cial participation of Renzo Levi and Abraham Blass, chief of ORT, Italy, in the International Conference of Labor which took place in Rome from January 26 to February 9, 1948.

**Other Organizations**

The assistance lent by the Joint Distribution Committee which was extremely significant during the period immediately following the liberation and thereafter, was decreasing little by little, while that of the local organizations was increasing. By the month of October, 1948, JDC was to cease all its contributions to the communities and institutions, although it was to carry on in other fields on a reduced scale.

OSE was the largest contributor to an infants' home in Rome for children under three, to several children's playgrounds situated in the principal communities and to summer camps.

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In five of the seven southeastern European countries discussed in this section, the year 1947–48 marked the achievement of complete and effective Communist political control, and of a far-reaching transformation of the economic life of these countries on the model furnished by the Soviet economy. While the tempo of achievement of these uniform "revolutions" varied according to local conditions and moods, the objectives and processes of transforming these countries into "people's democracies" were identical.

1 Prepared in the offices of the American Jewish Committee.
In YUGOSLAVIA, this process started during the war, and the regime of Marshal Tito was already firmly entrenched at a time when the other Communist parties of the area were still in the thick of the fight for complete political domination. By the end of the period under review, Marshal Tito's local power and relative independence had incurred the suspicion and ire of the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau).

In the spring of 1947, the position of the Communist party in HUNGARY was considered insufficiently powerful. Free elections held in 1945 had resulted in a disastrous defeat for the Communists. Subsequently, in May, 1947, Bela Kovacs, Secretary General of the majority Smallholders party, was arrested on a charge of conspiracy by the Soviet occupying authorities. This charge was later extended to include the entire leadership of the majority party, and, gradually, to all parties opposing Communist dominance. The legally elected Prime Minister, Ferenc Nagy, and a number of other opposition leaders fled the country, the cabinet resigned, and a new, completely conformist "coalition government" was put in power. New elections were held to confirm these changes. As a result of an extensive campaign, the Communists succeeded in boosting their share of the popular vote from 17 per cent (in 1945) to 22 per cent in the August, 1947, elections, and in reducing the Smallholders party share from 57 to 15 per cent. Paradoxically, the votes lost by this originally progressive democratic party went to a new ultra-conservative Catholic party, the Democratic People's party, organized on the very eve of the elections with practically no publicity. A new, carefully planned electoral law greatly limited the right to vote, and gave the Communist-dominated coalition of Communists, Social Democrats, Smallholders, and the Peasant parties 80 per cent of the seats in parliament, although they had received only 60 per cent of the popular vote. (The law contained a provision that any party or coalition which obtained over 50 per cent of the total vote was entitled to 80 per cent of the seats in parliament.)
The next step was to consolidate the leftist coalition itself. The same charges of conspiracy were leveled against the left-wing Social Democrats as had been made against the Smallholders party. In February, 1948, Charles Peyer, for many decades chairman of the Social Democratic party of Hungary, was sentenced in absentia to eight years' imprisonment for conspiracy to overthrow the "democratic republic." Shortly thereafter, thirty-five rightist members of the Social Democratic leadership, among them many Jews, were compelled to resign from the party and from their public positions. Finally, on March 8, the Social Democratic party passed a resolution accepting fusion with the Communist party.

In the wake of this political process followed the Communist transformation of the country's economic life. First the coal mines and electric power sources were nationalized (1946), then the leading banks together with their industrial concerns (June 1, 1947), and, finally, on March 29, 1948, all industrial plants employing more than 100 people. Today more than 90 per cent of Hungary's industry is state-owned.

Next came Bulgaria. On June 6, 1947, Nikola Petkov, leader of the Agrarian party representing the large peasant population, was arrested and charged with preparing an armed coup d'état. On August 16, he was sentenced to death; on August 25, the Agrarian party was dissolved; and on September 23, Nikola Petkov was hanged in Sofia.

No obstacle was left in the way of the Communist party's achieving the economic dominance of the country. A decree issued on January 25, 1948, ordered the nationalization of the entire industry of Bulgaria, with the exception of enterprises belonging to foreigners.

In Rumania, the final drive for exclusive Communist rule started in July, 1947, with the liquidation of the National Peasant party and the arrest of some 2,000 of its leaders, including its founders, Juliu Maniu and Ion Michalache, who were sentenced to hard labor for life.

The drive continued in November, 1947, with the elimination of foreign minister George Tatarescu and his rump Liberal party, the non-cooperative majority of which had been
discarded long before. Tatarescu was replaced by Ana Pauker, said to be the most influential Communist in Rumania. At the same time, the Independent Social Democratic party was placed under indictment for subversive activities, and later dissolved. In February, 1948, following the forced abdication of King Michael and the abrogation of the monarchy, the collaborating wing of the Social Democratic party was compelled to merge with the Communist “Workers’ party.” In the March 28 elections, the Communist-led Front of People’s Democracy achieved the usual sweeping victory.

By February, 1948, the rapid Gleichschaltung of Czecho-Slovakia became an urgent necessity. On February 25, President Benes accepted the resignation of twelve noncollaborationist ministers, and appointed a new cabinet under the permiership of the Communist chief, Klement Gottwald. Two weeks later, Jan Masaryk, son of the founder of the Republic and its perennial foreign minister, was dead; according to the official version, a suicide. His passing was deeply mourned by Jews the world over, who considered him a great friend.

On April 18, the Social Democratic party agreed to join the Communist party and, in May, engineered elections, the resignation of President Benes and Klement Gottwald’s accession to the presidency completed the transformation of Czechoslovakia into a single-party Communist state. On April 28, all industrial and commercial concerns employing more than fifty people were nationalized.

The Jews of this area, historically dependent on individual mercantile and industrial pursuits, were the greatest victims of the collectivist transformation of Eastern European economic life. The stark realities of Jewish existence in Eastern Europe—the Nazi-inflicted economic ruin, their poor health and abnormal age and sex distribution, and the fact that even their most energetic and capable elements had barely managed to re-establish themselves before this present crisis—all these made the economic future of the 800,000 surviving Jews more problematic than that of any other element of the population. The tragedy was rendered complete and
hopeless by the bitter civil strife, and the passions of the large dissatisfied majority of the population again were directed against the Jews; for, in varying numbers, Jews participated in local Communist governmental agencies, and, on the false principle of collective responsibility, all Jews became convenient scapegoats.

Unfortunately, there was no consolation to be found in the general status or treatment of the Jewish population of anti-Communist Greece and Turkey.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

From the foundation of the republic until the Nazi occupation of the country, Czechoslovakia had been universally recognized as a country in which democracy prevailed, and in which no serious disabilities had been imposed on Jews. But after the war, both Communist and Slovak nationalist policies prevented a satisfactory restoration of the pre-war state of affairs. Slovakia continued to be one of the most undemocratic and anti-Semitic regions in all Europe. Ceaseless anti-Semitic agitation was accompanied by physical violence, such as the riot in Bardeyov in June, 1947 and the attempted pogrom in Nove Zamky later in the same month. There prevailed social and economic segregation of Jews, systematic legal discrimination, and the denial of civil and property rights.

Restitution

The Slovak National Council systematically supported illegal holders of Jewish property, aiding those who profiteered under Hitler. The local Communist party eagerly participated in this ignoble competition for popularity. Reactionary Slovaks sought to justify these violations by appeals to "racial self-interest," while Communists explained that their attitude toward Jewish property rights was a matter of expediency, since this expropriation was the only "pro-
gressive" policy favorably viewed by the population as a whole. Thus, Slovakia retained under national administration a substantial amount of Jewish-owned industrial property, even properties which had been formally recognized by the judiciary as subject to restitution to their legal owners.

Even more striking was the treatment of Jewish agricultural property in Slovakia. Both Slovak political parties, the Slovak Communists and the Slovak Democrats, had seen to it that the agricultural property of Jews distributed among local peasants by the Slovak Nazi regime of Father Tiso was retained by these illegal holders, in violation of the postwar statute for all Czechoslovakia, which provided for the restitution of these properties to their original owners.

In addition, a large proportion of Jewish-owned agricultural property was subjected to "legal" confiscation and redistribution, on the pretext that the owners, all victims of Nazism, were of German or Hungarian nationality. The only explanation given for such confiscatory decisions was that the owners spoke German or Hungarian, or had studied these languages (in areas which before the first World War belonged to Austria or Hungary, where no secondary or higher education in the Slovak language existed). Jewish organizations were afraid to protest, and the unjust confiscations were fully protected by the Communist authorities.

Under the guise of nationalism there was a similar confiscation of Jewish-owned industrial assets in the provinces of Bohemia and Moravia, among which the Beer and Anders concerns were the most important. The subterfuge of the "German background" of the owners was again used. The release of Jewish heirless property to the Jewish community for the purpose of rehabilitating the surviving victims of Nazism was prevented, and these assets were ultimately attached to the currency stabilization fund.

The government attitude toward Jewish interests was best characterized by several public statements made by Vaclav Kopecky, Communist Minister of Information. On one occasion he charged the Jews with disloyalty for protesting against the wave of property confiscations. In March, 1947,
Mr. Kopecky vehemently attacked the few surviving Jews of Subcarpathia for having entered Czechoslovakia "in abject fear of Bolshevism." According to the Social Democratic daily, Pravo Lidn, Mr. Kopecky used the terms "those bearded Solomons, this Jewish rabble."

On April 6, 1948, an amendment to the restitution law was adopted which substituted government bonds for actual restitution, and which provided that property distributed among small landholders was not subject to restitution. Once nationalized, property was no longer subject to restitution—as, for example, when a number of small individual enterprises were consolidated into a business employing more than fifty persons. Restitution could be denied in all cases where "the public interest" was involved. Each claim for restitution was subject to a test of "national reliability." All claims were null and void, if not filed within three months after the promulgation of the new law.

Communal Life

The Communist coup d'etat was carried out with the aid of "actions committees." By February, 1948, a Jewish Actions Committee of the Communist party presided over by (Mr.) Laura Simek was in full charge of Jewish affairs and by April most of the recognized Jewish representatives had been eliminated from responsible positions within the Jewish community. Zionists were hit hardest. Ernest Frischer was the first to be removed from his post as chairman of the Association of Jewish Communities of Bohemia-Moravia. Kurt Wehle, secretary general of the Association, fled the country. At the same time, Adolf Bebes, chairman of the Zionist Organization, was also eliminated from the Association. Of the original leaders, only Frantisek Fuchs, the noted representative of liberal Judaism, was permitted to stay on as vice-chairman. The chairmanship went to Emil Ungar, an official in the Ministry of Health, the other vice-chairmanship to Edmund Schwarz, both designated by the Actions Committee. A memorandum protesting the removal
of Zionists from the Council was rejected by the Actions Committee. In June, Karel Stein, noted Zionist leader, was compelled to resign from the leadership of the Prague Jewish community. A few days later, the Actions Committee ordered Hanus Rezek, acting chief rabbi of Prague, to leave his post. After the establishment of control by the Actions Committee, the Jewish press concentrated on attacking anti-Semitism and fascism in America and Great Britain.

Only the following information is available thus far on the attitude of the new regime to concrete questions of Jewish interest: In April, 1948, the Agudas Israel in London submitted a complaint to the Prague government against the Jewish Actions Committee for its restrictions on religious activities. In June, a new constitution was adopted containing provisions against racial propaganda and formally guaranteeing religious freedom.

**HUNGARY**

*Anti-Semitism*

To judge correctly the impact of the political developments described above upon Jewish security in Hungary, one must realize that the country was rife with anti-Semitism, and that the remnants of Hungarian Jewry were living in a tense atmosphere. All the Jews were held responsible for the political changes imposed upon Hungary from abroad. In many a small community in the Hungarian plain the ominous sign: “Death to the Jews” was smeared on fences and buildings, and the desecration of Jewish cemeteries again became common practice. Against this rising wave of anti-Semitism, which served as an outlet for misdirected hatreds, very little was done by the Protestant churches, and nothing by the Catholic Church. Whereas a few years ago they attacked the physical existence of Hungarian Jews, Church authorities now offered “spiritual salvation” through conversion. As a result of these campaigns, numerous conversions took
place; on the other hand, some 800 returns to the Jewish religion were registered during the year.

The governmental authorities, themselves, did not actively discourage anti-Jewish manifestations. They claimed they were under the necessity of acting cautiously, because energetic measures might add to the growth of anti-Semitism. At the time of this writing those responsible for the Miskolc pogrom, perpetrated two years ago by a Communist-led mob of miners, had not been tried; and Ferenc Dusek, the chief instigator of the Miskolc outrage, was an influential member of the parliamentary group of the Communist party.

The Jews of Hungary, notwithstanding their widely differing political, economic and social interests were, as a body, completely dependent upon the protection of the regime for their very physical safety. Nevertheless it was reliably estimated that at least 45 per cent of the votes cast by the Jews went to middle-class parties such as the Smallholders party, the middle-class Radical party, and the old progressive National Democratic party, founded some forty years ago by the outstanding Jewish democratic statesman, William Vazsonyi. In addition, the great majority of the Jewish white collar and industrial workers (or about 30 per cent of the entire Jewish voting population) voted for the Social Democratic ticket, partly because the early theorists and leaders of this party were Jews. In the light of the known occupational distribution of the Jews, the strength of their non-Communist vote appears to be even more striking.

Population

The Budapest statistics for the year 1945 listed 21,831 Jews as independent breadwinners, 11,793 as private employees, and 51,299 as workers. (The total Jewish population of Budapest is estimated at some 110,000, out of a total of 140,000 for the entire country. The usually quoted figure of 180,000 for the total population of Jewish descent includes about 40,000 converts to Catholicism. The figure of 85,000 Jewish breadwinners given above excludes some 20,000
minors. It should be noted that under the prevailing economic conditions, a large proportion of those listed as breadwinners do not actually earn their own living.)

Restitution

Governmental objections were raised to Jewish efforts to secure the return of confiscated Jewish stores and other business establishments. The restitution of Jewish-owned agricultural property and implements was sabotaged, chiefly under the pressure of the Peasant party. The principle of equal rights in this domain appeared to exist only on paper. In the summer of 1947, the Supreme Court ruled that the state was not liable for the death of Jewish forced laborers killed abroad, and even denied them the payment of pensions. The establishment of a Jewish Rehabilitation Fund was decreed early in 1947, and a managing Board for the Fund appointed, but the actual release of heirless property to the Fund has not yet started. Although the Custodian of abandoned Properties was instructed to start turning over properties held by his office to the Jewish Fund, the matter did not proceed beyond the stage of legal quibbling over the interpretation of the texts of the pertinent decrees. It was feared that the Fund would not receive the assets involved in time to fulfill its functions as defined under the peace treaty. The provisions of the treaty, specifying that Jewish heirless assets were to be used for Jewish rehabilitation in Hungary, had already been violated by the decree establishing the Fund, which prescribed formal declarations of death and probate of estates, instead of simple transfer to the Fund within twelve months after the ratification of the treaty.

Economic Life

In general, the official attitude of the government to Jewish life was simply that there was no specific Jewish problem in Hungary, and that collectivism would eventually solve all problems of inequality and insecurity, on an equal
basis for all. Although the Communist leadership had encouraged private economic initiative, to which Hungary almost exclusively owed her partial postwar recovery during the first two years following liberation, the government later put a drastic end to this compromise.

As the collectivist trend progressed, Jews were charged with more and more economic offenses because of their private business activities. This official persecution of large numbers of Jewish business men created still another stereotype of the Jew: this time as the profiteering saboteur and enemy of the new "people's democracy." The implication of government sanction served as a relatively safe cover for anti-Semitic activity. It immensely strengthened anti-Semitic reactions in the poverty-stricken and embittered masses, victims of twenty-five years of fascist or semi-fascist indoctrination. It was revealing that the "Council of Reconciliation," an interfaith movement against anti-Semitism created after the war, ceased to function in September, 1947.

Communal Affairs

Zionism had made great strides among the Jews of Hungary in the period immediately following liberation. Ultimately, however, it failed by far to encompass the entire community, unlike other East-European countries. As a matter of fact, the great majority of Jews in Hungary, partly as a result of a long-standing non-Zionist tradition, and partly because of governmental opposition, remained aloof from Zionism. On the other hand, a marked intensification of religious life was noted, the synagogues were crowded, and, as in pre-war days, most of the social life of Jews was confined to the Jewish community and its social, educational and cultural institutions.

The representative organizations of Hungarian Jewry were the two Central Boards: the Central Board of Israelites in Hungary, and the Autonomous Board of Orthodox Jews in Hungary. Most orthodox Jews had formerly lived in provincial localities, where the deportation took a much heavier
toll than in the capital. As a result, the great majority of the Jewish population came under the jurisdiction of the liberal Central Board, the chairman of which was Louis Stoeckler, president of the Jewish Community of Budapest. The head of the orthodox Board was Samuel Kahan-Frankl. Like his Rumanian colleague, Chief Rabbi Francis Hevesi left the country.

Nearly 70 per cent of Hungarian Jewry were members of the Budapest community. Yet, until the end of May, 1948, no elections had been held in this largest Jewish community on the continent to replace the caretaker government. Elections were scheduled for March, 1947, but a bitter feud broke out between Zionists and non-Zionists, and Communist political leaders induced the government to order the postponement of the Jewish communal elections until the end of May, 1948. In the meantime, the two feuding factions had gradually composed their differences, and finally agreed on a common list of candidates, Stoeckler was re-elected president, and some 35 per cent of the elective officers were filled with Zionist representatives.

In Hungary, unlike most other Eastern European countries, the official Jewish organizations and communities were not controlled directly by Communists, but had a few Communist observers on their boards.

There was a modification in the anti-Zionist attitude of the government following the change of the Soviet position. Previously, in July 1947 two representatives of the Jewish Agency were deported and the right to publish a Zionist weekly was denied, although there was only one Jewish periodical in Hungary, the weekly Uj Elot ("New Life"), published by the Budapest Jewish Community.

The material living conditions of the Jews in Hungary improved considerably during the year under discussion, to a great extent as a result of contributions by the Joint Distribution Committee. Here, as in all other countries, the JDC placed greater emphasis on vocational rehabilitation than on mere subsistence relief.
RUMANIA

Anti-Semitism

The insecurity of the Jewish population of Rumania was aggravated by the radical political and economic changes of the past year. In August, 1947, Joseph J. Schwartz, Chairman of the European Executive Council of the Joint Distribution Committee, reported on the basis of firsthand information that anti-Semitism was increasing in Rumania, and that the government, while certainly not anti-Semitic, was unable to cope with this development. At the same time, in the course of its investigations into conditions of European Jewry, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine reported in August, 1947, that the Jews of Rumania were living in fear of mounting anti-Semitism and growing political and economic insecurity; that tens of thousands of them were existing solely on American Jewish relief, and that a large number considered emigration to Palestine the only solution to their problem.

During the past year, no major anti-Jewish outbreaks occurred; however this was attributable not to a tranquil atmosphere, but rather to the prevalence of thoroughgoing police action. Minor anti-Jewish disturbances occurred in a large number of localities all over the country. In the rural districts of Transylvania, a mixed commission of police and judicial officials had to take action to stamp out an alarming increase in anti-Semitic incidents. The commission had to replace the gendarmerie in numerous villages where anti-Jewish disturbances occurred. In some of these localities, attacks on the homes of Jews became a daily occurrence. In September, 1947, a number of Jews were attacked and beaten in the town of Braila. In Timisoara, twenty-six former members of the Gestapo were arrested for attacking the headquarters of a Jewish youth organization and injuring several Jews. There were some fifty Nazis involved in the attack. Jewish employees were syste-
matically dismissed by anti-Semitic businessmen and govern-
ment officials taking advantage of legal changes, such as
the issuance of a new labor redistribution law.

A new type of anti-Jewish action emerged that exploited
the desperate Jewish mood of flight from the country. In
the summer of 1947, the arrest was reported of an organized
gang of smugglers who recruited groups of Jewish emigrants,
guided them across the Hungarian-Rumanian border, and
then robbed them of all their belongings in remote mountain
regions.

There is no reason to doubt that the government was
trying hard to discourage, prevent, and even to punish,
anti-Jewish excesses. For example, by October, 1947, a special
commission to eliminate fascists and anti-Semites from uni-
versity faculties had dismissed over 1,500 instructors and
other personnel attached to Rumanian universities, most of
them on charges of anti-Semitic activities. On the other
hand, systematic official attempts to implicate all opponents
of the regime in anti-Semitic activities, and the indiscriminate
use of the charge of anti-Semitism for political reasons only
increased the insecurity of the Jewish population.

Economic Situation

The exceptional economic difficulties caused by the worst
crop failure in Rumanian history, and the immediate con-
sequences of the rapidly progressing economic trans-
formation of Rumania greatly contributed to this Jewish
insecurity and fear. The drastic currency stabilization of
September, 1947, also brought the work of Jewish organ-
izations and institutions of the country to an almost com-
plete standstill, and the resulting lack of funds caused the
shutdown of most Jewish schools and charitable institutions.
A subsequent government grant of thirty-two million lei for
Jewish schools, hospitals and other institutions could not nearly
meet actual needs. The situation of most Jewish relief in-
tstitutions was all the more serious, as the new program of
the Joint Distribution Committee concentrated on vocational
training and assistance rather than relief. The situation appeared hopeless; at least 50,000 adult Jews had no adequate means of subsistence, additional large numbers of children, sick and aged persons required direct and permanent assistance, and the ability of individual Jews to contribute to Jewish welfare funds rapidly decreased.

The only improvement shown in the economic status of the Jews was in employment. Jewish workers were reinstated belatedly in increasing numbers into jobs which they had lost under Nazism. In September, 1947, the Ministry of Justice instructed the judiciary to give special attention to applications by Jews for the return of homes from which they were ousted during the Antonescu regime. Inasmuch as Rumanian judges had previously rejected all such applications, the improvement in housing conditions that might ensue for Jews remained in doubt. Jewish organizations in Rumania had long demanded that widows and orphans of Jews killed either in pogroms or after deportations receive pensions on the same basis as war widows and orphans. In March, 1948, the press reported the introduction of a bill granting such pensions in parliament, but the fate of the measure remained unknown. The issues of property restitution in general, and of the release of heirless property to the Jewish community in particular, also remained unsettled.

**Human Rights**

The government seemed to abandon its earlier position that legally the Jews were Rumanians of Jewish faith. In April, 1948, a government spokesman declared that under the proposed constitution, Jews in Rumania would enjoy the same rights as were accorded other nationalities, and would be entitled to a "national minority" status. In November, 1947, legislation providing imprisonment for from six months to two years for "racial offenses" against the rights and honor of national minorities, including discrimination in employment, was drafted by the ministry of justice. According to press reports, freedom of religion would be guaranteed
under the new constitution, but religious communities would no longer be supported by the state. National minorities, on the other hand, would be entitled to establish their own schools to be supported by the state.

**Jassy Massacre Trial**

After more than three years of political maneuvering, the trial of some ninety-five persons implicated in the Jassy massacre of 1941 was reopened in June, 1948, before the Court of Appeals in Bucharest. Of the 150 original defendants, some 65 had died or disappeared. Two years ago, the defendants were either freed, or received token sentences by a military court. At this writing, the hearing of witnesses of the prosecution is in progress.

**Communal Life**

In the domain of Jewish communal life, William Filderman's resignation in November, 1947 as president of the Union of Rumanian Jewish Communities was followed by the dissolution, in December, 1947, of the Jewish party which had played a prominent part in Rumanian Jewish life before the war. Dr. Filderman subsequently left Rumania. In February, 1948, the Union of Jewish Communities, in process of liquidation, was merged with the Communist-dominated Jewish Democratic Committee, under the name of the Federation of Jewish Communities. Eduard Manolescu, representing the former Union, and M. A. Saraceanu and H. Serban, representing the Democratic Committee, were reported to be heading up the new organization, which appeared to be closely adapted to the prevailing political needs. The Front of People's Democracy named five Jewish candidates to represent the Jewish population in Parliament. These included Manolescu, Maximilian Popper, Hersch Leibovici, secretary of the Federation, Bercu Feldman, a Communist, and Marcel Fischer. Neither the liberal wing
once represented by Filderman nor the Zionist movement was represented. Early in 1948, Alexander Shafran, Chief Rabbi of Rumania, resigned his position and left the country, and in April, 1948, Moses Rosen was inaugurated as deputy Chief Rabbi.

*Emigration*

The exodus of Jews from Rumania was extremely difficult. The government and the Communist party employed every means to check the movement. Hundreds of intercepted emigrants were sentenced to imprisonment, and some even to forced labor. In December, 1947, a bill was introduced to deprive illegal emigrants of their citizenship. In September, 1947, nineteen persons fleeing Rumania, among them a number of Jews, were reported shot by Rumanian frontier guards. In December, 1947, Hungarian authorities abandoned their policy of tacit acquiescence to the movement of the refugees through their territory, and from then on, they returned thousands of emigrants to Rumania. Other groups of Rumanian Jews attempting to cross into Germany from Austria en route to Palestine were refused admission by American troops. Altogether, some twenty thousand Rumanian "infiltrees" succeeded in reaching Austria. There they had to spend months under intolerable conditions; in March, 1948, all Rumanian refugees, including those already admitted to displaced persons camps, were removed to refugee centers administered by the International Refugee Organization and maintained largely by supplies from the Joint Distribution Committee. The discriminatory provisions of the Immigration Law of 1948 enacted in June, 1948, by the United States Congress clearly indicate that for the predictable future the problem of these wanderers depended for its ultimate solution upon Palestine. The refugees who were interned by the British on Cyprus, after having taken the sea route to Palestine with the permission of the Rumanian authorities, seemed nearer a final haven than the "infiltrees" in Austria.
GREECE

Anti-Semitism

Under the stress of the civil war in Greece, fundamental freedoms, such as safety of the person against seizure without warrant, deportation or internment without trial were nonexistent. Indiscriminate mass murders by privileged bands went unpunished. Despite the improvement in the military situation of the nationalist forces there was no relaxation of oppressive and persecutory measures; instead the atmosphere of chauvinism and revenge was intensified.

The small Jewish community of Greece suffered from this unrestrained atmosphere. A considerable number of the Jewish survivors had fought with the EAM (Greek National Liberation Front) against the Nazis when this organization was the recognized center of all national resistance to the invader. These Jews had fought for their own survival, besides being animated by the desire to share in the fight for liberation. But now many of them were treated as enemies and held prisoners, merely because they had fought with EAM against the Germans during the war. During the early postwar period, this Jewish heroism and the role of EAM in saving Jewish lives were widely broadcast.

More ominously, most of the nationalist press coupled its anti-rebel propaganda with increasing anti-Jewish agitation. It represented Communism as Jewish-inspired world intrigue, and every Jew as a Communist, and claimed that the rebel Greeks were misled by Jewish influence. This spirit became manifest in a number of press comments on the Palestine partition resolution of the United Nations, which was opposed by the Greek government. A number of newspapers stated that American life was dominated by "Jewish finance power."

In the campaign against a rapidly spreading religious movement known as the Hiliastai (Millenarian) sect, whose doctrines closely resemble those of the Jehovah's Witnesses
movement, it was charged that the Jews were instrumental in creating and fostering this heresy in Greece, in order to weaken the position of the official Greek Orthodox Church, and, by so doing, undermine the nation’s spiritual cohesion and its national resistance to the Communists. American officials returning from Greece brought with them copies of a circular letter bearing the title, "Information Bulletin No. 1," and printed on the letterhead of the Archbishopric of Athens. This document contained the statement that the preachers of "Hiliasm" were “paid agents of Judaism.” (Another document, attributed to the Holy Synod, allegedly declared that the Hiliastic heresy was connected with the Zionist movement.) However, in a personal interview with Dr. Max Gottschalk of the American Jewish Committee, Archbishop Damaskinos emphasized his conviction that the Jews had nothing in common with the Hiliastic movement, authorized his interlocutor to make this statement public, and categorically denied that the Archbishopric of Athens was interested in involving the Jews in this matter. Nevertheless, this sustained anti-Jewish agitation could not fail to affect both popular and official attitudes toward the Jews.

In the second half of 1947, a marked intensification of anti-Jewish sentiment was observed in Northern Greece and particularly in the city of Salonika, in part as a reaction to Jewish claims for property restitution. In many such cases, the courts confirmed the Greek holders’ title to the properties. At the same time, Jewish homes were almost regularly requisitioned to quarter refugees from the war-torn regions. It was also reported that the taxes of Jewish shopkeepers were set two to three times higher than those of their Greek competitors in Salonika; that Jewish unemployed were denied assistance by the state employment agency, and that poor Jewish families could expect no help from government welfare centers. Finally, without warning and motivation, a government commissar was put in charge of the affairs of the Salonika Jewish community itself.
Discrimination

Legally and administratively, the government attitude toward the Jews deteriorated, despite the incontestable good-will of Prime Minister Themistocles Sofoulis. Unfortunately, the same good will could not be ascribed to the Populist Party led by Foreign Minister Tsaldaris, and the groups farther to the right.

The law dealing with restitution of property to individual claimants, was drastically revised to deprive the original statute of its substance and render it useless.

The Jewish community of the former Italian island of Rhodes was compelled to "account for" 340 pieces of real property owned by its members who had been exterminated by the Nazis; these properties had previously been handed over to the Jewish community by the British occupation authorities.

A new law increased inheritance taxes on Jewish property in an exorbitant manner, rendering restitution even more illusory. In addition, a moratorium on rents nullified just provisions in the original restitution law and prohibited the eviction of squatters, instead of providing for the evacuation of Jewish houses and shops.

Finally, passports were refused to Jews desiring to leave Greece for Palestine, and Jewish migrants passing through Greece on their way to Palestine received unfriendly treatment.

Governmental opposition to Jewish interests reached a climax in its manipulations, despite all official pledges, of the matter of Jewish heirless property. As a result of these manoeuvres, the three-year-old law providing that Jewish heirless property should go to a Jewish successor organization remained dormant. In December, 1947, Prime Minister Sofoulis had given personal assurances to Milton Winn of the American Jewish Committee that the government would soon issue the implementing decree to the law. Al-
though another half year passed, these assurances did not materialize. The responsibility for this remissness rested with Dingas, a Salonika lawyer and politician, and a member of the government commission entrusted with the final formulation of the decree. It was well known in Greece that Dingas served for years as counsel for a committee representing the interests of some 12,000 unlawful holders of Jewish property in Salonika, whose only objective was the prevention of property restitution to Jews. (This group was also partly responsible for the ceaseless defamation of Jews in the press.) With the active aid of influential politicians and government officials, they abandoned the strategy of procrastination intended to negate the entire legal commitment, claiming that the Greek state was obligated to protect property interests of its subjects abroad before it could proceed with the implementation of restitution at home.

For American consumption the release of heirless assets to the Jews in Greece was presented as adversely affecting the budgetary situation in Greece, and, indirectly, the American taxpayer’s commitments in Greece. This was untrue, of course, because the transfer of title to properties from one private holder to another within Greece could be of no fiscal consequence.

Unfortunately, the Greek Jewish community and its representative organs were greatly hampered by the prevailing political atmosphere from taking an effective stand on these and other vital Jewish interests. Internal divisions, fears and squabbles in the community greatly enhanced its ineffectiveness. The tireless efforts of Asher Moissis, the head of the Council of Jewish Communities, were usually futile.

On February 13, 1948, two Jews, Vital Hasson and Inno Recanati, were sentenced to death in Athens on charges of betraying their co-religionists to the Gestapo during the war.
YUGOSLAVIA

Because Yugoslavia was more consolidated politically and economically than the other countries of southeastern Europe, the record of the past year lacked such decisive and dramatic developments as characterized events in Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria or Czechoslovakia.

The absolute control of the press and of communications with the outside world prevented the receipt of specific information on the situation of the small Jewish community of Yugoslavia. No Jewish press agency or Jewish newspaper here or abroad was able to publish any factual information, favorable or unfavorable, on that situation.

The few items of Jewish interest which arrived under a Belgrade dateline, may be summed up as follows:

In May, 1947, a Reuter dispatch from Belgrade quoted "a high Yugoslav official" as declaring that his country would advocate at the United Nations "full independence for Palestine and all other Arab states." The official was further quoted as stating that the Yugoslav delegation would call on all members of the UN to declare their willingness to participate in the solution of the problem of Jewish displaced persons by accepting their share of displaced persons immigration.

The Yugoslav government was the only Eastern-European government which refused to support the partition decision of the General Assembly. Nevertheless, on May 28, 1948, the Yugoslav government granted unconditional recognition to the provisional government of Israel.

A Belgrade dispatch reported on January 5, 1948, that a film made in Czechoslovakia and entitled Nikola Suhaj was withdrawn by the State Committee on Films from circulation in Yugoslavia, following a protest that it portrayed a Jewish character in a manner tending to arouse group anti-Semitism.
TURKEY

There are about 80,000 Jews in Turkey, of whom some 56,000 live in Istanbul, 14,000 in Izmir, and the remainder scattered in other places, such as Broussa, Ankara, etc. The great majority are badly off economically; the wealthier group had been seriously affected by the discriminatory wartime property tax called Varlik (see *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 49). Nevertheless, needy Jews were cared for by domestic Jewish charitable organizations. The Jews of Turkey took pride in the fact that they did not seek outside material help. Their greatest need was for technical help and advice on vocational training.

Discriminatory practices in the economic field and in civic activities existed, nor were the Jews secure politically. There were anti-Semitic statements in the press, essentially anti-Zionist. Under such circumstances, the Jews were not particularly active in politics, although one of the official opposition parties recently authorized was represented by a Jewish deputy in parliament.

GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

By Boris Sapir

In 1947–48 Germany and Austria lived under a regime of occupation. The countries were divided into four zones: American, British, French and Russian. The cities of Berlin and Vienna were divided into four sectors, each governed by one of these powers; Vienna had in addition an international sector.

Attempts to create a central government for the whole of Germany failed because of divergent views entertained by the Western powers on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on