Latin America

MEXICO

The government of President Miguel Alemán continued on its liberal political course during the period under review (July, 1950, through June, 1951). As in previous years Mexican Jews enjoyed a status of complete equality with the other groups of the population. No anti-Semitic manifestations were reported. However, there was no mitigation of the severe restrictions imposed on immigration under the Ley de Población adopted in 1948. Hence Jewish immigration was practically nonexistent.

Economic Situation

Jewish economic activities in Mexico were concentrated in trade and industry, and to a lesser extent in finance, which played a comparatively small role in the economic life of the Jewish population. There was a noticeable increase of Jewish participation in the Mexican motion-picture industry, and in the construction business. Jews were prominent in the manufacture and sale of clothes, textiles, shoes, furniture, and hardware, as well as the import of industrial equipment. On the whole, their economic situation could be considered satisfactory.

Certain changes in the occupational structure of the 40 per cent of Mexican Jewry born in that country could already be perceived. The number of physicians, lawyers, engineers, public accountants, teachers, clerical workers, and civil servants in this group was increasing. On the other hand, as in all Latin American countries where the prevalence of cheap native manpower and climatic conditions made the engagement of immigrants from Europe as laborers impossible, Mexican Jews were unrepresented in the ranks of the proletariat.

Communal Activities

A momentous event in the history of Mexican Jewry was the reorganization during the year under review of the Comité Central Israelita de México, the representative both in communal and civic affairs of all elements of the Jewish population—including the Ashkenazic, Sephardic, Oriental, German and Hungarian sectors. As reconstituted, the Comité Central, under the leadership of Fabian Swiadosh, reflected more closely the democratic tendencies of the community, the elements of the so-called extreme left having been purged.
During 1950–51 the principle of fund raising jointly for Israel and local needs which had prevailed in previous years was rejected by the main Zionist groups. Each of the organizations and institutions which had formerly participated in the Campaña Unida was conducting its own campaign.

A regrettable development in the field of social service was the closing of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee’s office for Mexico and Central America. Of the other world agencies represented in Mexico, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), ORT, OSE, and the World Jewish Congress continued active.

Jewish Education

About 80 per cent of the Jewish youth between the ages of six and seventeen were attending the six all-day schools of the Mexican Jewish community, which were incorporated into the public school system.

The Ashkenazic sector of the community was responsible for the instruction in four of the six existing Jewish schools, the oldest and the most important being the Colegio Israelita with about 950 pupils of both sexes. The Colegio contained a kindergarten, high school, and teacher’s seminary. Yavne, supervised by the Kehiláh Nidje Israel, gave instruction in the spirit of Orthodox Judaism to some 500 students, and the recently established Nuevo Colegio Israelita had an enrollment of over 200. The Ashkenazic Hebrew school Tarbut was attended by about 350 boys and girls. The two schools of the Sephardic community in Mexico City—Tarbut Monte Sinai and Tarbut Sefaradí—had a total of about 900 students.

An innovation in Jewish education in Mexico was the fund-raising campaign in behalf of the four Ashkenazic schools—the first in the history of the community. This drive, which started in May, 1951, was expected to result in the creation of a Vaad Ha-hinukh (Board of Education) to co-ordinate the different branches of Jewish education in Mexico.

Religious Life

There were three Jewish religious congregations in Mexico City, corresponding to the different origin and rites of their members. The oldest, Monte Sinai, established at the beginning of the twentieth century for Jewish immigrants from the Arab countries and the Near East, administered two synagogues where religious services were held on the Sabbath and High Holy Days. Sephardic Jews hailing from the Balkans and Turkey held their services on the High Holy Days. The most vigorous religious life was observed by the large Ashkenazic sector. The Ashkenazic Kehiláh Nidje Israel was established in 1924. Its religious head, Rabbi D. S. Rafalin, acted as Chief Rabbi of the Mexican Ashkenazic community. In addition to the usual Sabbath and High Holy Day services, daily services were held at the Nidje Israel synagogue. Hatikwah-Menorah and Emuna, the local associations of German and Hungarian Jews, also maintained synagogues of their own.
The Ashkenazic congregation in Monterrey—the second largest city of Mexico, with about 140 Jewish families—began to construct both a synagogue and a cultural center in 1950. In Guadalajara (with 160 Jewish families), religious services were conducted at the local community center. There was some religious activity in the Jewish centers in such smaller provincial towns as Pueblo (with 50-60 Jewish families) and Veracruz (with 30). The small groups of French and American Jews living in Mexico City attended services at the Yehuda Halevi Synagogue in that city.

Relations with Israel

During the year under review diplomatic relations between Israel and Mexico were further consolidated. Adolfo Fastlicht, formerly liaison officer of the Jewish Agency in Mexico, was appointed honorary consul of Israel and offices of the new consulate were opened in Mexico City.

Early in 1951, the special envoy of Israel to Latin America, Moshe Tov, visited Mexico on a good-will mission. Receptions were given in his honor by the Mexican Foreign Office and the Instituto de Relaciones Culturales entre México e Israel, whose president, Alfonso Francisco Ramírez, had visited Israel at the invitation of the government of that country and had conveyed his impressions to his fellow-citizens in a series of articles published in the Mexican press.

Cultural Activity

Literary life in the Mexican Jewish community in 1950-51 was almost entirely confined to the Yiddish-speaking circles. The Tzvi Kessel Fond far Yiddish Literatur published two books by Mexican Jewish authors—the epic poem *A Kezayes Ert* ("A Bit of Earth") by Jacob Glantz (1950), and *Farn Mabl* ("Before the Flood"), scenes from Jewish life in Warsaw on the eve of its extermination, by Josef Viniecki (1951). The same institution extended awards to three other writers—the poet Kehos Kliger for his volume of verse, *Di Velt Farbet Mikh Shtarben* ("The World Invites Me to Die"), Shie Tenenbaum for his *Miniaturen in Gots Gestalt* ("Miniatures in the Image of God"), and S. Izban for his novel *Di Familie Karp* ("The Family Karp").

The publishing committee of the Kultur Tzenter (a non-Zionist Yiddishist institution) put out a work by Abram Eisen, a refugee writer, with the title *Dos Gaystige Ponim Fun Ghetto* ("The Spiritual Aspect of the Ghetto"). Other articles in the area of Jewish letters included fund-raising campaigns for the General Yiddish Encyclopedia and the World Congress for Jewish Culture, and the appearance of volumes VII-IX of the *Enciclopedia Judaica Castellana*, the first Jewish lexicon ever published in the Spanish language, to be completed in the course of 1951. The cultural committee of the Comité Central Israelita, the local association of Jewish writers, the group Kultur un Helf, and Zionist organizations also engaged in literary activity.
PERIODICALS
The number and variety of Jewish periodicals appearing in Mexico compared favorably with that of most of the other Latin American communities. The Yiddish-speaking sector of the community was represented by the following periodicals: Der Veg (tri-weekly); Di Shtime (bi-weekly); Dos Vort (Poale Zionist) and Di Zionistishe Shtime (General Zionist), each bi-weekly; the Bundist weekly Foroys, and the "progressive" weekly Frayvelt. In addition, there were such irregular publications in Yiddish as a magazine edited by the Kultur Tzenter.

The oldest Jewish periodical in Spanish appearing in Mexico was the Revista Israelita (founded in 1933). Another monthly, La Tribuna Israelita, was published by the Comité Unido de Antidefamación sponsored by the B'nai B'rith. It attracted numerous non-Jewish contributors, especially among Mexican writers and scientists. The newest Spanish Jewish publication was El Eco Sefardi, edited by the Union Sefaradit de México.

YIVO
The importance of Mexico as a Jewish cultural center was newly stressed by the recent establishment of an office of the Jewish Scientific Institute (YIVO) in Mexico. The YIVO's social research operations were expanding from New York and Buenos Aires to include Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and the greater part of South America. Jacob Glantz, formerly director of the JDC in Mexico, was appointed representative of the YIVO in those countries.

Other organizations active on the cultural front were the Logia Espinoza and the Association Hatikwah-Menorah.

FINE ARTS AND MUSIC
Jews had had but a modest part in the rise of Mexican painting. However, a few refugee artists were becoming known to a wider public. Thus, in 1950 the Polish Jewish painter Yonie Fain was entrusted with the execution of the murals for the memorial monument for the Jewish victims of Nazism which the Kehiláh Nidje Israel was erecting at its cemetery. These murals evoked general admiration, as did a work on ancient Mexican art by the well-known art historian Paul Westheim.

A large number of Jewish musicians were active in Mexico. During the period under observation, the young Jewish maestro Abel Eisenberg, who was born and received his artistic education in Mexico, was appointed conductor of the Orquesta Sinfónica in Guadalajara, Mexico, after having conducted, for the previous five years, the National Symphonic Orchestra of the Dominican Republic.

Jacob Glantz
CUBA

UNDER the regime of President Carlos Prio Socorras, Cuban Jews as a whole continued to prosper during the period under review (July, 1950, through June, 1951).

Population

Cuban Jewry numbered about 11,000 members, 10,000 of whom lived in Havana. The majority of Havana's Jewry was Ashkenazic, or East European in origin. Sephardic (Mediterranean) Jews and American Jews were in the minority, numbering together about 1,500. Ninety per cent of Havana's Jews had become Cuban citizens. Immigration completely stopped in 1949.

Community Organization and Activities

Cuban Jewish life had produced at one time scores of organizations: religious, social, Zionist, philanthropic, cultural and educational. Some 80 per cent of these organizations had originated in the active Centro Israelita, founded in September, 1925. However, the vast majority of the organizations disappeared or were ineffective. A study made in June, 1951, revealed the existence of ten organizations that were still active and maintained a definite and independent character of their own.

The Centro Israelita represented all of Cuban Jewry. There were three religious organizations: Shevet Achim (Sephardic), founded in 1914, with a membership of 250; Achdus Yisrael (Ashkenazic), founded in 1904, with a membership of 500; and the United Hebrew Congregation (along American Liberal lines), founded in 1904, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee, founded in 1927, with a membership of 800; the Frauen-Verein Charitable Organization, founded in 1925, with a membership of 125. The social service agencies included: the Anti-Tubercu
PATRONATO PROJECT

Hope was offered for the development of local Cuban Jewish life when the cornerstone was laid on June 17, 1951 by an Ashkenazic committee for the Patronato project for a community house and synagogue, valued at $500,000. This project was intended to serve all sectors of the community, and to care for its religious, social, cultural, charitable, and educational needs. It was hoped that this democratic institution would efficiently unify all of Cuban Jewry and provide a home for all of its local organizations.

Religious and Educational Activities

The three sectors of Havana Jewry, Ashkenazic, Sephardic, and Liberal, each maintained a rabbi during this review period 1950–51.

March 21, 1951, saw the dedication of the United Hebrew Congregation, an English-speaking group, founded in 1904, as an affiliated member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; it thus became the first congregation in Latin America to join the ranks of American Liberal Judaism.

There were a number of Jewish private parochial schools in Cuba at the time of writing. These were attended by children of elementary school age. They included: the modern Yiddish-Hebrew School Theodor Herzl, founded in 1924, and attended by children from the Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities; the Tachkemoni School, an Orthodox yeshivah attended by children from the Ashkenazic community, founded in 1948; and the Autonomous School of the Centro Israelita, founded in 1939, a Conservative Talmud Torah attended by Ashkenazic children.

These schools all suffered financial hardship due to their lack of co-ordination.

YOUTH

Cuban Jewry’s greatest problem, as yet unsolved, was that of its youth. In April, 1951, the Hillel Foundation, established and maintained by the parent organization in the United States, went out of existence due to the lack of local support. The Cuban Jewish community had not yet developed to the point where it was willing to provide for the Jewish organizational life of its Cuban-born youth of high school and college age. The various local Jewish youth organizations were entirely social in character and without Jewish cultural or religious orientation and leadership.

Cultural Life

One Yiddish bi-weekly, Havaner Leben, and one Spanish periodical, Israelita, were still being published. The Leftist Havaner Vort and the Orthodox Unser Shtim ceased publication during the year under review. Cuban Jewry had its Yiddish poet, Eliezer Aronowsky, its artist, Simon Glezer, and its novelist, A. L. Dubelman. Generally, however, the intellectual level was very low.

MILTON WEISSBERG
ARGENTINA

Jewish Population

The Jewish population of Argentina was estimated at 360,000. No exact figures were available for the economic distribution of Argentinian Jews. However, it was known that Jews were well represented both in commerce and in industry, particularly in the developing textile industry as well as in the construction of furniture and iron products.

The data presented below concerning Jews active in installment selling and as agricultural colonists are based on surveys conducted in 1941 and 1946 by Jedidiah Efron.

In 1946 there were a total of 9,775 Jews in the installment business in Argentina, constituting 11 per cent of the Jewish population; the proportion in Buenos Aires was as high as 17 per cent. There was a tendency during 1946–51 for the more prosperous entrepreneurs to enter the fields of industry and more stable commerce.

In 1941 there were 3,881 Jewish families engaged in agriculture. These were distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buenos Aires</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fé</td>
<td>717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entre Rios</td>
<td>2,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago del Estra</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Juan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territories</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,881</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, during 1941–51 a large number of erstwhile Jewish colonists moved to the larger cities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Among the most important events in the economic field was the decision made known on September 24, 1950, by the large Jewish bank, Banco Israelita de la Plata, to build a new building at a cost of about 10,000,000 pesos (approximately $1,000,000). The bank had a capital of 50,000,000 pesos (approximately $5,000,000).

On May 5, 1951, another Argentinian Jewish bank, Banco Commercial de Buenos Aires, celebrated the completion of the renovation of its building. The bank operated with a capital of more than 10,000,000 pesos (approximately $1,000,000).

Civic and Political Status

The Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas (DAIA), the representative body of the Jewish community, requested the Argentinian congress...
on June 27, 1951, to put into effect article 28 of the new constitution, which forbids racial discrimination.

Communal Organization and Activities

Comunidad Israelita de Buenos Aires-Kehila Ashkenazit (AMIA) continued to take the initiative in improving the organization of Jewish communal life. The membership meeting held on July 26, 1950, extended the tenure of the administration of Moshe Slinin for another year, and approved a new constitution to replace the old constitution which did not meet the expanding needs of the AMIA. On September 22, 1950, the AMIA decided to meet half the costs for the construction of suitable school buildings. Among the many new undertakings of a social, cultural, and educational character deserving of special mention was the renovation of the cemetery in Tablada completed on December 10, 1950.

Educational Activity

There was absolutely no change in the organization of Jewish education in Argentina (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEARBOOK, 1951, [Vol. 52], pp. 216-17). At the beginning of the school year the AMIA, whose Organización Central de Esenelas Israelitas supervised all the schools in Buenos Aires and the environs, published the following statistical figures.

TABLE 2
ENROLLMENT IN JEWISH SCHOOLS
ARGENTINA, 1950-51

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name or Type of School</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>5,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>2,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' Seminary</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makhon le-Limude Hayahadut</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal School</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORT School</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,030</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 3
JEWISH SCHOOL TEACHERS,
ARGENTINA, 1950-51

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School or Teacher</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mittelshulen</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' Aids</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>265</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of the Jewish schools moved to new buildings or renovated old school buildings during the year under review (July, 1950, through June,
1951). These included the Bialik school in Villa Crespa, the religious educational organizations included within the Hekhal ha-Torah, and the Sholom Aleichem school in the agricultural colony of Julio Levin. Seven schools took advantage of the building subsidy of the AMIA; thus the Tel Aviv schools had four schools in operation in various neighborhoods in Buenos Aires.

At the time of writing (July, 1951) far-reaching reforms in the school system which had been suggested by Nahum Levin, the representative of the Jewish Agency, were under discussion. The proposed reforms were meeting strong opposition.

Religious Activity

The death of Rabbi David Maliar of Pasor Temple, one of the most important leaders in the community, was the occasion for the appointment of a new Argentinian rabbinate. The chief rabbinate was shared by the Rabbis Amram, Bloom, Nachman, Zigman and Samuel Isaac Gliksberg; this was the occasion of protests by many rabbis. The conflict over this issue was still not resolved at the time of writing.

Zionist and Pro-Israel Activity

Argentinian Jewry was strongly influenced by the development of the state of Israel. During the course of the year under review there was intense Zionist and pro-Israel activity in Argentina. Organizations in this area included the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), the Labor Poale Zion Hitachdut, and the Revisionist party.

The most important convention of the year was the second South American Zionist Congress, which opened on September 28, 1950. One hundred delegates from Argentina and other Latin American countries attended the congress; among the participants were Elijah Dobkin of the Jewish Agency and Jacob Tzur, the Minister of Israel to Argentina.

Elections for the World Zionist Congress took place on November 19, 1950. Unfortunately the struggle for votes was a bitter one in whose aftermath came protests and mutual accusations.

An important event was the decision of the Jewish Agency in February, 1951, to close its Latin American office in Buenos Aires which had been conducted by Abraham Mibashan and Isaac Harcavy. This decision was a source of regret to the community. However, Argentinian Jewry was stimulated by the presence of several visitors from Israel. These included: Golda Meyerson, Israel cabinet minister, Hadassah Samuel (daughter-in-law of Herbert Samuel), Joseph Baratz, the founder of the agricultural colony of Degania, and the journalist Meyer Grossman.

UNITED ISRAEL CAMPAIGN

Because of the difficult financial situation and the depreciation of the value of the Argentinian peso on the international market, the funds raised by the United Israel Campaign were sharply reduced during the period under review. No figures were made public. The funds raised were converted into
commodities which were then shipped to Israel by the United Israel Campaign; the chief such commodity was meat.

Condemned by the rest of the community, the "progressives" continued to remain isolated, and to conduct a separate and unsupervised People's Campaign for Israel for political reasons of their own. Their convention in Buenos Aires on May 27, 1951, was ignored by the general Jewish community.

More than 200 Argentinian Jewish halutzin (agricultural pioneers) left for Israel during the period under review.

ARGENTINA AND ISRAEL

Relations between the governments of Argentina and Israel were extremely friendly. An important event was the arrival in Argentina of the first transport of oranges from Israel, in accordance with a commercial treaty between those two countries. An Israel exhibit which opened on April 5, 1951, was visited by many thousands of Argentinians, and received a good press. Also deserving of mention was a project initiated on June 6, 1951, by a group of Argentinian Jews who undertook to found an agricultural colony in Israel in the name of the Republic of Argentina.

Cultural Activity

The Argentinian section of the World Congress for Jewish Culture particularly distinguished itself during the period under review. Of the various projects begun by the Congress, that of publishing a complete edition of Simon Dubnow's classic Jewish history won great acclaim. The congress devoted many meetings to discussions of Jewish authors and works; outstanding was a stimulating discussion of the Jewish theater.

The AMIA also undertook a program of cultural activity. These included Sunday morning courses for adults and the celebration of Jewish Book Month, a successful educational event.

The Central Committee for Polish Jews conducted a program of courses in Jewish literature and history. The Hebraica society was instrumental in importing the Spanish scholar Jose Millas Vallicrosa for a series of lectures on Hebrew literature, particularly that of the Middle Ages.

On November 24, 1950, the publishing company Israel announced the establishment of a Katie Merelman Foundation, which would give Argentinian Jewish professionals the opportunity to complete their studies in Israel.

PUBLISHING

The largest Argentinian Yiddish publishing company, and the largest in the world, was Dos Poylishe Yidntum, headed by Mark Turkow and Abraham Mittelberg. Among the authors published were: M. Strigler, Chaim Grade, Joel Mastbaum, Elijah Trotzky, Jacob Shatzky, Nachman Maisel, I. J. Trunk, Judah Elberg, A. Mukdony, and Sigmund Turkow.

Israel, a publishing house which produced books intended to meet the needs of the Spanish-reading Jewish youth, and Spanish readers in general, also embarked on a program of publications of books of Jewish interest.

ZALMEN WASSERTZUG
URUGUAY

The Oriental Republic of Uruguay, whose democratic system of government was based upon a liberal constitution, was commonly regarded as the freest republic on the South American continent.

The Colorados party had been in power since the beginning of the century. The policies of President Andres Martinez Trueba, a member of that party, closely followed the liberal line laid down by Jose Battle y Ordóñez, the party's founder (1911–15).

In extent Uruguay was the smallest republic in South America, with an area of 190,000 kilometers and a population of 2,300,000, approximately half of whom resided in the capital, Montevideo.

The Uruguayan economy was based on the export of such raw materials as fur, meat, wool and some agricultural products. Though its chief market was the United States, Uruguay also exported to England and other European countries. Its balance of trade was always favorable. In 1950 the excess of exports over imports totaled almost 54,000,000 pesos ($124,200,000). The peso was stable.

Before World War II there had been practically no industry in Uruguay. During and after the war Uruguay became rapidly industrialized. By 1951 Uruguay had large factories for the production of woolen materials, stockings and metal products, spinning mills, and all manner of smaller industries. Politically and economically Uruguay was oriented towards the United States. But it lived on friendly terms with all of its neighbors and the great world powers.

Jewish Population

As of July, 1950, the number of Jews in Uruguay was estimated at 40,000. They were divided into three distinct communities: the Ashkenazic, or Eastern European Jews, with approximately 6,000 families; the German-speaking, or Western European Jews, with approximately 1,500 families; and the Sephardic, or Mediterranean Jews, with approximately 2,000 families. In addition, there were a number of Hungarian Jews who joined in the communal life of the Ashkenazic Jews. Practically all the Jews resided in the capital; only approximately 600 families resided in the provinces.

The stream of immigration of Jews to Uruguay was strongly diminished during the year under review. During the period from July, 1950, to July, 1951, only approximately 220 Jews immigrated to Uruguay. The natural increase during the same period was approximately 150; the mortality was 210. Seventy-two persons emigrated to various countries. The result was an increase of 90 persons during the course of this period.

ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION

No exact statistics for the economic distribution of the Jewish population of Uruguay are available. The following is an estimate.
TABLE 1

JEWISH OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION
URUGUAY, 1951

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrialists</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installment salesmen</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Political and Civil Status

The Jews of Uruguay were constitutionally guaranteed political and social freedom. There was no distinction between religion and race in Uruguay. No discrimination or anti-Semitic agitation against Jews was discernible. With insignificant exceptions, their fellow citizens were friendly disposed to the Jewish residents of Uruguay. Jews were employed as government officials, and a significant number who had completed various universities were members of the Uruguayan professional family. A large number of Jews participated in the economic and industrial, as well as the financial life of the country. During the past year a bank to serve the needs of the Jewish community was established, the Banco Palestina-Uruguay, bringing the number of such banks in the capital of Uruguay to two.

Community Organization

The Jews of Montevideo were organized in three distinct communities: an Ashkenazic community of 4,000 families, a German-speaking community of 1,300 families, and a Sephardic community of 1,500 families. All of these communities were equally represented in the Comité Central Israelita de Uruguay. Besides this central organization there was the Federación Sionista del Uruguay, the Consejo Central Sionista, and a large number of social, cultural, and national organizations.

Jewish Education

Within the (Ashkenazic) Kehilah there was a section called Vaad Hajinuj, which had undertaken to stimulate and maintain Jewish education in Uruguay. The Vaad supervised a network of thirteen daily supplementary schools in Montevideo. Approximately 1,300 Jewish children were educated in these schools. The Vaad also conducted evening courses for young people and hakhsharah agricultural training courses for young Zionists. During 1951, the Vaad employed thirty-four teachers of Jewish subjects, one school inspector, and one teacher of singing. In June, 1951, the Vaad appointed a Jewish
teacher to the ORT trade school to lecture in Yiddish on Jewish history and tradition.

The budgets of the schools supervised by the Vaad were met in large part by the Kehilah, and to a lesser extent by voluntary membership payment and tuition fees.

The curriculum in these schools varied. Some schools were oriented to a traditional religious program; others stressed a more nationalistic orientation. The schools were alike in that all emphasized the study of Yiddish, Hebrew, history, tradition, and literature.

In June, 1951, the Cultural Division of the (Ashkenazic) Kehilah undertook to organize classes in religion for adults. Local intellectuals were expected to lecture on the Bible and Jewish history.

During the year 1950–51 there were two schools functioning outside the capital: one located in Paysandu, and another in Las Piedras.

**Religious Life**

The (Ashkenazic) Kehilah maintained two religious councils, each of which was headed by a rabbi. These religious councils supervised all the religious affairs of Montevideo: e.g., marriages, divorces, and kashrut.

During 1951 the Hungarian Jewish community appointed a rabbi in an attempt to raise the religious standards of the Hungarian Jews.

The Ashkenazic community in Montevideo supported fourteen temples, one yeshivah, a number of prayer quorums that met privately, and a cemetery. In addition the German community supported one rabbi, Dr. Fritz Winter, and one synagogue. The Sephardic community maintained one synagogue, whose rabbi died during 1950; as of July, 1951, his post had not yet been filled.

**Zionism and Relations with Israel**

It can be asserted with confidence that 75 per cent of the Jewish community in Uruguay was pro-Zionist. This sentiment became especially strong after the establishment of the state of Israel in May, 1948.

Uruguayan Jewry conducted annual organized united campaigns for Israel. In 1948 the sum collected was 2,000,000 pesos; in 1949 it was 1,400,000; in 1950, 1,000,000; and in 1951, 1,300,000.

The Jewish community of Uruguay possessed a full complement of Zionist parties: General Zionist, Poale Zionist, Histadrut, Mizrachi, Revisionist, and Mapam. All these groups were represented in the Consejo Central Sionista which centralized all the Zionist work in Uruguay. The Consejo Central was also the official representative of the Jewish Agency in Uruguay.

In addition to the customary Zionist work within the Jewish community, the Consejo Central also was instrumental in the formation of the Uruguayan Comité Pro-Palestina. The latter body was associated with the Uruguayan delegation to the United Nations, being advocates of the establishment of the state of Israel.
The Consejo Central also initiated and co-operated in establishing a Uruguayan Israel Chamber of Commerce.

The Women’s International Zionist Organization (WIZO), whose central administration was located in Montevideo, had branches in all the Uruguayan provinces, and achieved important results.

The Uruguayan Jewish youth, also largely Zionist, belonged to the following Zionist groups: Hatzehiah, Hanoar Hazioni, Maccabee, Hashomer Hatzair, Betar, Dror, and B’nai Akiba. All these groups were affiliated with the Zionist Youth Federation. Thirty young people had left for the state of Israel. During 1950–51 the Hanoar Hazioni and Hashomer Hatzair conducted two haksharah training farms, from which thirty-one young people had been prepared to emigrate to Israel.

One of the first diplomatic legations which Israel established soon after the proclamation of its independence was in Uruguay. Jacob Tzur, a fully accredited minister from Israel, was the first representative of Israel to Uruguay. At the time of writing (July, 1951), he was the diplomatic representative in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, and Paraguay.

Thanks to the industry and diplomacy of Israel’s First Secretary and Consul, Levi Arieh Allon, a commercial treaty was concluded between Israel and Uruguay in June, 1951. In accordance with the terms of this treaty Israel undertook to buy 20,000 tons of meat from Uruguay and Uruguay undertakes in turn to buy a number of Israel products.

During 1951 a society of Friends of the Weizmann Institute headed by Victor Soriano was founded in Uruguay to help the Weizmann Institute materially and to popularize its scientific work.

Social Service

The social services of the Uruguayan Jewish community were fairly well organized. On July 1, 1950, the (Ashkenazic) Kehilah reorganized its Bikur Holim division, and established a modern and well-equipped polyclinic to render medical aid to needy persons, both members and non-members of the Kehilah. The polyclinic was under the supervision of Dr. Mauricio Millies, who had a medical staff of seven physicians.

There were also an old-age home and an orphanage, to which a trade school was attached. The Women’s Aid Society, a philanthropic organization which numbered approximately 2,000 members, aided and supported needy individuals and families. The organization Ahim Rahamanim aided poor immigrants and residents financially and vocationally. In addition to these organizations, the Kehilah maintained a relief organization known as Ezrah.

Cultural Life

Uruguayan Jews had developed a full cultural life. Among the most important organizations in this area mention may be made of the Cultural Division of the (Ashkenazic) Kehilah, the Jewish Scientific Institute (YIVO),
the Zhitlovsky Culture House, the Culture League, and the Jewish Social Center. In January, 1951, a cultural center named after the Jewish Socialist Bundist leader Shlomo Mendelsohn, was established to meet the needs of Bundist intellectuals and sympathizers.

During the course of 1950–51 the Culture Division of the Kehilah organized a large library of Judaica. It also conducted Sunday cultural programs to which foreign, as well as local, lecturers were invited.

The Uruguayan chapter of the Jewish Scientific Institute (YIVO) also maintained a large Jewish library and archives, and conducted weekly discussions and symposiums on literary and cultural themes.

**Publications**

The Uruguayan Jewish community also possessed a fine Jewish press, in the form of *Folksblatt*, a nationalist daily, and *Unzer Fraynt*, a progressive daily, and *Der Moment–Momento*, an Orthodox weekly. The above mentioned all appeared in Yiddish. In addition, there were two publications: the weekly Spanish *La Voz de Israel*, Zionist in orientation, and *Revista Familiar Israelita del Uruguay*, a bi-monthly. There were also occasional Spanish partisan publications. There was a wide distribution of Argentinian and American periodicals. The small Uruguayan Jewish community also possessed its own intellectuals who wrote and published books and brochures in Yiddish and Hebrew.

**Personalia**

In May, 1951, the Uruguayan government signaled out Dr. Bernardo Porzecanski for appointment to the important post of Director of the Institute for the Prevention of Rabies. Dr. Marcus Loeff was sent on a tour of the European capitals to study modern surgery.

Leon Halpern

**Brazil**

There were no accurate statistics available concerning the size of the Jewish community of Brazil and the scope of its institutions. At the time of writing the Brazilian Jewish community was estimated at 120,000 (out of a general population of over 42,000,000); of this number, more than one-third resided in the capital, Rio de Janeiro; more than one-third in the second largest city, São Paulo; and the remainder in the larger cities (Porto Alegre, Recife, Belem, Bello-Horizonte, Curitiba, Bahia, and Santos), and in smaller towns dispersed throughout Brazil. Filipson and Quatro-Irmãos, two of the colonies founded by the Jewish Agricultural Society in Brazil, had shrunk considerably in size, nearly all the colonists having emigrated to the larger cities.
Civic and Political Status

Though Jews played an important role in the economic life of Brazil, they were rarely represented in the intellectual life and even more seldom in the political life. The number of Jewish voters was very small because very few Jews had become naturalized. Native Jews were appointed only to unimportant government posts because of the secret discriminatory policy practiced by certain official circles. Only one Jewish candidate, Salo Brand, was elected at the last parliamentary elections (October 3, 1950); the other, Horatio Lafer, was defeated, although he had been a deputy in the previous parliament where he had held an important position as the Chairman of the Finance Commission. However, Lafer was later appointed the Finance Minister of Brazil by the newly elected president, Getulio Vargas. Jewish candidates for the municipal elections in Rio and São Paulo were defeated.

Anti-Semitism

The objective conditions for organized anti-Semitic activity did not exist in Brazil, the racial theme being excluded by virtue of the mixed composition of the Brazilian people, who consisted of three separate elements—native Indian, African Negro, and white European. However, from time to time anti-Semitic articles appeared in the less reputable newspapers in reaction to specific events. Jewish immigration was the subject of occasional anti-Semitic comments in the better newspapers. The federations of Jewish organizations in Rio and São Paulo intervened during the period under review with the official government circle in several such instances of anti-Semitism.

A characteristic example of such sporadic anti-Semitic agitation took place on June 30, 1951. An extremely bitter controversy broke out in the Brazilian parliament between two powerful political groups each of which accused the other of illegal bank operations which were supposed to have wreaked havoc with the government treasury. The representative of one of the groups in parliament was Herbert Levy. That was utilized as a pretext by the opposition to publish in its press a defamation against Jews in general. Nor was the Finance Minister Horatio Lafer spared a similar attack.

Community Organization

The whole Jewish community life in Brazil concentrated in the federations of Jewish organizations which had been organized during the previous few years in the larger cities, particularly in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The federations included all institutions irrespective of their partisan leanings, although there was a noticeable tendency to exclude a small number of "progressive" institutions. Each organization was independent, in order to
fill its own function; the constituent members of the federation were consulted when problems of general interest were under discussion.

The federation of Rio de Janeiro contained forty-four institutions; nine social welfare, nine educational, twelve cultural and social, five religious, eight Zionist and one fiscal.

The federation of São Paulo and its environs contained thirty-nine organizations: eight educational, seven social welfare, seven cultural and social, six Zionist, six religious, three cultural-religious, one sport, and one fiscal.

**Jewish Education**

The federation of São Paulo maintained a Vaad Hahinukh (Board of Education) which supervised twelve educational institutions in the city and environs (except for one "progressive" school recently closed) attended by 1,129 students. This number constituted a very small proportion of the total number of Jewish children of school age. Before the Vaad Hahinukh was constituted in 1949, each of the schools had been independent, and their respective administrations, composed mainly of parents, had had to make strenuous efforts to meet their deficits. Since 1949 this problem had been partially solved, because the school deficits were met by the Vaad Hahinukh, which received for this purpose a specific percentage of the sums collected in the united campaigns for Israel and all local affairs. These schools taught both general and Jewish subjects, relegating approximately two hours daily to the latter. The curriculum for the general subjects was the same as that of the general schools. A specifically Jewish curriculum for two categories of schools (secular and religious) was worked out by the Pedagogic Commission of the Vaad Hahinukh; every affiliated school was required to accept this curriculum.

The Jewish schools in the capital, Rio de Janeiro, and its environs were attended by 2,000 students; the educational system was the same as in São Paulo. Jewish schools also functioned in other large cities in Brazil. There was a teachers' seminary in Rio de Janeiro but at the time of writing (July, 1951), it was not very successful because of the poor background of the students.

During the year under review, in accordance with the new educational policy of the Jewish Agency, several shelihim (emissaries) from the Education and Culture Department of the Agency visited Brazil and concluded agreements with the Vaad Hahinukh of São Paulo and that of Rio to send a specific number of teachers and educators from Israel to Brazil.

**Cultural Life**

There were no local organizations in Brazil that concerned themselves with Jewish cultural activity. An attempt by a branch of the World Congress for Jewish Culture to conduct in Rio de Janeiro a folk university proved unsuccessful and was completely abandoned after a few months. On the other
hand no opportunity was let pass to celebrate important literary anniversaries and to organize conferences with the cultural emissaries who often visited Brazil.

PRESS

Rio de Janeiro had a Zionist weekly in Yiddish called the *Yiddisher Presse*, founded more than twenty years before by Aron Bergman, who was its editor until his death in 1950, when his position was taken by David Markus. In São Paulo the "progressives" had for several years been publishing a Yiddish weekly, *Unzere Shtime*. On November 17, 1950, a new bi-weekly in Yiddish began to appear under the editorship of Elias Lipiner, called *Der Nayer Moment*. All these Yiddish publications contained one page in Portuguese. Two Yiddish dailies (*Di Yidisher Folkstzaytung*, edited in Rio by S. Karakushansky, and the São Paulo *Yidishe Tzaytung*, edited by M. Frankenthal), were suspended because of the government ban of 1941 on foreign-language newspapers, and did not reappear when the ban was lifted. Portuguese-language publications included: the weeklies *Aoňde Bamuś*, edited by Aron Neuman, and *Journal Israelita*, edited by Jacob Kutner, both published in Rio; a monthly, *Brasil-Israel*, founded by Berta Kogan and edited by Beno Milnitzky; and a Portuguese-German bi-monthly *A Cronica Israelita*, edited by Alfred Hirschberg.

In addition, there were irregular publications in Portuguese put out by Zionist youth and other communal organizations.

Zionist and Pro Israel Activities

The Zionist movement dominated Jewish life in Brazil. A large number of Jewish students were members of the various Zionist youth organizations, and a few hundred attended several *hakhsharah* centers, where they were studying farming and other trades. Almost all the educational activity and cultural work going on in Brazil was Zionist in character.

On January 31, 1951, the newly elected president, Getulio Vargas, took office and on the same day declared at a press interview that he was willing to establish commercial and diplomatic relationships with the state of Israel. On April 12, 1951, a decree authorizing the establishment of a Brazilian legation in Tel Aviv was published in the government newspaper. However, as of the time of writing, no official diplomatic exchange between the two governments had taken place. The official congressional record of May 11, 1951, published a lengthy and quite cordial speech by deputy Gama Filho, in connection with the third anniversary of the independence of Israel. A similar salutation was published in the city records of Rio de Janeiro, at the suggestion of the City Counsellor Pascoal Carlos Magno.

As the result of the intervention of some local Jewish philanthropists, the University of Rio granted permission for the opening of a course of free lectures on Judaica. However, the Yiddish press in Brazil severely criticized the appointment of two lecturers on the basis of their personal influence. A
similar undertaking by the University of São Paulo had failed a few years before for the same reasons.

Immigration

Jewish immigration to Brazil had been at a halt during the previous few years, except for isolated instances. As early as 1930 the government had put the first limitations on immigration in general, which was temporarily suspended entirely (particularly for Jews, although this was never publicly admitted). Rumors had long been circulating concerning a secret memorandum from the Ministry for External Affairs to the Brazilian consuls abroad, ordering them to deny visas to Jews who wished to enter Brazil. There was indirect official confirmation of these rumors when the new Minister of External Affairs, Joao Nevis Da Fontoura, suggested to the President of the Republic on February 21, 1951, that this secret memorandum be suspended; the president ordered that orders to this effect be sent to all Brazilian consuls. A federal anti-discrimination law was signed by the president on July 4, 1951, to go into force fifteen days later, according to which every act of discrimination because of race or color was made punishable by imprisonment and a fine. The press comment stressed that the anti-discrimination law was applicable to diplomatic representatives of Brazil who might refuse visas to Jews because of their descent. On the other hand, there was the distinct danger that hostile elements might attempt to turn the law against Brazilian Jewry in such charges as discrimination for refusal to accept non-Jewish children in Jewish schools.

Elias Lipiner