

AUSCHWITZ AND



Contents

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Cover picture,
1980s: Railway footbridge
in Spitalfields

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Auschwitz and East London

What do we see around us today that could conceivably be linked to the horror that was Auschwitz? Why so much concern about Nazi intolerance and racism four decades ago? What could possibly be taking place in East London that crosses such a span of time and reminds us of the dreadful lessons of Auschwitz?

Plenty.

East London’s history for one: a seat of power for Britain’s Union of Fascists in the 1930s and the largest Jewish and immigrant community of the time. The Battle of Cable Street.

East London’s people for another: people who

were born here and died in Auschwitz; people who survived Auschwitz; witnesses of the Nazi *Kristallnacht*, of their rallies, of their murders.

East London’s problems of racism now: the experience of racial attacks on Bengalis, Jews and Blacks; the funerals we have attended; the racist comic books and leaflets our children are given outside schools, at football matches, in the markets.

These are the stories of people amongst us, what they have witnessed and why they worry. This is why Auschwitz and East London are linked.



Racism: A Long History

Ian Mikardo MP

Member of Parliament for Bethnal Green and Bow

The first racist on record appears in the Book of Esther, written more than two thousand years ago. He was the Grand Vizier Haman, who went to his Emperor, Ahasuerus, to urge him to deport all the Jews from his country. In support of his demand he laid against those Jews what he clearly thought was a very grave charge. 'Sire,' he said, 'there is in your country a people which is different.'

He didn't say 'Sire, there is in your country a people which is bad, treacherous, dishonest, idle, or what-have-you.' To the racist anything which is merely different is an object of fear, jealousy and hatred.

We've heard all this from racists in the East End

all this century. Eighty years ago it was the Jews, and today it's the Asians, who are different. 'They look different,' says the racist, 'they talk different, their cooking smells different.'

And for some that's enough to justify treating the different ones worse than one's own, to justify discrimination against them by unfair legislators, by some policemen, some other officials, and in other ways.

That is not just intolerable in itself: it's also dangerous for where it can lead. In Germany it was the first step on the slippery slope that led to Belsen and Auschwitz.

That's something we must never forget.



factory and demanded that Whites should be given jobs before Asians.

LABOUR PARTY REDS GET THE SMOKE BOMB TREATMENT!



IAN MIKARDO, a Jewish Labour MP, makes an anti-British speech to a bunch of communists in Tunbridge Wells, Kent.



BUT NOT FOR LONG! A White youth rushes into the meeting armed with a smoke bomb.



ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE! The communists struggle to get out of the hall as the whole place is smoked out!

1982: Britain, from *Bulldog*, Young National Front paper, issue no.26. Opponents of racism are caricatured as Jewish, Communist and cowardly. The thug with a smoke bomb becomes a hero.



Ohne Lösung der Judenfrage
keine Erlösung der Menschheit

1934: Germany, published by *Der Stürmer*.
'No solution of the Jewish question;
no salvation for mankind.'

Like watching those boys
throwing stones and shouting
'Jew Boy - Jew Boy'
at the age of nine and
not understanding why.

Today I understand even less.

Poem by a young East End writer.



BEWARE!
WE WANT YOUR JOBS -
WE WANT YOUR HOMES -
WE WANT YOUR COUNTRY

1980s: Britain, publisher unknown.
An anti-Semitic caricature from 1930s Germany is echoed
by an anti-Sikh one from 1980s Britain.
The technique for creating racial tension
has not changed.

Germany: The Night of the Broken Glass

Trudi Eulenburg

Church worker at St. Botolph's, Aldgate

On the morning after *Kristallnacht*, I went along with my father to his business. We saw that the display windows of a large department store owned by a Jewish company had been smashed and looted, smoke was still rising from the building. Father, a Jew, was worried about his own business but nothing seemed to have happened there. The following morning, a Sunday, two men came to our home and demanded to see him. He was still shaving, so one impatiently went into the bathroom and ordered him to follow them. They told my mother that they had come to 'protect him' and were taking him into custody. They did not say where.

The next morning, a man in a black uniform came and told me to leave the business at once. Neither my father nor anyone from his family would ever be allowed to enter it again. It was no longer ours – he was in charge and would decide what would happen to it. From then on, the provisions of the Nuremberg Laws were fully applied to us. Our bank account was taken over and at first my mother and I had nothing to live on. We had to sell our possessions and discovered that we had to accept whatever was offered to us – people knew we had no option.

Only a handful of our former friends still cared to know us. A cousin my age, who had often stayed with us, ignored our birthdays. Her mother wrote to mine: 'You should have sold that business and gone away a long time ago.' Not a word of sympathy. A friend returned an umbrella we had forgotten by messenger with a note that she could, of course, never see us again. And so it went on.

It was over two weeks before we heard anything of

my father – a letter from one of the largest prison camps. He had no idea the business was gone nor what had been happening to us. My mother made several applications for his release, mainly pleading his age – he was fifty nine – and his war record – he had fought for his country and had been awarded a service medal. He was released just before Christmas. We understood that the army had intervened for those who had served what they had believed to be 'their country' during the war.

When I saw him standing at the door I hardly recognised him. His head had been shaved like a criminal's; he was holding his hat in his hands – it was as flat as a dinner plate because all the prisoners' clothing had been disinfected, i.e. pulled through a machine. Not only did he look like a beggar, he could hardly speak. He now had a dreadful cough which went on for months, without treatment of course, since Jewish doctors were not allowed to practise and Gentile ones would not see Jews.

However ill, he had to report daily to the police; he could not leave the country before paying the 'rates' (for which he hadn't the money, since it had been impounded) and, in addition, signed a statement that he had voluntarily 'sold' his business with all its rights and assets. In the end we had to flee illegally, leaving everything behind.

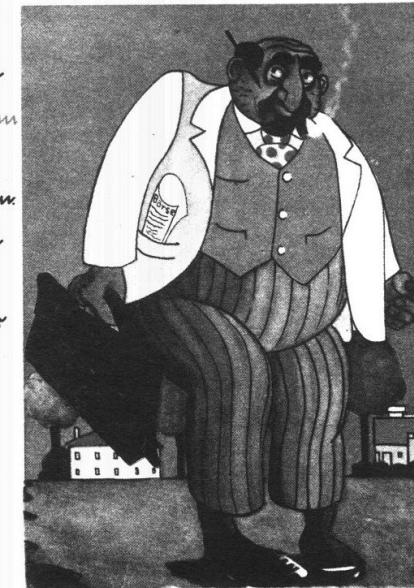
A Swiss couple, friends for many years, helped us cross the border – and also saved our lives: not a single one of our Jewish relatives and friends who stayed behind survived. When we made enquiries after the war we found they had all been murdered – or committed suicide.

1936: Germany, published by Der Stürmer.
A Nazi children's book.



Die ist der jüdische, der die Welt umgibt
Der größte Gift im jungen Reich!
Er meint, daß er der Edelsteine sei
Und ist so gelblich wie der Asch!

Der Deutsche ist
ein stolzer Mann
Der weißt
und künigst
Dilettant
im Reich
So ist es
für den jüdischen
für den jüdischen!



The text reads:

The German is
a splendid man
who can work
and fight.
Because he's so good-looking
the Jew has always
hated him.

You see at once, this is the Jew,
the greatest rogue in the Reich!
He thinks that he's most handsome
And yet he's so revolting!

Bethnal Green: Growing Up with Fascism

Frank Lesser

Born and brought up in East London.
Formerly Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology at Chelsea College

The coming to power of the Nazis in Germany in 1933 on a programme of crude and violent anti-Semitism produced a reaction among Jews in London. The United Jewish Protest Committee called for a demonstration on 20 July that year.

I was 17 years old, a schoolboy, a member of the Zionist youth movement and a part-time student at the Yeshiva. It was natural that we should be there, equally natural that anti-Zionists, Jewish socialists and trade unionists should be there too.

I do not remember the slogans of that demonstration but I do recall suddenly becoming aware of the occasion as we passed Wentworth Street on our way to Hyde Park. The occasional and mostly muted anti-semitism of everyday life had suddenly been transformed into an immediate threat, incorporating the uniforms, salutes, slogans and parades of the fascists. Talk of pogroms, of self-defence, was rife. Refugees from Germany were already among us with their accounts of brutal harassment and disappearances.

To me, fascism was un-English and alien, precisely the charge it levelled at Jews. My mother, worried about my anti-fascist activities, said to me one day at home: 'You'll not only be the first in the concentration camps, you'll take us all with you!' – a reflection of the mounting fear fuelled by increasing physical assaults on Jews, particularly in Stepney, near Mosley's Bethnal Green headquarters. I lived on the other side of the park and often heard him harangue his supporters in Victoria Park Square.

In 1934 and 1935 Mosley's British Union of Fascists made a series of attempts to stage rallies on the Nazi pattern at Olympia and the Albert Hall. I went to the latter and saw the brutal man-handling of those who protested inside the hall while uniformed policemen looked on with folded arms. Resistance grew, however, and on the day of the battle of Cable Street fear gave way to the feeling that fascism in England could and had to be defeated. It was natural that a year later I should go to Spain and enlist in the army of the Republic fighting fascism.

London: A Refugee Arrives

Pearl Binder

Artist and writer.
Lived and worked in Whitechapel in the 1930s

Trapped in Nazi Germany with war approaching, some Jewish or half-Jewish families managed to send their children to England before the death camps got them.

I shall never forget the scene at Waterloo Station when I went to fetch our refugee Margit. The arrival platform was crammed with young children, pale and exhausted after their long journey, each bewildered child wearing a huge cardboard label on which was printed the child's name and the name of the adopting family.



Margit in England, 1938

When I found Margit we could only embrace silently – she spoke no English, I spoke no German. She looked pale and half-starved. Her mother was Jewish, her father Catholic. Because he would not renounce his family, Hitler had ruined him.

At last the muddle on the platform sorted itself out. The kids were taken away to their new English homes, where gas masks and Anderson shelters awaited the coming Nazi bombing raids.

Poland: Life was Pleasant Until

Roman Halter

Artist

I was born in Poland in 1927 in the town of Chodecz, the seventh and the youngest son of Sala and Mordechai Halter. The Halters were scribes, etchers and printers; my grandfather, however, became a timber merchant.

In Chodecz there were about 500 Jews and the same number of Germans (we called them *Volksdeutsche*) and about 1000 Poles. We Jews had our attractive timber synagogue on the way to the lake, on the edge of town. The Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) and the Poles had their churches in the centre of town. Both churches had tall, almost identical, plain gothic spires.

The Roman Catholic Poles, the Protestant Germans and we Jews all got on well as a community until 1935-36. My brothers were honorary fire brigade officers. My uncle was clarinetist and conductor of the Chodecz fire brigade orchestra. My sisters helped in the lending library and acted in the amateur plays which the town put on. My father was an elected officer on the town council.

It was a custom that Jewish boys began attending 'Cheder' from the age of three and like my brothers and every Jewish boy before me in my town I too began learning to read the prayers. Because of my height and keenness, I was accepted to attend the town's compulsory Polish school 'Szkola Powszechna' from the age of six instead of seven. This was a mixed school: Jewish boys and girls sat and studied side by side with German and Polish boys and girls.

Life was pleasant and enjoyable until 1935-36. With Pilsudski's death and Hitler's increasingly frenzied screechings of hatred and obscenities against the Jews from across the border – even my Polish school friends became infected with it – it became all too frequent an occurrence for us to be set upon after school and beaten up. My grandfather taught me how to stand against a wall

on such occasions and to swing my trouser belt, buckle-out, from side to side.

A few days after the German occupation of Poland in 1939 we were removed from our house and put into an old shack in the back parts of Chodecz. The young *Volksdeutsche* from Chodecz and its surroundings were conscripted into an SS unit. To make their training realistic, Jewish people were rounded-up, taken to a forest and shot. Able Jewish men, including my eldest brother, were sent to work on the Hermann Goering Berlin-Pozen Highway. By the autumn of 1940 those Jews left in Chodecz were transported to Lodz ghetto. I was thirteen.

In 1944 I was sent to Auschwitz from Lodz with a group of metal workers. After a time in Birkenau-Auschwitz 2 we were sent on to Stutthof concentration camp, and from there to Dresden. There we worked in an ammunition factory until the bombing of Dresden in February 1945.

In May 1945, after the war ended, I returned to Chodecz in the hope of finding someone of my family, relations or friends alive. Our house was occupied by three Polish families who told me that I ought to find somewhere else to stay.

Stanislaw Podlanski who worked for my father for 14 years took me into his house. I stayed for two weeks in the town where I was born and had lived as a child. No-one made me welcome. Our cemetery was ploughed-up, the synagogue was burned and out of the 482 Jews four of us were alive: three Pinczewski girls who now live in Australia, and myself.

I was brought to England by the CBF World Jewish Relief, one of 723 boys and girls, all of us survivors of the concentration camps.

Spitalfields and Berlin: Football and the Nazis

Mick Mindel

Worker in the garment industry for most of his life
and a former leader of the Tailors and Garment Workers Union

I was very active in various sports at school – the Jewish Free in Bell Lane – and continued in the Old Boys' Club after I left in 1925. My father, a book-binder in Fournier Street, was an active member of the Workers' Circle, so I was a political animal from an early age too. I was later able to combine these interests when I played football for an amateur team of London workers; this took me to Germany in 1932 to play against similar teams of German workers.

Our opening match in Cologne, before a crowd numbering about 20,000, brought me sharply up against the true and horrifying face of fascism. During the gymnastic display prior to our match we suddenly heard screams and saw pandemonium in one part of the arena. Within a short time we heard over the loudspeakers that the police had banned the games: a group of Nazis had fired into the crowd, killing nine and injuring 26. We continued the tour without further incidents, but staying with the families of our opposing teams we were told of beatings, persecution and killings of the Nazis' political and trade union opponents and, of course, of the Jews.

The wish to arrange a return visit to London took me to Berlin in January 1933; I arrived the day before Hitler was made Chancellor. Printed indelibly on my

memory is the crowd of uniformed Nazis around the station aggressively demanding contributions for their collection boxes and shouting virulent anti-Semitic slogans. My hosts on this visit, non-Jews, confirmed the increase of violent attacks on Jews and other anti-Nazis, their homes and workplaces. Through them I was able to meet leading social democratic politicians, trade unionists, journalists and Communist activists, and our discussions seemed endless. I had the greatest difficulty understanding how Hitler and his National Socialist Party could have gained the hold they had over the German people, and how, in the face of this threat, his opponents could remain so divided.

My concern is now that the lessons I seemed to have learned in Germany in 1933 have either not been learned well or have been forgotten. We face alarmingly similar dangers today – mass unemployment, the fanning of 'patriotic' militarism, the growth in violent racist attacks, concerted attempts to weaken the trade union and labour movements and the resultant divisions within them, and not least the emergence of active anti-Semitism in a number of different guises. We have paid a tremendous price for our failure to learn these lessons in the past. We must not fail to learn them a second time.

1930s: Germany



1980s: Britain



The Stormer is a comic book that has been distributed outside schools and football grounds. It is based directly on *Der Stürmer*, the 1930s racist magazine edited by Julius Streicher, one of the early members of Hitler's group. He was convicted at the Nuremberg trials for crimes against humanity: 'He infected the German mind with the virus of anti-Semitism and incited the German people to active persecution.' (Indictment, Nuremberg Trial, 30 September 1946). Does not the same indictment apply to those who copy him?

Germany: Caution Amongst the Christians

Trudi Eulenberg

I was the daughter of a Jewish father and a Gentile mother, brought up as a Christian. In Hitler's Germany, Jewish people were by government decree barred from Baptism. The clergy were given, and accepted, strict orders not to receive them into Christ's church. As Jews and Gentiles could not mix, converts could not receive Communion together with Gentile Christians. I knew that I was not welcome at the Altar.

Towards the end of 1938 while my father was in a concentration camp, I wrote to the local pastor's wife, a nice woman, asking if, in the circumstances, I could continue to come to the Church Girls' Fellowship. The pastor himself called and asked my mother cautiously if my father was at home, since, if so, he would not be able to come in. He then explained that in the case of *Mischlinge* (children of mixed marriages), clarification of the law was still awaited. Meanwhile, he would ask the other girls if they would agree to my being there. Not a word of sympathy or encouragement – not a word to indicate any caring or concern for the fate of my father. I went once more to a Fellowship meeting but the other girls, once my friends, were so cold to me I never returned.

Racial injustice and hatred are evil. Forty five years ago the Church looked at it impassively, tolerated it, condoned it, to a lesser degree even approved of it. It ended with the ruthless murder of nearly six millions of innocent men, women and children.



„Wenn ihr ein Kreuz seht, dann denkt an den grauenhaften Mord
der Juden auf Golgatha...“

1936: Germany, published by *Der Stürmer*.
A children's book; the caption to the illustration reads:
'Whenever you see a cross, remember the Jews' horrible murder
(of Christ) on Golgotha.'

Poland: To the Ghetto

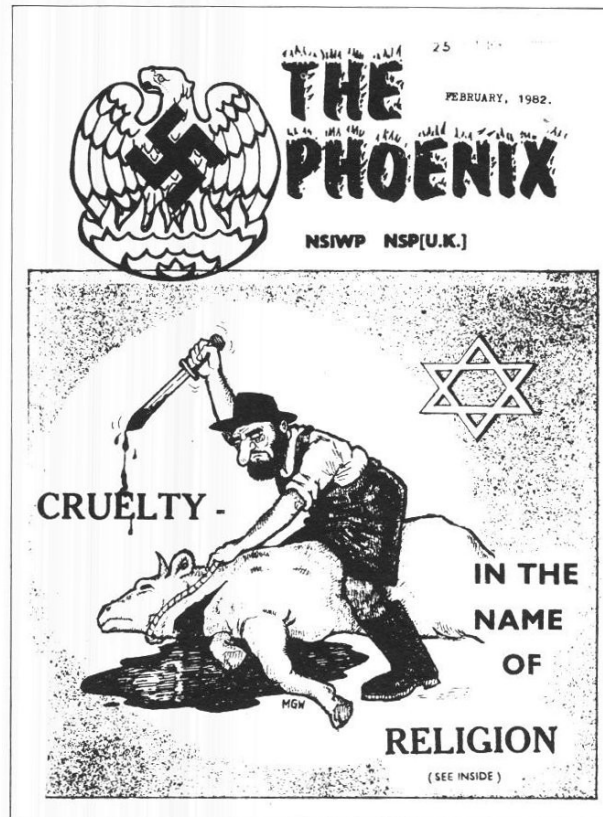
Michael Etkind
Poet

I was born in the textile town of Lodz in 1925. My father, who came from Russia, was an accountant, and my mother, a teacher. We were relatively well off; I was sent to private schools and we would spend three months summer holiday in the country. The only black cloud that marred my happy childhood was the anti-Semitism of the Poles towards the Jewish population.

On the first day of September 1939 we were plunged into all the horrors of modern warfare. With air-raids, bombs and refugees, life collapsed around us, but for us Jews a New Order was quickly established which sentenced the Jewish population to death. We were herded into a ghetto guarded by police who shot anyone trying to escape. People were rounded up ostensibly for work, and then disappeared.

In the spring of 1940, my father and older brother, who were trying to escape into Russia, were caught in the Kielce ghetto and we never saw them again. By the autumn of that year my younger brother had died in the typhus epidemic, and in March 1941, my mother died. My young sister was taken into an orphanage and I obtained a job as messenger in the ghetto post office. This meant we were saved from imminent deportation.

At the beginning of 1944, I was sent to various labour camps, including Buchenwald, where I realised that it was not only Jews that had been singled out to slave and disappear to make 'lebensraum' for the Master Race. One year later I was liberated by the Americans, then arrested by the Russians. After two months spent in a Russian military hospital, I joined a group of young people from the camps who were being sent to England, and I arrived here in 1945.



1982: Britain, front cover of *The Phoenix*. The older generation of Jews will remember that precisely the same image was published frequently in Germany in the 1930s. This is not from Germany five decades ago; this was published in February 1982 by the National Socialist Party, UK.

Surviving Auschwitz: An Empty Cemetery

Rabbi Hugo Gryn

Well-known broadcaster on radio and television

For me and others fortunate enough to survive it, Auschwitz was the beginning of a descent into the hell of nazi-dominated Europe. Virtually all my family were murdered within hours of our arrival there, including my brother, all my younger cousins as well as my grandparents. But my father and I were selected for slave labour and so was my mother. The relatively short time I spent in Birkenau-Auschwitz 2 was a time of forced adjustment, the beginning of a period of permanent uncertainty about life and death. I was conscious of becoming depersonalised. I became an insignificant number, and it took all my inner resources to realise and remain convinced not only of my innocence but that those who established and ran this death-dealing machine were criminals. It was in Auschwitz that I was determined to do everything in my power to survive, though I knew that neither my own abilities nor my intelligence could actually affect the ultimate outcome.

In the event, my father and I were taken from Auschwitz to a series of labour camps within Germany itself. We were both liberated by the US Army in a satellite camp of Mauthausen called Gunskirchen. Those of us who survived the forced march from Mauthausen during an unreasonably cold April, were totally devoid of physical strength, and typhoid was raging unchecked. Sadly, my father died within three days of liberation, as did hundreds of other people who were with us. My own recovery was fairly swift and by the end of May 1945 I was set to leave.

The question was: where to go? If any members of my family survived they would probably return to our home town in eastern Czechoslovakia. After a series of adventures, since public transport was barely functioning, I did reach my home town.

My actual arrival was very poignant. By a similar chance my mother also survived her set of forced-labour camps; she was already at home. She spent all the daylight hours looking out of a window and, in fact, saw me walk towards the house – but by myself. We did not even have to speak for she understood at once that her husband would not be returning and, as is the custom in our religious tradition, she spent the first hour in the mourning posture of Jews.

It was clear to me, within a matter of days, that there was no longer any purpose in remaining in this town. Our Community was destroyed, I had the feeling that I was in a cemetery in which most of the bodies were missing. If I was to survive emotionally and spiritually as well as physically I had to leave – find a new home – complete my education and build out of my own life some kind of a monument to those I loved and lost. In time I did complete my education and become a Rabbi, who now serves a congregation in London.

The fact that I am currently involved with a project in the East End of London is not unconnected with my experience in Auschwitz. There is a Huguenot house in Princelet Street which in its time became part of a synagogue and is now derelict. Combined with the fact that this street is now the home of recent immigrants from Bengal impelled a group of us to try to develop there a Centre for Minority Studies. If Auschwitz taught us anything at all, one of its lessons is surely the need for people to live in conditions of trust and understanding. An evil principle invaded Europe together with the Nazis; it can only be eradicated by the kind of decency which Auschwitz wanted to remove from human experience. I hope this book and the Auschwitz exhibition will go some way towards demonstrating that it failed to do so.



1945: Opposite, British troops watch the removal of bodies at Belsen concentration camp.

Belsen: They All Looked Like Skeletons

Rev. Dr. Isaac Levy, OBE, TD
Honorary Secretary of the Council of Christians and Jews

As the Senior Jewish Chaplain to the British Army of the Rhine it was my sad privilege to enter the Belsen Concentration Camp during the first week of its liberation. The first sight of its inmates has haunted me ever since. It was almost impossible to distinguish the barely living from the dead. They all looked like skeletons. Emaciated from hunger and the typhus which raged in the camp, thousands died even as we attempted to save them. During the first six weeks after the liberation we buried at least 21,000 corpses in mass graves. Desperately we tried to list the names and places of origin of the survivors, but it was a hopeless task. They died as we spoke to them.

Teams of doctors and medical students were dispatched to the camp but they were still ill equipped to deal with the overwhelming problem which faced them. Only the very fortunate among those who had more recently been transported to the camp managed to survive. After being washed and de-loused by the soldiers who formed the 'human laundry' they were transferred to the nearby Wehrmacht barracks where they were hospitalized and lovingly cared for by the medical corps under the command of Brigadier Glynn Hughes – a man whose name is still revered.

The horror of Belsen is in no way comparable in magnitude to that of Auschwitz, but the memory of it will long linger in the minds and the nostrils of those who witnessed it.

Nuremberg: A 'Service to the Human Race'

Lord Elwyn Jones
Member of Parliament for West Ham South 1945-74 and former Lord Chancellor

I spent a year in Nuremberg as a prosecuting counsel in the trial of the major war criminals. The Nazis' own documents revealed how, in Nazi Germany and in the countries the Nazi armies overran, millions of men, women and children were systematically put to death, and how modern science was used to hasten the process of mass murder and extermination. The gas chambers of Auschwitz and other concentration camps made it possible for the victims to be secretly destroyed in huge numbers without trace. Never has the menace of racialism been so clearly shown.

During the trials, I cross-questioned Erich von dem Bach Zelewski. I asked this Nazi commander, who had organised murder on a massive and indiscriminate scale: 'How could you have done these terrible things – and you a family man?' He said: 'When you have been brought up to believe that Jews, Gypsies, Russians and Poles are subhuman, it becomes a service to the human race to get rid of them.' Throughout the trial he showed no feeling of guilt or remorse whatsoever.

What happened in Auschwitz must not be allowed to disappear from memory. It has been said that evil only triumphs when good men do nothing. We must not make the same mistake again.

1978: Britain, from *Bulldog*, issue no.10
The Young National Front's own report of an attack on Brick Lane coupled with the distortion and misuse of science for propaganda.

EAST END RACE WAR EAST END RACE WAR EAST END RACE WAR EAST END RACE WAR

RACE WAR!

BRICK LANE: A race rampage by over 100 white youths hit the Brick Lane Asian "ghetto" in the summer. The mass attack followed two earlier incidents in which whites were attacked, kicked and beaten by Asians. The white youths charged down the street of Brick Lane seeking revenge. They were shouting "Kill the black bastards!" and "Out with the blacks!" The Asians counter attacked in groups, armed with sticks and stones. In the conflict that followed a number of people were hurt and many windows were smashed. Twenty arrests were made.

NEWHAM: A severely handicapped white youth was stabbed in the back twice in a knife attack by Asians. The youth, a deaf mute, was one of five whites who were attacked by Sikhs. Two of the whites received serious stab wounds. Only the brilliant work of doctors saved their lives.

WHY THERE IS A RACE WAR



Orang-Utan Negro European
Comparative drawing of skulls by Camper, showing the difference in the facial angle (MG) between the Negro and the European. The low forehead of the Negro restricts the cranial capacity for the frontal region of the brain. The drawings are discussed by Prof. Baker in his book *Race* (1974).

A STATE of open race warfare has now been reached in East London. It is becoming quite obvious that blacks and whites cannot live together in peace. Why is there so much racial trouble? Why can't blacks and whites live in

Other top scientists have shown that the negro brain is 8 to 12 per cent lighter than the white brain. Brain weight is another important measure of intelligence. Also, a top professor has shown that the white man evolved about 250,000

Surviving Auschwitz: No Home to Return To

Ben Helfgott

Ben Helfgott was brought to Forest Gate as a child refugee, attended Plaistow Grammar School, and worked in Hackney

When I recall the nightmare of those years, none fills me with a greater dread and horror than the one I experienced on my return to Poland soon after my liberation. I was fifteen years old, my cousin twelve, both of us were still emaciated and our hair was conspicuously short. Our faith in humanity – although bruised we never lost it – was being restored in a very manifest and palpable way.

We crossed the Polish-Czech border full of excitement and expectation for a brave new world. The train stopped in Czeszochowa. At the station we were waiting for the train that would take us to our home town. Hundreds of people were milling around. Suddenly two Polish officers accosted us. 'Who are you? What are you doing here?' Somewhat taken aback we replied 'Can't you see? We are survivors from the concentration camp and we are returning to our home.' To our amazement they asked for some proof, which we immediately produced in the form of an identity card issued to us in Theresienstadt, the place of our liberation.

They were still not satisfied and ordered us to come with them to the police station for a routine check. It seemed rather strange but we had nothing to fear. We walked along chatting animatedly about the great future that was in store for the people of Poland. The streets were deserted; there was still a curfew after midnight and street lighting was not yet restored. My cousin and I were tiring as we carried our cases. Casually I asked 'Where is the Police Station? It seems so far.' The reply was devastating 'Shut your f . . . mouth you f . . . Jew!!!!' I was stunned, hardly believing what I had just heard. How could I have been so naive, so gullible? The Nazi cancer was removed but its tentacles were widespread and deeply rooted. I began to fear the worst. Here I was in the middle of nowhere, no one to turn to for help.

At last we stopped at a house. We entered a room, dimly lit by a paraffin lamp, and were ordered to open our suitcases. They took most of the clothing and announced that they would now take us to the police station. After what seemed an eternity, we arrived at a place that looked frighteningly forbidding. The buildings were derelict and abandoned; there was no sign of human habitation; all one could hear was the howling of the wind, the barking of the dogs and the mating calls of the cats.

The two officers menacingly extracted pistols from their holsters and ordered us to walk to the nearest wall. Both my cousin and I felt rooted to the ground, unable to move. I pleaded with them 'Haven't we suffered enough? Haven't the Nazis caused enough destruction and devastation to all of us? Our common enemy is destroyed and we have survived against all the odds. Don't we speak the same language as you?' I went on in the same vein for some time. Eventually one of the officers succumbed to my pleas and said 'Let's leave them. They are, after all, still young boys.' As they put away their pistols, they made a remark which still rings loud in my ears . . . 'You can consider yourselves very lucky. We have killed many of your kind. You are the first we have left alive.' With this comment they disappeared into the night.

My cousin and I looked at each other unable to believe what had taken place. We were trembling and completely shattered by this experience. Racing through our minds was the realization that we had been nearer death in a free and liberated Poland than at any time during the ordeals of the five years under Nazi tyranny. I cannot help thinking of the many survivors who returned to Poland after the war. I wonder what happened to them, and how many were killed.

Auschwitz: There was Nothing to Ask

Phil Piratin

Member for Parliament for Stepney 1945-1950

I was one of the first Britons to visit the Auschwitz extermination camp after the 1939-45 war. I was one of a group of British Members of Parliament who visited Poland in January 1946 and spent a week touring the country, including a visit to Auschwitz.

The camp had been cleaned up and was deserted. We saw the gas-chambers and listened to a Polish official describing how they functioned. We saw the huts where the victims were incarcerated. But the scene which remains sharpest in my memory was of walking around the huts in which the clothing, shoes and personal belongings of the victims were stored. On the racks, as in a warehouse, were large neatly-bound bundles of clothing, men's, women's, children's; large boxes of boots and shoes, men's, women's, children's. We were told that that was how they were found and left undisturbed.

There were eight MPs, five Labour, two Tory and myself, Communist. Whereas, walking around the camp, we had asked many questions of our Polish guides and spoke together among ourselves, in this 'warehouse' we

were silent. There was nothing to ask. Each garment represented an exterminated human being. At this point we each felt close to these thousands and millions of innocents. Each, no doubt, had his own bitter thoughts.

The evidence of what Fascism stood for was here exposed. Not only were millions of people brutally destroyed but nations were corrupted and demoralised by those who manipulated and encouraged them to perpetrate these heinous deeds.

During the First World War, as school-children, we were told that this was the 'war was to end all wars.' It didn't. The 1939-45 war was a 'war to destroy Fascism'. The Fascist regimes of Hitler and Mussolini were destroyed, but the seeds of fascism have remained. They thrive on racism, the stepping-stone to Fascism.

This booklet is to be welcomed by all who want the younger generations to learn where fascism and racism lead; and also by older people who need to be reminded of those bitter years of anti-fascist struggle at home and abroad, whose final victory has yet to be won.

1944: Young Jewish inmate of Auschwitz (SS photograph)



1978: Britain, from *Bulldog*, issue no.7

KEEP BRITAIN TIDY!



Don't let these....spoil this

An example of the kind of propaganda sold to young people by the National Front. The juxtaposition of such images is typical of *Bulldog's* front page.

Montreal: Auschwitz is Never Far Away

Ben Helfgott

Former Olympic weightlifter representing Britain

The shattering events of the Holocaust were so unprecedented in the history of mankind that its lessons are constantly re-evaluated and re-assessed in the light of new experiences. For me, as a survivor of Auschwitz, the events are never far away: I should like to illustrate this by describing one of many episodes with which I am frequently confronted.

I have attended all the post-war Olympic Games, either as a competitor or as a spectator. On these occasions I have always contacted survivors from my home town in Poland, as well as those with whom I shared my experiences in the various concentration camps.

During the Montreal Olympics in 1976, I telephoned a survivor from my home town whom I had not seen since 1942. I was very disappointed when he told me that he couldn't recollect my name, and in exasperation I exclaimed, 'Don't you remember I used to play with your younger brother?' I could hardly believe my ears when he told me that his younger brother was alive and living in Montreal. I telephoned him immediately and he remembered my name without hesitation. The last time we had met we were both in our early teens and here we were, well into middle age.

It is difficult to convey the meaning of such an encounter, the depth of feeling that it involves. We remembered our friends as they were before they were taken away to the gas chambers — young, happy and smiling, with great aspirations and full of *joie de vivre*. We talked of a vanished world that had no chance to blossom, and we cherished the thought that we had survived and were privileged to revere their memory. We talked both in anguish and exhilaration, realising that we were probably the only two people who still shared their memory.

To a person who has lived a normal life and who does not begin to think about his deceased friends, if at all, until late in his lifetime, this may sound like a morbid preoccupation. That is why it is so difficult to comprehend the enormity of the crime, and the tragic catastrophe that befell European Jewry between the years 1933 and 1945.

"EXTERMINATION" CAMPS

IF AUSCHWITZ, Belsen, Dachau and the rest weren't 'extermination camps', what were they? The answer, as is clear from our photos of Auschwitz, the largest camp, is that they were industrial plants, operated by forced labour. Their inmates were shipped in from all over Europe not to die but to work.



Even Jewish historians like Gitta Sereny now concede that Auschwitz was NOT an 'extermination camp'. It was a Buna (synthetic rubber) factory. The revolting smell emitted from its chimneys cited by so many 'survivors' as 'the stench of burning bodies' was the characteristic smell of synthetic rubber factories the World over. The picture shows where the stages of rubber manufacture were carried out. The prisoners at this plant were not there to be 'gassed' but to act as forced labour.

1982: Britain, from 'Holocaust' News, issue no.1

Any means possible is used to deny the truth of Auschwitz. The Buna factory built by slave labour — and bombed by the Allies before it produced a single ounce of rubber — is used to attempt to deny the other role of Auschwitz: an extermination camp. 'Holocaust' News is one of the attempts to distort history spawned by the notorious publication *Did Six Million Really Die?*

AUSCHWITZ ... THE FACTS

Young Britons be on your guard! Your teachers are part of a Communist plot. This is the plot: When you ask your teacher 'why is it wrong to want Britain for the British?' he will tell you it is bad to talk racist and will advise you to visit the Auschwitz exhibition at the library. Do not be fooled! This is a selection of fake photos and films sent from Communist Poland.

The truth is that in 1945 Russian Communist troops found Auschwitz derelict and rebuilt it. The camp had been a work camp throughout the war. The bodies found there, and at every other camp, were typhoid victims. Due to allied bombing the water supplies became contaminated thereby poisoning everyone.

1981: Britain, November 9th Society leaflet.

When the Auschwitz Exhibition was first being planned this leaflet attacking it was distributed. This copy was put through a letterbox on an estate in Basildon, Essex.

Apart from the I.G. synthetic rubber factory, together with nearby 139 smaller camps it provided labour for a factory, a Siemens elec and on local farm engineering projects.

Parties of inmates outside the camp along the day, hardly a so' with men 'facing the and thus with nothing escape bids!

Similarly, for example inmates worked underground aircraft f Belsen skilled Jew from the Amsterd cutting industry we a diamond-cutting there.

Dachau inmate and repaired a German armed fo

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and often So im become many

Tower Hamlets: A New Generation of Discrimination

Dan Jones

Youth worker, Secretary of the Tower Hamlets Trades Council

I find it difficult to write about the late 1970s in the East End. My memories are full of death, marches and funeral processions.

I walked behind the coffin of Altab Ali, a young clothing worker from Wapping, who was stabbed to death in Whitechapel. I remember the massive outburst of grief and the dignified defiance by Bengali workers that followed his murder. I remember the murders of Ishaque Ali in Newham and of Michael Ferreiras in Hackney, the deaths of Kenith Singh of Newham and of the Khan family in Walthamstow. My friend Blair Peach, a member of the Trades Council and teacher of handicapped children at Phoenix School in Bow, died at the hands of the police in the Southall disturbances. Ten thousand of us, black and white, Sikh, Muslim, Christian and Jew gathered in the bleak East London cemetery for his burial.

There were times in the late '70s when thousands of Sylheti workers from the factories, sweat-shops and restaurants of the East End took to the streets in massive marches and protests demanding an end to racist incitement and attacks. The Trades Council published its indictment of racialism, *Blood on the Streets*. Protests remained peaceful and multi-racial despite continued provocation and a deadening lack of response from the authorities. A new generation of young cockney Bengalis was emerging, no longer prepared to cower in fear or to accept discriminatory treatment — a movement that has begun to make a fundamental political and social impact on our area.

The Asian community continues to demand fair treatment in housing, employment and civil liberty, and

the right to live and work in peace like anyone else, but the pattern of racist attacks continues. Black people complain of harassment by the Police and often that the victims of racist attacks are the people arrested while racist incitement is ignored. Now the black people face a whole new generation of discriminatory practices by the State: passports are demanded by officials in housing departments, dole offices, education offices and hospitals. The screw tightens as Britain's increasingly racist laws and rules on nationality and immigration break up black families and treat black people as second class citizens.

As the whole political climate moves in a more racist direction, what were once the mouthings of a tiny fringe of extremists have now become the common currency of major parties. The struggle against the ideas of Hitler and his heirs continues today. We have driven the National Front from their Shoreditch headquarters, action is at last being taken against the bookstall that has sold Nazi propaganda against Jews and black people at the Sunday market in Brick Lane for many months. But *Sieg Heil* salutes and racist chants still echo from the North Bank at West Ham football ground, and outside the schoolgates our children are handed poisonous leaflets that claim the Holocaust was a Jewish lie. We despair since white unemployed youth are still attracted to the British Movement.

Racism flourishes where there is insecurity, unemployment, bad social conditions and an easy scapegoat. It will not disappear until we tackle fundamental problems and attitudes that lie deep in our area.

Hackney: A Death that Brought Us Together

Joe Abrams

Black teacher, Secretary of the Tower Hamlets Association for Racial Justice and local councillor in Merton

There has been much racial abuse against Jews, West Indians, Asians and other ethnic minority groups in Hackney. Three years ago, Michael Ferreiras, British black born of West Indian parents, was stabbed to death near the police station in Hackney. He had been attacked by several local National Front youngsters. His death brought together various groups who protested at the amount of racial abuse, attacks and graffiti. Many meetings were held to highlight the problem of racism in Hackney. His funeral was an example of the getting together of all groups – Moroccans, Turks, Jews, West Indians, Asians, and the white population also – to voice their disapproval of the racist attack which led to Michael's death.

Out of the funeral came an awareness among the groups of the need to work together to eliminate this racism. The result has been the formation of the Hackney Asian Association, the Hackney Black People's Association and many other groups from the ethnic minority population. This show of solidarity forced the local authority to terminate the contract which allowed the National Front their headquarters in Shoreditch High Street.

Groups in Tower Hamlets, Newham and as far away

as Southwark worked together to ensure that these types of activities by the National Front are not allowed to spread. A joint committee called the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee co-ordinated efforts in both boroughs to resist the spread of the National Front. Much more is to be done before we can say that the National Front and its adherents have been defeated. The local authorities of both boroughs are now showing an awareness of the need to be seen publicly opposing racism. Many other voluntary groups now invite speakers from ethnic minority populations to address them on the issues of racism. It is hoped this work will continue and the lack of understanding of the needs of the various ethnic groups has now been recognised.

The Auschwitz Exhibition, which highlights the issues the Jews had to face under a fascist government, is seen by many black people as a continuation of the struggle they have to wage in society. We are involved as blacks at all levels with the planning and organising of this exhibition. We want people to know that we are not isolating ourselves from the problems the Jews faced and are still facing in society. We share a common cause. We must fight a common fight. We hope the exhibition will be well attended by people of all races.

Buy Bulldog in bulk!

DAVID LANE IS AS BLACK AS THE ACE OF SPADES!

DAVID LANE now looks as black as the rest of his friends in Brixton. *Bulldog* readers have turned him into a Black mugger!

We've reached our target of £150 and as a result we've been able to turn arch Race Traitor David Lane into his favourite colour – Black!

Since publication of the last issue we've received donations from the following people:

David, Benfleet, Essex – £1; The Pope, Vatican City, Rome – £1; East Anglia West Ham NF – £1; The Chelsea Mob – £5; Boys From Brazil – £1; The KGB, Moscow – £1; S. McGovern, Southend – £2; Kevin Keegan, Spain – £1; Pam and Eddie, Woking – £2; Scottish Loyalists – £5; W. G. Young, London SE – £3; Loyalist Prisoners, Maze Prison, Ulster – £10; Archie the Canine Nationalist, Brentford – £3;

£150
£100
£50
£0



Enver Hoxha, Albania – £4; Mrs. J. Young, London E – £2.50; Sid and Sam, Ballymoney, Northern Ireland – £1; A. Makarios, Kentish Town – £1; Chase – £1.

1982: Britain, from *Bulldog*, issue no.28

East London: Racism is Part of Our Daily Lives

Haji Mohammed Aftab Ali

General Secretary of the Bangladesh Welfare Association

As a Bangladeshi and a Moslem, I welcome the Auschwitz Exhibition. It shows us where racism can lead. The hatred and massacres did not stop when Hitler died and the Nazi regime ended.

Our community in Britain, 35,000 of whom live in the East End, face discrimination, harassment and bigotry; racism is part of our daily lives. On some housing estates white tenants sometimes prevent Asian families from moving into flats. We often feel we are being treated as second class citizens by the local housing authorities: we live in some of the worst housing conditions in London, we spend years on the waiting lists and are met with administrative practices which discriminate against immigrants. Our housing problems are made more difficult because we know that we would face racial attacks if we moved out of our community.

The East End has a bad reputation for racial attacks and our community suffers disproportionately from street violence. There have been several killings, a large number of beatings, stabbings, attempts at arson and even murder. We know this is because of our origins and colour and we know that some of these attacks are carried out by individuals and groups linked to the new Nazis. The National Front and the British Movement say the Asians are taking over, that they must be got rid of. Every small argument with a white person on the street, every confrontation with a group of white youths worries us enormously: each carries the possibility of racial attacks, or even worse.

But we know we have a lot to contribute to building a really multicultural society if only we can participate with our language, culture and religion freely. We need far more help from the education system. We need to know our rights so that we can fight the difficulties we meet when trying to use public services. We are worried that Britain's immigration and nationality rules are becoming more restrictive, not only keeping so many black families apart but increasingly asking us to produce our passports as proof that we are allowed to use or claim services here.

There are always endless delays, and endless delaying procedures.

Tower Hamlets is a place of many faiths and peoples. Muslim, Christian, Jew or those of no religion must not let racism divide us from the task of building a multiracial Britain and opposing the forces that created the Holocaust. We know they are still amongst us.





East London: The Ground has been Prepared

Cosmas Desmond

Tower Hamlets councillor, former Director of Amnesty International

To make any direct comparisons between the horrors of the Holocaust and racism in Britain would be to trivialise the demonic quality of the former. On the other hand, we do not recall the atrocities of Auschwitz simply to rekindle our moral outrage at the inhumanity of Hitler. Auschwitz did not happen out of the blue; the ground had been prepared.

'Take care not to arouse the beast in man' warned a German parliamentarian, Eugen Richter, in 1880, 'for it will stop at nothing.' For some years previous to that, concerted efforts had been made in Germany scientifically to nurture the beast of 'racial purity.' In 1881 a German philosopher suggested that Jews should be interned and 'held off from the sphere of the community in general.' Sixty years later Hitler allowed the beast full reign to its appetite.

In the intervening years most people had been conditioned into at least tacitly accepting any solution to the 'Jewish Problem'. There were many reasons for this, but two factors are particularly relevant for us today. Firstly, there was the cultivation of a narrow nationalism concerned with protecting the interests of 'its own' at the expense of any outsiders – Jews, Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals. A sort of municipal nationalism is often evident in relation to such questions as housing and jobs: 'We must look after our own.' Secondly, there was cultivated an undue respect for law and authority. Eichmann's 'defence' was that he had only obeyed those in authority. How often do we still hear that excuse? We hear it repeatedly in the Tower Hamlets Council Chamber: we cannot revoke a licence for the sale of racist literature because that would be against the law; government measures may only be opposed within the limits of the laws prescribed by the same government.

Another sixty years of such nationalism and blind obedience to the law will not, we trust, lead to another Holocaust but it will prepare us for accepting any final solution provided it is sanctioned by those in power.

Auschwitz and the Christian Church

Rev. Don Stokes

Curate of St. George-in-the-East-Church,
living and working in Stepney

As a Christian I have to stand up for those things which create harmony between people, to work for the healing of relationships in the community, and to oppose those forces and people who seek to deny wholeness and full human status to any human being.

As a Christian minister I am aware also that I must seek to put my own house in order. The history of the Christian church is a story of glory and failure. The glory is the good news that affirms the love and respect in which all men and women are held by God. The failure is the falling short of that vision in many instances. Auschwitz is proof of what happens to people when evil in society is not opposed. From the days of the early church, Jews have been cast in the role of scapegoats by people who have justified their inhuman behaviour by citing the teachings of some members of the church.

I hope the Auschwitz exhibition will result in the church examining its teaching and history. The writings of the early Church are one side of a dialogue of which both sides need to be understood if we are to be agents of God's reconciliation in the world.

How Far . . .

How far's Kolyma, Dachau, Buchenwald
How many miles to Katyn Las
How far is Babi-Yar
How far's Treblinka and that acrid gas
How many miles, how many years
How fragile the uneasy peace
How thin is the veneer
How hollow the sound of empty drums of war

How far is Auschwitz from these peaceful shores?

Michael Etkind

East London: Racism is Indivisible

Rev. Kenneth Leech

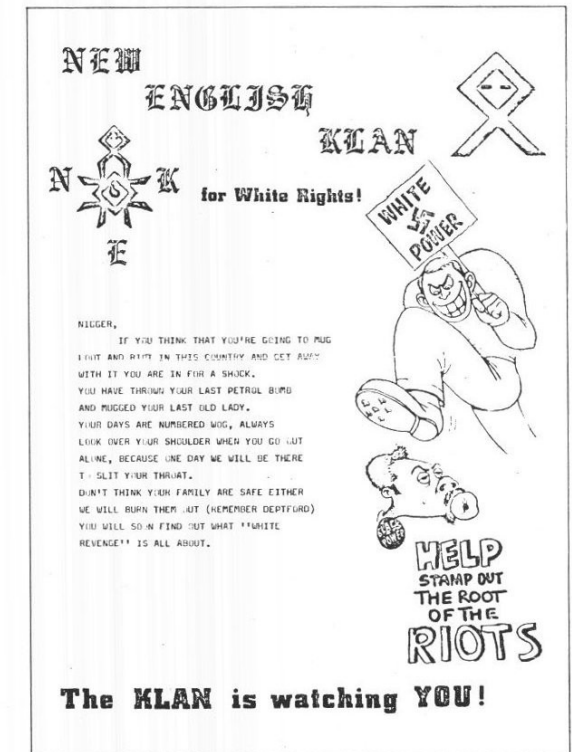
Officer, Church of England's Board of Social Responsibility, living in East London

Since the 1900s organised anti-Semitic and fascist groups have tried to exploit the grievances of working people in East London, and deflect anger and fear towards the Jewish community and other minority groups. Today, fears about the 'alien wedge,' the threat from 'subversives', the loss of national identity are aroused with a frightening similarity of style and language to that used by Hitler.



1982: Britain, Young National Front poster. A recruitment poster published by Bulldog in July 1982 has since been available from the National Front bookstall in Brick Lane, in the centre of the Bangladeshi community.

As we remember the 50th anniversary of Hitler's coming to power, we do well to remember too that the Jewish population of Germany was one per cent when Hitler decided that zero per cent should be the maximum tolerable level – and learn the lessons of that time. For racism is indivisible: we cannot oppose it then and there and not oppose it now and here.



1981: Britain, 'New English Klan' leaflet. Imagine this leaflet being put through your letterbox. Imagine the fear and offence it would cause a black family. Imagine how the Bangladeshi Youth Movement felt when it came through their letterbox.

In Memory of Those Born in East London
Who Died in Auschwitz

Copies of
birth certificates
of some of the London-born
victims of Auschwitz.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON

Application Number 2137A

REGISTRATION DISTRICT Whitechapel

1915 BIRTH in the Sub-district of Spitalfields in the County of London

No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
1	14th May 1915	Joseph	M	Joseph	Sidore	Turner	14th May 1915	14th May 1915	14th May 1915	14th May 1915

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON

Application Number 2138A

REGISTRATION DISTRICT St George in the East

1916 BIRTH in the Sub-district of St George and St John in the County of London

No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
1	1st Feb 1916	Leah	F	Abraham	Sora	Cohen	1st Feb 1916	1st Feb 1916	1st Feb 1916	1st Feb 1916

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON

Application Number 2138A

REGISTRATION DISTRICT Mile End Old Town

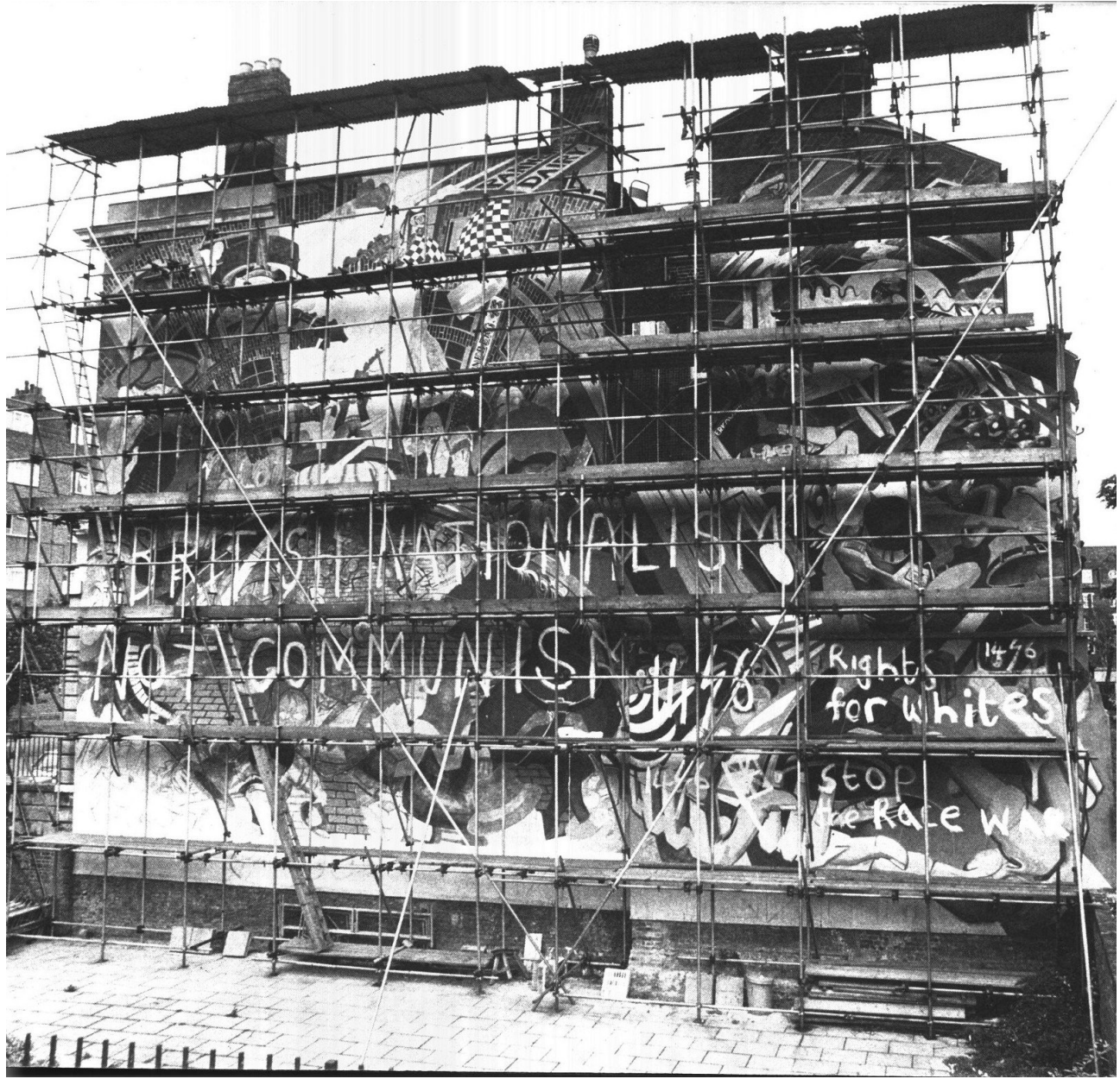
1917 BIRTH in the Sub-district of Mile End Old Town in the County of London

No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
1	1st Feb 1917	Leah	F	Abraham	Sora	Cohen	1st Feb 1917	1st Feb 1917	1st Feb 1917	1st Feb 1917

RTIFIED to be a true copy of entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

en at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 1st day of February 1982

CAUTION—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses a falsified certificate as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution.



Opposite,
The Cable Street mural,
to commemorate the rejection
of Mosley's fascists in 1936
by the people of the East End,
was vandalised in 1982.
It was immediately restored.