



SILVAN SHALOM

Israel's Vice-Premier

GERMANY IS OUR  
BEST FRIEND

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# JEWISH VOICE FROM GERMANY

קול יהודי מגרמניה

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ROSH HA-SHANA

## A Good Omen

Rosh ha-Shana, the Jewish New Year celebration, is an occasion for reflection and joy. Just recently, Germany was being portrayed in the international press as a country obsessed with discipline, ruled by a narrow-minded government. Now, Germany and Chancellor Angela Merkel, and even Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble, until recently the subject of special vituperation, are being portrayed in the world press as compassionate in their willingness to come to the aid of war refugees. And rightly so. Because Germany and the German government have been demonstrating that the right to asylum is not a meaningless provision within the German constitution, but rather a lived and living reality. By the end of 2015, Germany expects to receive up to a million asylum applications from people fleeing persecution and war.

Germany is currently marking the 25th anniversary of reunification. It is an occasion worthy of celebration. In a peaceful revolution, the people of East Germany toppled the Commu-

“The right to asylum is a lived and living reality in Germany

nist regime and established a democracy that was incorporated into the Federal Republic of Germany on October 3, 1990. Some months before, the first freely-elected East German government under Prime Minister Lothar de Maizière had authorized the immigration of Jewish citizens from the Soviet Union. For East German democrats, this invitation was seen as an acknowledgment of historical responsibility. Many Soviet Jews, who had suffered from poverty and anti-Semitic persecution, took up this invitation. More than 200,000 Jews left for Germany. Nearly half went on to join the German Jewish community, thereby helping to ensure its survival. More Jews from the former Soviet Union would have liked to come to Germany, but there were many obstacles in their way. Convinced that the Jewish state was the proper home of all Jews, Jerusalem encouraged Jews from post-Soviet states to immigrate to Israel. Germany's ministers of the interior feared that a continued “wave of Jewish immigration” could give rise to anti-Semitic attacks. And Germany's existing Jewish community did not wish to become a minority within a minority. And so a historic opportunity to increase the size of the Jewish community in Germany was lost.

Today, in nearly all German cities that are receiving incoming asylum-seekers, tens of thousands of people are volunteering their help. They are greeting the new arrivals, tending to the needs of children and adults, providing welcome gifts and needed supplies, and organizing language classes. “The new Germany is a country that has changed for the good,” as the founder of the State of Israel, David Ben-Gurion, noted more than 60 years ago. His belief in the good in Germany is being confirmed today. It is a good omen for the New Year, and not just within Germany.

5776

שנה טובה תשע"ו



The pomegranate, here a painting by Pavel Feinstein, symbolizes diversity, vitality, energy. These are our wishes for you for the New Year – plus, above all, peace.

POLITICS

### Silvan Shalom: We want peace

Israel's Vice-Premier is convinced that peace negotiations with the Palestinians need to be advanced. However, unilateral steps taken by Palestinians are not reconcilable with peace talks. In his interview with JVG Shalom also criticizes the recent deal with Iran: “The conditions of the agreement enable Iran to build nuclear weapons within a shorter time period than it could at present.”

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CULTURE

### Music Academy: We rehearse peace

“We aim to build upon the powers of reconciliation inherent in music.” Former German Secretary of Culture Michael Naumann is currently director of the Barenboim-Said Academy, based in Berlin, which strives to foster harmony in the Middle East. “Our Academy is a symbolic project,” explains Naumann in his interview with JVG. “We want to demonstrate that peace is possible.”

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### The Friends of JEWISH VOICE FROM GERMANY

With this Rosh ha-Shana, the *Jewish Voice from Germany* is entering its fifth year. In January 2012, we started with a circulation of 30,000 copies worldwide. Then-German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle presented our first issue.

Thanks to the ongoing interest of our readers as well as the Jewish and non-Jewish public, advertising support from major companies, interview partners including Chancellor Angela Merkel, Social Democratic leader and Economics Minister Sigmar Gabriel, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and Israeli Vice Prime Minister Silvan Shalom in this issue, among others, as well as a dedicated team of editors, we have made steady progress over the past years.

Alongside our English-language international edition, we have also been able to launch a German edition in partnership with Axel Springer Publishers. Our

circulation currently stands at more than 200,000 copies worldwide.

The *Jewish Voice* is now the world's largest independent Jewish newspaper, and presents our concerns to a global audience. But this success cannot undo the reality that print media now finds itself in a time of sinking advertising revenues. To maintain the independence of our newspaper and to ensure its continued publication, a group of friends and supporters have now joined together to lend their backing to the *Jewish Voice*. If you are interested in joining their efforts, or wish to know more, please contact for additional information.

We thank you for your attention and wish you Shana Tova. May the New Year bring you peace and happiness.

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▶ OPINION



This is our country  
New welcome culture

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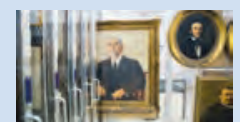
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Trade & Invest  
German export initiative

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Leo Baeck Institute  
Mission of preservation

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## GERMAN SOCIETY

# This is Our Country

## Humanity before rules

By Elisabeth Neu

If we now have to start apologizing for showing a friendly face in response to emergency situations, then that's not my country." Chancellor Merkel's remark in the face of the refugee crisis marks a turning point in Germany's self-image and conduct.

Germany has always stood for rules, duty and discipline that have priority over the needs of the individual. Even Immanuel Kant, the humanist philosopher of the Enlightenment, declared

anchored in people's minds and thus in the way they act in society. The result is the "Untertan," the slavish subordinate, as depicted by Heinrich Mann in his novel of the same name. This phenotype terrorized an entire society. Many people were destroyed by its "secondary virtues."

### No solidarity in Gulf States

In 1980 Lea Fleischmann, a teacher in Frankfurt, published her autobiographical book *Dies ist nicht mein Land* (This is not



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“

**Germany has changed. Life in our country has become better**

that "Duty is the necessity of an action from respect for the law." That served as a justification for the unconditional fulfillment of one's duty and obedience to the law demanded by an authoritarian state. The most obscene instrumentalization, or perversion, of unrelenting obedience came during the Nazi dictatorship.

Unlike a political system, a tradition of misusing rules of conduct, of instrumentalizing them, cannot be swept away by military means. That is because "damned duty" is often deeply

my Country), in which she depicted how oppressive everyday experiences were in all aspects of life: Attacks on humanity are always covert, wrapped in the mantle of principle and duty.

Angela Merkel has now thrown this monstrosity on to the scrap heap of history. The distress of the refugees – hundreds of thousands of them – is overwhelming. Most are from Muslim countries: Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea. It is a fact that the wealthy Gulf States, which boast about their solidarity with

Muslims everywhere at every opportunity, are not willing to take in a single refugee. Just as they have not taken in any of their Palestinian 'brothers' for almost seventy years now. It would be cheap and undignified to hide behind the indifference of others. Nor is there any point in getting worked up about the way Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán goes on about 'Christianity' or about similar

comments by other eastern European leaders.

### Support for refugees

Whether they derive their position from faith or political-moral tradition, Angela Merkel, the daughter of a pastor, and the Social Democrat Sigmar Gabriel both know full well that the Jew Jesus preached unconditional brotherly

love. And, whatever their reasons, millions of Germans support the refugees and offer them help. They prove that Germany and German society have changed. Life in the land of Angela Merkel, life in our country, has become better and more humane. That is something we can all build on. Not only in times of distress – as we know, necessity knows no law – but also in everyday life. ■

## BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

# Israel Should Accept the Deal With Iran

## Jerusalem must consolidate relations with the U.S. and Germany

By Rafael Seligmann

The first litmus test for the nuclear deal between Iran and the P5 + 1 is yielding negative results. Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader who is also considered the country's most powerful political authority, continues to vilify Israel as a cancer among nations and calls for its destruction. Even the attempt by peace activist Daniel Barenboim to bring his orchestra to Tehran for a performance was banned. Barenboim is Jewish, and that is anathema to the anti-Semitic mullahs. They attempted to discredit Barenboim as a Zionist – an accusation that was carefully calculated to not overstep the boundaries of what their Western supporters are willing to tolerate.

So is Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu correct in calling the Iran



Netanyahu ought to consider the fate of Michael Kohlhaas. German writer Heinrich von Kleist (1777–1811) created this figure in a novella of the same name (1808/10). Kohlhaas' unrelenting quest for justice ended fatally



Heinrich von Kleist

agreement a "bad deal"? Should Jerusalem continue to oppose the agreement? Iran's religious authorities remain unwavering in their hatred of Israel. But it would be a mistake for Jerusalem to continue its battle against the implementation of the Iran agree-

ment. As Bismarck rightly pointed out, politics is the art of the possible. For the Obama administration, the Iran deal is a major foreign policy coup – a mark of prestige. The Obama administration managed to convince the majority of the Democratic Party to close ranks and side with the administration. During this process, Washington enjoyed the unqualified support of its Western allies, including Germany. Now it has become clear that Netanyahu may well have overplayed his hand in his reliance on the Republican Party. In so doing, he managed to alienate the majority of the Democrats. The Republican-majority Senate again

fell short of the 60 votes it would need to advance legislation meant to kill the deal.

Another attempt to oppose the Obama administration would be harmful to Israel. Should he continue on this course, Netanyahu would be following in the footsteps of Michael Kohlhaas, a character from a well-known German novella – a man who, convinced of his own righteousness, burns his bridges and brings about his own destruction. But the political reality is that as the head of government, Netanyahu bears responsibility for the survival of Israel. And no political leader should risk the fate of his own country and people – even if he is convinced that an injustice is being done. Jerusalem would be well advised to assume that the current framework will be implemented, and to maintain the goodwill of its two most important allies, the U.S. and Germany. To preserve its continued existence, Israel will need to work with these two countries, and not against them. ■





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SILVAN SHALOM

# Germany is Our Best Friend

## Israel's Vice Prime Minister about German-Israeli relations, the Iran agreement and Aliyah

**Y**our wishes for the New Year 5776 for the State of Israel and the Jews in the Diaspora?

I wish the Jewish people in both Israel and the Diaspora to continue and preserve their identity on the one hand, and their nationality on the other. I want this year to see the gathering of all the Jewish people in the State of Israel, and that the latter continues to grow and prosper in freedom and security.

What is your message to the Jews of Germany?

The German Jewish community's roots date back nearly 2,000 years. The Jewish community in Germany should continue to serve as a home to the Jewish people, and serve as a direct link between Germany and the State of Israel. Today Israel and Germany enjoy a close and brave friendship and there is no doubt that this is largely due to the Jewish community in Germany. I bless you that you continue in your work out of a sense of understanding your duty and the role that you play in ensuring the vital interests of both countries.

This summer, you delivered the main address at the opening ceremony in Tel Aviv celebrating 50 years of Israeli-German diplomatic relations. What are your wishes for the future of these relations?

There are no two countries in the world which enjoy such unique and special relations as Israel and Germany. History does not for one moment escape the human memory and reminds us every moment that the relations between these two countries are not like any other relations. Germany has grown to stand out as one of Israel's closest and most important friends within Europe, and the world as a whole. Germany has proved its friendship through its uncompromising approach towards Nazis and their accomplices, neo-Nazis and anti-Semitism which is raising its dirty head throughout Europe. The military cooperation between Israel and Germany influences the military, intelligence, and strategic abilities of both countries. Additionally, the economic partnership between our countries is growing and the

Germany is as popular as never before with Israelis. But Israel's politics find little favor with many Germans. Your explanation?

I do not think this is correct. The President of Israel, Reuven Rivlin, recently visited Germany, and the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, visited Israel five times, most recently one year ago. We have very close relationships with the government of Germany and the interests of both countries are similar and often even identical. The security and economic cooperation serves as a focal point for our annual discussions, and this is a partnership that will only deepen and get stronger over the years.

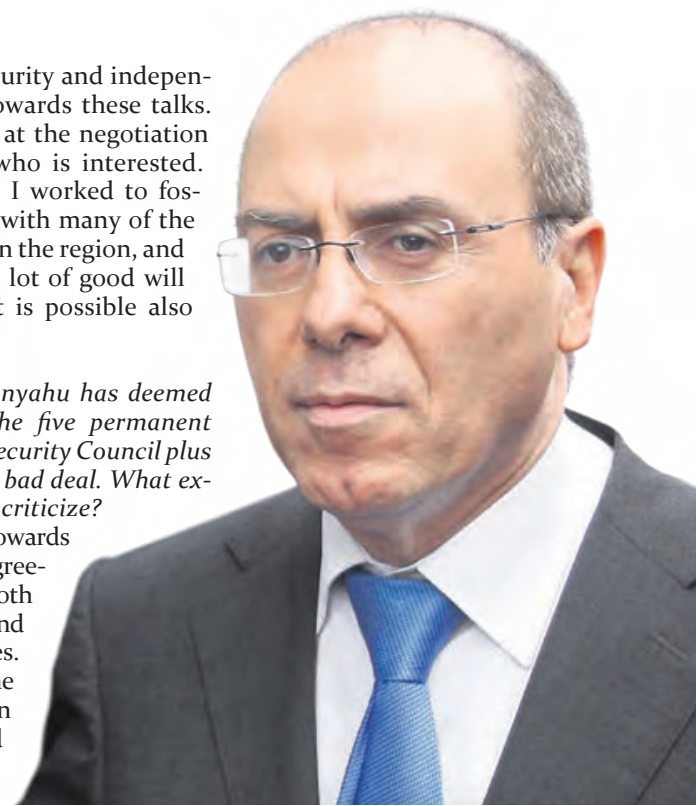
You serve as Vice Prime Minister. Which political aim is most important to you?

The political aim most important to me is to ensure the security, development and success of the State of Israel and its citizens. All of my efforts throughout my years as a public servant have focused on this, and every position that I have held focused on working on these issues.

in any way on its security and independence on its path towards these talks. We are happy to sit at the negotiation table with anyone who is interested. As foreign minister, I worked to foster Israel's relations with many of the moderate countries in the region, and I believe that with a lot of good will and courage, that it is possible also today.

Prime Minister Netanyahu has deemed the agreement of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany with Iran a bad deal. What exactly does Jerusalem criticize?

All findings point towards the fact that an agreement with Iran is both a threat to Israel and all Western countries. The conditions of the agreement enable Iran to violate them and build nuclear weapons within a short-



© photo: Michael Lucan

**“Anyone who values life will join hands and do everything to prevent Iran from developing the bomb**

In 2009, Benjamin Netanyahu declared at Bar Ilan that Israel is willing to live side by side with a Palestinian state. This has not happened as yet. Abu Mazen says he is ready to accept Israel's existence. Why is there no agreement so far?

The State of Israel believes that negotiations with the Palestinians is something that needs to be advanced. But “It takes two to tango.” The unilateral steps that the Palestinians have taken make it very difficult for us to move forward with negotiations, due to lack of cooperation on their end. Their request of the UN and FIFA to boycott Israel and turning it into a pariah state do not go hand in hand with a desire to move ahead with peace talks. We say: all parties have to come to the negotiation table without any preconditions. If the Palestinians will continue to refuse, and denounce Israel in every possible international forum, this will place great difficulty on the ability to move ahead with negotiations as this is a clear violation of past agreements that neither side will take unilateral steps.

Since its founding 1948, Israel has been attacked by other states. To this day, there is no peace apart from Egypt and Jordan. Nearly 70 years of war – how do the Israelis live with that? What are the perspectives for peace?

The State of Israel always strove for peace with all its neighbors. In the 67 years of its existence, Israel has dealt with many difficult threats. I doubt that any other country would have been able to deal with them. We are doing everything possible in order to speak to anyone who is interested in listening. However, Israel will not compromise

er time period than it could at present. A coordinated check of the facilities in advance, a significant removal of the sanctions, and providing the opportunity to achieve military atomic power in the near future, are not right. The former president of Iran Rafsanjani, who was seen as moderate, declared that an Israeli bomb, if one should exist, would leave just a “scratch” on the Islamic world, but an Iranian bomb would wipe the Zionist entity off the face of the earth. It is important to note, and I will emphasize this, preventing an agreement is an existential matter for the State of Israel, but it is not only the concern of Israel, but rather also of Germany. The Iranian threat, and the range of their rockets will enable harm also to vital and strategic interests to Germany. The problem is not local, it is global, and anyone who values life will join hands and do everything to prevent Iran from developing the bomb.

Germany's Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier has called the deal exemplary – what is your opinion?

In the context of the strategic relations that Israel has with Germany, it is o.k. to not agree on everything – just like there are arguments within families. There is no contradiction between strengthening the relations with Germany and ensuring the security of Israel, which comes into play in the opposition towards the agreement. Relations with Germany will continue to be good and strong like they have been.

The disagreement about the deal has severely damaged relations between Jerusalem and Washington. What can be done to improve these relations which are of vital importance to Israel?

Israel's existence is the only topic with in the U.S. that enjoys bipartisan support

and full consensus in both Congress and Senate. President Obama and his government are committed to the security of the State of Israel. As the one responsible for our dialogue with the U.S., I can tell you that despite our disagreements on the Iranian issue, and it is alright for friends to disagree, relations between the two countries are stronger than ever. The U.S. is committed to solving the conflict in the Middle East and I am confident that they will continue to serve as trusted mediators in this issue as they have in the past.

You were much respected as minister of foreign affairs of Israel. Would you be ready if the government calls you? Should the post not be filled as soon as possible?

I already hold two important positions in Israel's foreign service: Negotiations with the Palestinians and dialogue with the U.S. The Prime Minister serves today as foreign minister and does this job very well. I work today in both “worlds” as minister of interior and also towards the Palestinians and the Americans and I think that my work is done in the best way possible.

Aliyah from Europe is dramatically on the rise. One of the reasons is increasing anti-Semitism. How can Israel counteract the discrimination of Jews effectively? Are the European states doing enough against anti-Semitism?

The number of reported anti-Semitic attacks increases daily, and many are happening in Europe. The tradition of Jewish immigration to Israel, a blessed thing, is in many cases the result of anti-Semitism. There are many countries that are not doing enough to combat anti-Semitism and it is the responsibility of the State of Israel, the homeland of the Jewish people, to fight against this. The government of Israel formed a special team in order to fight anti-Semitism and encourages other countries to help. We will continue to fight anti-Semitism through an understanding that it is an evil that has to be abolished from this world.

Silvan Shalom was interviewed by JVG editor Rafael Seligmann; translation by Chaya Pomeranz



Silvan Shalom at his Jerusalem office

facts are impressive. From among its European neighbors, Germany is Israel's largest trade partner, ranking third in the world as a whole, following only the United States and China. In 2014, the trade between our two countries reached US\$ 6.6 billion, up 7 percent, and Israel's export to Germany in 2014 amounted to US\$ 1.7 billion. We will continue to grow and strengthen these relations in the years to come. We are aware that only a few will stand by our side like Germany does.



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# EQUAL





FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS REMEMBERED

# A Loyal Friend

## World politician and close ally of Israel



Bavaria on a sensitive mission. He asked the then defense minister for weapons and technology, and for support with equipment and training. The young State of Israel had already been forced to defend its existence

dimension; it also had a historical and cultural dimension. This was his main motivation for establishing the bases for a close and lasting cooperation between the NATO countries and Israel. Franz Josef Strauss saw the new-

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**Strauß was a convinced European and an equally convinced transatlanticist**

from attacks on several occasions. Strauß pledged his assistance and promised to share some of the limited resources at the disposal of the fledgling Bundeswehr. This is particularly noteworthy since the U.S. had flatly refused to supply weapons, a position which remained unchanged until John F. Kennedy became president in the early 1960s.

Franz Josef Strauß kept his word and thus laid the basis for David Ben-Gurion's historic meeting with Konrad Adenauer in New York in 1960, which in turn led to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965. Decades later, Shimon Peres wrote on the occasion of Strauß's 70th birthday: "Strauß's willingness to stand with Israel has imprinted itself deeply in our memory."

Extraordinary as his courage was, he also had nuanced and farsighted motives for supporting Israel during its early years. Although Strauß never became foreign minister, he did much to shape German foreign policy in every office he held – as a Federal Government minister, and as Bavaria's prime minister. He made more than 600 trips to 63 countries, including three visits to Israel.

Franz Josef Strauß was not only a convinced European; he was an equally convinced transatlanticist. No one worked harder for Germany's integration into the Western community than he did. Strauß was unshakeable in his belief that Germany's future lay not in centrist neutrality but in irreversible integration into the Western alliance of values. Western integration, for Strauß, not only had a primarily military

ly founded state not only as an important strategic partner but also as a bulwark of the West in the Middle East. For him, Israel's right to exist and security were non-negotiable.

### Breaking the deadlock

The core of his peace policy was a defense policy which was explicitly defensive and built on our own strength. It derived its credibility from its pledge that political goals would never be achieved through force. Even in the early 1950s, Franz Josef Strauß recognized that in the long term, it was unreasonable to expect the U.S. alone to guarantee Europe's security. He therefore regarded the European Defense Community, with a military contribution by the Federal Republic of Germany, as the key to safeguarding peace in Europe. Only a strong Europe standing shoulder to shoulder with the U.S., therefore, was able to preserve peace.

Today, these principles are more relevant than ever. The latest violent upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa remind us, with startling clarity, that Israelis and Europeans share the same fundamental security interests. However, a secure Israel cannot exist without an independent, viable and democratic Palestinian state within the framework of a two-state solution. Germany must therefore intensify its efforts, together with its partners in the EU, to achieve a solution to the conflict. Twenty years after the Oslo Accords, it is time to break the deadlock in the peace process.

Just as Europe is not, and must not become, a Christian club, neither should the Middle East be – or become – a Muslim one. In Israel, a new synthesis of European and Oriental Judaism is emerging. I am firmly convinced that this can be the starting point for a new and much-needed bridge between East and West.

Throughout his life, Franz Josef Strauß was connected to Israel in historical and moral responsibility. But he always regarded good relations as a task for the coming generations as well. For Strauß, remembrance meant internalizing the past again and again. And so today, it is down to us to constantly renew and strengthen the bond of friendship between our two nations. That is why I saw the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel as an occasion for a school exchange between young people from Israel and Germany. The group from Jerusalem visited Dachau in July, and I look forward to being in Israel with the German students in October. I hope that close and lasting friendships will ensue.

German-Israeli friendship is a stroke of great good fortune for Israel and Germany. Let's take these two anniversaries as encouragement to renew and strengthen this bond – based on responsibility for the past, and responsibility for the time to come.



*Gerda Hasselfeldt is chairwoman of the Bundestag group of Christian Social Union (CSU) parliamentarians*

By Gerda Hasselfeldt

Israelis and Germans have two causes for celebration this year: the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel, and the 100th birthday of Franz Josef Strauß, an early and close friend of the State of Israel.

Germany's relationship to Israel, and Israel's to Germany, will always be a very special one. Today, our countries are allies, partners and friends. After what the Germans did to the Jews, this is indeed a miracle. It was possible because Israel was willing to reach out its hand. Not long after the war, David Ben-Gurion once told his nation: "You must recognize that another Germany is emerging." Yes, another Germany emerged. But the responsibility that rests with us Germans remains. The Shoah will always put these relations beyond comparison.

We Germans have learned over the years that remembering always means assuming responsibility as well. Franz Josef Strauß was among those who assumed responsibility towards Israel very early on. Today, however,

public perception focuses mainly on the Reparations Agreement of September 1952. Less attention is paid to the military cooperation which, on the German side, is closely connected with the person of Franz Josef Strauß. As defense minister, Strauß built a close relationship

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**Already supporting Israel during its early years**

to Israel long before diplomatic relations were established. He also publicly called for full diplomatic relations long before this was widely regarded as desirable in Bonn.

### Memorable meeting with Peres

The foundation stone for this cooperation was laid by Shimon Peres and Franz Josef Strauß at a memorable meeting in Rott am Inn in late 1957. Peres – President of Israel half a century later – had come to

► **Franz Josef Strauß** (1915–1988) was one of the most eminent politicians of the Federal Republic of Germany. He contributed substantially to good relations with the United States and Israel. Long-term chairman of the CSU (Christian Social Union), Strauß also served as West-Germany's minister of defense (1956–1962), minister of finance (1966–1969) and from 1978 until his death as minister-president of the Free State of Bavaria.

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Saxony's Minister-President Tillich with asylum-seekers

Saxon State Chancellery/Matthias Reischel

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# A Jolt of Charity

## The vast majority of Germans won't allow hate to divide society

By Stanislaw Tillich

Seventy years ago, at the end of World War II, Germany stood militarily and morally defeated, having lost the war she started herself, and having committed unimaginable crimes against humanity. Today, Germany stands as the nation so far having taken in 40 percent of the refugees arriving in the EU, amidst the biggest humanitarian crisis since World War II, and being accused by other European governments of, supposedly, encouraging refugees to come in ever greater numbers. A very different Germany indeed.

However, at the same time the world watched in shock at footage of German right-wing extremists fire-bombing the police line in front of an asylum shelter. The terror of this fanatical minority is insufferable, and a great shame for our country. The vast majority of Germans – including us Saxons – is shocked and revolted by this minority's behavior. At the same time, we Germans have reason to be proud of the thousands of public servants and volunteers who make a huge effort in providing a safe haven to tens of thousands of refugees arriving each month.

### Meeting humanitarian challenges

It's an effort that overstretch- es many of those involved, and therefore they could need more helping hands, instead of being verbally and physically attacked by racist rioters. It's also an effort

that frays the nerves of many a local politician and citizen when they are told to find room for 300, or even 700, asylum-seekers within the next two days. Yet we find, again and again, that many people's initial state of shock quickly gives way to their rolling up sleeves and solving practical problems. This is a situation in which we Germans need to uncharacteristically do away with thoroughness and planning, finding shelters for asylum-seekers just as we go along. While there is a lot of criticism at this rather uneven process, the results so far are quite acceptable.

So despite the outright anti-immigrant hate by right-wing

indeed be beneficial. It is quite a different Germany, 70 years after World War II.

### Spirit of respect

Moreover, it is a Germany that is again home to a substantial Jewish community. Even in 1945, there had been Jewish Holocaust survivors who chose to stay in what they still considered their home, despite the terror and loss of family they had suffered at fellow Germans' hands. Twenty years after the War, the Federal Republic of Germany took up diplomatic relations with the State of Israel. This year, we commemo-

first resolution of this kind by a post-war German parliament. The resolution continued: "It is our responsibility to especially advance and protect Jewish religion, culture and tradition in Germany, and to care for, and sustain, Jewish cemeteries, synagogues and memorials. We consider it a special task to educate our youth in a spirit of respect for Jewish religion, tradition and culture. We are committed to offer asylum to persecuted Jews."

This was a resolution of some consequence. Immediately after the resolution, hundreds of Jews from the Soviet Union came to East Germany. They were followed by some 200,000 fellow Jews who settled in Germany, the country at whose hands their ancestors so terribly suffered! The ranks of the Jewish communities in Germany were swelled enormously, and we owe it to them that those immigrants were successfully integrated into German society. Moreover, new synagogues were erected and a rabbinical seminary set up, the first one since the Nazis had closed the last one down in 1942. When, in 2006, the first German-trained rabbis were ordained, at the synagogue of Dresden, Saxony, it was a great moment. It told the world about the renaissance of Jewish life in Eastern Germany.

However, despite this renaissance, German Jews often felt that their existence was a precarious one. We have not yet succeeded to overcome the anti-Semitism and racial prejudice fostered by a small minority, the

very sentiments that are easily transformed into violence against all those who are perceived to be different. When late last year anti-Muslim protestors took to Germany's streets, representatives of the Jewish community were among the first to sense the danger which our German democracy needs to confront. As the chairwoman of Dresden's Jewish Community said: "The anti-immigrant hate might soon be targeted at Jews, who only too readily could be declared aliens again." Again, that means, just like in 1933, when the Nazis rose to power. This in the year when we commemorate the end to these atrocities seventy years ago.

### United we stand

This is intolerable. No one in Saxony shall ever live in fear again. I myself and the entire Saxon state government have made it abundantly clear that all extremist violent attacks shall be prosecuted, and the perpetrators shall, if convicted, feel the full force of the law. The Saxon state will not cede an inch to those who attack fellow citizens, on whatever grounds. Whether someone is a Muslim, a Jew, a Christian or an atheist, everyone shall be defended against extremist attacks.

This is the government's pledge, but it is not the government's responsibility alone. Jews, Christians, Muslims and atheists have to stand united against the haters. And they do. Granted, the open-minded majority needs to be even more vocal. More of us democrats ought to engage the racists on-line in chat rooms and comments sections, where they spew their vile ideology, unrestrained by any common sense or etiquette. We also need to step up democratic education in our schools, at the same time we redouble our efforts at erecting permanent shelters for asylum-seekers, and stocking up on personnel that cares for them.

In December, I shall visit Israel again, and there will be many an opportunity to discuss recent developments in Saxony and Germany. I know that charity is an important part of Jewish identity. I am certain I can tell our Israeli friends that charitable works for refugees are on the rise in Saxony, and that our defense of freedom and democracy is stronger than ever.



Stanislaw Tillich is minister-president of the Free State of Saxony since 2008

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**We will not cede an inch to those who attack fellow citizens. Everyone shall be defended against extremists**

extremists, and despite a certain uneasiness about people who are yet foreigners, the vast majority of Germans stand united and rise to this humanitarian challenge. An unprecedented jolt of charity energizes Germany. We will do whatever it takes, and we shall succeed, that is the majority's mantra. We do even discuss that this situation could offer our demographically shrinking and ageing country a chance for rejuvenation and population growth, and that a more targeted approach to immigration could

rate this momentous event fifty years ago.

The Eastern part of our divided nation, however, remained deeply hostile towards Israel until the end of the Communist regime. When it was toppled by a democratic revolution in 1989, East Germany's first freely elected parliament swiftly moved and resolved in 1990 "to admit responsibility for the humiliation, expulsion and murder of Jewish women, men and children. We feel sorrow and shame, and acknowledge this burden of German history." It was the very

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## MIGRATION

# After the Great Welcome Party

## A Germany of Light or a “Dark Germany”?

By Dieter Sattler

Last year, Germany received about 200,000 new applications for asylum. It had already been assumed that this figure would increase significantly, to about 400,000, largely due to the dramatic escalation in the war-torn regions of the Middle East, as well as Germany's economic attractiveness. Today, however, many observers say Germany may see as many as one million new asylum-seekers this year. Social Democratic chair and Germany's Economics Minister Sigmar Gabriel has stated that Germany may see a half-million migrants and refugees a year for the next several years – although even this figure presumes that the influx will be distributed equitably among the EU states, and that a brake will be put on economic migration from the Balkan states (including several states that are candidates for EU accession).

When it comes to a Europe-wide solution, however, the eastern EU members are opposed to a quota plan. Countries such as France, Britain and Denmark are stonewalling under the pressure of right-wing nationalist parties. Even Portugal had only taken a few hundred refugees until August.

### Lion's share

Germany, which together with Austria and Sweden is assuming the lion's share of the burden, will receive at least as many refugees this year as all other EU states combined. This mass immigration has met with an ambivalent German public. Although incoming migrants and refugees have been greeted with cheering crowds and welcome parties at train stations in cities such as Munich and Frankfurt, the newcomers are then distributed to shelters for asylum-seekers, where some have encountered outright hatred. There have already been several arson attacks on refugee shelters. In eastern Germany, in particular, the arsonists have received open support from a significant segment of the “ordinary population.”

When Chancellor Angela Merkel went to visit a refugee shelter in Heidenau that had been the target of attacks, she found herself booed by a group of anti-refugee protesters, who called her a traitor. In this sense, Germany is separating into a majority of “helpers” and a minority of “haters”. German President Joachim Gauck likewise spoke of two Germanys: one that is full of light, and a “dark Germany.” Does this do justice to a rather complex mix of emotions amongst ordinary Germans?

The logistical feat of accommodating this influx of new arrivals is one thing, but the integration and assimilation of the newcomers into German society poses another and far more difficult challenge. What will happen when the



Syrians in Hungary trying to make it to Germany

party is over, and day-to-day life resumes? “Reality is grey,” in the words of the *Frankfurter Rundschau* daily, which is normally known for its support of a multicultural Germany. *Spiegel* magazine noted that the task ahead will be more than a “sunny fairy-tale.” And indeed, this mass migration into Germany has many aspects. Businesses are looking forward to an influx of skilled workers – and perhaps also to a larger pool of low-wage labor. The market-friendly Free Democrats are already demanding the suspension of the minimum wage for migrants. This is mirrored by concern and unease among the lower-middle class and working class, groups that are more affected by competition for affordable housing and low-skill jobs than are the internationally-oriented elite.

### Educational training

Although the educational level of the incoming Syrians appears to be relatively high, the migrants are not all engineers, doctors and skilled workers. According to a random survey of migrants, about 13 percent of asylum-seekers and refugees who held a residence permit in Germany were university graduates. Roughly a quarter had completed lower secondary education. But 58 percent had completed no vocational education at all. Among this current influx of refugees and migrants, initial experiences have been sobering, and Labor Minister Andrea Nahles has now stated that only about ten percent of the new arrivals will be able to directly enter the workforce. About 25 percent of the arriving adults are illiterate, and they will be particularly difficult to integrate into the workforce.

a time, security issues also fell by the wayside at the German border. This in part explains why fears have arisen that some of the new arrivals may pose a threat to the security of Germany's democracy.

### Dynamic and vibrant

Among the many Germans who are now caught up in the spirit of enthusiasm and welcome for the new arrivals, there will also be some who have failed to grasp what changes this influx will bring with it. Germany will become more dynamic and vibrant, but this is likely to come at the cost of some social tension. Germany's escalating labor shortage, which is the result of demographic transformation, could have been met more easily through immigration policies along the Canadian and Australian models, which support the immigration of highly-skilled and educated workers. Instead, Germany is now facing an anarchic influx of migrants and refugees, to which the state can only respond with remedial and after-the-fact measures. According to migration expert Dietrich Thränhardt, Germany would be

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**The current explosion of openness and goodwill must be maintained to master challenges ahead**

Germany's labor ministry will need to spend up to three billion additional euro this year for language classes and other educational and vocational training measures for migrants and refugees. It is likely that hundreds of thousands of these new arrivals will require public assistance. In some cases, educational and vocational training measures may allow some of these new arrivals to join the workforce, but the funds for these measures may end up coming at the cost of programs for unemployed Germans. Sigmar Gabriel has already warned that the government must avoid giving the impression to ordinary citizens that all monies would now have to go to help asylum-seekers.

Of course, Germany wants to and must help refugees who are fleeing war-torn areas. But in early September, at least, it seemed that Germany was reaching its breaking point. After Chancellor Merkel announced that Germany would be able to rise to the challenge – “we can do this” – the message that wealthy Germany was prepared to take in migrants spread like wildfire across social networks, and soon everyone seemed to want to come only to Germany.

The guarantee of asylum to people fleeing Syria would also appear to have led some migrants to attempt to pass themselves off as Syrians. For

best served by an annual migration of between 200,000 and 300,000 new arrivals. But at least for the moment, necessity knows no law.

In light of recent developments, controlled immigration is no longer an option, at least for the current year. Indeed, the Christian Democratic party has decided that the proposed new immigration law must be shelved for the time being. Chancellor Merkel has already announced that Germany must seek to fill its shortage of skilled laborers from the pool of qualified and qualifiable migrants and refugees. What remains to be seen is if the economic benefits of integration and assimilation will exceed its costs. If the costs outweigh the benefits, Germany's economy may find itself facing an immense and unforeseen burden.

Everything now depends on how quickly and how well Germany manages to integrate and assimilate the new arrivals. Thränhardt believes that Germany will succeed in this endeavor if the current “explosion of openness and goodwill” can be maintained to help master the day-to-day challenges that lie ahead. For a change will occur: “Germany will be younger and more diverse, and there will be more Muslims, though not all will be devout or observant.” ■



## 50 YEARS SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

# “A Bridge Between Us Seemed Nearly Impossible”

## How a German Jew helped pave the way to Nostra Aetate

By Hartmut Bomhoff

This fall, a symposium at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University will mark the 50th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the Declaration of the Second Vatican Council on the Relations of the Church with Non-Christian Religions proclaimed in 1965. A group of faculty and students from Potsdam's School of Jewish Theology will participate. It is noteworthy that it was one of the early advocates of this institute, the historian and scholar of religious studies Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich (1921–2007), who was instrumental in setting the stage for formal Jewish-Christian dialogue during the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council. In 1943, with the help of Christian friends, Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich escaped from Berlin to Switzerland. As Ehrlich later recalled, “a bridge between us seemed nearly impossible” – but then he went on to become a bridge-builder himself.

### Advancing a faltering dialogue

Ehrlich's hoped-for breakthrough in relations between Catholics and Jews finally came with the Declaration of the Second Vatican Council. Nostra Aetate acknowledged Judaism as a religion created by God and recognized Christianity's roots in Judaism. Ehrlich played an important role in the deliberations that preceded this declaration, which began for him with a personal encounter in Basle: “The year 1961 was a significant one for me in this respect. On Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, I met Cardinal Bea for the first time.” On September 20 of that year, his path took him directly from the synagogue in Basle to the Jesuit house, across the street, where the Cardinal was staying at the time. Ehrlich had just been appointed director of the European district of B'nai B'rith, and decided to take advantage of this informal contact to advance the faltering theological dialogue between the Vatican, the Israeli foreign ministry, the World Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith, and the



The Second Vatican Council convening at St. Peter's

Jewish reform movement in the United States.

In October, Ehrlich wrote to Professor Zwi Werblowsky (1924–2015), who was then on a lecture tour of Switzerland and who also served as an informal advisor to Maurice Fischer, the Israeli diplomat in charge of relations to the Vatican. In this letter, Ehrlich wrote that Cardinal Augustin Bea (1881–1968) was prepared to meet with Jewish experts for an exchange of ideas. At that time, Cardinal Bea, who was president of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, had been instructed by Pope John XXIII to prepare a “Decree on the Jews,” which was to serve as the basis for consultations by the Second Vatican Council. Like Ehrlich, Raphael Jehuda Zwi Werblowsky hailed from Germany. Werblowsky had received his doctorate in Geneva in 1951, and in 1958 had founded the Israel Inter-Faith Committee. He and Ehrlich became friends.

Thanks to Ehrlich's initiative, a two-day meeting took place in Paris during the last week of November 1961. Invitations had been extended to seven Catholics, who were all sympathetic to the Cardinal's point of view, as well as five Jews, of whom only two went on to attend the meeting – Ehrlich and Werblowsky. Two rabbis declined

the invitation, and a Jewish professor from Strasbourg was unable to participate. Ehrlich and Werblowsky wanted to ensure that the Vatican's planned declaration would address the basic problems within the relationship between Christians and Jews.

In addition to a critical reading of the anti-Jewish invective that had been issued by Church Fathers, Ehrlich and Werblowsky wanted the declaration to affirm the irrevocable covenant between



The Great Synagogue in Rome

and called for the creation of institutions that would dismantle religious prejudice.

This first meeting in Basle – which Ehrlich would later describe as a “relatively formal encounter” – and the later and very important meeting in Paris were followed by many more meetings, many of which took place in the Brazilian college, which was Cardinal Bea's residence in Rome. During the convening of the Council, Ehrlich also met with Monsignor John Oesterreicher (1904–1993), who had converted to Catholicism in 1924, and who served in the “unity secretariat.” In Ehrlich's view, Oesterreicher had been assigned the role of “defending the position of the Curia to the Jews, and reassuring the Jews that the Nostra Aetate was only the beginning.” During

As Ehrlich remembers, “That was when Cardinal Bea first sought personal contact and an exchange of ideas with Jewish people, and where he suddenly became aware of the extent of the opposition to Jews within his church.”

The Council marked a turning point, but Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich did not relinquish his efforts. In 1968, Ehrlich noted that many Christians still did not accept the reality of Jews, the Jewish people, and Israel. “The reason is the lasting legacy of the belief that Judaism is merely a fossilized religion that lost its historical validity with the resurrection of Jesus.” And Ehrlich continued: “The fact that Christians – even more so since the Council declaration – continue to display such a helpless attitude toward Jews and Judaism, and that so little constructive change has taken place, is related to the lack of knowledge about the reality of Judaism. First of all, on the Christian side, there is all too often a general lack of awareness of the diversity of ways in

which one can be a Jew. Judaism is not hierarchically organized, nor is there a world headquarters for Judaism. Judaism is a house of many rooms that can accommodate a diversity of residents. These residents may not always speak well of one another, and they may not appreciate the forms that religious worship takes among other Jews; they may accuse one another of being intolerant, too orthodox, too liberal, too chauvinistic, too universalist, too assimilatory, too ghetto-like, too critical, too uncritical. But they are all Jews and, above all: they all acknowledge one another as Jews. The reality of Judaism encompasses its diversity and pluralism.” ■

## Nostra Aetate acknowledged Judaism as a religion created by God and recognized Christianity's roots in Judaism

God and the people of Israel, to renounce any form of missionizing of Jews, and to require an examination of all official Church statements for anti-Semitic content. They also demanded that this declaration be made binding for all Catholic communities, and obtain the force of liturgical policy. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel was only later invited to submit recommendations to the Vatican Council. Rabbi Heschel's memorandum recommended that the Council formally reject the charge of “deicide” – the accusation that Jews were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. It also demanded recognition of Jews as Jews and a faith distinct and separate from Christianity,

those years, however, some Jewish standpoints rejected the notion of dialogue. In a 1964 article titled “Confrontation,” for example, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik argued that interfaith dialogue blurred the exclusive nature of religious dogma, while asking believers to abandon their commitment to the exclusive nature of religious truth.

### Embracing Jewish diversity

When Pope John XXIII directed Cardinal Bea on September 18, 1960 to draft a declaration on the Catholic Church's relationship to the Jewish people, the cardinal had had very little contact to Jews and Judaism.



Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich at the Arch of Titus

Archiv für Zeitgeschichte/ETH Zürich



## FOURTH LATERAN COUNCIL 1215

# The Church and Anti-Semitism

## The origins of institutionalized hatred

By Heide Langguth

In recent years, our society has again seen a rise in anti-Semitism that extends beyond far-right circles. An increasing number of “concerned citizens” from the mainstream of society are weighing in under the guise of criticism of Israel. They claim that Israel and “international Jewish financial capital” are mainly to blame for the conflict in the Middle East and the worldwide financial crises. Their arguments are anything but nuanced, and it is apparent that age-old anti-Semitic stereotypes and modes of thought (“the Jews are to blame for everything”) are enjoying a revival. These patterns of thought and explanation have their origins in the nearly two-thousand year tradition of anti-Judaism within Christianity.

This year we are marking the 800th anniversary of institutionalized anti-Semitism. In November 1215, Pope Innocent III proclaimed the resolutions of the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome. Some of the 71 decrees dealt with relations between Christians and Jews:

In Canon 67, Jews were forbidden from extorting “oppressive and immoderate interest,” with which they “in a short

time exhaust the resources of the Christians.”

In Canon 68, Jews and Saracens (Muslims) were instructed to dress in such a manner that Christian and Jewish or Muslim men and women would not “through error have relations.” During the Holy Week and Easter, Jews and Saracens were not permitted to appear in public.

In Canon 69, Jews were prohibited from taking public of-

Especially fateful was the above mentioned decree contained in Canon 69, issued in 1215, which not only prohibited Jews from assuming public office, but also excluded them from craft guilds, which had the effect of severely limiting the choice of occupation and the activity of Jews.

The decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council maintained and extended the anti-Jewish

“**The Pope’s mea culpa was ambiguous and inadequate**

fices in which they would exercise authority over Christians.

### Fateful decrees

In 1139, the Second Lateran Council had already forbidden Christians the practice of charging interest, while permitting Jews to do so. This in turn justified the stereotype of Jews as “greedy usurers,” which to this day ranks among the most virulent of anti-Semitic stereotypes.

tradition of the Christian church, which heightened the religious, social and economic oppression of the Jewish population.

In order to instruct ordinary Christians, most of whom were unable to read or write, on the proper attitudes toward their Jewish neighbors and the Jewish religion, the church documented its position in visual imagery of all sorts, including frescoes, sculpture, picture friezes, and stained-glass windows. On ma-



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torious anti-Semite of the Protestant Reformation.

### Examining Christian guilt

Augustine’s absurd thesis, along with the anti-Semitic declarations and decrees of the Christian church, became deeply lodged in the collective European memory, and would go on to give rise to the persistent defamation and social exclusion of Jews, and ultimately to pogroms and genocide.

In 2000, the public “mea culpa” issued by Pope John Paul II, which confessed the Church’s guilt and requested forgiveness, was both vague and ambiguous in its formulation: “We are deeply saddened by the behavior of those who in the course of history have caused those children of yours to suffer, and we ask your forgiveness...” In light of the role that the Christian church has played in anti-Semitism, this is a completely inadequate explanation. The year 2015, and the marking of the November anniversary, presents the Christian Church with another opportunity to take a strong and necessary position against anti-Semitism. ■

ny of the depictions, such as the one on the Strasbourg Cathedral, Ecclesia triumphs over the humiliated figure of Synagoga.

The anti-Semitism of the Church had its origins under Augustine (354–430), who in Book XVIII of his *City of God* had ascribed collective guilt to Jews for the death of Jesus. This anti-Jewish attitude would not remain limited to the Catholic Church. Indeed, Martin Luther was a no-

## EAST GERMANY AND ISRAEL

# Aggressive Anti-Zionist Policy

By Christian Nestler

On May 13, 1965, the headline on the front page of the *Neues Deutschland* national East German newspaper announced the establishment of “Diplomatic relations between Mideast conspirators Bonn-Tel Aviv.” This news was a slap in the face for the German Democratic Republic. Instead of allying itself with the anti-Fascist GDR, the Jewish homeland of Israel had established relations with the successor state of Nazi Germany.

### Communist strategy

The difficult relationship between East Germany and Israel can be divided into three phases. Until 1952, East Germany, which was then still under Soviet administration, maintained an overall stance of positive neutrality. After 1952, however, the show trials against Jewish party members and doctors in the Eastern bloc, which had been initiated by Stalin, signaled a distinct anti-Semitic turn – a development that was amplified by Israel’s increasing alignment with NATO. The third phase, which involved rapprochement between the two nations, began in 1985 with the reform policies of Mikhail Gorbachev.



Great pals – Erich Honecker and Yasser Arafat in Berlin, 1980

In the official historiography of East Germany, the Communist resistance had been the most important victim during the Hitler years. In this anti-Fascist mythology, Jews figured only as passive victims. As a result, East Germany felt itself under no obligation to provide any form of reparation to Jewish victims of Nazi persecution, apart from a small pension. In the 1950s, the show trials against high-ranking Communists such as Paul Merker in East Germany and Rudolf Slansky in Czechoslovakia, who were both convicted of being agents of Zionism, served as further evidence of increasing rancor toward the Jewish state.

with Lebanon in 1982, East German media made mention of a “well-prepared Holocaust.” And in the late 1960s, the German Democratic Republic began supporting the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

To avoid possible accusations of anti-Semitism that their anti-Israel policies might elicit at home and abroad, the East German regime held up the example of the publically-lauded Jewish and socialist artist and intellectual. One such figure was the singer and actress Lin Jaldati, who as a young woman had met Anne Frank in the concentration camp.

The East German regime thus took care to preempt any accusation of deliberate per-

This state of “non-relations” with Israel continued to deteriorate after 1965. The German Democratic Republic began to seek relations with the Arab states. Anti-Israel polemics flourished in East German media during the 1967 Six-Day War, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and the 1982 Lebanon War. An article published in the *Deutsche Lehrerzeitung* of 1975 stated, “Let us be clear: Zionism and Fascism share a common ideological platform. And this is the ideology of racism.” During the conflict

secution of their own Jewish citizens, and even greater care to avoid any accusations that their foreign policy aimed to bring about the erasure or elimination of Jews.

### Hypocrisy and hostility

Anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish rhetoric was deployed in tactical fashion, whenever it appeared that it might serve the regime’s propagandistic desire to portray itself as an “ordinary” member of the community of nations. But East Germany’s refusal to acknowledge the realities of the past and its demotion of Jews to “second-class” victims of Nazism was a clear and fundamental moral and ethical lapse.

On April 12, 1990, East Germany’s first and only freely elected parliament issued a declaration apologizing for the hostility of the “Workers’ and Farmers’ state” toward Jews and toward Israel: “We ask Jews all over the world for forgiveness. We ask the people of Israel for forgiveness of the hypocrisy and hostility of the official GDR policy toward the State of Israel, and for the persecution and degradation of our Jewish fellow citizens in our country, even after 1945.” ■

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## WHAT'S GOOD

## Growth Through Debt?

Today debt is higher than ever before. As a result, governments and central banks have only minimal to no room to maneuver. Governments and individuals together have now accumulated a total of US\$ 200 trillion in global debt, which corresponds to 258 percent of annual global GDP. In the seven years since the global finance crisis of 2007–2008, debt has increased by a further US\$ 60 trillion, or more than 40 percent. But debt is not an inevitability; it is the outcome of deliberate action. The U.S. alone has a debt worth more than 75 percent of annual global GDP. How could things have gotten to this point?

A bust of Ludwig Erhard greets visitors in the foyer of the Federal Ministry of Economics in Berlin. Recently the legendary economics minister (1949–1963) and German chancellor (1963–1966) received a new neighbor: Karl Schiller, Germany's minister of economics from the Social Democratic Party between 1966 and 1972. This addition represents more than a battle between the political parties over the interpretation of history. The controversy exemplified by the differences between Erhard and Schiller continues to have an impact on public debt and expansive monetary policy today – an impact that has largely been forgotten, perhaps because it calls into question the much-touted primacy of politics.

## Stability laws

A dispute over public debt cost Ludwig Erhard his chancellorship. Despite a flagging economy, Erhard continued to reject debt as an overall management strategy. Toward the end of his term in office, Erhard intro-

duced a draft for a new “stability law”. The explicit goal of the law was to protect the public budget from a growing public debt, and to safeguard monetary value. But the next generation of economic policy-makers had more ambitious goals: they wanted to establish control over the economic cycle itself. This was not solely a German phenomenon. As Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman noted with irony, “We are all Keynesians now.” In 1967, Karl Schiller helped pass a law with a name very similar to Erhard's proposal, but with very different intent. The Law for Promot-

Keynesianism was in vogue. And the result is well known. As then-Chancellor Helmut Schmidt intoned, “better five percent inflation than five percent unemployment.” Due to the economic crisis of 1974–1975, public debt as a percentage of GDP surged from levels that had typically remained under 20 percent to 24.9 percent. The belief that debt was the solution to economic problems became firmly ingrained in the political imagination. By the late 1980s, Germany's public debt had climbed to more than 40 percent of GDP. Today it is twice that. But the obvious fail-

instrumentalized monetary policy, expanded the money supply, and are attempting to heat up inflation. Is this all due to an implacable obsession with interventionism and growth, or is it due to a blind belief in a mistaken sense of power and control?

This history has left its mark down to this day. Indeed, global Keynesianism is largely responsible for the global debt crisis. Governments set ambitious benchmarks for growth. And increased public debt was the price for growth at any cost. This debt continued to feed on itself; even in good years, the debt was not paid off. By 2002, it had become apparent that debt does not lead to sustainable growth. At that point, governments shifted to instrumentalizing monetary policy as a tool for economic growth. For the U.S. Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank, monetary value has taken a back seat to promoting growth. But just as in the 1990s, debt policy has reached the limits of its efficacy. Interest rates are nil, and anyone who is currently calling for monetary policy must now also contend with the scourge of negative interest rates, which would require yet another plague, namely to scrap cash altogether.

Karl Schiller, one of the architects of this new policy, came to this conclusion early on. He realized his plan had failed. Policymakers increased debt with alacrity but refused to turn off the tap to reduce debt once the economy was booming. In 1972, he decided to retire from government.

In the subsequent parliamentary election, Karl Schiller even joined with Ludwig Erhard to

call for budgetary consolidation. “We can have faith in the wisdom of governments and governmental agencies. But in all questions relating to the allocation of resources, the wisdom of governments and governmental agencies is far inferior to the wisdom of the market,” he said.

## Renewed humility

In this sense, the fact that Karl Schiller now stands next to Ludwig Erhard should serve as a signal for renewed humility. Growth is not everything; the wisdom of state economic policy is questionable; and even when the state's judgment on matters of the economy is accurate, policies that aim to shift the economy in one direction or another are almost certain to backfire. Only the debt remains. But for now, the current monetary policies look set to continue. ■

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Roland Tichy

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**Anyone currently calling for monetary policy must now also contend with the scourge of negative interest rates**

ing Stability and Growth in the Economy marked the heyday of the conviction that the government was not only able but obligated to ensure steady economic growth. And this was to be accomplished by public debt, as British economist John Maynard Keynes had explained.

This story is particularly fascinating in light of current debates. Ludwig Erhard, whose policies had led to the postwar German economic miracle, rejected economic growth as an overarching imperative. He believed that it was a matter for every individual to either work more or work less. So what was the point of artificially enforcing growth if people preferred spending a greater share of their time in leisure pursuits?

But these reservations were brushed aside. Growth took on the force of law, and not just in Germany. Around the world,

ure of this policy did not cause it to be abandoned. Instead it was pursued with even greater vigor and financial outlay than before. Nearly all western nations followed a similar path, with similar results.

## Obsessive interventionism

Indeed, inflation had already become a problem under Schiller's tenure. In 1967 and 1968, the inflation rate was still under two percent. By 1971, the inflation rate exceeded five percent for the first time. Two years later, it was seven percent. Despite this unfortunate development, the Federal Reserve, the Bank of Japan, the Bank of England, the Bank of China, and the European Central Bank have now all started to push policies of growth, taking over the reins from a fiscal policy that has become severely overextended. All of these institutions have

## DILEMMA OF REGULATION

## The World of Finance in Uncertain Times – What about the Investor?

By Marcus Vitt

Capital markets have experienced a great deal of turmoil in recent years. At the turn of the century, the collapse of the New Economy bubble soon gave way to the upheaval that followed the attacks of September 11, 2001. Since 2008, historically low interest rates and the ongoing impact of the global finance and debt crisis have remained cause for concern.

The greed for profit, with its often negative impact on decision-making, has also played a role in these events. Policy-makers have responded by tightening regulations on banks, with the aim of pro-



Bankhaus Dörner &amp; Reuschel

tecting consumers from the consequences of poor investment advice. Since the start of the global finance crisis, every year has seen a flood of new legal duties, regulations and laws – with no end in sight. This massive regulatory wave is affecting all banks, even those that have always placed the interests of their clients at front and center. But does this truly serve the

interests of consumer protection? The reality is that this regulatory frenzy has done little to protect investors. To the contrary: the surfeit of new regulations means that

banks are increasingly scaling back their advisory services, leaving an ever larger number of consumers to make decisions on their own. And without competent investment advice, consumers are prey to erroneous worries and fears.

## Rules should benefit clients

The flood of laws and regulations has also had an impact on banks. Many financial advisors have become cautious, concerned mainly with avoiding mistakes. German financial institutions are becoming increasingly reluctant to provide investment advice. This trend is even apparent among banks that specialize in an affluent clientele. And many clients are tired of dealing with a seemingly endless mountain of paperwork. More and more are switching

to portfolio management services, where banks can operate freely within a predefined limit. Some private banks have even decided to switch entirely to portfolio management services, even for their high-wealth clientele.

And what about the clients who are unable to afford professional portfolio management, for example through a private bank? That is the true dilemma of regulation. A surfeit of caution has taken hold among investment advisors. Strict accountability requirements are keeping many potential investors out of the securities market. But with the European Central Bank enforcing continued low interest rates, securities have become an even more important investment tool. Financial repression on the part of the state will have a devastating impact on pension systems. By maintain-



By Arne Schönbohm

The digitization and networking of the economy and society seems unstoppable. This development, which permits continuous communication between man and machine, is transforming our industrial landscape in profound ways. With the rise of Industry 4.0 and the Internet of Things, cars will be driverless, factory machinery will be guided from smartphones, and agricultural fields will be planted and harvested automatically through machines guided by GPS signals. Such scenarios, which until recently were the stuff of sci-fi films, are now becoming a reality.



Yuri Samoilov/istockphoto.com/creativelibrary/2.0 (legakod)

#### Organized robbery

The brave new world of digitization and networking brings with it an unprecedented opportunity for economic development. But it also poses enormous risks, which could easily take on dystopian dimensions. Sabotage, extortion, espionage, and other forms of organized criminality are also a reality of cyberspace. Indeed, by 2009 cybercrime had become more profitable than drug trafficking. In February 2015, it was reported that the Carbanak cybergang had stolen up to US\$ 1 billion from a total of more than 100 banks worldwide. Ordinary citizens can now commission the services of cybercriminals via the Darknet, a hidden and anonymous underbelly of the searchable web. On the Darknet, services available for purchase range from human trafficking and weapons to the hiring of contract killers.

Because of their technological know-how, German companies are an especially attractive target for cybercriminals. The potential annual damage caused by cybercrime is estimated at € 51 billion (US\$ 57 billion), or approximately 1.6 percent of Germany's GDP. And the potential impact of cyberattacks could be devastating. For example, this past year a German steel mill was hacked in a cyberattack. And it is not only large companies that have been the targets of such attacks. Up to 10 percent of SMEs have also fallen victim to such attacks.

Alongside industrial and economic policy, digitization also poses new challenges to international security and defense policy. Since 2007, when a series of cyberattacks were carried out on a number of Estonian organizations, including the parliament, ministries, and banks, we have

#### WEB SAFETY

## Watch Out: Cyberattack!

### Government must invest to enhance security

been forced to acknowledge that states and governments are also vulnerable to massive cyberattacks. In the 2007 series, nearly the entire banking system of the Baltic nation was brought to a standstill for several days. The cyberattack was a targeted strike on state sovereignty and on the freedom of Estonian citizens. Indeed, NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg has stated that cyberattacks could also trigger the mutual defense clause under Article 5 of the NATO Charter.

While other countries realized at an early stage that successful digitization requires IT security, two years ago the German government was still describing the Internet as a kind of "terra incognita". Programs such as the "Digital Agenda" and the initiative "Industrie 4.0" high-tech strategy are

1.25 percent of the budget of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, of which the BSI is a part.

#### New law is no remedy

The cyberattack carried out on the German Bundestag earlier this year, which lasted for several months and led to data theft from the parliament's computers, demonstrates that German policymakers have underestimated the importance of cybersecurity. The new IT Security Act passed by the Bundestag in mid-June is unlikely to remedy this situation. One provision of the new law requires operators of critical infrastructure – meaning infrastructure that is of key importance to the functioning of the state – to report significant IT security incidents to the

is only 25 percent, and the introduction of such "placebo" regulations will do nothing to improve



public domain

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**The attack on the German Bundestag shows that policymakers have underestimated the importance of cybersecurity**

intended to reduce that gap. But German policy in matters of IT security is still lagging, in part due to very low levels of government investment. The agency in charge of IT infrastructure in Germany, the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI), in 2014 presided over a budget of € 79 million. This corresponds to approximately

BSI. Unfortunately, government agencies and institutions such as the Bundestag are not classified as critical infrastructure under the law. Moreover, the new law will lead to a flood of incident reports which the authorities are not currently equipped to handle. At present, the clearance rate for cybercrime in Germany

this situation. Also, the new law will do nothing to change the fact that the Internet currently operates as a kind of legal vacuum. But accepting this state of affairs poses a grave risk to our future. Instead, we must develop a vision of an Internet that is free of cybercrime.

This kind of governance by bureaucracy also exacts a price on private enterprise. When the state's remedy is little but a sham, private enterprise is forced to take matters into its own hands. In recent years, German companies have been

steadily increasing their IT security budgets. Cybersecurity has become an important issue during acquisitions of competitors and in corporate mergers. To maximize their security, German enterprises are constantly searching for new solutions and instituting new alliances, such as the German Cyber Security Hub Electricity (Cyberhub-E), an alliance of energy companies that is developing cybersecurity strategies and concepts. Last month, four major German companies – Volkswagen, Allianz, Bayer and BASF – teamed up to fight cybercriminals. The new venture will sell information-technology security services to help companies in Germany identify cyber risks and ward off attacks.

#### Towards innovative solutions

German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen's April 2015 visit to the NATO cyber defense center in Tallinn could represent a turning point in German cyber policies. According to initial reports, the issue of cybersecurity will play a more prominent role in the 2016 Bundeswehr White Paper, in which the German government defines its security policy guidelines and which is scheduled for presentation at the end of the year. This would appear to be a move in the right direction. In the event of a large-scale real-world attack, the armed forces would be called upon to respond. In the event of a digital attack on German soil, however, the responsibility would lie with the Federal Ministry of the Interior and its agencies. The question arises whether the German Bundeswehr may not be in a better position to ensure Germany's cybersecurity. At the same time, Germany would be well advised to establish a coordinating office at the highest level, based in the Federal Chancellery, along the U.S. and Israeli model. In a manner analogous to the structure of the intelligence services, this coordinating office would enable the harnessing of resources of a variety of institutions, and would more efficiently coordinate the various measures undertaken by the Bundeswehr, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the intelligence services, and the German states.

Such a step would help enhance Germany's security policy, even given current budgetary constraints. This would allow Germany to become a driver of innovative cybersecurity solutions, rather than continuing to play a game of catch-up in this sphere. ■

*Arne Schönbohm is president of Cyber-Sicherheitsrat Deutschland e.V., founded in 2012*

ing artificially low interest rates, the state is reducing its financing costs at the expense of citizens. And citizens, in turn, are forced to take higher risks in their retirement planning. Under these conditions, expert and reliable financial advising has become even more important.

Banks do not object to reasonable regulation – on the contrary. Rules have their purpose. But rules should also benefit the

clients. In the early stage of the regulatory process, there were a number of ideas that have indeed benefited clients, including the regulations related to cost transparency.

But for financial institutions, increased regulation also leads to increased data processing and IT costs. The regulatory requirements are exactly the same for a small bank as for a large one. And this, too, makes no sense.

Here in Germany, increased regulation has not led to better advising or better consumer understanding in matters related to finance. On the contrary – and this is a problem that must urgently be addressed. Banks must join in opposition to policies that will only serve to disenfranchise their clients, and banks must work together to find forward-looking solutions. Many are wary of unfa-

iliar types of investment, but unfamiliar forms of investment are exactly what are necessary under current conditions. This will also require that policy-makers keep step. In so doing, we will be better able to weather these turbulent times. ■

*Marcus Vitt is Spokesman of the Management Board of Donner & Reuschel Private Bank*



## GERMANY TRADE AND INVEST

# Combining the Best of Two Worlds

Export initiative advises SMEs regarding market opportunities in Israel



Growth sector healthcare: participants at the biomanufacturing workshop in Beersheba

By Tilo Mandry

Germany's life science sector is wide-ranging, extending from pharmaceuticals and medical technology to biotechnology to the manufacturing of electronic healthcare devices. Alongside well-established larger companies, the sector also includes many small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs). For these SMEs, Israel is an exciting opportunity. For one, Israel offers a market for German products. But German companies can also benefit from the innovative potential of Israel's healthcare sector. To date, however, German companies have not fully exploited this potential, to the detriment of both the German and Israeli sectors.

## Favorable prospects

Generally speaking, economic relations between Germany and Israel in the healthcare sector are largely ignored by the press. One exception was Israeli drugmaker TEVA's 2010 acquisition of the German generics manufacturer ratiopharm, which received significant international attention. TEVA is the world's largest generics manufacturer. Economic prospects for German companies in Israel's healthcare sector are favorable. Israel is already Germany's second-largest trade partner in the Middle East, and Israel's population is increasing rapidly. Although its population is still relatively young, the percentage of elderly is growing fast, a trend that will also increase demand for healthcare products. Imports of German medical technology to Israel rose 2.7 percent in 2014, even though public hospitals were not fully funded for a portion of the year. With imports totaling US\$ 137 million, Germany is Israel's second largest exporter of medical technology, topped only by the U.S.

German businesspeople in Israel generally find that the Israeli mentality is different from their own. As a rule, Israelis tend to make quick and spontaneous decisions. In German companies, the decision-making process tends to be significantly longer and more thorough. But other differences exist as well. Israeli companies in the healthcare sector are often headed by serial entrepreneurs – people who continuously come up with

new ideas and found new businesses. In Germany, SMEs tend to be family-owned and passed down from generation to generation. As a result, tradition tends to play a significantly larger role in a variety of respects than in Israel. A German company that has been producing endoscopes for many years will tend to stick to their tried-and-true technological approach, and refine it on an ongoing basis. In Israel, companies in the life science sector tend to be especially innovative in their search for new solutions. For example, an Israeli company invented a capsule camera that is swallowed by patients in order to deliver images from inside the patient's body. This capsule camera represents an entirely new approach, rather than simply an elaboration of existing endoscopic

events are conducted in collaboration with the German Chamber of Commerce and the German-Israeli Life Sciences Committee, and receive support from the German embassy in Tel Aviv.

At the University of the Negev in Beersheba, for example, the initiative helped organize a podium discussion, workshop and discussions on the topic of biomanufacturing. The focus of these events was manufacturing very small quantities of biotechnological substances for use in clinical studies. Germany is very advanced in this field, second only to the U.S. worldwide. The

events demonstrated how German contract manufacturers can meet the specific needs of their Israeli clients.

## Clinical studies

At the Life Sciences Israel conference, a forum was held on the execution of clinical trials. The forum focused on how data from clinical studies can be utilized for the regulatory approval of pharmaceuticals. Germany is an important site for the execution of clinical studies.

At an event held to mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Germany and Israel, the focus was on partnerships with industrial enterprises and financing via venture capital funds. Much like in the U.S., the venture capi-

“**Israeli innovation and German quality: the future will see many more joint and collaborative projects**”

technology. But it is precisely these differences in corporate culture that make collaboration between Germany and Israel so fruitful.

## Potential partners

But what steps are necessary to launch a German-Israeli joint venture? Are German partners able to obtain licenses for Israeli products? And how can a German business collaborate with an Israeli partner to refine a product, or enter a third market? The Export Initiative for the German Health Care Industry provides assistance to German SMEs establishing contact with potential Israeli partners, and in obtaining answers to these and other questions. The initiative is financed by the German Ministry of Economics and maintains competitive neutrality in its operations. Over the past four years, the initiative has succeeded in strengthening the position of German SMEs in Israel. To help establish contacts between companies, the initiative organizes podium discussions and workshops at trade fairs and congresses in Israel. Most of these

tal scene in Israel is a lively one. In Germany, by contrast, direct participation by established industrial enterprises plays a much larger role in the financing of startups and young companies. The Export Initiative for the German Health Care Industry provided information on different approaches and described how Israeli companies can go about finding a suitable partner in Germany – and vice versa.

In part due to the work of the Export Initiative for the German Health Care Industry, German-Israeli relations in this sector have blossomed over the past four years. German SMEs are growing increasingly familiar with the Israeli mentality. The overall conditions and parameters are good, and the future will likely see more joint and collaborative projects. Increased opportunities for intensive collaboration will help bring together the best of both worlds: German quality standards, and Israeli innovation. ■

*Tilo Mandry is director of the Export Initiative for the German Health Care Industry at Germany Trade and Invest, a partner of the Ministry of Economics*

## THE SPUDY COLUMN

## Asian Stock Market and Private Investors

By Jens Spudy

Nervousness has returned to the capital markets thanks to some strong fluctuations in stock prices these past few weeks. After China's most recent posting of economic data significantly weaker than expected, the DAX dropped by as much as 4.7 percent. Depreciation of the country's currency, the renminbi, by the central bank and the fall in commodity prices suggest that the Chinese economy is doing worse than previously believed.

The DAX descended from its all-time high of 12,390.75 points all the way down to 9,648.43. This has naturally led to questions of whether we are facing a new global economic crisis. I consider such fears to be exaggerated. China is still a positive driver for the global economy, with its gross domestic product of more than 10,000 billion dollar, even at much lower growth rates.

And yet, a glance at the portfolio balance will displease many private investors. It is closely followed by reflections on how best to respond to the current situation.

In view of the continued expansionary monetary policy, a notable change in interest rates is not to be expected anytime soon. Inflation in the eurozone remains at a very low level due to largely stagnant unit labor costs and falling commodity prices. These circumstances make it difficult to anticipate a sharp increase in interest rates – even in the longer term. This means the trend of investors moving from fixed-income investments to the stock markets and other alternatives will continue.

Investors should therefore use the opportunity presented by the latest market corrections to check their current asset allocations: What markets experienced particularly strong drops? Where is it worthwhile to make new investments or to reinvest? What asset classes are still missing in my portfolio because they seemed too expensive two months ago? What assets or countries, like India or Russia, have I been ignoring? What investments have become so large compared to my original allocation that they now represent a cluster risk for my portfolio and should therefore be reduced? And how am I positioned regarding dividend stocks that may be able to offset short-term losses with their high dividends?

The somewhat laborious task of setting dynamic stop-loss limits in accounts can secure profits and give investors considerable peace of mind in tense times should negative news result in another sudden drop on the market. ■

*Jens Spudy is executive partner of Spudy Invest*





MICHAEL NAUMANN

# Music Can Offer Hope

Barenboim-Said Academy shall foster reconciliation between peoples embroiled in conflict

**W**hat are your hopes for the Barenboim-Said Academy?

I am hoping for the institutionalization of the idea that is embodied in the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra. We want to show that joint music-making can help foster harmony between two Middle Eastern peoples that are embroiled in a deep political and cultural conflict. Music can offer both consolation and hope. With the Academy, Daniel Barenboim has elevated the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra to a new level – that of a college of music. Our Academy is a symbolic project that aims to build upon the powers of reconciliation inherent in music.

We are not assuming that the Academy can bring about peace in the Middle East. We are too small for that, in any case. But we want to demonstrate that peace is possible.

*The Academy is still under construction. Once it is finished, can you imagine it also offering a home to refugees?*

Of course. We will be housed in a public building. In the event of a shortage of space, we would make ourselves available, at least on a short-term basis. I can empathize with the plight of the refugees – not least because I experienced it myself as a boy, when we fled the former East Germany. I know what it means to flee, to lose one's home overnight, and to be forced to start over in a new place, in deep poverty. My mother came from a family of mixed Jewish descent, and corresponded regularly with her relatives who had emigrated to New York and England. In March 1953, she discovered by sheer coincidence that the Stasi [the GDR's State Security Service] was planning her arrest, supposedly for sabotage or espionage. So we fled Köthen overnight, and finally made our new home in West Germany.

*How long did it take you to accept Daniel Barenboim's offer of the post of director of the Academy?*

Well, I have to say, I didn't engage in any kind of deep philo-

sophical contemplation. My work here is an extension of my life as a manager, which was also an aspect of my work as a publisher and editor-in-chief. But my main motivation was that, at the age 70, I was still eager to attempt something completely new. I first met Daniel Barenboim through my work as the German Secretary of Culture.

*Daniel Barenboim had hoped to perform with the Staatskapelle Berlin in Tehran. But permission was denied by the Iranians...*

Plans for this concert project had been underway for a year, with support from a former German ambassador and a leading Iranian foreign affairs politician, and with the agreement of the cultural commissioner of the mayor of

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**The mullah regime will eventually lose its grip on power**

Tehran. The date had been scheduled, the financing secured, the airplane had been chartered. Then we were informed that the concert would have to be postponed, as no suitable concert hall was available for the performance. Then came the sudden observation by a ministry spokesman that Barenboim was an Israeli citizen – which was not new information to anyone involved, of course.

*When it comes to the nuclear deal between Iran and the UN Security Council's five permanent members plus Germany, isn't it a worrisome sign that a musician who is working to overcome differences, and who has been the target of a great deal of criticism within Israel for his efforts, is denied permission to appear in Iran?*



In my view, these kinds of cultural rearguard actions on the part of the mullahs are a sign that the fundamentalist regime in Iran will eventually lose its grip on power. First they agreed to take part and then they cancelled, which demonstrates that there are two layers of decision-making in Iran. The Iranian capital is more pragmatic than Qom. And as they say there: as Tehran, so goes the rest of the country...

*The nuclear deal with Tehran focuses on the technical aspects – but it doesn't contain a recognition of the right of all states, including Israel, to exist. Does this take you aback?*

It does, yes. But I am in favor of the deal. Will Iran remain a threat to Israel? Yes, of course – also because they help finance Hezbollah. The Iranians won't let go of their ideological Israel-phobia quite so easily. But if the U.S. Senate had blocked the implementation of the deal, two things would have happened. First, Iran would have felt vindicated in its evident mania for nuclear weapons. Second, the international boycott regime would never have been reinstated. Foreign visitors and investors are already lining up in Tehran.

*The Barenboim-Said Academy is something of an ivory tower – its curriculum will focus on music, philosophy, cultural history...*

I have nothing against ivory towers. The ivory towers of the German university gave birth to the great scientific breakthroughs of the 19th century. It is Barenboim's hope that the Academy will give young musicians in training a solid foundation in the humanities.

*The first thirteen scholarship students have arrived in Berlin. What kinds of students applied for admission to the Academy?*

We had well over 100 applications. Many came from Israel. But an even larger number of responses came from students of Arab background, hailing from Palestine, Iraq, Egypt, and Lebanon. I'm always amazed and delighted to see how familiar the Arab middle class is with classical European music. That's very different from what we see here, where only a minority are familiar with Arab music.

Ever since Verdi – for example, the premiere of *Aida* at Cairo opera house – European opera has been familiar to people all around the Mediterranean. So we're also drawing upon that cultural and historical reservoir. We assume that our young musicians will return to their home countries after complet-

ed that the Nazis would use gas in their campaign against Jews.

In my view, the 19th and 20th centuries embody the moral, intellectual and political defeat of the idea of the intellectual. Intellectuals have not always been “politically impotent” – on the contrary. In any case, I never saw myself as an intellectual. For me, the 20th century intellectual, in particular, was a person who professed speculative, salvational theories of history and society – such as Marxism or fascism – someone who believed himself capable of offering or imposing sweeping solutions to political, economic or religious problems. That tradition never existed in England. Of course, this classical figure of the intellectual did also exist in England,

but they were generally regarded as eccentrics. But here in continental Europe, in some countries at least, they ascended to power – for example Goebbels in Germany, Gentile in Italy, Lenin and Trotsky in Russia; all intellectuals who seemed to have supped on blood...

*... and who had read Marx, who said that the philosophers had only interpreted the world, but the point was to change it...*

... and in that sense, that is why the concept of the intellectual has a slight whiff of decay about it. Currently we're experiencing a state of relative intellectual calm. We're a bit more pragmatic in our thinking these days, and I'd say that's not such a bad thing...

Michael Naumann served as Germany's first Secretary of Culture (1998–2001). He was appointed director of the Barenboim-Said Academy in 2012



Michael Naumann talked to Elisabeth Neu and Rafael Seligmann



Model of the Barenboim-Said Academy in Berlin

ing their training – to the extent that's possible, at least. We aren't aiming for something that is mere window dressing. Our goals are also eminently practical. Our graduates will be able to teach music in schools and conservatories in their home countries, or work as professional musicians. They will be artists who can set an example, who can carry forth the ideals of shared music-making, critical thinking, and harmony.

*Politics and art: Karl Kraus once said, "About Hitler, I have nothing to say." ... How do you explain the political impotence of intellectuals?*

But Karl Kraus in fact went on to say a great deal about Hitler. For example, in 1933 he predict-



## JEWISH HERITAGE

# The Moment to Save Our History is Now

## Leo Baeck Institute's urgent mission

By Carol Kahn Strauss

Jews in Germany joined the modern world well prepared. For centuries they had studied Talmud and other sacred texts making the transition to German poetry, philosophy and writing easy. Intellectually curious and eager to participate in the progressive spirit of the 19th and 20th centuries, German-speaking Jews happily took advantage of Emancipation by becoming more and more assimilated.

### Emotional bonds

Yet the traditions of family and faith were never entirely lost, nor was the sense of never entirely fitting in. The emotional bonds to Judaism seemed to remain well after the outward manifestations of observance were discarded. The golden age of German Jewry that generated such an extraordinary array of creativity and innovation lives on along with centuries-old traditions. The Nazis could neither obliterate the breakthrough developments that paved the way for modernity nor the vestiges of the faith that sustained us.

The library and archives of Leo Baeck Institute contain some of the most important documents in this history of German-speaking Jewry. From illustrious names to unknown villagers, the record of their lives is preserved for pos-

terity. The birth and death records of every Jew in the city of Frankfurt going back to the 13th century; the first edition of Martin Luther's scathingly anti-Semitic book, *On the Jews and their Lies* (Von den Juden und ihren Lügen); official documents granting Jews special favors; memorabilia attesting to Jewish patriotism in the service of their fatherland; dismissal notices to Jewish lawyers, teachers, professors, and doctors when they were no longer permitted to earn a living in Germany.

There is a vast amount of social, religious and cultural history to be learned from the LBI collections that cover five centuries. It is cataloged and accessible to scholars, genealogists, and researchers

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**The voices of the last survivors will still be heard here**

around the world. Most of it is digitized and online. All of it is rare, fragile and unique. The great German-Jewish novelist Alfred Döblin once said he knew hardly any real Jews, only people who



Portraits in the LBI Art collection

called themselves Jews. “Perhaps they were the remnants of a vanished people who had long ago been absorbed into their surroundings.” When it came to the catastrophic end of German Jewry, it was clear that being absorbed into their surroundings was a myth. Jews were always Jews, at least to others.

### Preservation as primary goal

As the survivor generation passes on, it is the children and especially the grandchildren who are discovering troves of letters, report cards, photo albums and transatlantic correspondence. At Leo Baeck Institute these priceless documents are properly preserved to become part of the permanent record. The preservation of these materials has been our primary mission for 60 years. But our efforts cannot end at preservation. Rather, the Institute has made, and continues to make, every effort to publicize its ongoing search for artifacts that reveal a decimated world. Readers of *Jewish Voice* can be enormously important contributors. Everything is relevant in the annals of history. Papers that might seem superficially prosaic – perhaps a memoir describing daily routines of life in a small village – can offer powerful insights into

social dynamics. When such papers are lost, authentic eyewitness accounts of history are lost with them.

We must cast a wide net to find and save these papers. When the Jews of Central Europe had to flee their homelands, there were 98 countries of exile. This postwar Diaspora resulted in widely dispersed communities where contact was maintained through letters, photos, memoirs and diaries. Whether in German, Spanish, French or English, the language is always of loss and hope, despair and promise. The last survivors look to Leo Baeck Institute to preserve their stories. When they can no longer speak of the past and how it relates to the present, their voice will still be heard here. We ask you to partner with us in this vital responsibility by sharing our vital mission with anyone you know who might have material for the LBI collections. This may be the last moment to save it.

Jewish texts instruct us in remembrance, Jewish writers teach us the importance of the transmission of knowledge. Leo Baeck Institute has taken this obligation as a mandate to collect and preserve our heritage.

Carol Kahn Strauss is International Director of Leo Baeck Institute, New York



An 18th-century Esther scroll has recently been restored

### ANTHOLOGY

## Third Generation Snapshots of Today

### Young German and Israeli authors write about the other country

By Elisabeth Neu

A dancing couple – the guy with his pinkish skin looks as if he has been in the sun for too long, the girl, a dark-haired beauty, has put on socks and boots to brave the weather to come. They're holding hands, dancing on rail tracks. The buildings on the left are taken straight from Tel Aviv's shoreline. On the right, a Berlin landmark, the television tower at Alexanderplatz, rises. A yellow Berlin

subway train is rattling along, towards a junction from which another track leads directly to – Auschwitz. Hardly a light-hearted jive they're dancing – or is it?

This cartoon image graces the cover of the book *We Won't Forget – We're Going Dancing*, subtitled: “Israeli and German authors write about the other country.” Appearing simultaneously in German and Hebrew, the anthology contains 18 stories and one poem, each documenting a special and personal

perspective on German-Israeli relations far and beyond this year's celebrations of 50 years of diplomatic ties. Authors include Katharina Hacker, Eva Menasse, Jochen Schmidt and as their Israeli counterparts Li-at Elkayam, Yiftach Aloni and Assaf Gavron. With one exception, all the writers were born long after official relations between the two countries were established.

Between the covers, we find everything from politically-correct

analysis of Middle East politics by self-appointed German experts to totally politically-incorrect (Israeli) tales of love, soccer, sex, stamp collecting and the power of the past and of memory. The odd die-hard cliché is there too: The German guy is “one blond meter 92,” with “beautiful blue eyes” ... Yet it may come as a surprise to many that Germany is viewed by more than one Israeli as the center



of a thriving porn movie industry.

Whilst the quality of the contributions may vary, all in all *We Won't Forget – We're Going Dancing*, edited by Israeli writer

Amichai Shalev and his German colleague Norbert Kron, makes for a great read. As for the “new” German-Israeli relations, third generation on, why be “normal” when there are so many more exciting things on offer?



## CIVIL-SOCIETY ACTIVISM

# Standing Up to Xenophobia and Racism

## Taking responsibility for democracy and justice

By Uwe-Karsten Heye

There is no more powerful testimony than this photo: The body of a toddler washed up on the shore of the Mediterranean. Thousands of people have perished while attempting to flee across the sea in overcrowded boats, foundering on the rocks of Fortress Europe. The Mediterranean has become a mass grave. Aylan was just three years old. Small and fragile, he was found on the beach in the Turkish tourist resort of Bodrum. His photo and his death have come to symbolize the refugee crisis – in the Middle East, the famine-stricken countries of Africa and elsewhere. There are currently 60 million displaced people around the world.

Several hundred thousand have headed to Europe. More and more are coming overland. They travel thousands of kilometers, alone or with their families, because they have pinned their hopes on the European Union, on the rich northern hemisphere.

### Ill prepared

But the European Union is evidently far from pleased to be the chosen destination of so many people fleeing civil war or famine and seeking security and protection. The EU has completely failed to appreciate the current political storm as it seeks to defend its borders, spending hundreds of millions of euro to make these borders as impenetrable as possible. No agreements among its member states had prepared the EU for the wave of desperate people heading its way. A great many want to come to Germany which together with Sweden has admitted the largest numbers.



Flight is no crime and no person is illegal – demonstration at the Federal Chancellery in Berlin

But there are also those who object. Protests in Germany in front of refugee shelters have been organized by rightwing extremist groups; apartment buildings and sports halls where refugees were to be put up have been torched. Large-scale demonstrations against admitting refugees have been staged in Dresden by a group calling itself “Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West.” Hatred and resistance are real and should not be underestimated. But there have also been major counter-demonstrations, and they show where the majority of people in Germany stand.

The government too has now made quite clear that Germany has indeed learned from its history. But it was above all civil society – ordinary people de-

termined to take a stand and to help – that prompted the government to finally become active – also spurred on by the Social Democrats, the conservative chancellor’s coalition partners. The CDU’s Bavarian sister party, the CSU, remains opposed to opening the country’s doors to refugees. This year about a million are expected to come to Germany. It is not clear whether they will be here temporarily or for ever.

### Show your face!

An example of civil-society activism: every Tuesday in Berlin volunteers run a ‘language café’ on the premises of *Gesicht Zeigen!* Für ein weltoffenes Deutschland, a non-profit organization which was founded to encourage people

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**The initiative *Gesicht Zeigen!* seeks to encourage the young to care about the society they live in**

to become involved in society and to take responsibility for democracy and justice in Germany. Its name translates roughly as ‘Show your face!’ For a liberal-minded Germany. At the café, immigrants and refugees can learn German or simply meet and talk, get to know each other and local people. The common language is mostly English, but some volunteers speak Arabic, Kurdish and Turkish.

The Tuesday language café takes place in seven exhibition rooms where workshops for youngsters are held the rest of the week. About 10,000 school-children have so far taken part. The program is billed as a “training ground for solidarity and respect.” While there, children often tell their school-mates their own stories of being a refugee for the first time. In many school classes nowadays half the children or more are from refugee or immigrant families. The exhibition is about the experiences of young people in the Nazi period, but also about what it means for society today and for young people today.

### Diverse and colorful

In all its projects, *Gesicht Zeigen!* seeks to encourage the young to care about the society they live in and to get involved, to stand up for a free and democratic Germany and for its diverse and colorful society.

There are thousands of organizations and initiatives, large and small, dedicated to combating rightwing extremism, xenophobia and racism. Many have adopted the name *Gesicht Zeigen!* – something its founders can rightly be proud of. ■

*Uwe-Karsten Heye was German consul general in New York and is founder of Gesicht Zeigen!*

## BOMHOFF RECOMMENDS

## Culture First

“Never change a winning team” is a rule set at naught by the board of Berlin’s Jewish Community when they cancelled this year’s Days of Jewish Culture at short notice. Refusing the annual state subsidy of about US\$ 280,000 was one thing; the justification provided was even more startling, as the board referred to the “difficult financial situation of the state of Berlin.” Launched in 1987, the 10 days festival has become a part of the cultural



scene in re-unified Berlin and a cultural must for Berlin residents and their guests, Jews and non-Jews alike, attracting some 35,000 people last year.

Another opportunity to highlight the relevance of Berlin’s Jewish Community was missed on September 6th, the European Day of Jewish Culture, a continent-wide Jewish culture and education festival that encompasses hundreds of events in more than 30 countries. Marked in

various German cities, particularly in Munich, the day provided a platform to battle indifference and prejudice. “Bridges” was the general theme this year, aptly describing the drawing power of Jewish culture as a truly trans-national element of European heritage.

With its many members engaged in the cultural sector, the Jewish Community of Berlin could be a shining example of diversity, dialogue and debate. Jewish culture festivals mushroom throughout Germany, for instance in Erfurt and Dresden, and echo the need and enthusiasm for living Judaism beyond textbooks and museums. They also provide an op-

portunity for the growing numbers of unaffiliated Jews to reconnect with the immense richness of the Jewish tradition beyond religious observance.

We are only at the beginning of the discussion about tolerance, identity, globalization and the consequences of the insight that in this world today we are all minorities. Together with the questions about the quality of life and our role as media consumers, we have to seize the opportunity and present the significance of Jewish culture and Jewish values in Germany today.

Maybe we ought to sidestep official lines and create our own spaces, recognizing the creativity of the wider Jewish community. ■



## IDENTITY

# So, Who Integrated Whom Then?

## 25 Years of Russian-speaking Jewish immigration in Germany

By Hartmut Bomhoff

I came to Germany as a secular Jew who had been persecuted in the Soviet Union, and I did not know a word of German. Today I am a religious Jew and a poet and writer in German and Russian. In my case, you couldn't talk of failed integration." Boris Schapiro was born in Moscow in 1944. He is a successful natural scientist and is currently working on what he calls a rational theology of Judaism. He came to Berlin in 1975, fifteen years before the major influx of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union began in the summer of 1990. Still, he is quite representative: Like a majority of these immigrants who number about 212,000 in all, he hails from a big city and has a university education.

## Revival

For many, starting a new life in Germany was accompanied by a renewed interest in Judaism: About half joined a synagogue. But tens of thousands of others who had been considered ethnically Jew-

huge number. Since the immigration regulations were changed in July 2006, hardly any more Jews have come here from the former Soviet Union.

Nowadays there are 108 Jewish communities of various denominations in Germany affiliated with the umbrella organization, the Central Council of Jews in Germany, and they have 100,500 members in all. 90 percent of the members are immigrants or descendants of immigrants.

"The influx has done a lot for both sides. The local Jews received reinforcements. Sometimes, as in Chemnitz, the new arrivals actually saved a tiny dying community. And we immigrants found a new home," says Mascha Lyamets. She is head of the *Atid* Jewish culture club in Chemnitz. "Two things annoyed me about the locals: First, they reproached us for not being religious enough and not the real thing. But we don't have to justify ourselves, given the hard times we often endured as Jews in the Soviet Union. Despite discrimination and repressive measures, our Jewish networks there were at least as authentic and stable as the ones in Germany, where it is very easy to pursue your faith and your culture openly." She says immigrants with Jewish fathers have been poorly treated: "They were ignored. It is very sad. And in the long term that will backfire."

Michaela Michalowitz, a Christian Democrat local politician in Hanover, views things differently: "At first, I saw that period as one of inner emigration. Many of the German congregations were unlikely to survive. But they did constitute a community of Jewish survivors. Jewish and survivors – that is what united the members, who after all had come from many different countries." Michalowitz says the situation nowadays is very different.



The New Synagogue, Berlin

Barbara Fuchs from Frankfurt am Main sees it like this: "The Jews from the former Soviet Union strengthened the German Jewish community and gave it a new lease on life. They had fought in the Red Army against Germany and therefore had a very different perspective on the Holocaust than those who had survived it or had come back after the war. It is not easy in the communities, but it works."

## A two-way process

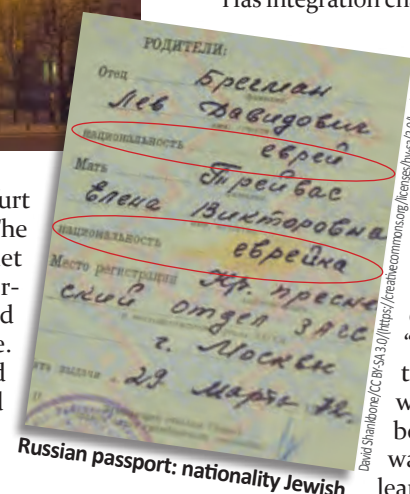
Mary Sofer is an administrator at the association of Jewish communities in the state of Lower Saxony. "On Rosh ha-Shana I had the opportunity to meet people who came here 20 or 25 years ago. The younger generation went to school here, and to university. Many have good jobs. But I have the impression that their background is stronger than the German cul-

ture they live in. It is not a matter of language. They speak perfect German."

One member of this younger generation is Renate Pal. "I think it was a reciprocal undertaking: The newcomers integrated as well as they could at the time. The Germans helped with the integration and in the process they changed too; they became a bit Russian perhaps. Now they eat pelmeni and piroshki. As to culture and religion, the fast pace of life and modern media have such a strong influence that things like that fade into the background. You could say a hyper-integration has taken place, at the expense of tradition."

Has integration changed both the newcomers and those already here – and changed them for the better? Looking back over the past quarter-century, one could say it has been a success. Jascha Nemtsov certainly thinks so: "My impression is that the integration was successful – for both sides. Whoever was still able to learn, learned a lot from German culture. And the

locals adopted a little Russian culture." Nemtsov is a pianist and musicologist who grew up in what was then Leningrad, came to Germany in 1992 and is now professor of the history of Jewish music in Weimar. "Many immigrants have developed a complex identity," he says. Alla Vollodarska-Kelmereit, a social worker at the Liberal Jewish Community in Hanover who comes from Ukraine, would agree: "Wherever they realized that only reciprocal integration can work, integration in the communities has been a success."



Russian passport: nationality Jewish

“Special efforts are required in order to promote Jewish knowledge and Jewish identity”

ish in the Soviet Union and had therefore faced discrimination were suddenly confronted with the fact that they did not count as Jews under Jewish law because their mothers were not Jewish.

For the small Jewish community in Germany – in 1989, West-Germany just counted 30,000 registered members, and a couple of hundred in the East – the new arrivals heralded a revival, though it was a great challenge trying to integrate such a

# World Class Culture with a Jewish Core

## A new festival in Erfurt sparks interfaith dialogue and debate

By Gideon Wollberg

Thuringia has many different faces. Martin Luther, Johann Sebastian Bach and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe have all left their marks in the Free State, and some of its landmarks have been recognized as UNESCO World Heritage sites. This fall, Erfurt, the capital of Thuringia, became a magnet for locals and visitors alike who wanted to discover the diversity of contemporary Jewish culture. The "Achava", or Brotherhood, Festival, the first event of its kind in the former East German city, attracted more than 4,000 visitors. The result of event organizer Martin Kranz's vision and supported by patrons including the German Federal Foreign Office, the Israeli Embassy in Berlin and the Central



Non-Jewish pupils get immersed in the history of Erfurt's medieval synagogue

Council of Jews in Germany, the festival featured renowned Israeli musicians like Avishai Cohen, Ravid Kahalani and Idan Raichel.

More than an opportunity to promote artistic quality, "Achava" aimed at discussing current political issues, highlight prejudices

and unanswered questions about all things Jewish. "To engage in dialogue and debate, to accept dissent and to encounter each other with respect and attention contributed to social discourse at large," explained Jascha Nemtsov, the festival's artistic director.

A highlight was the opening concert at Erfurt Cathedral, introducing the rich legacy of synagogue music, with cantors Roslyn Barak (San Francisco), Isidoro Abramowicz (Stockholm) and Azi Schwartz (New York) performing. The next day, on Friday evening, the three cantors led the small Jewish community of Erfurt in prayers, proving how very much alive this musical heritage is. Today, the Jewish Community of Thuringia numbers around 800, amongst them about 500 who live in Erfurt.

Thuringia's Minister-President Bodo Ramelow attended both the concert and the synagogue service. He spoke out in favor of a second edition of the festival, whose success had not been foreseeable. Concentrating on

brotherhood and the common grounds of Jews, Christians and Muslims in a state where over two thirds of the population identify as non-religious seemed to be like jumping in at the deep end. Program highlights included guided tours conducted by high school students who took their peers to Jewish, Christian and Muslim venues in Erfurt, hence creating a sense of understanding and community. For the teenagers, this was also an opportunity to explore Erfurt's Old Synagogue. Together with a *mikvah* and the Erfurt Treasure, rare jewelry and Judaica from the late 13th and early 14th centuries, the 900 year old synagogue is a gem that tells of a fruitful co-existence hopefully revived by today's Achava Festival.





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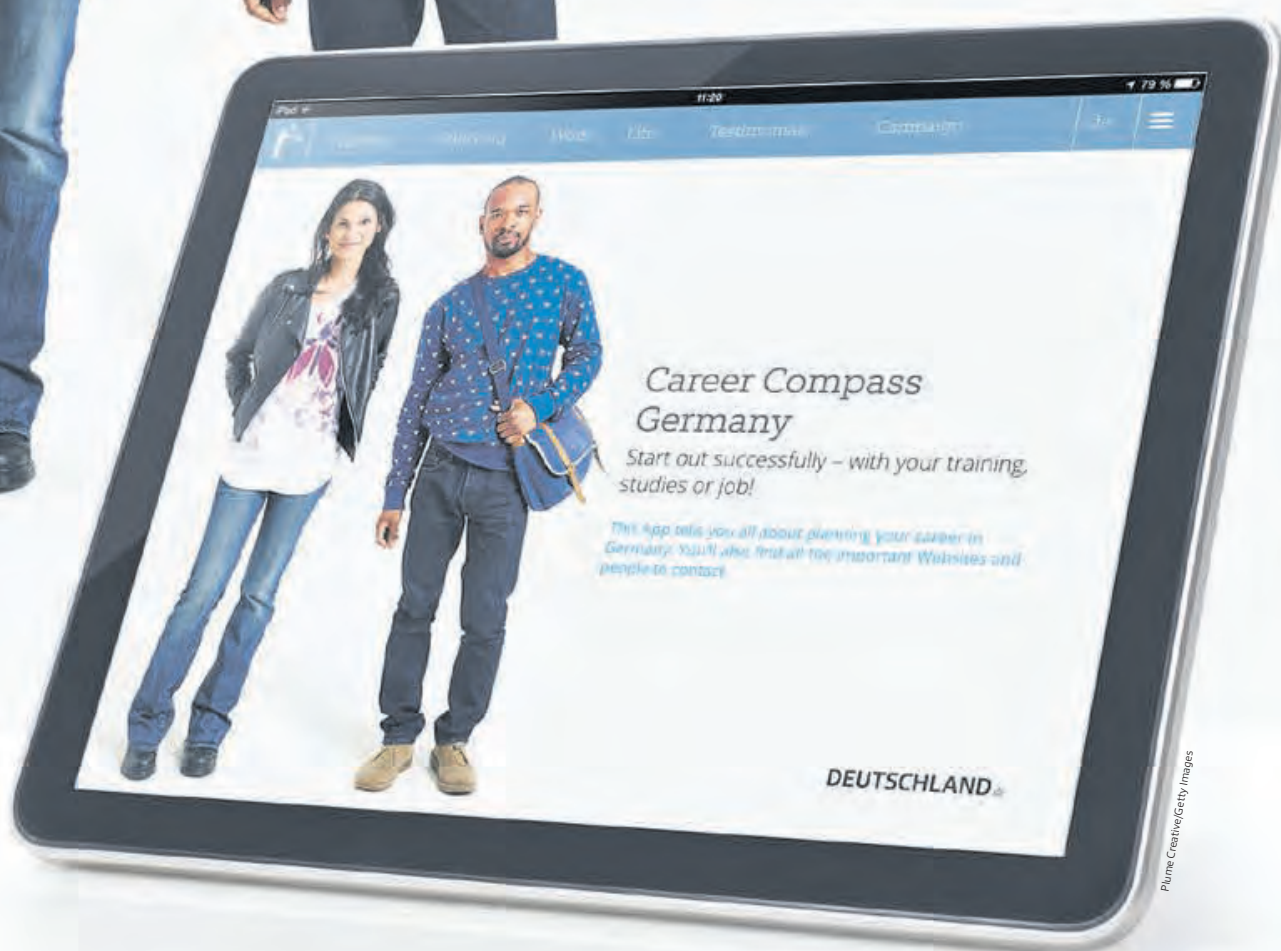
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PAVEL FEINSTEIN

# Fiendishly Good Paintings

A new book presents masterpieces by the Berlin painter



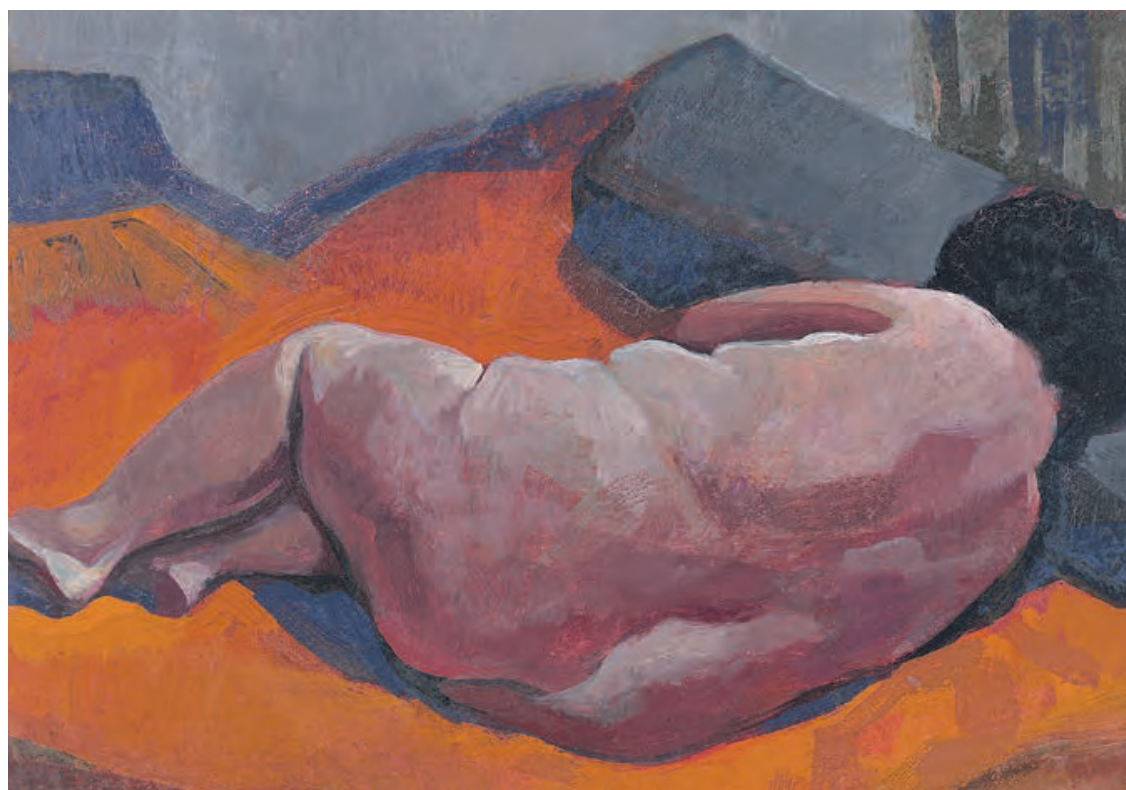
By Elisabeth Neu

The painter likes to act the devil. On the cover of his new book „Pavel Feinstein“ (just published by Hirmer, Munich) a glowering look captures the beholder, dark brows furrow above large, penetrating eyes. But once you have climbed the more than 100 steps up to his studio in Berlin, you are greeted by – a jester.

Feinstein is born in Moscow in 1960. Soon the family moves to the Soviet Republic of Tajikistan. The gifted boy receives painting lessons; later attends arts college. Feinstein is twenty years old when he moves on. Emigration. Destination: Berlin.

“

**The subversive, the breaking of taboos bestows an intriguing timelessness on Feinstein's paintings**



Feinstein studies at the University of Arts. At that time, the artistic ambitions of the „Neue Wilde“ (New Wild Ones) painters are running riot here – “more of a kindergarten than an artistic laboratory”, as an art critic of the time states. Pavel, soon attending masterclasses at the university, has little in common with them. Pavel is a serious young man, and a jester at the same time, with a penchant for ambiguity, for alienated references. He paints in the style of the Old Masters. His craftsmanship is perfect.

In his studio, where once George Grosz created his works of art before he was defamed by the Nazis and left Germany, Feinstein works on his large and many-faceted oeuvre. There are paintings telling of the transitoriness of living creatures and objects alike – like the fish, wrapped in cloth – next to it on

the table a hammer placed in a delicate China bowl. Still lives abound. The 17th century Dutch Masters would have been astonished to see how their genre has evolved. Apparently conservative in choice of object, Feinstein's brush bestows a magical touch even upon a bunch of humble vegetables. Time and again, pomegranates and their seeds – symbols of beauty, fertility, diversity. Dates on a plate – a masterpiece of chiaroscuro, the art of light-dark, of stark contrast. The scales of a fish shimmer from the canvas, tempting one to touch them. Next to a knife and a lemon, an egg is placed, complete with identification code. These ironic references, quotes and twists make Feinstein's still lives unique.

Desert paintings. One is tempted to interpret them as Biblical landscapes, scenes from the Old Testament. Human





Pavel Feinsein/Photo: G. Lepkowski (6)

figures, alone or in groups, often accompanied by goats, their piercing eyes penetrating the dark, are resting in blue-gray landscapes at dusk or in the night. But the human figures are by no means devoutly waiting for a Divine sign from

above – they are noisy, swinging sticks and clubs, worshipping the moon or one another. This anarchy seems to pay homage to the great Russian realist Ilya Repin. Feinstein's figures are on a par with the Zaporozhian Cossacks in their

hefty obstinacy and their anarchic vitality.

Monkeys are romping through Feinstein's paintings. Vanity, lechery and malice have been attributed to this animal making it the mirror image of man himself. Feinstein's monkeys



are painting, aping, trying to capture the skull of a monkey on paper, doing monkey business, courting each other. There is only a thin divide between the tragic and the absurd. Just as in real life.

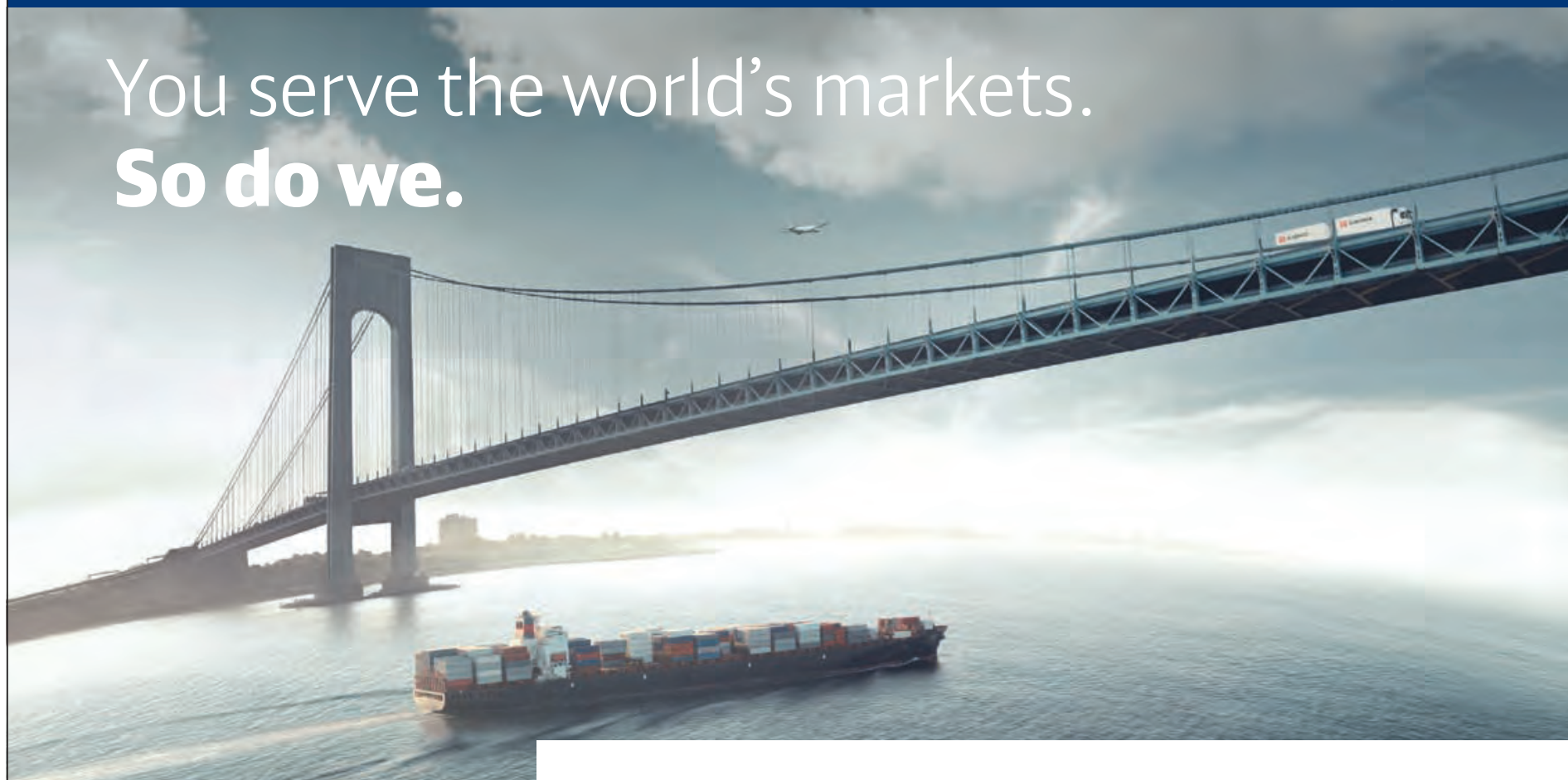
People in Feinstein's oeuvre – portraits, masterfully rendering beauty, fear, the furrows of everyday life, melancholia. Children's eyes looking to the future are full of hope and skeptical at the same time. Self-portraits whilst painting – or acting the devil. Nudes showing the human body in its dignity.

Religious themes, also Jewish themes, appear time and again in Feinstein's work. Scenes of sacrifice, rituals and rites – but always just a little refocused, their interpretation highly ambiguous. Thus the two young Chassids, their arms around each others' shoulders. In their hands they hold lulav and etrog, attributes of Succot, the Feast of the Tabernacles. All this is traditional – but the two young men are barely clad. The subversive, the turn of the screw of tradition, his re-interpretation, the breaking of taboos bestows an intriguing timelessness on Feinstein's paintings. ■

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## ACTION RECONCILIATION SERVICE

# “To Perform a Good Deed With Our Hands”

## Volunteers accompany survivors of the Shoah

By Lena Altman

**R**aya'le, have you eaten? Would you like a bowl of soup?" This is how every weekly meeting begins between Mrs. S. and Raya Bolduan, a young woman from Kiel who is spending a year in Israel as a volunteer for the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace program (*Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste*). Now 93 years old, Mrs. S. was born and grew up in Bratislava. As a young girl, she and her parents were deported by the Germans. She survived the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, but would never see her parents again. In recounting those experiences, Mrs. S. recalls: "My childhood didn't last very long."

### Grappling with history.

At the Siegfried Moses retirement home in Jerusalem, the two share a meal, discuss everyday topics, look at photos of Bratislava – especially the old synagogue, the castle, and the Jewish quarter. Mrs. S. recalls the penicillin filled with chestnut cream, a local specialty she enjoyed as a girl. Raya helps Mrs. S. recreate her family tree, writes down her reminiscences, and submerges herself in the life story of a remarkable



Sharing one's stories is immensely rewarding for both generations and sparks meaningful relations

other volunteers who are taking part in a year of service in one of thirteen different countries are well aware, the crimes committed under National Socialism can never be undone, and no amends can ever erase that history. But Raya and her fellow volunteers hope that they, through their actions, can help rebuild damaged relationships and promote mutual understanding. In the pro-

suffered violence at our hands to allow us to perform a good deed in their countries, with our hands and our resources." He proposed that young Germans spend a year as a volunteer in a country that had suffered under National Socialism. The starting point for these projects was to be a clear acknowledgment of guilt. But his idea did not catch on. On the contrary. In the years following the war, Germans were more concerned with repressing the memories of the atrocities they had committed, and the consequences of their actions.

These were the beginnings of an organization that would go on to send young volunteers to take part in projects across Europe, in Israel, and the United States. For some Germans, the organization and its founders were traitors – people who, they said, were blemishing their own nest. And initially, many of the host countries were also skeptical. Yehuda Roemer, who still lives in Kibbutz Uri, remembers the arrival of the first German volunteers in 1961. "We had no idea what kind of people we were letting ourselves in for," he recalls. But ongoing dialogue helped overcome those initial reservations. "In conversation with people from different countries and cultures, we must engage with their perspectives and memories, demonstrate respect, and confront the ongoing impact of the history of National Socialism for our shared, present-day existence. And, fortunately for us, our project partners soon came to recognize the seriousness with which our volunteers approached that task," as Dagmar Pruin notes. "Because of our history, we have a special responsibility to speak out against far-right extremism and anti-Semitism, and to actively promote the development of a more open and inclusive society." Since its founding, the ARSP has sent more than 12,000 young

volunteers to take part in encounters that have furthered their understanding of history, their civic courage, and their understanding of other cultures, religions and mentalities. ARSP volunteers provide support to Holocaust survivors and their families. They accompany groups of visitors to memorials, lend support to elderly and disabled people, refugees, and the socially disadvantaged, and take part in community projects and anti-racism initiatives. They travel to summer camps in Greece, Belarus, and many other countries, where they spend several weeks performing maintenance work at cemeteries, carrying out renovation work on behalf of former forced laborers, acting as guides at memorial sites, and encountering young people from ARSP partner countries. They speak with young adults from their host countries about their identities, exchange collective and indi-

vidual memories, and discuss their shared political, social and religious engagement. During the course of this work, they get to know one another better and gain a more tangible understanding of the scope of the crimes of the past, as well their ongoing impact today.

### Culture of memory.

The issue of interculturality also plays an ever-larger role. As a nation of immigrants, today the memories of National Socialism and its crimes are recalled in Germany by both majority and minority groups from a variety of perspectives. This has had an impact on the culture of memory as a whole. In the Berlin districts of Kreuzberg and Neukölln, the ARSP collaborates with "neighborhood mothers" who have helped develop joint seminars on the topic of National Socialism. These initiatives are part of the ARSP's work to help Germans with an immigrant background grapple with the mechanisms of exclusion, persecution and genocide under National Socialism. Building new bridges is also the goal of the Germany Close Up, a program under the sponsorship of the ARSP that promotes encounters between North American Jews and Germans. The program has already funded more than 1,800 grants to young North American Jews for short trips to Germany lasting 8 to 12 days. During that time, participants are able to experience present-day Germany, explore contemporary debates, and observe how Germany is seeking to address its history. ■

Action Reconciliation Service for Peace is accepting applications for volunteers for the coming year. The application deadline is November 1, 2015. For more information, visit [www.asf-ev.de](http://www.asf-ev.de)

“**We hope to make a contribution toward restoring severed ties**

woman. In the Action Reconciliation program, volunteers demonstrate responsibility by grappling with the history and consequences of National Socialism. For Raya, responsibility entails listening, empathizing and reaching out, while always remaining aware of and examining her own history and past as a citizen of Germany.

"Christians and Jews, Germany and Israel, are inextricably tied to one another because of our shared history. With our work, we hope to make a contribution toward restoring and expanding upon these ties," says Dagmar Pruin, executive director of Action Reconciliation Service for Peace. As Raya and the 180

cess, the volunteers learn a great deal about themselves. This is also true for volunteers who take part in ARSP projects in partner countries, including Poland, Russia, France and the United States.

### Practicing across Europe

Action Reconciliation was founded in 1958. One of the key figures was Lothar Kreyssig, a German judge, member of the Confessing Church, and opponent of the National Socialist regime. In his founding statement, Kreyssig wrote, "In a sacrilegious rebellion against the will of God, Germans have killed millions of Jews. We ask the people who



Taking a stand: ARSP joined the rally against anti-Semitism in Berlin

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## IN MEMORIAM

# Philipp Mißfelder (1979–2015)

## A true friend

By Rafael Seligmann

Philipp Mißfelder was a person you could talk to. A real conversation – we take that for granted and yet it is so rare, and so important. Anyone can talk. But the willingness to truly listen to one another, to absorb what the other person is saying, and then to contribute to the conversation, to possess one's own values and to develop one's ideas on the basis of these, and then to move beyond what was said and transform those words into actions – that is indeed rare. Philipp Mißfelder was still a young man, but he was a wonderful conversational partner who truly enjoyed dialogue, and who took pleasure in implementing the outcome of those encounters.

Philipp Mißfelder hailed from the Rhineland. As a cultural region that has been subject to frequent changes of sovereignty over the course of history, the Rhineland is also a region that discourages nationalistic narrow-mindedness. Once under Roman rule, it later became a disputed area between the French and the Germans. In his poem *The Drum Major*, Heinrich Heine, who hailed from Düsseldorf, admonished German readers to encounter French veterans "with reverence", for "that old man could well be

your father." In my first encounter with Mißfelder, the subject of the German-Jewish bard arose. Mißfelder loved Heine's pointed irony.

Born in 1979, Philipp Mißfelder was in his mid-20s when we met. But the expression in his dark eyes showed that he understood the depth and complexity of life. When it came to his plans for life, the tall young man moved forward with vigor. At age 23 he was head of the Christian Democratic Party youth organization. Three years later he was one of the youngest delegates in the German Bundestag, and in relatively short order he was on the national board of the CDU. At age 30, he was appointed foreign policy spokesman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group. At the same time, but not just on the side, he completed a degree in history in Berlin. He married at a young age, and had two children. At the same time, he also worked for a publishing house. But Philipp Mißfelder always remained thoughtful and systematic in his efforts. Any form of hectic ambition or aggressive self-assertion was foreign to his nature. But perhaps he did somehow sense that his time on earth would be short.

Some years ago, I invited Philipp Mißfelder to appear as my guest at a public debate in Hamburg. The young

politician had picked a quarrel with the older generation, arguing that medical treatment for an 85-year-old should not be paid for with public means. Was this humane? Mißfelder smiled, and said he had intended to raise awareness for a demographic problem. And in this, he had succeeded. What followed was a lively debate between the younger and the older generation. Despite opposing opinions, in the end we had come to a better understanding of one another. Argument for argument's sake was anathema to him. As a politician, Mißfelder already possessed the serenity of maturity.

Philipp Mißfelder told me about the subject of his master's thesis, the German-Jewish writer Maximilian Harden (1861–1927). As publisher of the journal *Die Zukunft*, Harden was one of the most polemical writers of his time. The revelations contained in *Die Zukunft* shook the rule of Emperor Wilhelm II. In the Weimar Republic, Harden became a target of the hatred of the Nazis and the far-right. Harden impressed the liberal-conservative Mißfelder, who was also never one to shy away from a necessary argument.

For Philipp Mißfelder, the relationship between Germans and Jews, and the



P. Mißfelder, A. Koenigs

furthering of German-Israeli relations, were both a matter of the heart and a matter of sound politics. He regarded his membership on the advisory board of the *Jewish Voice* not only as an honorary position, but also as an opportunity to play an active role in furthering these joint concerns. Mißfelder enjoyed writing contributions for the *Jewish Voice*, and lent our publication his active support. In what would be our last conversation, he told me about his accident, but was already making plans for the coming weeks and months.

Philipp Mißfelder will not be forgotten. ■

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# You Shall Not Stand by Idle

## Welcome the stranger, protect the refugee

By Rabbi Walter Homolka

On Yom Kippur afternoon, synagogue-goers around the world heard this verse from Leviticus, “You shall not stand by idle when your neighbor’s blood is being shed.” After weeks of reflection and our reckoning before God, this verse called us to take care of those who appear abandoned by the world community. Some of us are already suffering fatigue from waves of unpleasant stories about massive human displacement. It is quite natural that people do not want to be disturbed by strangers who cost money and place a strain on society at large. Our challenge is to remain engaged in the pursuit of justice.

This reminds me of the annual Passover seder: Surrounded by comfort and good food, we are encouraged to remember the story of the Exodus as if we were the ones who had been slaves and refugees. The admonition to treat others with compassion and justice is echoed 36 times in the Torah. We must do so because we ourselves were foreigners in Egypt. The Jewish story is that of refugees. Jews carry the knowledge of how it feels to flee one’s homes.

Our Jewish tradition enjoins upon us the love of mankind. The Torah insists that we treat strangers with dignity and respect. The obligation to protect human life stands at the center of our tradition.

It is the overarching principle of *pikuah nefesh* that asserts the supreme responsibility of protecting individuals and even trumps Shabbat observance. In his addenda to Maimonides’ *Sefer Hamitzvot*, Nahmanides explains on the basis of

“

**‘According to the effort is the reward’**

Pirkei Avot 5:26

Leviticus 25:35 that we must save the life of a *ger toshav*, a stranger in our midst, if he is drowning or if he is sick even on Shabbat, for *pikuah nefesh* overrides the Shabbat restrictions.

### Cities of Refuge

In his *Sefer Hamitzvot*, Maimonides includes the *mitzva* of *arei miklat*, or cities of refuge, among the 613 Biblical commandments. This *mitzva* is introduced in the Torah portion *Masei* (Numbers 33:1–36:13). The Israelites are instructed upon entering the land of Canaan to designate places that would serve as asylums for inadvertent killers from violent retribution by their victims’ relatives. For Maimonides, this ob-



HIAS, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, is helping Darfur refugees in Chad

ligation implies not only the designation of the cities of refuge, but also ensuring their accessibility. Maimonides asserts: “The court is obligated to straighten the roads to the cities of refuge, to repair them and broaden them. Bridges should be built (over all natural barriers) so as not to delay one who is fleeing to [the city of refuge].”

Hence the Biblical institution provides us with a Jewish foundation for action for today, as advocated by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and American Jewish World Service. To quote Rab-

bi Jacob E. Fine of the AJWS: “If our tradition displays such concern for people who have themselves committed murder, even if unintentionally, how much more so should we feel compelled to protect these tens of millions of refugees, the bulk of whom are not themselves criminals but rather innocent bystanders driven from their homes as a result of wars and violence.”

Rabbi Walter Homolka is rector of the Abraham Geiger College at Potsdam University



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