has made over 50 study visits to Israel, and in 2017, a related book of his was published: Stealth Altruism: Forbidden Care as Jewish Resistance in the Holocaust.
Major Saunders was the head of the British police in Palestine during the mandate period, and his statement concerned the massacre by Arabs, in August 1929, of 69 Jews in Hebron, a city where their community had been a continuous presence for at least two millennia.

I was reminded of Major Saunders’s pithy summary of the motive behind the Hebron pogrom when news broke of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s speech to the World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem, in which he essentially argued that it was the mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini, who crystallized the idea of the mass extermination of the Jews in Adolf Hitler’s mind. But before I talk about the controversy that followed these comments, I want to make some more general observations by way of introduction.

The first is that, while Hitler unarguably remains the most powerful and devastating anti-Semite to ever hold state power, he was far from the only one at that time to approach the “Jewish question” in exterminationist terms. As Major Saunders related from faraway Palestine, about an episode that presaged the Nazi atrocities that were to follow in Germany and then in occupied Europe and North Africa, the same hatred of Jews simply for being Jews was in painful evidence there. For there were thousands, even millions, of ordinary people in Europe and the Middle East who regarded the Jews as a social and religious poison and wanted them — all of them — dead. In that sense, the Führer was their representative and their master.

The second is that, as an Israeli Jew, Netanyahu is naturally sensitive to the Palestinian Arab dimension of the broader issue of collaboration with the Nazis, something I can relate to. As a kid, I remember sitting around my grandfather’s table with his relatives from Bosnia — men with sad eyes and the muscles and paunches of retired boxers, who had spent their youths in the Socialist-Zionist Hashomer Hatzair movement, gradually coming to fight with Marshal Tito’s Communist partisans against the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia that began in 1941. Men who, I realized with awe, had actually killed some of these Nazis that I’d seen in the movies.

And yet, when they spoke about the war, their anger really flowed when they remembered the locals who had assisted the Germans. Like Netanyahu now, what they found hardest to stomach was the spectacle of those non-Jews who lived alongside them collaborating with the Nazi extermination program.

In the pantheon of Nazi collaborators, Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini is right up there with Pavelic in Croatia, Petain in France, Horthy in Hungary, and all the other quislings — their name comes from the collaborationist leader in Norway, Vidkun Quisling — who implemented Hitler’s will. It was, ironically, the British authorities who appointed him to his position in 1921. During the 1929 massacre in Hebron, as during the openly anti-Semitic 1936–39 Arab revolt in Palestine, al-Husseini proved himself a confirmed Jew-hater and the natural ally of Hitler in the Arab and Muslim worlds.

It wasn’t until November 1941 that the mufti met Hitler in person. Significantly, in the view of many historians, that encounter in Berlin took place two months before the Wannsee conference, where leading Nazis led by Hitler’s security chief, Reinhard Heydrich, plotted the implementation of the “Final Solution” — the extermination of the Jews.

In the official German record of their visit, it was clear that both Hitler and the mufti were already in agreement that the Holocaust had to be visited upon the Jews. For his part, the mufti expressed his appreciation of Germany’s commitment to the “elimination of the Jewish national home,” while Hitler restated his “active opposition to the Jewish national home in Palestine, which was nothing other than a center, in the form of a state, for the exercise of destructive influence by Jewish interests.”

For good measure, the Führer added that Germany was also aware that the assertion that the Jews were carrying out the functions of economic pioneers in Palestine was a lie. The work there was done only by the Arabs, not by the Jews — a slander that could easily be expressed in the exact same words by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement that targets the “Jewish national home” in our own time.

That last point highlights a critical factor which the furor around Netanyahu’s speech — much of it generated by visceral opponents of Israel who only talk about the Holocaust when it justifies their backing of Palestinian violence against Israelis — has largely missed.

During the 1930s, both Germany and Palestine were the sites of mob violence, boycotts, and discriminatory laws and regulations against Jews. The Nazis’ consolidation of power in the 1930s was what enabled them to launch their campaign of war and genocide at the end of that decade.

Had Palestine been conquered by the Germans from the British, there is no doubt that the mufti would have been the mutual vision expressed in Berlin in 1941, the distinctly Arab contribution to the achievement of the “Thousand-Year Reich.”

In 2013, German historian Matthias Kuentzel has noted, the 700,000 Jews in the Middle East were in Hitler’s sights when he received the mufti.

“After Hitler envisaged it, after the assault on the Soviet Union, the Wehrmacht would also occupy the Caucasus and so open the way to the Middle East... Part of this scenario was the killing of the Jews,” Kuentzel writes. Even though this grand ambition failed, the mufti was still able, as the prominent Israeli Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer put it, to be “an active partner in devising the Final Solution.” The mufti also played a role in its implementation, raising three SS divisions composed of Bosnian and Albanian Muslims in the western Balkans.

Nor did the mufti forget Palestine. The Israeli scholar Edy Cohen has revealed how, in May 1943, he blocked a deal agreed to by the British and the Germans to allow 4,000 Jewish children to enter Palestine in exchange for 20,000 British prisonners of war. While in 1944, he parachuted a terror cell into Tel Aviv with the intention of poisoning the local water supply.

The mufti, disgracefully, escaped the Nuremberg trials of Nazi war criminals and ended his days in Beirut in 1974. His legacy survives in the daily incitement against Jews that emanates from Palestinian official and social media. So, when considering the latest Netanyahu controversy, please remember this: Those Holocaust scholars who criticized Netanyahu’s speech nonetheless recognize the fun-...
THE CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER FACING SWEDEN'S JEWS

(Continued from page 6)

and is a case of pull rather than push, as the established spectrum of pro-Israeli or religious activities here is not comprehensive and distinctive enough for some Swedish Jews. I know, as I was one of these Jews that left for Israel at the age of 18 to fulfill both Zionist and religious aspirations by volunteering at a kibbutz, studying at a yeshiva academy on Israel’s northern border and serving in the Israel Defense Forces. At no point was this due to persecution or even the lack of acceptance of my religion by my fellow Swedes: rather, it was the manifestation of my own convictions.

A similar choice is currently being made by many Jewish families in Malmö, a town now globally infamous for anti-Semitism. These families may leave Malmö, but rather than going to Israel, they settle in the larger and more vibrant Jewish community of Stockholm. They have chosen an internal emigration rather than leaving Sweden’s borders. Bearing in mind the reports, articles and surveys that detail the anti-Semitic atmosphere in Sweden, what is behind this choice? Why would the Jews of Malmö risk staying in Sweden instead of leaving the country? Why would any Jew? Are the Jews of Sweden wishful thinkers or just ignorant? Doesn’t the majority of Swedish Jews see the clear and present danger that is being described, not least by the Simon Wiesenthal Center and other international anti-racist organizations?

To understand the answers to these questions, we need to look beyond the convenient and glib “truth” that I hear too many times in Israel: “Europe — a continent of anti-Semites and Muslims — is lost. All sensible Jews should make aliyah and get the hell out of there!” As an advocate for Israel, I have grown accustomed to the sweeping generalizations made by our adversaries. These generalizations — directed at Israeli settlements, wartime conquests, Israeli public opinion and many other subjects — are usually based on ignorance or malice, and frequently both. We now risk making the same generalization regarding Sweden, without looking at the core issues at hand.

It is no coincidence that Malmö, with its large Muslim population, has seen a vast increase in anti-Semitic attacks. Let me explain why. First, a point of order: Swedes are sticklers for order and administration, even compared to their fellow EU citizens, and this includes the proper registration of crimes. This goes some way toward explaining the country’s disheartening statistics reported in recent EU surveys.

Secondly, and more importantly, the recent rise in anti-Semitic activity in Sweden originates largely from the Arab and Muslim communities. Here, many immigrants have backgrounds that are directly linked to the Israeli-Arab conflict, and hail from countries where classic anti-Semitism is commonly accepted, encouraged by politicians and even taught in schools. Anti-Semitism in Sweden is commonly hidden under a very thin veil of anti-Zionism and anti-Israeli sentiments. Therefore it’s relatively easy to see the direct correlation between certain events in the Middle East, such as the Second Lebanon War in 2006, and an increase in local anti-Semitic attacks.

Thirdly, most crucially and discouragingly, the current political climate in Sweden is a key enabler for the rise of anti-Semitic attacks. This is Swedish Jewry’s real clear and present danger; a fatal combination of proportionate demonization of Israel that directly harbors anti-Semitism, is compounded by — among others — the leading Social Democrat and former Malmö mayor Illmar Reepalu, who stated publicly that his city’s Jews were themselves to blame for the rise of anti-Semitic attacks, as they did not distance themselves clearly enough from Israel. After the end of his term, Reepalu was promoted by his party, Sweden’s largest, to a seat on its powerful executive committee.

What we need to call a spade a spade: There is no general deterioration in the quality of life for Jews in Sweden because of anti-Israeli or a general persecution of Jews. The recent debates regarding circumcision and kosher slaughter are symptoms of Swedish society unsuccessfully trying to come to grips with its colossal failure in integrating the recent waves of Muslim immigrants. As in many other countries, there are right-wing political parties that are more than ready to cross the common line of political correctness and pick up these issues in the populist pursuit of votes.

The manifestation of my own conviction was this due to persecution or even the lack of acceptance of my religion by my fellow Swedes: rather, it was the manifestation of my own convictions.

TO JEWS

A city like Malmö has vast social issues to be resolved, which is the reason for many inhabitants, including Jews, to seek their fortunes elsewhere. However, the problem is not Malmö, or even the predictable hate against both Israel and Jews that is being displayed and acted upon by certain elements of its population. It is the eagerness, with a small number of outstanding exceptions, of the mainstream media, politicians and opinion makers to ignore and hide current anti-Semitism under the cover of disproportionate and unjustified criticism of Israel. These attitudes should not be tolerated in modern Swedish society, and until they are recognized and openly discussed, the tide of anti-Semitism against Swedish Jews will continue to rise.
Heated arguments ensued. She felt differently about something with-
By Ella Nayor, Florida Weekly

Cesare Frustaci may be a Hungarian version of our own Forrest Gump. On his own as a 7-year-old, he evaded the Nazis in 1941 in Budapest, Hungary, for months before being captured and moved to a detention center, where he was imprisoned until the liberation.

But a number of chance encounters with famous people, such as Italy’s foreign minister and a future pope, would change his life.

Forced out of Italy as a child with his Jewish mother, the renowned Hungarian ballerina Margit Wolf, he was relocated to the Jewish ghetto in Nazi-occupied Budapest. His father, Italian composer Pasquale Frustaci, a Roman Catholic, was forced to remain in Italy.

Fearing that life in the ghetto was about to turn for the worse, his mother smuggled him out of the ghetto, gave him his baptismal certificate — although he was Jewish by birth, he was baptized in his father’s religion — and told him not to return. He began to live on the streets of Budapest, as a 7-year-old.

“It was well known that children and teenagers were rounded up by the Nazis and drowned every day,” said Mr. Frustaci. “My mother was a rather smart woman to separate from her son. She thought I might be safer on the street.”

Soon after, his mother was sent to Spandau concentration camp near Berlin, Germany.

So, for the next couple of months, Cesare hid in the cellar of an apartment building. During the day he strategized ways to survive.

He collected tennis balls for tips at the nearby tennis club. The money he made went for food. Then he asked management at one of the clubs if he could clean the bathrooms, for free. This allowed him to take care of his hygiene needs.

One day, Cesare recalled, he was walking along the bridge that stretches over the Danube River when he heard shouting. He recalls a young SS officer shouting at a young woman carrying a baby.

Cesare watched the guard hurl the baby into the river and shoot the woman.

“That was the atmosphere in the summer of 1941,” he said. “What was surprising were the pedestrians. They didn’t do anything. They just walked away. It was like it was just a normal day.”

Shortly after this incident, Cesare was captured and sent to a juvenile detention camp.

“There, life was harsh,” he recalled. “I remember waking up next to dead children,” Mr. Frustaci said.

The end of the war liberated the detention center and Cesare. But he would have a longer way to go in his journey. Unaccompanied children, like Cesare, were placed in adoptive homes since their parents were presumed dead.

Forrest Gump.

They were often placed in agricultural settings where they could work and help rebuild war-torn farms. A kind pig farmer and his family adopted Cesare and renamed him Geza Babaly. He moved to a small village named Apagy, about 20 miles north of Budapest.

A letter liberation, Cesare’s mother set out from Spandau in Germany to find her son. She walked all the way to Budapest. Mr. Frustaci compares his mother’s trek to that of walking from Florida to Canada.

She combed through nearly 200 villages carrying a newspaper image of Cesare as a young child. When he was in kindergarten, he was picked to go to a university in Italy. But the Communists said no. They didn’t want to lose a talented future engineer.

So, Cesare was again trapped. However, his mother’s friend knew a priest who thought he could help persuade the Hungarian government to allow Cesare to return to Italy. The Rev. Angelo Roncalli used what pull he had, and Cesare emigrated from Hungary to Italy, where he completed his engineering studies.

Father Roncalli went on to become Pope John XXIII.

Today, Mr. Frustaci spends his time traveling around the country sharing his story.

“It is my mission since 2004 to pass the torch to the younger generations — the history of Second World War and the Holocaust,” he said.

PHILLIP MAISEL AND HIS PURPOSE

(Continued from page 14)

“My father was very, very upset and said I should have gone with him,” she said.

For years the twins struggled to survive, each not knowing what had happened to the other.

Phillip was taken from Vilna to a hard labor camp in Estonia, then to numerous concentration camps across occupied Europe.

At one point both twins ended up at the Stutthof concentration camp at the same time, but neither knew the other was there.

A SAD KIND OF FREEDOM

Phillip was liberated in 1945 while on a death march.

“My father was very, very happy, I was free,” he said.

“But then I realized that I was somewhere in Germany … I didn’t know what had happened to my family. It was a very, very sad feeling.”

He was all alone.

He would later discover his father was killed at Klooga. Yet a chance meeting with a man from the American-controlled zone of Germany returned hope to Phillip’s life. The man was looking for his own family when he struck up a conversation with Phillip.

“My sister.”

Phillip rode his motorbike the equivalent of 500 kilometers to collect his sister.

“Tell the world what happened”

I was while struggling to survive in an Estonian work camp that Phillip made a promise he has kept to this day.

“When you ask me is it sometimes difficult to listen to the testimonies, I am fulfilling something that I promised, and this makes it a little bit easier.”

The survivors’ stories have been told and retold to Phillip over the decades. He says memories change and over time things become more important to those who survived.

He has also started to interview the third generation, to see if the trauma of the Holocaust has affected the descendants of Holocaust survivors.

At 94, Phillip can still be found filming at the Jewish Holocaust Center. He’d like to see his work publicly accessible one day.

“If the human race wants to survive, we should be fully conscious of being human beings, we should love each other instead of hate, and the result of hate is terrible.”
WE WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP THE FLAME OF REMEMBRANCE SHINING BRIGHT

(Continued from page 1) face of Yad Vashem; memorialized their first son Uziel, murdered in Auschwitz, and all of the children who perished in the Shoah and proved to be an inseparable gift to the Jewish people and all humanity.

Dr. Miriam and Sheldon Adelson, long-time friends of the late Edita and Abraham Spiegel, presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to Rita Spiegel on behalf of the entire Spiegel family. Sheldon Adelson stated, "Miri and I visited Yad Vashem and the Children’s Memorial in the late 1980’s and were incredibly moved. Abe and Edita’s unique contribution was a catalyst for us. When we returned home, I contacted Abe and we began to deepen our relationship along with our commitment to Yad Vashem. Rita has continued her family’s support of the work of Yad Vashem and the maintenance of the Children’s Memorial," he continued. "She demonstrated her commitment to Israel and the Jewish people through her leadership in philanthropy, education and community activities, while living in southern California and during the fourteen years she spent in Israel."

In accepting the award, Rita echoed the words that her father had spoken at the dedication of the Children’s Memorial: "Inside this building is a chamber illuminated by one and a half million separate points of light. Each little light symbolizes the soul of a Jewish child prematurely snuffed out. The mirrors reflect and multiply the lights to infinity, to remind us that not only did these children perish, but with them, their offspring, whom they would have parented. These eternal lights will not bring back all those children — those ruined lives. All it can serve is as a concrete reminder that this great evil could happen — did happen — and must never happen again."

Longtime major donors Elissa and Edward Czuker, honorary co-chairs of the evening, led the audience through a short memorial service in remembrance of the six million. As the lights went down, and candles and stars illuminated the ballroom, Cantor Seth Ettinger of Wiltshire Boulevard Temple, along with a string trio, left the audience tear-filled with a magical performance of “We Remember Them.” Lenny Wilf returned to the stage to present the Legacy Award to Gene Simmons, who accepted the honor for himself and his mother, Holocaust survivor Flora Klein. "While achieving exceptional success in America," said Wilf, "Gene still considers Israel his home. He returned there in 2011 for the first time since leaving as a child, and has been a lifelong ardent supporter of Israel. He has been a vocal advocate for Israel in public and within the entertainment community.” Gene’s emotional and heartfelt response noted that the Jewish people’s gift to the world, as reflected in the words of the Ten Commandments, particularly those related to honoring thy mother and father, were critically important to him. For without the encouragement of his mother, herself a teenage survivor of Auschwitz, and her instilling in him the “will to win,” he would have never achieved professional success.

FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION: A PLANNED GIFT TO ASYV

Empower, educate and strengthen our future by making an endowment gift to the American Society for Yad Vashem. Your legacy will help to support Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and keep the memory of the Shoah, its victims, survivors and heroes alive forever. You can make a generous contribution through a bequest in your will by designating ASYV as a beneficiary of a Charitable Remainder Trust or Charitable Gift Annuity. You can also contribute through a life insurance or retirement plan, by naming ASYV as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, IRA or other retirement vehicle.

Our ASYV staff are here to help you accomplish your estate planning goals. For more information or assistance with your estate plan, please contact Chris Morton, Director of Planned Giving: cmorton@yadvashemusa.org or by phone at: 212-220-4304, extension 213.