BANGED UP

What I Went Through and Thought as a Political Prisoner in Austria

David Irving *recalls his four hundred days in solitary confinement in Austria's oldest jailhouse, convicted in 2005 under a 1945 Stalin-era law because of a lecture on history that he had delivered sixteen years before*

Also in German as MEINE GEFÄNGNISSE: *Erlebnisse und Gedanken in österreichischen Kerkern.*
160 pages with many photos and documents, €14,90 (or €20 incl. p. & p.) The German title is an allusion to the classical Italian work *Le mie prigioni* by Silvio Pellico about his imprisonment by the Austrians starting with Milan, then Austrian, in 1820.

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PROLOGUE

The War We Infants Had

JUST as babies have no developed fear of snakes or spiders, I don't think we children were ever old enough to be mortally afraid of war.

We were more curious about, than frightened by, the Blitz. In about 1940, when I was two, a Heinkel bomber crashed in the Bluebell Woods, and we sometimes picnicked near the wreckage. My older brother John picked over the remains and found a flying boot containing the pilot's toes.

He brought it home with visions of boundless popularity at school arising from this gruesome find; our mother had no such vision, and tossed the boot irritably away (so he tells me now). I do recall that he swore to me at the time that the Heinkel had been piloted by a Red Indian and a cowboy, and I saw no reason to disbelieve that throughout the war.

Exploring those same woods later in the war, or perhaps after, my friends and I came across a bomb dump, a shallow pit filled

with fragments of bombs, though whether they were British or enemy I don't know.

Later, the fields around our houses were decorated with garlands of tinsel foil, painted matte black; that must have been after the RAF started dropping "Window"—metal anti-radar foils—on Germany in the summer of 1943, and the Luftwaffe lifted its own foolish embargo on using this secret device.

No boy of five or six was accepted by his pals unless he knew and could identify all the Jerry bombers and fighter planes just by the sound of their engines.

Playing with the urchins from Hutton Village, we briefly stopped at the sound of airplanes duelling high over our heads; we could not see them, but we knew all about them, those Heinkels and Junkers and Dorniers, just as children now have their favourite sneakers or pop stars.

The Heinkel 111 was the workhorse of Hermann Göring's bomber fleet, it carried the Luftwaffe's heaviest load; it droned stealthily up the Thames estuary and headed northwest into Essex—the ball-bearing works of the Hoffmann Manufacturing Company was at Chelmsford. Its twin Daimler-Benz 601 engines ran slightly out of sync; the engine note rose and fell.

"Where are you? Where are you? Where are you?" it crooned, or so it seemed to the ear of Graham Greene's little murderer on the run.*

On mornings in 1944 and 1945 we stood on our tennis lawn shading our eyes and peering up at the awesome spectacle of the Flying Fortresses of the U.S. Eighth Air Force glittering high overhead, flying in perfect box formation as they circled over East Anglia to gain height and set course for Germany. Later we would see the same squadrons return, with some planes missing from the box but the rest still holding tight formation. Death meant nothing to us children.

I had a soft-plastic black model of a Stirling bomber—a Lancaster would have been worth more. We bought and bartered such

* *Ministry of Fear* (London, 1941).

things by swapping them for marbles or prize conkers. For my American and other readers unfamiliar with the English autumn schoolyard "conkers" are highly polished horse-chestnuts pierced with a short length of string, and used in one-on-one combat: one boy dangles his conker, the opponent's object is to smash it with one swing of his. Of course we experimented with various performance-enhancing chemicals like vinegar, rumoured to harden the nut to invincibility. The other, less belligerent, schoolyard game was marbles, played with dime- or quarter-sized coloured glass balls.

Recollections of the war are few but vivid: I saw a V-1 doodlebug, a flying bomb, a buzz bomb—it was called all these things—growling one night swiftly across my field of vision, from left to right, as I stood on tiptoes and looked out of our bathroom window one evening in 1944; it must have been about a mile away and running quite low.

The V-1s impacted all over the Essex countryside; one "came down" near Mountnessing, another half a mile away from us. On the way up to church we visited the crater near the Hutton village school: around the rim lay scattered the tangled wires and metal of this contraption.

As distant detonations rattled the house and windows, cracks appeared in the ceiling. It was of course nothing compared with what life in the cities must have been like; in retrospect, it is hard to imagine the anguish that a mother of four children, separated from her husband who is away at sea, must feel every time the planes or missiles were heard going over.

We children certainly had no fears. We slept at night in the rusty steel Morrison shelter—a solid table of sheet steel and angle-iron—which had been painted with a kind of pink distemper and covered with a tablecloth to serve as a table by day. If the house had collapsed, we would have been safe inside.

FROM all around the silent horizon, that summer of 1944, day and night, there emerged this deep penetrating tone, a kind of animal growl on one single frequency, and we infants huddled in the Mor-

rison shelter and waited out the five minutes of suspense which that sound pushed ahead of it.

We six-year olds knew the ritual by now. Out here in the country we heard every sound that these weapons, the V-1s, made. No sirens sounded. Their own organ note heralded their approach. We hadn't been frightened by the stories of butterfly-bombs; we had rather liked the Christmas festoons of long silver paper strips that the planes dropped over our hedges and fields; but the V-1 was different and evil.

After a minute or so, as the speeding weapon came into sight—too fast for any but the new Meteor jets to catch, and those we never saw—the full roar of its engine came, vibrating through the trees and across the cornfields, louder and deeper than the deepest double-diapason note of which our village church organ was capable.

The V-1's Argus Tube, a simple pulse-jet engine, was built in the underground Mittelwerk plant near Nordhausen, captured by US forces in 1945

If you caught sight of the evil thing, it was scudding at low altitude across the sky in a straight line, a stab of flame streaking behind its engine. Usually the robot just carried on in a straight line—it had no pilot to be daunted by ground fire; but there were times when the weapon's heart-throb suddenly cut out.

Six-year-olds don't fear death, but our mother and all around us must have prayed to the Lord each time that engine note cut out. Every one of us knew that you counted twenty-five as the missile hurtled down in its silent death-glide to the ground. Then it detonated with a sudden white flash—against which all the trees and animals and houses on the horizon were silhouetted in black, even in daytime. It was an illusion of some kind, but I always thought I heard a shower of glass follow the bang. It was that, being sliced by the broken glass, that the younger women most feared. (Government studies showed this: I wrote about it all, twenty years later, compiling the biography of the German field marshal who had sent these weapons over to us. Their one ton warhead carried an aluminized explosive that packed twice the punch of TNT.)

Other than the low jungle growl of the distant pilotless V-1s as

they scudded undismayed past the horizon, no sound recalls for me the years of World War II as does the English air raid siren.

It had its own accent. I've heard sirens since then from Illinois (tornado warning) to Austria (prison breakout) and they leave me unmoved; but the ghostly lament of the 1940s English siren, actually two tones working in incongruous tin-whistle harmony, is hard-wired into our generation's memories and like the V-1 engine it still halts my heart when I hear it in old BBC recordings.

Unforgettable too, its final dying moan—it was a long-drawn out "oh"-sound—as it then sounded the all clear: its power switched off, the siren's rotors freewheeled on, gradually slowing, the moan descending through quantumless octaves and decaying for a minute or more until its last whisper was carried away, like the spirits of the newly dead, into the darkness of our Essex countryside. And we children lay there listening.

We heard Mr. Butler the Butcher, now a blue-dungaree'd and tin-hatted air-raid warden, wheeze importantly past on his bicycle, still looking for chinks in the window blinds.

"Put out that light!"

Sirens, darkness, comfort. Carry on, England.

Political Prisoner in Austria
2005–2006

Eight Men with Glocks

Padfield, Pinkerton, Porteous, Ransome, Rawlings, Sandiford, Siebert, Sibthorpe, Taylor…

HUMAN memory is like an onion, I have decided. Once you have peeled off one skin and written down what you find, you realize the next time you look that there was another layer of forgotten memories just beneath it. I was lying awake one night in my two-foot-wide cot, alone in Cell 19, in "C" Block in the notorious "Landl"— the grim Josefstadt prison, built in the center of Vienna in 1839. I was listening to the dim sounds of the *Hausarbeiter* ("trusties") cleaning the tiled corridor on the other side of the six-inch thick strong-room-type door separating me from the outside world, and I found that I had suddenly recalled the next tranche of names in my class list at Brentwood School, nearly sixty years before.

It must have been three a.m. I had no clock or watch, or radio or television, with which to judge the time. Just blank walls, with a few snapshots of my children. I still had each schoolboy's face in my mind's eye, but the faces have also aged in my memory, so I would recognize them instantly today.

Four months had already passed since I arrived in Austria for

two days in November 11, 2005, to talk to a Vienna student body—the powerful "Olympia" *Burschenschaft*, or student fraternity—about the secret watch kept on Joel Brand's negotiations with Adolf Eichmann by British Intelligence and our codebreakers.

My trial in the country's biggest courtroom—chosen because it would have to accommodate the world's media—would begin on February 20, 2006.

Apart from three visits lasting a few hours each in 1991, 1992, and 1993 I had not been in Austria since 1989, for which latter visit I was now condemned to serve three years in jail, charged with expressing illegal opinions on World War II history.

Yes, I should have stuck to the consensus view—the kind of history that the conformist historians peddle. Everybody said that; the judge, the jury, the Austrian and German press, even my own lawyer Dr. Elmar Kresbach said that. Then I would not be languishing in jail like this. My own fault entirely.

"However," consoled Kresbach, creasing his face into an oily Viennese-lawyer smile, and referring to the blanket coverage he had won for himself in the international press, and even in the less free world like China, North Korea, Iran and Russia, "you are now undeniably a martyr."

"That was not my intention," I said bitterly. "I just wanted to speak to those students and go home."

I HAD taken Jessica, 11, to the Saint James's Park tube station for school before setting out for Heathrow airport in my rental car. Did I suspect that many moons would pass before I saw her and Bente again? I wrote as much in my diary; I prudently left that in London, with my laptop, before flying over to Basle in western Switzerland.

From the airport I phoned my good friend the playwright Rolf Hochhuth, but he was in Berlin, so dinner with him was out. He had just left Basle after his wife's death, he now said. He sounded very cast down, and had not even received my letter.

In another rented car I drove east all night through Zürich and into Austria. I had decided not to risk flying direct to Vienna. Many countries in western Europe are police states now, with state po-

lice—*Staatspolizei*, which operate broadly like the Gestapo with which we historians are familiar.

After covering nine hundred kilometers I was in Vienna by eight a.m. As soon as it was decent, I phoned Christopher V., my student host, from the West railroad station.

"Rendezvous A," I said, without identifying myself. "One hour from now."

We had prearranged the details six months earlier. Security like this was necessary. The last time I spoke in Vienna, on November 6, 1989, the far Left organisations had brought five thousand demonstrators out into the capital's streets, and five hundred riot police had had to put a ring of steel around the big Park Hotel.

The rendezvous was inside the ticket hall. It was not ideal; the hall was 500 yards long, but it had a long balcony where I positioned myself looking for any signs of trouble—the odd furled banner, or any gathering of the unwashed. I knew what signs to look for. Five minutes after the hour I strolled outside to check whether anybody was prowling round the car.

A young student in his twenties emerged from the station and we made eye contact. I nodded with my head towards the car and we drove off down the Ring, with him at the wheel. I wanted to check him out before we went further. "Let's get a coffee at the Café Landtmann," I suggested, in a fit of nostalgia.

That was where I was arrested at a press conference on the orders of Minister of the Interior Karl Blecha on June 26, 1984. It cost him dear; we were awarded heavy damages. It was like yesterday.

"You're speaking at six," the student said. I needed sleep. He agreed that I could put my head down at the *Burschenschaft* building for three or four hours first.

Still half suspecting that the function might not take place, I asked him to grab a snapshot under the Landtmann's canopy as proof that I was in Vienna. It would certainly irritate some folks back in London. The Board of Deputies of British Jews had written in June 1992 to the Austrian government, livid at hearing of a recent visit by me to the country, and demanding my immediate arrest the next time. Some "Britons"!

I had obtained a copy of their letter during a court action against the Prime Minister of Australia, no less.

Strange, the things that turn out to have been going on all along unseen, unheard—like the termites gnawing at the woodwork of a rotten building. Not that they are an International Conspiracy of course, they have always denied that. They are the great hypocrisy-deniers.

FINISHING his lemon tea at the Landtmann, Christopher, a law (*Iura*) student, picked up his cell phone—what they call a "handy" here, in that German mania for inappropriate English—and said: "I'll tell them you'll be over for a nap right away."

I was uneasy. *Mensch*, I thought, phoning? On a mobile? *Das kann nicht gut gehen*. That spells trouble.

He expected two or three hundred to come, he said.

"Are you sure it is secure?" I asked, and he nodded dismissively, saying: "Our folks don't talk."

Perhaps twenty-five minutes passed between his phone call and our reaching the building.

We parked two blocks away, behind it. Instinct made me think ahead. "Is there a rear exit?" I asked. He shook his head. Not good. Still visualizing what could go wrong, I slipped him the car keys: "If we get separated, you drive off," I said, anticipating possible Red violence and costly damage to the car. "And I'll phone you later."

We turned the last corner, and then it happened. I saw three burly goons peel off the wall on the other side of the otherwise empty street across from the entrance. Phrases from Raymond Chandler skidded through my brain. What would Philip Marlowe have done?

In their early forties, they were stubble-faced and wearing weatherproof jackets—they were hard to place. There was something about them that reminded me of the thugs with baseball bats who smashed my Chicago dinner in September 2000; my fifty guests had included five professors from DePaul University - one thug smashed a chair into my face, other guests were cut by flying glass. After a moment's hesitation, they crossed the street diago-

nally towards us.

Ignoring them, we walked right through them. "*Mahlzeit*," I nodded: Good afternoon. "Let's drop into that *Kneipe*," I murmured to the student—the bar on the next corner.

"Too late," he said, dropping the car keys furtively back into my hand. "They're following. I recognize one. *Staatspolizei*!"

I doubted it. How could he know the Stapo by sight?

This was no time for "The Long Goodbye." We split at the corner. Briefly out of sight of the goons, I quickened my pace. The Ford Focus was round the next corner. One of the men was following me, a hundred yards behind; two were pursuing Christopher.

Round the final corner I speeded up again, walking briskly in the middle of the street, not visibly aiming for anything. I pressed the remote, and heard the soft answering clunk of the car doors unlocking. I ripped open the front right hand door and dropped into the seat, and locked the door. The goon was ninety yards away, and he had begun to trot. Supposing he took out a gun?

My hands reached for the steering column—but the wheel wasn't there. It was not a British car. I was on the wrong side. Jeez, you're getting senile, perhaps just exhausted. Drive all night, and this is what happens. Your brain clouds over.

Impossible to climb across. Fifty yards away the man broke into a run. I leapt out, and hurled myself into the other side, displaying as much nonchalance as I could, commensurate with the urgency of the moment, slammed and locked the doors. The engine started first time, the man was twenty yards off, then ten, but with wheels skidding in the gravel I was already moving.

I caught a glimpse of him in the mirror, and what I saw was not good. He had a pad in his hand, and he was writing. So he was *Staatspolizei*, as Christopher had said.

An Israeli newspaperman later learned from his contacts that a senior, older, member of the "Olympia" had tipped off the police—a dueling offense if ever there was one.

I WAS on the run from their secret police, and this was Vienna. It was not a happy moment. I am a professional, and I have never let

down an audience yet.

In the prison yard the old hands told me, "Yer should've dumped the car right then, Dave."

Easily said. In theory, I could indeed have phoned Sixt and told them where their car was. In practice, I had only forty euros on me, fifty dollars; the students owed me a lot of expenses, but had not had time to pay; forty, fifty would not have got me far.

So I stuck with the car, and it was travelling fast. I took the next four corners on two wheels. It should be easy to submerge in Vienna. I could not get this zither music out of my head. The Harry Lime Theme. I wanted to put distance between myself and those burly gentlemen, because in this scenario they were definitely not the Good Guys.

I parked back at the rendezvous point, and cautiously phoned Christopher. "Shall we meet in an hour's time," I suggested, "at that place you took the photo?"

"I don't think that would be advisable," he muttered.

"You can't speak?"

"No."

He was in *Staatspolizei* custody? It puzzled me that they had left him his mobile, his handy. The more I thought about it, the more that inappropriate name irritated me. Handy? Handy for whom?

HOME, therefore, and don't spare the horses. London via Basle, and calling at no stations in between. I assumed that all routes due west out of Vienna would be watched, if they were really looking out for me. It still seemed hard to believe, after sixteen years. After all, these are the much vaunted "free democracies".

I bought a map book, checked the freeways and decided I could still get back to Basle in time for my return flight next evening if I drove nonstop south, then west across Italy, and then north, adding perhaps 1,000 kilometers to the normally 900 kilometer journey.

It was time for the Third Man to make his final getaway—from Austria's new "democratic" *Stapo*. I waited until darkness fell and the Ring was choked with nose-to-tail rush-hour traffic; I figured I could just make it. I set out down the A2, the southern freeway,

toward Italy. I was glad I carried no mobile phone myself; they now all have built-in GPS chips, the Global Positioning System, as an aid—to the authorities.

I gassed up, and put the metal-cased pocket tape recorder on the seat next to me, so I could dictate over the next few hours. As the lights of Vienna fell behind me, the Harry Lime Theme began to fade too.

After an hour or so my gaze fell on the instrument panel.

"YOU ARE ON THE A2, 140 KM SOUTH OF VIENNA," the satellite (GPS) navigation screen told me—and whom else, I suddenly wondered. There seemed to be no way to switch off the treacherous instrument. But it was a Swiss car, I reasoned, and the *Stapo* were Austrians.

After another hour I settled down to a steady 110 km per hour, and there was now a police car some way in front. It obviously was not chasing. After another hour, a second police car showed up in my rear-view mirror, and I was not so sure.

They both maintained my exact speed, no matter how I modestly slowed or accelerated. Using the standard "box" manœuvre—a simple "please" would have sufficed—they suddenly forced me off the freeway at speed, and halted me on the hard shoulder in a cloud of dust and gravel.

As the other traffic sped past inches away in the darkness, eight uniformed cops jumped out and began running towards me, shouting hysterically.

I do so hate unpleasantness. I reached for my tape recorder. It glinted on the passenger seat next to me. I saw that the running cops thumping on the Ford's hood and doors were all carrying drawn automatics, nine-millimeter Glocks, and they were actually pointing them at my head.

It was a most uncivil sensation. I concluded that it might be unrewarding to point something metallic at them after all. The recorder slipped from my nerveless fingers—that's how Raymond Chandler would have put it.

It was now evident to me that I would not be seeing London, Bente, and Jessica any time soon after all.

By Krokodil to Vienna

FOR a week I was held in Jakomini jail, one of two prisons in Graz, in southern Austria. One, Karlau, is well-spoken of by veteran prisoners—who compare prison experiences in the prison yard as if they were resort hotels; the other, Jakomini, is not.

The initial pretence used for stopping me—the car was "reported stolen"—was smoothly replaced by offences I was alleged to have committed in 1989, sixteen years earlier, against Austria's unique Banning Law, enacted during the post-war Soviet occupation; the law is also called NS-*Wiederbetätigung* (Nazi Reactivation). The *Staatspolizei* had issued a warrant against me in 1989 under section 3(*g*) of the Act.

The law makes it an offence to challenge established history on the Holocaust and Nazi Germany; its section 3(*h*) allows sentences of up to twenty years in jail, and in some cases—repeat offenders—life imprisonment. It is a very elastic law; in its sixty years of enforcement, more than two thousand terms have been deemed to come within its clutch, including even harmless words like "system" (*e.g.*, referring to a current government as a "System Regime").

Since there is little prospect of a Nazi movement re-emerging now, it is widely used to harass political opponents.

The prison staff at Jakomini could not have been more embarrassed at their new arrival. It took a day or two for the penny to drop.

On the second or third day several officers knocked on my cell door (yes, they knocked on a cell door), unlocked it, and brought in my books from their homes for me to autograph. I have sold probably two million books in Germany and Austria, including 67,000 hardback copies of *Rommel* (Hoffmann & Campe) alone; it was serialised in *Der Spiegel* for five weeks.

Several of my books were in the prison library—I remember seeing *Hitler's Krieg—Die Siege* (Herbig Verlag), and *Schlacht im Eismeer* (Bertelsmann). On the third or fourth day a delegation of half a dozen senior officers brought in all four of the prison's copies of books written by me and invited me to sign them too.

The justice system was less accommodating. My requests to speak to a lawyer or to Bente in London were fruitless. Six weeks or more would pass before I could phone my family from Vienna. The illegality of this was obvious.

I remained philosophical. It was much harder on Bente. In London, they feared I was dead; when I did not return from Vienna on time, she and her friends phoned the embassies, the police, the hospitals, the mortuaries, the car hire firms; but nobody knew what had happened to me. Unable to contact me to access bank accounts or use key system-passwords, she lost our home and possessions. *Nacht und Nebel* was the system, as invented by Reinhard Heydrich and his police. One vanished, as though in Night and Fog.

Three times a day the hatch in the cell door was banged open, and five slices of brown rye bread were stacked onto a plate; nothing else. A bowl of soup came at midday, together with a mug of pink fruit-tea which—being an Englishman—I sluiced straight down the toilet. I did not trust the tap-water enough to drink it, but I was still violently sick.h

My initial room-mate, a Romanian telephone-thief—now I knew why it had taken so long to find a working telephone in Vi-

enna the morning I arrived—was in a poor psychiatric state. He begged me in Spanish to write a letter in German warning that he was contemplating suicide, and he was not joking.

I took three Captain Hornblower books from the library, and began a year-long reading campaign, devouring a hundred books or more, since I had no radio or TV or newspapers for six months.

I caught up on all the books I should have read a lifetime ago: *Hornblower in the West Indies*—now I could see what had intoxicated Winston Churchill about this fictional navy hero. I discovered the works of P. G. Wodehouse and Graham Greene.

As books ran out, I read *The Collected Works of Sherlock Holmes* twice. I set myself the task of counting how often Holmes actually uttered the famous catchphrase, "Elementary, my dear Watson," to his long-suffering partner Dr. Watson. The surprising answer: not once, the phrase must have grown up elsewhere. Even the word *elementary* occurs only once, as a stray adjective.

Evidently we cannot believe all that we are told, I decided. But whom could I tell of these discoveries?

The Romanian had been snatched away as a suicide risk, I was alone; after he had been taken away, two hours later, I found in his empty locker a knotted "rope" of torn sheets, with a noose he had fashioned at one end. I had helped him just in time.

Welcome to Jakomini jail, southern Austria: suicide was the only other way out, and I had often wondered what drove men to do that. In Vienna's jail, there were quite a few suicides, it turned out, though the newspapers were not told: two prisoners hanged themselves in our block in the last two weeks I was there, probably newcomers, because it is in the first two weeks that despair turns to desperation. The whole block was locked down all day without exercise, so that nobody would learn what had happened.

"Don't do it, Dave," urged Bernhard rather superfluously, an armed car hijacker—he had got seven years, because his accomplice, a Jugo, was carrying a gun—the day I was transferred back to Vienna. "Nobody is impressed, and they (the screws, I mean) just laugh among themselves afterwards."

I had no intention of doing it. I reasoned to myself that the

prison staff were kindly shutting the whole outside world out for me; I thanked them pointedly each time they closed the door, and sometimes if they lingered I asked them if they would be so good as to oblige. I was in control.

Others might go mad, but I would not: many already were mad, and visibly belonged in a mental institution, not jail.

One old man displayed his madness by walking clockwise round the yard—in prison, all prisoners walk anti-clockwise; or he stood in a corner, head bowed like a small boy being punished; or he walked around stooping and clawing up sodden fag-ends from the muddy ground.

I regarded this whole new world, this submerged world, this world behind strong-room doors and steel bars, in the same way that Jacques Cousteau would have regarded a new ocean bed.

I decided I would spend the months, perhaps even years, exploring this microcosm and recording every detail of the fauna I encountered (of flora there were none: no—once I did find a dandelion in the yard, and I grabbed it before it was trampled by the shuffling crowd of eastern European and Balkan prisoners, and I mailed it to a lady in Hungary who had come to visit me).

"You see them all in the papers when you're outside," philosophised Bernhard, an otherwise likeable Austrian. "But only for a few weeks: the murderers, bank robbers, hijackers, dealers. Then they're on trial, and they disappear—you don't hear nothing about them any more."

He paused significantly, rolling yet another disgusting cigarette, then lowered his voice, overwhelmed by the drama of it all: "They're all here, Dave. They're here!"

FORTUNATELY the British Consul had sent over a girl staffer to visit me in Jakomini. Embassies are very limited in what they are permitted to do, but I asked her to phone Bente.

"What's the message?"

"Tell her I think Copenhagen would be a good idea."

Bente is Danish (and so is my fifth daughter, born in London: the Pakistan-born official at the British Passport Office refused to

allow her a British passport—another weird bit of chicanery).

"Copenhagen?" asked the girl, raising a diplomatic eyebrow. It seemed an odd message.

"Copenhagen," I repeated. "She's Danish." I did not explain.

COPENHAGEN was the codeword we had arranged; Bente was to watch for it. However it was used—if I said it to a journalist, or on TV, or on a postcard message, it meant I had been arrested and was unable to contact her, and she was to take certain steps. Just like the BBC's "Verlaine" messages to the French Resistance before the Normandy landings.

Before every recent speaking trip to the Continent, as we English still call Europe, to Denmark, Hungary, Greece and elsewhere, we had actually prepared a detailed website announcement of my "arrest", just in case it should transpire. Such is the decline of freedom in the European Union now.

Hearing the codeword COPENHAGEN Bente and Jessica—who at eleven was the more computer-savvy of the two—at once uploaded the page to the Internet and most every newspaper in the world carried the news. The Fog had lifted, but the Night was still there.

I HAD a visitor from Klagenfurt a few days later, an elegant Austrian cripple in her sixties whom I had last seen as a demure twenty-year old, sharing a train journey across France. Her grown up son, touring China with the Berlin Philharmonic, had read of this violation of human rights in a Chinese newspaper.

Austria had actually hoped to conceal the fact of my arrest until that moment. The Government now had to admit that yes, the British historian was being held in one of their jails, though no charges had yet been brought.

Der Spiegel and other magazines and newspapers suggested that I had expected to be arrested, that I had been out to provoke; they might see this COPENHAGEN preparation was proof.

In fact I was always steeled for the worst: I was a Boy Scout in my youth, and BE PREPARED was on our belt-buckle, just as some Germans, including Günter Grass as it now turns out, had MEINE

EHRE HEISST TREUE on theirs.

To illustrate this, let me give a parallel example: in the earlier years of my marriage, which lasted twenty years, we travelled from England to Germany by the North Sea ferry, because we could not afford to fly. I secretly took a two-meter length of cord with me, in case the ferry sank: then I could tie our lifejackets together, and we would not drift apart. I never *expected* the ferry to sink, but I was prepared. (I never told my wife. I sometimes wondered whether she might have taken a pair of scissors if I had). This was many years before the *Herald of Free Enterprise* Channel ferry disaster of March 1987 which took so many lives.

AFTER a week of solitude in a four-man cell at Jakomini—freshly repainted, as a prisoner had set it on fire two weeks before—I was interrogated over a video link by a "judge" in Vienna. He appeared on the screen wearing a T-shirt and jeans, and was younger than my local newspaper boy. It was all a farce, a done deal, as I told him, and the outcome was foregone. I was not to be released. They decided that I should be transferred on Thursday back to Vienna.

The future tailed off into an uncertain darkness now. On Thursday forty of us were loaded in handcuffs into a dark green, windowless, prison bus. Seasoned prisoners called it the *Krokodil*. The journey took ten hours as we zigzagged across the country, picking up and depositing prisoners at jails around the country. There were ten locked cells in the *Krokodil*. We sat four to a cell with interlocking knees, in a space smaller than an airplane toilet, blasted by air that was alternately icy cold and volcano-hot. My travel companions were two murderers and a multiple rapist. I did not speak; in rail compartments we English never do. It is part of being English.

But I listened. The veterans knew all about our transport's history—the *Krokodil* had been bought from Germany, where it had been declared illegal and unsafe because of the holocaust that would occur if it caught fire or ran off the road. Only the officers would get out alive.

But then mostly everything about the Austrian prison system is illegal under European Union legislation: the Josefstadt prison

in Vienna pays a substantial daily fine to Europe because it is overcrowded, with over 1,400 prisoners instead of 800; the windows are not large enough; there is illegal fine-mesh wire netting outside the window bars; there is illegal razor wire in the yards; the exercise yards are too tiny; the prisoners still sleep in bunk beds (which Europe has banned in jails); remand prisoners get to shower only twice a week; the cement floors of each cell are covered with toxic black paint; and there are half a dozen other infractions.

The thugs in the yard complained indignantly to each other about all this lawbreaking, which is how I know about it.

LONG after midnight the *Krokodil* drove into the covered reception yard of the Josefstadt prison in Vienna. The older hands told me this was right in the heart of the capital, next to the City Hall, but there was not a sound that would confirm this. No traffic noises, birdsong, planes, or sirens penetrated its walls. After a few months it was easy to believe we were nowhere near Vienna, just as it is hard to accept that the museums and Harrods are up above, as your underground train passes through South Kensington and Knightsbridge stations.

A few days later I was escorted before the custodial judge, a Dr. Seda. He had a falsetto voice of such a high pitch that the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* made fun of it in its opening words of a report on my arrest. To use Graham Greene's words, "He was like a Pekinese who has been insulted by an Alsatian."

His voice rose to an indignant squeak when I replied in frank terms to his more inane questions during this interrogation. He asked what lecture I had planned to deliver to the students in Vienna. I replied, "The 1944 financial dealings between the Hungarian Jewish leader Joel Brand and Adolf Eichmann to save Jews from Auschwitz, as seen by the British decode service."*

"You're doing it again," trilled Dr. Seda, shocked to the core; and then one full octave higher: "*Wiederbetätigung*! Reactivation!"

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* *Die finanziellen Verhandlungen 1944 zwischen dem ungarischen Judenführer Joel Brand und Adolf Eichmann zur Rettung der ungarischen Juden vor Auschwitz, im Spiegel des britischen Entzifferungsdienstes.*

Baffled, I was led back to Cell 19.

For many weeks I brooded on where the Pottersman Factor fitted into all this. Apart from the first Glock-toting police officers who had been informed I was a car thief, the Austrian prison officers could not have been friendlier. As word spread round the Josefstadt jail on who I was, I received a stream of uniformed, if not official, visitors. Jailers brought me packets of good-quality coffee or gifts. At Christmas, one officer unlocked my cell, invited me to his room, and gave me a glass of whisky—"This remains strictly between us, Mr. Irving."

The enemy—above all the Greens—erupted with fury about my "Nazi" books being in the prison libraries, over a hundred and twenty as it turned out; the Minister of Justice, a Frau *Magister* Karin Gastinger, assured Parliament that all my books had now been withdrawn. They were burned soon after. This would surely convince the world that modern Austria was not a Nazi state.

When I was told that this was reported in the newspapers, I remembered the passport barracks of the People's Police inside Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin, through which I trekked on my visits to Potsdam or Köpenick in the then Soviet Zone of Germany in the 1970s and 1980s: "Where they burn books, they finish by burning people," ran the quotation from Heinrich Heine in large letters along the inside wall of the building.

ON the morning after my arrival in Vienna, I was summoned upstairs to the lawyers' visiting rooms. I had sent a letter to Dr. Herbert Schaller, who had acted for me in the great Munich battles of 1989–1993, where Germany had used against me its equally oppressive and ill-named law against "Defaming the Memory of the Dead". These laws for the suppression of free speech still operate in Germany, and if I were to set out here the allegations against me, and our corresponding defence, I would probably be arrested all over again.

It is a ticklish subject. By way of proof of this, I might mention that Dr. Schaller is representing another accused in Mannheim, Germany on the same account, even as I write; and Schaller, the

attorney, has been threatened by the Judge with arrest and imprisonment if he even makes certain written submissions to, or asks certain questions of, the Court.

Suffice it to say that in a 1990 lecture I had said that a particular building in Poland that was being (and still is) shown to tourists was not a genuine wartime construction; that in January 1993 I was fined 30,000 Deutschmarks, a lot of money in those days, for saying this; and that in the following November I was banned permanently from setting foot on German soil; and that in January 1995 the Polish government admitted officially that the building concerned was in fact built three years after World War II ended.

The Munich lawyer who was to act for me that day in January 1993, Klaus Göbel, arrived at court but only to show me a letter he had received from the city's professional attorneys' body, the *Anwaltskammer*, that morning, threatening him with instant dismissal from the bar if he represented me. In England and the United States, that would be unthinkable.

In Vienna now, 2005, I found that Schaller had never received my letter; evidently it had been intercepted by the Austrian justice authorities and blocked. He had come of his own accord, having read in the newspapers of my arrest—one positive result of our Operation Copenhagen. I hired him on the spot. Although now eighty-three years, he was fit, active, and above all an expert on these political cases.

Moments later, I made a big, big mistake. As I stepped out of the interview room I was accosted by another lawyer, Dr. Elmar Kresbach, a forty-six year old Viennese society-lawyer. He had thick, long, wavy hair, a lean face and an engaging manner, with a thick Viennese dialect which I often found very difficult to understand. Luring me into another interview room, he persuaded me within ten minutes that Schaller was the wrong choice: he would be vilified as a right-winger, it could only damage me in Court: the "Nazi historian with the Nazi attorney", was how he charmingly put it.

He himself on the other hand was on first-name terms with the country's leading journalists—he mentioned several to me—and it was the support of the media I now needed. He was a media lawyer,

he said. That made a lot of sense, and I hired him too.

Then came the bombshell. Although the new lawyer admitted that Schaller was far better informed on the Banning Law than he, and had handled innumerable cases, he refused to sit at the same table as him or even to listen to, let alone accept, advice from him.

It became disturbingly evident over the next weeks that Kresbach himself was a left-winger, and would represent me purely for the huge international publicity it would bring him and his law office. When I mentioned his name soon after to the Social Services female in the prison—they had asked me who was acting for me—she grimaced eloquently, bit her lip, and said nothing; but that was after I had taken the decision.

It was an awful decision. Kresbach assured me that he knew the judges personally, and would arrange a deal behind the scenes (that was a lie). Schaller, he said, could never do that. I withdrew the formal instructions from Dr. Schaller—he took it like the gentleman that he is—and I had a whole year to regret the decision after that.

Later I met several other prisoners in the yard—we were all in remand custody, which is far more oppressive than convict prison—who had also been represented by Kresbach and who had fired him for incompetence or sloppiness. Zoran, a major cocaine dealer from Serbia, had parted with 80,000 euros for his defence, and still got thirteen years. "He did nothing for me," shouted Zoran, who later did my haircuts, one millimeter all over, convict-style. "Nothing! Just pleaded in mitigation—no defence whatever."

An indictment was served on me in my cell, listing the allegations, all under section *3(g)*. It struck me as odd that as the months passed before the trial, which was soon set down for February 20, 2006, and although Kresbach had me brought up to the interview rooms three or four times a week, it was just for chats or to answer questions which he relayed to me from the media—he did not seem to be seriously preparing any defence. After a while I asked him how I would be pleading: He replied, Guilty of course, because, "You are guilty, after all."

I expressed mild dismay. That's the way things are done here, he added: you plead guilty and then they will release you. It had all

been agreed. Behind the scenes. With the judge.

I assumed he knew what he was doing; after all, he did have those secret backdoor contacts with the Judge appointed to the case, Dr. Peter Liebetreu, or so he told me. (I still saw no reason for gloom. I toyed with the idea of inquiring in Court, "*Euer Ehre heisst Liebetreu?*" but decided it would not advance my cause.)

The media coverage was good, that I will admit; the international press published editorials which, while not all supporting me personally, expressed dismay at this assault on free speech.

The Italian newspapers, particularly Berlusconi's, went overboard with their contempt of Austria, and I saw newspaper photographs of a major championship football match in northern Italy at which a section of the crowd unfurled a banner reading IRVING LIBERO for the television cameras.

Der Spiegel ran a fine five-page article which attracted angry letters from my opponents, including Hungarian writer Paul Lendvai, who screeched that my book *Uprising** was anti-Semitic (my book mentioned that all the Hungarian communist monsters like Kun, Revai, Farkas, Gerö, and Rakösi were Jewish; as is Lendvai himself).

AFTER a while the visits to the interview rooms grew quite irksome. I was routinely held in what I called a holding tank for an hour before Dr. Kresbach arrived, and another hour or longer in a second such tank after he left. The walls were covered with graffiti, some very sad. The other prisoners were all chain smokers (I have never touched the stuff).

Once I was shown into the holding tank, and it contained only fifteen very disgruntled Blacks (twenty-five percent of the prisoners were from Africa, nearly all for drug dealing, some for murder or rape).

I hesitated as the steel door behind me slammed shut, and said: "Sorry, I think there's been a mistake. Where's the waiting room for Whites!"

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* *Uprising* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1981).

They bellowed with laughter. It's the kind of joke that needs split-second timing, and you can only risk in certain circumstances.

AT two-thirty pm, after supper had been brought round, the guards all went off duty, leaving only a skeleton staff of three or four for the whole building. Then the "jungle" began, as the prisoners clung like spiders to their window bars, and screamed across the yards to their accomplices, getting their stories straight for the Judge—in thirty-nine different European and African languages.

The cacophony went on until past midnight. It always degenerated into Black-and-White taunting—"*Afrika gut, Euro Scheisse*!" and "*Afrika! Banana*!" were among the more cerebral rival efforts. I suppose I could have shut the windows—they were soundproof—but after exercising some days outside in winter at minus 16 degrees, the heat in the summer months became intense.

Once I heard roars of laughter and saw a single banana being lowered on a string from one floor and dangled just out of reach of the African cells below. Bananas now will always remind me of Josefstadt jail. If you bought them from the canteen, they always arrived, like most everything else, brown and beyond their sell-by date.

In the exercise hour in the little yard, the Africans clustered around me, asking for help, yammering in Spanish, French, or English, or whatever other tongues we could communicate in (I was the only Englishman in the building for fourteen months). I made good friends with one, Momo (Momodou), a youngster with Afro dreadlocks, from Gambia; it was poor etiquette to ask the other's offence, and I don't recall that I ever found out his. The really bad ones lied about the reason anyway.

I bought extra coffee from my weekly canteen allowance, for the newcomers who had none. They asked me to translate their letters to the judge into German; I did so, but secretly I knew they had little hope. They were stuck inside the machine. One Black had been on remand here for seven years, and they had lost all his files. Given the chance, they would all have returned to Africa the next

day; they had all been lured to Europe under false prospects and pretences.

AFTER a few weeks I was allowed to see a sanitised copy of the police file on my arrest, now called the court file. It was inches thick, and went back sixteen years to 1989, when I had last toured Austria. Phone intercepts and other intelligence materials had been removed. There had also been an internal police inquiry into the fact that Austrian police officials who attended my talks at Leoben and Vienna—at our request—had both reported that I had said nothing that broke the law. These inquiry documents were missing from the copy supplied to me.

The public prosecutors, the *Staatsanwaltschaft* in Leoben and in Kaufbeuren in Germany where I also talked on that 1989 tour, both reported that they had seen no grounds to prosecute me. The top items in the file were laborious and worryingly inaccurate transcripts of my talks in Leoben (November 5, 1989) and Vienna (November 6), received by the *Staatspolizei* authorities in late November and early 1990. The Socialist Student Society in Leoben University had zealously provided to the *Stapo* their own tapes of my talks to supplement the police officials' recordings.

Vienna's police chief Günther Bögl had issued the now faded, yellowing arrest warrant on the evening of November 8, 1989—the very day before the Berlin Wall came down, an ironic counterpoint in European freedoms. His panic was written all across the document—the press that morning was reporting that Jewish and Communist bodies were calling for his head, for having failed to silence me completely in Vienna on the sixth.

Turning the page I came to the pivotal document that led to Bögl's warrant. The formal *Anzeige*, the demand for my arrest and prosecution, had been addressed to Bögl on the seventh by a Jewish and Communist-front organisation, the Document Center of the Austrian Resistance.* Bögl had received this letter at midday on the eighth.

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* *Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstands.*

There were some familiar names on its letterhead, including Professor Erika Weinzierl, "doyenne" of Austria's historians, according to the press; Erika had the kind of ineffable looks that could stop a ding-ding-ding full-right-up Number 15 London bus charging pell-mell down Pall Mall; indeed to stop a whole fleet of them.

The Archive's Honorary President was Professor A. Maleta. It is not an unusual name: Maleta is not Rumpelstiltskin. Still, I confess I did wonder if this could be the same Professor A. Maleta who had sworn affidavits many years ago testifying that he had personally seen homicidal gas chambers in operation at Dachau, Heinrich Himmler's first concentration camp? The German Government has long ago dismissed that particular piece of nonsense history; there was no such installation at Dachau. A lot of people served time because of Maleta's convenient little perjury.

Deeper in this public file I came across even uglier stuff, including letters from the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde* of Austria: Their chief executive Peter Grosz* was applying for a police permit to demonstrate outside my Vienna lecture in the Park Hotel on November 6, 1989, with a hate-filled coalition of three to five thousand like-minded folks: the rent-a-crowd scum of Vienna would all be there, and Grosz appended a battle-order of participating bodies.

There was something about this "Israelite Cultural Community," the equivalent of our own respected Board of Deputies of British Jews, that reminded me of that "Coalition for Human Dignity" in Oregon, whom I call the mob-spitters, because that was what they did outside my meetings there. Perhaps it was the news clipping I found in this police file, reporting that Grosz, in his loudspeaker address to the scummy multitudes, had called on them to use *Gewaltmassnahmen*, violence, if necessary to stop me lecturing.

We evidently came from different cultural backgrounds.

My attorney Dr. Herbert Schaller had issued an immediate *Anzeige* against Grosz alleging criminal incitement to violence, but it was soon choked off in the conduits of Austrian justice.

* As fortune had it, my cell neighbour for a time was Peter-Paul Grosz, a major Viennese cocaine dealer; presumably no relation.

The Trademark Pen

GOTCHA!—These Lilliputian swarms, Pottersman's people, these international midgets with their buckets and ladders and threads, must have thought that they had finally got me strung down.

I was the only Englishman in an overcrowded Austrian prison built in 1839. Until 1966 all Austria's condemned men had been transferred here for their brief meeting with their hangman.

Dr. Herbert Schaller, who would later act for me after all, had narrowly avoided the duty of witnessing one 1949 execution, though he could not duck his duties as court reporter the day before, when the three men—senior army and Brownshirt-officers sentenced now to death for having formed a court martial trying deserters in Vienna in April 1945—were informed that their appeal had been rejected.

Execution here was not by hanging as we British know it, with a six-foot drop that instantly breaks the neck; the Vienna hangman stood behind his hooded victim, ready to slip on the noose; the doomed man was pushed off a low wooden block, and the hangman bore down on his shoulders with crossed arms until he was dead by strangulation, a fearsome end for any man or woman.

During the four months before the trial, Lawyer Dr. Elmar

Kresbach several times applied for bail, although I advised against: he seemed obsessed with the idea; he pleaded with me to get wealthy American friends to transfer, say, fifty thousand dollars to his account, and said that it made "tactical sense". I would have to surrender my passport of course.

I bowed to his legal expertise, but pointed out that if bail were allowed, those dollars would have to be converted to euros, and back again to dollars at the end, which would see me ten thousand dollars out of pocket in exchange-rate losses; that I would have to live in a Vienna hotel for the months before the trial, and find money for food and expenses as well. It made no sense at all.

I could not understand why Kresbach kept pressing for the money, and I made no attempt to raise the bail; as the Public Prosecutor, Michael Klackl, rightly objected there would be little to stop me returning to England, from where, as a purely political offender, they could not extradite me.

Kresbach meanwhile lined up the German and Austrian media to his own liking; perhaps they were paying him, I don't know. He informed me that scores of photographers would cover the actual trial, which rather baffled me, as cameras are strictly forbidden in all British courts, and I wondered what effect this pandemonium would have on a jury.

Vienna's Grand Courtroom had been chosen for the trial because it was the largest in Austria and would hold two hundred spectators. Besides, it was part of the same jailhouse complex. I would not have far to walk from Cell 19. The presiding judge would be *Magister* Peter Liebetreu.

Since the government now realised, too late, that it had made an international spectacle of itself by my arrest—I called it kidnapping—it would have to find room for over sixty journalists; it also decided to allow in newspaper and television cameras for the first time in twenty years.

Later, I saw a letter written by Judge Liebetreu to the secret police authorities (now renamed Regional Agency for the Protection of the Constitution and Combating Terrorism—*Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung*), displaying real

panic about the mounting international interest.

Dated February 2, 2006, eighteen days before the trial, the letter requested the "prompt introduction and application of appropriate security measures" for guarding the courtroom and securing the criminal trial itself:

> Media interest in this trial is already enormously large. Countless television teams and journalists, mainly foreign, in fact from around the entire world, have announced their coming, mainly via the Internet.
>
> In consultation with me the President of the Central Criminal Court, Vienna, Dr. Ulrike Psenner has on this occasion waived the current ban on filming and photography for the Grand Jury Courtroom, so that before the trial begins we must expect a corresponding onslaught by camera teams and news photographers, who will all thereafter have to be cleared from the courtroom in order not to delay the start of the main proceedings too long.
>
> Particularly with this trial it is especially difficult to assess the special interest of individual members of the audience or what definite "camp" they may belong to. The fact is that the prisoner has been receiving hundreds of letters and cards every month from all over the world, which are to be counted without exception as fan mail. We cannot even begin to estimate how far this interest in the various camps will translate into personal attendance at the trial.
>
> For this reason, we request the transmittal of the above request with special urgency coupled with a plea for contact to be established, as various points ought to be clarified well in advance. For example, whether there should be an additional entrance—security check, coupled perhaps with procuring the personal ID details of every single member of the public—and whether the gallery to the Grand Jury Courtroom ought not in fact to be left closed to the public for better security and surveillance operations.
>
> At the very least, taking into account the innumerable pages on the Internet on the subject of the trial—at times the keyword "David Irving" yielded over 9 million hits (URLs) every day—we may in any case be faced with operations to disrupt during and before the main trial.

So the letters arriving were entirely in favour, "fan mail". Shut away

in my cell with no access to radio, television, or newspapers, and receiving no mail at all, I was unaware of all this media interest.

Kresbach informed me that Judge Liebetreu had indicated that if I "played along" I would be given a sentence which would result in my immediate release. I believed him. My friends contacted the major television programmes in London. The biggest, BBC's *Newsnight*—hosted by tough commentator Jeremy Paxman—offered to fly me back to London first-class straight after my release that afternoon, in return for an exclusive live broadcast.

Kresbach informed me that I would be handcuffed outside the courtroom and ritually led in—rather like what the Americans call the "perp. walk." He offered to speak to "his friend," the judge, about whether the manacles were really necessary, but I demurred. What had been good for Canada in 1992—the pen-and-handcuffs image—would make the point here too. I had already extracted a copy of my flagship work, *Hitler's War*, from my sealed property three weeks before.

Two days before the trial, I began practicing in front of the cracked mirror in my wet-room—as the toilet space was called—on how to manipulate the heavy volume and open fountain pen in my manacled hands, so that my fingers did not obscure either the title or the late Führer's likeness. It was more difficult than it sounds.

on the morning of the trial, February 20, 2006, I put on the blazer Bente had posted to me some weeks earlier, polished my black Church's shoes on a prison towel, and waited.

An escort squad fetched me from the cell to a room where I was body-searched and handcuffed. The Mont Blanc pen was handed back to me, and *Hitler's War* too when I explained it was "evidence". A phone card was confiscated. Dumped in the holding tank just outside the courtroom, I re-read a story by P. G. Wodehouse.

I could hear an immense hubbub coming through the closed doors of the courtroom. The police guards had courteously left the cell door open. I had enough wriggle-room to smooth down my four-month growth of hair and to force my handcuffed hands into the blazer pocket and to extract and open the pen.

As they fetched me out, the towering escort-squad commander noticed the glint of the pen's Gold nib and challenged, "What's that?"

"My trademark," I said. "I'm a writer."

He let it go. Through a slit between the double doors I could see the television and press photographers gathering on the other side, facing the door: row upon row, tier upon tier, like a school group photograph in reverse, jostling and jockeying, standing on chairs and stools, waiting for their target to emerge.

I held up book and pen, checked my fingers, shook my blazer sleeves back so that the manacles were fully exposed and stepped through the door carrying the book at shoulder height. There was an epileptic blizzard of flashes. The strange photo-opportunity went on for twenty or twenty-five minutes, while I answered questions fired at me by the newsmen. I struggled to maintain hands, book, and face in one nice compact picture, delivering one message: Austria jails historians for expressing illegal views about Hitler's war seventeen years earlier. The picture went around the world, as I had intended. Stay in control.

(At the appeal hearing a year later I was specifically forbidden by the escort to carry any books, and had to put the pen away.)

AT nine-thirty a.m. the trial itself began. It lasted ten hours, during which I received no food or water. The courtroom was perhaps two hundred feet long, one hundred feet wide, and three stories high, like a marble cathedral, with a high vaulted ceiling lit by upward-pointing arc lamps. There was Gold-leaf and marble everywhere, the statues, columns, and walls.

The end wall behind the semi-circular plinth where the three Judges sat was semi-cylindrical, concave, focused on the small oaken bench and chair for the prisoner, like a one-man church pew, spaced some thirty feet in front of the judges. It sat in the centre of an otherwise empty arena facing them. The press and public sat behind me; prosecution and defence counsel to my left, the jury to my right—to my fury I saw that seven of the eight were stolid, slab-featured, middle-aged Viennese *Hausfrau* type women, with a

bus-stopping range-coefficient of perhaps a hundred yards.

It was not an encouraging spectacle. No matter, Liebetreu, the presiding judge, was on my side, or so Dr. Kresbach had said.

When he began to speak I realized at once to my dismay that—unless it was a display of mock severity—this was less than true.

On the other hand, I found that what Kresbach had warned me about this courtroom's acoustics was only too accurate. I could make out little of what was said to me. Besides, Liebetreu spoke in an impenetrable Viennese dialect—although by law all legal actions in Austria are supposed to be tried in High German, *Hochdeutsch*. I spoke into a good microphone, and nobody missed the few words that I spoke; but the judge was wholly unintelligible. I found myself trying to lip-read, then asking him two or even three times to repeat.

THE prosecutor, Dr. Michael Klackl, was—I have to admit—truly excellent. He spoke forcefully and audibly, enunciating every word.

He was a short, fierce, balding, dark-haired attorney with beady eyes; he reminded me of C.C. Aronsfeld, the director of the Wiener Library in London, my antagonist back in the early 1960s; or even more oddly of Adolf Eichmann, on trial in Jerusalem at the same time. Klackl had the same kind of lean, merciless, penetrating features.

I found myself recalling the Berlin People's Court after the July 20, 1944 Bomb Plot, where one defence lawyer began his opening submission with the words, "Having listened to the opening remarks of my colleague the Public Prosecutor about the disgraceful behaviour of my client, I find that I can only wholeheartedly endorse them. . ." Yes, Klackl was that good.

He had spent days if not weeks mastering the details of the case and threw at the jury facts and quotations from right across my writing career, many twisted to unrecognisability in the malign way that critics have.

The seven grim ladies hung on every word; I looked at my defence attorney, Kresbach. He had languidly picked up a felt pen and

scribbled one large word diagonally across a yellow American-style legal pad; I could not read what it was from where I sat.

His speech notes? Was that all? It might as well have been a shopping reminder. When Klackl finished, Kresbach levered himself up, tossed a lick of hair off his forehead, and began to speak in a rambling, drawling Viennese that was more conversational than forceful, ignoring every point that Klackl had made.

He ignored too the long list of arguments in mitigation of a possible sentence that I had prepared—for example that if sentenced to prison I could not be visited by Bente, as she was seriously ill, nor could I be exchanged to a prison in London, as this facility was available only for offences with identical laws in England. The Banning Law was unique to Austria.

He lectured the ladies about the differences between Sections *3(g)* and *3(h)* of that law. One yawned, the others closed their eyes.

I was not pleased by his performance and told him so. I delivered to him two short and forceful lessons on How to Speak in Public: stand up, speak up, and shut up; and, say what you're going to say, say it, and then say what you've said.

He seemed incapable of public speaking; perhaps he was out of his depth in the vast hall, or overawed by the omnipresent media and the size of the audience.

Too late it began to dawn on me that between him and Dr. Schaller—who was sitting, squirming, agonized, in the public benches—I had made a very bad choice. Kresbach was turning out to be what veteran lawyers call "*ein Schwimmer*"; a swimmer—a flounderer, more like.

I sat in frozen, expressionless grief, looking for even the smallest sign that the jury was getting his drift. He relied on Viennese charm and dialect—on arm-swinging gesticulations and boyish enthusiasm. The ladies had wanted to hear our reply to Klackl's charges, but did not get it. Kresbach was trying to wing it; but this was not the Battle of Britain, a jolly good show and a wizard prang, this was *Zitadelle*, the Battle of Kursk: we were facing the main battle tanks of the enemy, and waffle was no match for their massed artillery.

ALL the while the Judge sat on his high podium, pink cheeked and puffy faced, oddly reminiscent of Mr Justsice Gray in the Lipstadt libel trial.

Given that Kresbach claimed that he had reached an understanding with him, *Magister* Liebetreu's questions to me seemed odd, unfocused, and off-the-wall.

Would I accept the invitation that the President of Iran had now extended to me? This was the first I knew of any invitation, I replied; I had neither newspaper nor radio nor television in my cell, and few visitors. But would I accept, pressed Liebetreu? (Three times I had to ask him to repeat because of the bad acoustics).

I would prefer an invitation to receive a Nobel Peace Prize, I countered; he sniffed, shuffled his papers, and moved on.

He asked me to set out the process by which I had updated my views on Auschwitz, since 1989. I began by saying that it would take three or four minutes, and explained the first two stages—finding the Adolf Eichmann papers, and finding Hans Aumeier's manuscripts (he was deputy commandant of Auschwitz). After thirty seconds, Liebetreu wearily interrupted and that was that.

After this evidence phase, Prosecutor Klackl again rose to his feet and began reading out extracts from my writings since 1989, and he referred to my hundreds of lectures around the world as compounding my felony.

Dr. Schaller, seated in his public benches, expected Kresbach to leap to his feet and shout, "Is the evidence phase finished or is it not?" and, "What concern does this court have with Mr. Irving's utterances in other countries around the world where they are not against the law?"

Perhaps Kresbach's mind was elsewhere; he did not stir.

The hours ground on. I had assumed that we would be finished by early afternoon, as Kresbach had indicated, and I could take a plane back to London that afternoon at BBC expense. Once or twice I looked up at the clock at the back of the hall. It was already five p.m.

The jury retired, I was escorted into a holding cell. Like any Anglo-Saxon jury, the eight jurors now deliberated on my guilt.

Since Kresbach had advised a guilty plea, it was a formality, but they could still have found me not guilty, and if they had known all the facts they might well have—for instance, that the police had agreed with us in advance in 1989 on what I was permitted to say, and had stated afterwards that I had remained within those guidelines. That was in the court documents.

Now the jury retired again to decide the proper sentence, and to my surprise the judges went in with them too, to supervise. Once again, in England and the United States this would be unthinkable: the sovereign independence of jury deliberations is a cornerstone of our own legal system.

After they filed back into the courtroom, the forewoman read out the sentences. The acoustics were so bad that when she said on each count "*acht Ja, null Nein*" all I could hear was the words "acht Jahre", eight years, and my mind froze over. I would never see Bente and little Jessica again.

Liebetreu took the jury record, leaned back, far from the microphone, and gabbled through it, for twenty minutes; his voice, never powerful, had shriveled during the ten hours. Sentence pronounced, he asked at the end if I had understood, and I replied that I had not (and I heard murmurs of assent from the public benches).

Eight years, that was all I could think. *Churchill's War*, vol. iii: *The Sundered Dream*, already nearly complete, would never be published. Like William Manchester's, my three-volume Churchill biography, a thirty-five year project, choked to death after the first two volumes.

Liebetreu mumbled through the lines again in truncated form for my benefit, but the result was the same.

"With the utmost respect, your Honour, " I replied finally as politely as I could, "I have again understood less than five percent of what you just said. I will ask my attorney what the sentence is, on the way out."

This little closing *pas de deux* was characteristic of the whole farce. Justice was not only not being seen to be done, it could not be heard either. Slapping me sympathetically on the shoulder as I was

escorted away, because he had noticed the television lights come on again, Kresbach told me that the jury had sentenced me to three years' jail, and that unconditionally, *unbedingt*; i.e. without remission. ("More than I would have considered appropriate," this man, my lawyer, later confided to a newspaper. "I would have considered two years correct.")

As the police escort of five men in black uniforms struggled to drag me through the pack of newsmen and out of the courtroom. I noticed that the hands of three of them had sprouted drawn and loaded Glocks, issued to them by an officer from a polished steel attaché case. Eight hundred miles away in London, watching the scene live on BBC television, Bente burst into tears, as she told newspapers later.

"I am shocked," I said clearly into the microphones, in several languages: shocked, not so much by the sentence, as by the whole grotesque farce, and by the total failure of Dr. Kresbach to prevent it.

It was long past seven p.m., cold, and pitch dark outside. I was unbearably thirsty and hungry too. The armed escort took me back to my cell by an odd backstairs route, down spiral staircases and across remote floodlit courtyards of the Justice building. They were fearing either an assassination or a rescue attempt, one told me later.

Dr. Kresbach told me later that the "jury had gone out of control" when they retired. Something had happened in the jury room, he said, and Mag. Liebetreu had lost his grip. The judge (and the justice ministry) had planned to steer the trial toward a two- or three-year suspended sentence, so I would be released that day. This was the comfortable prognosis he had given me all along, and I had quoted it in my letters to friends and family (which Liebetreu will of course have read, as prison censor).

For a few days I believed it, because he had spent, he said, many hours before and after the trial closeted with the Judge and with his associates. A month later, when we read the actual transcript, we saw for the first time—it was now Dr. Schaller and I—that Liebetreu had concealed a profound malice in his heart, and had held

out for the stiffest possible sentence against me during the jury discussion.

THE British embassy had insisted I should get a cell to myself, which might be called solitary confinement, I suppose, but it suited me. The cell's living space was two meters wide and two point five meters long, with a WC in the wet room and a two-tier cot; the cot had an inch-thick foam mattress on wooden boards. There were two iron chairs and a two-foot square table with a torn surface, a narrow cupboard and that was all.

I had a lot of writing to do. I was now given the hundreds of letters that had already arrived, as Liebetreu had remarked during the trial—the first I knew of their arrival. In the months after the trial, I eventually received over two thousand letters. Nearly every one backed me and gave me encouragement; only two were hostile—one was a mean-spirited card from England which wished me "Many Happy Returns—to prison" (my sixty-eighth birthday came soon after).

I formed a mental image of this midget correspondent, standing on a wind-blown cardboard box, trying to reach the mail-slot to post this witty epistle which must have cost him so much mental effort.

Other letters were simply addressed to "David Irving, The Gulag, Vienna" and to "Mr. Irving, Austria." The Post Office delivered them as promptly as the rest.

Gradually the press hullabaloo quietened down. The Associated Press reported that I told their man, who visited a few days after the trial, "Now I have regained my peace and I am writing again."

The Year that Never Was

IN RETROSPECT, the months of my imprisonment in Austria were months which did not happen. But at the time, the jail existence extended forwards like a featureless landscape; and seen in reverse there was nothing that stood out to distinguish one day from the next.

I wondered how Nelson Mandela and Albert Speer had fared for twenty years, and Rudolf Hess for forty-seven. Even now, I find myself saying, "Last summer, when…," and then correcting myself, "I mean, the summer before last…"

The whole year just vanished from my life.

At least I had my thoughts, and then my writing, to occupy me. "I was recently wondering," I wrote to a friend as the bitter prison winter was left behind, and then the spring turned into summer, "why I was taking prison so very much in my stride, then found this passage in *Decline and Fall* (by Evelyn Waugh, published in 1928) in which our hero Paul Pennyfeather similarly muses, whilst in jail:

> . . .anyone who has been to an English public school will always feel comparatively at home in prison. It is the people brought up in the gay intimacy of the slums who find prison so soul-destroying.

"That was written," I added, "before those other ghastly people hijacked the word *gay*."

So my public-school years had prepared me well for this mild ordeal. I sometimes wondered too how the common criminals, accustomed to neither writing nor thinking, could survive; the answer was that some did not—they killed themselves in the first week or two of their captivity, and the jail staff in Austria did not make that too hard: unlike in British prisons, where your tie, shoelaces, and belt are taken away from you, here there were always electric cables, cords, belts, hooks, and window bars.

One of my fellow prisoners, I called him Ratty—seven years for robbing a bank and firing two shots during the raid—told me that his own cellmate at Karlau (the other prison in Graz) had hanged himself, and that he had caught stick from the prison administration next morning for not preventing it.

"I woke up, and he had hanged himself during the night. What was I supposed to have done about it?"

I don't know how many committed suicide in Josefstadt while I was there. I do know that in my last two weeks, in December 2006, two more prisoners hanged themselves—one on our floor, *Trakt* C-1, and one a week earlier two floors above us.

We heard of it only indirectly. I protested mildly one afternoon to a jail officer that we had been locked down for twenty-four hours, although a bright December sun was shining.

"Staff shortage," was his excuse, but he looked past me as he said it.

A *Hausarbeiter*, a trusty, whispered the truth—a man had hanged himself, the body had to be removed, the prisoners were not to know. The Austrian press of course published none of this.

I TAUGHT myself to regard the six-inch thick steel door as a friend: it was shutting out the outside world, and for my benefit. It was a matter of ones *Weltanschauung*, a little psychological trick. The door was keeping out all those disturbing things that a writer learns to hate—unexpected visitors, bailiffs, Jehovah's Witnesses, bill col-

lectors, letters, e-mails, and of course the ringing telephone. For fourteen months—in this respect they were months of pure bliss—I never heard the irritating ring of anybody's cellular phone.

Our cells were occasionally ransacked for mobile phones and other contraband smuggled in by prisoners on outside work-details or by crooked lawyers—and there were those too. Once or twice lawyers helped their clients escape (a few weeks after I arrived one lawyer brought a clean shirt and tie into Josefstadt prison for his client, and they walked out together through the main doors. After that scandal Josefstadt introduced modern biometric ID cards for all visiting lawyers).

Prisoners caught violating regulations would be sent down to the Bunker for a week or two. I was told it was a bare cell with a mattress on the floor and a bucket in the corner. I only once saw a prisoner being frog-marched off in that direction, his arms buckled back behind him. I don't know what he had done to deserve it.

My cell was searched four or five times in the first months, *gefilzt* is the word I used, having picked it up from researching in the private diaries of Field Marshal Erhard Milch during his stay in the Allied prisons of Nuremberg and Dachau. After that they seemed to have given up. These searches lasted twenty minutes or so, and the officers were friendly, perfunctory, and informal. Once the leading officer said, "Everything okay, Herr Irving—except," he said, with an envious jerk of his thumb at my book *Hitler's War*, on which I was working that day, "that book: it is confiscated."

"— Just joking," he added.

THE steel door was dark green, and totally smooth and featureless on the inside, apart from a covered peephole. I deliberately never tried the door, to see if it was locked. It was. Looking at the peephole I recalled with a silent chuckle how Mr Justice Gray had declared in the Lipstadt Trial that since the architect's drawings showed that Mortuary No. 1 at Auschwitz was to be provided with a peephole in its door (it was in fact a standard air-raid shelter door), it was *therefore* quite evidently a homicidal gas chamber. Unlike that door in Auschwitz however, I had no handle on the inside of mine.

On the door of the WC next to this smooth steel door a previous inmate had expertly drawn a small boy piddling into a potty, just like the statue I recalled from Nuremberg (there are others too, in Brussels and Knokke, Belgium, for example). He, and the hardy little family of cockroaches inside, were my only cellmates now. The drawing was still there when I walked out, an almost free man, fourteen months later; the cockroaches were less fortunate.

Later that year I wrote,

> Normally I begin by saying I'm fit, but I'm not—my muscles are all beginning to ache; lack of proper and variegated exercise (cell is only 2 by 2.5m, and mostly filled with its double bunk [*illegal under EU prison regulations*]—the cot is two inches too small for a 186cm man—cupboard and table, and two iron chairs) and yesterday for no reason being given we were locked down for twenty-four hours altho' it was sunny outside; worst, in the long run, is the cheap food, mostly cast-offs and out of date, rice, rotten fruit, thin soups with the powder still floating, etc. It is impossible to get any salads or greens—none is provided and none is for sale; in the long run this will do me no good.
>
> I have bought a liter of pure lemon juice to get the Vitamin C, or I'll go down with scurvy; and a liter of orange-colored syrup. Yesterday night at the wee hours, emphasis on the wee, I mixed a drink of lemon and syrup; it foamed instead of fizzed, not a good sign . . . lay curled up in the cot wondering why the drink left a burning taste, realized the cell cleaning detergent comes in a one liter bottle of same size, shape, and colour as the lemon juice standing next to it.
>
> Well, at least I'll be clean inside for a month or two.

A FEW minutes after Judge Peter Liebetreu had pronounced his—to me inaudible—judgment in the Grand Courtroom in Vienna on February 20, 2006, we had given formal notice of appeal to void the sentence (to the Supreme Court) and an appeal of sentence (to the *Oberlandesgericht,* the *OLG*.

My attorney Dr. Elmar Kresbach told me we could do nothing until we received the written judgment of the court and that took, as he predicted, four weeks.

In Britain the protocol is a verbatim record by skilled court stenographers; the transcript of the Lipstadt trial fills several thousand pages, and it cost me many thousands of pounds for permission to post it on my website.

In Germany, Austria, and other European countries it is a summary, it is a *post facto* concoction. Much monkeying-around is habitually done with the questions and answers therein, to defeat possible appeals; traditionally however this protocol then becomes what actually happened, and not what, uh, actually happened.

The protocol which reached us in about mid-March stated on its very first page that I had admitted having carried out Nazi activities in Austria in 1989; this was absurd, as I had not, and the two hundred people in the public galleries could testify to that. But there was nothing we could do about it.

More disturbing to me when I glanced much later at the document—I labour under a profound distaste of all such judicial papers—was what I found tagged on at the end: here were four print-outs of newspaper articles privately downloaded by Judge Liebetreu in the days before the trial, all from distinctly left-wing sources: he had even printed out the lengthy entry about me in the German Wikipedia, the informal Internet encyclopedia, blissfully ignoring that while it referenced a dozen other websites attacking me, it dared not give even the address of my own website, as it unashamedly stated, "for legal reasons."

As for the others, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* for example had printed a raving article by the young Jewish journalist Eva Menasse. On behalf of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* Menasse had covered the Lipstadt action in London in 2000 and had even written the first of seven books published about the trial. She was a clever writer, and the first interview she published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* after spending the evening with us in our home off Grosvenor Square in London, was remarkably friendly and positive. She had evidently received a reprimand for that and perhaps a reminder not to do it again. For the rest of that trial her writings just poured concentrated slops and bile over me.

Writing for the *Süddeutsche* now, Eva Menasse had recalled that

lesson. She used her space to demand that I should receive a severe jail sentence in the forthcoming trial, as I was clearly guilty: European Law and the United Nations Charter of Human Rights did not enter into it, she declared pre-emptively (and suspiciously well informed), as the Austrian *Verbotsgesetz*, or Banning Law, had constitutional character, which overrode the laws of Europe. In Britain, a journalist would proceed instantly to jail for contempt of court if she prejudged a case like that.

In Britain too, for that matter, a judge would be sent packing, if he informed himself extra-judicially by cruising the Internet before a trial even began. But Liebetreu was no friend, for all that Kresbach kept assuring me that he was.

Weeks later, Kresbach's successor drew my attention to what had happened in the jury room at the trial. Reported in the body of the trial protocol, which I had not bothered to read, the record showed that Liebetreu had agitated for the stiffest possible sentence against me, and he had urged the jury to disregard all statements that had been made in open court in mitigation.

THERE was little I could do to humanize the tiny cell that was now my home.

After a few weeks I had posted snapshots of my daughters on the wall next to the barred window and later, as they began to write to me, the latest pictures of their children too. I used to chuckle when I first read in the fact-starved British press—*The Sunday Express* started this particular legend—that "Mr. Irving's children are estranged from him." Or: "Irving's twin brother Nicholas, a retired civil servant, and older brother John, a retired RAF officer, have both disowned his views," as *The Daily Telegraph* reported a few days after the trial, "while he is understood to have seen little in recent years of his daughters by his Spanish wife Pilar."

The newspapers even invented things my children were supposed to have said. I had long given up correcting such things. The gap between press image and reality is constantly widening, like a seismic fault-line in California or Mesopotamia; once the chasm has first opened it seems impossible to close it again.

My oldest daughter is with the angels—she took her own life eight years ago, shortly before the Lipstadt trial, legless and paralyzed after a terrible accident; there was not a day that I did not think of her while I was held in this Austrian jailhouse. Her three sisters now lived with their husbands in Spain or Australia, and the fourth, Jessica, who would soon be 12, in London.

In the spring Beatrice flew up from Brisbane to Vienna to visit me and show off her first daughter; they were permitted the same fifteen-minute visit as the rest after their 20,000 km flight, speaking with me through a soundproof, two-foot-wide window; the phone was abruptly cut off at the end before I could say goodbye. Her Australian husband had come with her but he was not allowed in. *Ordnung muss sein*. Rules are rules.

Bente unfortunately could never visit, being too chronically unwell to leave London. To my added grief, that meant of course that Jessica, even when she turned twelve, could not visit either.

Daughter Paloma visited me, flying in from Madrid early in May. She asked if I had received the presents the family had all sent via Dr. Kresbach for my birthday in March—she herself had sent a good CD player and classical music discs.

I hadn't heard about them until now, and that puzzled me. I asked Kresbach the next time he next visited; he loftily admitted that yes, he had received and opened the gifts and letters and contributions some months before. I never did receive them, and eventually lodged two formal complaints with the Bar Association in Vienna about this chaotic lawyer. They took no action against him.

How bitterly I was now regretting that I had not engaged Dr. Herbert Schaller when I had the chance.

THE cell door remained locked for twenty-three or twenty-four hours a day. It was unlocked briefly twice during the day—to hand in breakfast (a mug of hot drink and a quarter-loaf of black bread) at seven, and a hot lunch at 10:30 a.m. At two-thirty p.m. a jailer ladelled supper onto a plate I pushed through the small, square, bowl-sized hatch to him. On weekends they handed in supper together with lunch at 10:30 a.m; it was a small pot of turkey paste for

the black bread, or a matchbox-sized piece of cheese and perhaps a whole raw onion.

In the afternoon, after supper had been delivered and the jail officers had all gone home, the vast building was empty but for a skeleton staff of three or four. (We inmates were not supposed to realize this). Then the cacophony started, as the prisoners clung to the bars of their windows and communicated across the prison yard in thirty-nine different languages with their accomplices, getting their stories straight for the judge.

Gradually the patch of sky over the courtyard darkened, and the coils of razor wire were bathed in the light of the floodlights on the roof. The searchlight beams glared mercilessly down into our curtainless cells all night long.

Sometimes during the night I could hear a baby's cry, or the sound of women prisoners calling out of windows from the fourth floor; they had given birth here in prison, but we rarely saw them—unless we came across them being shepherded in little shuffling columns of five or six, with downcast eyes, unkempt clothes, and disheveled hair, down the tiled prison corridors.

For several nights there came from the cell next door, Number 20, the doleful singing of a gypsy, who chanted Romany laments out of the window until long after midnight each night. Under different circumstances it might have been inspiring, but now it was not.

THE days all melted in retrospect into a gray, seamless blur. Occasionally the door would be thrown open by a jailer, with one word: "*Anwalt*!" or "*Besuch*!"

"Anwalt" meant a three-hour excursion up to the second floor, and being held in that stinking, smoke-filled holding tank with sad graffiti scrawled on the walls—"HANG IN THERE, SISI—YOUR TEDDY-BEAR"—until Dr. Kresbach drifted in for his regular five-minute chat—he never seemed to discuss tactics or the appeal however—and then back into the tank again to wait for the escort back to my cell and whatever I had been writing.

"Besuch" was a visitor. The very first visitor, just after the news-

papers revealed my arrest, was quite unexpected—a once-beautiful and elegant lady, now a cripple now in her sixties. Disconcertingly she greeted me with the words, "Do you recognize me?"

At my hesitant nod she prompted, "Brigitte."

"Brigitte Müller!" I exclaimed—her married name now is different; she smiled shyly, pleased that I had remembered her name after all these years.

I had last seen her forty-five years ago. I was young and fit, with a family of four young daughters. They had gone on ahead to Spain, and I followed by rail from London three weeks later. On the train from Boulogne I sat opposite this pretty Austrian girl from Carinthia, a twenty-year-old, and we chatted all the way to Paris; we had three hours to kill between trains—hers to Munich and Klagenfurt, mine to Spain, and I invited her to a meal in Paris. Of course I confessed all this to Pilar when I arrived in northern Spain.

Now she was sitting on the far side of the soundproof glass window. I indicated the telephone in front of her and she picked it up. "Did you get my letter?" she inquired shyly. My mind flipped back to a morning all those years ago when the light had flashed on in my Grosvenor Square bedroom, and Pilar had shouted angrily: Who is Brigitte Müller? Yes, I had received a letter from her, many months after that train trip, but it was seven pages long, handwritten in German, and I had tucked it into a pocket to read later.

"I was going through your pockets," exclaimed Pilar, "and I found this!"

Comfortable in the knowledge that the letter's contents, whatever they might be, were in German, I spluttered that this was the girl I had told her about that summer—quite harmless. "Then how do you explain," she challenged, "her final sentence?"

Final sentence? I hadn't even read the letter's first. Brigitte, it turned out, had innocently closed her letter with a sentence in English—a sentence which I recalled vividly, as I smiled at the elderly lady now facing me at Josefstadt: "*This Christmas I am going to be a ski instructor in the Tyrol*," I quoted to her through the telephone. "*Why don't you come, and I will teach you a thing or two*."

Her face flickered briefly with delight, but how the years had

changed us both. She had been paralyzed in an Autobahn accident, and was hunched over, able to write only with her left hand.

She forced a painful smile onto her lips, and explained that she had taken the train up from Klagenfurt that morning, a five-hour journey, and would be taking the train back that afternoon, another five hours. She had tried to see me when I spoke in her city in 1989—the fateful tour which had now, sixteen years later, led to my arrest—but the Marxist mobs had blocked the hall and my lecture was called off.

I asked how she knew I was here.

"My son Knut —" she said, adding almost apologetically, "I have three grown-up children now—he's with the Berlin Philharmonic, a violinist. They are touring China. The newspapers there are full of your arrest—a violation of your human rights."

MORE visitors followed. Once a month the shout "Besuch" was amplified by the grinning officer: "— and it's Réka!" She was a young Hungarian widow, a flight attendant with Malev whose father had read my books. They had adopted me. After only a few of her visits, word about her went round the whole prison, she was as good-looking as that. She regularly brought me gifts from her distant destinations like Damascus, or Tokyo, or Beijing. It was mostly clothing, and from it I concluded without much difficulty that even the largest Oriental men are many sizes smaller than we English.

After the February 20, 2006 trial it was the turn of the journalists. Dr. Kresbach arranged for them to visit—I suspect he did so for a fee—and the judge, who controlled such visits, seemed to have no objection. The first was an oily, over-friendly English-speaking freelancer from Berlin, writing, he claimed, for the London newspapers. Unlike newspaper staff journalists, freelancers have to spice up their stories to make them marketable: they are therefore a particularly dangerous species of writer.

He was careful not to reveal his name to me—I later saw that it was Greenfield—but the slant on his questions put me immediately on guard. Would I not agree, he said in a conspiratorial whisper, that the Jews had once again taken control in Vienna, and that

I had them to thank for this whole ordeal? I made a non-committal reply—I was not familiar with Vienna politics, I said; this did not prevent him from putting those evil words of his into my mouth when he published his article in *The Independent* (London) a few days later. He knew I could hardly stop him. He could get away with it.

Other journalists who interviewed me committed the opposite sin, of omission. When my statements did not accord with what they had expected me to say, or with the line they intended to adopt, and which their editors had instructed them in, they simply left out what I said. This happened when two journalists from *Die Presse*, a quality Vienna newspaper, and the Austrian Press Agency visited me together one morning, and interviewed me at length—with difficulty, as they had only one phone between them for communication through that soundproof window in the visitors' zone.

What they published was very damaging and led ultimately to fresh investigations against me. Fortunately Michael Klackl was a conscientious prosecutor, and he researched his new case thoroughly. In the court file I discovered, months later, the original manuscript notes of both journalists, and these contained key sentences which I had actually spoken, and which they had for whatever reason refrained from using.

For example: "Nobody in their right mind can deny that the Nazis did kill millions of Jews," I had carefully stated.

There was no sign of this in their printed reports. I was a "Holocaust denier." They themselves had said so, and nothing must be allowed to disturb that image.

I had also described how I had been held incommunicado by the authorities, unable to contact anybody, just as the Gestapo used to with its method of *Nacht und Nebel*—Night and Fog; and I referred to the order of Austria's minister of justice, Frau Gastinger, that all of my books were to be withdrawn from the prison libraries of Austria and destroyed—books published by Ullstein, Hoffmann & Campe, Bertelsmann, and other leading publishers.

Die Presse published my bitter comment, "Österreich Benimmt sich wie ein NS-Staat"—Austria is acting like a Nazi state—as

a banner headline across a whole page, but not my preceding remark about *Nacht und Nebel* and the books.

The last straw for the police authorities was when the newspapers reported that I had managed to broadcast live several times from our prison wing, "C"-*Trakt*, to my supporters in England.

Using the payphone in a room at the end of our cell-block, I had put a call through to Sky Television News in London at their request; as soon as their news desk heard my name they announced, "Hang on a second, and we'll put you on live"—and thus I found myself speaking to the millions from that little phone cell in Josefstadt.

Satellites carried voice and image around the world. I spoke until my phone card ran out. Boosted by this achievement, the next time I got a phone card I spoke to Independent Television News, the biggest news channel in England, and then to the BBC's "Today" programme, their major morning radio show.

The latter fifteen-minute talk with Kirstie Mackenzie was perhaps a mistake;. the BBC posted the audio file on their website, and the *Staatspolizei* in Vienna were later able to use it against me. The notion of free speech, for which the British—and the BBC—had fought so valiantly in World War II, still seemed foreign to some minds in Austria.

I responded freely to Kirstie Mackenzie during this BBC programme when she asked about the evidence to support my view that Adolf Hitler had never planned a total genocide of the Jews: I pointed to the logical evidence that ran counter to any plan of total genocide—the proof that Nazi Germany had allowed 200,000 Jews to emigrate by 1941; the fact that as late as 1944 there were still several exchanges of thousands of Jews from the camps at Bergen Belsen and Vittel for expatriate Germans released from Allied internment; and the clear evidence that even when the Auschwitz site was finally about to be overrun the Nazis either evacuated the 70,000 Jews still there to the west (including Anne Frank) or left those that so chose (including Anne's sick father Otto) in the camp hospital being tended by SS doctors until the Russians came.

In Austria it is illegal to say such things, it appears. The truth

is no defence against the *Verbotsgesetz*. Unfortunately, my routine warning that "Nobody in their right mind can deny that the Nazis did kill millions of Jews," was edited out when the BBC trimmed down the recording for their hugely popular Internet website, which left my subsequent remark, "Nobody can excuse that," as a non-sequitur, orphaned and adrift.

The upshot was ugly. The Austrian press reported with instant fury on my mischievous prison broadcasts. More questions were asked in the Viennese Parliament. For several days the whole "C" *Trakt* had its telephone privileges withdrawn—it was perhaps fortunate that my fellow inmates did not know whom they had to thank for this. From the Ministry of Justice emanated a decree dated March 6, 2006, forbidding David Irving any further use of the telephone or visits from journalists.

The decree was formally handed to me in my cell one day, and I had to sign for it. I would be unable to speak with Bente or Jessica for many more months, and in consequence one calamity after another now overtook them in London.

AT the next evening group discussion, one of the fraudster inmates—he had married Dr. Kresbach's ex-wife, and rather oddly changed his own name to Kresbach—smirked that he had learned through the grapevine that the prosecution was planning to charge me again, over these reckless interviews with the media.

The prosecutor Michael Klackl had seized upon all these radio and newspaper items, particularly the lies sold to the English press by Greenfield, and he set about polishing this second charge against me. It could now only get worse. The new court file revealed that Klackl demanded that I be charged under Section *3(h)* of the Verbotsgesetz, not *3(g)* as I had been before: *3(h)* carried a minimum sentence of five years, and maximum of ten or even twenty years, with a possible life sentence for "dangerous repeat offenders".

My lawyer Kresbach now remained mute. He was out of his depth.

I was aghast. I slowly began to perceive where this particular journey was heading. The light which had flickered dimly three

years ahead, at the end of the darkened prison tunnel, now seemed to have gone out altogether.

THE appeal documents against the original three-year sentence had to be served by April 22, 2006, otherwise I was in for the long haul. Worried by Kresbach's inactivity, I wrote a letter to Dr. Herbert Schaller, the veteran lawyer who had seen me through the Munich battles of the early 1990s, and asked him to come and see me.

By mid April I was uncomfortably aware that the deadline was approaching, and Kresbach had done nothing to discuss the two appeal documents with me. Through the prison grapevine I learned that he had in fact assured the prosecution that he was not going to make the serious appeal, the nullity appeal, at all; it was a fundamental decision but since he had not mentioned it to me I discounted the rumours.

Schaller came to see me, and declared himself willing to clean up the mess that Kresbach was making, assuming that I could somehow raise the money to pay his fees.

"I am an old man, Mr. Irving," he said, "and I must live on my earnings as a criminal defence attorney." It was fair enough.

He started work, still unofficially. Kresbach, he said, had refused to consult him during the earlier trial, or even have him sit at the same table in court.

The next time Schaller saw me he revealed that Kresbach had not signed on to read the court file since November 2005, although many new documents had been added to it since then.

I was dumbfounded. I asked him to see me again later that morning, and tackled Kresbach about it that midday, Thursday April 13.

"How far have you got with the appeal papers?" I asked.

Kresbach lit another cheroot, settled back in the chair on his side of the glass, and flicked the lick of hair back out of his eyes, while avoiding meeting mine.

"My assistant is going to start work on it this afternoon," he said.

"Tomorrow is Good Friday," I pointed out with some bitter-

ness. "Then comes the Easter weekend. The papers have to be filed in court by next weekend. You have had two months since the trial ended, and you have not even started. You're fired."

I rose and called for the escort to take me back to the holding tank.

"Schaller has never won in the court of appeal!" Kresbach cried out truculently as I closed the door of the attorney interview room.

That too was untrue.

"Arrant nonsense!" snarled Schaller when I told him an hour later. I signed him back on that same day.

AS I looked at this wiry, white haired, bull-terrier of a lawyer, I felt suddenly encouraged. We were going to win after all.

That day, April 13, 2006, I signed the formal document replacing Dr. Elmar Kresbach with Dr. Herbert Schaller as my lawyer. He would conduct all the further appeals.

It was a fateful, possibly even fatal, decision: the Austrian judges might have no greater love for Schaller than did their British counterparts for me.

That same day, over in the offices of the Public Prosecutor, at the other end of this large prison complex, prosecutor Michael Klackl had also signed a document—he had now formally lodged his appeal against the three-year sentence. It was too low, he said, and he demanded that it be increased.

It was like old times. Herbert Schaller might now be eighty-three, but he was an expert, knowledgeable and more vigorous than a lawyer half his age. As we shook hands and parted, little dots of red lit up his cheeks, betraying his excitement.

I remembered one officer's description of Field-Marshal Erwin Rommel returning to fight his last battle in Tunisia in 1943—his mystery illness suddenly gone, reacting like a horse that has heard the distant cry of the hunting horn.

I signaled for the escort. A good and faithful soldier all his life, Schaller worked right through the Easter weekend, and produced the appeal documents in time.

On Remand

THE STORY that I had been going to tell the students in Vienna—had I not been arrested—was an extraordinary one. In April 1944, a few weeks after the Nazis had marched into Hungary, SS-*Sturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann had established contact with the Jewish leaders in Budapest and proposed a bargain: if they supplied to him a large sum of money, or alternatively ten thousand trucks for use, he promised, only on the eastern front, then he would spare one million Hungarian Jews from deportation to Auschwitz. The first six hundred could be released directly to Palestine as a demonstration of good faith, the rest would go to America.

We still cannot determine from the archives how sincerely the offer was meant; I personally suspect it was a Machiavellian attempt by the *Reichsführer* SS Heinrich Himmler to drive a wedge between London, Washington, and Moscow.

Leaving his wife and children behind in Budapest as hostages, the Hungarian Jewish community leader Joel Brand flew to Istanbul in a German courier plane, carrying details of the offer and taking a Jew who was a Gestapo agent with him. They were soon intercepted by British Intelligence in Syria, and Brandt spent the next months in British captivity in Cairo; he was released but only

into Palestine in August 1944, by which time it was too late to save the Hungarian Jews.

What made the story I had to tell—which is quite well known to historians—unique was that while researching for my Winston Churchill and Himmler biographies I had discovered in the British archives the evidence that the British codebreakers, who were experts in decoding Hebrew and German SS messages, had quietly watched the whole episode from bases in England and Palestine: the archives in London contained scores of intercepts of the actual code messages exchanged between Brand and his lieutenants, and the Jewish Agency representatives in Switzerland and Turkey and Palestine.

I had transcripts of the intercepts with me when I was arrested. One for example was a Hebrew message, containing many Hebrew codewords, sent by Nathan Schwalb in Switzerland to the "Committee" in Istanbul, reporting the latest message brought by courier from Hungary:

> I received the letter from Joel [Brand] on the 25th April [1944] through a messenger. Willi [the codename for Eichmann] is with him with his plan. . . They succeeded in postponing the deportation and got an answer that in principle there is no objection to the emigration [to Palestine] of 600 persons and to an emigration to Arye [the U.S.].
>
> In view of the fact that Wilhelm [Eichmann] is in favour of an emigration [of the Hungarian Jews] to Arye, it is indispensable that Tartskower [the American Government] should confirm that he is prepared to receive them. The messenger left today. . . I transferred about half a million Swiss Francs as Uncle's present [Uncle was the Treasurer of the Jewish Agency] to Joel [in Hungary] and Gizi [Frau Gizi Fleischmann in Slovakia]. Also Heini and Rolf sent them presents [*Note by British Intelligence: presumably Heini Bornstein, representative of Hashomer Hatzair in Basle, and Rolf Schloss, Baden, formerly of Holland*].

The British were well aware of Eichmann's offer, and so shortly were the Americans in Istanbul; the British, at the suggestion of foreign minister Anthony Eden, deliberately dragged their feet, while the

the Hungarian Jews were deported in their tens of thousands to concentration camps in Germany. The Americans wanted to investigate how genuine the offer was.

"*Wiederbetätigung*!" the Austrian custodial judge had shrilled a few days after my arrest, as I sketched for him the Eichmann–Brand story, and he held up a shocked hand as a signal for me to stop; *Wiederbetätigung*—that was the name of the crime I was said, absurdly, to have committed: reactivating the Nazi Party. It left me baffled—and still remanded in custody.

AUSTRIA's prisons are overcrowded, and down in the prison yard it was not hard to see why. Twenty percent of the prisoners are Blacks; most of them told me—in whatever language we could agree on, English, Spanish, or French—that they had been tricked into coming to Europe and longed to return to their villages in West Africa.

About ten percent of the prisoners belonged in secure hospitals, and not in jail at all. At any one time in our yard I could see two or three mentally-ill prisoners, or prisoners pretending to be ill.

Other prisoners were quite obviously innocent, and were it not for the need to provide employment to this overstaffed prison complex and its lawyers I could not see why they were being held here at all.

Under Austrian law however prisoners are guilty until they can prove their innocence—not an easy task for the unfortunates held behind bars, denied access to phones, and forced to use court-appointed lawyers who could not care less about their clients.

One such prisoner was Sal, an elegant, upright, elderly Albanian, one of the leaders of the Kosovo liberation movement. He brought his police file into the yard one day for me to read. He and a friend had legally collected two million euros, around 1.3 million dollars, to buy arms for the Kosovo liberation movement; a middleman had relieved them of the money, undertaking to procure the arms from a Russian source. They never saw the arms, or their cash, again. After the Kosovo war ended, they angrily insisted on the money's return; the swindler had turned them in to the police, alleging that they had "demanded money with menaces."

It was clear to even the meanest intelligence that Sal had been set up by his accuser, and the police should have seen that too. Over the next four months I watched as he became a physical ruin. He stooped, his hair became bedraggled, his suit was ruined by the weather; his eyes were hollow and his face gaunt with worry about his family, as he faced the last years of his life in jail while the swindler laughed up his sleeve at him.

One Tuesday he was missing from the yard, and I feared the worst, that he hanged himself. I asked the block-chief, *Bezirks-Inspektor* Bernhard Hornicek—a good and conscientious officer.

"He had his day in court yesterday," said Hornicek. "*Freispruch*—acquitted."

My silent prayers for the old man had been answered.

Of course there was no word of these injustices in the Viennese newspapers. They were slavering for the latest news about Natascha Kampusch.

I met another elderly prisoner at Josefstadt during our fortnightly discussion group—these were half a dozen academics and white-collar criminals allowed to debate current affairs under the supervision of a police officer, "Herr" Grobmann (in plain clothes, which did not fool us, of course). The professor was good-natured and philosophical about his predicament; I was curious why a professor was a prisoner here on remand like the rest of us, and I was even more baffled when he told us.

He was embroiled in the kind of perennial academic squabbling that abounds in the cloisters of every university. He was a political economist, and brilliant, but a *Querkopf*, a member of the Awkward Squad. That was soon plain.

Politics had come into it too, and among his opponents was the president of the university. Our professor, our new group member, had written a letter to that worthy, advising the university president to take his views seriously, adding for emphasis, "— *blutig ernst*," bloody seriously. His opponent underlined the words in red and turned the letter to the Public Prosecutor. He was now charged with threatening bodily harm, and thrown into prison with the rest of us. He was still there five months later, awaiting trial, and I do

not know what happened to him. That his career would not have been prospered by this episode was plain.

I was once again glad to have refused an academic career myself.

"WE'RE pretty confident about the outcome of the appeal," I wrote to a German lawyer who followed such cases as mine, Marcus J. Oswald.

> The whole world is astonished at the lack of freedom in Austria. The Austrian legal system evidently never reckoned with such a "setback", as *The Times* called it in its main front-page headline the day after my trial, and certainly never with this international interest in the fate of my person.
>
> The international press has been very decent, as my work as a writer and historian is well known worldwide—I've written thirty books, all published by the most reputable publishers like Ullstein, Bertelsmann, Hoffmann & Campe, Scherz, Heyne, Rowohlt and so on.
>
> Today for the first time I did however see the Austrian press of February 21, the day after the trial, and I was very upset at the spiteful, low-down and even hateful words used by these Austrian gutter-journalists.
>
> I'd just like to know what, or who, is behind the whole thing. Austria has become an oasis of paranoia, and doesn't even realize it itself. Everybody is obsessed with alleged "Nazi" historians and "revisionists". I've had conversations with representatives of the entire world press, that is the press of the free outside world, and now Austria is the bane of this free world, and has to pay the price.
>
> Of course like any normal human being I deprecate the appalling crimes committed by the Nazis against the Jews and others. But I am neither a Nazi nor a Jew, just a British historian trying to establish the truth about the great Jewish tragedy—the how and the what and the why—and so far as it is possible in my own sphere of interest and under the present laws, to publish it too. Without rancour or hatred—*sine ira et studio*—just the way I was taught at school.

TWO or three times a month, a dozen of us were escorted through the prison corridors to the little evangelical chapel on the fourth

floor, a strange ceremony conducted partly in English and partly in German, and enlivened by Austrian hymns and African tribal songs including the Kum-Ba-Ya chant.

The two pastors became firm friends—both were actually German-born, not Austrians—and some afternoons they visited me in my cell.

One day one of them, Mathias Geist, came into my cell looking more than ticked off, and spluttering harsh and even unchristian words about Viennese judges. I asked him why.

"Seven thousand euros," he said. "That's why."

A Viennese newspaper had quoted him as criticizing the city's judges in general, for their rudeness towards witnesses in court.

I interrupted to remark that British judges, on the contrary, leaned over backwards to be courteous, and showed an exaggerated politeness and deference to both the witnesses and the jury.

Mathias clenched his hands. One of the Vienna judges, he said, Frau *Magister* Nathalie Fröhner, had charged him with defamation, *üble Nachrede*, because of this newspaper article; even though he had not mentioned her by name, she had taken his criticism personally. A conviction for *üble Nachrede*—a civil offence in Britain, but criminal in Austria—would have cost him his living as a pastor. She had suggested an out-of-court settlement. He had had no option but to agree.

I remarked that I had met prisoners in the yard who were accused of obtaining money with menaces. He smiled, then grimaced without comment. The sum that the judge had suggested he pay her was seven thousand euros, and he had just handed over the cash, that very morning: two months of his modest salary perhaps.

The more I heard of the Viennese legal system, the more puzzled I became.

"ANOTHER Thursday," I wrote on April 12, 2006 to a friend in Chicago. It was the day I had just switched lawyers, and I waas feeling good about it.

> I was lent a radio by one of the guards yesterday, which brightens

the cell a lot, I must say. . . I get a lot of writing done, though sometimes I nearly run out of ink, and start using shorter words in consequence. Prisoners are not supposed to have ink in case they use it for tattooing. Yeah, right, I can just see me tattooing one of these gangsters.

I have got a good history institute in Munich sending me the documents I need for the work on Himmler, so my time here is not completely wasted. I write about ten pages a day. Today less, as I spent three hours on the 2nd floor firing my old lawyer, and signing up my new one—Dr. Herbert Schaller, who will fight the appeal in 2–3 months' time. We have to lodge the documents on the appeal in ten days' time and we have Easter in between.

The original lawyer did not inspire me with any confidence any more. Very weak. As I was taken out of the courtroom [on February 20, 2006] I said, "I am shocked", when asked by TV reporters: In fact I was shocked at how weak he had been! The old lawyer is 46; the new one almost twice as old.

"My writing style," I added, "if not my handwriting, has improved enormously in prison. I have read a lot of Raymond Chandler and Mickey Spillane"—both American thriller writers.

Schaller did not let me down. A few days later I reported to a friend in London, Lady Renouf:

We served our appeal documents just on time, April 22; the State Prosecutor has also served a rather lame notice of appeal, demanding an increase in the three-year sentence. He has pointed to my "hundreds of lectures around the world" in justification; of course, this pretends that Austria's Banning Law is in force in all those countries too (in fact it holds force only in Austria); and it also pretends that I was talking about the Holocaust and praising the Nazis in all these lectures.

This too is absurd, as my audiences know I talk about Churchill, Poland, Sikorski, atomic research, Rommel, and Hungary's Revolution of 1956, to mention just a few topics. It is all smoke and mirrors; he would make a good rival for David Copperfield!

I don't think the judges of the Supreme Court of Austria who hear the appeal in 2—3 months' time will be very impressed by his efforts. Unless of course . . . but then, this letter goes through prison Censorship, so the rest of the sentence will have to remain in the eye of the

beholder.

Three weeks later, Dr. Schaller had completed the next stage of the appeal:

> Dr. Herbert Schaller, 83, has done a magnificent job displaying a legal expertise and fighting energy that was shockingly absent from his youthful (46) predecessor, criminal attorney Dr. Elmar Kresbach. Kresbach had previously made a name for himself in narcotics cases... Legal experts say that if I appeal to the European Court, Austria will face a massive compensation claim.

Schaller kept me closely informed. I instructed him not to use the word *gas-chamber* in any of his documents—it was a red rag to a bull here in Austria, I reminded him.

"I don't need to," he rather abrasively replied, but I wanted to be certain.

I became a familiar figure to the guards on the holding tank and to the other prisoners: nearly all of them knew who I was and why I was there.

I recalled my earlier cellmate Bernhard confiding to me during my first week here at Josefstadt what had happened to all the criminals who had disappeared from the front pages of the newspapers—"They're all here," he whispered.

I DID occasionally bump into these celebrity prisoners. One of them was Robert Mang, the forty-something alarm-systems expert who had just been sentenced to four years for a daring burglary of the Museum of the History of Art, stealing the famous golden salt cellar, the "Saliera" sculpted by Benvenuto Cellini and now worth millions of dollars, early one morning in May 2003. The newspaper photos portrayed him as dashing, handsome, and masculine, and soon reported that he was receiving hundreds of letters from female admirers.

I met him sometimes in the tank or elevator, and we shook hands, as one VIP to another; I noticed with surreptitious pleasure

that his face was lined and wrinkled, which the cameras had not shown. The women were in for a shock.

In the weekly discussion group we speculated on how long it would be before Helmut Elsner, former CEO of the Bawag Bank, would turn up and join us; the elderly Austrian millionaire, under whose regime the trades-union bank had, ahem, mislaid a billion euros, was fighting extradition from France at that time. The common view was that he would be held in the third-floor sickbay when he did arrive, as the necessary fiction of his illness would be maintained.*

As the months passed, I settled in. With proper routine, the days slipped swiftly by. But I was aware that the several major legal actions I had brought while in freedom in London, among them one to force the British government Trustees to return my seized archives to me, were quietly but surely running out of time.

"I have issued a High Court Writ against them for compensation," I wrote to my friends, distraught at the knowledge that my forty years of research was at risk.

> The dogs are now threatening to destroy the rest. I feel very powerless in situations like this. The London lawyers I hired turned out to be yet another firm of do-nothing deadbeats like the one I first had here (and fired).
>
> Every time I hear people innocently inquire, "Why did you not use lawyers?"—against Lipstadt—I could scream with fury at such ignorance. Anybody who has had experience of lawyers and has hired them knows the answer to that one.†
>
> My eye-glasses are failing. My opticians are in Key West, Florida. Everything takes so long, when you are locked up 23 or 24 hours a day! All over by Christmas—or rather, "the holiday season"—I hope.

MY optimism was forced, and in retrospect I realize that I did not really believe it myself. The prison system was almost designed to

* Elsner was forcibly repatriated to Austria on February 13, 2007.

† Gary Sh., the partner in the law firm Frank & Co., had not responded to my letters for months. It turned out he was preoccupied with changing into a woman.

feed off itself. Prisoners became institutionalized; they found it difficult to shake it off when released. Everything militated against their escaping re-arrest. They were caught in a vicious circle, an overwhelming vortex.

I asked my neighbor in C Block, Momo, a Gambian, what he would do when released. "Go back to driving a taxi," he said hopefully, flashing his teeth in a bright white smile.

"No you won't," I educated him, passing on what wisdom other prisoners had imparted to me. "Unless you write now to somebody to come and get your driving license out of your possessions in the Depot. Otherwise, just before you are released, they search through them and send your license off to the licensing authorities, with a note that you have not been driving for so many years. So you have to do the lessons and take the test all over again, and—guess what: you haven't any money."

So informative were the one-to-one discussions we "hardened criminals" had with each other in the yard. Gradually one sensed that one was shifting away from the law-abiding world outside, and helplessly becoming one of them. They came to regard prison as home: no taxes to pay, no family worries, three meals a day.

Occasionally I noticed that a face which had vanished some months earlier had reappeared—"I done it again," the fellow would say carelessly, in this case a Turkish drug dealer who had earlier been a *Hausarbeiter* in our block. "What else could I live off?"

"I got as far as Slovenia," said another, a likeable chap who had robbed a bank.

"You done a runner?" I exclaimed, using the prison argot for escaped—I am a linguist, after all, and High German doesn't go down too well in the yard: you've got to speak, and look, the part. Zoran, the Serbian (thirteen years for cocaine dealing) had shaved my own hair down to a punishing one-millimeter all over so as to make me look tough.

"Nah, I *absconded*," said my interlocutor. "There's a difference. I was out on a day-work detail, and just didn't come back here that night. If they catch you after *absconding*, there's no added penalty, like there is for *escaping*. Unless, that is, you abscond wearing prison

socks, or a shirt or whatever. Then they tack on another two years for thieving prison property."

"Ah," I said, trying to grapple with the intricacies of prison law.

"Anyway, me and my girlfriend, we had 25,000 euros between us, and we were heading for Spain and a new life. I phoned Spain from a post office in Slovenia, and that's how they got me next day. *Stimmenerkennung*. Voice-print identification." There was a hint of pride that he had fallen victim to a high-tech "collar."

"Voice-print identification?" I echoed.

He nodded. The judge at the extradition hearing had been proud of it too. "'No point in you denying your identity,' says the Judge. 'Here's the Interpol file on you.' And he done showed it to me. Fingerprints, mug shots—and voice-print."

It was a graph, a print-out like an electrocardiogram. Every telephone hub in Europe now automatically computer-checks every phone conversation against the Interpol database of criminals' voiceprints. Even in Slovenia.

That's the word from the yard (Josefstadt Prison yard, not Scotland Yard), anyway.

I WOULD be unable to resume work on *Churchill's War*, vol. iii: *The Sundered Dream*, because, paradoxically, it was almost finished in London. Working on memoirs would be easier; prison is an ideal time for reflecting and remembering, in peace and total solitude. Recalibrating, I later called it: re-setting all the dials to zero.

Provided that I could get the documents I needed I would also resume drafting my life of the *Reichsführer* SS, Heinrich Himmler—this strange character of Hitler's Reich, who lived only forty-four years but achieved so much that was both grotesque and spectacular—building an industrial empire, creating a vast and intricate police state, and raising from scratch the Waffen SS, the most formidable fighting force that history had ever known—at the same time as masterminding what is now called the Holocaust.

To my pleasure and surprise, the world's leading history institutes rallied round, whether in Munich or in Princeton, and

sent me the files I requested, "under the circumstances" without charge—circumstances which they universally deplored.

I sometimes wondered what the Viennese Judge Liebetreu, who was censoring all my inward and outgoing mail, was making of their letters to me.

Fifty or sixty letters were handed in to me each Friday, and I answered most of them that same weekend. On June 9, 2006 I wrote to a Canadian friend,

> First, I apologize for using this paper. A coffee disaster this morning has effectively polluted most of my remaining paper—but you're "family" so I can use it on you without (many) qualms. Next, thank you (to the power of ten) for the attached photographs. I liked the T-shirt, and greatly appreciated the logo, "Austria Sucks!"
>
> This imprisonment has made a huge hole in our finances, unrefundable airline tickets, lecture fees at universities, etc. Around $300,000—that's the hole I would expect to have to refill. Himmler is going well, I don't have many idle hours in the week. I have about one visitor a month.
>
> A month ago a nice visit by one daughter, from Madrid.
>
> Gotta go now. Well, not exactly "go", I have a hundred letters to write. Well not exactly a hundred, but a LOT.

AS the months floundered past, I got organised. Computers or laptops were not allowed to us remand prisoners awaiting trial. I always write in ink anyway, and I had my fountain pen with me—though not my favourite Mont Blanc; I had written many of my early books with the Mont Blanc which the late Field Marshal Erhard Milch had bequeathed to me after I compiled his biography. When the pen became faulty, I sent it to Mont Blanc for repair, and the firm very kindly, as they thought, replaced it with a brand new pen, as the old one was, they explained, "an antique."

At first I wrote on the back of prison regulations and envelopes. Later, I got paper sent in, and I eventually wrote four thousand pages during the months of my imprisonment.

Ink cartridges were still a problem. For weeks while I had to write in pencil my friends around the world mailed packets of car-

tridges to me, but they were all confiscated—with the covering letters—as contraband. After the affair with the telephone interviews, and my books being found in the prison libraries, they were all jittery about more questions in the Viennese Parliament, I heard later.

Eventually Matthias Schacht, the other prison chaplain, brought me a packet of ink cartridges, and then a prison officer whose name I never knew smuggled in to me fifteen whole boxes of them, enough to keep me going for over a year.

The Minister of Justice, Frau Gastinger, would not have approved, though the authorities did impose one final quirky rule on me: I was not permitted to draw any non-fiction books from the library. "Because of your offence," the governor tartly snapped at me after I protested to the court, even before the trial was held.

"— *alleged* offence," I corrected him, and asked for the cell door to be closed.

I did have some frustrations. A Munich auction house revealed to me that it was selling Himmler's 1940 pocket diary in October. It is one of the few Himmler diaries not yet found and researched by historians, but the reserve price was 25,000 euros, and taking copies of it was not permitted.

These months did provide an opportunity to ponder some of the deeper Himmler mysteries. London sent me a copy of his wife's diary. "Work on Heinrich Himmler progresses," I reported to my friends as the summer drew in.

> I have finished reading the diaries of his wife, and written one hundred and twenty pages of notes based on them. It is a sad document—she in her fifties, he seven years younger; she fiercely protective of their daughter, who is still alive today. He began in 1939 to take his custom elsewhere; the other woman (now dead) bore him two children, in 1942 and 1944, of whom one also survives.

It was a difficult diary to exploit, as Frau Himmler had written it in retrospect, often after weeks of silence, and she might refer just to "last Monday" or "Easter," leaving it to me to figure out what day

that had been.

Himmler had obviously been keeping his (often horrific) secrets to himself. Careful analysis of the diary, extending over many weeks, revealed several anomalies: she refers to the Jews only two or three times—Himmler had seemingly not mentioned the Holocaust to her; and on the morning of July 20, 1944 he had instructed her to leave Berlin at once for Bavaria—she learned only that evening, upon arriving at her home in Gmund, that there had been an attempt on Hitler's life early that afternoon.

From my own collection in the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich I obtained a copy of my notes on my own interview with Himmler's older brother, Gebhard, in 1971. I had fortunately donated all my earlier Hitler research files to the Institute.

It struck me that I did not use the word "Holocaust" once in this interview note, but then I realized why—that word was then unknown; it came into usage only later, in the mid-1970s.

Gebhard told me that Heini had not even told him about the forthcoming campaign in Russia: "We saw the munitions and troop trains passing eastwards through Dresden every day," he said, "but we did not know about the attack until the day it happened."

From a lawyer in Chicago I had already obtained and read the two hundred pages of letters that Himmler had written to his mistress between 1938 and 1944. Himmler had concealed the Holocaust from her too (writing to her in mid July 1942 that he was touring Polish sites including Lublin and Auschwitz, over the next week, he mentioned only, "There are some unpleasant things that I have to do, for Germany's sake.")

I have always tried my best to get to the root of things. Perhaps readers will one day understand why it always amuses me when I see rivals refer to me in the press as a pseudo-historian.

Lifetime Achievement Award

MOST days that spring of 2006 a single ray of sunshine found its way down through the rooftop jumble of razor wire, closed-circuit cameras, and searchlight rigs, and pierced my cell for a few minutes around eleven-fifteen each morning; a crab-sized patch of sunshine crawled sideways for fifteen minutes across the cell floor. I rejoiced in that small sunbeam until the patch climbed up the wall facing my cot, and vanished. A Turkish *Hausarbeiter* furnished the cheering word that in summer the cells here in the Josefstadt jailhouse became baking hot, as the floors were covered in a toxic black paint.

Spring would soon be over and already Austria was gripped in an extended heatwave. The temperature outside had hit minus sixteen Celsius in February, but now it began to climb, and things were heating up for other reasons too. At the behest of who knows whom, Austrian officials were gearing up to charge me, "In the Name of the People" of course, with committing a new thought-crime.

In his gloomy, 150-year-old workshop at the far end of this depressing grey stone building, the "Landl," in the heart of Vienna, the public prosecutor Michael Klackl had begun to polish a second,

potentially far more deadly case against me, one which threatened a maximum sentence of twenty years and even life imprisonment. Word filtered down the jailhouse grapevine to me that Klackl had already opened a court file with a fresh file number—the last stage before a formal indictment.

As the temperature outside hit thirty-five Celsius, police escorted me on June 16, 2006 before a new investigating magistrate, Dr. Frederic Artner, housed elsewhere in this rambling building, to answer questions about my post-trial interviews with the Austrian and British media. It seemed absurd that in a free world, six decades after the end of World War II, an interview with a newspaper could lead to new criminal charges.

I cannot deny that I was worried, but I kept this unsettling development from my own family. Our London home was now lost, our surviving property all gathering dust in storage; they had worries of their own.

Conscious that every letter that I wrote was still being censored and copied, however intimate, for the prosecutor, I reported to a friend:

> It looks as though the Viennese criminal authorities are hoping for a second bite at the cherry. The Austrians are now contemplating prosecuting me again for an article published by the Vienna newspaper Die Presse on March 3.
>
> The prosecutor Dr. Michael Klackl is understood to object to a passage in which I drew attention to the fact that nearly 100,000 Jewish prisoners survived Auschwitz until the camp was abandoned in January 1945. More irksome for the criminal authorities was the title for the whole-page article: "AUSTRIA IS ACTING LIKE A NAZI STATE". In the present vindictive mood, if the consequent irony of their new action is lost on the authorities here, I will again be prosecuted.
>
> I was summoned at 9:10 a.m. this morning to be interrogated about the article, and about a dispatch issued by the Austrian Press Agency APA, and no doubt also about the BBC "Today" interview—although the judge did not get that far as I refused to answer any questions at all.
>
> My continued imprisonment is costing Austrian taxpayers over

$1,000 a week. The cost to me is incalculable, of course . . .

On June 10 fellow prisoners smuggled in to my cell a page of the Vienna newspaper *Der Standard*, carrying a lengthy interview with the Jewish historian Raul Hilberg. I think highly of Hilberg; in fact he shared many of my views—though I was unlikely to see him here in Josefstadt. (In fact there were only two Jews in this jail, on the floor above ours, C-2: one was made *Blockschreiber*, or block-clerk, although the jailers told me he could, or would, write only in Hebrew script; the other was allowed to keep his cell door permanently open on some pretext or other.)

On December 5, 1975, while researching *Hitler's War*, I had asked Professor Hilberg, "Is there any acceptable evidence linking Hitler himself with the order to exterminate European Jews?"

I added that there was of course enough evidence linking Hitler with the killing of Russian Jews and with the deportation of the European Jews to the East." Professor Hilberg replied that he too now believed there was no such Hitler extermination order: "Possibly, the destruction of the Jews was so drastic that it could only have occurred in an organic, evolutionary process, from vagueness to specificity, and in a very real administrative sense, from the bottom up."

Hilberg had a degree of intellectual honesty not often found in the conformist historians. Here is part of the *Standard* interview:

STANDARD: Mr. Hilberg, do we know all there is to know now about the Holocaust?

HILBERG: As good as twenty percent. . . There just hasn't been the research, because people did not want to know certain things, for example that the poor died first, and only then the well-to-do. . .

STANDARD: One topic at the Wiesenthal Symposium was his memorandum to the Austrian Government forty years ago, stating that Austrians were disproportionately involved in the Holocaust.

HILBERG: [*Agrees, with many details*].

Standard: Should we be imprisoning David Irving for Holocaust-denial [*sic*]?

HILBERG: To be honest, no. He is a fraudster (*Hochstapler*).

STANDARD: As an historian, yes. But he has provided legitimacy to the deniers. Should Holocaust denial be criminalized at all?

HILBERG: Not in my view. I am for freedom even for these people. We can even learn from them. They're like children who say: Prove it! And so we must—prove it!"

Dr. Herbert Schaller, my attorney, had also seen the Hilberg interview. He included it in a fresh submission to the *Oberster Gerichtshof* (OGH), the Viennese Supreme Court.

I reminded him that in Canada the Crown had called the unfortunate Dr. Hilberg as a well-paid expert witness at the original trial of Ernst Zündel in Toronto, and he had crumpled under defence counsel Douglas Christie's fierce cross-examination; when the prosecution asked him to testify again at the 1988 retrial (at which I was also called, by the defence) Hilberg flatly refused, stating that he never wanted to go through that ordeal again.

Hence, I rather suspect, Hilberg's wan admission that only twenty percent is known; which is not to claim that we nonconformist historians know the other eighty percent.

At least he had been honest. Schaller and I, we both chuckled loudly as we shook hands and parted, and a friendly prison officer escorted me back to Cell 19.

"Air conditioning's out in my cell," I jested.

"Whole building," he grunted, and the bare, wax-polished corridor, lined with its dark green steel doors, rocked with our jovial but incongruous laughter.

In the afternoon a different prison officer brought me an ominous Notice. The prison had started a formal inquiry into whether I had breached regulations by having a copy of Henri Roques' dissertation on the "Kurt Gerstein Report" in my cell. (In French captivity Gerstein claimed, plausibly enough, to have visited the Belzec extermination centre in August 1942.)

Not much mileage for them in this new game, I fear: Judge Peter Liebetreu had himself cleared this book and the accompanying letter from Dr. Roques through Censorship to my cell.

"How wonderful to live in a free democracy," I wrote to friends

outside. "I shall look forward to it on my release."

A FEW days after the Hilberg article appeared, on June 20, 2006, I wrote this to a friend in Chicago:

> Letter number 69 [*of a final total of 114*] goes off to Jessica and Bente. Coffee bubbling on a chair in the corner. In this cell everything is within arm's reach. Humid and 33 degrees Celsius today, the cell is boiling. I am now into the eighth month of my Austrian taxpayer-funded Sabbatical.
>
> My new lawyer is Dr. Herbert Schaller, 83, veteran member of the Ernst Zündel defence team in Mannheim. He shuttles between Mannheim and Vienna, ministering to our needs. A great guy. He is optimistic about this appeal; I warn him that in all countries that have Ministries of Justice it is politics and politicians that ultimately call the shots.
>
> I remind him of the last big trial in Munich where he acted for me, in January 1993: his German co-lawyer Klaus Göbel arrived at court palpitating with fear—he had that morning received a letter from the Bavarian Bar Association, which he showed me, ordering him not to defend me, on penalty of permanent suspension; fortunately I also had Colonel Hajo Herrmann as an attorney, a wartime bearer of the Knight's Cross and hence not easily intimidated—still alive today in Düsseldorf, he fought as a Luftwaffe pilot in the July 1942 battle for Convoy PQ.17—and of course Dr. Herbert Schaller too, again fighting for my freedom today.
>
> I have today lodged a formal complaint with the Vienna Bar Association about Schaller's predecessor, the feckless left-winger Dr. Elmar Kresbach. . . I do not seriously expect them to act. These professional bodies rarely do. . .

DOWN in the prison yard there was a new face, a fresh young Italian-looking man. Like the young Sinti whom we shall meet later, he recognized me from press reports, he said, and made a bee-line over to me. His name was Andrew von W., he announced, citing the name of one of Austria's most famous philosophers.

He offered congenial, amusing company, and I often shared my morning stroll with him.

After a day or two he initiated a subtle campaign whose purpose I never really fathomed. His grandfather von W. had been a famous Luftwaffe ace, he confided, and had left behind two cases filled with uniforms, a Luftwaffe dagger, and three black leather-bound volumes which contained the inventory and location one of the most sought after treasures of WW2, the fabled *Bernstein Zimmer,* the Amber Room looted by German troops from Leningrad during the war. The loot was concealed, he said, in a former Luftwaffe bunker in what had been the German Democratic Republic, the DDR, near Halle.

This was precisely how I had picked up so many precious documents during the years of my research, an unexpected tip-off. To the questions which immediately arose—why me? And why had he not himself profited from this immense wealth?—he had ready answers. So I pricked up my ears; after all I had little else to do; he was good company, as said, and a cut above the rest of those in the prison yard.

He seemed to have free access to our jailhouse wing's pay telephone, and the officers allowed him to speak for hours at a time. As for the black leather volumes, he described that these contained in copperplate Sütterlin handwriting the inventory of each piece of the *Bernstein Zimmer*—he professed that he himself could not read such Old German handwriting well—and of the bunker room in which it was stored; helpfully, a map of the location was glued into the third volume.

The easy telephone access did momentarily puzzle me. I recalled that when I had first arrived, Inspector Böhm, an elderly prison officer about to retire, snarled: "Even though the judge has given his consent, Herr Irving, that doesn't mean that *we* here will permit it, not by a long chalk."

From Cell 19 of C Block I began Operation Leonard, to research the real history of the Bernstein Zimmer—not easy when six weeks elapsed between every letter and reply. I began to check the details through my friends. One Australian historian whom I knew was an expert on the whole Von W. family and their ancestors. Another knew all about the Luftwaffe aces.

By the time their replies came in, this Italianate gentleman in the yard had already begun to lose me; he was making the familiar mistake of all tricksters. It reminded me of the saga of one Klaus Benzing, who had offered me the hidden wartime diaries of Hitler's Intelligence chief Vice-Admiral Wilhelm Canaris back in the 1970s.

"Von W." embroidered the story with more and more detail, as I mildly asked for more, and eventually he tripped himself up. The map gave the precise geographic coordinates, he said. It was glued in, unusually, with North at the bottom, he recalled. He even sketched what it looked like. He and his brother had visited the location in the closing years of the DDR, he said, using GPS (satellite navigation) to pinpoint the precise location: they had spoken with the farmer on whose land the bunker ruins were—the bunker was still there, partly demolished, and overgrown with weeds.

I pointed out in the nicest possible way that the DDR breathed its last gasp in 1989, and that GPS was not publicly available by then. Of course the next day he smoothly and seamlessly enlarged his story to explain that blemish too.

I never really fathomed what he was after; true, he got free coffee handouts and other groceries from me in the first weeks of his imprisonment, but I would have given him those even without the tall stories.

His face vanished from our wing some weeks later; newspapers reported that the court had sentenced him to seven years as a confidence trickster, having deceived the noble lady whose name he now bore (he had changed it by deed poll).

He had also used his charms on Inspector John, one of the senior Block Chiefs, as I learned later from the trusty, Zoran. We were swapping yarns about the trickster, to general laughter in the prison yard. Each had his own story. Learning that Herrn John was a passionate huntsman—a member of what Adolf Hitler referred to scathingly as "*die grüne Freimaurerei*," the green Masonic lodge—Von W. had mentioned that he had had a bit of luck: he had inherited a hunting preserve in the Tyrol, and he hinted that he would be happy to invite the Inspector as his guest when happier

times returned. That explained perhaps the liberal use of the telephone that he was allowed.

THE yard was a kaleidoscope of strange faces at eleven-thirty each morning that summer, as new prisoners arrived, and others fled outside from the heat of their cells. That same month as I was shuffling anti-clockwise round the crowded yard in the sunshine, and occasionally pausing to read another chapter of a Graham Greene novel in my favorite spot along the sunshine wall, a prisoner came loping across the patch of baked mud and grass in the centre, and rather shyly asked if I was the English writer.

I nodded cautiously. "There is somebody over there who'd like to speak with you," he said, and beckoned over a slim, educated looking young man in his thirties hovering in the far corner.

His name, he said, was Gitan W.; I won't write his full name as (if genuine) he is still a prisoner; and it may not even have been his real name, as two searches of the Austrian prison computer database on my behalf by friendly officers failed to raise any trace of him. Prison is full of mysteries.

He had been passing through Vienna a few days ago, his pockets full of euros, he described, when police arrested him—and then the whole story came tumbling out.

"I am a Sinti, a gypsy," he said. "We are not like the Romas. They are just lazy layabouts; we are a hard working, educated clan, with careers and professions like teachers and lawyers. The Romas come originally from India," he continued. "They are crooks, thieves, and cheats, they do nothing but thieve all day, and sing all night."

At the mention of the late-night lullabies I nodded with a weariness born of familiarity, and nodded up to the cell window next to mine.

"We Sintis live on a housing estate, a project, outside Stuttgart," he continued his tale. "We are awarded 500 euros a month by the German Federal Republic, and we pay no taxes—these concessions are a recognition of our suffering as Sintis under the Nazis. My father and grandfather were in Auschwitz," he explained.

As a court- and newspaper-nominated "denier," I stiffened

slightly, still not guessing where his story was heading.

Shortly he began to pour out his whole extraordinary case: he had been driving through Vienna to Bulgaria a few days before, carrying a large sum of euros in cash, to buy oil paintings. He was a dealer—"We buy up unwanted family junk, and sell antiques." (I still do not know whether to put quotation marks around that latter word or not.) He had checked into the Intercontinental Hotel and paid cash in advance for the night, but in completing the registration form which the Austrian police still require of their country's hotel guests, he had entered simply his family name "W."—omitting the first name, Gitan, short for "gypsy".

I understood why, I said. They don't like gypsies in Austria, whether Roma or Sinti in origin. I motioned him to go on, and he did. At two a.m. the police had rousted him out of his room, at the instance of the hotel management, and searched his property.

Here the story took a totally unexpected turn: in his wallet they had found, carefully folded, the fading and yellowing original death warrant which Rudolf Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz, had pronounced in July 1942, sixty-five years before, on his grandfather and a dozen other Sintis who had staged a mutiny in the camp that month, killing a number of SS guards.*

Going into a degree of detail that again made me briefly suspicious, Gitan described the document—it carried the swastika emblem, rubber stamps, the commandant's signature, and the names of the other unfortunates sentenced to death by hanging. Before his execution, Gitan's grandfather had given it to his father; the father let Gitan carry it with him as a memento, which is why

* Alan H., of Warsaw, an expert on Polish World War II history, has commented: "There do seem to be some rather odd things here. The first hangings took place in Auschwitz in July 1942 but of two Catholic Poles for attempted escape. I have been unable to find any information about a rebellion by Sinti in this month. Furthermore it seems a bit odd that he would have the death warrant on him, where did he get this from? And carrying the original, not a copy? Perhaps you got the month wrong; Himmler visited the camp in July 1942 and perhaps this caused the confusion."

the Viennese police had found it, a few days before, in his wallet.

And? I looked at him quizzically, still waiting for an explanation for why he was here in prison. At five a.m. that morning, he continued, he was formally arrested, charged with concealment of a genocide, and brought here to Josefstadt prison.

I gasped, but the young man's story grew even wilder: the investigating magistrate had been as perplexed as I was, and had promised a swift hearing in five days' time, and indicated he would be released. He had phoned his wife back in Stuttgart with the good news. Instead, he was taken to Stein prison, which I knew from yard talk was one of the nastier prisons in the Austrian system. Here plain-clothes investigators had visited him from, he was told, the Israeli embassy.

The lady judge presiding over the subsequent hearing in Vienna would not hear of a swift release. In Austria all prisoners are guilty until they prove their innocence. In Austria all accused must always show remorse. "Do you regret your deed?" she had challenged the prisoner, as is the Austrian custom.

Deed? Gitan W. protested that he was innocent—the document was his family property, he had nothing to show regret for. His court-appointed lawyer shifted uneasily and went red.

The judge repeated her question, Gitan W. told me, more sharply: "*Do you regret your deed*?"

Gitan could see his lawyer nodding fervently as a signal to him. So he shrugged and agreed that he did feel remorse.

"That is just as well," said the judge, "otherwise the sentence would have been ten years. You will serve two years."

As he was led out in a daze, he stopped and called out to the Judge: "You'll go home tonight to your own bed, and I won't see mine, or my wife and kids either, for two years. . ."

She ordered him to be silent, and motioned dismissively to the guards.

The Viennese prosecutor smirked. "*Auf Wiederseh'n, Zigeuner*! Farewell, Gypsy!"

"My name is not Gypsy, it's Gitan W—," he retorted, as he was escorted out.

"*Z'gainer bleebt Z'gainer*," sneered the prosecutor, lapsing into the Viennese dialect. Once a gypsy, always a gypsy.

I asked if he would appeal, and he bitterly said he would not: he could just about handle the two years, and sentences on appeal were often increased—half a dozen words I did not really want to hear.

I wrote a six-page note on what he had told me, and tested him during the exercise period the next day for more details, just as I had the "noble" trickster earlier. His account remained identical, with one piquant added detail: "The Judge was a Jewess," he recalled, as an afterthought, and he gave me her name. "Sonja Allyes."

I wanted to ask him the next day for his court file number and his lawyer's name, but they had already removed him in the Krokodil to Stein. I mailed my six-page note to Rolf Hochhuth in Berlin—I knew that the playwright could make a fine two-act drama out of this real life human story. Act 1: 1942 Mutiny in Auschwitz; Act 2, 2006 Trial in Vienna. Intercepted by the Censors, the letter never reached Rolf.

> Everything is monitored here *[I wrote in a letter later that broiling hot summer*]. An Italian nobleman is paying Jessica's next school fees. The world is full of Irving-lovers (and Austria-haters).
>
> I'm still reading Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall* (his son Auberon Waugh was a good friend of mine. He once wrote in *The Daily Telegraph*, "I cannot help asking myself what sort of truth it is" that requires the protection of fines and prison sentences to survive.)

After I replaced Dr. Elmar Kresbach with Dr. Schaller, the prison officers searched me only once more. This time they subjected me to a very different treatment: the door was flung open without warning, and I was curtly ordered to stand up and stop writing in mid-sentence—it reminded me of Hungary's 1956 revolutionary prime minister, the luckless "Reform Communist" Imre Nagy, dragged away from his own writings in mid-sentence to be hanged—and I was escorted to an empty cell, ordered to strip naked, and searched.

This time their search of my cell, No. 19, lasted over an hour, and when I was finally escorted back to it, the scene defied all the usual hurricane-aftermath clichés. Every tin and packet had been torn open, papers strewn around, and much of my property had drifted down to the floor (a level I was now finding more difficult to reach, as my muscles lapsed into an ante-mortis rigor).

Again the officers left my cell empty-handed, and this time there were no jests or smiles. Two other cells were also searched, but given only the briefest once-over. The next day a trusty told me that the Block Chief, the same Inspector John we have met before, had confided to him that Judge Liebetreu had ordered this special search, as the prison had been informed that Dr. Schaller had smuggled an item of contraband into me at his last visit. The two other cells had been searched as a blind.

In fact Schaller was not just *korrekt*, but over-scrupulous: the Austrian judiciary had disbarred him some years back for five years for his nationalist views, and even now it allowed him to act only as a *Strafverteidiger*, defence counsel, and not as a *Rechtsanwalt*, attorney, like the young Dr. Kresbach.

I picked up my pen and resumed writing where I had left off, and I wondered who had fingered Schaller, and why.

I HAD been imprisoned for eight months, most of the time locked down alone for twenty-three or twenty-four hours a day. I now had a small new television in my cell: I had had to buy it to deplete my canteen account – any cash above a certain ceiling was confiscated. When I eventually left, I donated the little television to the prison wing for other prisoners to borrow.

I tried not to think of the disasters that had befallen us in London. "Tip," I wrote sardonically to American friends in Chicago on their national holiday, July 4: "Become a controversial historian. Assemble forty-five years of stuff. Watch it ALL being seized and destroyed. Simplifies subsequent moves, evictions, removals, etc., no end."

I envied the Americans the freedom of speech that they still enjoy, protected by their Constitution. It used to exist in Britain

too. In that letter, I added:

> I have hung that excellent copy of the Magna Carta on my wall. I just hope the turnkeys can read it when they search the cell, as they often do.
>
> The TV is about two feet from my nose, so it takes minimum effort to adjust it. It's off all day, however, except for the Russian-language channel's "Novosti" (News) at midday and CNN in the evening. Oh, and *C.S.I. Miami* (for glimpses of favorite haunts) and, of course, *Monk* with Tony Shalhoub.
>
> Most of the time I have my small radio on, tuned to the St. Stephen's Cathedral radio station nearby, which provides wall-to-wall (in my case a distance of five feet) classical music.
>
> As for this continued incarceration, I regard it now as an Oscars-style "Lifetime Achievement Award", made in recognition of writing forty years of inconvenient history.

On July 24, the Procurator General informed Dr. Herbert Schaller that he would recommend that my application to set aside the February 20 judgment should not go before the Supreme Court, the OGH (*Oberster Gerichtshof*). It had taken three months to get this far. I wrote to a correspondent in London, that day:

> Schaller will now demand an oral hearing of the application by the OGH, to which he is entitled. If that fails [*it did*], the main appeal will be heard by the lower appeal court, the OLG (*Oberlandesgericht*). Either way, it is expected that the appeal will be heard in September [*in fact late December*].
>
> I have been in solitary confinement on political charges since November 11, 2005. I am continuing to write, and thank the hundreds who write me from all over the world every month, especially those writing anonymously from Germany and Austria—evidence, in my view, that these citizens still fear that they are living in . . . police states.

AS THE autumn approached I followed outside events with more than usual curiosity, especially the tragic and needlessly prolonged fighting in the Middle East. Like hundreds of millions of fathers

around the world, I wept for the little Palestinian daughter running scared and frantic, hither and thither about that Mediterranean beach, after all seven members of her family had been killed by an Israeli artillery shell, and sensed impotent fury as the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, like all the hidebound German media, tried to mitigate and expiate and reason and exonerate the government which had committed this atrocity.

A week later full-scale war broke out—the Palestinians were held to blame, of course. To writers on history it all seemed so familiar—particularly the propaganda from both sides, and the lies.

> I have been very intrigued by the media coverage of this Israel-Hizbollah conflict, I wrote to one friend. I get the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* every day and *Die Zeit* brought regularly to my cell by helpful prison officers, and I follow the news bulletins on my tiny TV—we get Moscow Channel One, Turkish TV, CNN, two Austrian, one German and a scattering of other channels.
>
> The main German government channels were scolded yesterday by former president Richard von Weizsäcker for showing too much of the carnage inflicted on Lebanese civilians by those nice folks next door [Israel], whose ambassador to the U.N., the racist Dan Gillerman, actually called the Lebanese "just animals" in one live broadcast; I have seen only one newspaper reference, in the *SZ*, to that Freudian slip.
>
> I am more robust. In one speech to a Passau audience I said that I had heard that people sometimes wrote letters to "*Richard von Speichellecker*"—Richard von Lickspittle—and that German postal workers knew who that was and delivered them to his palace too! And there has been no mention that Germany supplied many of the tanks, guns, shells, and bombs used against Lebanon, free of charge!
>
> But I digress. The war bulletins. Unlike other recent wars, we have seen nothing of any actual ground fighting between Israeli troops and Hizbollah guerrillas. (Perhaps, as with *Schindler's List*, Mr. Spielberg will later oblige). Correspondents were "embedded"—i.e. in bed with—the IDF [Israeli Defence Forces] forces, but I never saw them step outside that compound of artillery howitzers, whose mission was to create a holocaust among the Lebanese villages, a clear war crime, by the way.

> The fighting stopped four days ago. We have still not been told how many IDF tanks and armored vehicles were destroyed by rocket-propelled grenades [RPGs]—and those tanks don't come cheap.

Other battlefield incidents just vanished as though they had never happened. Hizbollah claimed to have shot down an aircraft. Israel denied it. I saw with my own eyes on the Turkish news bulletin a large flaming object brought down over Beirut. Israel suggested it was "a container". Robert Fisk saw the wreckage, mostly unidentifiable but including what looked to him like a helicopter rotor blade. Hizbollah claimed to have attacked a warship. Israel muttered that a "Colombian freighter" had been sunk. Again, nobody followed up.

As for the tank casualties, the wrecks were pushed into the famous media Memory Hole, like in that popular TV series where the losing robot warrior is toppled into the pit.

Once, an early news bulletin showed telephoto footage of a short column of tanks, and the lead tank receiving an RPG smack in the mouth and blowing up. It vanished from all subsequent bulletins; as did a later picture of RPG damage done to the tracks of a main battle tank.

Toward the end there was another brief glimpse of an attack on three tanks—the rear tank going into reverse, either also hit or billowing out a white smoke screen. This clip also vanished from later bulletins. It had not happened; and the Arabs are all just animals.

> We conspiracy-theorists and incorrigible extremists [*I wrote*] all know Who Controls the Media. … The media have served us poorly so far, and they have some explaining to do.

THERE was another juicy media scandal that summer, which gave me much cause for belated enjoyment. Back in 1977, my main publisher in Germany, Hoffmann & Campe ("HoCa"), who had just published my Rommel biography as a huge best-seller, told me privately that leading leftwing novelist Günter Grass had headed a

visiting posse threatening that unless they refused to publish any more books by "the Nazi" David Irving, they would submit no more books to HoCa, and would put pressure on others too. HoCa of course cravenly complied.

"This week, Oh Joy!," I wrote to a friend:

> . . . the German press revealed that Günter Grass had a "dirty little secret". He had fought for the Waffen SS as a volunteer, 1944–1945. In a letter to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* I criticize him—not for that, but for his hypocrisy.

The *Süddeutsche* of course did not publish it. They have their own priorities.

On September 5, a prison escort took me up to Dr. Schaller in an interview room. He was wearying, I could see, from his strenuous eight-hour commute to and from Mannheim, Germany, where he was acting in the endless trial of Zündel. He told me he had heard that morning on radio and TV that the Supreme Court (OGH) had, as recommended by the Procurator General, refused to hear my appeal against the February 20 verdict; so the remaining appeal (against sentence) would now go to the lower appeal court, the OLG.

It seemed odd to Schaller that he had had to read this in the morning newspapers before the Court had actually notified him.

Although he remained forcefully optimistic about the outcome, it did not seem a good sign to me of the way things were going. I have had a bellyful, indeed a lifetime, of optimistic lawyers.

The light at the tunnel's end was visibly fading, or receding. A new period of official foot-dragging began, but we now expected the appeal against the three-year sentence to be heard by the OLG in November.

As the months trickled past, my health also went into decline. The prison had recently promised me an exercise bike for my cell, but it never came.

I confided to a friend in London, on September 27, 2006:

> My cash is now down to around 150 euros, which will last two weeks—mostly spent on stamps and phone cards. I am getting a hundred letters a week, half from strangers; I answer them all, and letters to the USA cost 1.30 euros (around $2.00. . .)
>
> Still waiting for the appeal hearing, presumably in November. Writing is going well, tho' today I am stricken by a Great Lethargy, to which the detergent [*which I had accidentally swallowed one night in mistake for lemon juice*] may have contributed. At least it wasn't bleach. That might have had the Coroner guessing.

My writing was making good progress, so the new delay made little difference to me. It was harder on Bente and Jessica, now 12, in London, although I don't think they had expected any different either.

"We all know who is really calling the shots here," I wrote to friends in London. To a supporter in Chicago, a few days later on September 29, 2006, I revealed that I knew from my brother that Bente, never well, was in fact now becoming very ill, and she had undergone several operations in London that summer.

> I have given five instructions to Jessica on comportment while Mummy's ill. No. 3 reads, "Cars run on gasoline; Mummies run on hugs. So fill her with gallons and gallons of hugs to keep her running smoothly till I am free."

I was deeply concerned by this news from London. Under Tony Blair's Labour Government the British health service had collapsed. Twelve thousand people had died the previous year of infections caught while in British hospitals, the so-called "super bug". I now had to fear for Bente's life.

Because of this developing emergency I angrily persuaded Dr. Schaller to make an emergency application to the Courts for my temporary release from this prison on parole, or word-of-honor, an Austrian procedure evidently. (I recalled the romantic ballad "Die Burgschaft," the Pledge, in that big illustrated volume of *Schillers Gedichte*, which I had found in a second-hand booksellers in Essex and bought for two pennies while a child.)

The application—heard at 2:30 p.m. that day, September 29—was of course swiftly dismissed in a ten-minute hearing. The Judge was a *Reichsleiter* Martin Bormann look-alike—paunchy, scowling, bull-necked, poorly-shaved.

"Anything to say?" he concluded.

I replied, "I was born in 1938, two weeks after the Austrian *Anschluss*"—when his country became part of Nazi Germany. "*I* have changed a lot since then," I added, with the barest emphasis on the first-person singular.

He shrugged and scowled. History evidently wasn't his strong point.

A FRIENDLY lawyer sent me an extraordinary document he had found while browsing through the foot-thick Court file *409 Hv 3/05y* on my arrest and trial before Judge Peter Liebetreu. Eighteen days before the trial, Liebetreu had written to the Austrian Staatspolizei authorities, now fashionably renamed the "Anti-Terrorism Police," which doesn't quite have the same cachet, the same *je-ne-sais-quoi* as "Stapo"—pleading for extra police measures for the trial-day, because of my worldwide fame and popularity as an historian.

It seemed, I had written at the time, that they genuinely feared an attempt to rescue me. "All I noticed, apart from barricades and helicopters overhead, was that after sentencing I was surrounded by eight special forces police in combat gear with drawn Glock automatics, and hustled away through a labyrinth of back passages and external staircases to my cell. Now I know why."

"Yes," I wrote mockingly to a friend in Virginia, USA, on November 10, 2006: "It's getting real risky to be a Real Historian in Europe nowadays. The good news is however that I've had around two thousand letters since I was kidnapped and put on trial here in Vienna and *all* (except for two hate-letters) were supportive, a fact which alarmed the Judge so much that for the day of the trial he secretly ordered massive special protection for the courtroom (Austria's largest), no doubt in case two hidden Waffen-SS divisions turned up in full battle gear with Otto Skorzeny at their head to

rescue me! Their paranoia here is boundless."

> Work on Himmler is benefiting from the solitary confinement; it will upset a lot of people, I fear, including H's daughter Gudrun, who (wrongly) predicts I will demolish her late father purely in an attempt to rehabilitate myself.
>
> That's what I hear. I don't do things that way; and that's probably why I am writing this letter to you in a five feet by ten feet cell, locked-down 23 or 24 hours a day . . .

ON THE charge related to my press and BBC interviews, things were coming to a head. In the stillness of my cell at night I fancied I could hear the distant rumble of millstones somewhere, grinding *trefflich fein*—fine, and then finer still.

An investigating magistrate was insisting on interrogating me about my interviews with the BBC and Austrian Press back in February. Klackl, the very capable prosecutor, was recommending that I be indicted under Section 3(*h*) of the Banning Law. The maximum penalty was life imprisonment. Dr. Schaller warned that I would now *have* to answer the investigating judge's questions—he cited tactical reasons why.

Shortly, Schaller sent for me again. The OLG would hear our appeal on December 20. That would be my last chance of freedom—of escaping this unfolding nightmare.

They're out for blood

I NOW do—or at least I had done before all this happened—most of my writing a few hundred yards from the southernmost point of the USA, in the sub-tropical island town of Key West.

As I lay on my cot in Cell Block "C", looking at the rungs of the empty cot above me, I reflected that I still had three bicycles chained to a tree in Key West waiting for my friends and me to return. And here I was in Cell 19, in what the Americans dismissively called "Old Europe", locked down for twenty-three hours a day, imprisoned for an opinion I had expressed sixteen years ago—no, it was now seventeen.

The summer had passed on. The sun no longer rose above the rooftops five stories above the narrow prison yard. There was no longer that little crab-sized sunbeam crawling across my floor.

I had made friends here among the prisoners, and tried not to prejudge them, though I eventually learned to believe none of them.

One good-looking young African from Guinea-Bissau—apart from his Creole he could speak only Spanish—muttered softly that he'd been caught with one just one gram, I did not ask of what.

Over the weeks, I helped him, translated occasional letters to

the officials for him, and gave him some of my canteen rations.

A few mornings after he left, as I sat on one of the two iron chairs from my cell in the corridor outside and Zoran, the Serbian trusty, mowed my hair down to one millimetre all over, he whispered to me that the lad had in fact raped a thirteen-year-old Viennese girl.

"They'll all make up stories rather than admit to that in the prison yard," he said.

My other existence, as a professional historian, had by this time resumed. The monastic existence gave me a great opportunity for analyzing the more complex sources.

I had obtained from an institute in Munich the verbatim transcript of one of Heinrich Himmler's secret speeches, in August 1944, and I could now take the time and trouble to analyse its text and language, and to ponder what was really going on in the Reichsführer's mind as he spoke—to see beyond what he actually said, to why he was saying it.

At the same time I continued my own long-range battle with the court-appointed trustees in London who had seized my correspondence files and archives—and either destroyed them or sold them to my enemies.

A friend had sent me Gitta Sereny's book about Albert Speer's twenty-year imprisonment. Unlike him, I kept no count of the passing months. So long as I was working productively, the days and weeks no longer mattered.

Other prisoners sketched calendars on their cell walls and marked off the weeks and months with crosses. My walls were freshly painted and blank, apart from my family's photos.

IT WAS now October 2006 and we had a date. Dr. Herbert Schaller, my lawyer, had told me the last time he visited that the OLG, the *Oberlandesgericht* or court of appeal, would hear my appeal against sentence on December 20, 2006.

We wondered why they had set a date so far ahead, and one well hidden in the penumbra of Christmas too: it was clearly not by chance. As I was escorted back to my cell I remembered the first

cynical reaction of one of Tony Blair's ministers on hearing the shocking news from New York on September 11, 2001—that this was a God-sent opportunity for Blair's government to "bury the bad news"—to release a particularly unpopular decision in the press, knowing that it would most likely never be read.

Who reads trial reports at Christmas? What was the bad news that the Ministry of Justice was hoping to bury? In Austria and Germany any increase in my sentence would be reported as good news, but not in the free world outside.

There was however another, even darker shadow forming above the horizon. Dr. Schaller showed me the court file on the second charge—the remarks I had made on history in my post-trial interviews with the newspaper *Die Presse* and the BBC.

His face was set in granite, it lacked its usual boyish grin; and I could see why: although he did not specifically draw my attention to it, I noticed that the Public Prosecutor Michael Klackl was calling specifically for an indictment under section *3(h)* of the Banning Law, the *Verbotsgesetz*, a new section which could carry even life imprisonment for repeat offenders, such as Klackl maintained I was.

It would be up to the court to rule whether the indictment could go ahead. Things could hardly get worse.

As before, I kept this worsening news from Bente and young Jessica in London. The next time I spoke with her—I could speak with her for five minutes sometimes, if she was well enough—she told me that some enemy had reported her plight to the Social Services and recommended they take Jessica, now 12, away from us; a social worker had visited her, and had even suggested that Jessica's name should be changed from mine, Irving, to her mother's, Høgh, "to protect her". Bente was still seething.

As I waited, back outside my cell, to be locked back in I noticed that my hands were clenched and the knuckles were white with anger. I recalled how Heinrich Himmler had ordered the Stauffenberg children taken away from their mother after the 1944 attempt on Hitler's life, and their name changed, as a peculiarly inhuman form of psychological punishment.

I NOW knew all the guards by name, though it was not wise to seem to be too friendly. Long-term prisoners did not take kindly to it; they were sensitive about such things. It was them and us, and that cake was sliced in several different ways. In the yard the different nationalities clustered together. An eastern European once loudly accused me of speaking too kindly with a Black prisoner who was a new arrival. It was just like public school in England; just as Evelyn Waugh had written.

My mind often wandered back to London, eight hundred miles away. Until my homes were lost, one after the other, I had lived for forty years in the heart of the historic district: I knew it inside out. I used to ask the drivers of black cabs if they knew what the anonymous red-tiled building at the lower end of Down Street was, facing our old home.

"It is the old Down Street tube station," I educated them, "which Winston Churchill shut down in 1940 to use as a deep shelter for himself."

The dark red glazed tiles are typical of stations on the Piccadilly Line. London cabbies are always happy to have something they can tell their passengers (one told me the mayor had recently sent a circular letter forbidding them to call themselves Black-cab drivers—"racism").

I tried the same kind of riddles on the jailers. "What's twelve times eleven?" I challenged Inspector John one afternoon. For us English, it's a simple sum: every English infant has learned his eleven- and twelve-times tables, because Old England had twelve inches to the foot, and twelve pence to the shilling.

The jailer spluttered, shook out his fingers, and began to work it out.

"Hundred and thirty-two," I prompted, and explained why we English knew. "Won the war for us, that did," I suggested facetiously. "While you Huns were working it out, twelve times eleven, we had the answer already."

He grinned foolishly as he locked me back in.

The next morning, at seven a.m. he was still there, this time

with the breakfast cart. "Hundred and thirty-two," he bellowed as he opened the door. He was king of the hill. "I had night shift, Herr Irving, and not one of the others knew the answer."

"Told you," I said. "Won the war that did."

DECEMBER 20, 2006, the day of the appeal, was now just one day away. I did not mark it off on the wall; for me one day was the same as the next.

What did I expect as the outcome? The brain works at many conflicting levels, and mine was no different: on one floor it was realistic, and expected that things would in fact only get worse, as I was in "their" hands now, and they were working to that end.

On another floor, my brain was listening to Dr. Schaller who remained obstinately up-beat. He had found that the OLG had allotted the appeal hearing only a thirty-minute slot.

"That can mean only one thing, Herr Irving," he said as he settled himself into his chair on the other side of the glass panel on the day before the hearing: "They are going to order your immediate release."

I groaned silently. Lawyers! "They can't do otherwise," he insisted, which made it worse, rather than better. Grinning lawyers, I had now seen enough of them to last me a lifetime.

I said, "Herr Dr. Schaller, I must be realistic—so I can tell the family in London. Are they to expect me home tomorrow, or will I be here for many more years?"

He grinned again, his engaging boyish grin, for all his eighty-three years, and repeated his prognosis. "A short hearing means only one thing—appeal allowed."

"It takes just as long to say No as Yes," I retorted.

He could not be shaken. "If they are going to deny the appeal," he reasoned, "then I am entitled to call for a full reading of all the papers and my own submission, and that would take far longer than the thirty minutes allotted."

That made more sense. With a spring in my step I went back to Cell 19. Hornicek let me phone Bente in London and I confirmed that the general view was that I would be home the next day. I

washed the cell's walls and floor, and began to go through my papers and package things up—the manuscripts I had written here in captivity, throwing away much dead paper, and tidying things for a quick getaway if the appeal succeeded, yet aware all the time that by doing so I was tempting Providence.

LATER that afternoon Officer Grobmann unlocked the door to escort me to an unscheduled last discussion group before Christmas. The Viennese newspapers and radio were bookmarking the coming appeal widely, while making no predictions. The group's other five participants all knew that the hearing was slated for the next day; there was a tinge of envy about their remarks.

Grobmann had brought a case of beer into the room—none of us had seen alcohol since we arrived. He plonked a can of Schwechater lager on the table in front of me, but I pushed it aside.

"No offence," I said, "but a coffee would do me fine."

The others, all meanwhile sentenced to terms of eight and even ten years and waiting for their appeals, were eager to deflate me. One well-informed prisoner loudly scoffed that Dr. Schaller was manifestly wrong—there was no way that my appeal would succeed: "From this prison, only three have got away with an appeal to the OLG in the last five years," he said.

As he said the words "got away", an image of the homemade glider in the loft of Colditz Castle flickered into my mind's eye, but it failed to blot out the preceding words "only three".

Be realistic, they all slyly agreed, forget about it; and Grobmann, the plain-clothes police officer, nodded with a friendly, Christmassy, grin. Their vote was unanimous: the appeal had no chance of success.

As I padded back to the cell in my sandals, I realised now with dread that I had given Bente and Jessica the wrong information. I had raised false hopes. I softly cursed Dr. Schaller for his forced and misplaced optimism.

DECEMBER 20, 2006 was a Wednesday, and became more immediately memorable for me because it was the first day that I actually

saw the Christmas city of Vienna, close to whose heart I had been living for fourteen months.

Guards and the sudden ceiling lights awakened me at six a.m. as usual. I dressed in my "best" clothes, such as they were. A beetle had made a meal of one blazer sleeve, I noticed only now.

I disconsolately peeled the last photos of my children and grandchildren off the wall where they had accumulated over the months, sprawling outwards across the plaster in all four directions like new suburbs of Las Vegas across the Nevada desert. Inspector Bernhard Hornicek noticed their absence at once when he came round unlocking doors for the breakfast cart a few minutes later; I think I saw him shake his head slightly, but he already knew what I was thinking, and made no comment.

In my diary I pencilled these lines:

> In view of last night's remarks by Officer Grobmann, I now have little hope of the appeal succeeding: only three have succeeded at the OLG in recent years, he said; Dr. Herbert Schaller humanely kept that little statistic from me.

The prison officers' escort party fetched me at eight-thirty and a jovial officer with a walrus moustache carried out the obligatory body search. I had tucked an Agatha Christie paperback into my blazer pocket as a prop for the cameras.

"What's the book?" he asked. He had evidently been told not to let me carry *Hitler's War* into court again. I still managed to slip an open fountain pen into my handcuffed hands however, my trademark, I explained to The Walrus: I am a writer. . .

Toward nine o'clock they drove me through Vienna's late morning rush-hour to the Palace of Justice. I found myself sharing the closed prison van with an eastern European hoodlum; I could not really see his appeal succeeding either.

It was unusual to see people, crowds, cars, trees, birds, and children. I had forgotten all about them. The van delivered me into the closed yard of the building, and after several minutes' delay while they adjusted the handcuffs and waited for the signal to proceed,

like stagehands at the Covent Garden Operahouse, we went up in the elevators to the courtroom level.

As I stepped out of the roomy metal-walled elevator, I found that the whole building was filled incongruously with live classical music, inevitably that of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. A string quartet was playing in the enclosed atrium below us. It was almost surreal, as the delicious baroque music floated up to the marble galleries and ceiling, and the squad of grim-faced police encircled me and forced a way through the crush of press photographers and television cameras. I was conscious that I now looked a real thug with my razored-down hair and puffy, pallid prison skin.

In the courtroom itself I saw the now usual (though to an English eye, deeply unfamiliar) crush of press photographers and television cameras; flanked only inches away by police officers, I had to stand and then sit there for fifteen minutes while these jackals clicked and flashed and whirred away at me.

The five appeal judges were already in court. Their president Ernst Maurer looked disconcertingly like me. Throughout the two hours that we were there he ran his tongue around his dry lips as though dying, or at least in need of water; he looked almost frightened of what was going on. It did not encourage me.

Herbert Schaller, my lawyer, bustled forward and warned me to give no interviews, now or later—not in Austria: "They're out for blood," he whispered.

About fifty members of the public and journalists packed the public gallery; to my surprise, I spotted Réka, the goodlooking Malev flight attendant, against the rear wall, very fetching in a powder blue suit. I had not expected her to come from Budapest. She must have been up all night.

She had driven over once a month with her fiancé to chat with me for fifteen minutes from behind a soundproof glass window in Josefstadt prison; she had had to set out at three a.m. to get to Vienna in time for each visit if somebody else was not to beat her to it. She would not understand a word of the German proceedings; I beckoned her over and shook her hand before the uniformed heavies surrounding me could step between us.

As they tugged her away I indicated gratefully that I was wearing the necktie, trousers, and socks that she had contributed for the cause—mostly bought on her long-haul flights to the Far East.

I recognised too Wolfgang Frölich, a Holocaust revisionist whom Schaller had also rescued from a lengthy imprisonment, standing at the back of the courtroom taking photos, and he was even illegally filming until they stopped him.

The appeal proceedings began. I no longer expected any good to come of it all. Rather alarmingly, the auxiliary judge, a young female, read out the whole of Judge Liebetreu's fifty-page Judgment of February 20, in a toneless, unaccentuated voice. It took her the best part of an hour. My heart sank. It rather destroyed the basis of Schaller's confident prognosis.

At one point where I quoted in my 1989 lectures a particularly shocking 1942 Foreign Office admission that they themselves—British propagandists—had invented the gas chamber story for war purposes ("That too was a lie"), I interjected: "Quote–unquote"—that was a quotation, namely, it was not I who had said it.

I was not comfortable with what I had heard. There were many points I had made quite forcefully in those 1989 lectures that I would not make today, and the Liebetreu Judgment had included nothing of the balancing arguments I had made for the other case.

Read out in that toneless, flat legal voice, it sounded very extreme, and it soon got worse, as the Chief Prosecutor, the chief public prosecutor, addressed the court, heatedly and with many gesticulations, for half an hour, demanding a much stiffer penalty than the three years already handed down to me (and no doubt wishing that a death sentence could have been possible).

I felt certain now that the sentence would go up, and heard whispers of "fünf"—"five years" from behind me, which I thought perhaps even an underestimate.

MY OWN friend and attorney Dr. Herbert Schaller, veteran of many a legal battle, fearless and patriotic too, would now deliver the final act. Gathering his black robe around his shoulders like a schoolmaster, he rose to his feet and orated as though he were addressing

a public meeting.

Waves of silent applause rolled across the public benches toward him. An oddly droll, proud-looking little man, wiry, red faced and tough, he spoke unlike the Chief Prosecutor without notes—he was after all a veteran and an expert—and with great force.

How dare the prosecution, he asked, adduce against me, both now and in February, my lectures around the world (which were not about the Holocaust anyway)? They were not illegal anywhere in the world except in Austria. Austria can not claim to police the world, he thundered, and he repeated twice that I had not been properly defended at the lower level, in February—a grave rebuke for his lackadaiscal, slipshod, couldn't-care-less predecessor Dr. Elmar Kresbach. Quite so.

Even so, I was now without hope. At Judge Maurer's invitation I addressed the court in German, also without notes though only briefly, for perhaps two minutes or more, anticipating that my voice would not now be heard in public for several years.

I pointed out that Judge Peter Liebetreu's February 2006 Judgment, as read out by his female colleague, had of course quoted only the "prosecutable" parts of my two 1989 lectures in Austria, but that the lectures had been, if taken as a whole, properly balanced pro and con, and that this was why the police officials who actually attended at our invitation each time found (and recorded) that I had not broken the law; that I had now been held for over four hundred days in solitary confinement; that Bente is very ill, and that if I were to be imprisoned further I could not be exchanged to a British prison, because the Austrian law, the Banning Law, had no parallel in Britain—one of the prerequisites for such bilateral prisoner exchanges. In other words, I would not see my family for years, if even then.

The panel retired to consider, and I seized this bleak moment for a final chat with Réka. I said goodbye to my friends in the courtroom too and shook hands all round so far as I could. The police guards made no attempt to intervene.

THE final act. Courtroom officials called everybody to silence after

half an hour, and the five judges filed back in. Judge Maurer held a sheaf of typed pages in his hands, and when everybody was silent he began to read out their findings. I tried not to betray any emotions either way. The sun had come out outside and a beam shafted across the room, as the judge straight away dismissed the prosecution's arguments, one hundred percent, reciting all the reasons that Dr. Schaller had enunciated; and in his immediately following remarks he equally accepted all of ours.

I was to be freed immediately. I noticed that he was now licking his lips more frantically than before.

Perplexed, relieved, and frankly shocked at this unexpected outcome, my face unfroze. I half-turned to my right, caught Dr. Schaller's eye, and winked. His benign features slowly creased into a Sphinx-like smile. Was this perhaps no surprise to him at all—what had just happened? The doors swung open and shut as two pressmen rushed out to be the first to phone home. The jackals of the Austrian press were not going to like this at all.

These five judges could still not overturn Judge Liebetreu's monstrous judgment—I am told that this was because Austria would then have had to pay major compensation to me—but in their findings they had adjusted the sentence to effect an immediate release; time served, in other words.

Still an injustice, but what the hell. The police guards who had been only inches from my chair throughout the proceedings now pulled discreetly back; the cameras flashed, and the photos showed that several of the police officers were wearing broad smiles—for them, this was a popular decision all round.

THE flight attendant in powder-blue disentangled herself from the public gallery and dashed forward to give me a warm hug, which felt so good after all those months alone. Her young fiancé looked on indulgently. Fly Hungarian!

"Give no interviews in Austria!" Dr. Schaller again instructed, protecting my interests: journalists, as we have found, have a tendency to distort things to create fresh stories. He told me that the police had assured him I would now be freed, and not deported.

He handed over one thousand euros, provided by an Austrian supporter, to pay for my one-way flight back to London, and then almost at once he was gone, as this brave and tireless advocate left for the eight-hour journey to Mannheim, where he was defending Ernst Zündel in that man's mammoth, year-long trial, almost ignored by the media. I will probably never see him again.

The press clung around asking questions that now had an altogether different, more respectful hue. Open season seemed to have ended.

At eleven-thirty, the police drove me back across Vienna to the Josefstadt prison. The officers accompanying me began cracking off-colour jokes, and two even began educating me about what they and everybody else knew: "You've been the victim of a small religious clique, a people not like us at all. They were the ones really behind your arrest in 2005." I made no response.

THE sun had briefly gone back in again. I was back in Josefstadt prison and I should have been a free man, and yet I was not. Shortly—despite what Dr. Schaller had assured me—I was escorted before the Aliens Police for expulsion proceedings. The clique of "people not like us at all" had evidently sprung into action again.

Dr. Schaller had already left for Mannheim. I refused to sign any documents. The hours passed, and I was still detained, behind locked doors, hanging around in the foyer of our Cell Block. I made a few phone calls, but my phone cards were nearly out of juice.

I phoned the Press Association (PA) in London to arrange a big press conference at the Marriott Hotel on Grosvenor Square, next to our old home, at seven p.m. this evening, and I put my brother John in charge.

Immediately, it occurred to me that this call to the PA might easily yet become another undoing—I might still be under Judge Liebetreu's prohibition order and not allowed to call the press.

The hours passed. An officer brought me my latest mail, thirty more letters, including one from Bente, one from a lawyer searching for me about a bequest, and one from Rym Belkhodja (a long-lost Tunisian friend from 1982). Preoccupied with the inexplicable

delay, I put them aside to read on the plane to London.

I got through eventually to Bente, and she had disconcerting news: the BBC was reporting in London that Judge Liebetreu was livid with the court of appeal for overturning his judgment that morning, and that he was even now casting about for ways to detain me pending a fresh prosecution for the interviews I had given the BBC and Austrian press in February.

I had no way of knowing how true this BBC report was. Inspector Hornicek, our Block Chief, confided to me that there had indeed been an unheard-of development—Judge Liebetreu was refusing to sign my release order pending the arrival of the actual paper warrant from the OLG. It was a very thin pretext. It looked like he was stalling for time. He had been told the decision verbally by the court, by phone, but he was refusing to accept that. Everybody at the OLG had gone home. Three or four hours had passed since the OLG had ordered my release, and I was still very much a prisoner behind locked doors. It looked to me like another ambush.

So at 2:30 p.m. a most unpleasant interlude began. The prison officers were all going off duty as usual; the whole jailhouse was about to be buttoned down for the night.

Hornicek, now dressed in his street uniform, showed up again and invited me with an easy grin to return to my old cell. With a rattle of heavy keys, he slammed the door behind me as I went in; it looked very bare and inhospitable without my family's pictures on the wall.

I noticed that there was already somebody else's name on the door. I was no longer in solitary: My cell now also housed a chain-smoking Viennese thug, mentally unbalanced, and evidently deeply unhappy about his incarceration. He looked like another candidate for the rope, like last week's other two "C"-Block unfortunates.

I made diary notes of the day on scraps of paper.

This intermezzo ended at 4:30 p.m. It was already dark. A police escort extricated me and drove me across Vienna to the Police Jail. There was no explanation for the move, except perhaps that this building came under a different ministry than the Josefstadt jail. The driver said that thirty more letters had already arrived for me,

but perhaps I would not now get them.

The mood seemed somehow more restless than that morning. There was a perceptibly inflated evening shift of officers waiting to receive me, their now notorious prisoner. They told me I was to be held here for one or two more days pending—an almost imperceptible pause—formalities.

In this new building I was stripped and searched, and my dwindling possessions were registered once again; it was all the usual chicanery but I was philosophical, resigned, even blasé about it now.

One officer asked, "Who was the beautiful young Hungarian in court?"—everybody was commenting on her. Prison visitor, I told him, which was true; and perhaps he made a mental note to become a writer too. I weighed in at 110 kilos, six less than when I was arrested in 2005, and height 186 cm; but for the weight, I could have just made it into the *Leibstandarte*, Hitler's Guards Brigade.

I HAD expected to be in London by this time, with a big press conference to address this evening, but here I was getting ready to be locked down again for the night, and I was getting tired of it.

At five p.m. all my possessions were opened and re-boxed. They told me they would bring the rest of the money in my canteen account over from Josefstadt prison tomorrow.

That was the least of my concerns. Before they locked me in, at five-thirty I phoned Bente in London, to tell her I would not be home tonight after all, as I was being held in a different Vienna jail and had not been told why. I would now hold the London press conference in two days' time, on December 22, as I could not even bank on being back tomorrow. "*It seems like clouds are gathering*," I said; more than that I decided not to tell her.

With one phone card empty and the other looking very frail, I called my brother John in Wiltshire again and asked him to rebook the Marriott conference room for Friday; I again phoned the Press Association, still from a payphone in this very obliging Viennese police HQ, and postponed the press conference until then.

By eight p.m. my new jailers had put a dish with three bread

rolls and some cheese-quarters into the cell, and a plastic pouch of toilet articles. The cell had one small window, too high up to see out of. The walls were covered with deep scratches and graffiti. A previous occupant had scratched a calendar in Cyrillic script on one wall, and methodically crossed off the weeks and days for seven months. It did not bear thinking of.

The cell was filthy, but it had clean sheets; I was tempted to stand up all night, but I was hungry and exhausted. I lay down and waited for the glaring ceiling light to go out. It stayed on all night.

IF THE police officers were telling the truth, I would be on a plane out of Austria the next day or so, but I was still a prisoner, despite our appeal court victory. I was held in a Vienna police jail.

Thursday, December 21, 2006 finally brought this whole unsavoury episode to an end. The tone of the captivity subtly changed—perhaps the officers had been reading reports in the press and were now thinking for themselves. Shortly before dawn the commandant himself, the prison governor, unlocked the door, shifted barely perceptibly to attention on the threshold, and murmured courteously: "Mr. Irving, we are deeply ashamed that this is happening. We do not agree with this at all. We will of course have to treat you the same as any other prisoner. . ."

I rewarded him with a strained smile, and said that I expected no different.

The Aliens Police took me in for final interrogations; no surprises there either, but I answered no questions beyond the absolutely necessary. Name, age, and number. With Dr. Schaller himself away in Mannheim, Germany, his daughter Elisabeth, also a fine lawyer, came in to continue the fight. She formally expressed our outrage that the government had broken its undertakings about expulsion.

The police responded that I was to be held one or even two more days, pending flight arrangements. Knowing whom we were really up against, we suspected that there were other reasons for detaining me on Austrian soil. The British press too was expressing puzzlement that I was being detained two more days ostensibly "to

speed my departure."

The police offered the excuse that they had no escort officers available today, but Elisabeth Schaller insisted: we needed no escort; I must be permitted to fly out today, since the appeal court had ordered my release; using her cell phone in front of the police officials, she calmly booked me on to an Austrian Airlines flight scheduled to leave for London at 5:15 p.m. It would cost 437 euros, nearly six hundred U.S. dollars (not cheap, but British Airways were asking twice as much).

She told me that my appeal victory had dominated the TV discussion panels here in Vienna last night, with the Jewish Cultural Community and all the usual suspects expressing outrage—acting like Shakespearean Shylocks, furious at being short-weighted on their pound of flesh.

Réka and other loyal friends had asked her to tell me that they had hung around Vienna airport yesterday for six hours waiting to wish me farewell and God-speed.

The attempted police interrogation continued. On Elisabeth Schaller's cellular phone, still in the police office, I took several incoming calls. The BBC asked if they could come with a TV camera to interview me in this building; the officer pinked and panicked, when I asked him, and said no.

I did take a lengthy call from a reporter of Agence France Presse. I fed him some safe morsels—that the prison commandant had privately apologised, and in a very decent way; that I was no Holocaust denier—people who said the opposite had clearly never read my books; and that historian Raul Hilberg had declared that 80 percent of the Holocaust had never been researched, and that some historians should not be imprisoned for thinking differently from others.

Asked how I had spent my time, I added that I had done so "recalibrating", resetting all my mental dials to zero; and as a final aside, on an impulse, knowing what journalists need—namely a headline story—I fed him the words: "Mel Gibson was right."

He knew what I was getting at, but asked me all the same; I declined to amplify. I knew those words alone would do the trick. It

was payback time.

Still from that police interrogation room, I called John in southwest England again. My brother said that there had been good coverage of yesterday's appeal triumph and the lively courtroom scenes were shown on the BBC and other television channels, but that the BBC's "Newsnight," Britain's most popular late news programme, had cancelled, so it looked as if the Board of Deputies of British Jews had already put the boot in there. The Board had protested vigorously by letter to the BBC for allowing me onto the screen after the Lipstadt Trial and insisted that it never happen again. The Marriott had also come under pressure, and were revoking their contract for tomorrow's conference; asked for a reason, they had been rather mysterious about it.

"Tell me the Old, Old Story," I yodelled to him, and asked him, as my phone card gasped to an end, to notify the Press Association that I would issue new location details at the last possible moment tomorrow.

Elisabeth remarked to me once again, as had her father, that none of this would have happened if I had not fallen for that incompetent charlatan Dr. Elmar Kresbach as my first lawyer.

That was true, but possibly there would also have been only one-hundredth of the media noise in consequence.

The journalists' questions showed that my call for an international boycott of German and Austrian historians was hitting home.

I had decided on this tactic two nights earlier. I have not studied the life of Dr. Joseph Goebbels for nothing. It was one of his recommended techniques: Always counter-attack, but elsewhere. "If they start asking about the concentration camps," he had dictated to his staff in 1942, "we wade into them about the poverty and starvation in British India."

I was returned to my cell, and an officer brought me real Viennese coffee. A little procession followed, one might even call it a pilgrimage. At mid-day four officers traipsed in, with a *Gruppeninspekteur* at their head, and a young ordinary Inspector, Markus, bringing up the rear; they asked for my autograph. Two women

officers shortly followed with the same request, one wanting the signature for her twenty-three year old son. All stayed to chat, and all expressed private outrage at the whole episode and the world-wide harm it was doing to Austria.

As they left, they made as if to leave the cell door open as a courtesy; I suggested they close it, to observe the formalities, observing that it was all the same to me.

It was now a race between Judge Liebetreu and the Public Prosecutor's office and the police—the former's efforts to get their second indictment against me drawn up in time to serve it, and the police determination to carry out their duty to remove me from Austria. It was not hard to see where the latter's real sympathies lay.

I WONDERED if "the Jews" ever realised the lasting harm they did to their own community's long-term interests by this unbridled persecution fervour against me and other writers; in my case, they had erred, they had stumbled across a famous victim, and one not afraid to hit back.

At noon-thirty a guard brought a tray with lunch—dumplings and an excellent goulash. Another *Gruppeninspekteur* came in with a sheet of paper in his hand for an autograph. I complimented him on the lunch, and since he hung around I remarked on the alien scum that I had often encountered in the Josefstadt jailhouse yard.

The officer—he stuck out a hand to shake, and said his name was Toni—loosened up at once, and said: "That's the European Union for you, for God's sake. It's the end."

One wondered why, I said, and who was behind it; and he nodded in silent endorsement.

As the afternoon dragged on, I began to wonder if I had been foolhardy in feeding that Mel Gibson teaser to a press agency while still on Austrian soil.

I realised that I had heard the agency man typing my answers straight onto a keyboard, so they would be on the wires by now. If he had embellished them in any way, it might well land me back in the goulash. Austria was still a police state. I had been very careful

with what I did say and what I did not, but we knew by now what evil-spirited journalists would do to flog their stories.

Before I could leave there had to be yet another medical. Blood pressure 158, pulse normal, in fact "fit enough for sports" as the woman doctor said. Yes, but the muscles, the muscles . . . months of virtual inactivity, and a cot by night that was always four inches too short.

Back in the cell, three more hours elapsed and then suddenly it was clear we were winning the grotesque race with the clock. Escorted to a chilly prison van with new officers and two dishevelled Romanian deportees, I was at last driven out from underneath the building's roll-up doors. We hurtled through the rush-hour streets of Vienna to the airport with police-sirens howling and flashing blue lights, and ran the lights at every intersection as though it were a real emergency.

The Romanians tried to make small talk, but I decided to ignore them for these remaining minutes of purgatory.

No more Mr. Nice-Guy; or, as the Americans would say, I was fresh out of niceness now. I dug out of my pocket the letter that arrived from Bente as I left Josefstadt yesterday and read it quietly through. She had had a very hard time, but it was warm and friendly.

At the airport, we parked on a police stand, and waited. The officers went away. The minutes turned into hours. We were abandoned. There was some kind of problem now in London. The police officers had all gone inside the warm terminal building and were in no hurry to return. When they returned, I even overheard talk of returning me to the jailhouse in Vienna, with all the fresh dangers that that offered.

The police van's engine had long been switched off, and we were held on this outside parking stand for hours on end in the bitter cold; all flights in to London were being delayed by the worst fog there for years. The airport there was shut, with scores of planes moaning around in holding patterns over the Home Counties, unable to get in.

At last two police officers came to fetch me with the tickets. I

learned that my boxes of books and manuscripts had just cost me another four hundred euros—four times what my original return ticket had cost. All my cash had dribbled away again.

If the Austrian taxpayers had been paying for the ticket, and not I, an officer would have been required to accompany me, handcuffed to me, all the way to Heathrow. Such are the perils of writing real history in Europe today.

The handcuffs were removed for the last time. Inside the brightly lit terminal the officers loosened up, I invited them to coffee and bought Austrian newspapers: I was happy to see that the country's journalists were foaming with obscenities about me. They knew which side their bread was buttered on.

What venal cowards they were. The *Journaille*, as Goebbels called them, and by now I knew why. Nothing had changed since then, just the invisible armbands that they wore.

I HAD paid the extra for a business-class seat, thanks to that kind Austrian supporter. I settled down into the Austrian Airlines leather to sleep for the two-hour flight home.

I had a lot to think about. I went through my pockets, and found the two exhausted phone cards: I tucked them into the seat pocket in front. Goodbye Austria.

After fourteen months without income, damage-repair would occupy me for many months to come: we had lost book sales, publishing contracts, air tickets, lecture engagements, our home and many of my possessions; Bente had become very unwell and my imprisonment had not helped her. Later this night I would find over six thousand emails waiting for me to read and answer.

In all these months since the moment of my arrest, there had been not one sound, not a peep, from the students who had invited me to speak, the wealthy Vienna student corporation "Olympia": no apology, message, letter, or visitor had come from them. My brief inquiries to the corporation from prison had gone unanswered. I had been left to fend for myself.

That, and the hundreds of *anonymous* letters of support I had received, showed that Germans and Austrians believe, deep down,

that they are living once again in police states.

The Airbus lifted off the Austrian runway two hours late, but we were served a good meal in this class, with real meat for the first time in months and good wine too.

In my first week of imprisonment, while still in Graz-Jakomini jail, I had once dreamed that I was flying home, and that a flight attendant was bringing me a bottle of champagne with the compliments of British Airways after my ordeal, to the loud applause of all the passengers. This meal was almost as good. I declined the alcohol, of course; I had always steered clear of it.

We landed heavily at Heathrow—a totally blind landing—around nine-thirty. A jostling, elbowing, politely unruly pack of press and television photographers was thronging the walkway off the plane, rather mystifyingly for the other passengers following behind me. After all, I was no Tom Cruise or Kate Middleton.

More newsmen waited outside the Customs area. The BBC could not now use me—I phoned them first—it was too late. Most U.K. national newspapers had already gone to press. Damn the English fog. Channel 4 was also lost. Here at Heathrow airport I suddenly felt very tired. I bought a new phone card and some English money. I stayed for an hour talking to Reuters, and to other reporters in the arrivals area, and to a young lady Associated Press interviewer. In the Americas it was still only afternoon and evening. So there was still a meagre plus side to the profit-and-loss account of all those days in solitary.

I had banked on getting at least one broadcaster to offer to drive me into the city. Now, with so much baggage, I would have to take a cab to London, which robbed me of another sixty pounds.

"Take me to Sloane Street," I groaned, and gave the cabbie the street number. It was long after eleven p.m., and an icy, damp, cold, London winter evening. A chilly sleet had replaced the earlier fog as we pulled out of the airport complex, fourteen months after I had parked my car there—long since stolen—for a two-day trip to lecture students in Austria.

"Four hundred days in solitary," said the cockney driver. "Gorblimey!"

I began to tell him about Rudolf Hess, and Spandau prison, and forty-seven years, but decided not to.

He deposited me with my suitcase and two boxes at the apartment building's showcase front door. Of course I had not yet seen our new home. We had lost our old one on March 20 thanks to my "kidnapping", as I now called it, and Bente had made the move here all on her own.

The block had a big art deco frontage of the Thirties, in one of London's fashionable streets, and through the glass I could see that the foyer was warm and brightly lit.

The concierge's desk was empty. I thought again of those bikes rusting in the warmth of sub-tropical Key West, I straightened my tie, and I rang the bell of our apartment.

The snow had now reached London's West End and it had begun drifting down around me, and I finally noticed how cold it had become. I was in my shirtsleeves and a pullover. It was nearly midnight, and Bente and Jessica had probably given up and gone to bed.

A minute or two passed. I rang the bell again.

The street was deserted. In the distance I heard a police car's siren, and saw flashing blue lights coming from Sloane Square. For the briefest instant I stiffened, then relaxed: No, I said to myself, you're safe in London now.