20. PALESTINE

By Lotta Levensohn

BRITAIN AND PALESTINE

The British policy of "freezing" the Jewish National Home within the narrowest possible limits of population and area did not change in the year 5707. Not only did it not change, but it was enforced with unprecedented severity by the Labor Government, whose hostility was the last thing anyone expected in view of the Labor Party's stand on Palestine before it was swept into power soon after the war.

Enforcement of the 1939 White Paper policy took three directions: to undermine the constituted authorities of the Yishuv; to deprive the Yishuv of its facilities for self-defense; and to stop the flow of "illegal" Jewish immigration. The military, naval and air strength of the British Empire was mobilized in what Mr. Churchill has called the Labor Government's war with the Jews in Palestine.

The bitterness aroused in the Yishuv by hostile measures from so unexpected a quarter was profound and intense. The ineffectiveness of the orderly procedure of protest and negotiation followed by the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi was exploited by the minority dissident groups, which believe that Britain is impervious to all arguments but those of force. The result has been a year of bombings and shootings, mass detentions without trial, reprisals and counter-reprisals, kidnappings and hangings, punitive curfews and martial law. All this apart from the struggle of the Jewish Agency to maintain the rights of the National Home under international law.

1 This article deals with developments in the Yishuv. For the international aspects see "Palestine Problem," by Louis Shub, p. 483—ED.
The year's record might have been quite different. On April 30, 1946, it seemed as if, at long last, the strangulation policy would be relaxed. On that day, tension in Palestine eased perceptibly with the announcement that the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry had recommended that, pending the ultimate solution of the Palestine problem, 100,000 refugees be admitted within a twelvemonth. But the very next day Prime Minister Attlee demanded an impossibly high price of admission: that the Yishuv strip itself of its vital defenses. Then the fat was in the fire. Jewish resistance attacks upon airfields, police stations, government offices and international bridges were countered with military operations against agricultural settlements, harassing house-to-house searches, and prolonged curfews that immobilized for twelve hours out of every twenty-four the business, social and cultural life of large sections of the Yishuv. The wartime emergency regulations were amended, empowering any soldier or police constable to arrest without a warrant any person they might suspect of terrorism. (In other words, any Jew anywhere and at any time, may be taken into custody and held, without trial, in prison camps for weeks, months, or years. He may even be deported to Eritrea.)

Attack on the Jewish Agency

All this was only the prelude to “Operation Agatha,” which was launched against the Jewish Agency and some 25 settlements in various parts of the country by the military at dawn on Saturday morning, June 29, 1946. The events of that and the following days were soberly summed up by Dr. Weizmann on behalf of the Jewish Agency and the Inner Zionist Council, when he said

The Jewish people in Palestine, and the Jewish Agency in Palestine, have been subjected to a sudden attack by the Mandatory Government. Four members of the Agency’s Executive have been detained.¹ Military and police forces

¹ Rabbi J. L. Fishman, Acting Chairman of the Agency’s Executive; Mr. M. Shertok, head of its Political Department; Mr. Isaac Gruenbaum, head of its Labor Department; and Dr. Bernard Joseph, legal adviser.
have broken into its building in Jerusalem and its offices in Tel Aviv. Its archives, and treasures of historic value, have been seized in the absence of the Agency's officers. The sanctity of the Sabbath has been violated and the faithful forced to profane it. Jewish towns and villages have been seized as by a hostile army. Blood has been shed, violence has not been absent, thousands have been taken from their homes and work to languish in prison; material damage has been inflicted. The Yishuv's weapon of defense have been seized.

The excuse offered by the Government for this offensive ... is the deplorable and tragic acts of violence in which Jews and non-Jews have lost their lives. They have sprung from ever securing, through peaceful means, justice for the Jewish people.

The Government persists in delaying every positive action which could bring immediate relief to the survivors of Nazi terrorism, or right the wrong committed against the Jews of Palestine. The urgent recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry are not being carried out, or so much as accepted in principle. The laws imposing racial discrimination against the Jews of Palestine in the land of their National Home remain in force.

Later, the Agency referred to the attack upon it as the climax of a campaign of misrepresentation and slander that had gone on for years, even while it was helping actively to organize the Jewish contribution to the war effort. Suggestions had been thrown out from official quarters to the Anglo-American Committee that the liquidation of the Jewish Agency would be desirable. When those hints were disregarded, resort was had to military force. Following the seizure of the Agency, official quarters had suggested the creation of a more amenable Jewish leadership. That such a suggestion could have been made shows how little the rulers understand the mind or spirit of the ruled.

The Agency offices were handed back to the Executive on July 12, two weeks after their seizure by the military, but the leaders were released from the Latrun prison camp only on November 6. No charges were ever preferred against any of them in a court of law.
Non-Cooperation

Two days after the swoop upon the Agency, a conference of the public bodies of the Yishuv resolved upon a policy of non-cooperation with the Government. After two months of discussion, during which public opinion was sharply divided between the Lefts and the Rights, a second conference was called where the Vaad Leumi sat with the Mayors of the Jewish towns and heads of Jewish Local and Community Councils. Two resolutions were then adopted as a first step towards non-cooperation. One resolution called upon Jewish members of Government committees, except those dealing with the citrus industry and the rehabilitation of ex-service-men, to withdraw. The second resolution allocated L. P. 100,000 for an immigration fund to be used regardless of the White Paper restrictions. (By May 1947 about L. P. 80,000 had been raised for the immigration fund, and part of it had been used for bringing in uncertificated immigrants.)

Terrorism

Flouting the authority of the organized Yishuv, the dissident groups then went all out for terror, employing most ruthless forms of guerrilla warfare. On July 22, three weeks after the seizure of the Agency, the Irgun Zvai Leumi bombed the Government offices in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem with a loss of 72 lives and 45 other serious casualties. Many Government officers of high rank were included among the British, Jewish and Arab victims.

The Agency, Vaad Leumi, the press and the Yishuv generally denounced the King David outrage in scathing terms as a crime against humanity and the Jewish people itself. But this outburst of intense indignation was brusquely ignored by General Evelyn Barker, the General Officer Commanding, who, in an order putting all Jewish places of entertainment, shops and homes out of bounds for the troops, saw fit to charge the Yishuv as a whole with complicity in the crime and to suggest that the Jews be punished "in a way the race dislikes as much as any, by striking at their pockets and showing our
His Majesty's Government dissociated itself soon afterwards from the terms of the Barker order, and the virulent anti-Semite who had the Yishuv so much at his mercy was transferred to another command, but only six months later. In the Barker spirit, but aiming at Jewish political rights, the First Division of Civil Servants (senior officials) in Palestine petitioned the High Commissioner, insisting that they should not be "expected to collaborate with any public institution whose aims are criminally antagonistic to Government."

Alleging that all or most of the criminals who bombed the Government offices came from Tel Aviv, the authorities on July 30 placed the city under a strict twenty-four hour curfew for four successive days in the sub-tropical heat of the Palestinian summer, while 20,000 troops "screened" the whole population for terrorists. Of the close to 200,000 persons subjected to the screening, 700 were detained, but of those only 30 were held as suspects. No one was ever brought to trial for the King David crime.

At that time Jewish shops, offices and flats in the business center of Jerusalem were requisitioned at very short notice, and the whole area was transformed into a "fortress" (dubbed "Bevingrad" by local cynics), where Government offices and military headquarters transact their business behind barbed-wire entanglements and sand-bag barricades.

The curfews and requisitioning of premises naturally entailed great hardships and financial losses for thousands of innocent people. The Government disclaimed any intention of collective punishment, but its measures amounted to just that.

Cyprus Deportations

Now the Government launched a new attack upon a vital Jewish sector. For many months after the 1500-a-month immigration quota was inaugurated (following the vacuum when the 75,000 certificates granted by the 1939 White Paper had been used up), "illegals" were placed in the Athlit Clearance Camp and held there until certificates became available
for them in their turn. On August 13, 1946, the Government announced that the limits of its forbearance had been reached, and that thereafter "illegals" would not be allowed to land in Palestine, but would be transferred to Cyprus "and elsewhere" pending a decision as to their future. This new offensive was justified on the grounds that "Apart from its illegality, immigration to Palestine is a source of grave danger to law and order in Palestine," and that "their (the refugees') arrival has greatly increased the tension between the Arab and Jewish communities in Palestine." Neither assertion had any basis in fact. The Jewish Agency retorted by saying that if the British Government were sincerely anxious to preserve the peace of Palestine, it could never have authorized such an action nor issued so inflammatory a statement.

So began the series of sordid deportations from the shores of Palestine, numbering eighteen up to the middle of May 1947. In their desperation, the unarmed refugees usually resist transshipment to Cyprus, and not a few Jewish lives have been lost in this unequal tussle with the British army and navy. In Cyprus (there has fortunately been no "elsewhere") the "illegals" are interned in camps to wait their turn, many months later, when certificates become available for them. This Palestine-Cyprus-Palestine shuttle service would be a farce if it had not so many harsh implications for helpless human beings. (In May 1947 there were over 16,000 refugees in the Cyprus camps. At the present rate of transfer, the latest arrivals will remain there for nearly five years.)

Soon after the Cyprus deportation order, military searches were renewed in several settlements. Two Kibbutzim in the South were all but wrecked during such searches. When some arms were finally found, the exposed settlements were deprived of their sole means of defense.

The stern measures of the Mandatory Power called out ever more violent reactions from the dissident groups, who have remained deaf to all appeals and even threats. The frequently reiterated calls upon them to desist from their criminal and politically dangerous course have come from the Zionist Congress, the Agency, the Vaad Leumi, the Chief Rabbinate, the Labor Federation, youth organizations, polit-
ical parties, and many others, but to no avail. Occasional clashes have occurred between terrorists and anti-terrorists which, while not serious in themselves, are ominous in their implications of the possibility of civil war in the Yishuv.

The King David outrage was followed by the bombing of railway stations, goods and passenger trains, oil pipe lines, and oil installations, by shooting of police and soldiers in city streets, with numerous reprisals against passers-by; and by bank robberies, in which murders were committed, for the benefit of terrorist funds. There was a short lull—the so-called terrorist “truce”—while the Zionist Congress was in session last December.

*Dov Gruner’s Execution*

In the course of the military trials of terrorist suspects, a number of death sentences had been imposed, but always—notably in the case of eighteen young members of the Stern Group—commuted to life imprisonment. This policy was changed at the end of 1946. Dov Gruner, an ex-serviceman with a good record, was given a death sentence for having taken part in an attack upon a police station at Ramath Gan during which an Arab police constable was killed. The man’s death could not be proved specifically against Gruner, but the extreme penalty was imposed nevertheless. No sooner was the sentence confirmed, than two Britishers—a Jerusalem business man and the president of the district court of Tel Aviv—were kidnapped. The government warned the Jewish authorities that unless the men were returned unharmed within forty-eight hours, martial law would be imposed upon the main Jewish centers. Both men were released just in time. Meanwhile, Gruner was granted a reprieve in connection with efforts to bring his case before the Privy Council in London. This was early in January.

The kidnapping incident was used by the military as the occasion for ordering a wholesale evacuation from Palestine of the families of non-Jewish British subjects, in spite of the vehement protests of most of the persons concerned. British
Government officials and military personnel were then concentrated in so-called “security zones,” with very little liberty of movement. The new zones were created largely by evicting hundreds of Jewish families from their homes in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa at forty-eight hours’ notice—and this during an acute housing shortage.

Yishuv Refuses to Turn Informer

On February 3, the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi were asked by the Palestine Government to state categorically whether they were prepared within seven days to call upon the Yishuv to lend its aid to the authorities on locating terrorists and bringing them to justice. The demand was refused because, as it was pointed out, the situation was not comparable to one in which cooperation is normally expected from citizens in fighting breaches of the law. The Yishuv utterly condemned terrorism and was resisting terroristic activities with all the means at its disposal; but it was felt that the Yishuv should not be called upon to cooperate with the Government in combatting the evil consequences of a policy which was of the Government’s own making, and which the Yishuv regarded as a menace to its very existence.

In the middle of February death sentences were passed on three young Jews for having had arms and rawhide whips in their possession on the night when a British major and three noncommissioned officers were flogged by terrorists in reprisal for the caning of a youth who took part in an armed bank holdup. (It should be explained that while the Yishuv has not protested against even the long prison sentences, feeling is very strong against corporal punishment as an infringement of human dignity that cannot be tolerated in Palestine, whatever the practice may be in England.)

On Saturday, March 1, a new wave of terror broke over wide areas, though it was evident that any additional excesses would be followed by martial law, the threat of which had been hanging over the Yishuv for many weeks. An army officers’ club was bombed and completely wrecked in Jeru-
salem, and a series of attacks was launched simultaneously on military camps, armored cars and military and police patrols in different parts of the country. The casualties were heavy, aggregating 30 killed and 37 wounded.

**Martial Law**

The next morning statutory martial law was imposed on a large Jewish section of Jerusalem, the whole city of Tel-Aviv and the neighboring points of Petach Tikvah, Ramath Gan and Bnai Berak. Nearly half the Yishuv—some 250,000 souls—was immobilized at a single stroke. Postal, telegraph, telephone and transport services were suspended, and food supplies were rationed out under military control. Tens of thousands of people had to stay away from their work, and great numbers of children were unable to go to school. Business and industry were seriously handicapped by the lack of transport for goods and raw materials, even apart from the absence of managers and staff in many cases. The material losses during the fifteen days of martial law were very heavy, and the chief burden fell, as always, on daily wage-earners and casual workers.

All the material losses and hardships were intensified by a sense of bitter humiliation that nearly half of the Yishuv could be imprisoned, for the crimes of a few, in the National Home built up under international guarantees.

As far as the control of terrorism goes, the effects of martial law were practically nil, though the Government professed itself satisfied. No one believed that the few score terrorists apprehended during those fifteen days could not have been taken into custody without turning Palestine into a police state. Nor did martial law deter terrorist activity, judging by the number of “incidents” that occurred while it was in force.

**Death Sentences**

While the Gruner appeal was still pending and the Jewish authorities were pleading for commutation of his and the other three death sentences, all four men were secretly hanged at
Acre prison before dawn on April 16. Simultaneously a twenty-four hour curfew was imposed on the whole Jewish population. The shock of the sudden executions was all the greater when, the next day, new amendments were announced to the Emergency Regulations providing retroactively that judgments and sentences passed by military courts in Palestine or by the General Officer Commanding would not be subject to appeal and might not be questioned or challenged before any court!

On the day after the four hangings, two death sentences were confirmed. One of the condemned youths had helped to attack the Jerusalem railway station, the other had been caught carrying a hand grenade in his hand while the Yishuv was under martial law. Both men committed suicide by blowing themselves up in their prison cell on the night before they were to have been executed.

The executions have not had any deterrent effects upon the terrorists. On the contrary, their fanatical "patriotism" has been intensified by motives of revenge and romantic martyrdom. The excesses continue, taking toll of lives and property, and increasing the tension between the troops and the population to a dangerous pitch.

Reaction to British Political Moves

In the political sphere the moves of the Mandatory Power have evoked either downright opposition or, at best, scepticism that any good might come out of them. The limited cantonization scheme put forward in the Morrison-Grady report was rejected by majority opinion as "a Procrustean bed for the Jews of Palestine and a policy of dispersion and exile for the Jews outside." Certain minority elements felt, however, that while the scheme was unacceptable in many if not most of its aspects, it should have been taken as a starting point for a discussion looking towards an ultimate political solution.

The refusal of the Agency last September to attend the London talks on Palestine, while some of its leaders were in a detention camp, was generally approved, though it was the
first time Jews had refused to attend such a conference. There was also the consideration, as Haaretz pointed out at the time, that the federal plan had already been brought before Parliament, and that there was “good reason to believe that the plan itself had been drawn up following consultation with Arab representatives, who were promised that no plan would be accepted that could serve as a spring-board to a Jewish State or to Jewish-controlled immigration, even in part of Palestine.” The Government’s invitation to non-Agency leaders to come to the London talks were interpreted as an attempt to find Jewish “quislings.” Though some of those invited may have disagreed with the Agency’s decision, it was unthinkable that they “should violate national discipline,” as the phrase goes in Palestine.

Palestine and the United Nations

The British decision to refer the Palestine problem to the United Nations was mostly regarded simply as a continuation of Bevin’s well-known delaying tactics. The most optimistic view was that if U. N. did no good to the Jewish cause, it would do no harm. The broad hint thrown out that Britain would be bound by the U. N. recommendations only if it suited her book did nothing to dispel the prevailing cynicism. On the other hand, the decision of the Agency to try to get a hearing was approved on the whole in the hope that this would confirm its status as an internationally recognized body. The appointment of a new fact-finding committee was greeted with apathy, as making no difference one way or the other. Comment on M. Gromyko’s statement that there ought to be a bi-national state in Palestine, or failing that, an Arab and a Jewish State in view of the sufferings of the Jews in the war, varied, as the Palestine Post summed it up, “from joyful acclamation of a Soviet Balfour Declaration to tempered appraisal of the tactical aims behind the Soviet delegate’s speech.” All in all, it was an unexpectedly friendly gesture, even if no more than that, from a quarter believed to be hostile altogether.
JEWISH-ARAB AND ORIENTAL RELATIONS

The stubborn political conflict notwithstanding, daily contacts between the Jewish and Arab communities reveal no signs of general tension, though not a few Arabs have been the innocent victims of Jewish terrorist attacks upon British forces.

There were two Jewish-Arab clashes during the year, but neither was a major "incident." On November 3 last, Arab villagers attacked Naoth Mordecai, a new Jewish settlement in Upper Galilee on the pretense that the ownership of the land, which is held by the Jewish National Fund, was in dispute. In May a Jewish Resistance party raided an Arab village near Petach Tikveh in an attempt to seize murderers and brigands who had been attacking individual Jews for some months in the coastal plain. One Arab and one Jew were killed in the exchange of fire. According to a statement issued by the raiders, the Arabs of the vicinity are well aware that the action was not intended against them, but solely against the murderers, who had gone unpunished.

Friendly relations are evident in the frequent instances where new Jewish settlements have been formally welcomed by their Arab neighbors, and in complete Jewish-Arab solidarity in large-scale strikes in Government services and elsewhere.

As for the Arab boycott against "Zionist" goods, which was proclaimed in January 1946, it is much less effective in Palestine itself than in the neighboring States. Jewish goods of all kinds are openly displayed in Arab shops and on Arab pushcarts in Palestine, though there have been occasional "confiscations" of merchandise bought by Arabs from Jews, and Arab merchants have been threatened for dealing with Jews.

Syria and Lebanon have been encouraged by the Arab League to forbid their nationals to sell to Jews land owned by them in Palestine. In Palestine itself there have been not a few cases where Arabs have been murdered by their own people for selling their surplus land to Jews. The sales go on, however, as a matter of economic necessity.
Egypt is the most active in enforcing the boycott. Jewish goods in transit to overseas countries have been impounded and the loading of Jewish goods in Egyptian ports is prohibited. Iraq has followed suit by forbidding any goods whatever to be shipped to and from its territories via Palestine. In the case of Syria and Lebanon, the Jews have instituted a counter-boycott by refusing to import their fruits and vegetables.

Beyond a few casual arrests of Arab picketers, the Palestine Government, after a year and a half, has taken no action to stop the boycott except to register a formal protest against it with the International Trade Organization Conference held recently at Geneva.

For the first time in the history of modern Palestine the Yishuv as such was accorded a friendly gesture by its Oriental neighbors when the Indian Council of World Affairs, a non-political body headed by Pandit Nehru, invited it to send representatives to the Pan-Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi late in March. The Palestinian Arabs boycotted the Conference when they learned that the Jews had been invited and had accepted.

JERUSALEM MUNICIPALITY

Jerusalem still carries on under an appointed municipal commission of Government officers, without an elected council of its own. Sir William Fitzgerald, Chief Justice of Palestine, who was appointed a one-man committee to study the conflicting claims of the Jews and Arabs in regard to municipal representation, in August 1945 made a recommendation which, taking account of the impossibility of Jewish-Arab cooperation under the existing Municipal Corporations Ordinance, was designed to satisfy the just claims of both parties. The city was to be constituted as a county with two municipal boroughs (Jewish and Arab) each having its own mayor and council. The Old City with its Holy Places and other parts outside the two boroughs would be administered directly by the County Council. Sir William's report was published after a delay of sixteen months (December, 1946), with a note to
the effect that the Government did not consider itself bound to accept its recommendations. Nothing more has been heard of the plan.

JAFFA

The Jewish quarters of Jaffa, with a population of some 30,000 souls, boycotted the recent municipal elections. One reason was that the Yemenite quarter had been attached to the Moslem ward and would have had no choice but to vote for a Moslem candidate if it voted at all. The two seats of the Jewish Ward thus went uncontested—to Moslem candidates. The abnormality of the situation is revealed through the election boycott and its peculiar results. Seats on the Jaffa Municipal Council would not bring the Jews any nearer to their desire to be incorporated in the Tel Aviv municipality or, failing that, to have a Local Council, enjoying a certain measure of autonomy, within the Jaffa municipality. Jaffa provides its Jewish quarters only with lighting, scavenging roads and water supply in return for their taxes, but makes no provision for their educational, health and religious requirements, which for many years have been met by Tel Aviv. Repeated representations on behalf of the Jewish quarters of Jaffa by the Jewish Agency to the Government have so far had no effect.

IMMIGRATION FIGURES

Between 1939 and 1946, about 100,000 Jews entered Palestine. The great majority came from Eastern Europe, but there was also a considerable immigration from Oriental countries.

Of the 15,296 who came in the year 1945-46, nearly half (48.8 per cent) were "illegals." Practically all were impoverished, and of the former "capitalist" immigration there is now barely a trace. About 78 per cent of last year's newcomers were of working age. As a matter of fact, most of the "illegals" are pioneer material. The Jewish Agency's measures of rehabilitation include immediate relief, medical care, loans and
grants for tools, equipment for workshops, and vocational training. In the first eight months of 1946, 25 per cent of the immigrants were absorbed by Youth Aliyah, 35 per cent entered labor settlements, 25 per cent settled in the cities and 8 per cent in the private villages, while 7 per cent were still in the Agency's transit camps, awaiting rehabilitation.

The Youth Aliyah wards now in training in Palestine number about 8,000 with 2,000 more prospective wards still held in Cyprus and another 2,000 registered in Europe. About 60 per cent are trained in settlements and the others in institutions.

POPULATION

The population of Palestine has increased to nearly 2,000,000. On December 31, 1946, according to Government figures, there were 1,912,100 souls in Palestine. The Moslem inhabitants numbered 1,143,330 (including 66,550 nomads), the Jews 608,230, the Christians 145,060, and "others" 15,490. Tel Aviv with its population of 183,200 (including some 600 non-Jews) is the largest city in the country. Next comes Jerusalem with 164,440, of whom 99,320 are Jews (a good two-thirds). Just over half (75,230) of Haifa's population of 145,430 are Jews. Jaffa is Palestine's fourth largest city, having a population of 101,580, of whom 53,930 are Moslems, 30,820 Jews, and 16,800 Christians.

LAND

About half of the Jewish land in Palestine is now nationally owned, since the Jewish National Fund holds 835,000 dunams out of 1,807,000 dunams in Jewish ownership. Despite the 1939 Land Transfer Regulations, which are as rigorously applied in spirit as in letter, the National Fund acquired some 362,000 dunams in the past seven years,—a remarkable achievement under the circumstances. Two directives have been followed in the Fund's land-buying policy: to link up existing Jewish settlements more closely and to open up new regions for settlement, especially along the frontiers and in
areas that might conceivably be cut off under a partition scheme.

All told, barely seven per cent of the 26,000,000 dunams of Palestine are held by Jews. That fact explains why land, any kind of land, is so eagerly bought up at exorbitant prices. (The Jewish National Fund reports a more than five-fold increase in the average price per dunam bought by it. Where it paid on an average of LP. 4.08 in 1939–40, the corresponding figure for 1945–46 stood at LP. 22.40.)

**AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Between July 1946 and March 1947, 27 new settlements were founded in Palestine, bringing the total up to 333. By September there will be twelve more.

Fifteen of the new points are situated in the Negev or on its northern borders. Though the Negev is at present mostly unreclaimed, it comprises nearly 13,000,000 dunams, or about half the area of Palestine, and must be taken into account in any large development scheme at the present time. While settlement there is still in its early experimental stages, the experts give encouraging reports about underground water supplies and the possibilities of storing water from the winter rains. Some of the outposts (the settlements are hardly more than that) have already developed irrigated field and garden crops in areas that seemed stark desert.

Five of the new settlements were founded by ex-soldiers, including one by ex-servicemen and women from South Africa in a northern frontier area. Seven more such groups are waiting their turn.

All branches of farming showed largely increased output in 5706. Milk and egg production has been doubled in the past seven years, while four times the quantity of vegetables has been grown, and the catch of fish (from the sea, lakes and artificial ponds) has increased seven times over.

Rapid progress is being made in the development of small industries in Labor settlements, especially in the hill country and in the Negev, where farming is not as yet very remunerative. In other areas, the steady industrial earnings of agri-
cultural settlements also help to balance budgets at times adversely affected by the fluctuating prices of farm produce.

On the whole, the 1946–47 citrus season has shown some recovery from the wartime slump, exports having increased from 5,000,000 cases last year to this year's 7,500,000 cases. Though many growers have made profits, the industry as such claims to have lost about LP. 1,200,000 owing to shortage of shipping and packing facilities and to loss of orders because some fruit arrived abroad in bad condition. It is hoped that these handicaps can be overcome in the course of the year, and that the 1947–48 exports will reach the unparalleled figure of 15,000,000 cases.

The Jewish citrus growers claim that they are discriminated against by the authorities in two ways. While they produce about two-thirds of the Jaffa oranges (which form 70 per cent of the citrus exports), they are allowed to export only 45 per cent because the allocations are made according to the size of the groves and not of their yield. Again, the Arab growers are allowed, in addition to their share in the common exports, to sell their fruit, through Arab agents, to Arab countries which boycott the Jewish produce.

INDUSTRY

Though, like all other parts of the Palestinian economy, industry has been constantly interfered with during the past year by the untoward political situation, many new workshops and factories have been started, and unemployment is at a low level, with actual labor shortages in many sectors. There is a strong movement in the building trades, especially in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa. The aviation and maritime industries are also beginning to recover from their wartime handicaps.

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

In 1946 there was an enormous increase in the amount of capital investments. The LP. 20,000,000 total almost doubled the LP 11,000,000 of 1945; and, judging by test surveys made
early in 1947 by the Jewish Agency, the figure will be even higher this year. Most of the new investments have been made by private individuals, but it is pointed out that Keren Hayesod and other public funds often stimulate private investment by taking first risks. The building industry tops the list, with the other industries coming a close second. Bad as political conditions are, the confidence of business men in the future of the country seems to be as strong or stronger than ever.

FOREIGN TRADE

The volume of foreign trade in 1946 reached LP. 104,000,000, unprecedented figure, as compared to LP. 68,000,000 in 1945 and LP. 22,000,000 in 1939. Imports absorbed LP. 70,000,000 mostly consisting of raw diamonds, crude oil, food stuffs, machinery and manufactured goods. Exports rose to LP. 24,500,000, the main items being refined oil, polished diamonds, citrus fruits and potash. (The remaining LP. 9,000,000 are accounted for by re-exports and transit shipments.)

The very unfavorable trade balance is due in no small degree to the "open door" policy of the Mandatory Government which, while flouting without ado the Clauses in the Mandate that call for Jewish immigration and land settlement, is stubbornly faithful to the notorious Clause 18, which assures member-States of the League of Nations equality of commercial treatment in Palestine with Britain herself. Under that Clause, Palestine enjoys very little tariff protection for its young industries, and is subjected to dumping ad lib.

Another great difficulty in the foreign trade situation is that the dollar derived by the Yishuv from the U. S. A. (constituting almost the whole of Palestine's dollar income) for Keren Hayesod, Jewish National Fund, Youth Aliyah, Hadassah, University, Histadruth and other public institutions in Palestine and in payment for diamond exports, are held in London in the Dollar Pool of the Sterling Area. Last year the sum total came to something like $65,000,000, almost as large as Britain's own dollar income for exports to the U. S. A. Under an agreement with the Mandatory Government, the Jewish Agency uses some of its "gift dollars" in the U. S. A.
for the purchase of industrial machinery, raw materials and other capital equipment for factories, agricultural settlements, transport cooperatives and building contractors in Palestine, being reimbursed by them in Palestinian pounds. This is good as far as it goes, but the allocations are relatively very small (about $8,000,000 in 1946), and import licenses are not granted for anything the United Kingdom or other countries in the Sterling Area can supply, even though the same articles may be offered in America for half the price.

EDUCATION

The report of the Jewish Education Inquiry Committee for Palestine (appointed by the Colonial Office) is critical, but sympathetic. Concerning the educational system, it states: "To have been able in so short a time to provide education, though mainly elementary, for nearly 100 per cent of the children of a population of half a million was a remarkable achievement, whatever the defects." In regard to the Government's grudging doles towards the costs of Jewish education, the Commissioners had these enheartening words to say: "The Jewish Community ought not to be penalized because, apart from rates, both local and communal, partly from fees and partly from other sources, Palestinian and extra-Palestinian, it is able to meet almost 90 per cent of the cost of educating its children. A policy which took advantage of these sources of supply in order to reduce the Government share of the total cost would be as unwise as it would be unfair."

One of the Committee's main criticisms was directed against the system of divided control of the Vaad Leumi's school system among the General Zionists, Labor and Mizrahi. The Hebrew University came in for high praise as having rendered great services to the Jewish people both inside and outside Palestine. The Committee recommended that the University be enabled to train more teachers and suggested that it also undertake the training of youth leaders.

In 1946-47 the University has proceeded with an extensive post-war programme of development. Its most ambitious
program is a medical school for undergraduates, jointly sponsored by itself and Hadassah, which is to be opened in the autumn of 1948. Preliminary measures are being taken for the establishment, at a later date, of a school of economics and social sciences. Enrollments at the University are nearing the pre-war figures. Of the 1,000 undergraduates, almost 100 have come from the U. S. A., including a large contingent of ex-servicemen and women on G. I. Government scholarships.

A Public Service College has been opened by the Jewish Agency, where qualified civil servants will be trained for the Agency's own political department and for the needs of other national institutions.

A People's "University" has been opened in Tel Aviv by the Histadruth in response to a demand by the graduates of its evening school for adults. Most of the students are under the age of 25. The most popular courses are those in Bible and biology.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The Hebrew Publishers' Association of Palestine estimates that the Yishuv spends about LP. 500,000 a year on Hebrew books, both originals and translations from many European languages, and another LP. 130,000 a year on foreign-language books imported from abroad. In these latter English is far in the lead, followed by German, Arabic, French, Russian and Yiddish.

Some 18 books were gazetted in March as forbidden in Palestine. The list includes The Forgotten Ally and three other books by Pierre Van Paassen, Ben Hecht's popular play, A Flag is Born, William Ziff's Rape of Palestine and Megillath Struma by Kuperstein.

The monumental Ben Yehuda Hebrew dictionary has at last been completed under the editorship of Professor Torczyner, who holds the Chair in Semitic Philology at the Hebrew University. Four thousand copies of a popular edition, priced at LP 24 the set, have already been sold.

A novel development in the literary field is an association of 25 young writers, all members of Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutzim. Their earnings will be pooled for mutual aid, as will
also the "bank of working days" allocated to the writers by their Kibbutzim as special leave for important literary activities.

The outstanding theatrical event of the year was the production of Sophocles' "Oedipus the King" by the Habima Company under the direction of Tyrone Guthrie, the noted English producer. The new Chamber Theatre made its hit of the year with Franz Werfel's tragi-comedy, "Jacobowsky and the Colonel."

During the past season the Palestine Symphony Orchestra was led by a number of distinguished conductors from abroad, including Bernardo Molinari, Charles Munch, and Leonard Bernstein. No Jewish conductor has met with such ovations as Bernstein since Hubermann was here. His genius as a musician and warm interest in the struggling Orchestra endeared him to the whole Yishuv.

The Hebrew Programme of the Palestine Broadcasting Service has been expanded from two and a half hours a day to five, while the number of Jewish radio owners has grown during the year from 45,000 to 66,000.

At the annual exhibition in Tel Aviv of the Palestine Association of Artists and Sculptors, which now has 150 members, over 160 paintings in oils and water colors and over 30 pieces of sculpture were shown. Landscapes and local types predominated as subjects of the paintings.

The Bezalel School in Jerusalem this year held its usual Boris Schatz Fund exhibition of Jewish ritual objects, which were acquired mainly from immigrants. Hanukkah lamps, Torah shields and pointers, spice boxes, illuminated manuscripts of old Passover Haggadoth and Scrolls of Esther and seals of considerable historic value were shown.

Described as one of the most important archaeological discoveries in Jerusalem during the past seventy years, a 2000-year-old stone wall has been found in the courtyard of the Tower of David. The wall, which appears to have been linked with Herod's "upper palace," may have been an extension of the first city wall.

While confirmation is still lacking, it appears not unlikely that a site excavated near Nablus by the French School of
Archaeology in Jerusalem may be that of Tirzah, the first capital of the kingdom of Israel, dating back to the ninth century before the Christian era.

**RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE**

Except in their own agricultural settlements, the Orthodox laborers consider themselves aggrieved by current practices in regard to Kashruth and Sabbath observance. In recent months progress has been made in both respects. The Histadruth has promised that hereafter only Kosher food will be served in the canteens of closed Labor institutions, and that it will do what it can to persuade workers' restaurants in all parts of the country to install Kosher kitchens. The Histadruth has also undertaken to insist on Sabbath observance in all Labor agreements under its competence or signed by it. If these resolutions are carried out, it will considerably ease the situation of the Orthodox laborers, who have often suffered inconvenience and losses because they would not violate their religious principles.

**HEALTH**

Since last October, Hadassah has been carrying out the full administrative responsibility for the medical care of new immigrants and sharing the expenditure for the immigrants' medical service with the Jewish Agency on a 50-50 basis. A whole new floor with 70 beds for immigrants has been added to the Rothschild-Hadassah-University Hospital on Mount Scopus, and a hospital has been opened by Hadassah at the Atlit Clearance Camp for immigrants. Work will shortly be begun on a 200-bed tuberculosis Hospital on Mount Scopus as part of the Hadassah complex, and a new wing for the Henrietta Szold-Hadassah School of Nursing is already under construction.

At the end of 1946 the membership of Kuppath Holim, the Sick Fund of the Jewish Labor Federation of Palestine, reached nearly 130,000. Forty-five new dispensaries were opened during the year, bringing the total to 323. Kuppath Holim
has five hospitals and eight convalescent homes. Its budget for 1947 has been fixed at nearly LP. 2,250,000.

SOCIAL SERVICE

A noble monument to Henrietta Szold’s memory was set up at the Zionist Congress held in Basle last December, when the Jewish Agency, the Vaad Leumi and Hadassah each contributed $100,000 towards the Child and Youth Welfare Fund of Palestine. The Fund was inaugurated by Miss Szold herself during the last years of her life and was envisaged by her as of equal importance with Keren Hayesod and Keren Kayemeth.

The first building of a Children’s Centre, the gift of the Australian branch of the Women’s International Zionist Organization, was recently dedicated on Mount Carmel. Most of the children now sheltered there are refugees.

A FINAL WORD

No one in Palestine knows what the future, the immediate political future, may hold. No one is over-optimistic about it. Yet everyone goes on planning and working as if all were well with the world and with Palestine. Expansion goes on everywhere: on the land, in industry, in trade, in building. Wartime lags in production are being made up. Plans are ready for the absorption of at least 100,000 immigrants. New hospitals and schools are built. In every sphere of cultural life there is growth, expansion, a reaching up to higher levels of achievement. Even the most pessimistic do not think of waiting for better times. It is as if better times simply must come if one works hard and paves the way for them. Here the Jewish will to live manifests itself in its soundest instincts. This community builds not for itself alone but for the Jewish future: a future with every Jew settled in Palestine who wishes to make his home here, with the deserts and the marshes transformed into fertile fields and gardens. And there are those who dare to dream that, in time, the inertia of the Middle East may be overcome by the example of the Yishuv in Palestine.
21. THE MIDDLE EAST

By Isaac Shamosh

POLITICAL SITUATION

The Middle East has in recent years been overtaken by vast political changes. Syria and the Lebanon attained their independence after a quarter of a century of French Mandate rule. Egypt succeeded in effecting British withdrawal from her principal cities after an occupation of some 64 years and was demanding British evacuation of the Sudan. Iraq struggled to consolidate an independence gained in an imperfect condition in 1932, when she became a member of the quondam League of Nations. (Yemen alone has remained politically stagnant.) The governments of all these countries thus came to enjoy considerable freedom of action in the conduct of foreign and domestic policy.

Arab Boycott

Since the establishment of the Arab League on March 22, 1945, the attitude of the Arab States to their Jewish minorities has been determined by the Palestine situation. One of the most important manifestations of this was the proclamation on January 1, 1946 of the boycott of "Zionist" products. In their zeal to make the boycott totally effective the Arab countries visited heavy punishment on all merchants trading in Jewish-produced merchandise or facilitating its distribution. Informers were offered half the price of any goods confiscated. Special committees were formed of cabinet ministers, members

1 The Palestine situation is discussed in separate articles elsewhere in the Year Book. Transjordania is omitted from consideration as a territory without Jewish population.
of parliament, and others to help enforce the boycott. In Palestine the big Arab merchants availed themselves of the boycott to increase their vast profits.

A second manifestation of anti-Zionist policy was the refusal to grant exit visas for travel to Palestine. Only an insignificant number of well-to-do Jews, with influential friends in Government departments, have succeeded in obtaining visas, after depositing cash guarantees in Syria and Lebanon of £200–£300, and in Iraq as high as £2,000! It goes without saying that no Jew is allowed to make that journey for the purpose of visiting the Holy Places, or fulfilling a religious duty, much less of visiting relatives or friends. Officials of the Egyptian passport service have frankly told Jewish friends they could receive passports to any country in the world—save Palestine.

Unauthorized Immigration

Consequently, unauthorized Jewish emigration from these countries has, during the past two years, gained considerable momentum, particularly among the youth and the poorer classes. Against these emigrants, the Arab governments have resorted to the most rigorous measures. The penalty now imposed includes imprisonment and exposure to public opprobrium. Unfortunate would-be emigrants when caught are dragged through the streets by armed police and exposed to the abuse of the populace. If the Security Forces get so much as a hint of a Jew successfully crossing to Palestine, they hastily arrest his relatives who are compelled to disclose the identity of anyone who gave aid or comfort to the emigrant. The Syrian Government's fanaticism reached the point of introducing a Bill on March 23, 1947, recommending imposition of the death penalty on any Jew attempting to cross to Palestine illegally, or abetting such movement even if not a Jew. The penalty was later changed to imprisonment with hard labor.

Jewish travel to Arab countries has become just as impossible. Arab Consulates in Jerusalem have received explicit instructions to refuse any Jewish Palestinian citizen "an entry
visa to our country." But the practical application of these decrees has been extended to include all Jews, irrespective of nationality. Some of these Arab countries have declined to grant Jews even transit visas through their countries. Yet despite this fact, these severe restrictions do not seem to bar top-ranking Palestinian Jewish physicians when their services are required by Arab politicians.

Yet another aspect of this Arab policy is the increasing refusal to appoint a proportionate number of Jewish officials in accordance with established custom. In consequence the representation of Jews in Governmental departments is perceptibly on the decrease. Jews retaining their jobs seldom receive promotions or grants unless they explicitly and aggressively repudiate Zionism.

The constitutions of the Arab countries, adopted following World War I, guarantee to all minorities, including Jews, the right of parliamentary representation on a proportional basis. The Jewish population in Iraq, estimated at 125,000, is represented by four members in the Chamber of Deputies and two in the Senate. In Egypt, where the Jewish population is estimated at 75,000, there is one Jew in the Chamber of Deputies and another in the Senate. In Syria, where there are some 1,300 Jews, they are represented by one member in the Chamber of Deputies. (Syria dispenses with a Senate.) In the Lebanon, with a present Jewish population of 6,000, a Jew was a candidate in the June 1947 elections. These few Jewish representatives in the parliamentary bodies of the Arab countries find their duties somewhat onerous. When the Iraq Chamber of Deputies and Senate held a session towards the end of March 1947, to adopt resolutions on the Palestine situation, Jewish members found themselves excluded.

Political Intimidation

Another manifestation of the anti-Jewish line appeared in Egypt during the war when the Government demanded that Jewish communities declare their official opposition to Zionism. In like manner, Arab authorities in other Middle East countries now form parties, Jewish and non-Jewish, for the
express purpose of combating Zionism, such as "The League for Combating Zionism" in Baghdad, established in September 1945; and "The Democratic Youth Party for Combating Zionism" in Cairo, established in 1947. Efforts were being made to form similar leagues in Syria, the Lebanon and Yemen.

There is a continuous barrage of anti-Jewish propaganda in the Arab countries, conducted by sections of the press and some politico-religious reactionary organizations of the type of "the Moslem Brotherhood," "The Mohammed Youth," and "Young Egypt." To this propaganda well-informed sources attribute the disturbances of November 2, 1945, in Egypt and, to a smaller extent, in the Arab countries. Jewish life, individually and collectively, has been rendered well-nigh intolerable, and what intensifies Jewish anxiety is the knowledge of governmental connivance. Dr. Fadhil el-Jamali, the Iraq Foreign Minister, has officially announced that Jews in the Arab countries have become "hostages." The situation appears less strained in the Lebanon, where the governmental authorities and leading circles are inclined to resume official contacts with Jewish bodies in the country. Last Passover, for instance, the President of the Lebanese Republic sent his representative, accompanied by members of the government, to visit the great Synagogue in Beirut.

**ECONOMIC SITUATION**

If such is the political status of the Jews in the Middle East, their economic condition is scarcely more favorable. What is generally said about "Jewish wealth" in these regions applies only to the case of a few individuals. In point of fact, the proportion of the Jewish well-to-do class in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen does not exceed 10 per cent of the total Jewish population. Add to this the middle class, comprising about 15–20 per cent, and the majority of Jews will be found to be suffering from abject poverty.

The proportion of the poorer classes in the Jewish popula-

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1 Later the Iraq Government discovered that most of the League members were Communists, resulting in its liquidation.
tion varies in different regions, being as high as 95 per cent in Yemen, 85–90 per cent in Iraq, and as low as 55 per cent in Syria; it is 75 per cent in Egypt and 65–70 per cent in the Lebanon. These classes live mostly on charity and overseas aid from relatives, particularly in the United States and Latin American countries. They work at odd jobs, but even their earnings are more in the nature of charity than merited remuneration.

The middle class consists of the small merchants, employees in commercial institutions and industries, and a very small group in the free professions, such as teaching, law, journalism and pharmacy. Some few practice medicine. The well-to-do class comprises the bankers and big merchants, who render important services to the countries they live in by contributing much-needed capital for various constructive enterprises. Nevertheless, during the last two years the native masses have been incited against these merchants too on the assumption that they are Zionists or Zionist sympathizers.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS

As an inevitable result of miserable economic conditions, Jews of the Middle East are culturally retrograde. Education is limited to members of the well-to-do and middle classes, and even among these, it is on an elementary level. Most of the poor, and they comprise the overwhelming majority of the Jews of these countries, receive absolutely no education, not even preliminaries of reading, writing or arithmetic. Their knowledge is limited to the elementary Jewish prayers and rites instilled in hedarim which have not changed in the course of hundreds of years. Even these miserable substitutes for schools admit boys only.

Despite the fact that elementary education is free in the Government schools, these are seldom attended by the poorer Jewish children, because of distance from Jewish quarters and because parents or others responsible are anxious to give the children the essentials of Jewish religion and observances in Jewish community schools. These latter are Jewish community institutions established for the most part by the community
councils or by religious societies (the "Talmud Torah" type); or by some private benefactor.

Deserving of honorable mention are the Alliance Israelite Universelle Schools which were and still are rendering invaluable service. The beneficial results secured by the Alliance Schools encouraged them to raise the official educational standards from the primary to the secondary level. Though the language of instruction was French—as in other regions—Arabic was not neglected. Many Alliance students won distinction in the Arabic language and its literature.

The Alliance Schools were, however, dealt a severe blow both in Syria and the Lebanon. Following the liberation of the two countries from French Mandatory rule, they were closed because they were deemed French schools with Paris headquarters. To meet new requirements they were ordered to effect basic changes in their curricula. Arabic was to become the principal language of instruction. Importance was to be attached to the study of Arab history and subjects fostering the development of Arab national sentiment; local directors were to be appointed. The Alliance schools were anxious to fulfill these conditions in order to resume their cultural efforts among the Jewish population. In Egypt, Jewish schools were obliged to effect similar changes in accordance with the "Arabic Language Law" enacted in 1945. A similar situation prevails in Iraq. In Yemen, the school system is too primitive to merit serious discussion. Only a little Arabic is taught along with some instruction in elementary religious principles.

Whatever justification there was for these changes in terms of the Arab national awakening, it was hardly possible to justify the decrees of the Ministries of Education restricting the study of Hebrew or banning it altogether. National minorities other than the Jewish were still permitted to teach their languages without let or hindrance.

In all these countries there were too few Jewish secondary schools, except in Iraq and particularly in Baghdad where there are five such schools with Arabic as the language of instruction. In other Arab countries young students of both sexes frequent the various foreign missionary schools.
SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Such backward economic and educational conditions were naturally not conducive to Jewish happiness in the Middle East. Only a few members of the wealthier class and a small number of the middle class have been able to enjoy the amenities and comforts that favor decent health and living standards. Many Jews live in a lamentable state of ignorance, poverty and disease in dirty mean quarters. Absolute illiteracy completely isolates them from the outside world. The women, as in some parts of Iraq, still go veiled. Many women of the wealthy and middle classes receive sufficient education to put them culturally in advance of the Arab women.

IRAN

The Jewish Community in Iran is counted among the oldest Jewish communities of the world. Ispahan, for instance, was at one time a Jewish city, and was called "Little Jerusalem." But how different are present-day conditions! This same community has been reduced to the most miserable and the most backward community in the whole of the Middle East, and the Jewish quarter in Ispahan has become the meanest ghetto in the world!

Most of the Persian Jews live in the big cities: Teheran, Ispahan, Hamadan, Karmanshah, Shiraz and others; but a small percentage lives in the smaller cities and even in secluded villages not far from the Kurdistan Mountains near Iran's western frontier. Most are small traders, peddlers and middlemen, but some also engage in handicrafts like weaving and the manufacture of hoisery.

When the recent World War ended, the Jews numbered about 85,000; but it is evident that this number has decreased by several thousand who have made their way, by hook or crook, to Palestine. Their incredibly difficult economic conditions are responsible, too, for the fact that many Persian Jews have lately embraced Protestantism in exchange for a specified sum of money or the promise of a job in a foreign company and the like.
But the number of Jews who have become Protestantized is almost insignificant compared with those who have embraced the Bahai creed, a number estimated at 10,000.

What facilitates these conversions is the lack of organization within the Jewish communities, and the fact that conversion does not prejudice private relations with one's family. The converts seem to preserve their connections with their former co-religionists. It is not a rare thing to find in Iran many Jewish families, whose members include converts to Protestantism, Islamism or Bahai-ism, without this affecting their relations with one another or other members of the community.

Many Persian Jews were officials and employees in Government departments, but were discharged, early in the war, when Nazi influence in Persia was at its peak. Nevertheless, the dismissed Jewish officials were not restored to their posts after the cessation of hostilities, as Iran follows the Arab League as regards the Palestine situation.

The Jews still retain the single seat they held in the Persian parliament. Yet the strange thing is that the Persian Government itself does not contact the Jewish community through this Jewish member of Parliament, but through the Director of the Alliance Israelite schools in Teheran.

If the Jews of Iran owe a debt of gratitude to any institution, it is to the Alliance Israelite schools. When it is remembered that all literate Jews were educated in the Alliance schools, it is difficult to imagine what Jewish conditions might have been without them.

During the last few years, these schools in Iran received a severe setback. The Government decided that Persian should be the medium of education in all schools. It was ordered that the director must be a Persian, licensed by Persian educational institutions. It became imperative for the director of the Alliance schools to "hire" a nominal director approved by the Government. This dualism in the school management frequently resulted in conflicts between the two directors, especially because the "nominal" director is usually imbued with fanatical national sentiments.
What is chiefly inadequate in the Alliance schools in Iran—as well as in other Oriental states—is the teaching of Jewish history, religion, and Hebrew. So sketchy are the Jewish studies in these schools that the graduates' knowledge in these subjects seldom rises above zero. Yet those whom circumstances allow to attend these schools are fortunate, especially those who can afford to graduate. The maximum proportion of these graduates, however, rarely exceeds 10–15 per cent of all Persian Jews.

Side by side with the dearth of religious education, the hold of religion on individual Jews is constantly slackening. The majority seldom know anything more than Shema Yisrael.

The Jews of Iran have neither clubs nor press. In their secluded ghetto, they are shut off from all contacts with their co-religionists throughout the world. Most of them speak Persian, though some speak Aramaic and others Arabic. A small minority, who were educated at the Alliance schools, understand French.

---22. THE FAR EAST---
---By Ernest Strauss---

When the Japanese "Segregation Order" came into effect on May 18, 1943, 15,225 Central European refugees had been crammed into what later came to be known as the Hongkew Ghetto. Their total number may have been slightly higher because of exemptions granted to a fortunate few.

At the time of the Japanese surrender, 14,874 were left. According to their countries of origin, 8,466 were Germans, 4,279 Austrians, 1,211 Poles and 918 other nationalities. 6,170 were male and 8,704 female. The age distribution showed 2 per cent up to 5 years, 7.5 per cent from 6–15 years, 44 per cent from 31–50 years, 24 per cent from 51–60 years, and 11.9 per cent above 60 years.