The population of the State of Israel at the end of June 1955 was 1,748,000. Of this number, 195,000 were non-Jews. Table 1 shows the growth of Israel since May 1948.

### Table 1


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jews</th>
<th>Non-Jews</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948 (Dec. 31)</td>
<td>758,701</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>758,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1,013,871</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>1,173,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1,202,993</td>
<td>167,101</td>
<td>1,370,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1,404,392</td>
<td>173,433</td>
<td>1,577,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>1,450,217</td>
<td>179,302</td>
<td>1,629,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>1,483,505</td>
<td>185,892</td>
<td>1,669,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>1,526,000</td>
<td>191,000</td>
<td>1,717,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 (June 30)</td>
<td>1,553,000</td>
<td>195,000</td>
<td>1,748,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Population**

The yearly population increase from all sources was about 3 per cent, as against 2.3 per cent in 1953, and 17 per cent in 1950. From 1952 through 1954 natural increase exceeded net immigration. In 1954 natural increase accounted for 74 per cent of the population increase, immigration for 26 per cent. At the time of writing (July 1955) immigration approximately equaled the natural increase. During the first half of 1953 the number of emigrants exceeded the immigrants, but during the period under review

### Table 2

**Growth of Jewish Population in Israel**

(in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1949</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1952</th>
<th>1953</th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>1955 (July 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Immigration</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Increase</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Increase</strong></td>
<td>255</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VITAL STATISTICS

The Jewish birth rate was 27.35 in 1954, as compared to 30.23 in 1953, and 31.57 in 1952. The non-Jewish birth rate was 45.08 in 1954 (48.41 in 1953), and continued to be among the highest in the world.

The Jewish death rate was 6.76 per thousand in 1954, practically the same as in the corresponding period for 1953 (6.67). Non-Jewish death rate in 1954 was 6.42; in 1953, 6.32.

Jewish infant mortality was 34.12 in 1954, a further decrease in comparison with the previous years (1953, 35.66; 1952, 38.70; 1950, 46.22). The non-Jewish death rate was 61.23 in 1954; it had been 60.09 in 1953, 67.74 in 1952.

The Jewish marriage rate was 8.75 per 1,000 mean population in 1954. It had been 9.56 in 1953 and 11.30 in 1952. The non-Jewish marriage rate was 6.90 in 1954; it had been 7.64 in 1953 and 8.86 in 1952. The registered Jewish divorce rate was 1.46 in 1954, compared to 1.57 in 1953 and 1.66 in 1952. The non-Jewish divorce rate was 0.71 in 1954; it had been 0.84 in 1953 and 1.11 in 1952.

There were 774,812 Jewish males and 751,204 females at the end of 1954. The mean age was 28.2; the median age, 26.0.

TABLE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-14</td>
<td>500,835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-29</td>
<td>458,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>323,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>273,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>68,246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The total population increase in 1954 was about 2.9 per cent (about 49,000 persons) above 1953, as against an increase of 40,000 (2.4 per cent) in 1953. Above the country-wide average were the Beersheba region (13.6 per cent), Ascalon (7 per cent), and Safed (5.4 per cent). Jerusalem (0.3 per cent), on the other hand, was below the national average. Population in city areas increased in 1954 by 2.4 per cent, but agricultural regions grew by almost twice as much—4.3 per cent. The percentage of residents in the three big cities decreased from 43 to 42.1, but in the smaller towns it went up from 33.6 to 34.1. Within the agricultural sector the main increase was among the smallholders settlements (moshve ovdim—5.9 per cent). Five per cent of the country's population now lived in the kibbutzim, or collective settlements (5 per cent in 1953, 4.8 per cent in 1952, 5.7 per cent in 1950, 7.9 per cent in 1948). The percentage of those in independent maabarot fell from 5.4 per cent in 1951 to 2.6 per cent in 1954.
Immigration and Settlement

Immigration showed a distinct upward trend during 1954–55. January 1954 was the month with the fewest immigrants (328) since the founding of the state. But in the summer of 1955 immigration was running steadily at between 2,000-4,000 a month. This was considerably larger than in 1952–54, though much less than during the period of mass immigration in 1948–51.

Of the 17,485 immigrants in 1954, the country of birth of 8,185 was Morocco, 2,628 Tunisia, 1,506 India, 584 Yemen, 296 Argentina, and 93 the United States. Children under fourteen constituted 13.6 per cent of the immigrants—a much higher proportion than in previous years. Over one-fourth of the immigrants (66.5 per cent of the males, 29.2 per cent of the females) stated that they were wage earners. These included 664 clothing workers, 502 middlemen, 435 clerical workers, and 404 leather workers. Immigration from French North Africa increased because of unsettled political conditions there. Tentative plans provided for the immigration to Israel of 60,000 Jews from Morocco, Tunis, and Algeria during 1955–56.

The activities of Youth Aliyah were surveyed in 1955 on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the death of Henrietta Szold, the moving spirit of the organization. Youth Aliyah had absorbed 70,000 children from seventy-two different countries during the twenty-one years of its existence. Of the 13,500 Youth Aliyah wards aged ten to seventeen now in Israel, the majority were in agricultural settlements, the remainder in vocational or agricultural training schools, special institutions, and the Ramat Hadassah Szold Reception Center. Every month the organization absorbed some 500 children (75 per cent Sephardic) from North Africa and immigrant settlements and slum areas in Israel.

About two-thirds of the newcomers in 1954–55 were sent to their final destination directly from the immigrant ships, and apart from minor hitches, this new scheme worked well. The reclamation of the 750,000-dunam Bet Guvrin (Lachish) area in the South, half-way between Rehovoth and Beer-sheba, was expected to play a major role in the absorption of the North African Aliyah. In the Bet Guvrin area there were at least 280,000 dunams of arable land, with the balance suitable for pasture and afforestation. The settling of the area, which was eventually to feed a population of 5,000 families in forty-eight new settlements, depended entirely on the Yarkon-Negev waterpipe. The first groups of newcomers to settle in the Lachish area arrived in Israel in January 1955, and the first settlements were established there in the spring of 1955. Towards the end of 1954 three training transit camps were established, two in the Lachish region and one near Ta’anach, to enable the policy of “ship to settlement” to be carried out in areas where settlements had not yet been established. Jewish Agency blueprints for the absorption of immigration throughout 1955–56 were based, inter alia, on the establishment of 100 new settlements to absorb 9,000 families, comprising some 40,000 persons.

Emigration dropped in 1954 to the lowest point since Israel was established. Only 5,774 persons left the country in 1954, as compared with 8,644 in 1953 and 11,128 in 1952. Of those who left, 1,650 went to the United States, 556 to
Brazil, 1,033 to Turkey, 435 to Iran, 281 to Rumania, 310 to Oceania, and 269 to Canada. Since May 1948 63,000 persons had left. This was about 7.5 per cent of all newcomers and 4.5 per cent of the entire population.

Some 38,700 tourists visited Israel in 1954, as compared with 36,212 in 1953. There was a considerable increase in tourism during the first half of 1955 (8,283 visitors during the first three months of 1955, as compared to 6,485 during the first three months of 1954).

**Jewish Agency**

1954–55 was proclaimed Herzl Year by the World Zionist movement—the fiftieth since the passing of Theodor Herzl.

The Zionist General Council convened in Jerusalem in July 1954, and dealt with both immigration problems and such general issues as “the role of the Zionist movement in the light of present-day events.” An £103,000,000 ($185,400,000) draft budget was proposed for 1954–55 providing, among other things, for the consolidation of 106 agricultural settlements. Giora Josephtal, treasurer of the Jewish Agency and co-head of the absorption department, declared that immigration must be founded on three principles: no immigrant should be brought to camp; newcomers should be settled in development areas; and no immigrant should be brought who would become a financial burden to the state because of chronic ill-health or other reasons which entailed maintenance in an institution. Because 35 per cent of candidates for immigration from Morocco (and other North African countries) failed to meet health requirements, certain relaxations of these requirements were gradually introduced by the Agency in North Africa.

It was also decided to convene the Zionist Congress in Jerusalem in August 1955. However, in view of the Knesset elections fixed for July 1955, the Jewish Agency executive decided in March 1955 to postpone the Zionist Congress until 1956. Preparations for the second World Hebrew Congress, sponsored by the World Zionist Organization, the Israel ministry of education, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and other public bodies, continued. This congress was scheduled to open on August 7, 1955, in Jerusalem.

**Domestic Politics**

On February 21, 1955, David Ben Gurion returned from Sdeh Boker in the Negev to Jerusalem to be Minister of Defense, replacing Pinhas Lavon, who resigned because of “differences of opinion” inside the government.

Moishe Smoira, the first president of Israel’s Supreme Court, resigned in August 1954 for reasons of health. Supreme Court Justice Yitzhak Olshan was appointed to succeed him.

The political scene in general was overshadowed by the elections to the third Knesset in July 1955, and to a lesser degree by the Histadrut elections in May 1955. The pro-Communist Sneh faction, which had been expelled by Mapam in January 1954 and had subsequently become the Left Socialist Party, merged with the Israel Communist Party in October 1954. Of more political importance was the expulsion from Mapam of the Le-achduth
Avodah faction by the Hashomer Hatzair majority in August 1954 “for many breaches of discipline.” Le-achdut Avodah, formerly a faction of Mapai, had joined Hashomer Hatzair in founding Mapam in 1947. It followed a more nationalist line and, though sympathetic to Soviet Russia, strongly opposed any collaboration with the Israel Communists and dissociated itself from the Cominform stand on Israel.

Hapoel Hamizrachi and Mizrachi merged in January 1955, over the opposition of the former group’s left wing, called Lamifneh. Hapoel Hamizrachi continued to exist as the trade union movement of the Orthodox Zionists. Both Mizrachi and Agudat Israel continued to press for legislation based on Jewish religious tradition. The other parties and the non-Orthodox public in general complained about “Orthodox encroachment,” and there was much criticism of the religious courts in the debates on the law for the appointment of Religious Court judges (dayanim) in July-August 1954 and again in May 1955. The demand for introduction of civil marriage was frequently voiced, and as stubbornly resisted. These conflicts were high lighted by the hunger strike of the Haifa painter Moshe Barak for the right to marry a Yugoslav Christian, and the frequent clashes near the Jerusalem Histadrut children’s home, located on the border of the ultra-Orthodox Mea Shearim district, in the winter of 1954–55. The ultra-Orthodox Neturei Karta, with considerable support from the Orthodox parties, sought by demonstrations to force the removal from the neighborhood of the Histadrut children’s home because boys and girls up to the age of fourteen were educated together in it. On the whole the status quo in religious affairs was preserved, and no sizeable progress was made by either side. This subacute Kulturkampf, despite due predictions, was always prevented at the last moment from coming to a head.

Notwithstanding minor clashes, collaboration between Mapai and the General Zionists continued fairly smoothly until shortly before the elections. The main bone of contention was over economic issues, such as foreign currency controls, income tax, and the relations between the “private” and “collective” (Histadrut) sectors of the Israel national economy. The General Zionists complained of discrimination against the private sector, while Mapai implied that the main aim of the General Zionists was to reduce income taxes in the higher brackets.

Mapai continued to hold the leadership of the Histadrut. The May 1955 Histadrut elections gave Mapai 57.7 per cent (236,961 votes), compared to 57.1 per cent in 1949. Achdut Avodah polled 14.6 per cent (59,966), and Mapam (Hashomer Hatzair) 12.5 per cent (51,505). (The united Mapam had received 34 per cent in 1949.) The Progressives rose from 4 per cent to 5 per cent (21,543), the Communists (reinforced this time by the Sneh faction of Mapam) from 3 per cent to 4 per cent (16,806), and the General Zionists, appearing for the first time in the Histadrut elections, received 3.8 per cent (15,618). Achdut Avodah sought to gain influence among the younger generation, and especially the Mapai youth. It stood for a strongly nationalist, “activist,” policy toward Israel’s neighbors, a neutralist attitude with a pro-Soviet bias in world affairs, and a vaguely “radical” program in domestic politics nearer to that of the Bevanites in Britain than to Communism. Mapam (i.e., the old Hashomer Hatzair), had a more restricted appeal for
the general public and appeared to be slowly declining. The Israel Communists made strong efforts to win the politically less mature strata of the population. Assisted by the Sneh faction of Mapam, they made some slight headway in new immigrant cities such as Ramle and among Hebrew University students. The Orthodox parties revealed a high degree of stability. Their main complaint was alleged discrimination against their schools. Herut continually appealed to the public to overthrow a “defeatist government” which it charged with refraining from large-scale action in the face of constant Arab attacks. Generally speaking, the debate on “activism versus moderation” cut across party lines and in almost each party supporters of both trends were to be found.

All other lists received less than one per cent and no Knesset seat. Achdut Avodah and Mapam had appeared in one list at the elections to the second Knesset and then obtained fifteen seats. The Communists got five seats in 1951, but were subsequently reinforced by two former Mapam Knesset members, Moshe Sneh and Adolf Berman. Eighty-three per cent of the electorate participated in the July 1955 elections. (The percentage had been 87 per cent for the first Knesset, and 79 per cent for the second.) The election results were generally interpreted as a severe setback for Mapai and an even more serious defeat for the General Zionists, who lost one-third of their strength. The religious parties and the Progressives made some slight progress, the Communists held their ground. But Achdut Avodah apparently made some inroads into Mapai, while Herut benefited from the debacle of the General Zionists and almost doubled their Knesset representation. This was generally taken as the endorsement by certain sections of the public of a more “activist line” in relation to the neighboring Arab countries. The Mapai losses mainly occurred in towns and settlements chiefly inhabited by new immigrants, while it was able to maintain its position in the big cities. The returns were a disappointment to all but the extremist groups, for they tended to make the establishment of a working coalition even more difficult than hitherto.

Kastner Case

On June 22, 1955, judgment was given in the Jerusalem District court in the criminal libel case brought by the government against Malkiel Gruenwald. He had alleged that Israel Kastner, a former leader of Hungarian Jewry and a top Israel civil servant, had collaborated with the Nazis; was indirectly responsible for or assisted in the murder of Hungarian Jewry; had shared with Nazis loot taken from Jews; and had saved Nazi criminals after the war. The presiding judge, Benjamin Halevi, found three of the allegations proved and said that Kastner had “sold his soul to Satan” and was guilty of “criminal collaboration” with the Nazis. Gruenwald was fined a token sum of £1, because it was ruled that there was insufficient evidence to show that Kastner had shared loot taken from Jews. This trial had very strong political overtones. Gruenwald’s counsel, Samuel Tamir, was a former commander of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, and the charges against Kastner—who had been prominent in Mapai—though known and partly published as far
back as 1946, became in effect part of the election campaign, and more particularly part of the electoral propaganda of Herut and the Communists and some other circles against Mapai. On August 21, 1955, the Israel Attorney General appealed to the Supreme Court against the verdict. Leading Israel newspapers expressed reservations with regard to the verdict and said that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to pass judgment on acts committed in Nazi-occupied Europe in 1943-44 in the light of everything that was known twelve years later. On June 29 two motions of nonconfidence in the Knesset against the government's handling of the Kastner case were brought by Herut and the Communists. The General Zionists abstained from voting on the Herut motion. Prime Minister Sharett demanded the resignation of the General Zionist members of the cabinet, on the ground that they had violated the principle of collective responsibility. When they refused, he submitted the government's resignation to the President, who immediately invited him to form a new one. On the same evening Sharett's new government received a vote of confidence in the Knesset. In this government, which was to hold office until the July general elections, the General Zionist representatives were dropped but no new ministers enlisted.

**Municipality of Jerusalem**

The municipal government of Jerusalem continued to be a major problem. The Israel capital had been ruled for some years past by an Orthodox-General Zionist-Herut coalition, with Mapai in the opposition and Yitzchak Kariv of Mizrachi as Mayor. This coalition had not been a success and, following the decision of the General Zionists to leave it, a non-confidence vote in the mayor was passed in March 1955. Subsequently, on April 5, 1955, the management of Jerusalem municipal affairs was transferred to a government-appointed administrative commission.

**Arabs**

Various developments and professional schemes were undertaken in 1954-55 in the Arab areas of Israel. Magistrate Elias Tewfik Kteili, sworn in on January 25, 1955, became the second Arab to serve on the bench and the first to be appointed since 1948. Politically few if any changes occurred. The Communists maintained their strong position in Nazareth and several villages, though their position was no longer what it had been in 1948-49, when they had held a virtual monopoly. But the other Arab groups and parties continued to be split on political, family, and religious lines, and there was dissension also among the Druze minority. An attempt was made to found an Israel-Arab movement under the leadership of Taher Fahoum, ex-mayor of Nazareth, and Elias Khoussa, a well-known lawyer in Haifa. This group opposed the practice of joining existing Jewish parties and proposed the establishment of a united Arab national movement, without distinction of creed, to press for the national demands of the Arab citizens.

During 1954 the registration of Arab youth by the ministry of defense (concurrently with the registration of Jewish youth) continued. Arabs did
not, however, serve in the army—with the exception of some Druze and Cherkess units.

It was announced in July 1954 that £500,000 had been paid during the preceding months to Arab landowners under the Land Acquisition Act. (The total area requisitioned under the law was 1,200,000 dunams and the total compensation was expected to be £15,000,000 [$27,000,000].) Nevertheless, there was much criticism of this law and especially of its application. Several hundred Arab landowners, it was claimed, were regarded as absentees though they had not in fact left the country.

**Legislation**

The Knesset in its 1954-55 session was mainly preoccupied with routine matters such as the budget and the state comptroller's annual report, with a foreign political debate or statement every now and then. The frequent opposition motions of non-confidence were all defeated by comfortable majorities. Most of the laws passed dealt with technical questions such as the control of water resources, the establishment of archives, or the protection of wild animals, and did not create as much stormy public discussion as did some legislation in previous years. Nor did the amended Election Law (introduced in November 1954) bring any conspicuous change.

In January 1955 Ja'akov Serlin, the General Zionist Minister of Health, urged the replacement of the present system, under which Kupath Holim (the sick fund of the Histadruth) served more than half of the population, by government health services. This proposal met strong opposition; the ability of the government to replace the Histadruth Sick Fund was widely doubted. According to a new and comprehensive law on the judiciary (introduced in February 1955), courts of four degrees—municipal, magistrates', district courts and supreme courts—were to exist, and the scope of each court was clearly defined. It was also announced in February 1955 that the ministry of justice was preparing a new criminal code.

The Knesset Standing Committee voted in December 1954 to revoke the parliamentary immunity of the Knesset member and Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Israel Solomon Rosenberg. He had been charged by the attorney general with contravening two currency regulations in the transfer of foreign funds on behalf of the Mizrachi party. The case against Rabbi Rosenberg was, however, dropped when the chief magistrate in Tel Aviv found on January 16, 1955, that he had found nothing in the evidence presented to the court to show that the accused was responsible for the violations in question.

**Religious Affairs**

Rabbi Isaac Halevi Herzog was unanimously reelected Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel while Rabbi Yitzhak Nissim Rahamin was elected Sephardic Chief Rabbi at a meeting of the electoral college in Jerusalem on February 21, 1955. Rabbi Nissim received forty-two votes against twenty-seven for Rabbi Ya'akov Toledano. The election of the Sephardic Chief Rabbi was
annulled in June 1955 by the Supreme Court on a technicality, but was validated retroactively by the Knesset.

A six-member Supreme Rabbinical Council was also elected, consisting of Rabbi Zvi Pessah Frank, Rabbi Israel Unterman, Rabbi Ya'akov Toledano, Rabbi Ovadya Hadaya, Rabbi Reuven Katz, and Rabbi Ya'akov Adas.

Rambam year, honoring the memory of Maimonides, was ushered in on January 13, 1955, the 750th anniversary of his death. The program for the Rambam year included the preparation of Maimonides' entire work for publication, including his medical writings. A new scholarly translation of the Guide for the Perplexed was to be published under a joint agreement between the Rabbi Kook Foundation and Dr. Jehudah Ibn-Shmuel (Kaufmann), and the Tomb of the Rambam was to be restored. In Jerusalem a Rambam exhibition (containing 1,500 exhibits) was arranged by the Rabbi Kook Institute and opened in January 1955.

Foreign Relations

Relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors did not change significantly during the period under review. But relations with Turkey deteriorated following the signing of the pact between that country and Iraq in January 1955. There was some tension in Israel relations with the Western powers and especially the United States; all leaders and political parties viewed with much concern the shipment of arms to an Arab government, their projected supply to others, and the refusal to send arms to Israel. The American explanation that Israel need not worry about these shipments was not accepted in view of declarations made by Arab chiefs of governments, stating in so many words that the arms would be used for a second round against Israel. There was also much irritation and anger at American warnings against Israel military counteraction. A feeling of isolation grew, and the demand for a neutralist policy and a general reorientation to prevent a "Middle Eastern Munich" was voiced by influential sections of public opinion. In Asia, Israel also suffered a setback, its exclusion from the Bandung conference held in April 1955. Relations with the Communist states continued to be normal. An Israel government delegation visited Communist China early in 1955.

Repeated Israel offers of an agreement for nonaggression and pacific settlement of disputes between it and the Arab states did not evoke any positive reaction from these quarters. Such a suggestion was made, for instance, in Abba Eban's speech of October 6, 1954, to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. In September 1954, Israel freed the last blocked accounts of Arab refugees, and in November 1954 Michael Comay told the Special Political Committee of the UN that Israel would compensate the Arab refugees if the Arab states would lift their economic embargo and if Israel could get foreign loans to pay for such compensation. These offers also were rejected, and they were subsequently sharply criticized by extremist opinion in Israel. The Arab governments refused to participate in negotiations on the release of blocked accounts, and following an agreement between Israel
and the Arab Refugees Congress the heads of this organization were ordered arrested in Jordan and charged with "collaboration with the enemy."

Negotiations between Ambassador Eric Johnston and Israel representatives ended in Jerusalem in February 1955 with a feeling "on both sides that considerable progress has been achieved in defining attitudes and eliminating points of difference." Talks between experts continued in the United States during the spring and early summer of 1955. The success of this project for the common development of water resources seemed doubtful, however, in view of the unwillingness of the Arab governments to cooperate with Israel, as a matter of principle.

**BAT GALIM INCIDENT**

The Israel vessel *Bat Galim*, proceeding from Massawa to Haifa with a mixed cargo of meat, plywood, and hides, was seized by Egypt while passing through Suez on September 28, 1954. This was generally taken to be a test of Egypt's readiness to permit free passage of the Canal, following the Anglo-Egyptian agreement on Suez. In a note sent to the UN Security Council the same day Israel demanded the immediate release of this unarmed 500-ton ship and its ten-man crew. Egypt countered with a complaint alleging that the vessel had attacked Egyptian ships and killed Egyptian fishermen while approaching the Canal. (These charges were later dropped.) The Security Council first referred the matter back to the Israel-Egyptian Armistice Commission, but eventually had to deal with it after a report by Maj. Gen. Eedson Louis Millard Burns. To forestall a vote of censure, the Cairo authorities on December 6, 1954, announced their willingness to release the *Bat Galim* crew and cargo. Subsequently, however, it appeared that the Egyptian government insisted on its ban on Israel shipping through Suez and intended to release crew and ship separately. The *Bat Galim* crew arrived back in Israel on January 1, 1955, but the ship and cargo remained in Egyptian hands. The Security Council ended its debate on the issue on January 13, 1955, without any formal resolution and recommendation, the president of the Council expressing his hope and expectation that the whole affair would be disposed of through the Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commission. But there was no mention of upholding Israel's right to free passage and this, as well as several subsequent decisions by the Council, undermined Israel's confidence in the UN and helped to strengthen the advocates of "direct action."

**SECURITY COUNCIL**

The Security Council again had to deal with Middle Eastern affairs when Egypt filed a complaint against Israel in connection with the Gaza incident in March 1955 (see below). This was called by the Egyptian delegate "one of the greatest acts of aggression and a veritable act of war." General Burns also stressed that this Israel attack was a clear violation of the armistice, but noted at the same time, as causes contributory to this grave incident, the many Egyptian attacks which preceded the Gaza clash. The representatives of the powers, both West and East, condemned the Israel action in emphatic
terms. Two weeks later Israel asked for Security Council action against renewed Egyptian attacks. But Israel suffered another rebuff when the chairman of this body, summing up the views of the members, declared (April 19, 1955) that "no new action appears required." This in turn strengthened belief in Israel that further attempts to enlist the help of the UN against Arab aggression were hopeless, in view of the cold war and the intensive attempts made by both West and East to woo the Arab states. An Israeli government spokesman charged the Security Council with partiality, while extremist circles in Israel criticized the foreign ministry for having taken up the matter with the UN.

RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

The most notable feature in relations between Israel and the Communist countries was the resumption of immigration, though on a tiny scale and restricted mainly to people over sixty. Approximately 100 Soviet Jews were permitted to leave Russia during 1954–55, and there were more than 200 arrivals from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Immigration from Bulgaria had been relatively free since 1949, and early in the summer of 1955 the Rumanian government was reported willing to allow the emigration of relatives of Israel residents. Cultural relations between Israel and the Soviet Union did not prosper, however. The Israeli government explained in a special communiqué in October 1954 why it had refused to grant visas to members of a Soviet delegation to the Communist-sponsored Israel-Soviet Friendship Congress. It pointed out that any such visits would have to be made on the basis of reciprocity, and noted that all Israeli proposals for fostering cultural relations had been ignored by Moscow. In the satellite countries approximately one dozen Israeli citizens, Zionist leaders, and former employees of the local Israeli embassies were released from prison, and several were permitted to proceed to Israel. This undoubtedly contributed to the normalization of relations between Israel and the Eastern European countries. Rumania, however, demanded the recall of the first secretary of the Israel Embassy, Daniel Laor, in September 1954, on the charge of having provided a forged passport to a staff member of the Israel legation (a Rumanian citizen) so that he might flee Rumania.

SMALL WAR

During 1954–55 tension on Israel's borders frequently reached alarming proportions. Up to the summer of 1954, most incidents had occurred on the Israel-Jordan frontier. This remained relatively quiet throughout the period under review, and the main center of danger shifted to the Israel-Egyptian frontier along the Gaza strip. During the winter and spring of 1955 this became the scene of almost continuous small-scale Egyptian aggression interspersed with more infrequent but more extensive Israeli acts of retaliation. Relations between the Israeli representatives and some of the UN truce observation staff had deteriorated throughout 1953–54. General Vagn Bennicke was charged by the Israeli press with a pronounced anti-Israel bias; this was perhaps borne out by newspaper interviews in which General Bennicke ex-
pressed the view that a Jewish state was not viable (e.g., September 1954, *Davar*). General Burns replaced General Bennicke as UN Truce Supervision Organization Chief of Staff on August 3, 1954. Comm. Elmo H. Hutchison of the United States, chairman of the Israel-Jordan Armistice Commission, was also replaced in October 1954. Israel then rejoined this body from which it had withdrawn in March 1954, following what it regarded as a number of anti-Israel resolutions. Relations with General Burns and the other UN observers were correct, though Israel representatives doubted the efficacy of some of General Burns's proposals for lessening tension on the border. The Israel attitude was that there was no point in working out detailed plans of supervision and control, since they could not work as long as the Egyptian authorities wanted to continue the small war on the border, making the Negev an area of insecurity and preventing settlement and development schemes there. Egyptian attacks included bi-weekly mining of the water line in the Negev, the murder of a tractor driver and an Israel Bedouin on September 5, 1954, raids on Israel Bedouin camps throughout the year, and the killing of two settlers at Bet Hashima on September 25, 1954. These sporadic attacks were intensified in December 1954, when several members of a ring of marauders and saboteurs were arrested in Israel; they said that they were acting under the direction of an Egyptian army intelligence headquarters in Gaza. Israeli settlers and soldiers were killed in January 1955 at Nir Yitzhak, Ein Hashlosha, and elsewhere in the South, and there were almost daily attacks throughout February. Also in February an Egyptian intelligence unit penetrated up to the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, killing and wounding residents of Israel on the way. In an act of retaliation at Gaza on February 28, Israel units attacked an Egyptian military camp. In the battle which ensued, about forty Egyptian soldiers were killed. Israeli losses were eight dead and thirteen wounded. After a short lull, attackers from the Gaza strip killed and wounded several persons at an Israel wedding party in Moshav Patish in the Negev on March 24. In April several more Israeli settlers were killed in the Gaza region, but the main attacks were directed against Israel border patrols, and Israeli soldiers were killed and wounded almost daily. Occasionally settlements were also attacked, such as Nachal Oz in March 1955, and Nirim and Ein Hashlosha on May 30. When the Security Council adjourned on April 19 without taking action on Israel's complaint against Egyptian attacks (after having very emphatically condemned the Israel attack on Gaza), conviction grew in Israel that further complaints to the UN would hardly be of much avail, and that despite American demands that Israel abstain from military counteraction, Israel would have to help itself in the face of Egyptian attacks, rather than rely on intervention from outside. In May 1955, an Israel spokesman for the first time officially announced an act of retaliation (the destruction of an Egyptian army post), following the murder of three Israeli officers by Egyptian forces. This action again provoked American protests, leading to increased resentment, since the United States Department of State did not condemn the original attack which caused the death of three Israelis but did condemn the Israel counteraction—which in this case did not even result in casualties.

There were occasional clashes between Israel and Jordan forces in the
Hebron-Bet Gubrin area. Four Arab legionnaires were killed in an encounter with Israel border police near Battir on November 18, 1954. Two Israel tractor drivers were killed by Jordanians near Agur on January 18, 1955. An Israel soldier was killed and two wounded in another clash at Dawayima which continued for several hours on February 12, 1955. In February-March 1955 there were several attacks in the Southern Emek area and against Moshav Zacharia in the Jerusalem region. Four Israel youths were arrested on March 7, on suspicion of being connected with the murder during the preceding month of five Jordan Bedouins several miles inside Jordan territory. One of the detained was the brother of a girl killed in the Hebron hills together with another hiker by Jordan Bedouins in January 1955.

A local commanders agreement in the Jerusalem area in April 1955 again inaugurated a period of relative calm on the Israel-Jordan border in general. There were several minor incidents on the Syrian border. Syrian frontier guards repeatedly attacked Israel fishermen on Lake Tiberias and blew up the water supply of neighboring settlements, such as Kibbutz Shamir and Bet Katzir. Five Israel soldiers were captured inside Syrian territory by the Syrians on December 5, 1954. One of them, Private Uri Ilan, 20, was found dead in his cell in a Damascus prison on January 13, 1955, presumably a suicide. The other four soldiers were to be brought to trial on charges of espionage, according to Syrian press reports early in 1955.

**Economic Developments**

On the whole, 1954–55 was a year of sizable economic progress in Israel. National income in 1954 was 1£1,426,000,000 (12,566,800,000), as against 1£1,100,000,000 in 1953 ($1,800,000,000), an increase of about 30 per cent, two-thirds of which was due to increased production and services. Israel's trade deficit was 10 per cent less in 1954 than in 1953, when it was $227,100,000. The cost of living index rose only 7 per cent in 1954, as compared with 19 per cent in 1953; during the period September 1954 through March 1955, it rose only two points. The number of unemployed dropped from 20,000 in November 1953 to 12,500 in November 1954; in June 1955 it was 8,820. Foreign currency holdings rose from 1£ 2,000,000 ($3,600,000) in January 1954, to 1£ 50,000,000 ($90,000,000) in January 1955. Industrial production was 15 to 20 per cent higher in 1954 than in the previous year and there was considerable progress in agriculture. Nevertheless, the rate of economic progress was as yet too slow to attain the goal of economic independence in the near future. The foundations for a self-sufficient economy were laid in 1954–55 with greater rapidity than generally expected, but not rapidly enough to make the country's economy viable, independent of the various grants-in-aid, German reparations, etc., which must be expected to come to an end in the not too distant future.

**Foreign Trade and Finance**

The value of Israel imports rose by 47 per cent from 1£ 100,249,000 in 1953 ($180,448,200) to 1£ 103,470,000 ($186,246,000) in 1954, and was
£ 48,734,000 ($87,721,200) for the first five months of 1955. Trade agreements existed with more than fifteen states and trade relations with over seventy.

Total exports and re-exports in 1954 were £ 31,472,000 ($56,649,600) as against £ 21,309,00 (38,356,200) in 1953. They were £ 18,244,000 ($51,083,200 for the first five months of 1955. The two chief export items in 1954 were citrus and diamonds, followed by automobiles and automobile parts and building materials. During 1954, Great Britain continued to be Israel’s best customer (mainly for citrus) followed by the United States (mainly for diamonds), and Turkey third. Finland, the Soviet Union and Belgium were other large purchasers of Israel products.

The increase in Israel foreign currency holdings was due in part to the increase in the value of exports but also to the Consolidation Loan of American Jewry, which permitted the refunding of Israel’s short-term debts. In November 1954 the Bank of Israel was opened as the official instrument of government monetary policy. It held cover in foreign currency and gold for a third of the currency.

A £633,000,000 ($1,139,400,000) budget was proposed for the fiscal year 1955–56. There had been 40-45 per cent annual increases in each previous budget, but there was only an 8 per cent increase in 1955. This increase reflected slightly increased costs and normal population growth. There was no rise in tax, customs, or excise rates, but vigorous efforts were made to increase the efficiency of tax collection.

The draft development budget for 1955–56 was £192,000,000 as compared with £189,000,000 ($345,600,000) in 1954–55. Agriculture was allotted 35 per cent of this sum, transport and housing about 11 per cent each, and industry about 10 per cent.

Agriculture

Food imports required $5,500,000 less in 1954 than in 1953, because of the progress achieved in agriculture. For the first time since 1947 a regular year-round supply of vegetables was attained. The milk supply increased from 87,692,000 litres in 1953 to 101,134,000 litres in 1954, while egg production permitted both full domestic consumption and exports. Local meat production was started, but had not as yet exceeded modest limits.

The cultivation of industrial crops was generally considered the most important agricultural achievement of 1954–55. New crops, such as sugar beet, cotton, and peanuts, were grown for the first time in sizable quantities. Many of the older settlements had gone over to industrial crops because of the fall in the prices of vegetables and the comparative ease with which credits were obtainable from the banks for financing industrial crops. (Generally speaking, farmers were short of cash during 1954–55 as a result of the government’s restriction of credit to stem inflation.) The first sugar processing plant was to start operation in 1956. Meanwhile, local producers of alcohol had switched to the use of sugar beet as their basic raw material.

The first Israel cotton harvest was above expectations, yielding 300 tons of fibre and 600 tons of cotton seed. The area devoted to cotton was to be
extended year by year until it reached 70,000 dunams. It was expected that in 1960 all imports of cotton would cease. The first cotton gin of commercial proportions was set up in Beisan. The cultivation of peanuts was also successful; the peanut harvest provided 8,000 jobs in a usually dead season. The area under cultivation (21,000 dunams in 1954) was to be extended to 50,000 dunams. There was progress also in the traditional agricultural branches, which still took first place. Citrus groves under cultivation totaled 160,000 dunams in 1954 and 195,000 in 1955. The 1954–55 crop was, however, slightly smaller than the bumper crop of the previous season. The drought in the winter of 1954–55, affecting large parts of the country, presented a serious problem, and government assistance to the settlements most severely affected was necessary.

Industry

The rise in industrial production continued. Many new factories came into production, and others were in various stages of construction. The variety of locally produced goods increased. Great increases were achieved in electricity, cement, and plywood production, which were of particular importance for the country’s housing schemes. (The extent of these was criticized by some observers, who demanded a strengthening of the productive sector instead.) The rise in electricity production allowed a 35 per cent increase in consumption over 1953 (895,584,000 kilowatt hours in 1954, as compared with 759,267,000 in 1953). Cement production increased from 464,755 tons in 1953 to 563,099 tons in 1954, and plywood production by 60 per cent. The chemical industries, which resumed production in 1952–53 after an interval of several years, reached a level of production several times that of 1953. The monthly average of potash production was 1,600 tons, of superphosphates up to 5,000 tons, and sulphuric acid just under 3,500 tons. The number of vehicles assembled in the Kaiser-Frazer plant rose by about 35 per cent.

There was a drop in production in several other fields, such as flour. The explanation given in these cases was that the decreases were registered in items hitherto produced on a subsidy rather than a self-supporting basis. Oil drillings continued during 1954–55 in various places without success. Six additional large chemical plants were scheduled to go into operation during 1955.

The improved supply position in light industry products, as well as the increase in local production, had encouraged competition, which in its turn resulted in a considerable improvement in quality.

Irrigation

The whole issue of water resources became a matter of high policy and diplomatic negotiations with Eric Johnston’s missions to the Middle East (see p. 287). These negotiations were followed with great interest and oc-

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1 On September 22, 1955, Israel celebrated the striking of what promised to be a major oil field in Huleikat at a depth of 1,056 feet.
casional concern in Israel. The entire agricultural future of the country was linked up with irrigation, as the normal rainfall in Israel was concentrated in four months and was insufficient in large parts of the country, notably the south.

By great efforts and considerable investments, the area under irrigation had been increased from 230,000 dunams in 1948 to 800,000 in 1954 and 1,000,000 in 1955. The second stage of the general water plan now under way called for five master projects: the reclamation of the Huleh marshes; the utilization of the Dan River; the procuring of additional water from Lake Kinnereth for agricultural development in the Jordan valley; the Western Galilee-Jezreel valley project; and a water pipe system permitting the supply of Yarkon water to the Negev. The second stage of the Yarkon-Negev project would pipe the purified sewage of Tel Aviv to the Negev. The third phase envisaged the harnessing of the Jordan River and floodwaters throughout the country, including a master conduit leading from the Jordan River to the Negev. These various programs would increase the amount of water available for irrigation during the next eight years by 100,000,000 cubic meters annually to a total of 1,800,000,000 cubic meters. This quantity was expected to irrigate about three million dunams, satisfying the industrial and domestic consumption of a population of three millions.

**Transport**

The growth of Israel's foreign commerce, the tourist trade, and the extension of areas under settlement, made an expansion of the various communication services necessary. The Israel Merchant Marine was almost doubled during 1954–55: three new fruit carriers, a 10,000-ton passenger liner, and a 4,000-ton freighter were launched, as well as other ships, and more were under construction. A port on the Kishon River, near Tel Aviv, was opened during the year under review; it would relieve pressure on Haifa harbor. It could take ships up to 3,000 tons and was to be the main base of the Israel fishing fleet. El Al renewed its fleet of aircraft, and Lydda airport was modernized. A new railway terminal was opened in North Tel Aviv, and a Tel Aviv-Beersheba line was under construction. The passenger and freight carrying capacity of the railways had been considerably increased; the number of rail passengers on the Tel Aviv-Haifa line increased by 35 per cent over 1953–54; the number of tourists rose appreciably, and was on the average 50-70 per cent larger than in 1952–53.

Buses remained the main means of both urban and interurban transportation. The three leading bus companies (all cooperatives) several times threatened a strike for fare increases. A temporary compromise in this long-standing conflict was reached in April 1955.

**Economic Aid**

The United Jewish Appeal, the Consolidation Loan, grants-in-aid, and German reparations continued to be of decisive importance in the development of the Israel economy. A $40,000,000 grant-in-aid was released by the
United States government to Israel in 1954–55—$12,500,000 and $30,000,000 less respectively than in the preceding years. There was also a United Nations (UN) technical aid program of modest size, and United States technical aid to Israel in 1955 was expected to be $1,400,000. (See also p. 286.)

Reparation goods to the value of 591,000,000 German marks (about $140,-000,000) had been shipped to Israel from Germany as of January 1955. Up to the end of the fiscal year 1955–56 Israel was authorized to buy goods to the value of 900,000,000 marks ($21,430,000). In addition, the Israel Purchasing Mission had placed orders for additional goods valued at 200,000,000 marks ($4,762,000), making 1,100,000,000 marks ($26,139,000) worth available for use or on order. Private restitution also made considerable progress.

Labor

The employment situation during 1954–55 was better on the whole than during previous years. The daily average of unemployment in March 1955, for instance, stood at 4,120, the lowest figure since 1950.

National insurance came into force on April 1, 1954, offering universal insurance against death or accident at work. It also provided old age pensions and maternity benefits to the entire population. In its first eleven months of operation insurance premiums collected were about £20,000,000 ($36,-000,000), and benefits paid about £5,000,000 ($9,000,000).

New labor legislation which came into force on January 15, 1954, regulated hours of work for persons under eighteen years of age and prohibited certain work as injurious to the health of the youth.

Education

There were 232,000 pupils in 929 elementary schools in Israel in 1955. A total of 329,000 studied in educational institutions in 1954: 68.7 per cent in state schools, 24 per cent in state religious schools, and 7.5 per cent in recognized religious schools. Elementary schools apart, there were about 50,000 in kindergarten, 15,000 in secondary schools. There were 110 Arab elementary schools attended by 25,000 pupils, among them 7,800 girls. There were also nine Arab secondary schools. There were 11,500 teachers in all educational institutions, including 520 in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

The provision of secondary education for all children capable of benefiting from it, regardless of their means, was the goal of a draft bill introduced by the minister of education in September 1954, but it became the subject of criticism in view of the lack of means to carry out this project in the near future.

The student body of the Hebrew University now totaled about 3,300 undergraduates and 300 research students. The students of both the Hebrew University and the Haifa Technion struck in November 1954 against an increase in tuition fees. The strike ended in a compromise with the academic authorities. There were 2,300 students at the Haifa Technion and its affiliated Technical High School in 1955, the faculty of mechanical engineering having the largest enrollment.
Projects for the establishment of a French high school in Tel Aviv and an archaeological school in Jerusalem entered the final stage. A faculty of journalism was opened in 1955 at the Tel Aviv Law School. The creation of an academic council to promote science and control higher education was also planned.

The Hebrew Year was inaugurated in Israel in August 1954. An intense effort was made to teach thousands of newcomers the language of the land. A 1,000-word basic Hebrew reader for that purpose was issued by the ministry of education.

Culture

Cultural statistics, covering the year 1952-53, were published for the first time by the ministry of education and culture in collaboration with the central bureau of statistics. According to this source, in 1952-53 there were twenty-five daily newspapers in Israel, of which twelve were morning and three afternoon papers in Hebrew, and ten were foreign-language papers. Their total circulation was 335,000 on weekdays and 410,000 on Fridays. (Both circulation and number of daily newspapers had risen slightly since 1952-53; circulation of weeklies and monthlies had risen greatly during 1953-55, but no exact figures were available.) The foreign-language press accounted for one-third of the total circulation. The languages employed were: Arabic, Bulgarian, English, French, German, Hungarian, and Yiddish. Morning papers had three-fifths and evening papers two-fifths of the Hebrew circulation. There were 211,000 radio sets in Israel in 1953. Museums in the three major cities had 139,000 visitors: 63,000 came to the Bezalel Museum in Jerusalem, 46,000 to the Municipal Museum in Tel Aviv, and 30,000 to the Municipal Museum in Haifa.

The total number of admissions sold to the theatrical performances of Habima, Ohel, the Chamber Theater, and the Matate was 981,000 during 1952-53. Forty thousand persons attended the opera and 180,000 the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra concerts.

The traditional Purim parade, the Adloyada in Tel Aviv, was revived for the first time since 1935. More than half a million people from all over the country assembled to take part in the celebrations on March 8, 1955.

Awards

The third annual distribution of the Israel prizes took place on the occasion of Independence Day, April 27, 1955. The Jewish studies prize went jointly to Prof. Yitzhak Heinemann for his Darchei Haggadah and to Efrayim Urbach for his Ba'alei Tossafot. The belles lettres prizes went to Zalman Shneour and the late Yitzhak Lamdan. Prof. Michael Moshe Fekete was given the exact sciences award for his transfinite diameter theory. The medical science award went to Dr. Sarah Hestrin-Lerner and Dr. M. Shapiro for their research into body absorption of glucose. Yaakov Bentor and Akiva Vroman received natural science prizes for their geological map of the Negev, and a prize in this field also went to Prof. Yisrael Reichert for his pio-
neering research into the plant life of the country. The technology and agriculture award went to Natanael Hochberg for his book *Vine Cultivation*, the fine arts award to Miss Zahava Schatz for "having infused new life into craft work in Israel." There were no prizes in education, social science, and liberal arts in 1955.

**Music**

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra left in April 1955 for a three-month tour of West Europe. The Israel Opera, which suspended its activities early in 1954, and the Popular Opera staged several performances, but their situation continued to be precarious. A committee to find means to insure the financial basis for an Israel Opera was appointed by the ministry of education. In June 1955 this committee decided to recommend the granting of a £100,000 ($180,000) loan to the Hebrew National Opera Company to enable it to renovate the Ohel Shem Hall in Tel Aviv. A Jewish music month was held in May 1955. Among the more notable works first performed was Marc Lavry's *First Symphony* (November 1954). Many prominent conductors, singers, and virtuosi came to Israel in 1954-55; those who made perhaps the most lasting impression on the Israel public were the contralto Marian Anderson and the jazz musician Lionel Hampton.

**Theatre**

The thousandth performance of *The Dybbuk* was given by Habima in Tel Aviv in February 1955. Other plays performed by Habima included *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *The Caine Mutiny*, and *The Tea House of the August Moon*. Habima also opened an "experimental theater." Its first play was Christopher Fry's *A Sleep of Prisoners*. The Chamber Theater received a hall of its own in celebration of its tenth anniversary. *As You Like It* was one of this troupe's successes, while Yigal Mossenson's *Casablan* was undoubtedly the most successful original Israel play of the year. Another Israel play performed during the year under survey was Moshe Shamir's comedy *End of the World*. During the year 2,500,000 new immigrants in villages and maabarot enjoyed performances of Telem, a new group specializing in performances for the benefit of newcomers to the country.

**Literature**

The Ussishkin prize in literature went in October 1954 to Aron Meged for his novel *Chedva ve-ANI* ("Hedva and I"), the story of a young couple who leave the kibbutz for city life, and to Hanokh Bartov for his novel *Shesh Kenafayim le-Echad* ("Each Has Six Wings"), depicting new immigrant life in a maabara and later in an abandoned Arab village. In a different field, Prof. Ernst Simon received the Yellin prize for his study *The Teachings of Pestalozzi*. James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was translated by D. Doron and A. Yarin, and published with a critical study of Joyce's work by M. Mindlin.
Perhaps the most notable new beginning in the field of publishing was a literary enterprise to be conducted jointly by the Histadrut Publishing House Am Oved and workers' councils in towns and settlements, to bring books of national and human cultural importance within the reach of the masses. These first-quality "pocket books," comparable to the British Penguin or the American Anchor or Vintage series, appeared in the spring of 1955 and sold more than 30,000 copies each. Another important milestone was the publication in 1955 of the first volume of the official history of the Haganah in Israel. An extensive historical and literary project aiming at recording the past role of Russian Jewry was also initiated. This was to consist of four sections, the most important of which would be a systematic history in several volumes and compendium volumes.

A League of Arab Poets was founded in March 1955 by sixteen poets meeting in Nazareth.

GRAPHIC ARTS

Israel participated for the first time in the Milan Triennale arts and crafts exhibition held in December 1954-January 1955. Israel artists received three first prizes, seven gold medals, and several other prizes for general arrangement of the exhibition. An exhibition of abstract and surrealist painting opened in Tel Aviv in January 1955. The exhibition of modern French painting in the Jerusalem Bezalel Museum in March-April 1955 was an outstanding success.

The most interesting, and so far technically, the best film made in Israel during 1954-55 was *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer*, produced by Sik Or. The background of the film was the Israel War of Independence.

Israel Orientalists (including Professors Shlomo Dov Goitein, Leo Ari Mayer, B. Banet, Jacob Hans Polotzki, and others) took a prominent part in the International Conference of Orientalists in Cambridge (England) in August 1954.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology continued to be the most popular science in Israel, and the purchase of four of the ancient Dead Sea scrolls in February 1955 (three had been acquired previously) was an event widely welcomed. They were acquired through the efforts of Gen. Yigael Yadin, the American Fund for Israel Institutions, and the generosity of the D. S. and R. H. Gottesman Foundation of New York, from the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan at the St. Marks Monastery in the Old City of Jerusalem. A national corporation, Kepen Hekhal Hasefer, the Shrine of the Book Trust, was established to acquire and hold in perpetual trust manuscripts and documents of Biblical and related literature.

Another major event in this field was the tenth conference of the Israel Exploration Society in Ashkelon in October 1954. The history of the Philistines was given particular attention at this conference.

Archaeological discoveries were made in many places. One of the most
important took place at Massada on the shore of the Dead Sea (reported March 31, 1955). The description of the fortress and palace of Herod given by Josephus in his seventh book of the *Jewish War* was fully confirmed. A city dating back to the kingdom of Israel (probably the ancient Netofa mentioned in the Bible) was discovered at the present site of the Ramat Rachel settlement south of Jerusalem.

The petrified head of a 250-million-year-old reptile, one of the oldest found in the world and the very oldest of its species, was found in Wadi Ramon in the Central Negev in December 1954.

**Science**

Details on atomic research in Israel were first made public by Abba Eban in a debate on the peaceful use of atomic energy in the UN on November 15, 1954, and came as a considerable surprise to people in Israel. It was revealed that a relatively high percentage of scientists was working on projects such as radioactive isotopes of low activity, enrichment of heavy water by distillation and other related projects, cosmic rays, exploration of low grade uranium ores, etc. An Israel pilot plant producing heavy water by a new method attracted interest in Europe, and its technique had already been applied there. It was also announced on this occasion that France and Israel had agreed to cooperate in the development of nuclear energy.

Two thousand Israel scientific papers were exhibited for the first time in London in December 1954.

Another major project, the botanical classification of the variegated flora of the Negev (which took four years) was concluded by the Geobotanical Laboratory Institute of the Jewish National Fund (reported January 21, 1955).

Israel's first general hospital department of psychiatry was opened in December 1954 at the Hadassah University Hospital in Jerusalem.

*W. Z. LAQUEUR*
The period under review (July 1, 1954, through June 30, 1955) was one of relative stability in the Arab world. For the first time in many years there were no violent upheavals, sudden coups d'état, and changes of regime in the major countries. But the drift towards disintegration of the Arab League continued, and there was much internal tension.

The Anglo-Egyptian agreement on the evacuation of Suez was initialed in July 1954. This was generally regarded as strengthening Egypt's international position. But inside Egypt the pact created much resentment and furnished the occasion for an all-out attack against the ruling military junta by the enemies of the regime, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood and the Communists. Following an attempt on the life of Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser in October 1954, the Cairo junta repressed the Muslim Brotherhood, arrested most of its leaders, and banned the Brotherhood. Several of the leaders of this movement were sentenced to death and executed in a series of trials throughout the winter of 1954–55. General Naguib was charged with abetting the Brotherhood and was deposed from his nominal position as president of Egypt on November 11, 1954. During the same period there were also prosecutions of Communists and "Zionists." The para-military stormtroops of the Muslim Brotherhood were apparently broken as a result of the junta purge. But if the far-reaching differences of opinion among the members of the junta on issues of both domestic and foreign policy should lead to a permanent split within it, the Brotherhood might revive as a force.

There were no important changes in Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan. But the widespread riots which accompanied the Jordanian elections (October 1954) revealed much anti-government (and anti-Western) feeling. Elections in Syria (in September-October 1954) gave no party a majority. The pro-Western government of Faris al Khouri was replaced by the neutralist, pro-Egyptian coalition of Zabri al Assali. Against a background of internal dissension, general strikes, feuds between families and clans, armed attacks, and recurrent political murder, Communism made progress and was reputed to have some influence on the Assali government.

The biggest event in inter-Arab affairs was the direct alignment of Iraq with the West through the Turko-Iraqi pact of January 1955, subsequently joined by Britain. This most recent Western move to establish a regional defense organization was originally designed to include all or most of the Arab countries. Cairo, however, strongly objected because it felt that such an arrangement would put an end to Egyptian supremacy in the Arab world. A similar position was taken by Saudi Arabia, traditionally antagonistic to the Hashemites. In Syria the pro-Western al Khouri government was over-
thrown. Jordan and Lebanon, though perhaps sympathetic to the idea of a regional defense scheme in cooperation with the West, could not join the new “Northern tier” in view of Egyptian and Sau’dian opposition. But neither did these two countries join the Egyptian-Syrian-Sau’dian axis established as a counterweight in March 1955. Syrian and Lebanese attempts to mediate between Egypt and Iraq failed, as did Egyptian attempts to exclude Iraq from the Arab League. The League, though not formally dissolved, ceased to be an active factor in Middle Eastern politics. A stalemate continued throughout the spring and summer of 1955. Iraq and Turkey were sharply attacked by Egypt and Syria in a press and radio war and in diplomatic notes. For the time being, the radio abuse had been suspended by mutual agreement.

During 1954–55 the anti-Israel activities of the Arab countries included, as in previous years, a boycott of Israel goods, occasional unified political and diplomatic action (such as in the United Nations or the Bandung conference) and, probably, military coordination in the “small war” on Israel’s frontiers.

Arab press and radio propaganda was frequently directed against Jews in general, not only against Israel and Zionism. Thus, Radio Jordan (Ramalla) stated that “the Jews are a criminal and traitorous people from their very birth” (July 7, 1954). Premier Pierre Mendès-France in particular was singled out for attacks on account of his Jewishness: Radio Cairo described him as a “Jewish dog,” a “Jewish criminal,” and a “Jewish terrorist” throughout September and October 1954. Radio Damascus and Radio Baghdad followed suit. No other French statesman had ever been attacked in a similar manner, though Mendès-France’s North African policy was generally considered more friendly to the local nationalist movement than that of preceding French premiers. Only infrequently did the Arab governments attempt to explain that their campaign was directed solely against Zionism, not against those Jews who fought Zionism; e.g. during the visits of Alfred Lilienthal and Rabbi Elmer Berger to the Arab League countries (in the fall of 1954 and the spring of 1955 respectively).

**EGYPT**

The trial of a group of thirteen “Israeli spies” was the most striking event in the life of 35,000 Egyptian Jews during the period under review. But even aside from this trial the situation of Egyptian Jewry palpably deteriorated in 1954–55. During the first year after the coup d’état of July 1952, the government of General Naguib and Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser had stressed time and again that there was to be no discrimination on religious or racial grounds in Egypt, and that their enmity to Israel was something quite apart from their attitude towards Egyptian Jews. There had been some discrimination against Jews in 1952–54 but, broadly speaking, their situation had been better than during the last years under King Farouk. In the summer of 1954, however, when the regime underwent a crisis, their status began to deteriorate rapidly, and it reached its nadir in the winter of 1954–55. This deterioration was reflected in the mass arrests of some fifty to one hundred Jews in Cairo and Alexandria at frequent intervals, and trials of many Jewish indi-
individuals and groups on all kinds of charges: political, criminal, the contravention of economic regulations, etc. Both the official mouthpieces of the government, such as the Cairo junta's Al Gumhouriya, and, to an even larger degree, unofficial newspapers inspired by the same source, attacked Egyptian Jews, charging them with "collaboration with Zionism, Communism and the Muslim Brotherhood (!)" The most sweeping anti-Jewish attacks came from the new Sawt al Arab radio station in Cairo, which in its broadcasts to the Arab world vilified "World Jewry," "American Jewry," and Premier Pierre Mendès-France no less emphatically than it did Israel and Zionism. Its broadcasts to North Africa and Iraq were occasionally almost open appeals for a pogrom. This anti-Jewish policy and propaganda (which frequently ceased to distinguish between Jews and Zionism) though not expressive of the collective will of the Cairo junta, certainly reflected the opinion of some of its members.

Anti-Jewish Activity

Jewish affairs in Egypt were administered by a special department in the Egyptian ministry of the interior headed by Maj. Mahmoud Ryad. Agents of this institution frequently searched the offices and homes of Jewish merchants, commercial agents, and bankers, usually on the charge of nonpayment of taxes. Some of the Jews concerned had been compelled to sell their property but nevertheless had been forbidden to leave Egypt. Anti-Jewish propaganda was concentrated in the ministry of "National Guidance," headed by Maj. Saleh Salem, and the general secretariat of the Muslim Congress, headed by Lieut. Col. Anwar Sadat.

Trials

Mass arrests of Egyptian Jews began in June and July of 1954. Those arrested, numbering about 100, were brought to two concentration camps—one in Heliopolis, the other at Amrawa, near Alexandria. Many of the inmates of these camps were subsequently released and only a minority of some ten to fifteen were brought to trial. Most attention was attracted by the "Trial of the Thirteen." The first official announcement was made by the Egyptian ministry of the interior on July 27, 1954. It asserted that a number of Jews had been arrested following an attempt to burn down two Cairo motion picture houses, the United States Library, and the parcel department of the Cairo railway station. There were conflicting reports in the Egyptian press before and after this first official announcement. A second communiqué, on October 5, 1954, announced that "a Zionist gang of spies and saboteurs" was also accused of having collected military information on behalf of Israel. According to these sources, the "gang" was apprehended following the arrest of one of its members, Philip Nathanson, in Alexandria. Intensive investigations continued throughout the autumn of 1954. One of the accused, Eli Carmona, died, either as a result of ill-treatment or a suicide in prison ([London] Jewish Chronicle, October 22, 1954; Manchester Guardian, November 12, 1954). Another defendant, Victoria Marcelle Ninio, at-
tempted suicide by throwing herself from the second story of the court building. She was seriously injured, but survived. A third defendant, Max Bennet, committed suicide during the trial.

The Trial of the Thirteen was opened on December 11, 1954, before a military court consisting of five army officers headed by Brig. Fuad al Digwy. Only eleven of the accused appeared in court: Dr. Moshe Marzouk, 28, a Cairo physician; Shmuel Azar, 24, teacher; Victor Levy, 21, employee; Victoria Ninio, 25; Max Bennet, 38, described as an Israel army officer; Philip Nathanson, 23, employee; Robert Desa, 22, employee; Eli Ya'akov Na'Im, 22, employee; Meir Yosef Safran, 26, architect; Meir Shmuel Meyuhas, employee; Cesar Yosef Cohen, 35, employee. Two other accused persons, Abraham Dar (alias John Darling), described as an Israel officer and the organizer of the “spy network,” and Paul Frank, the administrator of the group, were tried in absentia. Paul Frank and Max Bennet were described as German citizens.

It was stated in the indictment that all the accused had confessed. During the eighteen sessions of the court, however, the defendants did not plead guilty to espionage, though admitting their guilt on other accounts. None of the judges had judicial experience, and the lawyers defending the accused were not allowed to see their clients prior to the beginning of the trial, or to study the material against them. The request of the leading lawyer of the defense, Ahmed Rushdi (who had been hired by the French Consulate on behalf of Dr. Marzouk, a French citizen), for a few days' postponement of the trial was not granted. Maetre Yusef Gariani, the lawyer defending Victoria Ninio, charged in court that his client had tried to commit suicide because “she was tortured, beaten up, and forced to talk under pressure.” Similarly, Maurice Orbach, a British Labor M.P. who went to Cairo as an observer for the World Jewish Congress, reported that signs of torture were visible on the body of Dr. Marzouk (Jewish Chronicle, February 4, 1955).

The court concluded its sessions on January 5, 1955, but the sentences were announced only after a delay of twenty-two days, when they had been confirmed by Prime Minister Gamal Abdul Nasser. Dr. Marzouk and Shmuel Azar were condemned to death. Philip Nathanson and Victor Levy received life sentences. Sentences of fifteen years' hard labor were given to Victoria Ninio and Robert Desa, and seven-year sentences to Yosef Safran and Meir Meyuhas. Eli Na'im and Cesar Cohen were acquitted.

The trial had been viewed from the very beginning by most observers in its obvious political context. Several weeks previously some leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood had been sentenced to death, and a trial of Jews tended to distract general attention from the unpopular government suppression of the Brotherhood. Some death sentences against Jews were apparently needed in order to counterbalance the death sentence against the leaders of the Brotherhood. Since the defendants had been found guilty—and had partly admitted their guilt—heavy sentences appeared inevitable, though Prime Minister Nasser had promised visitors (among them Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union and the British Labor M.P. Richard Crossman) that the sentences would be “light.” Many Jewish and non-Jewish organizations throughout the world protested against the death sentences, pointing out that the Egyptian government would do well to commute them for both
humanitarian and political reasons. Outside appeals and intervention were in vain, however, and Moshe Marzouk and Shmuel Azar were hanged in Cairo prison on January 31, 1955. Subsequently, in the face of adverse comment throughout the world, the Egyptian propaganda ministry published a sixty-three-page booklet defending the action of the government and the court proceedings.

There was a series of other trials against Jews during the same period. Josef Albert Cohen, owner of the Imperial Drug Stores, and five others were arrested in October 1954, when the Egyptian police uncovered a ring of "Zionist smugglers." Eli Politi, a Greek, general manager of the Commercial Bank of Egypt, was ordered deported in March 1955, on "commercial grounds." The arrest of seventy-seven Jews on charges of falsification of documents was announced in January 1955. A new gang of "smugglers and spies" consisting of "Jews, Greeks, and Zionists" was allegedly uncovered in April 1955 (United Press Association, April 15, 1955). Salvatore Adjiman, head of the Jewish community of Heliopolis and of the publicity department of the leading newspaper Al Ahram, was arrested in the summer of 1954 (on a smuggling charge, later reduced to that of technical contravention of commercial regulations), but he was subsequently released on bail. Several Jews in Cairo and Alexandria were arrested in July and August 1955, charged with offences against foreign currency regulations. In October 1954, 120 Jews were arrested in a number of raids on Jewish homes on charges of studying the Hebrew language (Jewish Observer, London, October 13, 1954). Seven members of a Jewish Communist cell (also accused of "Zionist and pro-Israel activities") were sentenced to various prison terms on March 22, 1955. Among them were Henry Vita Cohen, an employee of Al Ahram, Natan and Joyce Blau, Solomon Israel—all French citizens—and Henry Josef Osmo, a Greek citizen. The Egyptian press reported that all the Communists accused had admitted spying for a Zionist espionage center in Paris. Nevertheless, there was not a single Jew among the defendants in the simultaneous trials against the leadership of several Communist factions in Egypt; the charges of collaboration between Zionists and Communists were all the more false in view of the well-known negative Communist attitude to Israel and the Zionist movement.

**Community Situation**

There were now 6,000 Jews left in Alexandria. But all the Jews had left Port Said since that city's evacuation by the British in the summer of 1954. There were two Jewish schools in Alexandria: one sponsored by the local Jewish community, the other named after Baron Menashe (Rothschild?). The pupils were required to study the Koran and were examined in Arabic.

**Religious Representation**

The Egyptian authorities officially recognized Rabbi Haim Nahum, chief rabbi of Cairo, as the representative of Egyptian Jewry. Rabbi Nahum, who was eighty years old and ailing, had not been very active for some years. Nor
did the Egyptian authorities show him, in 1954–55, the same measure of outward esteem as General Naguib had in 1952–53. Rabbi Nahum’s request for an interview with Col. Abdul Nasser, in connection with the Trial of the Thirteen, was refused. Nevertheless, Rabbi Nahum remained distinctly pro-government. He gave instructions for special prayers to be recited in all synagogues on the occasion of the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian pact on Suez. In an interview with foreign journalists at the time of the Trial of the Thirteen he denied the charges of persecution of Jews in Egypt which had been spread by Jewish and Zionist organizations in the United States, France, Britain, and elsewhere. The position of chief rabbi had been offered to Rabbi Aharon Angel, chief rabbi of Alexandria, who had refused it. The Egyptian authorities opposed the appointment of a rabbi from France, as suggested by the local Jewish communities in view of the absence of local candidates.

Emigration

Egyptian Jews who received exit permits continued to leave the country during 1954–55. Among the emigrants was Yitzhak (“Zuzi”) Harari, head of the Cairo Maccabi team and for many years a leading figure in Egyptian sports. His exit followed attacks in the more extremist organs of the press against Maccabi, which they described as the center of “Jewish terrorists.” Maccabi continued to exist, however, and these particular attacks ceased following the ban of the Muslin Brotherhood organs. There was a new departure in official Egyptian policy in March 1955, when thirty Jewish families were allowed to leave Egypt for Israel. They were given special passports and allowed to take with them up to 1,000 Egyptian pounds ($2,800) (Al Ahram, Cairo, March 24, 1955). They were to be followed by other groups of emigrants journeying to Israel via Marseilles.

IRAQ

On various occasions during 1954–55, the Iraqi government revoked the citizenship of groups of Jews charged with “Zionist and Communist activities.” Ellen Josef, one of a group of sixty-six thus deprived of citizenship, succeeded in getting a court order against the government (Al Hayat, May 5, 1954). On November 17, 1954, the Iraqi Embassy in London published an advertisement in the Times ordering “all Iraqi Jews who have left Iraq either for a holiday or for business reasons” to return within six months of their departure. Similar notices directing Iraqi Jews to return, and thus making discrimination against them legal, were published in the Arab countries (NEABS, February 13, 1955) and in Japan (United Press Association, May 7, 1955).

PROPERTY

The property of all Iraqi Jews who had left the country was administered by a special government department. Since November 1953, Jewish real
estate had been sold at regular intervals, though the legal position had not been clarified to this day. The largest sale so far took place between December 4 and 8, 1954 (World Jewish Affairs, December 17, 1954).

Arrests

Menahem Yitzhak ben Sa'adia, an Egyptian Jew, was given a three-year sentence in January 1954, on charges of espionage and "maintaining contact with the Jewish Agency in Persia" (As Sha'ab, January 10, 1954). The Basra police announced the arrest in July 1954 of a "gang of Jewish merchants and bank employees" on charges of "espionage and smuggling capital out to Persia and the United States" (A Difa, Arab Jerusalem, July 18, 1954). Abraham Ades, the brother of Shank Ades (who had been executed in 1948 for collaborating with Israel), was killed by an Arab in his home in Baghdad in July 1954 (As Sha'ab, Baghdad, July 16, 1954). According to the Iraqi police, the motive was "non-political." Between March and May of 1955, two small groups of young Iraqi Jews, some ten to twelve altogether, released from the Nuqrat Suliman concentration camp, arrived in Israel. Most of them had been in prison from five to seven years, having been sentenced for "Zionist activities." According to their reports, there were about sixty more Jews remaining in Iraqi prisons.

All Jews in Iraq had been dismissed from government service during 1952-53.

Jewish Communal Affairs

The number of Jews still in Iraq was estimated at between 4,000 and 5,000; most of them were concentrated in Baghdad. About one hundred families lived in Basra and fifty in Divaniya. Some of those remaining owned real estate which they were not allowed to sell. Several hundred Jews from the district centers now lived in the capital and were supported by the Baghdad Jewish community. Since 1953, the Baghdad Jewish community had been headed by Rabbi Sassoon Khadouri, who had been appointed to this post by the Iraqi ministry of the interior. Five Jewish clubs belonging to the Baghdad Jewish community had been taken over without compensation by the Iraqi government. The Meir Elias hospital of the Jewish community was also seized by the Iraqi authorities, supposedly with nominal compensation, (Az Zeman, Baghdad, January 18, 1954), on the ground that the remaining Jews did not need such a big and modern hospital. The Baghdad community maintained two schools: the Frank Eyni school with 650 pupils, and the Menahem Daniel school with 450 pupils. Of the sixty small synagogues in the old city of Baghdad only one continued to function, but there were five more synagogues in the new city.

Syria

The Syrian Jewish community was the one most discriminated against: the legalization of anti-Jewish practices in Syria had progressed even further than in Iraq. The administration of Jewish affairs was in the hands of the
Syrian police and the situation of Syrian Jews did not improve at all under the various "progressive" regimes which held office after the September 1954 elections.

The chief of the afforestation department in the ministry of agriculture was dismissed from his post in September 1954, after it was found out that he was a Jew who was acting on behalf of Jewish commercial establishments (Sawt el Arab, Cairo, September 9, 1954). A Jewish merchant, Salim Siton, was killed by persons unknown (according to the police) in Aleppo in May 1955; under current conditions, political significance was inevitably attached to the killing. In September 1954, in Aleppo, a "Jewish spy ring" was allegedly revealed following the arrest of Victor Manshel. Arrested while trying to cross the frontier to Lebanon, Manshel admitted "contacts" with other Jews in Aleppo (NEABS, October 3, 1954). Subsequently, however, nothing more was heard about Manshel, nor was any member of the alleged "spy ring" brought to trial.

Radio Damascus continued to broadcast one hour daily in Hebrew, Arabic, German, and Serbo-Croat to Israel, extolling the freedom enjoyed by Jews in Syria and calling on Jews in Israel to escape from their "Zionist hell."

**Communal Affairs**

The 6,000 Jews in Syria (about 8,000 in Damascus, 2,000 in Aleppo, several hundred in Kamashliya) formed the poorest and least educated of all the Jewish communities in the Eastern Mediterranean. According to an unofficial estimate, about 90 per cent of Damascus Jews had no income whatsoever and lived on assistance provided by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). There was no chief rabbi in Syria, though Rabbi Chaim Indibo was officially recognized as the spiritual head of the community. Laniado Sabri continued to head the Damascus Jewish community. The Damascus Talmud Torah, with 170 pupils, was headed by Moshe Mashiani, and there were about 400 pupils in the Damascus Alliance Israélite Universelle school. The Aleppo Alliance building was seized by the local authorities in 1950. The building of the Damascus school had also been taken over by the government, and classes were being held in private flats. The Governor of Aleppo gave orders to sell the local Jewish cemetery at public auction (As Sha'ab, Damascus, January 12, 1954).

In March 1954 there was a demonstration in Damascus against the leaders of the community. The demonstrators asserted that the funds transferred by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) for social assistance had been embezzled. The police were called in and arrested several demonstrators (Al Khayat, March 10, 1954).

**Emigration**

Since November 1954 Syrian Jews had again been allowed to leave the country, though they were forbidden to sell any property. A first group of

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1 The figure of 3,500 given in the American Jewish Year Book, 1955 (Vol. 56) referred only to Jews of Damascus.
Syrian Jewish emigrants reached the Turkish city of Alexandretta in November 1954, on their way to Israel ([London] Jewish Chronicle, November 26, 1954).

Instructions were given by the Syrian government to all its embassies abroad not to grant entrance visas to technical experts (of the United Nations, etc.) of Jewish origin (Bulletin of the Syrian Press, September 28, 1954).

LEBANON

The 6,000 Lebanese Jews continued to enjoy better treatment than the Jews in other Arab countries. However, following Arab League pressure, the Lebanese government established investigating commissions in 1954 to examine the “loyalty” of Jewish civil servants. Throughout 1954 several Arab newspapers outside Lebanon (e.g., Ad Dunya) complained that Jews continued to serve as officers in the Lebanese army; it was doubtful that this complaint had any factual basis. Since September 1953, Lebanese Jews had not been allowed to leave the country without a special permit from the foreign ministry. Nevertheless, Syrian newspapers occasionally complained about the freedom given to Lebanese Jews, which was said to be “almost as full as that enjoyed by them in Israel.” Their influence, it was charged, endangered not only Lebanon but the whole Arab world (Ad Dunya, Damascus, January 8, 1955). Radio Beirut announced on January 25, 1955, that the Lebanese authorities had discovered that travel permits had been forged for the benefit of some Lebanese Jews. There were searches in Jewish homes in Beirut in April 1955, following the sale in local bookshops of an Arabic book on Israel printed in Israel (NEABS, April 26, 1955).

Throughout the autumn and winter of 1954 Arab newspapers and radio stations announced the preparation of a “big Jewish espionage trial” in Lebanon. However, there was no attempt made by the Lebanese authorities to stage such a trial. The Egyptian radio station Sawt el Arab reported (December 15, 1954) that several Lebanese Jews had been arrested and charged with espionage for Israel. But it later developed that the “spies” in question were Palestine and Lebanese Arabs, and not a single Lebanese Jew was involved in the affair. Despite considerable outside pressure, both official and unofficial, to “adjust” the treatment of Jews in Lebanon to their status in the other Arab countries, there were no mass persecutions against them or any major discriminatory acts.

There were 1,589 pupils in 1954 in the six schools maintained by the Alliance Israélite Universelle and the local Jewish community.

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