



A Polish prisoner in "Auschwitz". Indiana University Press; 292 pages; \$59.95

Children of the Holocaust Some survived

THE HIDDEN CHILDREN. By Jane Marks. Piatkus; 336 pages; £17.99. Ballantine/Random House; \$22.50

IT IS not what happens to you in life but how you react to it that counts. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in this volume of interviews with 23 Jews whose warm, sheltered childhoods were brutally cut short by the start of the Holocaust. They were often separated from their parents and found refuge during the war years in vermin-infested sewers and basements, in barns and forests, or with compassionate Christian families and religious institutions where they assumed Catholic identities. Some even joined the partisans. Many, conscious of the danger of discovery by the Gestapo or betrayal by neighbours, had to keep on the move, suppressing all childlike instincts in an effort to stay alive.

That these boys and girls survived at all is remarkable. In Nazi-occupied Europe the pre-war population of Jewish children was roughly 1.6m. Only 7% had escaped slaughter by 1945—compared with 33% of the Jewish population as a whole. When 9,000 French Jews were rounded up and sent to Auschwitz in 1942, 4,000 were under 12 years old. Of the entire group only 30 returned after the war. None was a child.

One of the most moving stories in this collection is that of Leon Ginsburg, who is now an electrical engineer with his own company in upstate New York. Orphaned by 1942, he spent several silent, hungry years in Poland as a little boy on the run. His indomitable spirit enabled him to make several split-second decisions that literally saved his life. Today he is a happily married man and grandfather.

Other hidden children still suffer a sense of alienation. Hell began for Marie-Claire Rakowski when she was taken back after the

war from the childless Catholic couple in Belgium who gave her the only real love she has ever known. Her real mother was emotionally unstable after a spell in Auschwitz and had lost all her nurturing instincts. Now middle-aged, Miss Rakowski cannot bring herself to unpack in her Manhattan apartment lest she has suddenly to move. She has never formed a loving relationship with a man. Clemens Lowe, an eminent psychoanalyst, still pins up notices in the vain hope of being reunited with his father who died in a concentration camp.

Three years ago, 1,600 such survivors—most of them in their 50s—gathered together in New York to exchange their wartime experiences. The meeting provided many of them with their first opportunity to come to terms with their painful past.

Britain and America Old pals

SPECIAL NO MORE. By John Dickie. Weidenfeld & Nicolson; 320 pages; £20

THERE is now as much dissension as consensus among Anglo-American diplomats over how to deal with the world's trouble spots, from Somalia (where America sent in troops and Britain did not) to ex-Yugoslavia (where the roles were reversed). John Dickie, a former diplomatic reporter for the *Daily Mail*, has chronicled the ups and downs of their dealings since the stirring times of Churchill and Roosevelt, and concludes that the present "down" in the old special relationship is permanent.

Yet he launches his book with a splendid chapter revealing the special, secret and extensive military help that America gave Britain in 1982 during the Falklands war. That was followed by the close collaboration of the two countries in the Gulf war. Can things really have gone awry since then?

True, the absence of an enemy has di-

luted the need to work together. But the relationship, including Churchill's with Roosevelt, has always been volatile. Mr Dickie points, for instance, to the bad patch when Harry Truman recognised Israel over the objections of the Foreign Office (which learned of his final decision from a news bulletin). The Suez crisis was rock-bottom.

Personalities have been tremendously important. Dean Acheson, a patrician, and Ernest Bevin, a trade unionist, hit it off; John Foster Dulles and Anthony Eden could not abide the sight of each other; John Kennedy almost adopted the British ambassador, David Ormsby-Gore, as a member of the Kennedy clan; Lyndon Johnson hated Harold Wilson's offers to mediate in the Vietnam war; Alexander Haig thought Peter Carrington was a "duplicitous bastard"; George Shultz and Geoffrey Howe liked each other; Ronald Reagan, taking telephone calls from an upset Margaret Thatcher, told his colleagues "she's great".

The co-operation, from atomic bomb to Trident to the sharing of many (although not all) secrets, has been special despite periodic spy scandals. The sharing continues.

Nonetheless, Mr Dickie thinks the two countries have reached the "end of the affair", mainly because Britain's priority when a problem arises is now to get a consensus within the European Union (EU) on what to do and only then to try to encourage the Americans to take a similar line. He sees Bill Clinton as too parochial and grumbles that the secretary of state, Warren Christopher, does not consult the British.

It is probably true that John Major and Douglas Hurd spend more time worrying about the EU than about America, and that Mr Clinton's main interlocutor on Eastern Europe will be Germany and on Asia, Japan. That said, however, America still needs allies capable of projecting well-trained and well-equipped armed forces over long distances when vitally needed.

Because their constitutions forbid it, Japan and Germany are disqualified. Apart from America and a crippled Russia, there are only two countries currently capable of power projection: Britain and France. And the British have the edge in dealing with the Americans because of their shared culture (and the fact that their representatives conveniently sit next to each other at most international conferences).

In short, Mr Dickie's reporting is brilliant, his conclusion wonky. As long as the British retain the ability to project power, Mr Clinton and his successors will give them a hearing. In February the president, as host to Mr Major, spoke of "the incredible depth and breadth of our shared interests and our shared values" and of "a profoundly important relationship, I think, to both countries and, I believe, to the future of the world". That was not all Arkansas syrup.