Western Europe

GREAT BRITAIN

The period from July 1, 1954, through June 30, 1955, was an eventful one in Great Britain. It saw the dissolution of Parliament, accompanied by the retirement of Sir Winston Churchill and his replacement as prime minister by Sir Anthony Eden. Matters of special concern to British Jews were, internationally, Great Britain's relations with the Arab states, the trials of Rumanian Zionists, and the rearmament of Germany. On the domestic front, British Jewry combatted a parliamentary campaign against Shechita, the Jewish method of slaughter.

In the general election of May 1955 the Conservative party increased its majority from seventeen to sixty. It polled 906,000 votes more than Labor, obtaining successes even in Lancashire where foreign competition in the textile industry was causing considerable anxiety. Of the seventeen Communist candidates, none were elected; fifteen lost their deposits by not securing one-eighth of the total votes cast in the constituencies in which they ran.

Of the fifty-six Jewish candidates, thirty-nine were Labor, ten Conservative, five Liberal, and two Communist. All the sixteen Jewish members in the last House of Commons were re-elected. There were now seventeen Jewish Labor members and one Conservative. The government had two Jewish members, both in the House of Lords—the Marquess of Reading, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and Lord Mancroft, Undersecretary at the Home Office.

The only anti-Jewish incident during the election was the painting of some slogans on walls in the Aston Division of Birmingham where there was a Jewish candidate, Julius Silverman. He was elected; the incident was universally condemned by all parties, and was attributable to a small anti-Semitic group of no consequence.

The British Jewish community had always played an impartial role in politics, though it reserved the right to question candidates on matters which affected its vital interests. Thus all candidates were asked their views on the Crouch bill (see below). The Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland also sent candidates a questionnaire on their attitude towards Israel and the Middle East.

International Relations

In July 1954 Great Britain and Egypt, after long and tortuous negotiations, reached an agreement on British evacuation of the Suez Canal Zone.
This agreement, which created dissension within the ranks of the Conservative Party, was not accompanied by Egypt's easing of its blockade of the Suez Canal to permit Israel or other ships to pass to Israel. The Board of Deputies of British Jews protested both directly to the Egyptian government and indirectly through the British government against the sentences passed by Egypt on Jews accused of espionage and sabotage (see p. 512).

The Board of Deputies also made representations to the British government in regard to the treaties with Turkey and Iraq, from which Israel was excluded, emphasizing the feelings of British Jewry that the matter concerned the welfare of a state which they had done so much to create.

The Board of Deputies also unsuccessfully approached the Rumanian representatives in Britain in June 1954 in regard to the secret trial of Rumanian Zionists on unspecified charges.

The rearmament of Germany now seemed to be a fait accompli, but British Jewry had not withdrawn its opposition. It planned to keep a constant watch on the potential revival of Nazi or neo-Nazi groups or their infiltration into the new army organization.

Campaign Against Shechita

The Slaughter of Animals Act of 1933 exempted members of the Jewish and Moslem communities from having to stun beasts before slaughtering them for food. Towards the end of the Parliamentary session Robert Crouch, Conservative member of Parliament for North Dorset, introduced a bill in December 1954 to remove this exemption. Crouch insisted that far from being anti-Semitic, he was inspired by purely humanitarian motives, and supported his action by pointing out that the Stockholm community used electrical stunning for Shechita. He was informed that the Stockholm community was small and held Reform opinions which were not those of the overwhelming majority of British Jewry. The Crouch bill was supported by the Council of Justice to Animals and Humane Slaughter Association, and indirectly by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). Every borough and urban council in Great Britain as well as all the M.P.'s was circularized by the RSPCA in support of the bill. A considerable number of councils (514) passed resolutions of support, 15 definitely announced their intention of opposing it, and 763 decided to take no action in the matter. The Jewish community, through the Board of Deputies, conducted a counter-campaign so that these councils also received pamphlets giving outstanding medical and ecclesiastical opinions in favor of Shechita. As a consequence, a number of councils withdrew their support. The bill got its formal first reading, but before its second reading, Parliament was dissolved. Crouch, however, stated that he and his associates would endeavor to reintroduce a similar bill in the new Parliament. The situation was regarded with anxiety by the community, though the bill seemed unlikely to receive much support. The government had refused to back the Crouch bill on the ground that it affected the religious views held by a minority of British subjects.
Jewish Population

The result of a survey contained in the publication, *A Minority in Britain*, confirmed the view that the Jewish population of Great Britain was approximately 450,000 as of 1950. The Jewish birth rate, the average size of the Jewish family, and the Jewish reproduction rate all seemed to be lower than those of the population as a whole. The increase in the proportion of older people in the Jewish community’s age structure exceeded that of the general population. Consequently, the proportion of Jews in the general population was expected to fall steadily. Anglo-Jewry had more and more become a middle-class group, culturally assimilated, yet retaining certain traditional Jewish characteristics—in family organization, in the emphasis on education, and in occupational structure.

Community Organization

The three-year term of the Board of Deputies ended on April 17, 1955, and the new Board met on June 19. The majority of the 450 members were re-elected. Barnett Janner, Labor M.P. for North-West Leicester, was elected by a large majority. Janner was also president of the English Zionist Federation—it was the first time that both offices were held by one individual.

As reported in the *American Jewish Year Book, 1955* (Vol. 56, p. 311), for some time an effort had been under way to secure joint action in foreign affairs so that the various organizations would not make separate approaches to the government, thus minimizing the general effect. No final agreement as to a permanent arrangement had yet been reached. Both the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association hoped to continue these discussions.

The Board of Deputies was making preparations for the celebration of its bicentenary in 1960. A committee had been set up in January 1954 to prepare material and undertake research for the writing of the history of the Board.

In the wake of the second Conference of Commonwealth Communities held in June 1954, a conference was convened on October 24, 1954, under the auspices of the Education Committee of the Board of Deputies, to deal with the problems of youth work. Representatives of all youth organizations in Great Britain attended and discussed plans for joint policy and work. The Conference set up a working party to examine the proposals and to submit schemes for their implementation.

Consultative Conference of Jewish Organizations

The Consultative Conference of Jewish Organizations which met on June 12, 1955, was the lineal successor of that held in 1946 which had taken stock of a European Jewry decimated and shattered by Nazism and war. Its purpose in 1946 had been to unite in the task of rescue, resettlement, and reconstruction. The conference of 1955, convened by the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the American Jewish Committee, and the Anglo-Jewish Associa-
tion, met under different circumstances. The State of Israel was now in being and had given shelter to many thousands from Europe, the Near East, and North Africa, while others had found homes elsewhere, both in Europe and in the New World. The Conference included, in addition to the leaders of the three convening organizations, representatives of leading organizations in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Gibraltar, Holland, Italy, Malta, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, and West Germany. In addition, representatives were present from the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA), the World Sephardi Federation, the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and the World Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT). Representatives and observers attended from a number of communal organizations in Great Britain. No representative of the two and a half million Jews living in Soviet-dominated countries was present. The Conference expressed the hope that with relaxed tension the Jews behind the Iron Curtain might be afforded open and unimpeded communication with their fellow Jews in other lands. The Conference was solely consultative, for the purpose of exchanging experiences and conferring as to the future.

The Conference stated its approval of the work carried on by the JDC, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), ICA, ORT, and all the other bodies which had been active in the area of welfare and rehabilitation. Reports were presented of communal activities that had been revived, though the communities were sadly reduced in numbers and resources.

The members of the Conference were furnished with memoranda giving background to the reports. The subjects included: the Jewish situation in Western Europe; the Jews of North Africa, with emphasis on their religion, education, and culture; the United Nations; human rights, with special reference to the work of the Consultative Conference in this sphere; and intolerance and anti-Semitism.

A number of reports on anti-Semitism and group defamation were received. In no country of Europe did the present situation call for more than continued watchfulness. It was agreed that facilities should be established for the continuous interchange of information on these subjects. The Conference was concerned with the furtherance and protection of basic human rights throughout the world without distinction of race, color, or creed. It deprecated the delay in achieving binding international covenants and enforcement machinery for the Declaration of Human Rights in the Covenant of the United Nations. Referring to the European Covenant on Human Rights, the Conference asked that European nongovernmental organizations be given the opportunity to participate in the work of the Council of Europe concerned with the enforcement of these rights.

The Conference organizations were united in their sympathy for Israel and pride in that country's achievements and progress; it was the unanimous hope that Israel might achieve a permanent peace settlement with its Arab neighbors and continue to develop and prosper as a strong, stable, and democratic society.

A feature of the reports presented by representatives of the various com-
communities was that they contained no suggestion of the liquidation of any community, but rather spoke only of rebuilding and confidence in a continued future. Emphasis was laid on the importance of maintaining religious life, particularly in view of the present inadequacy of religious and spiritual guidance and the resulting apathy, and the growing incidence of intermarriage and even conversion. Stress was laid on the lack of opportunity, particularly for young people, for social and intellectual interchanges.

In view of the shortage of rabbis, teachers, and trained social and communal workers, as well as of schools and libraries, the Conference was of the opinion that these problems required intercommunal action. It was hoped that as a result of the Conference, positive cooperative action would be taken by the Jewish communities of Europe. The Conference recommended that means be established for an informal exchange and dissemination of information so that full use might be made of resources presently available and that existing needs might be better understood. It was proposed that European and North African Jewish communities benefit from the extensive communal resources possessed by American Jewry.

Considerable attention was paid to the difficult problems arising out of the critical position in North Africa, especially in Morocco. It was felt that wholesale emigration was no real solution, involving as it would the dislocation of Jewish communities. In addition, the impact on the economic life of Israel could not be ignored. The real issue was one of security and of basic human rights for all. The Jews must be given political and equal status under adequate guarantees, as well as explicit assurances that the traditional religious and communal structure of Jewish life would be preserved.

To facilitate the implementation of the proposals, the participants in the Conference asked the three sponsoring organizations to convene, as speedily as practicable, working groups on an *ad hoc* basis for specific purposes. These groups would evolve the methods whereby the European communities might through voluntary cooperative effort translate the conclusions reached by the Conference into positive action.

**Tercentenary Celebration**

In 1956 British Jewry was to celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of the resettlement of the Jews in England. A representative committee had been set up with Viscount Samuel as president, the Marquess of Reading and Lord Cohen as vice presidents, and the Hon. Ewen Montagu and Dr. Abraham Cohen as joint chairmen.

**Anti-Semitism and Discrimination**

There was little or no significant manifestation of anti-Semitism or fascism during 1954–55. Sir Oswald Mosley, head of the Union Movement, was still endeavoring, but without success, to keep his name before the public. His most spectacular effort was the nomination by his movement of nine candidates for the London County Council Elections in 1955. This decision was obviously inspired by the fact that at a municipal by-election held shortly
before, the Fascist candidate had polled 120 votes as compared to the 170 of his Labor opponent. At the London County Council elections in April 1955 none of the Fascist candidates, who adopted their old name of "Blackshirt," was returned. The highest number of votes a Fascist candidate obtained was 953. In Bethnal Green, which was the spiritual home of the Blackshirt Movement, the Fascist figure was 635, as compared with 10,253 for the Labor candidate, who headed the poll. The general poll was one of the lowest on record, only 32 per cent of the electorate voting as compared with 46 per cent on the last occasion. It was assumed that the Blackshirts polled their full following and may indeed have received some extraneous support in view of their campaign against the growing immigration of colored workers. Anti-Semitism did not appear in any of their published programs.

The League of Empire Loyalists, founded and controlled by A. K. Chesterton, continued its activities, through its organ, Candour, circulated to subscribers. Its policy was openly anti-American and anti-Russian, as well as somewhat anti-Semitic. Other minor organizations of a similar but more openly anti-Semitic character continued their publications, but it was doubtful whether the man in the street was aware of their existence. None of these groups held meetings.

Religious Activities

The general activities of the United Synagogue centering around the rebuilding of constituent synagogues continued to increase. It announced that a new site had been found for one of the most important of its constituents, the St. John's Wood Synagogue, at a cost of £30,000 ($84,000).

The Council of the United Synagogue decided not to rebuild the Great Synagogue at Duke's Place, Aldgate, which had been blitzed and burnt out, but to erect a new synagogue in Great Cumberland Place, Marble Arch.

The Federation of Synagogues, a strongly Orthodox body, was independent of the United Synagogue, though recognizing the chief rabbi's authority. It was faced with the problem that owing to the shift of Jewish population from the blitzed East End, a number of its smaller synagogues were no longer in use. It had therefore been suggested that a number of these unused synagogues be amalgamated into new synagogues to be erected in new areas, probably North London. In addition, the federation had increased its educational levy to give a larger grant to the London Board of Religious Education.

A significant development in the Liberal movement was the laying of the foundation stone for a large synagogue in the Wembley District, whose Jewish population was largely Orthodox.

Interfaith Relations

In March 1954 the Council of Christians and Jews was informed that the Vatican had ordered the withdrawal of its Catholic members headed by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Bernard W. Griffin, a joint president.
At the same time the Roman Catholic Church authorities stated that they were still in full sympathy with the aims of the Council in its fight against anti-Semitism, but charged the Council with "indifferentism"—the view that there was little fundamental difference between one faith and another. The Archbishop of Canterbury, senior president, vigorously repudiated this statement. Negotiations were proceeding for the return of the Catholics to the Council.

The Council was responsible for the study by a panel of lecturers and teachers of history text books used in schools with a view to an examination and report on group antagonism, if any, to be found in them. The report was published under the title of History Without Bias, by E. H. Dance, with a foreword by Herbert Butterfield, professor of modern history at Cambridge University.

The general conclusions drawn from the survey were that many of the text books, while not written for the special purpose of promoting good human relations, were likely to produce this result, and only a few operated to the contrary. Some of them concentrated too much on the political and military aspects of history, and ignored the social. It was agreed that the subjective element could never be eliminated from the writing of history, but it could in some cases be modified. It was in the treatment of religion that it was most difficult to avoid bias. The Gospel story was rarely treated in its historical context, or related to the earlier history of the Jewish people. Bias appeared chiefly in omission, especially of factors which might, to an author writing within the context of his own intellectual and cultural equipment, seem unimportant. In conclusion, the survey stated that reform must come, not from universities, but from the the schools and the school books. The text book should be chiefly concerned with the formation of the minds of the children rather than with bits and pieces of knowledge.

Jewish Education

A survey of Jewish religious education in the London area in December 1954 showed that the number of children attending the classes of the London Board of Jewish Religious Education had increased in two years from 11,837 to 14,034. There also had been an increase of 2,000 in the number attending classes under the auspices of synagogues. An important problem was the provision of religious educational requirements in the postwar housing estates and satellite (suburban) towns. This was often attempted even before the founding of a synagogue.

Classes for the training of teachers were being held under the auspices of Jews' College and the London Board of Jewish Religious Education. A special subcommittee had been set up in November 1954 to investigate the problem of Hebrew teachers' training.

The position of Talmud Torahs, particularly in the East End of London, was the subject of a special investigation in process, as it was felt that while adequate facilities existed, not enough children were making use of them. An additional problem was that of religious education for girls for whom classes had been set up at girls' clubs.
HIGHER EDUCATION

Jews' College celebrated its centenary during 1954–55. The centenary was to be marked at the latter end of 1956 by its departure from Woburn House, the headquarters of many Jewish organizations in London, to a new building of its own nearby. During 1954–55 a Center for Jewish Higher Education was established, to prepare secondary school pupils for the Jews' College Certificate Examination. Jews' College aimed not only to attract boys from secondary schools to the rabbinate, but also to encourage them in the pursuit of advanced Jewish studies. The College was affiliated with the University of London, and many of its students worked for degrees while studying at the College. Three of its past students, after examination, were awarded the rabbinical diploma. Its extension courses set a record in 1955, with eight courses of ten weekly lectures. In August 1955, there were forty-nine students in residence, in addition to nine who were engaged in research.

The first Hillel House in Great Britain was opened by the Grand Lodge of B'nai B'rith of Great Britain on October 31, 1954. It was to serve as a focus of social and cultural activities, not only for Jewish students in London, but also for students of other universities visiting the metropolis, though it was hoped to open Hillel houses in other university centers.

The Anglo-Jewish Association (AJA) continued its educational work, particularly its schools in the Middle East. There were 200 pupils in the Evelina de Rothschild School and 150 pupils in the Selim School in Jerusalem, and 150 pupils in the Sir Elly Kadoorie School in Aden. The AJA also sponsored scholarships for students from Iraq and other Eastern countries to study in Great Britain. There were fifteen such scholarships: eleven for Iraq, two for Israel, one for Aden, and one for Yugoslavia. Its Hospitality Committee for Overseas Students reported a successful year. The AJA's cultural activities included a series of addresses on current topics during the winter of 1954–55.

ZIONISM AND FUND RAISING

Zionist organizations made strong representations to the British government on a number of issues in the Middle East in which the interests of the State of Israel were threatened, particularly the sale of arms to the members of the Arab League.

The annual appeal for the Joint Palestine Fund inaugurated in February 1955 aimed at raising £2,000,000 ($8,400,000). Both Keren Hayesod (the Palestine Foundation Fund) and Keren Kayemeth (the Jewish National Fund) were represented in the joint campaign. Allocations were also made for constructive projects which were being sponsored in Israel by the Orthodox Mizrachi, the Labor Poale Zion, and the General Zionist parties; English settlers in Israel were also to benefit.

As of the fall of 1955, the British Exchequer had not yet authorised the selling of bonds on behalf of Israel in Great Britain; but the Republic of Ireland had sanctioned such a campaign in January 1955.
Cultural Activities

The most important event of 1954–55 in the cultural work of the Jewish community was the reopening on September 22, 1954, of the Mocatta Library at University College, which had been burnt out during the London blitz. A considerable portion of the Library's contents had been destroyed, but contributions in kind and donations had done much to restore it to its former condition. The Library was the focus of the work of the Jewish Historical Society and was expected again to become the center of study and research into Anglo-Jewish history and literature.

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra's tour of Great Britain and Ireland in June 1955 received high praise from the music critics. Two of its programs were broadcast in full by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC).

Jewish Book Week, which had become an annual feature of Anglo-Jewish life, was held in January 1955. Jewish publications during the year included two important contributions to the sociological study of British Jewry: Social History of the Jews in England, by V. D. Lipman, and A Minority in Britain, edited by Maurice Freedman (see above). Other volumes of interest were: Workingman Anti-Semite, by James H. Robb; Faith and Judaism, by Isidore Epstein; Essays Presented to Leo Baeck on the Occasion of His 80th Birthday; Jewish Thought as a Factor in Civilization by Leon Roth, published jointly by UNESCO and the British government; Ben Gurion of Israel, by Barnet Litvinoff, and The Secret Roads, by Jon and David Kimche, dealing with the entry of the illegal immigrants into Palestine. The AJA Quarterly made its first appearance in June 1955.

The British Section of the World Jewish Congress sponsored a Popular Jewish Library. Its first publication, in September 1954, was The Parting of the Ways, Judaism and Christianity, by Abraham Cohen. Alfred Rubens was the author of Jewish Iconography, a sequel to his Anglo-Jewish Portraits, published under the auspices of the Jewish Museum. Other books of Jewish interest included The Scourge of the Swastika, a short history of Nazi war crimes, by Lord Russell of Liverpool, formerly Assistant Judge Advocate. (This was published during the negotiations in regard to German rearmament, and an attempt was made to stop publication. In consequence, on September 8, 1954, Lord Russell resigned his office.) Gideon goes to War, by Leonard Mosley, a biography of Gen. Orde Wingate, contained much controversial matter regarding Wingate's attitude toward and support of Zionism, particularly during the Arab riots of 1936–39.

Wolf Mankowitz's two novels of Jewish life, Make Me an Offer and A Kid for Two Farthings, had been filmed with much success.

During 1954–55 the BBC included in its program plays and subjects of Jewish interest. There were several talks on the State of Israel given with objectivity and in most cases from a sympathetic angle.

Personalia

J. W. Nicholls, an assistant undersecretary of state at the foreign office, was appointed British Ambassador to Israel in succession to Sir Francis Evans, appointed British Ambassador to the Argentine.
Sir. Louis Sterling, on his seventy-fifth birthday in December 1954 gave £200,000 (\$560,000) to be divided among Jewish and non-Jewish charities. He had also presented his library, one of the finest in Great Britain, to London University, and his collection of state papers and contemporary memoranda dealing with the campaigns of the first Duke of Marlborough in the Low Countries, to the Duke's descendant, Sir Winston Churchill.

The number of Jewish peers in the House of Lords had been increased to fourteen by the elevation of H. G. Strauss, parliamentary secretary to the Board of Trade in the last administration, who was created a Baron. Knight-hoods were conferred on Basil Henriques, for his work in the youth movement and as chairman of juvenile courts, and on E. A. Cohen, second secretary to the Board of Trade. The Hon. Lily Montagu, president of the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues, and Bertram Benas, a prominent figure in the Liverpool Jewish community and a leader of the local bar, were honored with the appellation of Commander of the British Empire (CBE).

Professor H. Lauterpacht was appointed a member of the International Court at the Hague, and in consequence resigned from the Whewell Professorship of International Law at Cambridge University. Dr. D. Daube, professor of jurisprudence at Aberdeen University, was appointed regius professor of civil law at Oxford. Dr. Cyril Domb was appointed professor of theoretical physics at London University. Of special interest was the appointment of Miss Ruth Cohen, sister of Sir Andrew Cohen, Governor of Uganda, as principal at Newnham College, Cambridge—the first Jewess to hold this appointment. Alderman C. H. Harris was elected lord mayor of Leicester.

During 1954-55, the community lost a number of prominent communal figures. These included: Albert M. Hyamson—Anglo-Jewish historian and author of the official history of the Sephardim in England (Oct. 5, 1954); Lord Morris of Kenwood, formerly a Labor M.P. and a prominent worker both for Zionism and Jewish ex-servicemen (July 1, 1954); Isaac Landau, doyen of the Board of Deputies and a former president of the Shechita Board (Nov. 12, 1954); Arnold Levy, a prominent industrialist who initiated the forty-five hour week in the rubber industry and was a generous supporter of all charitable causes (March 3, 1955); Benzion Margulies, a leading figure in the Mizrachi movement (Feb. 9, 1955); Bela Horowitz, managing director of the East and West Library and of the Phaidon Press (March 11, 1955); Otto Shick of the [London] Jewish Chronicle, for many years connected with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (Jan. 25, 1955); Vladimir Robert Idelson, a distinguished international lawyer (Nov. 29, 1954); Herbert Felix Jolowicz, Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford University (Dec. 19, 1954); Ernst Frischer, member of the Czechoslovakian government-in-exile, and chairman of the Jewish Party in pre-war Czechoslovakia (July 31, 1954); and Redcliffe Salaman, a distinguished scientist (June 12, 1955).

Sidney Salomon
FRANCE

North Africa presented France with its greatest difficulties during the year under review (July 1, 1954, through October 1955). In November 1954 rebellion broke out in previously peaceful Algeria. There was fighting throughout the year in its wild central Aures plateau. Morocco was in a virtual state of siege, with almost daily assassinations by terrorists and counter-terrorists, as the search went on for a political solution acceptable to France, the Moroccan nationalists, and the French colonists. A succession of crises forced the departure of two resident generals—Francis Lacoste and Gilbert Grandval—and of a sultan who had spent only two years on the sherifian throne, Sidi Mohammed Moulay ben Arafa. Back to France from Madagascar, where he had been exiled in 1953, came Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef, Morocco's former sultan. By October 1955 there was a universal Moroccan demand for ben Youssef's return to the throne, coming even from the instrument of his deposition, Pasha Thami El Glaoui of Marrakesh.

Anti-Semitism was an important factor in the attacks on Resident General Grandval by some French colonial elements in Morocco aided by such French anti-Semitic newspapers as Aspects de la France and Rivarol. Grandval was of Jewish descent, but a convert to Catholicism of long standing. He earned the hatred of colonial elements by proposing the ousting of Sultan Sidi Mohammed Moulay ben Arafa and the formation of a Moroccan government of moderate nationalist leaders.

French procrastination in Morocco and Algeria led to increasing nationalist demands. Even in Tunisia, where the French and Tunisian government had signed an agreement giving Tunisia virtual internal sovereignty effective September 1955, dissident nationalist elements claimed that this was not enough. Throughout North Africa Moslem groups warned that they would be satisfied with nothing less than full independence—something France felt it could not grant and still remain a great power.

France's difficulties with the Moslem world, and especially with Egypt, whose Cairo radio incited Moslems against the French, led to closer relations between France and Israel on the international scene. France was reliably reported in August 1955 to have sold Israel some modern arms, although rumors that French Mystère jet fighter planes had gone to Israel were denied by the Israel Embassy in Paris. In France, as in Israel, considerable feeling was aroused by the execution of two Jews in Cairo, in January 1955, on charges of espionage. One of those executed, Dr. Moussa Marzouk, was a French national of Tunis, for whose foreign affairs France was responsible. Premier Faure called in the Egyptian ambassador to inform him of France's "profound shock" at the Egyptian action. France also joined in protesting the shooting down by Bulgaria on July 27, 1955, of an El Al tourist plane that had lost its way and passed over Bulgarian territory. Several victims of the disaster were French citizens.

It was a vote on his government's handling of the Tunisian situation that brought about the fall of Pierre Mendès-France, third Jew to be premier of France since World War II, on February 5, 1955 (see American Jewish Year
The causes for his fall were, however, more varied and complex. Mendès-France's fight to get through parliament a modified form of the European Defense Community, thus making possible German rearmament, cost him much popularity. He had taken action to cut government subsidies to wine and beet growers, and campaigned against alcoholism, thus gaining the enmity of two of France's strongest lobbies. His promises that he would try to revamp the noncompetitive French economy made him important enemies at home, the natural allies of those who opposed any changes in North Africa. To all this was added "a hatred, unavowed in certain quarters, which has not ceased to pursue M. Mendès-France—a hatred fed by anti-Semitism, all the stronger because it is constrained in expression," according to the newspaper Combat. With so many other forces combining against Mendès-France, however, one cannot regard anti-Semitism as a major factor in his fall. The opponent probably most responsible for his departure was a leader of the same Radical Socialist Party to which Mendès-France belonged, former Premier René Mayer, himself a Jew. This led the anti-Semitic monthly magazine, Écrits de Paris, to suggest that "it is not improbable" that the two men opposed each other "because of some obscure quarrel between Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews."

Even after his departure from the premiership, Mendès-France continued to be the favorite whipping boy of the anti-Semitic press. A number of events kept him in the public eye: his winning fight to take over control of the executive of the Radical Socialist party; and the transformation of a weekly newspaper supporting him, L'Express, into a daily. L'Express was edited by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, frequently attacked together with Georges Boris as part of a "Jewish brain trust" for Mendès-France.

After he took office, a false report spread that Premier Edgar Faure, too, was Jewish. The rumor probably had its roots in the fact that his wife, Lucie Faure—an intellectual of some note best known for her role in the editing of the literary-political magazine La Nef—was Jewish.

Many Jews held posts of importance during 1954-55. They included René Mayer, who was named president of the European Coal and Steel Authority; Socialist veteran Jules Moch, French representative in disarmament talks at the United Nations and Geneva; Daniel Mayer, chairman of the foreign affairs committee of the French Chamber of Deputies; and Sen. Michel Déché and Leo Hamon. René Cassin continued as president of France's most important court, the Cour de Cassation. Raymond Aron, one of France's most prominent newspaper commentators, accepted a teaching chair at the Sorbonne.

On the whole, the French economy was fairly well off during 1954-55. Business was good. The franc was stable. Labor discontent, manifested particularly during the summer months of 1955, was assuaged by pay rises in the key automobile and ship-building industries. There were, however, certain depressed areas, such as the wine-growing industry. The textile and garment industries, in which many Jews were engaged, were also in some difficulty, but rallied in the fall of 1955.

Pierre Poujade, a bookseller from the little town of Saint-Céré in central France, started a revolt of shopkeepers and artisans against payment of taxes,
and was soon joined by many peasant groups. His support was strongest in the poorer central and southwestern parts of France, but spread rapidly. At its peak in March 1955, the Mouvement Poujade was estimated by its supporters to have 1,000,000 members, and by its critics to have 500,000. The Mouvement Poujade had some help from Jewish merchants, until it became clear that it had a definite anti-Semitic streak. A featured speaker at a Poujade movement rally in Macon in May 1955, for instance, attacked only parliament members of Jewish origin and “all those Frenchmen of recent date, those Rozenkranzs and Rosenkopfs”; he asserted that if French wine could not be exported, it was due to the “combinations of the little Levys and the little Dreyfuses”; and he railed against the “80,000 usurers naturalized as Frenchmen by the Crémieux decree” in Algeria who robbed the poor Algerian peasants of their crops, and thus were to be held responsible for French troubles in Algeria. Similar themes, more or less veiled, were developed at other Poujade rallies. Poujade himself attacked former Minister of Commerce and Industry Henri Ulver as “French for only one generation.” Significantly, the bylaws of the Poujade movement required members of its executive committee “to be of French nationality for at least three generations.”

German Rearmament

France ratified the Western European Union Agreement at the end of March 1955. Before and after ratification, Jewish opinion in France continued virtually unanimous against any German rearmament. The Conseil Réprésentatif des Juifs de France (CRIF), grouping leading Jewish organizations, wrote Premier Faure expressing its “emotion at the risks of German rearmament,” on the eve of the parliamentary vote; similar opposition was expressed by most Jewish organizations. A special petition was drawn up by eighty well-known figures in French Jewish life, including thirteen rabbis and the writer Edmond Fleg. As in previous years, during 1954–55 several commemorative services for Jewish victims of Nazism were made the occasion for expressions of opposition to German rearmament.

On December 12, 1954, the Communist-dominated Jewish Action Committee Against the Rearmament of Germany, which had tried unsuccessfully in January and April 1954 to bring non-Communist Jewish groups into a common campaign against rearmament, arranged a protest meeting against German rearmament. This was spurned by non-Communist groups. The Paris Yiddish dailies Unzer Shtimme and Unzer Vort attacked the meeting as being under the sponsorship of Communist groups that had defended the anti-Semitism of the Prague and Moscow trials. Several Jews from Rumania and Poland who were supposed to come to the Action Committee meeting—and who had been denied entry visas into France by the authorities, along with a score of non-Jews—were denounced as Communists who had done their best to kill real Jewish life in their own lands. In June 1955, the Action Committee sponsored a World Jewish Conference Against German Rearmament attended by more than seventy delegates from a dozen countries, including Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria; this conference was similarly at-
tacked by non-Communist French Jewish groups. The president of the Action Committee was André Blumel, who was also president of the French Zionist movement. Blumel's role led to a crisis in the Zionist movement in France (see p. 328).

**War Criminals and War Sufferers**

On February 10, 1955, the highest French court, the Cour de Cassation, rejected an appeal by SS General Karl Oberg and his adjutant SS Colonel Helmuth Knochen against death sentences passed on them for war crimes by a military tribunal in October 1954. Oberg, known as the Butcher of Paris, and Knochen had played a leading role in the deportation of 120,000 French Jews to death camps. At the time of writing (October 1955) their case was before a special commission which reviewed all death sentences and made recommendations to the President of France regarding pardons and clemency. After the Cour de Cassation handed down its decision, the West German government asked that Oberg and Knochen be amnestied.

In April 1955 the French parliament passed a law establishing the last Sunday in April as a commemoration day for victims of Nazism. In May 1955 a French military tribunal sentenced three Nazi guards to death for war crimes at the Struthof concentration camp. In the same month, the Association of Former Deportees to Auschwitz made public a study showing that only 38,000 of 240,000 French deportees had returned from German camps, and that more than 12,000 of these had died since their return. Prof. Gilbert Dreyfus, on behalf of the association, called for special aid to the remaining 25,000 survivors in France, who he said were suffering from a "deportation asthenia" and had been permanently weakened by their experience.

Early in 1955 the minister of justice reported that there were still 408 persons in French prisons for collaboration and fifty-one Germans imprisoned in France for crimes during the occupation.

**Anti-Semitic Agitation**

The anti-Semitic press in France was busy during 1954–55 with its attacks on Mendès-France and Grandval and its support of Poujade. It was, however, having considerable internal difficulties.

In November 1954 two veterans of the weekly *Aspects de la France*, Maurice Pujo (who was to die in September 1955) and Georges Calzant, managed to oust editor-in-chief Pierre Boutang. The latter joined an insignificant neo-Fascist sheet in Marseille, *L'Action Ouvrière Française*, for some months, and then began publishing his own paper, *Nation Française*, in September 1955. To replace Boutang, *Aspects de la France* brought in the former Vichy High Commissioner for Jewish Affairs, Xavier Vallat. In an editorial on January 7, 1955, Vallat declared that he "had not modified by an iota his conception of the Jewish problem," and "would begin all over again every time it would seem to me to be useful for the good of France."

One of the probable reasons for Boutang's departure was that he had involved *Aspects de la France* in heavy libel suits. One of the severest penalties
ever handed down under French libel law was imposed by the Tribune Correctionelle of the Seine in January 1955 on Boutang and a director of Aspects, Lionel Moreaux. Each was fined 500,000 francs (about $1,400) four times, for a series of four articles in July-August 1954 libeling Mendes-France and various members of his government. The public prosecutor brought suit on the basis of the so-called Marchandeau decree, forbidding defamation of the members of an ethnic or racial group, which had been incorporated in existing French press laws. The court merged each set of four fines into one fine of 500,000 francs ($1,400). Boutang and Moreaux appealed, however, and lost. The court then ruled in May 1955 that they should pay a total of 6,300,000 francs ($18,000).

The other leading anti-Semitic weekly in France, Rivarol, was also reported to be in difficulties at the end of 1954, also in part because it found itself constantly in the courts on charges of libel. In a shake-up, Rivarol directors brought back the paper’s original editor, Fabre-Luce, who had left some years before, changed to a tabloid format, and for a while muted the paper’s anti-Semitism. Rivarol and Aspects de la France were believed to have a circulation of about 35,000 each, probably duplicatory to a considerable degree.

Maurice Bardeche, probably the most notorious of contemporary French anti-Semites, continued publication of his bimonthly Défense de l’Occident. In March and October 1955 this magazine vigorously attacked the American Jewish Committee (AJC), claiming that articles about North Africa in AJC’s French-language magazine Evidences were part of a Jewish propaganda plot to get the French evicted from North Africa.

There was some feeling that anti-Semitism in France was increasing, or at least showing itself more flamboyantly, during 1954–55. Nobel Prize winner François Mauriac told the seventeenth national congress of the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism, on December 5, 1954, that “the virulence of the anti-Semites has not diminished,” despite the lessons of the Hitler era. Former Minister Henri Ulver warned in March 1955 against the “real danger” of a resurgence of racism, and of anti-Semitism “showing itself a little bit everywhere.” There was some discussion in the correspondence columns of the neutralist fortnightly France-L’Observateur as to whether the French working classes were anti-Semitic, but no substantial evidence was advanced on either side.

There were several signs of increased audacity by anti-Semitic elements. Xavier Vallat tried to hold public rallies of his supporters in Nancy and Lille during May 1955, but the protests of Resistance organizations and Jewish groups caused the prefects of police to forbid the meetings. Maurice Bardèche organized a meeting in Poitiers, also in May, which was broken up by Resistance groups that invaded the hall. Certain anti-Semitic elements took their offensive into the courts. A firm known as Artisans du Film Assois aux sued the Mouvement Contre le Racisme, et Pour la Paix (MRAP), a Communist fellow-traveling organization, for 30,000,000 francs (about $85,700), on the grounds that it had made impossible the distribution of the film The New Masters, issued in 1950. Jewish groups felt that this film was leveled against them. Its theme was that “foreigners” had become the real rulers
of France, by deceit and chicanery; and the central character closely resembled Nazi caricatures of Jews. MRAP played a leading role in having the film boycotted. On May 26, 1955, the civil tribunal of the Seine awarded the film company 500,000 francs (about $1,400) on the grounds that the central character in the picture could not be identified positively as Jewish, and that therefore MRAP had passed the bounds of legitimate criticism. The sentence was appealed.

Throughout 1954–55 the usual quota of rather crude anti-Semitic tracts were distributed in the streets and through the mails. One of these was a reprint of excerpts from the Protocols of the Elders of Zion—which was included in a remarkable exhibition of The False in History showing fake pictures and documents, sponsored by the French police in Paris in the early months of 1955.

Jewish Population

Troubles in North Africa sharply accelerated the movement of Jews from that area to metropolitan France. This was the only significant demographic shift during 1954–55 affecting the Jewish population of France, estimated at over 300,000. No precise statistics were available on the influx of North African Jews, since they came on their own initiative rather than as part of any organized movement; but their coming was reflected in the relief rolls of the French Jewish community. In January 1955, for example, 90 immigrant families registered for relief with the Comité Israélite de Bienfaisance in Paris; in September 1955 there were over 200 such registrations, representing almost 1,000 persons. Altogether, during the first nine months of 1955, three times as many newcomers registered for relief as in the comparable period of 1954; and there were believed to be thousands who contacted no Jewish organization. Most of the immigrants came from Tunisia, whose citizens had right of entry into France, and from Algeria, whose Jews as French citizens could come freely. Perhaps 20 per cent came from Morocco. Economic hardship and political insecurity were given by the immigrants as the major reasons for their departure.

The overwhelming difficulty for most of the newcomers was that of finding places to live in a country with a desperate housing shortage, and it was not uncommon to find six or eight persons living in a single room. Some gravitated to the tent camps set up by the Catholic champion of the homeless, Abbé Pierre, on the banks of the Seine; others, to shack settlements outside of Paris. In other respects, however, the immigrants' adaptation to France was easier, since most of them were eligible immediately on arrival for French working papers, and for the substantial French social security benefits, which helped them eke out a living.

Unlike Jews from East Europe who had migrated to France in previous decades, North African Jews did not tend to stick together, but assimilated rapidly. Fear was expressed that large numbers of them would be lost to Judaism, unless more positive community action was undertaken on their behalf. There was increased demand for a special reception center for North African Jews, and the feeling that greater aid would have to be mobilized
on their behalf than just the local French Jewish community could provide. A sizeable percentage of the budget of the Fonds Social Juif Unifié, French Jewry's central fund-raising and distributing agency, was already being used on behalf of the newcomers. The French section of the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT) opened several new vocational courses particularly designed for the North African newcomers, as well as an employment advisory service. And the youth organization attached to the Consistoire Central des Israélites de France et d'Algerie, French Judaism's central religious body, appointed a North African rabbi to minister to the needs of young North African Jews.

Jewish emigration from France was practically nonexistent. The United Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) Service reported that fewer than 500 persons were moved from France during the period July 1, 1954—July 1, 1955; there was a backlog of 2,446 persons registered for emigration on the latter date. According to the Fédération Sioniste de France, about forty Jews a month went to Israel from France during the same period. Several thousand Jews from North Africa went to Israel via transit camps located outside the Mediterranean port of Marseille.

In addition to the textile and garment industries, French Jews continued to be concentrated in the fur, leathermaking, and jewelry businesses, and in such professions as medicine, law, journalism, and banking.

Communal Activity

Jewish community organizations in France really began to feel the impact of the funds available through the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) during 1955. By far the greater part of all funds available for Jewish community work went for welfare purposes; but the dominant interest of community leaders was in greater cultural, social, and educational effort. The welfare needs of Jews in France—if one excepts the North African immigrants—had been stabilized and were "being met to a fairly adequate extent financially," it was reported at the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) country directors conference held in Paris, October 14-17, 1955. French Jewish leaders felt that the community could not hope to develop, or keep from gradually losing strength, unless Jewish children and youth were attracted to community institutions. CJMCAG money was making possible a refurbishing of educational institutions and a number of community cultural pilot projects. Certain CJMCAG appropriations made at the end of 1954 were still unused by October 1955; but there was substantial progress in several fields.

Most activity centered around the thirty-six institutions attached to the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU). The FSJU was the almost exclusive channel for the funds coming into France from the CJMCAG and the JDC. The three organizations cooperated so closely, despite some differences of opinion, that they practically made up a single complex in their effect on Jewish life in France. The only independent JDC activity in France was on behalf of certain rabbinical and transient groups, totaling 525 persons, for whom JDC was expending 90,000,000 francs ($257,000) in 1955.
The FSJU did not ask for any funds directly from the CJMCAG for 1955 but received CJMCAG funds through the JDC. For 1955 it was estimated that total FSJU-JDC expenditures in France would be 570,000,000 francs ($1,630,000), with 165,000,000 francs ($471,000) of this sum being raised by the FSJU locally, 385,000,000 ($1,100,000) coming from the JDC, and 20,000,000 ($57,100) from heirless Jewish property in what used to be the French Zone of Germany.

**Fund Raising**

These figures tell only about half the story, however. The Jewish communities of Strasbourg, Lyon, Marseille, and Nice ran FSJU campaigns of their own which were expected to net about 35,000,000 francs ($100,000) in 1955; and each of the FSJU member agencies could hold one fund-raising function of its own each year, with a total expected yield of 50,000,000 ($143,000) francs in 1955. (The total of Jewish fund raising in France for local purposes was thus expected to be about 250,000,000 francs [$174,000], not including contributions for religious purposes.) Finally, and most important, the various FSJU institutions received from the French government and other sources subventions of almost 500,000,000 francs (over $1,430,000) with which to carry on their work, so that total funds spent for Jewish community activity in France in 1955 were expected to total well over $3,000,000.

The pattern of FSJU distribution of almost 400,000,000 francs ($1,114,000) in 1954 showed that almost 80 per cent of community funds went for welfare purposes of one kind or another. FSJU reported that in 1954 its member institutions had given financial assistance to some 2,200 families and to another 750 Jewish youths whose family situation was such that they needed special support. More than 800 children between the ages of three and seventeen had been housed in fourteen different homes; 3,000 children had been taken to summer camps. Medical services had cared for some 2,000 persons a month; two canteens in Paris had served 6,000 free meals a month.

Despite heavy requests, little was granted by the CJMCAG to organizations outside the FSJU complex for relief and rehabilitation work. The CJMCAG gave $86,000 for such purposes: about half went to the Strasbourg Jewish community, and $45,000 was made available to the Selfhelp of Emigres from Central Europe, for establishing a home for the aged near Paris.

The picture was different in the educational and cultural field. Over and above 77,000,000 francs ($120,000) made available through JDC-FSJU funds for these purposes in 1955, the CJMCAG had allocated another 40,000,000 francs ($111,000) for some thirty projects. In 1954 FSJU had spent 68,000,000 francs ($194,000) in the normal course of operations. The three Jewish full-time day schools in Paris—Maimonides, Yabnc, and Lucien de Hirsch—benefited, with their 430 students, 130 of whom lived in school institutions. So did the three institutions for advanced Jewish studies in France, with 130 students in all: the seminary maintained by the Consistoire Central in Paris, the Yeshiva at Aix-les-Bains, and the Gilbert Bloch school at Orsay. Help was given to five Jewish part-time schools, and to a group of kindergartens with 400 students; to two youth groups, the Jewish Boy Scouts and the Union
des Etudiants Juifs de de France, whose membership, at least on paper, totaled 6,000; and to two organizations doing cultural work on behalf of adults.

Limoges Pilot Effort

The town of Limoges, in central France, was the scene of a pilot effort during 1954–55 by the FSJU, the Consistoire Central, and the French cultural commission attached to the CJMCAG, to revitalize the Jewish community. The Jewish community joined the Consistoire Central in this enterprise. A community worker-teacher was sent to Limoges, partially paid for by the community, and partially by the FSJU. Soon there was a religious class of twenty-seven children, a Jewish study circle for youth between seventeen and twenty-two, and, for the first time in years, regular Friday night services in Limoges. Almost the entire Jewish community of 120 persons was involved in the Purim celebration in March 1955, and a Jewish book and record library was set up.

There was some dissatisfaction among French Jewish leadership with CJMCAG methods. It was suggested that the CJMCAG abandon its system of strictly annual allocations for long-range programs extending over several years; that a permanent office of the CJMCAG be set up in London or Paris; and that governing bodies of the CJMCAG meet in Europe, especially when matters affecting European Jewry were being discussed. There was a feeling that forms of inter-European Jewish community cooperation should be worked out, since individual Jewish communities on the continent were too small to establish necessary teacher, social work, and rabbinical training institutions. This viewpoint was vigorously pressed by French delegates to the Consultative Conference of Jewish Organizations in London in June 1955, where the FSJU, the Consistoire Central and the CRIF—the latter after some dispute among its member organizations—were represented, as well as the Alliance Israélite Universelle, one of the sponsors of the London conference (see p. 310).

Personnel Problem

In almost all cultural and religious areas there was a great shortage of professional personnel, often hindering the carrying out of planned projects. There had, however, been a significant improvement in recruiting and training persons for Jewish community tasks: whereas hardly a dozen persons were being trained three years before, there were over sixty in training in various institutions in the fall of 1955.

Jewish Education

With the additional funds available from the CJMCAG, progress was made toward the extension of part-time Jewish education in Paris, Strasbourg, and a number of provincial towns; in the publishing of Jewish texts and religious manuals; in the repair of several school buildings, and the purchase of the École Aquiba in Strasbourg; and in the establishment of a students’ center in Paris. Projects were under way, or under discussion, for the improvement
and extension of communal facilities in Metz, Nancy, Grenoble, Lens, Roanne, Limoges, and several other smaller communities. Efforts to establish a permanent Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA) type of center for Jewish youth in Paris were blocked by failure to find an appropriate building or building site, despite intensive efforts; but a temporary center was purchased in February 1955, and it went into operation in September 1955. A suitable building for a similar type of center was purchased in Lyon in the spring of 1955, but preparations for opening it were going ahead slowly. Funds were made available by the CJMCAG for a building to house the two full-time Jewish secondary schools in Paris, as part of a plan to merge them for greater efficiency, but little progress had been made in this direction.

**Religious Activity**

Jacob Kaplan was elected grand rabbi of France and Algeria on January 16, 1955, and Meyer Jais was chosen to succeed him as grand rabbi of Paris on June 22, 1955. Increased religious activity was manifested in a number of ways during 1954–55. A number of small communities—Toulon, Caen, and Cannes—joined the Consistoire Centrale. The communities of Béziers, Narbonne, Perpignan, and Bastia in Corsica applied for affiliation. An increased demand for rabbis for the provincial cities had to go largely unsatisfied. A few rabbinical students were sent to work in different towns even before they had finished their studies. Important financial assistance was given to the Consistoire Centrale’s rabbinical training seminary by the consistories of Alsace and Lorraine, which made up a separate religious entity in France, but which drew heavily on the seminary for religious personnel. In September 1954 a new synagogue was opened in Nice; in November 1954 a seminary of Jewish studies was opened in Strasbourg, under the direction of Grand Rabbi Abraham Deutsch; and in December 1954 the École Aquiba was opened in the same city, assuring Jewish education through the secondary school level. In December, too, the Jewish Youth Community in France, attached to the Consistoire Central, asked that youth chaplains be named for the ten geographical divisions into which the country had been divided as part of an over-all plan for religious and cultural development; by September 1955 two youth chaplains had been named. Grand Rabbi Kaplan made a series of pastoral visits to the French provinces which helped provoke interest in religious life.

Altogether, it was estimated that the various consistories raised some 150,000,000 francs ($429,000) for religious purposes during 1954–55. Over half of this came from the Consistoire de Paris, which carried on an active program. This included full or part-time religious education for about 400 children. Its Comité de Bienfaisance was largely instrumental in the creation of a student center in Paris in June 1955.

Paris Jewry was much concerned by municipal action in disinterring bodies of Jews from tombs more than seventy-five years old and not cared for by heirs of the deceased. A number of Jewish family tombs were left untended, because of the great number of Jews who had disappeared during the Hitler era. A solution was being sought to this problem by the Chevra Kadisha.
Zionist and Pro-Israel Activity

André Blumel's leadership of the Jewish Action Committee Against the Rearmament of Germany (see p. 321) stirred the wrath of veteran Zionists against the then secretary general of the Fédération Sioniste. Blumel was attacked by Fédération president Marc Jarblum who, since he had moved to Israel, was more the nominal than the actual head of the organization. As a result, Blumel resigned in January 1955. After some difficulty, the conflict was settled with the aid of Zionist leaders from Israel. In March 1955 Jarblum became honorary president and Blumel president of the Fédération Sioniste.

The Zionist reorganization plan (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1955 [Vol. 56], p. 325-26) brought into the Fédération a number of nonpolitical Jewish organizations that had been working on behalf of Israel—such as the French branch of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), the Youth Aliyah, and the Maccabi—and a variety of bodies not so closely associated previously, such as the Cercle Léon Blum and the Groupe Crémieux. It also managed to draw some 350 native Jewish French personalities into its nonpolitical Parisian regional section. In the fall of 1955 the Fédération organized a Shekel campaign, and hoped to have 35,000 sales by the end of 1955. Major activities of the Fédération were a campaign for increased teaching of Hebrew, under the direction of Vice President Zwi Lewin; sponsorship of a mass celebration of Israel's seventh birthday anniversary at the Palais de Chaillot; and the sending of over 200 children to Israel for summer vacations.

Fund raising for Israel during 1954–55 was about the same as in previous years, with 120,000,000 francs ($343,000) collected by L'Aide Israel, some 45,000,000 ($129,000) by the Keren Kayemeth—Jewish National Fund, and about 20,000,000 ($57,100) by other organizations on behalf of Israel. By the fall of 1955 the French government had still not given permission for the sale of Israel bonds in France, but negotiations were being carried on to that end.

In the fall of 1955 the Zionist Federation and the FSJU launched a special fund-raising campaign, with a goal of 40,000,000 francs ($111,400), on behalf of Jewish emigration from North Africa to Israel. By the end of October 1955 well over half this amount had been raised.

A number of events focused French attention on Israel during 1954–55. There was an exhibition of Israel scientific publications in Paris in May 1955. The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra made two appearances in the spring of 1955. Leading Israel personalities were constantly passing through France. Israel Ambassador to France Jacob Tsur made visits to the Jewish communities of Marseille and Bordeaux.

Cultural Activity

The strongly Zionist-oriented French-language Jewish daily news bulletin, Informations, disappeared in the fall of 1954 because of financial difficulties. This left the Nouvelles Juives Mondiales, owned by the (London) Jewish Chronicle as the only such service for the European continent and North
Africa. The three Yiddish dailies published in Paris—the Zionist's Unzer Vort, the Jewish Socialist Bund's Unzer Shtimme, and the Communist Naye Presse—did not have very impressive circulations. While still the strongest circulation-wise, the Naye Presse was losing strength during the year. The monthly Yiddish magazine Kiyoum, which returned to the scene in 1953-54, after a years absence, again dropped out of sight in 1955.

Evidences, issued by the European Office of the American Jewish Committee, continued to be the leading French-language magazine dealing with Jewish subjects in a nonparochial fashion, appearing every six weeks. The French Section of the World Jewish Congress, which already issued La Vie Juive, a bi-monthly house organ, and a mimeographed paper, Signes, reporting on anti-Semitism, announced that it was going to issue an intellectual quarterly. French-language Zionist publications were the fortnightly paper La Terre Retrouvée, and the weekly house-organ of the Zionist Federation, Tribune Sioniste, which began publication in the fall of 1955. Among the organs of the community were the Journal des Communautés, of the Consistoire Centrale; the Bulletin des nos Communautés, of Alsace and Lorraine; Le Rayon, issued by France's one Liberal synagogue; and the Trait d'Union of the Montevideo synagogue. The Fonds Social Juif Unifié published special illustrated issues every few months dealing with some particular community problem. The CRIF circulated an extensive mimeographed summary of news of matters affecting Jews five or six times a year; and the Alliance Israelite Universelle's house organ, Cahiers, included some material of general Jewish interest. Le Monde Juif, of the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, changed its format, continuing into its ninth year.

It was an impressive year for the publication of books of general circulation dealing with subjects of Jewish interest. Among them were Pierre Fabert's Le Dieu de Colère—the life and death of a Jewish shtetl, which suffers at the hands of Nazi collaborators and then is wiped out completely, as the result of a horrible misunderstanding, near the end of World War II. La Greffe du Printemps, one part of Roger Ikor's two-volume series, Les Eaux Mélangées, dealing with the assimilation of a Jewish family in France (and which was hardly accurate in its portrayal of Jewish life and customs) won France's most important literary award, the Prix Goncourt. Albert Memmi, whose La Statue de Sel had been a best seller the year before, wrote a follow-up novel entitled Agar. In the nonfiction field, Léon Poliakov issued the first part of his history of anti-Semitism, Du Christ aux Juifs de Cour; and P. Lovsky, a non-Jew, excited much comment with his Antisémitisme et Mystère d'Israël. The Hachette publishing house issued a Guide Bleu sur Israël, while André Chouraqui wrote l'Etat d'Israël for the "Que Sais-je" collection. The eightieth birthday of the writer Edmond Fleg was marked by a number of community affairs during 1954, and by the publication of a special edition of his anthology of Jewish writings.

Abraham Karlikow
BELGIUM

The hundred-year battle between clerical and anti-clerical forces in Belgium flared up in April 1955, when the Socialist-Liberal coalition government of Achille Van Acker decided to cut $10,000,000 from government subsidies to the so-called “free”—meaning denominational—schools. In protest, Catholic groups marched on Brussels and staged a school strike involving over a million students; but the government stood fast and weathered the storm. Otherwise, it was a calm year politically. Foreign Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, a fervent protagonist of Western European Union, was one of the standard-bearers of the Council of Europe.

Production expanded during 1954–55, though less than in neighboring countries, and Brussels was one of the most prosperous capitals in Europe. Economic links with Holland were strengthened as part of the Benelux program; most of the industrial and agricultural groups formerly opposed to Benelux Union had changed their views. The Belgian textile industry, which felt that it could not favorably compete with Dutch prices due to a lower wage structure, presented a major obstacle to increased integration, however.

Belgian relations with Israel were cordial. The Belgian press was neutral in its reporting of events concerning Israel; the issue of internationalizing Jerusalem, which in previous years had given rise to much adverse criticism of Israel, was not in the news during 1954–55.

Memories of German occupation were still vivid. Reports that the former Nazi collaborator Leon Degrelle had been seen in Spain led the Belgian government to ask for his extradition in January 1955. Because the Spanish government pretended ignorance of Degrelle’s whereabouts, Belgium voted against admitting Spain to the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC). In April 1955 King Baudouin took part in a ceremony celebrating the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Nazi concentration camp victims; and Queen Elizabeth, his grandmother, deposited a wreath in memory of Nazi victims at the site of the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland in March 1955.

Jewish Population

Belgium’s Jewish population, some 80,000 before World War II, was estimated by community leaders at 35,000 to 40,000 in the fall of 1955. Only approximations were possible because Jews were not listed as such in Belgian state registers and membership in religious communities was optional. This population was to be found, primarily, in two cities. Brussels had 20,000 to 25,000 Jews scattered through the city. Antwerp’s Jewish community of more than 10,000 was concentrated near the city’s Central Station. In addition, there were small Jewish communities in Liège and Charleroi, and a handful of Jews in Ostend and Ghent.

Jews in Brussels were to be found in the garment, leather, fur, and glove-making industries, while 80 per cent of those in Antwerp were associated, in
one way or another, with the diamond business. There was a fair scattering of Belgian Jews in medicine, law, and university posts, but none in parliament and few in any government posts.

Political and Civic Status

Jews in Belgium had the same civic status and rights as non-Jews in all respects. Only a small percentage of the Belgian Jews however—perhaps between 15 and 20 per cent—had Belgian nationality. This was due to the fact that Belgian naturalization was subject to a minimum of ten years of residence; many Jews who had come to the country after World War II still had not fulfilled this basic requirement. Furthermore, naturalization involved complicated administrative formalities and approval on a case-by-case basis by the Belgian parliament, as well as the payment of a sizable tax. Children born in Belgium of foreign parents did not automatically become citizens, but had to apply for citizenship between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two.

During 1954–55 there was a sharp increase in the number of Jews who received citizenship, despite these difficulties. It was estimated that of more than 2,000 naturalizations approved in the last year in Belgium, almost 900 affected Jews. There was also an increase in the number of Jewish children opting for citizenship as they reached the age of eligibility. Occasionally, there were government officials who questioned whether there was incompatibility between an applicant’s request for citizenship and his participation in Zionist activities.

The Aide aux Israelites Victimes de la Guerre (AIVG), the leading Jewish welfare association in Brussels, asked the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) for money to establish a revolving fund to help poor persons pay naturalization taxes.

The non-Belgian Jews fell into two main categories: those who, though not citizens, had been in the country for over ten years and had permanent resident permits, and those with only temporary permits. Under Belgian law, both categories needed special authorization to engage in employment or trade, but it was naturally more difficult—and sometimes exceedingly difficult—for persons in the second category to get such authorization. Non-citizens could not engage in the liberal professions.

Nonetheless, the bulk of the Jews in Belgium had settled down despite these economic impediments to integration, and could be considered a stable community. The United HIAS Service reported that during the period under review (from July 1, 1954, through June 30, 1955) it had helped over 300 Jews migrate to other lands, and that the rate of emigration was declining somewhat. Movement to Israel was estimated by the Belgian Fédération Sioniste at about 50 persons a year. The status of some 200 persons who had come to Belgium from Israel during 1953–54 with the intention of moving to other lands, but had then found it impossible to do so, posed a particularly difficult problem for which no ready solution was foreseen.

There was no perceptible Jewish immigration. The AIVG was instrumental, however, in obtaining Belgian visas for fourteen elderly Jewish refugees in China. Three of them arrived early in 1955, and were settled in Jew-
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ish homes for the aged. Thousands of Jewish refugees were among those affected when the Belgian and Dutch governments agreed in April 1955 that holders of International Refugee Organization (IRO) passports would not need visas to travel between the two countries.

Anti-Semitic Agitation

Anti-Semitism had been practically nonexistent in Belgium before the advent of Hitlerism, and it sank no deep roots as a result of German occupation and propaganda. With one exception, 1954-55 was free of any anti-Semitic occurrence of importance. In June 1955 the influential Antwerp economic daily paper Handelsblad published a number of articles that were anti-Semitic in tone. The Belgian B'nai B'rith asked a public retraction. An article then appeared criticizing B'nai B'rith and expressing irritation with "international Jewish politics." Finally, however, the editor-in-chief of the paper wrote a letter to B'nai B'rith expressing his regrets; later Handelsblad published a retraction of its articles.

War Orphan Cases

In August 1955 a Catholic school teacher, Miss Fernande Henrard, attempted to hide a fourteen-year-old Jewish war orphan, Henry Alias, whom she had adopted in 1943, but who had been claimed successfully by an uncle living in Algiers. Alias's parents had been murdered in Antwerp by the Nazis. Shortly after taking charge of the lad, Miss Henrard had had him baptized. She illegally gave the child the false identity of Antoine Benoit and then she maintained Henri Elias had died. When the uncle, M. Hammerman, won custody of the child in the Belgian courts, Miss Henrard had him hidden in a clinic. She was arrested, but was released after the police found the child, who was later sent to Algiers. Miss Henrard appealed the court's decision.

No trace could be found of the young Jewish orphan girl, Anneke Beekman, who was known to have been smuggled into Belgium from Holland in 1954 by her erstwhile Catholic guardians, Mrs. Langedijk van Moorst and the latter's sister Elizabeth. They had done this in order to avoid turning Anneke over to Jewish custody, as ordered by the Dutch courts. It was thought that the task of finding the child would be greatly facilitated if Belgian Catholic leaders would make a public appeal that she be returned, but Catholic church authorities in Belgium refused any comment on this case or similar ones, though they certainly gave all possible help to the Van Moorst sisters and Miss Henrard.

Communal Organization and Activity

The two centers of Jewish life in Belgium, Brussels and Antwerp, were markedly different in character. There was little real communication between them, and for most practical purposes they could be considered as two separate entities. The Brussels Jewish community was on the whole composed of non-Orthodox Jews who were integrated into general Belgian life and had
only a slight sense of belonging to Judaism. The very extensive dispersement of Jews throughout Brussels and its suburbs was one factor making for lack of community cohesion. The lack of qualified community personnel, such as Jewish teachers and religious leaders, aggravated the difficulties of creating greater spiritual cohesion. Few children went to Jewish schools of any kind; Jewish youth organizations had little membership; and intermarriage with non-Jews was frequent. To help counteract the gradual drift away from Judaism, a group of Jewish organizations in Brussels were seeking the creation of an American-type Jewish community center, where all Jewish cultural and educational work would be centralized, to serve as a visible focal point for Brussels' Jewish activities. Half a million dollars was sought from the CJMCAG for this project.

In Antwerp, on the other hand, over half of the Jewish families in the city were associated with one of the two active religious community organizations, the Machsiki Hadass and the Shomrei Hadass, which formed the Verenigde Israelietische Gemeenten of Antwerp. Antwerp's Jewish community was, indeed, probably the most intensively Jewish in Western Europe, thanks to its Orthodoxy, its cohesiveness, and a Jewish day school system attended by 75 per cent of the Jewish children in the city.

Religious Activity

The Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique was the recognized Jewish religious body for the country. All important Jewish religious communities were part of the Consistoire; indeed, religious communities were recognized by the state only if integrated into the Consistoire. This was important because the Belgian government, while not interfering in religious matters, considered rabbis and certain functionaries of recognized religious communities as state officials and helped pay their salaries. The grand rabbi for Belgium was Solomon Ullmann, who was also Jewish chaplain general for the Belgian armed forces.

In September 1955 the Van den Nestlei Synagogue in Antwerp, rebuilt after having been destroyed by the Nazis, was consecrated in the presence of leading national and city officials, giving the city a fourth important synagogue. The largest synagogue in Brussels, that of Rue Regence, lost its rabbi, Robert Dreyfus, in May 1955 when he accepted a post in his native city of Metz, France. Efforts to find a replacement for him were unsuccessful. There were synagogues in Liège, Charleroi, Ghent, and Ostend, where local cantors also assumed rabbinical duties.

Despite the opening of Antwerp's Van den Nestlei Synagogue, the Shomrei Hadass felt that the seating capacity of its other two synagogues had to be expanded; the Machsiki Hadass was particularly interested in the rebuilding of its mikvah, destroyed by the war. Both groups asked CJMCAG assistance for these projects.

Jewish Education

Jewish education in Antwerp centered around two excellent all-day schools, the Yesode Hatorah Beth Jacob, with 650 children, and the Tachkemoni
school, with over 400. The latter was seeking a director. In both schools students were prepared for state baccalaureate examinations and given a thorough Jewish education at the same time. In Tachkemoni much of the instruction was in Hebrew, while that in Beth Jacob was more along the lines of traditional cheder teaching. In Brussels, the Ecole Israélite, a primary day school, had 145 students. Four part-time schools reached another 150 children. Thus, fewer than 300 of the estimated 1,200 to 1,500 children between the ages of six and fourteen in Brussels were receiving some Jewish education. About 700 children in Belgium took advantage of the weekly courses, lasting forty-five to ninety minutes, in Jewish religion and history given in government schools at state expense. The Belgian government contributed to the upkeep of Jewish all-day schools, as it did to that of Catholic schools, by paying for the costs of secular instruction. State subsidies to the Jewish schools were scheduled to be cut, in line with the reduction of subsidies to all nongovernmental schools.

The majority of requests from Belgian Jewish organizations to the CJMCAG for 1956 had to do with Jewish education. Thus, the Tachkemoni and Beth Jacob schools sought to improve their buildings and purchase new equipment. The École Israélite Supérieure pour L'Europe, Ets Chajim, the advanced Talmud Torah at Kapellen near Antwerp, with sixty students, asked for $90,000 for purchase of a new building. The Secours Mutuel Juif of Brussels sought funds for Hebrew courses and Yiddish supplementary schools; the Brussels Yiddishist Arbeiter Ring asked money for a part-time school. Because of Antwerp's intensely Jewish character, the Central Keren Hatorah asked that a European teachers' central training seminary be established there. Opponents argued that such a seminary could be more profitably located in a city like Paris, Antwerp not being typical of European Jewish communities, and thus a poor training ground.

Social Service

Approximately 2,000 persons received some form of welfare aid in Belgium during 1954–55, according to American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) statistics. This aid was given primarily through the AIVG in Brussels, and the Centrale in Antwerp. There was also Solidarité Juive, which was primarily concerned with relief for widows and orphans, as well as sponsoring a summer camp for children and carrying on a social program, but figures were not available. The AIVG's director, Mrs. Guy Mansbach, reported that an average of 1,098 persons—including 105 transients—were on AIVG rolls during the months September 1954 through August 1955. Since the end of World War II more than 9,000 persons had been helped by the AIVG to rehabilitate and re-establish themselves in Belgium or in other countries. Only a small number of persons assisted had benefited, thus far, under the complex of West German restitution and indemnification laws affecting individual victims of Nazism, but there was hope that future payments would result in a cut in AIVG rolls.

In April 1955 the two remaining AIVG children's homes were merged, and a new home, purchased with CJMCAG funds, was opened outside of
Brussels on June 5. There were 35 children in the home, ranging in age from eight to twenty. Medical services were available for approximately 400 families during the year; and a loan fund aided 67 persons. A legal aid service assisted needy persons in preparing citizenship applications, requests for indemnification from the West German government, and claims for assistance from the Belgian government as civilian victims of the war. Amendment of the present Belgian law was asked so that half-orphans and Belgian widows of foreign deportees could benefit as civilian victims, and this was being considered by the government.

It appeared certain that continued outside help would be needed to maintain Jewish welfare services in Belgium. A Centrale d'Ouevres Sociales Juives, established as a central fund-raising organization for Jewish welfare institutions in Brussels in 1952 with Max Gottschalk at its head, managed to increase the list of donors to local causes from 300 to 1,500 by 1955, collecting over 1,500,000 Belgian francs ($30,000); but this sum was far below welfare needs. Community leaders pointed out that it was unrealistic to expect a community of 35,000 to 40,000 Jews, of whom only 5 per cent had reached an appreciable measure of wealth, to provide for the needs of more than 1,000 persons.

In Antwerp, the Centrale gave cash assistance to about 250 persons monthly and medical assistance to about 200, and supported an old age home lodging 25 persons. It also gave scholarships to a number of students, and maintained a feeding program for the indigent. Approximately 40 per cent of the estimated $100,000 needed for this activity came from outside sources. An old age home for 50 persons was envisaged by the community, and substantial help for this project was received from the CJMCAG.

Zionist and Cultural Activity

The Fédération Sioniste was one of the few Jewish organizations in Belgium that operated on a nation-wide basis. It formed a major link between the Brussels and Antwerp communities. A great proportion of Jewish social life in Belgium centered around Zionist and Zionist-oriented groups, such as the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), Maccabi, etc. According to Fédération Secretary General M. Anisfeld, there were over 4,500 members in all Zionist parties and in the WIZO. The Fédération's fortnightly Tribune Sioniste, in the French language, was the only Jewish newspaper in Belgium. It strove to give some general Jewish news and feature material while stressing Zionist activities. The Fédération conducted seven Hebrew courses, attended by some ninety persons; had an impressive chorale, Nachir; and was associated with the Cercle Culturel Juif. The Cercle organized twenty-six lectures and musicales during 1954-55, and formed a small dramatic group. Celebrations of such events as Israel Independence Day and Yom Hayeled (Childrens Day) were fairly well attended.

Rather active, too, was the Belgian B'nai B'rith, which sponsored a score of lectures yearly, as did the Franz Philippson Foundation in Brussels. There was a fair amount of "social Judaism" in the forms of dances, teas, and celebrations of holidays like Purim and Passover, but usually on a fractional
basis by separate groups rather than on a united community basis in the two major cities. During 1955, for the first time, lectures on Jewish subjects were offered in Liège; Jewish organizations in Liège were also seeking to build a community center.

In May 1955 a Zionist-oriented group named Menorah was formed in Brussels under the leadership of Brussels University Professor M. H. Perelman, for the announced purpose of helping rebuild Judaism in Belgium through Jewish culture and education.

ABRAHAM KARLIKOW

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During the year from July 1, 1954, to June 30, 1955, The Netherlands enjoyed continued prosperity, with practically full employment. Despite the continued watchfulness dictated by inflationary pressures, taxes were reduced slightly. Profits were excellent, and prices were fairly stable. There was a rising demand by labor for higher wages; the government, fearing inflation, opposed a general increase.

The *mandament* issued by The Netherlands’ seven Roman Catholic bishops on May 30, 1954, was still a matter of sharp controversy during much of the year. The bishops had proclaimed that grave sanctions would be imposed on Roman Catholics who joined Socialist associations, or regularly read Socialist publications, or regularly listened to the Socialist radio network. On July 3, 1954, Socialist Premier Willem Drees severely attacked the *mandament* in a speech at Utrecht.

Early in August 1954 The Netherlands government voiced sharp opposition to an American plan for returning war assets to German citizens. The bill was shelved in Congress the same month.


On August 13, 1954, the United States and The Netherlands agreed to the stationing of a United States Air Force squadron in The Netherlands, the first United States military base on Dutch soil. The Soviet Union protested this agreement, on the ground that there was no threat to The Netherlands that justified it.
After its defeat in Parliament's Second Chamber (lower house) by fifty to forty-eight on a rent bill, the Drees cabinet presented its resignation to the Queen. A difficult period of political negotiations ensued. The crisis was finally resolved, on June 2, 1954, thanks to a compromise evolved largely by Jacob A. W. Burger, Socialist leader in the Second Chamber. The old cabinet returned to office, and a rent bill similar to the one which had been rejected was approved.

On June 30, 1955, the government introduced a long-awaited and generally popular bill for general old age insurance.

**Jewish Population**

Despite the best efforts of a special Jewish demographic commission, assisted by Amsterdam city authorities, reliable statistics on the Jewish population could not be compiled. The commission, after about a year of painful compilations—with the help of most of the organized Jewish communities throughout the land—emerged with a series of figures which one official hopefully suggested might be as much as 80 per cent accurate. In addition to the problem posed by a number of people who were born to Jewish parents but preferred to be considered non-Jews, a serious difficulty was the approximate nature of much of the statistical material furnished by the Jewish communities outside Amsterdam. The final results indicated that there were about 24,000 Jews in Holland. Some 14,000 of this total were in Amsterdam; it had earlier been estimated that about 12,000 of Amsterdam's Jews were born in the city.

There were some strikingly abnormal features in the population figures. Amsterdam, for example, had about 1,100 Jewish widows, but only about 200 widowers. Men were generally outnumbered by women; in Amsterdam the figures were 6,657 and 7,406, respectively. The five-year period 1944–48 showed 1,800 births; from 1949–1953 the total was 1,300. The largest group in the Amsterdam male population was that born between 1904 and 1908. Among women the largest group was born between 1909 and 1913.

**Emigration and Immigration**

During the year under review, about 175 emigrants sponsored by the new combined United HIAS Service left The Netherlands. Most of those emigrating had been working for the low wages (about $15 weekly) which prevailed in the lower brackets of the controlled wage sector. A number of applicants came from Amsterdam's diamond industry, which had known prosperity before World War II, but was undergoing difficult times in the face of severe foreign competition.

There was a marked decline in the number seeking to emigrate. This was ascribed to the virtual full employment achieved in The Netherlands, and to an enormously reduced fear of war. The Netherlands government, by no means persuaded that prosperity would continue indefinitely, and at the same time worried by the high birth rate (which went hand in hand with a very low death rate), continued actively to sponsor emigration. Employers maintained their long-standing opposition to the program, because emigra-
tion cut down the supply of skilled labor—and the supply of laborers generally.

United HIAS Service estimated that by July 1955 the rate of emigration under its sponsorship was only one-half what it had been a year earlier. About 250 new applicants for emigration registered with HIAS during the year 1954-55.

Most prospective Jewish emigrants wanted to settle in the United States. Far behind in second place came Australia, with Canada third.

The Jewish Agency for Palestine reported that during the Jewish year 5713 (September 20, 1952, through September 8, 1953) it had received 116 applications from prospective emigrants to Israel. The Agency continued processing the 302 cases remaining from the previous year. Some 48 persons emigrated in groups, and another 65 individually—including nine with temporary worker visas for Israel.

**Anti-Semitic Activity**

On October 15, 1954, the Appeals Court in The Hague sentenced the two NESB (National European Social Movement) leaders, Paul van Tienen and J. A. Wolthuis, to two months' imprisonment for leadership of a forbidden organization. The court held that the NESB was a continuation of the Dutch Nazi NSB. It was reported on October 14, 1954, that NESB leaders had decided to disband their organization until a Supreme Court ruling on the group's legality.

The Dutch Government was unable (except in one case—that of Jacob de Jonge) to bring about the return to The Netherlands of the war criminals who had escaped from Breda prison to West Germany in 1952.

The former Amsterdam banker Otto Rebholz was sentenced *in absentia* by the Amsterdam district court to five years' imprisonment. Rebholz was charged with helping the enemy in wartime by dealing in securities seized from their rightful Jewish owners. Rebholz was enjoying asylum in Liechtenstein.

**Discrimination and Anti-Semitism**

There were several isolated cases of overt anti-Semitism. The cases which came to public attention involved insults addressed to Jews. In one such case a police judge fined an Amsterdam woman 75 guilders (about $20), and in a second case a Hilversum worker was fined 40 guilders (about $11), appealed, and had his sentence increased to a week's imprisonment.

**Community Organization and Communal Affairs**

Eduard Spier, long-time chairman of the Centrale Commissie of The Netherlands Israelite religious community, declined renomination and was succeeded by Isaac Dasberg.

In May 1955 the Centrale Commissie decided in favor of the community's
joining the World Jewish Congress. On June 1 and 2, 1955, the European Executive of the World Jewish Congress met in Scheveningen.

WAR ORPHANS

The question of two Jewish war orphans, Anneke Beekman and Rebecca (Betty) Milhado continued to disturb the Jewish community and to attract considerable public attention. On July 9, 1954, a delegation from the Jewish community in Great Britain interceded with Netherlands ambassador Dirk U. Stikker.

Geertruida M. Langendijk-van Moorst, of Hilversum, who had been detained since March 23, 1954, was brought to trial on July 16, 1954, charged with complicity in the abduction of Betty Milhado, and for hiding her, subsequently, from legal authorities. On July 27, 1954, the Amsterdam district court found Mrs. Langendijk guilty of complicity in hiding Betty Milhado, and sentenced her to one year’s imprisonment and three years’ probation. Six months of the jail sentence were suspended, and the four months already served in preventive detention were deducted from the remaining six months.

Meanwhile, Betty Milhado was placed in a “neutral” family. Anneke Beekman was still missing, and Jewish circles felt confident that she was being hidden in Belgium—where she had narrowly escaped capture when Betty Milhado was found.

A report for the year 1953 on Jewish war orphans was published during the period under review. The report indicated that 457 war orphans were under Jewish guardianship, and 358 under non-Jewish. Some 53 had not yet been assigned to guardians. Definitively abroad were 351. Some 537 war orphans had reached adulthood.

The three religious communities (Ashkenazic, Sephardic, and Liberal) addressed a joint memorandum to Minister of Justice Leendert A. Donker concerning an adoption bill before Parliament. The memorandum was generally hostile to the attempt to legalize adoption, noting that many of the cases which would be coming up involved war orphans. Strenuously opposed, also, was the idea that the adoptee would not eventually be given a chance to undo the adoption. The joint communication sought permission for Le-Ezrath Ha-Yeled, the Jewish board of guardians, to report on or intervene in cases of Jewish war orphans. On June 29, 1954, the Second Chamber passed the adoption bill.

Jewish Education

The premiere of a film short entitled Een Eigen Plaats Waard (“Worth a Place of Its Own”) was held in May 1955. The film concerned the work of Dutch Jewish schools, and was to be shown to parents throughout The Netherlands.

ORT courses were attended during 1954–55 by 601 people. Most of those attending courses were unemployed persons seeking to learn a new trade, or people planning to emigrate. There were courses for nineteen separate trades.
Religious Life

There was still a shortage of qualified rabbis. On December 9, 1954, Chief Rabbi Justus Tal died. He had assumed the chief rabbi's post only till a successor could be found. After Rabbi Tal's death an interim group of Amsterdam rabbis was delegated to assume the functions of the chief rabbi.

Rabbi Eliezer Berlinger, who came to The Netherlands from Sweden, took up his post in July 1954, after being installed at a ceremony in Utrecht. As the first rabbi in the general service of the entire Dutch Ashkenazic community, he had a somewhat vague field of work. To remove the uncertainty, Rabbis Aron Schuster (of Amsterdam) and Berlinger met and announced agreement on a division of tasks. Rabbi Berlinger's functions were delineated as principally pastoral, to be exercised wherever there was no rabbi, or with the approval of Rabbi Schuster. In addition, he was to busy himself with cultural tasks such as giving lectures and lessons. But Rabbi Berlinger was empowered to make rabbinical decisions only when Rabbi Schuster was unavailable.

On June 2, 1955, Rabbi Benjamin Benedikt was named to fill the long-standing vacancy as rabbi for The Hague's Jewish (Orthodox) community, but as of July 1955 he had not yet taken up the post.

An authoritative estimate put the number of Ashkenazim in Amsterdam at about 6,000, compared with fewer than 1,000 Sephardic Jews and about 300 Liberal Jews. One official in the Jewish community stated that fewer than 5 per cent of Amsterdam's Jews were in the Sephardic group.

The Amsterdam Israelite religious community gave its final approval to the sale for 500,000 guilders (about $130,000) of the synagogue complex on the Jonas Daniel Meijerplein to the city of Amsterdam. The synagogue and its annexes had been seriously damaged during the war, and the decimated Jewish population was not in a position to restore the property. The original proposal to dispose of the property brought last-ditch opposition from members of the Jewish community who disapproved of the very idea of selling the old shrine, and were concerned about what would be erected in its place if sale proved inevitable. Amsterdam authorities offered assurances that the land on which the synagogue complex was situated would receive a fitting use. In October 1954 the synagogue complex was officially turned over to the city.

In Zutphen the local Jewish congregation bought a private home and installed its synagogue there, to replace the old, damaged synagogue.

Proposals initiated by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion of Israel to revoke the excommunication of Benedict Spinoza were rejected by officials of the Sephardic Jewish community in Amsterdam. It was in the Sephardic synagogue that the excommunication had originally been pronounced. Rabbi Salomon Rodrigues Pereira declared, "No rabbinate has the right to review a decision of previous rabbinates, unless it is greater in number or wiser." He added, "I do not consider myself wiser than those who came before me."

An 11-Sjoelentocht ("11 Synagogue Rally") was held for the second straight year. This auto rally—half sport, half sociability—had proved from its initiation an enormously popular event. Inspiration for the rally was the 11-Stedentocht ("11-Town Rally"), a huge ice-skating race in Friesland hallowed
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by Dutch tradition. The 11-Sjoelentocht was organized by the Jewish Recreation Association of Haarlem. Contestants could start in any one of six places (Amsterdam, Zwolle, Eindhoven, Rotterdam, Haarlem, or The Hague, and were expected not only to touch in at a number of synagogues along the way, but also to answer recondite and occasionally profound questions en route to the finish line.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

From September 11 to September 19, 1954, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Theodor Herzl, Dutch Jews celebrated Israel Week. A series of memorial meetings, featuring guest speakers, was organized in a large number of towns and cities.

Israel Bond Week was held from October 31 through November 6, 1954. Early in May 1955 David Horowitz, head of the Israel State Bank, arrived in Amsterdam for a one-week visit, partly to stimulate the sale of State of Israel Bonds. The Netherlands Bank, which had authorized the sale of 2,000,000 guilders (about $530,000) worth of bonds, issued a second authorization for a like amount. Both issues were sold out, with the Amsterdamsche Bank buying a considerable number for itself and clients. There was considerable investment in the bonds, also, by a number of Jewish charitable trust funds.

On May 18 and 19, 1955, Zionist delegates from Italy, Switzerland, the four Scandinavian lands, and The Netherlands, together with an observer from West Germany, gathered in Amsterdam to probe opportunities for practical international cooperation among Zionists of the smaller European countries. Delegates agreed on an exchange of publications, and on mutual help in Jewish education.

The Netherlands Zionist Federation (NZB) reported that as of December 1, 1954, it had 2,688 members, compared with 2,709 a year earlier. On December 25 and 26, 1954, the NZB held its annual general assembly. The principal controversy at the meeting concerned the responsibilities of Zionists occupying positions in Jewish communal organizations. A majority voted in favor of holding Zionists in communal organizations responsible to the Zionist governing council; a minority held that this was undue interference in a sphere properly outside the scope of the Zionist Federation.

Netherlands Mizrahi held an extraordinary general assembly on January 30, 1954, and adopted a resolution directing its governing body to inform the officers of the NZB that the NZB’s resolution was unacceptable. Furthermore, Mizrahi resolved to take “all steps” to negate the offending resolution.

Subsequent to the passage of the NZB’s controversial resolution, a number of Zionists in communal organizations refused adherence to it, and as a result an extraordinary general assembly of the NZB was called for September 1955.

Collectieve Israëل Actie reported that from October 1, 1953, to September 30, 1954, it had received a total of 479,865.55 guilders (about $125,000) in direct contributions. Of this total, 430,784.20 guilders (about $113,000) resulted from the 1954 campaign.

The Jewish National Fund reported a net income of 114,581.35 guilders (about $30,000) between October 1, 1953 and September 30, 1954.
The problem of training young people for life in Israel was a matter of concern to the Jewish community. The old training centers had proved uninteresting to prospective emigrants, and, practically speaking, only one training center (in Bussum) remained.

The Stichting Hachsjarah en Alijah made public the findings of a survey it conducted during 1954 among 2,200 Jews born between 1922 and 1934 and living in The Netherlands. Some 25 per cent of those who received questionnaires returned them in usable form. In the big cities outside Amsterdam about one-half of those who turned in answers noted that they were active members of at least one Jewish organization. One-third were not, or were no longer active. The percentages were reversed in Amsterdam and the smaller communities. About two-thirds of those who replied indicated that they were living in a “positive” Jewish milieu. Some 40 per cent of those who replied indicated they were seriously considering emigration to Israel. About 13 per cent “wavered.” Of the 40 per cent looking forward to emigration, four-fifths belonged to one or more Jewish organizations. Of the 47 per cent not interested in emigrating to Israel, fewer than one-third were members of Jewish organizations. There was a dearth of prospective emigrants to Israel in the seventeen-to-eighteen-year-old group, which would normally constitute those interested in chalutz training. There was also a shift in the objectives of emigration; fewer emigrants to Israel were going out to live in collective settlements.

Social Services

In its report for 1953, the social section of the Ashkenazic community in Amsterdam reported that it had distributed 2,770 packages to the needy, and had distributed clothes to 429.

Dissatisfaction was expressed at a meeting of the Centrale Commissie of The Netherlands Israeliite religious community with the procedure employed for distributing funds allocated to The Netherlands by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. The Centrale Commissie wanted CJMCAG leaders to hew more closely to Dutch wishes in this matter. In the last week of 1954 it was decided to allocate to The Netherlands $72,100 for social services and $33,992 for cultural purposes.

The Joods Maatschappelijk Werk (JMW) announced an increase to sixty-two in the number of affiliated organizations, active in the care of Jewish orphans, aged, invalid, and indigent persons.

Cultural Activities

September 1954 marked the initial appearance of a youth monthly called Niw-Hanaor, distributed with the Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad, and subsidized by the CJMCAG.

The Stichting Het Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad won control over all shares of Joachimsthal’s Boekhandel, Uitgevers -en Drukkerijbedrijf N.V. All profits from the commercial printing operations of the concern were to be plowed back into the newspaper.
During the period under review (July 1, 1954, through June 30, 1955) political calm continued to prevail in Switzerland, thanks to the excellent state of the Swiss economy. Numerous international congresses and conferences, including that of the Big Four held in Geneva July 18-23, 1955, bore witness that it had been possible to preserve the concept of Swiss neutrality in spite of the existing tensions between the Eastern and Western blocs. The presence of numerous Jewish politicians and journalists from all parts of the world for these conferences offered opportunities for the development of contacts and valuable exchanges of ideas between them and the Jewish population of Switzerland.

Jewish Population

According to the last census, there were 19,048 Jews in 1950 (as compared to 19,429 at the time of the previous census in 1941) out of a total population of 4,700,000. Of these, 6,169 lived in Zurich, where they formed 1.6 per cent of the inhabitants; 2,148, in Geneva (1.8 per cent); 2,471, in Basel (1.3 per cent); 1,009, in Lausanne (0.9 per cent), and 792 in Berne (0.5 per cent). They included 10,735 Swiss citizens and 8,313 persons of other nationalities or stateless. There were 3,587 families in 1950 in which both husband and wife were Jewish, as against 3,572 in 1941; the number of mixed marriages had risen from 775 to 1,240. While the new census figures on the occupational distribution of the Jewish population were not yet available, there had been little change from the situation at the time of the 1941 census (see American Jewish Year Book, 1955 [Vol. 56], p. 278).

The past year saw a further trend toward an aging Jewish population and an increase in the number of mixed marriages. There were 179 births and 288 deaths. Seventy-eight new mixed marriages were contracted during 1954, as against 70 marriages in which both partners were Jewish; in 1953 the respective figures had been 102 and 80. Since 1950, every year except 1952 had seen a predominance of mixed marriages.

Of 1,204 persons admitted to citizenship in 1954, 92 were Jews; in 1953, the 1,141 persons naturalized had included 74 Jews.
Communal Organization

The twenty-six Jewish communities in Switzerland, with a total membership of 3,955 ministered to by thirteen rabbis, continued their religious, philanthropic, and cultural activities. The Jewish community of Basel celebrated its one hundred fiftieth anniversary, and signalized the occasion by laying the financial groundwork for the erection of a Jewish center. Other community centers existed in the major communities of Zurich (three communities with 1,683 members) and Geneva (two communities with about 350 members). The great majority of Swiss Jews were Conservative. There were Orthodox communities in the three chief cities, but no Reform rabbis or congregations. There were only a few dozen Sephardic families altogether.

In 1955 the Schweizerische Israelitische Gemeindebund (SIG), the official representative of Jewish interests, published a report of its year’s activities. A commemorative volume was published. This report contained a detailed account of the past and present of Swiss Jewry. The SIG was represented at the meeting of the World Jewish Congress, and at that of the Consultative Conference of Jewish Organizations held in London from June 12 to June 16, 1955. It also took part in the European conference of the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), which took place in Paris in October 1954.

Heirless Property

In this matter, which had been under discussion since the end of World War II, Jewish representatives proposed that the property be inventoried and, where no legitimate owners could be discovered, turned over to institutions for philanthropic use. Studies were under way to determine whether the problem of heirless property required a change in the Swiss law of inheritance for its solution. The Jewish point of view was that a change in the law could and must be made. The greatest difficulties arose from the obligation of secrecy, which was strictly observed by Swiss banks. The Swiss government stated in April 1955 that it was seeking speedy progress in the negotiations.

Anti-Semitism and Discrimination

Neo-Nazism led a shadow existence in Switzerland, and its publications continued practically unnoticed. But it apparently maintained connections with international Fascist organizations, and the Socialist press rightly asked who financed the activities of these groups and their international conferences in Switzerland. The pamphlets of the anti-Semitic agitator Einar Aberg continued to reach Switzerland from Sweden, and it remained to be seen whether the prison sentence pronounced against Aberg in June 1954 would end his activities.

Aside from the prohibition against kosher slaughter, there had been no official discrimination. There was a certain latent social anti-Semitism, essentially confined to right-wing circles. An anti-Semitic attitude showed itself in parts of a book, *Zeitgenoessische Europaeische Betrachtungen*, by Hans Zur-
linden, who had been consul general in Munich during World War II and later Swiss minister to Moscow. During a world tour of its football team, the Zurich Grasshopper Club was criticized in a radio broadcast in San Francisco in January 1955 for limiting its membership to "Aryans."

The publication in 1953 of the archives of the German foreign office from 1918 on brought to light new facts which were taken up in the press and led to an interpellation in parliament. From the German archives it appeared that the discriminatory "J" stamped in the passports of German Jews in 1938 was the result of a suggestion emanating from Swiss authorities, and that these authorities also agreed to discriminatory German restrictions with respect to the passports of Jewish citizens of Switzerland. In 1954 the Swiss government entrusted an independent scholar, Prof. Carl Ludwig of Basel, with the preparation of an exhaustive report on Swiss refugee policy. The various refugee aid organizations and Jewish groups placed material at Professor Ludwig's disposal. His report was not expected to be ready before the end of 1955.

In September 1954 the Swiss national radio put on a Jewish Evening for the first time, as a contribution to better understanding between Christians and Jews. In cooperation with the appropriate Jewish quarters, it offered a program which permitted a good insight into the Jewish world. Subsequently there were a number of other shorter broadcasts with Jewish content, and all were well received.

Religious and Educational Activities

It was again necessary to import all kosher meat from abroad, as the Federal constitution had since 1893 prohibited the slaughter of cattle without first stunning them. In spite of all technical difficulties, the necessary meat—about 250,000 kilograms—was available regularly and in good quality. There were no disputes over Shechitah.

For Chanukah (December) 1954, a synagogue was opened in the home for the aged, Les Berges du Léman-Maon, at Vevey. It was also to serve the local Jewish community. As the result of representations by Swiss Jewry to the Federal political department, the Swiss observer at the United Nations (UN) informed the UN secretariat that Switzerland was not interested in calendar reform (see p. 194).

Since there were no Jewish private schools, except for Zurich, where one had existed only since 1954, religiously observant Jewish students had had recourse to a dispensation from manual labor on Sabbaths and Holy Days, which had invariably been granted. During 1954–55 the cantons of Basel and Zurich adopted the policy of excusing Seventh Day Adventists and observant Jews from attending school on Saturday altogether.

Social Services

At the end of 1954 the Verband Schweizerischer Juedischer Fluechtlingshilfen (VSJF) was giving financial support to 595 persons, as compared to 650 in 1953 and 9,694 in 1944. It was also assisting about 1,000 individuals in other ways. The total budget of this organization came to 1,732,797 Swiss
francs (about $425,000), as compared to 1,896,954 Swiss francs in 1953. Of this sum, 46 per cent came from the Swiss authorities, 17.6 per cent from Swiss Jewish collections, 17.5 per cent from the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and 18.9 per cent from smaller collections and individual contributions. From 1933 to 1954 the VSJF spent over 70,000,000 Swiss francs ($17,000,000) for Jewish refugees in Switzerland. The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) did not maintain contact with the official Jewish bodies of Switzerland. Funds for assistance of refugees (e.g., for homes for the aged and for subsistence grants) were made available through the JDC. The need for assistance diminished somewhat during 1954–55, because numerous refugees received individual restitution payments and indemnity payments for imprisonment from Germany and, more recently, from Austria as well.

The numerous Jewish welfare organizations (described in the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1955 [Vol. 56], p. 344-45) had no significant difficulty in finding the funds and personnel needed to carry on their work on their usual scale. The third world congress of the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT) took place in Geneva in June 1955, the organization's seventy-fifth anniversary, and attracted a wide attendance both from Switzerland and from other lands. Other international Jewish organizations which maintained offices and carried on activities in Switzerland were the JDC, the World Jewish Congress, and the Oeuvre pour Secours des Enfants Israélites (OSE).

Zionism and Relations with Israel

As in former years, cultural relations with Israel were close and fruitful during 1954–55. Among the numerous political personages who delivered addresses in Switzerland were Labor Minister Golda Myerson, Nahum Goldmann, Keren Kayemeth chairman Abraham Granott, Knesset member Mordecai Nurock, and Justice Minister Pinchas Rosen. A group of three from the Israel Army attended military courses in Switzerland in the autumn of 1954. Among the numerous cultural events may be mentioned the lectures of Elias Auerbach and a lecture delivered by Martin Buber at the University of Zurich which drew wide attention. The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra played in various of the larger cities with great success.

In August 1954 the European seminar of the department of religious education and culture of the Jewish Agency took place in Montreux. Local Zionist organizations in almost all major cities conducted celebrations of Israel Independence Day. As in 1953 the Schweizerische Zionistenerband was able to send a number of children to Israel for the summer holidays of 1954, to work in collective settlements and see the country.

There was no change in the mutual diplomatic representation of Switzerland and Israel. Their economic relations continued on a satisfactory basis. To facilitate trade, the Bank Leumi le-Israel made an agreement with one of the leading Swiss banks which was expected to make possible the financing of at least 5,000,000 additional francs (approximately $1,250,000) worth of Swiss exports to Israel.
YOUTH

In recent years, youth work had received increased attention. The organizations and communities had established numerous youth camps, and regarded contact with the youth groups and assistance to their activities as a field of work which, if somewhat neglected in the past, was urgent in view of the process of progressive assimilation taking place in Switzerland. The most important youth groups were the Orthodox Bachad, with 200 members; the Aguda youth, with 250; the liberal scout organization Brit Hatzofim-Emunah, with 140; and the leftist Hashomir Hatzair, with 150. There were also the politically and religiously neutral groups: the athletic and sport organization Maccabi, with 1,326 members, and the Verband Juedischer Studenten, with 270. The activities of the various groups were financed by the contributions of the members and their parents, and by subsidies from the various Jewish organizations. The ban on subsidies to the Hashomir Hatzair, imposed in 1952 because of its irreligious attitude, was removed during 1954–55. Jewish groups were also giving special attention to the unorganized “delinquent” youth. The individual groups held encampments during the summer and winter holidays; the SIG, in accordance with its annual practice since 1950, held an all-Switzerland youth assembly at Pentecost. This very successfully brought together over 500 young people between the ages of thirteen and eighteen from all parts of Switzerland for two days of games, dancing, singing, athletic contests, an enthusiastic campfire, lectures, and discussions.

Fund Raising

The annual collection for Jewish refugee and postwar assistance brought in about 250,000 francs ($62,500). The Aktion Israel raised almost 800,000 francs. The sale of Israel bonds in the period of a year and a half beginning with the summer of 1954 reached the unexpectedly high total of 6,500,000 Swiss francs ($1,625,000). In Switzerland these bonds were sold by a private committee, with its own office, and three large banks handled the registration of title and payment of coupons.

The Women’s International Zionist Organization (WIZO), which was also active in the cultural field, raised 230,000 francs ($56,000), about the same as in 1953–54. In connection with its jubilee ORT for the first time conducted a fund drive in Switzerland, and raised 280,000 francs ($70,000). There were no significant independent drives, and the arrangement introduced after World War II, by which all collections had to be reported to the SIG and the first six months of the year were reserved for Israel and Zionist purposes, the last six months for Swiss and other drives, continued in effect.

Cultural Activities

The organizations active in the cultural field in Switzerland were described in the American Jewish Year Book, 1954 (Vol. 55, p. 225-26). During 1954–55 these organizations again offered a rich program of art exhibits, musical
performances, and other cultural events. In Zurich, Geneva, and Basel, Jewish cultural programs were available almost nightly.

The seven hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the death of Maimonides was commemorated by the Jewish communities and numerous non-Jewish philosophical societies. The Swiss Rabbinerverband published a memorial pamphlet, *Moses Maimonides*, 1955, by Rabbi A. Weil.

Willy Guggenheim's *Zur Soziologie der Einwanderung nach Israel*, a doctoral study at the University of Zurich, was published by the Juedische Buchgemeinde of Zurich. Other publications of Jewish interest included Guglielmo Ferrero, by the Geneva philosopher and historian Josue Jehouda, and the German edition of Cecil Roth's *History of the Jews*.

**Personalia**

Grand Rabbi J. Kaplan of Geneva received the Officer's Cross of the French Legion of Honor in July 1954. Prof. Paul Guggenheim, former chairman of the SIG, was appointed to teach international law at the University of Geneva in June 1955. Prof. Felix Bloch, a native of Switzerland and winner of the Nobel Prize in 1952, resigned as director of the European Organization for Atomic Research in Geneva to return to teaching in July 1955.

Death took Felix Stoessinger, who had come to Switzerland as a refugee in 1942, and in a short time had made a reputation as a historian of literature and a publicist, on September 1, 1954; Gustav Bernheim, co-founder and president of the Jewish sanatorium Etania in Davos, and for many years active in the field of tubercular care, on January 17, 1955; Jules Wolff, for more than sixty years a rabbi at La Chaux-de-Fonds, on January 29, 1955; Leo Hersch, professor of statistics at the University of Geneva and a scholarly participant in many Jewish cultural organizations, on June 9, 1955; and Max Ruda, an official of the Orthodox community of Zurich and president of the Israelitischer Religionslehrer- und Kantorverband, on June 10, 1955.

**ITALY**

**DURING THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW (JULY 1, 1954, TO JUNE 30, 1955)**

Italy continued to be governed by the Christian Democrats in coalition with the small Social Democratic and Liberal parties. The government was caught between the pressure of unresolved social problems and the opposition to land and tax reform of right-wing groups, including part of Prime Minister Mario Scelba's own Christian Democratic Party.

The left wing of the Christian Democrats began to talk about an "opening to the left" as a way out of this impasse. This meant a coalition with the Socialist Party of Pietro Nenni. This idea received considerable encouragement from Nenni, but at his party's congress he made it clear that he had no intention of breaking his alliance with the Communists.

The split within the Christian Democratic Party affected the Presidential
election when Cesare Merzagora, supported by Scelba, lost to President Giovanni Gronchi of the Chamber of Deputies, the most prominent of the left-wing Christian Democrats. Since Gronchi was a leading advocate of collaboration with the Nenni Socialists, they and the Communists assured his election by throwing their support to him on the final ballot.

In the June 1955 elections for the Sicilian regional parliament, the Christian Democrats increased their seats from thirty to thirty-seven, but at the expense of the smaller center parties. The Socialist-Communist alliance failed to gain in strength, but did retain its previous thirty seats. In the north, meanwhile, the Communists and their allies lost ground, as indicated by their defeats in shop steward elections in several plants, notably the Fiat works in Turin. Some observers believed that a major factor in this was the American policy of refusing off shore procurement contracts to plants with Communist-led unions.

No significant progress was made toward reducing unemployment, estimated at about 2,000,000. However, hopes were raised with the announcement of the Vanoni Plan, named after its author, Ezio Vanoni, minister of the budget, and submitted to the Office for European Economic Cooperation in January 1955. Vanoni estimated that in the period 1955–64 there would be, in addition to 2,200,000 presently unemployed or underemployed industrial workers, another 2,000,000 from natural increase, and 1,300,000 new urban workers coming from agriculture. He assumed that during the ten-year period, 800,000 would emigrate, and postulated a "normal" unemployment of 700,000. Thus, he foresaw the need to create 4,000,000 new jobs. He proposed to do this by expanding Italy's productive capacity at an annual rate of 5 per cent. The necessary investment capital, a total of about $55,000,000,000, would be found in part by redirecting money now being invested in nonproductive items, and in part through a 60 per cent increase in exports.

As of April 1954 the occupational distribution of Jews in the Roman ghetto was: merchants, 47 per cent; peddlers, 22 per cent; employers and pensioners, 17 per cent; professionals, 8 per cent; artisans, 1 per cent; and others, 5 per cent.

Community Organization

The approximately 33,000 Italian Jews were organized in twenty-three communities; these ranged from Gorizia, with a membership of 70, to Milan and Rome, with 6,000 and 12,000 respectively. A law of 1930, enacted at the request of the Jewish leadership, gave these communities the power to tax their members. The council of the community, elected by the taxpayers, determined the amount each member was obliged to pay. Provision was made for appeals to a special committee of the council. After this committee had rendered its decision, the member was obliged to pay or resign from the community. The twenty-three communities were organized in the Unione delle Communità Israelitiche, recognized by law as the official voice of Italian Jewry.

One of the Unione's functions was to defend the community against anti-Semitism, but happily it had relatively little to do in this area during the period under review. A young man who was apparently mentally unbalanced...
defaced a memorial plaque in front of the Genoa synagogue, writing "Death to the Jews" and "Heil Hitler." He was immediately arrested and the city of Genoa restored the plaque to its original condition. Only one piece of anti-Semitic literature came to the attention of the Unione; a pamphlet called Triangolo Tragico: Ebraismo, Massoneria e Comunismo. It was written, published, and distributed by the author, who signed himself "Vermijon." The author was well known to the Unione, having published a rehash of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion in 1951. He had no organized support and little apparent influence.

The Unione again expressed the concern of Italian Jewry at the possible effects of German rearmament, by sending telegrams to the Big Four prior to the Geneva Conference held July 18-23, 1955. It urged the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on November 9, 1954, not to admit Rumania until that country altered its treatment of Zionist leaders. On December 15, 1954, the Unione also asked the then Italian President, Luigi Einaudi, to intervene with the Egyptians in an effort to save the lives of the three Jews charged with spying for Israel.

Jewish Education

Most of the larger Jewish communities maintained full-time Jewish schools, feeling compelled to do so because the public schools required attendance on Saturdays, and because of the teaching of Catholicism in the schools. By the concordat of 1929 between the Vatican and the Italian government (confirmed in the Italian constitution adopted in 1947) it had been agreed that the teaching of religion would be a part of the public school curriculum. A new decree on elementary education, issued by the government in June 1955, referring to the program for the first and second grades, stated:

Religious instruction should be considered as the foundation and summit of the entire educational activity. School life should start each day with prayers . . ., followed by a brief religious song, or by listening to a simple piece of holy music. In the course of the period, the teacher will hold simple discussions on the sign of the cross, on the best-known prayers, on the events of the Old Testament, and the episodes of the life of Jesus derived from the Gospel.

Above the first two grades, religious instruction was to be formal, with a specific time set aside when teaching was conducted by a priest. Non-Catholics could be excused from these classes. Protestant leaders asked that their children be permitted to come late in order to miss the customary prayers with which the school day began, but the school authorities refused on the ground that this would disrupt the school program.

The Unione favored the elimination of all religious teaching in public schools and opposed the adoption of the constitution in its present form. However, recognizing that since Italy was overwhelmingly Catholic there was little hope of changing the situation in the foreseeable future, the leaders of the Unione had chosen to put their emphasis on the argument that the Jewish and Protestant religious communities were at a disadvantage in being
forced to pay for religious teaching which the Catholic community got from the state.

Of the eight communities that operated full-time Jewish schools, five received some help from the government. The Rome community received a grant from the government which covered about 25 per cent of the total cost of operating its school of eight grades. Trieste received a grant equal to 20 per cent of its school budget. On the other hand, Milan received no help with its $50,000 expenditure for a school program beginning with kindergarten and going through liceo, the equivalent of an American high school. The decision seemed to depend on the local situation. In Rome the crowded state of public schools would make it difficult to absorb the Jewish children if the community should abandon its program, while in Milan the school authorities felt quite able to provide for the number of children attending the Jewish school. Table 1 shows the communities which operated Jewish schools,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Years of Education</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genoa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leghorn</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trieste</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,353</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the number of years of education offered, and the number of children who attended during the academic year 1954–55.

The community of Rome reported a total of 1,680 children between the ages of six and fourteen, of whom 610 were attending Jewish schools, or approximately 36 per cent. Turin reported 129 children attending school from a total child population of the same age group of 160, or some 80 per cent. It was estimated that the 297 children attending Jewish schools in Milan represented some 54 per cent of Jewish children of school age in that city. To give Jewish children in outlying communities an opportunity to attend a Jewish school, the community of Milan had opened a boarding-house in 1953 which cared for forty-five children.

Most schools provided a lunch for their students. They were enabled to improve the quality of these lunches through the provision of United States Department of Agriculture surplus foods, made available through the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) beginning in August 1954. In addition, in March 1955 the JDC and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) gave a grant of $5,000. A total of 1,085 children in kindergartens and Jewish schools (including the Organization for Re-
habilitation Through Training—ORT school in Rome) participated in this program.

The Unione, with the aid of a grant of $3,200 from the JDC and the CJMCAG, gave scholarship grants to forty-nine needy university students.

**Vocational Education**

ORT operated schools in Milan and Rome. During 1954–55 the Milan school had a total of eighty-seven students enrolled in its courses for television mechanics, dental technicians, and automobile mechanics. The Rome school had an enrolment of 100 students in what was the equivalent of an American vocational junior high school. In addition, 200 were enrolled in short courses of about nine months' duration. Also, the ORT gave several hours of manual training weekly to children in Jewish schools throughout Italy.

**Religious Activity**

Of the twenty-three Jewish communities, fourteen had rabbis. Florence, with a Jewish population of 1,500, had not been able to fill its vacancy. The Rabbinical College of the Unione continued in operation and had eleven students attending. To raise the level of teaching, arrangements were made to bring two teachers from Israel in the fall of 1955. Nevertheless, the Unione felt that the cost of an adequate faculty was beyond the means of such a relatively small community, and continued to urge the establishment of a rabbinical seminary in Israel or somewhere in Europe, specifically for the purpose of training rabbis for the small surviving communities of Western Europe. The leadership was also concerned about the difficulty of interesting young men in entering the rabbinate, since in all but the two largest communities salaries were very low.

**Social Services**

With a grant of 28,000,000 lire ($45,000) from the JDC and the CJMCAG in March 1955, the communities were able substantially to increase their help to needy persons. This amount was added to the 19,000,000 ($30,000) lire which the various communities were able to raise locally and was distributed among 1,200 persons, most of whom were aged and chronic sick.

Homes for the aged were maintained by seven communities, and provided care for a total of 275 old persons. Thirty-one of these were refugees, placed and paid for by the JDC. Table 2 indicates the location and population of these homes.

Because of the high level of self-employment among Jews, they benefited less from the public health insurance program than did the general population. To provide medical services to the uninsured needy, the Jewish health organization, Organizzazione Sanitaria Ebraica—Assistenza all'Infanzia—OSE operated clinics in Rome and Milan which served approximately 1,800 and 600 patients respectively. The Jewish community of Rome also maintained a thirty-five-bed hospital and a twelve-bed maternity clinic.
TABLE 2
HOMES FOR THE AGED, ITALY, 1954–55

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Persons Cared For</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florence</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mantua</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turin</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trieste</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>258</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OSE also operated three summer camps, serving a total of 779 children, during the summer of 1954. Of these, 324 attended a day camp near Rome, and 455 were in two overnight camps.

On its entire program of medical service and child care, OSE spent a total of $77,000 in 1954. Of this, $33,000 was given by the JDC and the CJMCAG in March 1955. The rest was raised in Italy and included a grant of $25,000 from the government.

Refugees

The number of refugees still in Italy was estimated at between 1,500 and 2,000. JDC had to provide full care for approximately 600 of them. Relief grants and medical care for this group cost almost $300,000 for 1954–55. Some help was given by the Italian government and by the United States Escapee Program, but over 90 per cent of the cost was borne by JDC. Of these 600 persons, JDC estimated that about half would eventually emigrate, but the others would require assistance for the rest of their lives. Emigration and death removed 150 persons from the relief rolls during 1954–55, but this was almost balanced by applications from refugees who previously had succeeded in earning their own livelihood but were compelled to ask for help when sickness and advancing age made this no longer possible.

Relations with Israel

The commercial agreement concluded between Israel and Italy in March 1954 had to be extended for another year, because neither the purchase of $9,000,000 worth of Italian goods by Israel, nor the sale of $3,000,000 worth of Israel goods to Italy, could be completed. The Arab countries, through their legations in Rome, brought great pressure on the Italian foreign ministry and threatened Italian manufacturers and importers with a boycott if they dealt with Israel. Israel spokesman claimed to have been able to convince both the foreign ministry and Italian businessmen that Italy's long-term commercial interests would be best served by resisting the boycott.

Israel was represented in the Bari Fair, the Industrial Exhibition in Milan, and the Venice Biennial Art Exhibit.

As part of its European tour, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra played in the major Italian cities and had a special audience with the Pope.
Despite Arab protests during 1954–55, the Italian government accepted a small number of Israel students for training in its schools for Air Force and Naval Officers. Approximately forty other Israelis were enrolled in various Italian universities.

Plans to sell Israel Bonds in Italy were being developed, but as of July 1955, had not yet received the approval of the Italian government.

**Cultural Activity**

The Unione continued the publication of its monthly *La Rassegna Mensile d'Israel* and its weekly *Aspetti e Problemi dell'Ebraismo*. Both were edited by Prof. Dante Lattes.

A national Jewish weekly, *Israel*, though privately owned, received a subsidy from the Unione. Most of its space was devoted to news of Israel, but it also covered Italian Jewish life. Monthly community bulletins were published by the communities of Rome and Milan.

Several organizations issued monthly bulletins, which were distributed with the newspaper *Israel*. These included the Federazione Giovanile Ebraica Italiana's *Hatikvah*, the Youth Aliyah's *Ha-Noar*, and *Le Nostre Instituzioni*, published by the United Fund for Roman Jewish Welfare Institutions (RUPIER).


**SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES**

During 1954–55 Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland all continued firmly democratic. Sweden, Denmark, and Norway had moderate Social Democratic governments. In Finland, the Communists were relatively strong, but had no part in the government, which was a coalition of Social Democrats, Agrarians, and various minor groups. Any Finnish government, however, had to take account of the proximity of the Soviet Union and the special position which it had under the peace treaties.

**Jewish Population**

Of the 23,000 Jews in the four countries, Sweden had about 13,500, in a total population of 7,200,000. In Denmark there were about 6,500 Jews in a population of 4,300,000. Of Finland's 4,000,000 people, about 1,800 were Jews, while only 900 Jews lived in Norway, whose population was about 3,250,000. Of the Swedish Jews, about 6,000, almost 50 per cent, lived in Stockholm. The others were scattered all over the country. They preferred
to settle in the larger towns such as Gothenburg and Malmö, or medium-sized and smaller towns, where newcomers could earn a livelihood as artisans or textile or metal workers. In the rather sparsely populated northern districts there were only occasional Jews. Whereas prior to World War II there had been a steady flow to the cities, a reverse movement could be observed after the end of the war, when newcomers began to settle in small towns. Now immigrants were again tending towards large towns, where they hoped to find closer contact with Jewish surroundings. About 80 per cent of Denmark's Jews lived in the capital, Copenhagen; in Finland about 40 per cent were in Helsinki, and in Norway about one-third in Oslo.

Migration

The only significant emigration from Scandinavia was from Sweden, from which small groups still went to the United States, and occasionally to other destinations. Since 1945 approximately 10,000 persons, mostly originating from eastern countries, had emigrated from Sweden, but only 150 persons (130 of whom were bound for the United States) left between July 1, 1954, and June 30, 1955, with the joint assistance of the Jewish communities and United HIAS Service. To this number may be added perhaps 20 who emigrated without help from organizations, mostly to Israel. In the three other countries, a few emigrants to Israel were also reported.

Immigration was negligible. Occasionally persons who had next of kin in Sweden were granted entry permits. Illegal immigration from eastern countries had practically ceased. Often close relatives were separated. Those settled in Scandinavia had no wish to return to their former homes in eastern countries, and their relatives could not obtain exit permits, although no obstacle to their immigration was raised at the Scandinavian end. There had been a few cases of persons who had resided in Sweden, emigrated to Israel, and then re-emigrated to Sweden.

It should, however, be mentioned that the immigration of more Displaced Persons (DP's) from Germany to Norway was expected shortly. The number of these new arrivals had not yet been determined. Sweden was also willing in principle to receive a new group of DP's. At the time of writing (July 1955) a committee stationed in Germany and Austria was preparing the road for immigration to Sweden by an unspecified number of these persons.

Occupational Status

Scandinavian Jews worked in almost every profession. Post-1945 immigration had resulted in a more varied occupational structure in the Jewish community, as the newcomers were to a large extent artisans and skilled workers, a group hitherto absent.

Discrimination and Anti-Semitism

Group anti-Semitism was practically nonexistent, owing to the fundamental democratic attitude of the Scandinavian countries. Isolated attempts at propa-
ganda in Sweden and Denmark, apparently instigated by foreign student circles, had been rejected by the bulk of the students. A weekly called *Fria Ord* ("Free Speech"), not openly anti-Semitic but with a distinct Fascist tendency, had only a few subscribers and practically no advertisements and was in the second year of its publication in Stockholm. The publication was not expected to enjoy a long lease of life.

Discussions of Einar Aberg, who attracted occasional notice abroad—though not in Sweden—through his anti-Semitic publications, subsided after he was first fined and then sentenced to imprisonment in June 1954 by the Stockholm court.

In public life Jews were granted equal treatment with other citizens.

Community Organization and Communal Affairs

The official organization of the communities had remained unchanged in the four countries. The Religious Liberty Act which came into force in Sweden on January 1, 1952, had had no unfavorable result. Only a few persons—23 in Stockholm during 1954—had left the community, and none of them adopted the Christian faith. There had been a few new registrations in the Jewish communities by persons who had arrived since 1945 (160 persons in 1954).

A Central Council of Swedish Jewish Communities and a similar Finnish group were provisionally established in Stockholm and Helsinki respectively, to keep up contact between the different communities, but it was not planned to give these bodies any policy-making authority. Eventually, however, these organizations might develop broader functions.

In connection with the allocation of funds from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG), Jews who had arrived since 1945 founded the Förbundet Judiska Nazioffer i Sverige (Association of Jewish Nazi Victims in Sweden) in the fall of 1954. Together with the local Zionist Federation and the World Jewish Congress (Swedish section), in the spring of 1955, this association formed a Joint Committee which made certain demands for participation in the social and cultural aspects of community life. After negotiations in which the Paris office of the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) acted as mediator, an agreement was reached in May 1955 to the effect that a proportionate number of the Joint Committee members would participate in the Stockholm community's social and cultural activities.

In contrast to the Association of Nazi Victims, the Emigrants Self-Help Society, which was founded in 1938, and whose members were almost exclusively German Jews, was a purely charitable and social society without any political object.

Two other organizations in Stockholm were the Chenuch Association, which was concerned with the furtherance of Jewish education, and the Judisk Forum, an assembly of Liberal Jews.

Community organization had not changed in Denmark, Finland, and Norway, whereas in Sweden, owing to the relatively large number of newcomers, its development was still proceeding. No new associations had been founded,
but in about 20 medium and small Swedish towns Jewish associations, clubs, and societies for the promotion of Jewish cultural and community life with anywhere from 10 to 100 members had been established that were capable of forming the nucleus of future congregations.

**Jewish Education**

Copenhagen (Denmark) had a century-old Jewish elementary school for boys and girls, with seven classes where special attention was paid to religious instruction. Apart from this, there were a supplementary religious school and two Jewish kindergartens.

Helsinki (Finland) had a state-authorized Jewish elementary school with 114 pupils. There were also religious schools in Helsinki and Åbo. In Norway there were schools for religious instruction in Oslo and Trondheim.

The various communities in Sweden maintained schools for religious and general Jewish education where Biblical and Jewish history and the Hebrew language were taught. In the fall of 1955 a parochial all-day school was to open with the first grade; it was planned to add a further class each succeeding year. The kindergarten, founded in September 1953, was well attended. New kindergartens were being established in Gothenburg, Malmö, and Borås.

**Religious Life**

Religious life in Scandinavia was mainly centered in the large towns: Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö, and Norrköping in Sweden; Copenhagen in Denmark; Helsinki, Åbo, and Tammerfors in Finland; Oslo and Trondheim in Norway. The few private Orthodox congregations were part of the principal congregations.

In Gothenburg Rabbi Hermann Löb had retired; he was succeeded by a younger man, Dr. Josef Falir, a rabbi trained in Germany who had emigrated to Israel before World War II.

**Ritual Slaughter**

In Sweden the question of ritual slaughter had finally been settled with the introduction of electric shock anaesthesia. In Denmark the Jews had been exempted from the otherwise compulsory use of anaesthesia for slaughtering. In Norway only small cattle might be slaughtered by the electric anaesthesia method, but kosher meat imported from Denmark and Sweden had been secured. In Finland there were no regulations restricting ritual slaughter.

**Zionism and Relations with Israel**

General interest in Israel was helping to bridge the former disunion between Zionists and non-Zionists in Scandinavia. The difference between a Scandinavian Zionist and a non-Zionist Israeli sympathizer had assumed more
of a theoretical than a practical character. During 1954–55 a total of about $125,000 was collected in Sweden for Israel, about $30,000 in Denmark, about $65,000 in Finland, and about $30,000 in Norway. The official Israel diplomatic representation had no influence on the local community life. The Christian population's interest in Israel's development was noteworthy. Considerable amounts were contributed by non-Jews for special purposes (the building of hospitals, children's homes, and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem).

Social Service

In the four Scandinavian capitals there were modern homes for old people. In Stockholm, a nursing home for the aged was to be established within the next few years. Fifty per cent of the funds were to be provided out of CJMCAG grants, and 50 per cent by the Stockholm community. It was hoped to carry out this building project during the course of 1955–56.

The communities' social help schemes were financed out of their own means. In Sweden and Norway the CJMCAG made considerable contributions for social relief to newcomers. Sweden had to deal with special conditions, owing to the relatively large number of newcomers whose health was still impaired as an after-effect of the concentration camps. Over 150 persons—mostly tuberculosis patients—were still in sanatoria. Many hundreds more were only partly fit for work and might need assistance for a number of years. In view of this, the CJMCAG contribution, which amounted to about $45,000 in 1954, was increased to roughly $160,000 for 1955, a sum which also included aid for cultural and religious purposes. Besides, the JDC and the communities themselves contributed considerable amounts for assistance to newcomers. Social help consisted for the most part of regular or occasional subsidies to needy persons, assistance in economic rehabilitation, and professional training, scholarships, etc.

Individual restitution claims against Germany in the four Scandinavian states were handled by a United Restitution Office in Stockholm which had already arranged payments in over 100 cases. There were, however, complaints about the slowness and bureaucratic attitude of the German restitution and indemnification authorities.

The necessary transportation expenses for the small number of emigrants were borne by United HIAS Service.

Cultural Activities

The very active Union of Scandinavian Jewish Youth Associations formed a strong bond among the young people of the four Scandinavian states. The various groups carried on an active program of lectures, discussions about general Jewish problems, and social gatherings, besides arranging an annual youth encampment and an annual Young People's Congress.

The B'nai B'rith, which until World War II had existed only in Copenhagen, had been considerably expanded. New B'nai B'rith lodges had been founded in Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö in Sweden, as well as in
Oslo, Norway (in the summer of 1955). Scandinavian lodges had some 450 members, of whom approximately 140 were in Copenhagen, 130 in Stockholm, 140 in Gothenburg and Malmö, and 40 in Oslo.

The *Judisk Tidskrift* ("Jewish Journal"), founded in Sweden by the late Chief Rabbi Marcus Ehrenpreis, was being continued by the historian Hugo Valentin. Because of its high standard, this monthly was also highly regarded in non-Jewish circles. There were also the *Judisk Krönik* ("Jewish Chronicle"), a bi-monthly Zionist periodical, and the *Församlingsbladet*, the Stockholm community's official paper, which appeared six times a year. *Vår Röst* ("Our Voice"), a periodical published by the World Jewish Congress, had been replaced by *Aktuellt* ("Current News"), published by the Stockholm community and appearing five or six times a year. It dealt mainly with the problems of recent immigrants.

In Denmark there were the Zionist monthly *Israel* and the official monthly community paper *Det Mosaiske Troesamfund*.

At a Paris Conference in April 1955, the Jewish section of the Royal Library in Copenhagen was selected as the central library for all Jewish libraries in Europe. Head of this section of the Royal Library was Rafael Edelmann, whose book *Jewish Mysticism* was published during 1954-55.


**Personalia**

Deaths during 1954-55 included the manufacturer Marcus Kaplan, for many years member of the Stockholm Jewish community's Representation Assembly and an ardent Zionist (July 30, 1954); Leopold Levin, for many years member of the Council and Chairman of the Jewish Community in Malmö (June 14, 1955); Dr. Alfred Peyser, until 1939 a well known and much consulted throat specialist in Berlin and former chairman of the Jewish Liberal Community there (July 8, 1955), and Rabbi A. I. Jacobson of the Orthodox Synagogue of Stockholm (February 2, 1955).

Wilhelm Michaeli

**GREECE**

The period from July 1954 to June 1955 was one of inflation and political unrest in Greece. The price rise set off by the devaluation of April 1953 continued at a rate of approximately one per cent a month, so that by the summer of 1955 the cost of living had risen more than 40 per cent since devaluation. The drachma sold at only a negligible discount against the dollar on the free market—as had indeed been the case even before it was devalued.
by a half in 1953. But because of the rising price level, the drachma's purchasing power was one-fifth less than that of its dollar equivalent in the United States. Wages, despite periodic readjustments, lagged behind the price level. This was particularly true in the case of the unskilled workers who, because of continued large-scale unemployment, had little bargaining power and often worked for well below the legal minimum wages of $1.27 a day for men and $0.93 a day for women. The cost of living of this group, according to the index compiled by the pro-government newspaper *Vima*, also rose much more than that of its more prosperous compatriots, to some 50 per cent above the pre-devaluation level. Skilled workers, who were on the whole in short supply, were usually able to take advantage of the boom in industrial production set off by devaluation to maintain or improve their position. Farm prices also lagged behind industrial prices, but bumper crops, and the fact that there was a market for all they produced, substantially raised the income of most peasants. Industrial production was 40 per cent higher than it had been before devaluation, but the boom was clearly tapering off, if not on the verge of collapse. Inventories were rising, financed by a steady increase in bank credit, and bankruptcies were becoming more frequent, particularly in provincial industrial towns. The balance of trade, which had improved sharply after devaluation, was again beginning to show signs of deteriorating.

**Political Background**

Politically, the rightist government of the Greek Rally was wearing out its welcome. In the national elections of November 1952, it had obtained 49 per cent of the votes and four-fifths of the seats in Parliament. Despite splits which had led about half the members of the original Rally cabinet to go into opposition, the Rally still had an impressive parliamentary majority. But in the country the government's position was undermined by the rising cost of living, a widespread feeling that its policies favored the rich and special groups, a number of scandals, the squabbles of various Rally factions, and developments in the international field. The result was that in the nominally nonpartisan municipal elections of November 1954 outspokenly anti-government candidates were victorious in all the major cities and towns, usually by fairly substantial margins. In most cases, the winning candidates were supported by coalitions whose components included both the entire center and democratic left and the Communist-influenced Union of the Democratic Left (EDA). Except in some industrial suburbs, the mayors elected were almost certainly not Communist. (Thus the new mayor of Athens, General Pausanias Katsotas, had been minister of the interior in the government which suppressed the Communist revolt of 1944-45.) But in most cases the Communists had furnished the initiative, most of the organization, and a substantial segment of the votes for the victorious coalitions. In Salonika, for instance, the successful ticket polled 57 per cent of the vote; in a parliamentary by-election some months earlier, the EDA candidate had polled over 35 per cent. It was the apparent Communist purpose to carry this improvised unity into national politics, and to organize a Popular Front
for the parliamentary elections due in 1956. Democratic center and left elements were wary of such an alliance, but so great was their bitterness against the government, and against what they regarded as overt American intervention on behalf of the right in 1952, that many of them were tempted. United States Ambassador Cavendish Cannon issued a warning against a Popular Front in an interview with the pro-government newspaper Katemerini on April 3, 1955. But since he coupled it with praise for the government’s accomplishments, many oppositionists drew the conclusion that the ambassador was opposed to a Popular Front because it would lead to the government’s defeat, and even pro-government newspapers criticized his intervention. The death of Field Marshal Alexander Papagos in October 1955 seemed likely to precipitate a political crisis which could in any case not be postponed for long. His successor as premier, Constantine Karamanlis, was by no means certain of solid support in the Rally, and was expected to call new general elections early in 1956, instead of waiting for November of that year, when the Parliament’s mandate expired.

Cyprus Issue

Much Greek attention and feeling centered on the issue of Cyprus. This island near the Turkish coast had a population about four-fifths of which spoke Greek and belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church. It was, however, ruled by Great Britain, which had obtained it by cession from Turkey and had made it into a major military base. The military importance of Cyprus was increased by Britain’s evacuation of Palestine and Suez. There had long been a more or less widespread movement for union between Cyprus and Greece, called “Enosis”; indeed, in the first World War Britain had offered the island to the Greek King Constantine if he would enter the war on the side of the Allies, but he had refused. However, Enosis did not become an important issue until after the second World War, when the Communists raised it to counteract right-wing territorial demands on Bulgaria and Albania. The rightist and center groups could not afford to let the Communists outdo them in national claims, so the demand for Cyprus was adopted by all parties. The issue simmered with occasional outbreaks, until the Papagos government brought it to a head by raising it in the United Nations (UN). Here it was buried on British insistence (with United States support) that it was an internal problem outside the UN’s jurisdiction. Meanwhile, the Greek government and the Cypriot Archbishop Makarios had roused feeling in both Greece and Cyprus by a high-pressure campaign of publicity. In Greece, demonstrations resulted which went beyond what the government had intended; on a number of occasions, British and American offices were attacked. In August 1955 a conference of Britain, Greece, and Turkey (which for strategic reasons and in the interests of the Turkish minority on Cyprus objected to Enosis) failed to achieve any result. It was followed in September by violent anti-Greek riots in Turkey, in which many members of the Greek minority were injured and millions of dollars worth of Greek property was destroyed. This produced an intense popular reaction in Greece, which took on a violently anti-American tone after Secretary of State John Foster Dulles
sent the two countries identical communications urging them to maintain close relations in the interests of The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Balkan Alliance of Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia, despite the latter's efforts at intercession between her allies, seemed to have lost any significance. Greece refused to take part in scheduled NATO maneuvers, and there was talk of her withdrawing from NATO altogether. Most opposition groups urged that Greece do so, although it was possible that their positions might change if they actually came to power in the coming elections.

There were no specifically Jewish issues in the municipal elections. A few Jewish candidates ran on various tickets, but none was elected. In Athens, with the largest Jewish community in the country, the various mayoralty candidates made a point of expressing their friendship for the Jews. In Salonika, one of the factors which helped to cause the defeat of the pro-government candidate was the charge that he had been a collaborationist during the Nazi occupation.

**Jewish Population**

The Jewish population of Greece before the war was estimated at 75,500 persons. Of these, 64,300 lived in the Macedonian and Thracian areas acquired as a result of the Balkan wars of 1912–13; in the rest of the country, known as Sterea Hellas or Old Greece, there were about 11,200 Jews. During World War II, Greece was originally divided into areas of German, Bulgarian, and Italian occupation. Later, the Germans took over the Italian-occupied areas. Macedonia and Thrace, with the great majority of the Jewish population, were in the German and Bulgarian areas of occupation. Only a tiny percentage of their Jews survived. The Italians, on the other hand, protected the Jews in the territories they occupied, and many were able to escape to the mountains or to go into hiding before the Germans took over from the Italians. In these areas, about half the Jews were able to survive. There was also something of a shift of survivors from New Greece to Old Greece, and from the smaller communities to Athens. Table 1 gives an approximate idea of the effect of war and postwar developments on the Jewish population of various centers. It should be borne in mind that many of the figures are estimates, and that there were small numbers of Jews who survived concentration camps or escaped abroad and either returned to Greece later than 1945 or did not return at all.

Thus in 1955 Athens overshadowed the other Jewish communities; almost half the Jews of Greece lived in the capital. Salonika, once the political and cultural center of Sephardic Jewry and for centuries a predominantly Jewish city, now had only a tiny remnant of its former Jewish community; Jews now formed less than one per cent of its population. In Greece as a whole, the Jewish population before the war had been about one per cent of the total; in 1955 it was about one-twelfth of one per cent.

The 1955 Jewish population of about six thousand was numerically fairly stable, aside from emigration. Births approximately balanced deaths, and the age distribution of the community was more or less normal. Emigration since
the war had totaled about three thousand, of whom approximately two-thirds went to Israel and one-third to other countries, chiefly the United States. A small number had emigrated to Brazil in the last few years, and a trickle of emigrants to that country—largely relatives of those already there—continued. Emigration to Israel had almost stopped, but emigration to the United States continued under the Refugee Relief Act. Processing of applicants, which had previously been very slow, was speeded up somewhat toward the end of the period under review (July 1, 1954, through June 30, 1955).
ECONOMIC SITUATION

Economically, the Jews of Greece had largely recovered from the effects of the war. They were distributed among numerous occupations, but were especially active in the textile, garment, and jewelry industries, as well as in commerce and the free professions. None was prominent in political life, but a few held high posts in the civil service. Whereas immediately after the war only an estimated 2 per cent of the surviving Jews had been completely self-supporting, in 1954 only about 10 per cent required assistance. The rehabilitation of Greek Jewry was substantially assisted by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), by the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT) school established in 1948, and by the fact that as early as 1946 Greece had made provision for full restitution to survivors. The revolving loan fund established by the JDC had been particularly valuable in aiding Jews to reestablish themselves in businesses of their own. This fund, originally $300,000, had been reduced by successive devaluations of the currency to a 1955 value of $100,000.

Community Organization

The various Jewish communities in Greece were organized into the Central Council of Jewish Communities. This body served mainly to channel the funds received from the JDC and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) to the individual communities, and to represent Greek Jews in their official relations with the government. In addition, an organization called OPAIE had been set up under a special law to handle heirless Jewish property. So far, it merely administered the income from this property, which amounted to about $15,000 a year; much of the effort of the Jewish community in recent years had been devoted to the attempt to get a law passed declaring the persons who were carried off to concentration camps and never returned legally dead. This would permit the transfer of title to their property to the OPAIE. Such a law had now been before Parliament for approximately three years, but the government had not yet seen fit to bring it to a vote.

A new central council was elected by the communities in July 1955. David Sciaky replaced David Amarillo as president.

Religious Life

Most of the rabbis and rabbinical students were among the emigrants to Israel. As a result, there was only one full-time rabbi in Greece in 1955. Individuals who attended to the religious needs of the other communities on a part-time basis received small salaries through the Central Council.

Philanthropic, Cultural, and Educational Activities

The orphan asylum and home for young girls established by the JDC no longer existed, the former having ceased operation in 1948 and the latter
in 1951. Dispensaries existed in Athens and Salonika, and a children's camp in Athens. Some relief work was carried on directly by the various communities. There were Jewish elementary schools in Athens, Larissa, and Salonika. The Athens school had eighty-five pupils and that of Larissa fifty-two. In Athens there was also a kindergarten attended by forty children between the ages of four and six. Children at these schools received meals. In addition, 337 other children received special assistance. The ORT school in Athens had, since its establishment in 1949, given training to some 256 boys in electrical, mechanical, and clothing trades, and to 76 girls in the garment trades. Of these, 139 boys and 26 girls completed the full course. The CJMCAG granted the Central Council $60,000 for its welfare activities and $6,000 for cultural work for the year 1955.

The Council of Communities published a bimonthly magazine in Greek, Euraiki Estia (Jewish Hearth). This was the only publication issued by Greek Jews. However, the Israel Legation published a bimonthly bulletin.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

Trade between Israel and Greece continued to take place on a small scale, but few Israel products found a ready market in Greece. Israel's agricultural exports, such as citrus fruits, were also produced in Greece; her industrial products were on the whole unable to compete on a basis of price with those from Western Europe and the United States. Israel was prominently represented at the Salonika Fair in September 1954, and active efforts to increase trade between the two countries were taking place. At the time of Israel's seventh anniversary celebration, the various Athenian papers gave prominence to articles on Israel's progress in various fields.

Zionist activity was carried on by the Zionist Organization, the Young Zionists, and the WIZO. With the assistance of the Israel legation, a highly successful campaign was run on behalf of Keren Kayemeth.

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM