



Publication: The Jewish Chronicle
Date: 06.02.2020



► **Further** to last week's Letters to the Editor on the liberation of Auschwitz and Britain's refusal to acknowledge Hitler's parallel war against Jews by taking even the slightest step to hinder the efficient operation of Auschwitz, I remember the correspondence between my Jaffa-born mother and her sisters in Tel Aviv, where they moved as the city was being built.

In those days of incredible postal delivery, their airmail letters flew backwards and forwards like migrating birds. When Israel's War of Independence was finally over, my mother read out to me a letter from her older sister.

She said the joke going round Tel Aviv was that they should build statues to the country's two real founders: Adolf Hitler and Ernest Bevin.
Ruth Rothenberg
London NW3

Agunot and halachah

► **The issue** of agunot is emotional and often has tragic consequences for the families of those involved. The behaviour of separated husbands who weaponise the *get* needs to be punished and the success of the recent private prosecution in the UK has been welcomed by rabbis across Europe.

Halachic and legal solutions to the problem are being explored. In 2013, the Conference of European Rabbis led the introduction of a law in Israel that means that offending husbands are detained when leaving or entering

Israel. Thanks to this law, dozens of agunah cases have been solved. The CER obtained cross-Knesset support for it and, when it is up for renewal next year, we will work with the relevant authorities to ensure its extension.

Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt

*President, Conference of European Rabbis,
London NW5*

Come out or stay quiet?

► **As a** longtime admirer of the work of the St John Ambulance, when hosting a TV programme I was glad to be able to invite them to demonstrate to our viewers the best techniques to prevent children from choking.

As a result, several lives were saved, and I was honoured to be made a Serving Sister in the Order of St John.

Only when I attended the Awards and was awaiting my turn to receive a medal did I realise it was a religious ceremony, so I asked the lady sitting next to me if it mattered that I was Jewish?

"Oh no," she replied, but after a moment's thought: "But I shouldn't mention it now". So I didn't.

Years later, I now wonder if I should have come out? Was it unselfish of me to stay silent because otherwise I might have caused confusion or embarrassment, or was it selfishness because it could have cost me my medal?

When is it important to reveal one's Jewishness?

Dame Esther Rantzen
London NW3

