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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 13, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR LINAS KOJELIS

FROM: Marshall Breger 

Can you please communicate the substance of the enclosed with Barry Fisher.

Thank you.


Enclosure

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 1, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR MARSHALL BREGER
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR PUBLIC LIAISON

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS 
ASSOCIATE COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council

You have asked for our views on a request from Barry Fisher that the President "by Presidential directive create an associate status for three or four members of the Gypsy community leadership which would give them an ex-officio status with the Council allowing them of right of access to all privileges of that body." As you know, the Council is a creature of statute. The methods of appointing its membership, Executive Director, employees, experts, and consultants are all fixed by law. See 36 U.S.C. §§ 1401-1405. Under these circumstances it would be inappropriate for the President to attempt to interfere with the legislative scheme for the Council by unilaterally creating a new class of offices associated with the Council and according that new class rights with respect to the Council's activities.

The appropriate course for Mr. Fisher to pursue would seem to be to encourage the appointment as members of the Council of individuals who share his concerns about representation of the Gypsy community in the Holocaust Memorial.

Thank you for raising this matter with our office.



Romania of Mass., Inc.

1135 Salem Street • Malden, Massachusetts 02144

Telephone 617/426-4586

JOHN TENE,
President

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 3/ No. 1

March 1985

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE

The Days of Remembrance Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council has invited John Tene, President of the US Romani Holocaust Council, to attend the Annual National Civic Commemoration of Victims of the Holocaust.

Beginning on Thursday, April 18, there will be a commemoration at noon in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C. Leaders of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, the Administration and Congress will speak. Days of Remembrance will also observe the fortieth anniversary of liberation, and units that liberated the camps in 1945 will also be represented.

This invitation is a sign of recognition of E Romani Kris ande America, and will give Roma an opportunity to demonstrate their deep concern and unity on the issue of Romani victims of the Holocaust. All Roma are urged to attend the ceremonies, in order to show the solidarity of Roma people, both in this country and abroad.

AN EVENING OF COMMEMORATION THROUGH THE PERFORMING ARTS

The annual Evening of Commemoration through the Performing Arts will be held on Sunday, April 21 at 8:00 p.m. in the Convention Hall Auditorium of the Civic Center in Philadelphia. The Evening of Commemoration is being held at the Inaugural Assembly of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors.

Among the notables who will perform works of art created during the Holocaust are Jacqueline Bisset, Lorne Greene, James Earl Jones and Ted Koppel. Metropolitan opera star Martina Arroyo and pianist Jorge Bolet will perform, as well as the Singing City Choir. Elie Wiesel, Chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, will speak.

Inquiries for tickets and information should be directed to:

American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust
Survivors
122 W. 30th Street, Suite 205
New York, New York 10001

POMANA TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
FOR ROMANI HOLOCAUST VICTIMS

A pomana is a mourning ritual, traditionally observed for three days after the death of a person. During this time, it is prohibited to bathe, shave, change clothes, comb hair or wear jewellery, and all mirrors are covered. The day the body is buried, a pomana sinia, or death feast, is held, and there a designated person wears the clothes of the deceased and represents his departed spirit. He is honored with toasts and praises lauding his character and achievements in life. Several pomana are held throughout the year until the soul of the departed one is, in loving sorrow, finally released.

On the evening of April 18, a pomana for Romani Holocaust Victims will be held -- forty years after the fact -- to honor those Roma who perished in the Holocaust. Their spirits will be personified by Roma who will wear the striped camp uniforms, and they will be symbolically honored with toasts and testimonies. Traditional pomana food will be offered at the Governor's House Holiday Inn (1615 Rhode Island Ave. N.W.) at 6:30 p.m. All participants in Days of Remembrance ceremonies, and members of the press, are invited to attend. During the pomana testimony of Romani survivors will be read aloud in Romanes and in English. Traditional and modern Gypsy music will be heard, and a film will be shown depicting the World Romani Festival held in Chandigarh in 1983, which was attended by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

In typical Romani tradition, this pomana will be made possible by personal donations from Romani leaders who serve on the Council. Their generosity expresses their sincere wish to reach out to fellow survivors and children of survivors of the Holocaust in a gesture of pride in the past, and trust in a mutually shared future.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE U.S. ROMANI COUNCIL

The United States Romani Council will convene in Washington, D.C. on April 17 at 6:00 p.m. at the Governor's House Holiday Inn. Issues of importance to American and European Roma will be discussed, as well as relations with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

HOTELS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Inquiries among hotels in Washington near the Holocaust Memorial Council indicate that most hotels are booked during this high season in Washington, D.C. A list of hotels in the area will help you to make your reservations directly.

Governor's House Holiday Inn
1615 Rhode Island Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-296-2100

Grammercy Hotel
202-347-9550

Ramada Inn
202-462-7777

Quality Inn
16th Street
202-232-8000

Dupont Plaza
1500 New Hampshire St. N.W.
800-421-6662

COMMEMORATION PLANNED BY E TSOXA LOLI

At the time of going to press, plans are being discussed with John Megel of the Red Dress Society and Roma in New York and New Jersey to hold a commemoration at Patragi on April 14, in Linden, New Jersey. Megel stated recently that, "As an American, I feel ashamed ~~it~~ has taken this country 40 years to even begin to address the subject of persecution of Roma. The Rom had to endure genocide alone, without one voice of protest arising anywhere in the world."

FIFTY YEARS OF THE ROMANI MOVEMENT

The invitation to the Annual National Civic Commemoration of Days of Remembrance is an historic occasion that marks the long and painful road towards international identity and dignity among the Rom.

Fifty years ago the first international congress was held in Bucharest. At that time there was a Romani Society in Belgrade, which published its bulletin, Romano Lil, and another Romani organization was formed in Athens called the Panhellenic Romani League. In the United States in 1927 Steve Kaslow founded E Tsoxa loli (Red Dress Society). The Russian Romani Union was initiated in Moscow in 1928, and a year later the famous Gypsy Theatre of Moscow was opened. A strong organization of Roma in Poland was led by Michael and his son, Janusz Kwiek.

After the Second World War many organizations sprang up around Europe -- Phralipe in Yugoslavia and the Verband Deutscher Sinti in Germany. In Paris the Organisation nationale Gitane was created, as well as the Communaute mondiale Gitane, which was later changed to the Comitè internationale Tzigane. The Association des Gitans de France was founded in Provence, and in Spain the Secretariado Gitano was supported by the Catholic Church, and now has a representative in the Spanish Parliament. In 1966 the Gypsy Council was established in London, and in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s two Romani organizations were formed.

A World Romani Congress was held in 1971 in London under the auspices of the English Gypsy Council, and the Comitè internationale des Tziganes. There, the Romani symbol of the Ashok shakra -- the wagon wheel, as well as the Indian symbol of destiny -- was designed in red on a background of green and blue, designating earth and sky. The anthem of Dzelem, Dzelem was also adopted at that Congress.

Afterwards, the Indian Institute of Romani Studies was instituted in Chandigarh and its publication, Roma, was initiated. An International Romany Festival was held in Chandigarh in 1976. A year later, Prime Minister Desai led a delegation to Geneva to support the Romani Union's petition for minority status to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

In 1978 the Second World Romani Congress was held in Geneva, sponsored by the World Council of Churches. A press conference was held at the Palais des Nations, with Honorary President, Yul Brynner. The International Romani Union was founded in Berne, and thereafter the Romani Union led a delegation to the United Nations in New York to gain consultative status as a non-governmental organization with the U.N. Economic and Social Council.

The Third World Romani Congress was held in Gottingen, Germany in 1981, and was attended by nearly 500 Roma from all over the world. The headquarters was transferred to Belgrade.

Since that Congress, many gatherings have been held all over Europe and India, and the American Roma have formed local organizations, as well as the U.S. Romani Council and the U.S. Romani Holocaust Council.

Great strides have been made in the unification of Gypsy peoples, but much work is still to be done to assure the preservation of their culture, education, economic stability and outward dignity. The words of Grigoras Nicolescu, President of the First Congress in Bucharest fifty years ago, still have meaning: "As long as we progress on the road towards justice, honor and duty, nothing can distract us from our goals, because we have with us a devoted and honorable ally: suffering!"

POMANA HELD IN SPOKANE

Some 150 Rom from eleven states and 26 cities took part in the first pomana to honor victims of the Holocaust, in Spokane, Washington on March 2. It was organized by James Marks III, Vice President of the Romani Holocaust Council. Among the guests were local, state and federal civic leaders.

COMMEMORATION CEREMONIES IN GERMANY

In West Germany, leaders of the Verband Deutscher Sinti, led by Romani Rose, Vice President of the International Romani Union, are joining civic leaders for national commemoration ceremonies at the Dachau and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps in April. It was at Dachau that the Sinti held a 10-day hunger strike to protest the lack of compensation by the German Government to Romani victims of the Holocaust.

FOURTH WORLD ROMANI CONGRESS

Plans are still being formulated, and attempts are being made to raise funds to sponsor a Fourth World Romani Congress in Europe, presumably at Belgrade.

It is hoped that the involvement of the World Council of Churches, the Society for Endangered Peoples, and European and American Romani organizations will make possible the realization of the next Congress in the near future.

Any new information will be published in the next Newsletter of Romania.

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF ROMANIA OF MASS., INC.

John Tene and friends appeared on the Boston Channel 7 television show, "Morning Live" on March 14, where they were interviewed about Gypsy lifestyles and culture, and had a brief opportunity to express the situation of the Romani Holocaust Council.

John Tene will be travelling to New York, Baltimore and Philadelphia to meet with other Roma, in efforts to coordinate commemoration ceremonies of Romani Holocaust victims, and to plan strategies of presentation and unification around the country.

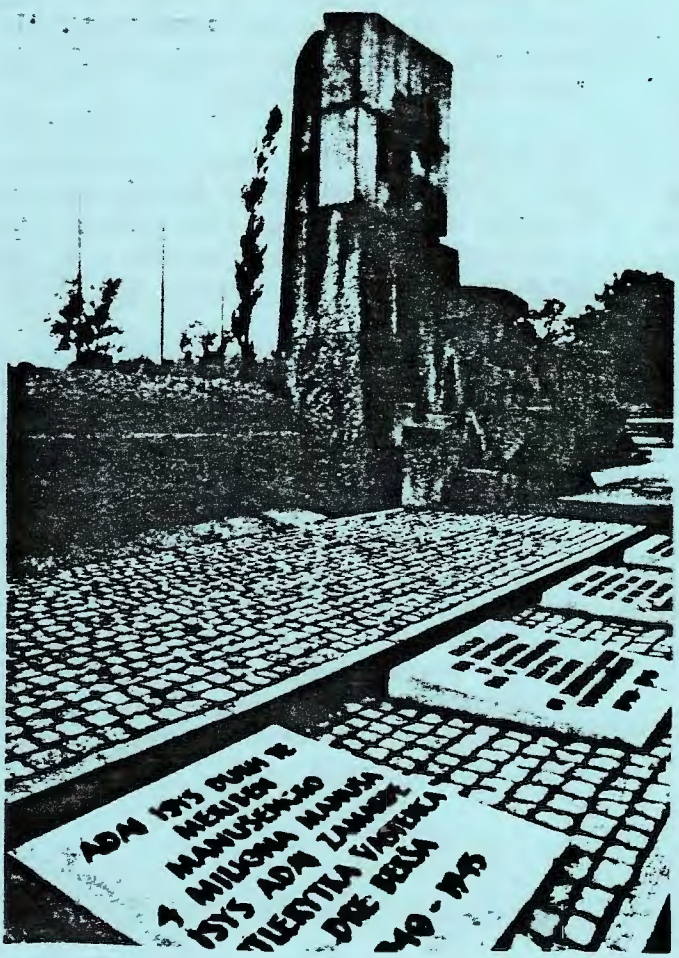
Volunteers are still needed at the Romania center to teach literacy skills, to counsel in health and legal matters, and to write grant proposals in order to raise the funds necessary to carry on the work of the Center.

PUBLICATIONS OF ROMANIA OF MASS., INC.

The following publications have been recently sponsored by Romania of Mass., Inc.

Kaldi, L., "The Fate of the Gypsies in World War II," Proceedings of the First International Conference of Children of Holocaust Survivors, (May 1984, New York) (forthcoming);

_____, "Alternative Education of the Rom in the United States," Traveller Education (Manchester, England) (forthcoming).



Romanes Plaque at Auschwitz-Birkenau Monument

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Many thanks for your Newsletter. /In our publication, Traveller Education 1984: The Journal of Gypsy Education Today,/ we have given some prominence to the U.S. Romani Holocaust Council, and only wish I had more space to offer it."

Dennis Binns
National Gypsy Education
Council
Manchester, England

"Thank you for your...newsletter... which contains a lot of useful information about Romani movement in the world. I was thrilled to see the news item about 'Roma Mourning Indira Gandhi.' Really she was an inspiring source to the entire Roma community."

Dr. S.S. Shashi
Government of India
New Delhi

"Reading your Newsletter gives me a more complete idea of a vital problem, worthy of general attention and with which I feel solidarity. I wish you much luck in your work and look forward to hearing your news."

Antonio Gomez Alfaro
George Borrow Institute
of Gypsy Studies
Madrid, Spain

"By their own admission, /Gypsies/ are crippled by illiteracy and are not familiar with the media. They hide from the public and fear the loss of their children. After being in the U.S. for 200 years they finally want to get involved. Representation in the /U.S. Holocaust Memorial/ Council would be the proper way to do so, and an important historical landmark to them in establishing a national presence. ... we are witnessing a new generation of Gypsy leaders who want to let the world know of their place in history. Won't you please help them?"

Letter to Elie Wiesel,
Chairman, Holocaust Memorial Council
from Jackie Jacobs
Executive Director
Jewish Federation
Binghamton, New York

"Your Newsletter was very interesting for me as we have very little information here... on Romani life in the USA. I am glad I can broaden my knowledge.... News of the Romani movement over the world is helpful for me and other brothers. I send greetings to all Roma in the USA."

Josef Banom
Gagarinova, Czechoslovakia

"As the European Gypsies were an integral part of the Nazi racialist extermination program, we regard it as a tragedy and scandal that none of the Gypsy representatives living in the U.S. was appointed to the board of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council; consequently, the victims of the Nazi Holocaust will only be remembered selectively. As seats on the board of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council will be vacated again in 1986 we urgently ask you to provide for full representation of Gypsies on the Council."

Letter to President Reagan
from Tilman Zulch
Survival International
Gottingen, Germany

* * *

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

While it has been our pleasure to circulate our Newsletter to Roma and friends around the world free of charge, the expense of printing and mailing to over 300 correspondents has become untenable. The news contained in this publication is vital, in the interests of universal solidarity and communication. We must therefore appeal to our readers to support the Newsletter by subscribing, as follows:

Patron -- \$50/year. (Patrons will be profiled in the Newsletter, receive a year's subscription, and a Romania T-shirt.)

Institution -- \$20/year. (Institutions will be profiled in the Newsletter and receive a year's subscription.)

Individual -- \$5/year. (Individuals will receive a year's subscription, and be much appreciated.)

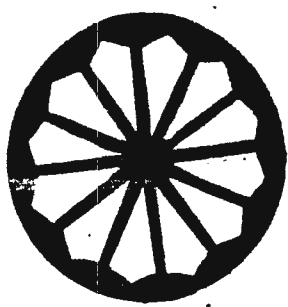
Please send checks to The Editor, Romania of Mass., Inc. (Leita Kaldi), 801 NE 17th Ave., Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33304.

Romania of Mass., Inc.

1135 Salem Street • Malden, Massachusetts 02144

Telephone 617/426-4586





US Romani Council

Affiliated to the International Romani Union

President
John Tene
(617) 426-4586

Vice-President
James Marks
(509) 534-0203

April 17, 1985

DEAR FRIEND,

You are invited to a POMANA in honor of Romani Holocaust Victims.

A POMANA is a mourning ritual, traditionally observed by Gypsies for three days after the death of a loved one. During this time, it is prohibited by custom to bathe, shave, change clothes, comb hair or wear jewellery, and all mirrors are covered. The day on which the body is buried, a pomana sinia -- a feast for the dead -- is conducted, where a designated guest wears the clothes of the deceased, and represents his departed spirit. He is honored with toasts and praises, lauding his character and achievements during his lifetime. The POMANA ceremony is repeated several times during the ensuing year until, at the final feast, in loving sorrow, the soul of the departed one is finally released.

On April 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Governor's House Holiday Inn (1615 Rhode Island Ave NW) a POMANA for Romani Holocaust Victims will be held. The souls of those who perished in the camps will be personified by Roma who will wear the striped uniforms of death, and they will be symbolically honored. Traditional POMANA food will be offered, and all participants in Days of Remembrance commemorations are invited to attend this very special Gypsy ceremony. During the POMANA, testimonies of Romani survivors will be read aloud in Romanes and in English. Traditional and modern Gypsy music will be heard, and a film will be shown depicting the World Romani Festival in Chandigarh in 1983, which was attended by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

In typical Romani tradition, this POMANA will be made possible by personal donations from Romani leaders who serve on the U.S. Romani Council. Their generosity expresses the sincere wish of all Rom to reach out to fellow survivors, and children of survivors, in a gesture of pride in the past, and trust in a mutually shared future.

Te avel o Del tu sa!
(God be with you!)

Patron
Yul Brynner
Founder members
Steve Stanley,
Rhode Island
(2nd. Vice-President)
Alex Adams,
Sacramento, California
Vanja Stevens,
Los Angeles, California
John Ellis,
Portland, Oregon
Leo Evans,
Miami, Florida
Babe Marks,
Washington
Nicholas Tene,
Wisconsin
Cathy Stanley,
California
Steve Bimbo,
Massachusetts
Jane Marks,
Washington
Joseph Tene,
Illinois
Tim Thomas,
Philadelphia
Steve Nicholls,
Washington DC
Larry Mitchell,
Connecticut
Bobbie Nelson,
Missouri

Secretary
Grattan Puxon, 11377 Culver Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90066 Tel: (213) 313-2369

ROMANO

ROMANO - JUMAKO
GIPSY WORLD UNITED



UNION

KHETANIPE
ZIGEUNER WELT UNION
CIGANSKO SVIJETSKO UJEDINJENJE

Stevica Nikolic,
Schollevaartseweg 2,
2908 LD Capelle aan den IJssel,
Holland.
Tel. 010-584473

Herrn Romani Ross,
Berghäimer Strasse 26,
6900 Heidelberg,
Deutschland.

Capelle aan den IJssel, 19-1-1985.

Lacho phrala,

Am 26 und 27 Februar wird ein Internationales Zigeuner Tribunal organisiert im Nederlands Congresgebouw in Den Haag in die Niederlande. Die Gastgeber des Tribunales sind die Vereniging Rom aus Amsterdam und das Internationaal Zigeuner Comité aus Capelle aan den IJssel.

Die Leitwörter des Tribunales sind:

- gegen Diskrimination und Unterdrückung
- für Anerkennung von Identität und Bürgerrechten
- für Emanzipation und Acceptation.

Eine internationale Jury wird nach Zeugnisse von Zigeuner aus viele Länder beurteilen ob internationale Verträge und Übereinkunften geschlossen bei Länder nachgekommen oder verletzt werden gegenüber Zigeuner in diesen Länder.

Zu denken fällt dabei an die Satzung der Vereinten Nationen, das Vertrag von Rom, die Konferenz von Helsinki und die Resolutionen von Eroparat aus 1969 und 1975. Der erste Tag des Tribunales wird öffentlich sein, während der zweite Tag allein für Zigeuner reserviert ist.

Im Namen der Vereniging Rom und das Internationaal Zigeuner Comité habe ich das Vergnügen Sie ein zu laden für das Tribunal auf 26 und 27 Februar 1985.

Können Sie Kontakt aufnehmen mit den Rom und Rom-Sinti in Deutschland um sie zu informieren über das Tribunal und können Sie mich schreiben ob Sie und andere Zigeuner nach dem Tribunal kommen?

Alle Zusammenkunften werden stattfinden im Sweelinckzaal des Nederlands Congresgebouw in Den Haag. Es gibt genug Parkplätze in die Umgebung.

Die Organisatoren können die Gäste in Lunchpause von 12.00 - 13.00 uur eine einfache Mahlzeit anbieten.

Im Namen der Organisatoren hofne ich Sie und viele andere Rom-Sinti am 26 und 27 Februar begrüßen zu können.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

PRESIDENT FOR INTERNATIONAL GIPSY COMMITTEE
STEVICA NIKOLIĆ DJULA

Gypsy meeting

1985. IV. 20.

Bonny Fisher.

John Tene.

Holocaust Commission.

- 10 in January.
- How many & who.
- 500,000 gypsies involved.

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENTS

To: Officer-in-charge
Appointments Center
Room 060, OEOB

Please admit the following appointments on April 19, 19 85

for Linas Kojelis of OPL
(NAME OF PERSON TO BE VISITED) (AGENCY)

FISHER, Barry Allen

PAXON, Grattan J.

MARKS, James II

MEGEL, John

TENE, John

MEETING LOCATION

Building OEOB

Requested by BRENDA WONG

Room No. 436

Room No. 436 Telephone 2741

Time of Meeting 8:30 a.m.

Date of request April 17, 1985

Additions and/or changes made by telephone should be limited to five (5) names or less.

APPOINTMENTS CENTER: SIG/OEOB - 395-6046 or WHITE HOUSE - 456-6742

newsletter

OF THE GYPSY LORE SOCIETY, NORTH AMERICAN CHAPTER

VOLUME 8 NUMBER 1

WINTER 1985

tives perspectives pers

MUSEUM COLLECTING AND EXHIBITING

Richard Ahlborn

At the most fundamental level, the museum curator shares research and educational goals with academic scholars. Each of us begins our research by gathering information and checking its accuracy. We then organize and compare this new information with relevant previously collected data. After the comparative analysis of our data, we attempt to interpret and communicate our findings to others. It is in this "final" process of communication that museums and universities are discovering that they may share a goal of democratic education.

The educational goal of communicating new and better understood social data requires that museum curators maintain a dialogue with academic scholars. Curators must utilize, and work with those most competent in utilizing, accepted methods of archival research and field work, including advances in audio and visual recording techniques. Our shared skills in locating data range from institutionally "submerged" information to "obvious" but overlooked evidence of popular and subcultures. Curators also employ academic training in paleography, statistical analysis and computerized organization of quantified data.

It is especially important that museum curators grasp the field work techniques of ethnohistorians in approaching people of cultural traditions different from our own, people often remote from and understandably suspicious of contact with us. Finally, the curator must combine these academic skills with museum procedures for collecting significant examples of material culture.

With the guidance of academic scholars, social history curators can approach data and object collecting with a set of structured questions and an ability to select appropriate sources of information. These curators must match a firm theoretical approach to a practical ability to recognize a definable ethnic or cultural group and

its changing patterns of social behavior.

The curator in the history museum must draw heavily on academic methodology in selecting and collecting data, both intellectual and physical, from highly variable informational sources -- identifiable social groups and subgroups. Field collecting requires patience, understanding, ingenuity and respect for the data-resource group. I believe that members of the group could be colleagues in the recording and preservation of their heritage.

In organizing and interpreting the collected data, museums should follow proven scientific methods. In the museum these methods include scientific laboratory analysis of physical objects -- artifacts -- to ascertain their materials and structure. The physical constituents and morphology of objects may provide clues to their means, quality, age and place of manufacture. By comparison to other analyzed objects and data, these clues may point to patterns of distribution, symbolic value and other cultural associations.

Along with scientific material analysis of objects, the curator undertakes research on their cultural associations and historical background, and must begin to plan for their preservation and educational exploitation. After tedious museum processes of physically stabilizing and preserving objects, they must be accessioned and categorized for storage in an appropriate climate of controlled temperature, humidity, support, light, access and security. With the conclusion of the initial processes of collecting, recording, preservation, storage and research, the curator may turn onto the path of education. The curator may again choose to emulate academic scholars by communicating information and ideas by means of lectures, discussions and publications.

The museum curator, however, has another option for education, the exhibition. Here, too, there needs to be cooperation between the curator, the academic scholar, and the essential third constituent -- contacts within the group to be studied and recorded. Increasingly, museum curators planning exhibits are turning to both sources of informa-

(Museum continued on p. 2)

PRIX ROMANES

Bogumila Michalewicz

On November 6, 1984, the second Prix Romanes awards ceremony was held in Paris.

Sponsored by the French Ministry of Culture and the Association des Etudes Tsiganes, the meeting was presided over by Matéo Maximoff, the author and founder of the prize, and Pierre Dassau of the Ministry of Culture.

The prize for 1984 was awarded to Jacques Sigot for his book Un camp pour les Tsiganes...et les autres (Bordeaux: Wallada, 1983). The awards jury consisted of Matéo Maximoff, Patrick Williams, Rene Rio, Charles Welty, René Zenelatto and Jarko Jovanovich.

In his book, Jacques Sigot, a teacher, describes Montreuil-Bellay, a little-known camp in France where Gypsies and other prisoners were detained under terrible conditions from 1940 to 1945.

A tapestry created and executed by Raida Maximoff and a bronze, hand-worked by Gypsy artisans from Montreuil, were presented to Sigot as symbols of the award.

About 150 people attended the ceremony held at the restaurant "Trottoirs de Buenos Aires;" entertainment was provided by the Gypsy orchestras of Jo Privat and Matlo Ferret.

∴ Bogumila Michalewicz is a sociologist and criminologist.

newsletter

Gypsy Lore Society, North American Chapter

Published quarterly: February, May, August, November. Copyright © 1985 by the Gypsy Lore Society, North American Chapter, Inc.

Send materials for publication and inquiries to the editors: Matt T. Salo and Sheila Salo, 2104 Dexter Ave., #203, Silver Spring, MD 20902, USA.

Deadline for receipt of materials is the first of the month preceding month of issue.

The Gypsy Lore Society, North American Chapter, Victor A. Friedman, President.

The Gypsy Lore Society, Rena C. Gropper, President; Prof. Sir Ralph Turner, Vice-President; Christopher Beresford-Webb, Hon. Secy., Manor Farm, Henley Road, Coventry, West Midlands, UK.

Views in signed articles in the Newsletter are those of the authors.

(Museum continued from p. 1)

tion: the group and scholarly recorders/collectors of its cultural heritage. This continuing contact between the external academic and museum scholars and the internal members of the group is complex and sensitive.

Both scholars and the internal, human sources of group information may already recognize some obstacles to educating the interested public. In the first place, not everyone in our mass society is interested in learning about all its groups and sub-groups; many are simply too involved with their own struggle for survival. Others carry prejudices and stereotypes that deny them broader human knowledge and experience. Similarly, there are corporate structures and institutions that focus their energies and resources on internal economic goals. Finally, governmental agencies often seem committed to a similar goal of self-survival, with little legislative encouragement of increased funding to support the development or research of smaller, less-powerful cultural groups.

However, each of these groups, such as the Gypsy peoples in North America, have a heritage worth recording and preserving. In the process of preserving the evidence of the cultural heritage of smaller groups, there are the usual risks of external pressure or contamination. There are sensitive questions of academic conscience, social integrity of the group, and scholarly intrusion. All the while, change is surely occurring within the group. What is the appropriate level and type of research into a group? Nelson Graburn and others have pointed out the complex relationship between the First through Fourth World groups in terms of preserving cultural traditions from essential tools and products to "airport art."

Curators of historical and ethnographic collections expand Graburn's concern to all classes of objects -- the stuff used to exhibit the material and intellectual culture of groups to the general public. I believe that when an object is removed from a cultural group it must be done only for an overwhelming purpose, such as public education and the long term preservation of the material culture history of the group. But there are legitimate and legal questions of "fair compensation." If curators, academic scholars and members of the groups agree on goals of recording, preservation and education, perhaps museums can cooperatively collect and exhibit North American Gypsy materials as a goal worthy of this Chapter.

∴ Richard Ahlborn is Curator of the Division of Community Life, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. The above address was delivered at the 6th Annual Meeting of the Gypsy Lore Society, North American Chapter, February 1984. © 1984 Richard Ahlborn. Used with permission.

INTERNATIONAL GYPSY FILM FESTIVAL

Eric Metzgar

From November 9 - 22, 1984, an International Gypsy Film Festival took place at the Fox International Theater in Venice, California. Films screened were: "The Princes" (France 1983, Tony Gatlif, color, 100 min.); "A Day with the Gypsies of England" (Great Britain 1906, Cecil Hepworth, b/w, 6 min.); "Cséplő Gyuri" (Hungary 1978, Pál Schiffer, color, 96 min.); "Angelo, My Love" (USA 1983, Robert Duvall, color, 115 min.); "Carmen" (Spain 1983, Carlos Saura, color, 99 min.); "The Gypsy Camp Vanishes into the Blue" (USSR 1976, Emil Loteanu, color, 102 min.); "Los Tarantos" (Spain 1963, color, 81 min.); "Gypsy Wedding" (USA 1975, Eric Metzgar and Penelope Willens, color, 12 min.); "I Even Met Happy Gypsies" (Yugoslavia 1967, Aleksandar Petrovic, color, 90 min.).

The festival left this observer with rather ambivalent feelings. On the positive side, the range of films about Gypsies ran the gamut of just about every film genre except for the political film of journalistic vein. Interestingly enough, however, the French melodrama, "The Princes," and the Hungarian docudrama, "Cséplő Gyuri," are political (the former more so than the latter) in that their plots focus at times on inequalities within their countries' social systems. The films offered by the Fox International Theater varied from the cinema vérité documentary "Gypsy Wedding" to the historical melodrama "The Gypsy Camp Vanishes into the Blue" and seemed that much more extraordinary because a commercial movie house usually does not put on this sort of thing. One would have thought that a museum might have done it first in this country, since that is what happened in West Germany: March 9-31, 1984, the Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg presented a series at the Metropolis Theater, "Gypsies in Film 1905-1984." Rafigh Pooya, organizer of the International Gypsy Film Festival at the Fox International Theater, deserves credit for his laudable efforts in carrying out a bold experiment which heretofore has never been attempted in the United States.

On the negative side, the film festival as a whole probably did more to reinforce stereotypical notions about Gypsies than it did to dispel them. Despite Pooya's sensitivity towards presenting films of "substance" about Gypsy culture, his efforts in this regard ended up looking more like a token gesture. Unlike the Museum für Völkerkunde's series, Pooya heavily weighted his festival with melodramas, excluding almost entirely documentaries and works under 80 minutes in length. It would be naive, of course, to think that this might have been otherwise, given the realities of the business world of commercial movie exhibitors. Indeed, it was a wonder that any documentary type films were shown at the festival at all. Nevertheless, for the scholar interested in

using filmic representations as a source of valid information about ethnic Gypsies in various lands, the lack of documentary films was a major shortcoming. Of the seven features shown, only "Cséplő Gyuri" could be said to rely on documentary film techniques as the basis of its cinematography. Of the two short subjects screened, only "Gypsy Wedding" clearly belongs in the documentary genre. The other, an English 1906 silent, "A Day with the Gypsies of England," shows a Gypsy wagon group meandering from village to countryside, but the staging of shots, stereotypical costuming, and affected mannerisms makes its authenticity as a documentary rather dubious. One cannot help but wonder if the filmmaker was using the potential of film to fool the public into believing what they were watching was the real thing.

The capacity of film to fool the public has not changed much even with the growing sophistication of the viewing audience since the turn of the century. When audio-visual depictions involve domains that are new or unknown to us, the tendency for most viewers is still to accept "at face value" what one sees on the screen as "the real thing." Producers of entertainment fiction films in particular would be broke if they were unable to use "creative license" -- the reworking and sometimes falsifying of facts -- in order to make a story less time-consuming in production, more economical, or more appealing to an audience. The integrity of minority cultures has generally suffered at the expense of the majority in this regard. The use of creative license in films about Gypsies, for example, has been frustrating for some Gypsy groups. In 1978, Rom in California brought a court injunction to keep "King of the Gypsies" from going into production ("The Continuing Saga of 'King of the Gypsies'," Newsletter Spring 1978). I know that some "Russian" Kalderaš men in Los Angeles were perturbed by the characterization of the leading Gypsy man in "Angelo, My Love" as a lying, no-good, crazy "Russian" Gypsy. A less critical but no less interesting aside came from the Kalderaš women who found fault with the depiction of the young Gypsy bride's wearing a head scarf (diklo) in the scene where the groom finally shows up at his family's home after being out on his wedding night. The women said that the bride should not have put on the diklo because it was too soon -- the marriage had not yet been consummated. The women also commented on how unseemly it was that Angelo's mother should be making all of the decisions without input from Angelo's father. I believe that Robert Duvall has commented in print that the father's absence was due to his lack of cooperation in the making of the film.

Gypsy perceptions of depictions about themselves in films is an interesting line of inquiry that has not been researched in much detail. It was curious, for example,

(Films continued on p. 7)

Nad osudem českých a slovenských Cikánů v letech 1939-1945 [Concerning the fate of the Czech and Slovak Gypsies in the years 1939-1945]. Ctibor Nečas. Brno: Univerzita J. E. Purkyně, 1981. 180 pp. Kčs 25.00 (cloth).

Jiří Lípa

Among the unfortunate groups of society against which the German Nazionalsozialismus, in its reversion to savagery, declared a policy of physical extermination, were the Gypsies. Ctibor Nečas recapitulates in what fateful ways this policy was reflected in the Czech lands (Bohemia and Moravia), and in Slovakia after these countries came under the control of Germany.

All Gypsy cultures are a testimony to the ability of human ingenuity to survive on scanty resources and with simple means even under the most unfavorable conditions. The methods which some Gypsies used for this purpose not infrequently involved sharp practices and disrespected private property, although the extent of it varied in different Gypsy groups and in different countries. Among traveling Gypsies such practices were more frequent than among those Gypsies who had become stationary. But in Hitler's Germany, conflicts between Gypsies and the local population, as annoying as they may have been to the individuals afflicted, were generalized and absolutized by the Nazis: Gypsies were declared an antisocial element and earmarked for physical extinction. In countries which came under the control of Germany during World War II, the Nazi model was increasingly enforced, regardless of the fact that even much less brutal treatment of Gypsies was contrary to the local traditions.

A work describing this topic, as Nečas' book does, should cover three aspects: (1) What the situation of the Gypsies was in the country in question; (2) What measures the authorities took against the Gypsies; (3) What the reactions of the population were: in the first place the reaction of the Gypsies, but also the reaction of the majority, non-Gypsy population. An ideal treatment of this topic should contain a balanced proportion of all three aspects.

The book reviewed here is based primarily on materials of the Slovak authorities which implemented the anti-Gypsy measures, as they

have been preserved in archives. In other words, in Nečas' book, aspect (2) prevails. Aspects (1) and (3) appear only to the extent that they were recorded in the official reports from the archives. The facts which Nečas brings out in his book are so shocking that at first reading we forget the other, missing, dimensions. However, it is necessary to be aware of the fact that aspect (2) does not express the whole situation and full-life reality of the time of the persecution of Gypsies in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia. After all, the facts come basically from one source only. For instance, the description of the conditions in the work camps would have been much more lively had the author included memories of some Gypsy survivors or non-Gypsy witnesses.

Also, much more commentary, for example, Gypsiological and historical background, is needed to picture the actual situation.

Allow me to give an example of what I consider a more balanced picture. In March 1939, Czechoslovakia was legally dissolved by Hitler. Its western part, Bohemia and Moravia, was declared a protectorate of Germany. The former eastern part, Slovakia, was granted to status of a nominally independent republic (the price for this generosity of Hitler was exacted later from the Slovaks in the form of orders which ran against their feelings and interests). Most Gypsies in Slovakia were stationary. Admittedly, from an objective point of view, the majority of them constituted a serious problem since they lived in abject poverty, mostly without skills and regular jobs, with all attendant difficulties. But in Slovakia, which itself was then an underdeveloped country, these problems were considered something like a daily nuisance, a necessary evil. The Slovaks were not ready to do anything about the Gypsies. The measures which the Slovak authorities adopted were not meant to annihilate the Gypsies. But they were so superficial, unpremeditated -- if we want to characterize them in the way that the Slovak authorities themselves should have viewed them in their own interest -- that they only objectively added to the problem which the Gypsies constituted for the surrounding society (I disregard at this point the personal suffering which they brought to the Gypsies). In spite of the persecution, the majority of the Gypsies of Slovakia survived the Nazi era. Unfortunately the opposite is true of Bohemia and Moravia: only a handful of their Gypsies survived.

In general, we can be grateful to Ctibor Nečas for having undertaken the job of finding the material in the archives and for having it published.

∴ Jiří Lípa is a linguist who has worked with several Gypsy groups in Czechoslovakia.

GYPSIES IN URBAN CONTEXTS

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"Da wollten wir frei sein!" Eine Sinti-familie erzählt ["We just Wanted to be Free! A Sinti Family Tells its Story]. Michael Krausnick. Basel: Beltz Verlag, 1983. 172 pp. DM 16.80 (paper).

Gabrielle Tyrnauer

This book contains an oral history of four generations of a German Sinti family, a "private history," but at the same time "a piece of German history, from the empire to the present day."

Krausnick describes his work as a joint undertaking between his informants and himself. The story is "told" rather than written and he sees himself as editor rather than author. This collaboration is applied to the selection and editing of the transcribed tapes as well as to the interviewing process. The result is an "authorized" and "authentic" self-portrait consistent with the recent Sinti civil rights movement's emphasis on self-portrayal and self-representation.

The reader may well ask if such an "authorized" self-portrait can indeed be wholly authentic. The answer must be based on an understanding of the social and historical context of Gypsy research in Germany. For Krausnick, as for many other scholars and journalists of his generation, such research is more than an assignment or a scholarly undertaking. It is the work of Vergangenheitsbewältigung, a coming to terms with the past. The extermination of half a million Gypsies, as well as six million Jews, was accomplished in his lifetime by his parents' generation. He was only a year old when some 4,000 Gypsies were gassed at Auschwitz on a single summer night of 1944. But the sense of historical complicity shapes his awareness and compels him to impose limitations on his research and writing. This awareness heightens the conflict and ethnical dilemmas faced by most field workers when dealing with competing demands of informants' confidences and professional standards.

In addition to this general sense of history, shared from opposite sides of a barbed wire fence, there is a special sense of responsibility derived from the abuse of biological and social science in the racial research institutes of the Third Reich. A new generation of Gypsy researchers treads with exceeding caution on recent historical ground. And for good reason. Their scholarly progenitors were directly implicated in the Nazi persecution and extermination of Germany's Gypsies. German researchers, generously funded by the National Socialist state, counted, measured and classified the Sinti, made the information available to the police and SS, and wrote policy papers recommending measures such as mass sterilization, separation from the German population and deportation. Romani-speaking scholars trained in the tradition of earlier German Gypsiologists, who had made such a large

contribution to the historical and linguistic understanding of Europe's Gypsies, used their knowledge to serve a racist ideology. Only in the context of this burdensome legacy can one understand the curious collective decision recently made by Gypsy researchers in Giessen not to learn the Gypsy language for their field research so as to avoid violating the privacy and trust of their informants. Krausnick sets limits on his own research at the point where "tears came to my host's eyes," at the point where fear and despair suddenly were reawakened by memories. Consequently, Krausnick does not probe his informants' concentration camp experiences, the memories of medical experiments, torture and killings. These, he notes, can be "relieved only through nightmares." This restraint comes not only from personal sensitivity but from the realization that the alternative to partial information is no information. Krausnick, like other recent German Gypsy researchers, understands that the Sinti distrust of German scholars runs deep and crosses generational lines.

I was frequently made aware of this in my own research with Sinti Holocaust survivors several years ago. Again and again I was told by my respondents that they trusted me and spoke to me about their experiences only because I too belonged to the victims rather than the victimizers. Thus the field paradigm of researcher and informant takes on a special importance in this situation. Here, if anywhere, "value-free" science appears a chimera, a bitter historical irony.

This being said, how then can Krausnick's book be evaluated? However, imperfect the scope of its information and "objectivity," Krausnick's work represents the beginning of a task that urgently needs to be accomplished, particularly in relation to the Holocaust. Because of decades of silence and neglect, the historians are only beginning their task of documenting the Gypsy tragedy. With such a late start, the documentation must be accomplished quickly, before the tide of history and the limits of individual life-spans wash away the memories of survivors.

While the Krausnick book does not deal exclusively, or even primarily, with the Holocaust, genocide nevertheless provides

(Krausnick continued on p. 6)

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(Krausnick continued from p. 5)

the essential context for this story of four generations of a Sinti family. Three of the four generations were touched directly by that terrible experience: the oldest, Elizabeth Kreutz, as a middle-aged adult, the second as teenagers, the third as an infant and young child. For Elizabeth Kreutz, born in 1896, the Nazi experience meant not only the death of most relatives, but the ultimate destruction of the culture and way of life she had known before the war. For her daughter, Hildegard Lagrenne, born in 1921, and her son, Friedrich Kreutz, born in 1922, the Nazi regime abruptly and prematurely ended childhood and adolescence, as it did for so many young Jews. Many Sinti of their generation had thought of themselves as Germans, even joining the Hitler youth movement with their German classmates and, in the case of Friedrich and his cousin Bernhard Steinbach, graduating to the Wehrmacht. Suddenly they were dismissed from the army and transported to a concentration camp, still wearing the medals on their uniforms.

Anton Franz, a member of the third generation, was born during the war. The Holocaust left scars on him as only the traumas of early childhood can. Franz retained fragmented memories of hiding from the SS, a flight to the forest, a massacre of Gypsies by the Yugoslav fascists.

Only the youngest of the four generations, the 18-year-old Jacqueline Lagrenne, can be said to have no immediate connection to the most traumatic event of the 20th century. And even she, living with her grandmother in a close Sinti family setting, may have been affected by the Holocaust in unanticipated ways which will become evident only at later stages of her life, as was seen in the case of the Jewish "second generation."

The civil rights movement, which has become a passion for many young Sinti, also has brought the younger generation closer to the terrible world of their fathers in Hitler's Germany, as they took part in dramatic demonstrations on the sites of former concentration camps along with their elders. Dronja Peters, born in 1946, participated in the hunger strike at Dachau without the knowledge of his parents, both concentration camp survivors. He recalls first learning of his parents' experiences at the age of 11, when his father, who had been drinking, summoned him from bed. "I must get these stories off my chest," the father told the son. And the horror stories continued to come for the next nine years. "I knew what they had suffered; I knew how many of us were murdered in the gas chambers." The knowledge shaped his attitudes and his actions. It became, as much as the observance of tradition had been in an earlier age, the vital link between the generations.

In a brief postscript, Krausnick refers to a large and untapped source of documents recently deposited in the German Federal

Archives as the result of a civil rights action of the Verband Deutscher Sinti (Association of German Sinti). Commonly called the Zigeunerkartei, it is the archival remains of the Racial Hygiene and Population Biological Research Institute within the Nazi Health Department. These documents are now accessible to the former research objects like the Sinti family which speaks through this book, as well as to scholars and legal researchers documenting the recent history of Gypsies in Europe. Hildegard Lagrenne went to Koblenz as a representative of the Verband Deutscher Sinti and discovered the photos, genealogy and fingerprints of her murdered relatives. There, in boxes and files, she found a "death register," macabre memorabilia of family she had lost to the death camps. "My heart stood still," she said, and added her reflection on this personal encounter with history. "The trouble which the Nazis took with us.... One can see here how thoroughly the Gypsy researchers were, how closely they worked with the police." Several photos and a family tree found in the archives are included as an appendix to the book.

The political revitalization movement among German Sinti has led to official recognition and considerable media exposure, as well as a renewed scholarly interest in Gypsies within the Federal Republic. It has permitted the Sinti organization to play a leading role in the international Romani Union. Krausnick rides the crest of this new wave of interest and points the way for other researchers to follow, perhaps with fewer externally or internally imposed restrictions, perhaps with the active support and collaboration of Sinti leaders. Researchers must hear the ticking of the biological clock as clearly as the Sinti themselves, who have stepped onto the stage of history so recently and with such urgency. Call it biography, life or oral history, the story must be told, the documentation made while there is still time. Krausnick has begun the task competently and responsibly.

■ Gabrielle Tyrnauer is an anthropologist who has written on social change among American Rom and has worked with Germany Gypsy Holocaust survivors.

LACIO DROM

A supplement to Lacio Drom, Laco Drom International, is planned for 1985, and will include studies in the original languages of the authors. Mirella Karpati, editor, invites contributions of articles.

The price of the international issue is \$5. Send checks, made out to Mirella Karpati, to Lacio Drom, Centro Studi Zingari, Arco della Pace, 5, 00186 Rome, Italy.

Lacio Drom is published bimonthly. Subscription rate outside Italy is 15,000 lire (\$8).

(Films continued from p. 3)

that some Gypsies attending the Fox International Theater who saw "The Princes" refused to accept the main characters in the film as "real" Rom (personal communication, R. Pooya). On the other hand, Pooya claims that the leading characters were Gypsies, the news media imply the same, and the director of the film, Tony Gatlif, is an Algerian-born Gypsy. Such perceptions by the Rom in Los Angeles underscore the difficulty of using fiction films as a source of meaningful information about Gypsy culture even if the film has been directed by a Gypsy.

Fiction films, unlike documentary films, rely entirely on the viewer's temporary suspension of critical judgment in order to put himself under the "spell" of the story. The fiction film may have advantages in expressing the elusive so-called Gypsy spirit (loaded as it is with romantic notions), but fiction films also have the disadvantage of reducing genuine human concerns of Gypsies to superficial stereotypes. Moreover, in the process of developing a plot, non-prescriptive or abnormal behavior is emphasized to provide conflict and thereby embellish the storyline. Such scripted characterizations, unlike documentary film footage, are subject to a wider degree of interpretation and may be invalidated altogether, as was done by the Gypsies who saw "The Princes."

For my money, the most interesting film in the festival was "Cséplő Gyuri" by Pál Schiffer. One must realize that I have an affinity for films made in the neo-realistic, cinema verité style. Consequently, "Cséplő Gyuri" may not be for everyone, especially those of us who have no patience for films that are devoid of chase scenes, sex, or violence, and the barest thread of a plot. But it is precisely because of these qualities that I felt that I had learned something about Gypsies in viewing the film. Because the film is basically a non-fiction piece, it has the unmistakable ring of truth. Gyuri's relationship to his kin and peers, his encounters with strangers and acculturated Gypsies in Budapest, and his dilemma between choosing life in the village or in the big city is a revealing slice of Gypsy life in Hungary.

In contrast, "The Princes" is a conventional film which includes chase scenes and violence, but never lets one forget that one is watching a movie. Consequently, I could never be totally sure that the behavior I was watching was, in fact, a true reflection of Gypsy culture even though a Gypsy directed the film. It was interesting to me that the film lacks depictions of lovemaking, nudity, or rape, unlike the non-Gypsy directed films such as "The Gypsy Camp Vanishes into the Blue" and "I Even Met Happy Gypsies." There are sexual encounters in "The Princes," but the Gypsy protagonist's advances are always foiled. Does this have

anything to do with a sensitivity by Tony Gatlif for female Rom viewing habits? Male Rom have told me it is indiscreet for female Rom to view filmed depictions of lovemaking, nudity or rape. In such cases, they are supposed to remove themselves from the potentially embarrassing situation or, at the very least, divert their attention. Rima Rudina, who has studied Macvaia in Los Angeles, reports that Rom women have walked out of films about Gypsies when certain sequences have appeared on the screen (personal communication). Is Gatlif making a conscious or unconscious decision in eliminating such scenes from "The Princes?" It is impossible to say on the basis of the film alone. Indeed, the point I am trying to make is that it will always be impossible to abstract meaningful data from a fiction film with any degree of certainty unless the film is accompanied by published written materials which are the product of knowledgeable, reliable reporters or "insiders." Such materials are necessary to inform us of the facts behind the fiction. Otherwise, depictions of Gypsy behavior in fiction films, and to a lesser but still important degree in non-fiction films, become a function of guesswork and hearsay -- a very non-productive mode of inquiry for an ethnologist.

It is worth mentioning that another film with Gypsy characterizations in it directly followed the film festival. This Yugoslavian film by Slobadan Sijan, "Who's Singin' Over There" was not included as an official part of the festival because of its 3-week "US Premiere Exclusive Engagement" at the Fox. The film has a curious, Brechtian plot which is not about Gypsies and yet in an indirect way makes a strong comment about Gypsy culture. Without giving away the surprise ending, I can only say that for this writer the film made a statement about "Gypsy spirit" unequalled by any of the films shown during the festival.

According to Pooya, the most popular film of the festival was "The Gypsy Camp Vanishes into the Blue" and the film most attended by Gypsies was "I Even Met Happy Gypsies." From discussions with Rom, I know that the film is very popular. Other Chapter members who also attended the festival remarked that it is a Gypsy favorite. The reasons for this preference are purely speculative at present since, as I have already mentioned, there has been no systematic gathering of data on perceptions by Rom of films about Gypsies. Such research might be helpful in learning what it means to be Rom in contemporary American society and shed some light on values, norms and enculturation patterns among various Gypsy groups.

:: Eric Metzgar is an ethnographic film maker who has worked with Rom in California. His interview with Rafigh Pooya will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.

WAR CRIMES

Andrija Artukovic, a cabinet member in the Nazi government of Croatia from 1941 to 1945, has been arrested in California and is being held for extradition to Yugoslavia. The 84-year-old Artukovic faces a murder trial for his role in the killing of 750,000 Jews, Serbs, Orthodox Christians and Gypsies. While the extradition process continues, defense lawyers have asked for hearings in February to determine whether Artukovic is competent to face extradition hearings. Artukovic, who has a history of heart trouble and strokes, is being held in a hospital jail ward.

According to a press release received from Grattan Puxon, former General Secretary of the World Romani Congress and co-author of The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies, Puxon was "engaged as a consultant on the Artukovic case by the Justice Department, with the task of providing expert evidence and locating witnesses." The Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations, which is handling the case, says that it does not employ consultants.

According to Puxon, an appeal for evidence and witnesses was circulated to Gypsy associations and broadcast in the Romani language over Radio Belgrade. Also according to Puxon, Sait Balić and Rajko Djurić, officers of the Romani Union, have gathered material on the Jasenovac concentration camp near Zagreb, where Gypsy children perished. Among those who suffered as a result of policies implemented by Artukovic, says Puxon, is the musician Žarko Jovanovic; his mother and other relatives died in the Jasenovac and Zemun camps.

Update: Basil Artishenko

Basil Artishenko has admitted entering the US illegally and has been stripped of his American citizenship. He will be permitted to remain in this country provided he cooperates with Justice Department investigations. He otherwise faces extradition to the USSR.

Artishenko had been the subject of a suit filed in 1982 by Federal prosecutors for revocation of his citizenship. He was charged with, among other things, concealing at the time of his entry to the US his participation in the killing of Gypsies and other civilians in Byelorussia in 1942 and 1943 (see NL 6(1): 9, Winter 1982).

SYMPOSIUM

An international symposium, Peripatetic Societies: An Overlooked Adaptation, is planned for the American Anthropological Association Annual Meetings in Washington, DC, December 5-8, 1985. For information, contact Matt T. Salo, NMAH 4100, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560 (202-357-2757).

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January 30, 1985

EXPRESS MAIL

Mark Valente
Staff Assistant
The White House
Room 438 OEOB
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Valente:

We are at that season when the 40th anniversary of the "liberation" of Auschwitz is being observed. And it brings to mind an historic injustice that is within the power of our society to correct at least as far as the American public and the American government are concerned. Among the victims of the Nazi carnage were approximately 1/2 million Gypsies who were treated to the same holocaust victimization that Jews were subject to on grounds not dissimilar and in conditions largely identical.

It is tragic that no real recognition has been given to the eradication of a large part of this historic people. It is also important that the Gypsies of various religious cultural and national backgrounds can come together and in a unity to honor their common dead whose sole cause for death was their being of Gypsy background and descent.

The creation of a place on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council for Gypsy representation would be a significant step in the right direction of correcting an historic omission. The present commission consists, we believe, of sixty-six members who serve by presidential appointment and at the discretion of the President. To the best of our knowledge, there are no current vacancies.

We therefore urge that the White House, by presidential directive, create an associate status for 3 or 4 members of the Gypsy community leadership which would give them an ex-officio status with the Commission, allowing them of right access to all privileges of that body, except for voting, and with a kind of a priority for filling what places may eventuate in the course of time when vacancies occur on the commission.

Mark Valente, Staff Assistant
The White House
Re: United States Holocaust
Memorial Council

January 30, 1985
Page 2

We also believe that it would be of significant value to both the administration in its desire to serve all people with all backgrounds in the nation, as well as to furthering the unifying goals which are set by Gypsy leadership from various subgroups on the American scene if the President of the United States would create a photo opportunity and be photographed with some of the leadership.

Certainly this would be status-giving to the Gypsies and would provide the proper news setting for the announcement for the associate ex-officio appointments of Gypsies to the commission.

The signators of this letter are not Gypsies but were among those who were present in a semi-professional and yet largely personal capacity at the founding meeting of the United States Romani Holocaust Council which was held, interestingly, at the auspices of the Simon Weisenthal Center at Yeshiva University of Los Angeles.

Both writers, being Jewish, understand that somehow or other it will be redemptive of a measure of the sorrow of the tragedy for the Gypsies to experience that same memorializing that Jews do in Jewish holocaust observance. Further, we note how the Holocaust has been, tragically enough, a unifying factor in bringing Jews together with common memories that make for elements of a common present and hopefully a more unified future.

This same social and spiritual change can come with significance to the Gypsies of America, and through them, perhaps by extensive to Gypsies throughout the world. If the President of the United States will help create an initiative so that another historic injustice can be met with a response of dignity, then something of the evil of the past can be translated into a good for the present and the future as a memorial and as a warning for all times. Gypsies should be part of the "Days of Remembrance" observance nationally sponsored by the Commission.

We hope that this will elicit from you a sense of an historic commitment. One of the signators of this letter, attorney Barry Fisher, has spoken to you about his being in Washington on Friday, February 14, and would look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you at a time of mutual convenience if it can be arranged. Please phone to let him know whether this can be arranged. He may be in Washington on Thursday and will remain until Sunday.

Mark Valente, Staff Assistant
The White House
Re: United States Holocaust
Memorial Council

January 30, 1985
Page 3

We Americans have pledged that we shall "never forget" and that means rectifying an unintended insensitivity to our Gypsy brethren whose victimization in the Holocaust has been little known and largely forgotten.

Sincerely yours,


William Kramer
Rabbi William Kramer


Barry A. Fisher
Barry A. Fisher

Counsel to U.S. Romani
Holocaust Council

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 5, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR SUSAN BOFCHARD, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
PRESIDENTIAL PERSONNEL

FROM: *CK* LINAS KOJELIS, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
PUBLIC LIAISON

SUBJECT: Gypsy representation on the U.S. Holocaust
Memorial Council

Susan, please note the enclosed correspondence from Mr. Barry Fisher regarding the above captioned matter. We have scheduled the meeting Mr. Fisher requested for Thursday, February 14, at 4:00 p.m. in our office (room 436, OEOB). We would appreciate it very much if you could join us for this meeting. We would also appreciate any comments or ideas you might have as to how we could best handle this situation.

Please respond either to myself or Mark Valente at x2741.
Thanks.

*M -
Pls make
meetings file
- ✓*

Barry Fisher.
Ruth Andersen.

2/14/85

B.F. - Civil rights lawyer.
Contact w/ Gypsies.
Hol. Council - cool to Gypsies.
Gypsies met at Simon Wies. Center.
Hol. C. - "patronizing" to Gypsies.

~~#~~

- If you can't enlarge, at least have "auxiliaries."
- would stimulate something positive.
- "Gypsy Love Society."

Program in April. - "Days of Remembrance."

Barry Key.

9:30 - 11:00.

2: - 2:30

Friday.

George Town Inn. → Room 511

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 10, 1984

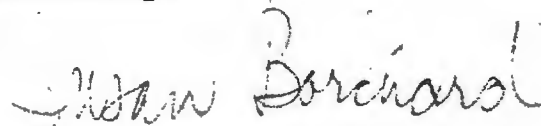
Dear Mr. Galata:

On behalf of the President, thank you for your letter recommending representation of the Gypsies on the United States Holocaust Council.

Currently there are no vacancies on the Council. We appreciate your concerns on this matter as we are always interested in equal representation. Should an opening develop we will give careful consideration to your recommendation.

President Reagan truly appreciates your taking the time to write.

Sincerely,



Susan A. Borchard
Director, Presidential Boards
and Commissions
Office of Presidential Personnel

Mr. Joseph A. Galata
Representative to the United Nations
in New York for the Gypsies - Romani
Union
101 East Prater Way #4H
Sparks, Nevada 89431

217235

ANDREJCHAK GALATA

Representative to the United Nations in New York for
the Gypsies - Romani Union

101 East Prater Way #4H
Sparks, Nevada 89431
June 3, 1984

Kojalis

Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

As Representative to the United Nations for the Romani Union, the official organization of the world's five million Gypsies, I wish to acknowledge our appreciation of the formation of the U.S. Holocaust Council for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial. As you are aware, over 500,000 of our Roma in Europe suffered repression, persecution and death in the World War II Concentration Camps. It is most commendable that the United States Government has initiated a memorial commemorating these victims and the victims of other racial, ethnic and religious groups.

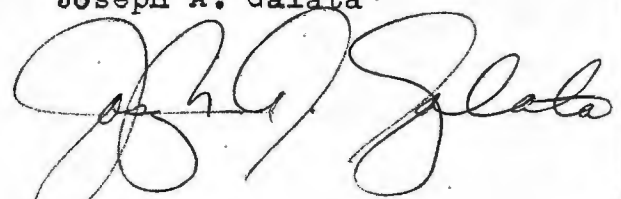
Mr. President, it has been brought to the attention of the Romani Union and the Gypsies around the world, that the sixty-five member Holocaust Council does not have representation by the Gypsies. The Romani Union, whose headquarters is in Switzerland and directed by Dr. Jan Cibula, has been informed by the U.S. Holocaust Council that Gypsies will not be excluded from the museum's programs. However, the Romani Union would appreciate inclusion on the Council by American Roma. This will ensure the Gypsies that participation by our people will be done so at the highest level of competency and that any non-Gypsy attempting to supply the council with information about the Roma will be verified and correct as regarding Gypsy history, culture, language, etc. The Romani Union has also been informed that there will be no appointments to the Holocaust Council until 1985. However, the Union is confident that this can be waived in regards to the appointment of an American Gypsy of prominence and scholastic capabilities.

The Romani Union is anxious to begin working with the Council Members in the design of the Memorial Museum. The Union looks forward to your assistance, Mr. President, in appointing an American Rom to represent the Gypsies on the Holocaust Council.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Galata

Jose



THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

92KOTE

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: JUNE 11, 1984

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: MR. JOSEPH A. GALATA

SUBJECT: WRITES CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN
AMERICAN GYPSY TO THE U. S. HOLOCAUST
COUNCIL

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)	ACTION ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	DISPOSITION TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
LINAS KOJELIS	ORG	84/06/11		C 84/07/30
<u>PPAERR</u>				
REFERRAL NOTE:				
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R-840614 58 # 8410710
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COMMENTS:

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS:

MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES:

PL MAIL

USER CODES: (A)

(B)

(C)

*ACTION CODES:	*DISPOSITION CODES:	*OUTGOING	*
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION	*A-ANSWERED	*CORRESPONDENCE:	*
*C-COMMENT/RECOM	*B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL	*TYPE RESP=INITIALS	*
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE	*C-COMPLETED	*OF SIGNER	*
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET	*S-SUSPENDED	*CODE = A	*
I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC		*COMPLETED = DATE OF	*
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY *		*OUTGOING	*
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE *			*
*X-INTERIM REPLY *			*

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT. 2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.



Romania

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED STATES ROMANI COUNCIL
Published by Romania of Massachusetts, Inc.

JOHN TENE
PRESIDENT

Vol. 3/ No. 3

September 1985

ROM CELEBRATE SANTANA

Every year in July, Rom from the United States and Canada congregate in St. Anne de Beaupre Cathedral near Quebec. Slavi are held at camp sites and motels near the shrine, and candlelight processions wind among the hills at night. It is always a joyous occasion, when families and friends come together and Romany traditions are celebrated. This year's Santana, however, was more special than most. Ronald Lee, a well-known Romany journalist/novelist, who lives in Quebec, described the event.

"The Santana was a great success. We attended the first mass to be said at the shrine honoring the Romany victims of the Holocaust. Father Yoshka Bartholemy presided and he visited all the families camped on the site. He also attended feasts held off the site, blessing the tables and handing out translations of the gospel in Romanes along with recordings and cassettes of the four gospels. ... The following day, John Tene and I attended the main feast held on the campsite where we met some relatives plus Gypsies from Europe and we had some interesting conversations. The feast, however, was abruptly terminated by a torrential downpour....

[We] spoke with Father Bartholemy, and Tene mentioned the need for pastors among the American Rom. Bartholemy agreed and I feel the first steps have been taken in this direction. We also spoke to the resident priests, explaining how the Rom, while sincerely religious, do not follow standard Roman Catholic practices, and we feel

the Church finally realizes that the Rom must be allowed to worship in their own way and simply provide them with pastors as they do in France and elsewhere.

The mass honoring our dead also made many American Rom aware of the Holocaust since, coming from Father Bartholemy, they could not doubt the sincerity of the statements. The text of the sermon was 'to forgive but not to forget' and to pray for the souls of those murdered. ... John Tene was able to give literature, clippings, etc., to both Father Bartholemy and other priests assigned to the Rom, making them aware of the peculiar problems facing the Rom in urban areas of the U.S. and the need for pastors who could deal directly with the Rom and with the Church on their behalf.

All in all, I feel that this year was a milestone in the history of the Rom pilgrimage in that the mass honoring our dead was held, grass-roots Rom leaders from the U.S. were able to attend and speak to the church officials concerned with ministering to the Rom and a Canadian CBC documentary film (The First Estate) was done covering these events. It also gave all of us a chance to meet again and to talk to the large number of American Rom who attended.

The documentary film did some good coverage of the Santana and they interviewed many of the Rom, including John Tene and Laszlo Megel. John also met the leader of a dance troupe (Gypsy dancers) which could result in some charity shows in Boston."

ROM DETAINED AT CANADIAN BORDER

On their way back to the United States after the Santana in Quebec, John Tene and three other Rom were detained at the Montreal Dorval Airport by U.S. Immigration Department officers. In spite of efforts by Ronald Lee, who called the Immigration Department and the U.S. Consulate to vouch that John Tene was an American citizen, and regardless of Tene's valid identification papers, as well as return ticket, he was held at the border with no explanation, but with the definite impression that his Romany identity was at the base of the authorities' actions. As Ronald Lee related, "I feel the whole problem arose when the American authorities in Canada realized he was a Gypsy since this problem has arisen in the past with other American-born Gypsies and naturalized citizens who were Gypsies. I feel that a very strong protest should be directed to whatever branch of the U.S. Government is responsible for such an outrage committed against an American citizen." John was caught in the heavy rain storm that washed out the Santana and, as Ronald Lee explained, "...his suit was drenched. Since it was too late to have it dry cleaned...John was forced to return the following morning in a jean jacket with the Romany flag on the back ... which probably contributed to his being manhandled by the U.S. Immigration officials in the Montreal airport when he went to board his American flight."

John Tene was finally rescued by American friends in Vermont, Gabrielle Tyrnauer and her husband, Charles Stastny, who were equally outraged at the treatment John had received at the border.

John Tene's experience is a commentary on the continuing prejudice that exists at frontiers on this continent, as well in other lands.

VATICAN MEETING REQUESTED BY ROM

An audience with His Holiness Pope Jean-Paul and a meeting with Vatican officials is being sought by the International Romani Union. The request has been taken up in the United States by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington.

Father Tomasi, Director of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees, was in Rome this summer and took the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Pontifical Commission on Migration and Tourism. It is envisaged that a delegation comprising representatives from both West and east Europe, and the U.S. attend the meetings in Italy. The hope has been expressed that Rom from Poland can also be included. Inhabiting countries governed by different systems, separated by the present East-West divide, Rom have a particular interest in world peace. "We would wish the Holy Father to bless our efforts to keep contact among Rom in all countries," said John Tene, President of the U.S. Romani Council.

The request to Pope Jean-Paul expresses the wish that he help Rom overcome remaining prejudices and discrimination among gadje. An example is the myth that says it was a Gypsy made the nails for the crucifixion.

As already raised by Dr. Cibula, the International Romani Union wants to talk with Vatican officials about the possibility of Catholic Church support for the holding of the Fourth World Romani Congress. The Second Congress, held in Geneva in 1979, received assistance from the World Council of Churches.

Juan de Dios Ramirez Heredia, the Rom member of the European Parliament representing Spain, has been asked to lead the delegation to Rome. Members of the U.S. Romani Council, including John Tene, President, James Marks, Vice-President, and John Megel, Washington representative, plan to participate.

UNITED STATES ROM INVITED TO FESTIVAL
IN YUGOSLAVIA

A warm invitation to American Rom to come and enjoy the big national Romano Festival in Yugoslavia this fall has been received by the U.S. Romani council. Particularly welcome are those Rom, among them Macvaja, who trace their ancestry to Serbia. For them, a return visit to the "old country" could be the experience of a lifetime. At the Romano Festival, to be held in the Serbian town of Kraljevo from November 15 - 22, they will meet with 1,000 Rom dancers, musicians and singers from all parts of Yugoslavia. The Romano Festival, which for the first time is to be a national event, will be bringing together performing groups and bands from some fifty local Rom cultural associations. Their musical styles and dances vary from the kolo round dance to the solo cuceko of Khorahane Rom.

American Rom who wish to accept the invitation to attend the festival will be guests of Sait Balic, President of the International Romani Union. They can arrange their travel to Yugoslavia from the United States individually or as a group.

"We'll be most happy to welcome Rom from the United States at this festival," said Balic. "It will be a reunion for those who must still have distant relations here in Serbia."

He said there would be much of interest for American Rom to see in Yugoslavia, besides having the pleasure of the company and the music. Ten schools using the Romani language as a teaching medium have been opened recently; three radio stations are broadcasting in Romanes and the town of Pristina has the first regular television program for Rom viewers.

For those who wish, it will be possible to arrange a visit to Macva town and the Rom quarter there, from which the great-grandparents of not a few American Rom migrated at the turn of this century.

More information can be obtained from Grattan Puxon, Second Secretary, International Romani Union: (213)313-2369.

MACVA AND THE MACVAJA

The Serbian town of Macva, in Yugoslavia, has a Rom quarter from which families now well-known in the U.S. emigrated at the beginning of this century, among them the Jovanoviches and Nikoliches. While there has been much talk recently of the Holocaust, and American Rom have been in Washington to pay respects to the half million Rom victims, few as yet know of the tragic fate of the Macvaya vitsa during the Nazi persecution.

On April 6, 1941, Hitler sent his armies to occupy Yugoslavia. As soon as they had control, they began the systematic round-up of cigani. Many Rom were dragged from their homes and taken to the Jasenovac concentration camp. The camp was controlled by Andrija Artukovic, then Minister of the Interior for the state of Croatia. After the war, he came to the U.S. and was finally arrested in California this year. Among the witnesses who testified against Artukovic are survivors from the Jovanovic and Nikolic families. This is what Stefan Nikolic said on April 5, 1984:

"I was taken in a cattle wagon, with others, to Jasenovac. There was my wife, five children, three brothers and three sisters. After a day they separated the men, women and children and said they were sending 35 men to work in Germany. All but these men were killed within two to three days. They were brought to pits, tied together two by two with wire and then killed with sledgehammers. Some died at once, others fell half-dead into the pits. When a pit was filled to the top, lime was thrown over the corpses and then earth. The soil above these human bodies moved because some were still alive and the blood flowed out of the pit..."

Between 30,00 and 50,000 Rom were murdered in Jasenovac, more even than the number who died in the notorious Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps. Concerned that the dead should be properly respected and remembered, Rom in Yugoslavia meet each year at Jasenovac to commemorate the families who died there. It is their wish that Macvaja in the U.S. should pay a visit to Yugoslavia, to see the town of Macva and, perhaps, to visit the memorial at Jasenovac.

Grattan Puxon
Executive Secretary
U.S. Romani Council

"...THE PAST WILL NOT LET HIM REST"

"Hans Braun is a German Sinti Gypsy now living in Kingston, Ontario. He lost his entire family in Auschwitz. He spent more than a year in the 'family camp' erected as part of the "final solution" for the 'Gypsy problem' in Nazi Germany. Twenty thousand Gypsies were registered there. Only a handful survived. 'In a way it was worse than being separated," Braun, a dignified grey-bearded man in his 60s, said. 'I had to watch them die, one by one."

Braun described their 'living conditions:' 'My brothers and sisters all had to live in one box. One metre, 50 centimeters wide, two metres long, three square metres high. A box for nine people. One after the other, my brothers and sisters died of starvation ... one of my brothers just sat in the box until suddenly he collapsed ... Then my mother died of typhus. She was 42 years old. I brought her into the sick bay on a wooden slab, the same slabs that they used for loading corpses at night and bringing us bread rations by day.

One day, I saved some of my rations to bring to my mother. They told me she died last night. I went out - I couldn't cry, there were no more tears. I went to the back of the block where the corpses were thrown. I saw my mother there. It was a terrible sight. I then had to work the night shift and had to bring the corpses including my mother to the crematorium where they were burned. That was that.'

Braun came to Canada five years ago with his German wife and two younger children in order to escape these memories. He did not want any more of his children to grow up in Germany. They live on an isolated farm outside the city and he keeps a summer cottage in the Thousand Islands.

But the past will not let him rest. In February 1985, U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter's subcommittee on Juvenile Justice of the Senate Judiciary Committee began a probe into the whereabouts of Mengele, who was responsible for the deaths of thousands of children.

Like Adolph Eichmann, Mengele claimed he had never personally killed or injured anyone. Few could prove otherwise. Braun is one of those few. His taped testimony

was submitted to Specter, and in April, Braun was asked to be a witness at the third sitting of the subcommittee held in Philadelphia during the annual 'Days of Remembrance' commemorating victims of the Holocaust. Braun was one of four witnesses."

Hans Braun is willing to resuscitate memories filled with boundless pain, in order that the world will not forget the suffering of the Gypsies during the Holocaust. He lends his history and perspective to Gypsies in North America and abroad who are united in the struggle against prejudice and its ultimate manifestation -- genocide.

(This article was excerpted from The Gazette, June 15, 1985, Kingston, Ontario, written by Gabrielle Tyrnauer, an anthropologist who has served as a consultant to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.)

ROM RECEIVED BY ITALIAN PRESIDENT

President of the Republic of Italy Sandro Pertini, together with his wife, Signora Carla Pertini, received a delegation of Rom and representatives of Opera Nomadi at the presidential palace in Rome on March 10 this year.

On behalf of Rom in Italy, the President and his wife were presented with traditionally made artificial roses, accompanied by a note reading "But Bersh Taj Baxt!"

The delegation took the opportunity to inform President Pertini of the continuing problems facing the Rom. He was told, in particular, about constant harassment of roadside families and of the difficulty children have in attending school.

An example of the treatment suffered by Rom at the hands of local authorities was cited. More than eighty families had recently been forcibly evicted from their camp in the Via Salviati in Rome.

National President of Opera Nomadi, Bruno Nicolini, prevailed upon President Pertini to issue a statement deploring the incident. He reminded him that Rom had lost 500,000 of their people during the Holocaust, and also that in 1977 the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had passed a resolution calling on every country with Rom citizens to recognize their cultural identity

"GYPSIES HOUNDED BY IMAGE"

This title headed an article published by The Detroit News on July 7, 1985, in response to recent derogatory media coverage of American Roma. (See "Of Schemes and Scams" in Romania, June 1985.) This article was gratefully received from Professor Charles Arnade, International Studies Department of the University of South Florida in Tampa.

"Police have been alerting Michigan citizens through the media to the dangers of 'Gypsy crimes,' but a musician with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra has a different message for the public.

'Gypsies bleed when they are cut. Real tears come out of their eyes when they are hurt.' Richard Margitza, an American Gypsy of Hungarian descent who has been a violinist with the orchestra for 30 years, knows that hurt from experience. 'The media only portrays the bad Gypsies, criminal Gypsies. These are just a handful. . . the majority are decent, honest, hard-working people.'

Police acknowledge that only a minority of the Gypsy population are involved in crime, yet all Gypsies suffer the repercussions of negative stereotypes. . . . Many Gypsies feel forced into hiding their heritage and would not allow their names or pictures to be published for this story.

'When I tell people I'm a Gypsy, they think I have a ring in my ear and travel the country in a covered wagon, which is certainly not true,' said a 28-year old investment banker from Detroit.

A house painter who built up a good business through hard work hides his Gypsy ancestry, too. He fears that if his background is revealed, he might lose customers. . . .

No one seemed to question the formation of the Michigan Gypsy Criminal Activity Task Force. In April, the task force hosted a widely publicized seminar to brief police on "Gypsy crime. . . ."

'There is no other ethnic group that the police would form a special team for,' said William Lockwood, an anthropology professor at the University of Michigan who has studied Gypsy culture. . . . 'The fact that the police formed the unit is bad enough. But that the papers and TV so publicize it is worse.'

In addition to divisions by national origin, there is a wide gulf between hard-working Gypsies and those engaged in questionable activities.

. . . .
Most American Gypsies have put down roots, although some of these may still travel on a whim, while still others travel periodically to find work. While Gypsy fortune-tellers still exist, many Gypsies work in auto plants and other steady blue-collar jobs, as well as white-collar jobs and professions.

Based on his own research, Lockwood contends that 'only a minority' of Gypsies in America are involved in criminal activity. He says they are generally the most poorly educated and least assimilated, which is not unlike the experiences of other, disadvantaged minority groups.

. . . .
Richard Margitza was afraid to speak out. 'I don't like to tell people I am a Gypsy for the obvious reasons,' he said. Yet, he has said he fought to overcome his dread, and finally made his soft voice heard. 'My parents told me to always be proud that I am a Gypsy. I am proud,' he said. 'We're trained to hang tough.'"

JEWISH-GYPSY SOLIDARITY GROWS

Simon Wiesenthal, a long-time supporter of Gypsy Holocaust victims, publishes a Bulletin of Information from the Dokumentationzentrum des Bundes Jüdischer Verfolgter des Naziregimes in Vienna. In Bulletin #25, the following article appeared:

"GYPSIES WITHOUT REPRESENTATION ON THE U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL COUNCIL

No one doubts that Nazi measures against the Gypsies were similar as those against the Jews: 500,000 have been murdered by the Nazis in a similar manner as the Jews. They too were subjected to experiments by Dr. Mengele in Auschwitz. Consequently, it would have been natural and only called for that representatives of the Gypsies occupy their rightful seat on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council. This has not been the case. Out of 55 seats, representatives of the Jews occupy more than one half. So do Nazi victims of other nationalities. The Society of Threatened Peoples,

...(cont'd on page 6)

JEWISH SOLIDARITY . . .

German section, in Gottingen, West Germany, has approached Elie Wiesel, the Chairman of the Holocaust Memorial Council ... requesting that a Gypsy be included on the Council as well. No reply has been received to that letter.... Simon Wiesenthal wrote a letter to Mr. Wiesel, in which he pointed out the sufferings of the Gypsies, proposing that one Romany representative be coopted into the 55-member Council. Should this be impossible, Wiesenthal suggested, it would be an act of solidarity with the Gypsy victims of the Nazis, if out of more than 30 Jewish representatives, one of these would vacate his seat on their behalf. It is hoped that this shameful state of affairs will soon be corrected through action to be taken on the part of Elie Wiesel."

The Bulletin then went on to invite its readers to write directly to Mr. Wiesel in support of the petitions of Roma to be included in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council. This Bulletin reaches countless people around the world who are concerned with the plight of all Holocaust victims and survivors. Recognition and support of the Romany cause seems to be spreading, through organs such as this Bulletin. It is fervently hoped that such gestures of solidarity from abroad will influence attitudes in the United States.

T H I N S T U F F

In his new novel, Thinner, Stephen King* delves into his limitless store of horrors for a gruesome tale that derives from a "Gypsy curse."

The hero of the book is a well-heeled lawyer, a suburban family man who loves to eat and consequently strains the scales at 250 pounds. Until, that is, the fateful day he runs over a Gypsy woman with his car, (while his wife is playing in his pants). The victim's father puts a curse on him..."Thinner," he whispers. And our hero begins to wither away until the end of the novel and his life. Other townsmen who white-washed the lawyer's deed are cursed as well, one with reptilian scales and another with pustulating boils. But the lawyer pursues the Rom across the country, in a desperate attempt to make the old man "take it off."

the same ilk as werewolves and vampires. They gather in dark forests at night and perpetrate all sorts of hocus-pocus, according to the lawyer. "...a few desperately impotent men and a like number of menopausal women [would] creep out to the encampment under cover of darkness and buy potions and nostrums and strange oilycreams." Another inevitable stereotype is the "dark-haired girl whose beauty was almost ethereal" and who excites the lawyer to fantasize about a "quick exotic lay." The old Rom turns out to be at least 116 years old, grossly ugly, and enormously powerful, physically as well as psychically. There are several passages written in what is supposed to be Romanes, for example, "skummade igenom" for "ignorant scum" and "purpurfargade Ansiktet" for "curse."

King's hero holds facile and derogatory viewpoints about the Rom: "If asked before today, he would have shrugged and guessed that there were no more traveling Gypsy caravans. But of course the wandering breed never died out. They came in rootless and left the same way, human tumbleweeds who cut whatever deals they could and then blew out of town with dollars in their greasy wallets that had been earned on the time clocks they themselves spurned. They survived. Hitler had tried to exterminate them along with the Jews and the homosexuals, but they would outlive a thousand Hitlers..."

For the reader who has the patience to forage under the roots of Thinner, a few sociological truffles may be unearthed. One might snort at the idea that the hero of the story deteriorated so dramatically because of his sense of guilt at killing the helpless Romni. As his body melts away from his bones and he faces his own death, the lawyer sees the dishonesty of his own life in "fat city." He seeks supernatural truth from the old Rom and finds instead the falsity and shallowness of his own world. In the end, "The old man laughed at him.... If I could have cursed you, you would be under the earth now.... You think we are magic - all you white men from town think we are magic. If we were magic, would we be driving around in old cars and vans with mufflers help up with baling wire? ...and sleeping in fields? This is no magic show...this is nothing but a traveling carry."

(An apt description, perhaps, of the book itself.)

*New York: New American Library, 1984
(copyright under Richard Bachman)

ARTHUR JOSEPHSON - GYPSY PORTRAITIST

Arthur Josephson is an established painter whose works have been collected by connoisseurs around the world. He has been exhibited in many art galleries, particularly

in the New York and New Jersey area. Having served in the United States Armed Forces in Europe during World War II, he carries abiding images and experiences in his artistic memory-bags. As a man of Jewish descent, he has inherited a proud tradition and a sorrowful history. As an artist who seeks

aesthetic personification of the spiritual and physical world, he is intrigued with the Gypsy countenance. "A person is like a crystal," he explains, "with many facets -- no two alike. And as it turns, you see different sides, each side complex and unlike another, when you look closely. But when you step back, you see the harmonious and perfect shape of the crystal."

Please direct any inquiries for further information to The Editor.



"Thank you for sending me the newsletter, 'Romania.' For years I'm involved to help Sinti and Roma in their difficulties. I'd been fighting two years with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council that the Gypsies get a seat for a representative. Now I hope that in 1986 this will happen. The Gypsies in Europe know that whenever I can help I do so, because I know about our common fate during the Nazi period. . . ."

Simon Wiesenthal
Dokumentationszentrum
des Bundes Judischer
Verfolgter des Naziregimes

* * *

"Thank you for your newsletter. I am very glad to know that a Romany organization exists in the United States, and to hear news of your activities."

Agustin de Vedia
Buenoes Aires, Argentina

* * *

The magazine, Heidens (Gypsies), published in Dutch by Lau Mazirelfonds, was received by the Editor. Readers interested in obtaining copies should write to:
Lau Mazirelfonds
Postbux 16875
1001 RJ Amsterdam

* * *

Mr. Stevica Nikolic, President of the International Gypsy Committee, sent a copy of the Resolutions of the International Gypsy Tribunal, which met in The Hague in February, to The Editor. He also invited John Tene to join that Committee "... because it is international and involves all Romany organizations which should work together in order to work better."

Further information about the International Gypsy Tribunal, as well as copies of its Resolutions, can be obtained from:

Stevica Nikolic
Schollevaartseweg 2
2908 LD Capelle a/dijssel
Holland

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