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# Israel

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**A**LL ASPECTS OF LIFE in Israel during the year under review (July 1, 1956, through June 30, 1957) revolved about the Sinai campaign and its aftermath. The war was, of course, central to Israel's international relations. But it also seriously affected the internal life of the country. The diversion of energies to military activities contributed to the steady rise in prices and the increasing friction between the various sections of society which inflation brought in its train. It also interfered with Israel's investment program, at the same time as the flight of thousands of Jews from Egypt resulted in an upsurge of immigration.

## *Events Leading up to the War*

Israel's apprehensions had been raised by the flow of arms to Egypt from the Soviet bloc in 1955 and 1956 (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1957 [Vol. 58], p. 394), and it had sought to get armaments from the West. At first, Israel approached the United States. While the United States was not itself willing to send the arms Israel sought, the State Department indicated its willingness to have other Western powers divert arms which they had manufactured under the United States military aid program. From the spring of 1956, France began to send *Mystère* jet planes and other arms to Israel in increasing quantities; these shipments appear to have been stepped up sharply after Egypt seized the Suez Canal. Canada also agreed to ship planes and other arms to Israel, but no important shipments had arrived from this source prior to the Sinai invasion, to which Canada responded by suspending deliveries.

Tension continued to build up on Israel's borders, particularly the border with Jordan, in the summer and autumn of 1956. The Egyptian border, however, was relatively quiet during this period; in the months after the nationalization of the Suez Canal, Egypt seemed anxious to avoid complicating its position by armed clashes with Israel. At the same time, however, Egyptian influence was increasing in Jordan, and Israel regarded this as a serious threat to its position.

A series of clashes on the Jordanian frontier in September and October 1956 led to increasingly severe retaliatory attacks on Jordan by Israel. Following a large-scale Israel attack on the Jordanian town of Qalqilya on October 11, in which forty-eight Jordanians and eighteen Israeli soldiers were killed, Great Britain warned Israel that it intended to fulfill its treaty obligation to defend Jordan against attack. Iraqi and Syrian troops began to move into Jordan in substantial numbers, and Egypt announced that it

also was prepared to join in the defense of Jordan against an attack by Israel. Nevertheless, there was widespread expectation both in Israel and abroad that an invasion of Jordan by Israel was imminent, since Israel had indicated that it would consider the presence in Jordan of troops from Iraq—which had never signed an armistice agreement with Israel—as a *causus belli*. There were no further reprisal raids against Jordan after the British warning. But this was not regarded as particularly significant; and when the victory of pro-Egyptian parties in the Jordanian elections of October 22, 1956, was followed two days later by an agreement to establish a joint command for the forces of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt, Israel action against Jordan was widely expected. The mobilization of Israel reserves which took place in the following days was generally interpreted in this light. It led the left-wing Socialist Mapam organ *Al Hamishmar* and the independent *Ha-aretz* to warn against the dangers of a preventive war, while the right-wing opposition organ *Herut* hailed the step as an indication that the government was about to attack Jordan in force. On October 27 and 28, 1956, President Eisenhower called on Israel, both through diplomatic channels and publicly, to refrain from any act endangering the peace. The Israel government replied that the mobilization was defensive in purpose.

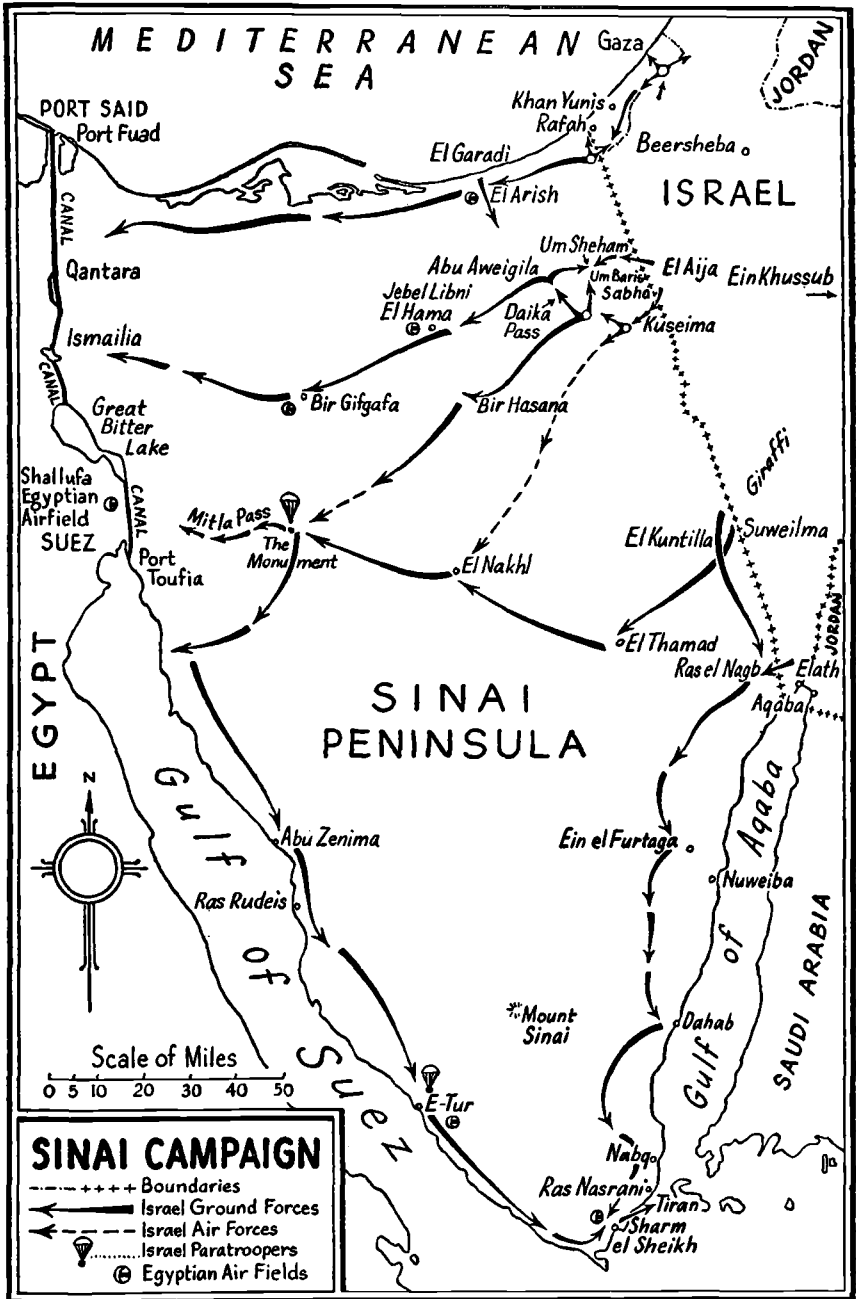
### *Sinai Campaign*

When on October 29, 1956, the Israel army announced that its forces had invaded the Sinai peninsula, the news was almost as much of a surprise to the public in Israel as it was to Cairo or Washington. Nevertheless, with the exception of the Communists, all parties and newspapers—including those that had been warning against a preventive war—gave their full support to the government's action. From a military standpoint, the campaign was fantastically successful.

In a press conference held on November 14, 1956 (as reported in the *Jerusalem Post* the next day), the Israel chief of staff, Rav Aluf Moshe Dayan, summarized the Sinai campaign. The main object had been to take the northern axis across the Sinai peninsula, which combined both a road and a railway feeding the Gaza strip. The campaign started with the dropping of a paratroop battalion in the southwest of the Sinai peninsula, 150 kilometres from Cairo. The same morning (October 29) two other battalions were sent from the border to join the paratroopers. These troops had to overcome the resistance of two Egyptian battalions stationed in Thamad and El-Nakhle, and required twenty-four hours to effect the junction. Meanwhile, two Egyptian battalions sent over from the Suez Canal to deal with the paratroopers were thrown back.

The next day an armored brigade joined the operation. The Egyptians countered with an armored brigade of their own; a clash took place the third day (October 31). After the engagement, what was left of the Egyptian forces retreated across the canal.

The same day (October 31) the Israelis took Rafah; El Arish surrendered November 1. In the north the campaign was virtually over. It was not Israel policy to try to take prisoners, and many Egyptians managed to escape west-



ward. Abu Aweigilia fortified positions were taken on the third day of the campaign, and the road to Ismailia lay open for the armored brigade.

The Israel air force did not bomb air bases within Egypt, in order to give the Egyptians no excuse to bomb the Israel civilian population in retaliation. About 30 to 40 per cent of the Egyptian ground troops material had been provided by the Soviet bloc—a much higher percentage of air material. Israelis killed by enemy air action were estimated at about thirty—most of them paratroopers who had landed forty kilometres from the Suez Canal. The Israel Air Force lost four planes during the campaign, the enemy at least nine. The amount of equipment found in Sinai clearly indicated that the Egyptians had stocked it for the use of forces much larger than the 40,000 men who took part in the campaign.

#### BRITISH-FRENCH INVASION

Meanwhile, the Sinai campaign was rapidly being absorbed into a larger picture. On October 30 Great Britain and France issued an ultimatum calling on Israel and Egypt to withdraw all troops from an area ten miles on each side of the Suez Canal, and to accept Anglo-French occupation of key points on the canal in order to protect it. Israel, whose forces had not yet come near the proscribed zone, readily agreed to the Anglo-French terms; Egypt rejected them as aggression. When the time-limit of the Anglo-French ultimatum expired, British and French planes began to bombard Port Said and other points in Egypt.

The Egyptian government responded to the Anglo-French attack by ordering the withdrawal of all its forces from Sinai, in order to concentrate on resistance to the French and British. At this point some Egyptian strongholds in Sinai were still holding out, although many of the most important ones were already in Israel's hands; henceforth, Egyptian resistance was only nominal. The Egyptian air force, whose home bases were under bombardment by Anglo-French planes, disappeared completely from Sinai; so far as he was able, President Gamal Abdel Nasser removed it from Egypt altogether to airfields in other Arab countries in order to protect it from destruction. On November 2, having cut the Gaza strip off from contact with Egypt by seizing the Egyptian positions at Rafah and El Arish, Israel occupied it after meeting only token resistance. On November 5 the occupation of Sharm el Sheikh, at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba, completed the military campaign. Israel reported the loss of 175 soldiers in the course of the campaign, while it was estimated that over 3,000 Egyptian soldiers were killed. Another 5,600 Egyptians were taken prisoner; they were eventually exchanged for four Israeli prisoners in Egypt, only one of whom had been captured during the campaign. Israel also captured substantial quantities of arms and military supplies stored at Egyptian bases in Sinai and Gaza. The issue was now transferred from the field of battle to that of diplomacy. (For a description of the action in the United Nations, the invasion of Egypt by Great Britain and France, the withdrawal of Israel, Great Britain, and France, and other developments, see the article on "The United Nations, Israel and the Middle East," p. 200 and f.)

### *Other Aspects of Foreign Relations*

On May 2, 1957, James Richards, President Dwight D. Eisenhower's special envoy, visited Israel to explain the Eisenhower Doctrine (*see* p. 212). Israel officially gave its support to the doctrine, and this was embodied in an exchange of notes between the two countries made public on May 21.

On June 4, 1957, the Knesset upheld Prime Minister David Ben Gurion in his endorsement of the Eisenhower Doctrine. Two left-wing labor party members of the government coalition (Mapam and Ahdut Avodah) had opposed the doctrine on the ground that Israel's acceptance of it would involve the country in the "cold war" between the East and the West. They also contended that, by aligning itself with the United States, Israel might be jeopardizing the future of Jews in the Soviet Union, who might be allowed to emigrate to Israel some day. However, neither Mapam nor Ahdut Avodah voted against the government on this issue. The vote for the government was carried by 50 to 5, with 39 abstentions—and only the Communists in opposition.

Israel's decision to withdraw from Gaza and the Aqaba areas on the basis of United States assurances (*see* p. 208) led to a crisis in the government in March 1957. On March 6 the Herut Party, the second largest in the Knesset, introduced a motion of nonconfidence. However, the motion was defeated, by a vote of 81 opposed to 25 in favor. A similar Communist motion received only 6 votes, and a General Zionist resolution which would have required the government to halt troop withdrawals at once was defeated by a vote of 85 opposed to 25 in favor.

On March 24, 1957, Menachem Beigin, leader of the Israel Herut opposition, announced a nation-wide campaign for the dissolution of the Knesset and new national elections, on the charge that the Ben Gurion cabinet had broken its pledge of office in voting to withdraw Israel forces from the Gaza strip. The cabinet, he argued, had pledged itself to carry out the resolutions of the Knesset, and the Knesset had resolved on January 23, 1957, that Israel should occupy and administer the Gaza strip. However, the dissolution of the Knesset required a parliamentary vote, and no such vote was taken on Beigin's proposal for dissolution.

Relations between Israel and the Soviet Union continued to deteriorate. During the Israel occupation of Sinai, the Soviet Union sent two notes to Israel, calling it a menace to the peace of the world and threatening it with annihilation. The Soviet ambassador was recalled from Israel as a gesture of disapproval. The Russians also abrogated their contract for the shipment of oil to Israel, and suspended deliveries under it. At the time of writing (November 1957), an Israel claim for damages because of this action was before the arbitration tribunal of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade.

There was some improvement, however, in the relations between Israel and some of the countries of the Soviet sphere, particularly Poland and Hungary. Both states relaxed their restrictions on the emigration of Jews to Israel. And in February 1957 the Kadar government appointed Hungary's first ambassador to Israel.

The Hungarian and Polish revolutions in the fall of 1956 had important consequences for the internal political life of Israel. In November 1956 the Israel Communist Party's official attitude to the events in Hungary and Poland led to widespread resignations from its ranks. There was a sharp decline in the circulation of *Kol Ha-Am*, the Party's daily, leading to its curtailment from four to two pages.

#### LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The winter session of the Knesset opened on October 8, 1956. The government coalition was represented in the Knesset by the following party members: Mapai (right Socialist), forty; the National Religious Party (Hapoel Hamizrachi and Mizrachi), eleven; Ahdut Avodah-Poale Zion (Unity of Labor Party), ten; Mapam (left Socialist), nine; Agudat Israel and Poale Agudat Israel (right-wing religious), six; and the Progressives, five. Outside the government coalition were: Herut, fifteen; the General Zionists, thirteen; the Communists, six; and the Arab and Druse parties, five.

On October 8, at the first Knesset session, the first reading of the basic law dealing with the functions and powers of the Knesset, which was to form part of the state constitution, was passed. Mapai abstained after Ben Gurion delivered an outspoken attack on one of its main provisions—that of proportional representation. At the end of November 1956 the Knesset passed the first reading of the amendment bill to the penal code, which defined espionage and treason, and increased maximum penalty for these offences to life imprisonment and death, respectively. The bill provided that the death penalty might be imposed only at a time when military hostilities were being conducted by Israel or against it.

On December 10 the Knesset passed a bill to provide financial compensation for those border settlers who were injured by infiltrators or military forces of neighboring countries. The awards granted included medical care, recuperation, medical and vocational rehabilitation, weekly payments, invalid grants, and grants or pensions for survivors, on the same scale as those provided for industrial accidents by the National Insurance Law. The bill was retroactive to February 24, 1949, the date of the signing of the first armistice agreement, and was to be administered by the National Insurance Institute. In mid-December 1956, the Knesset passed the third and final reading of an amendment to the personal status regulations (consular authority). The new law regulated the legal powers of foreign consuls over their nationals in Israel in line with prevailing world practice. The law gave consuls authority to act only in unlitigated matters, to record births, deaths, marriages, and other changes in the personal status of their nationals. On March 28, 1957, the Knesset approved the government's new income tax law, which introduced certain reforms in the methods of assessment and provided some relief for large families.

In February 1957 the government decided to hold an exhibit in Jerusalem to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the State of Israel. The exhibition would demonstrate the cultural, industrial, and agricultural achievements of the state in the ten years of its existence. On March 17, 1957, the government decided to ask the Knesset to abolish English as one of the three official

languages of Israel. If approved, the proposal would leave Hebrew and Arabic as the remaining official languages. All three official languages now appeared on Israel currency, postage stamps, and many official documents.

### *Domestic Developments*

On October 29 a unit of Israel border police intercepted the inhabitants of the village of Kfar Kassim as they were returning from the fields, and killed forty-eight men, women, and children in cold blood and without warning. A curfew had been imposed on the Arab villages on the Jordan frontier, in connection with the Sinai campaign, but the villagers of Kfar Kassim had received no notice of it. When the incident became known, Prime Minister David Ben Gurion announced in the Knesset that the government was paying compensation to the families of the victims, and a court-martial was ordered for the eleven members of the border police involved. This opened on March 25, 1957. The defendants did not challenge the prosecution's account of the events. But they claimed that they were under orders from their superiors to shoot all curfew violators on sight. The military commander of the area denied that he had given such orders. At the time of writing (November 1957) no verdict had as yet been rendered.

#### THE KASTNER MURDER

On March 7, 1957, Israel Kastner was shot down near his home in Tel Aviv and died of his wounds on March 15. Kastner's libel suit against Malchiel Gruenwald, who had charged him with collaborating with the Nazis during the war, had been a sensational event of 1955, and an important issue in the election of that year (*see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1955 [Vol. 56], p. 496-97*). Three men, alleged to be members of an underground National Youth Front, were arrested and charged with the murder of Kastner. Their attorney, Yakov Heruti, was himself arrested on April 5 as a leader of the group in question. Heruti maintained that the organization was an innocent study group. He had formerly been an activist in a pre-1948 terrorist group, and was one of those arrested in connection with the murder of Count Folke Bernadotte on September 17, 1948 (*see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1950 [Vol. 51], p. 391*). At the end of the period under review (November 1957), the trials of Heruti and the three individuals charged with the murder of Kastner had not yet taken place.

### *Population and Migration*

At the end of December 1956 there were 1,667,000 Jews and 205,000 non-Jews in Israel. In June 1957, the Jewish population had reached 1,727,419, that of non-Jews 209,791. Of the population increase in 1956, net immigration supplied 52 per cent, natural increase the remainder.

There were 55,000 immigrants in 1956 as against 36,000 in 1955. The first five months of 1957 brought another 42,500. Emigration from Israel increased from 6,000 in 1955 to 11,000 in 1956.

TABLE 1  
POPULATION, DECEMBER 1948-JUNE 1957

Year	Population at Period's End		
	Total	Jews	Others
1948 .....	(879,000) <sup>a</sup>	758,702	(120,000) <sup>a</sup>
1949 .....	1,173,871	1,013,871	160,000
1950 .....	1,370,094	1,202,993	167,101
1951 .....	1,577,825	1,404,392	173,433
1952 .....	1,629,519	1,450,217	179,302
1953 .....	1,669,417	1,483,641	185,776
1954 .....	1,717,814	1,526,009	191,805
1955 .....	1,789,075	1,590,519	198,556
1956 .....	1,872,390	1,667,455	204,935
1957 (June) .....	1,937,210	1,727,419	209,791

<sup>a</sup> Estimated.

In 1956 North Africa supplied 82 per cent of the immigrants; 12 per cent came from Europe, 5 per cent from Asia, and 1 per cent from the rest of the world. Beginning in October 1956, Eastern European immigration increased in importance. In all, from the establishment of the state through June 1957, 891,000 immigrants had come to Israel.

TABLE 2  
IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN  
OCTOBER, 1956-JULY, 1957

Country	Number
Europe .....	36,190
Egypt .....	11,789
North Africa .....	20,177
Other Countries .....	4,375
TOTAL .....	72,531

## EMIGRATION

In 1956 there was a considerable increase in foreign travel by Jews of Israel. The number of Jews to depart from Israel since the establishment of the state until the end of 1956 was 242,978, while the number of those returning was 146,592. As of the end of 1956, 77,267 Jews had left Israel to settle in other countries.

## BIRTH RATE AND AGE DISTRIBUTION

During 1956 the birth rate of the Moslem population was very high—51.7 per thousand and in the Druse population, 47.1 per thousand. The Jewish birth rate was 26.69 per thousand.

The 0-20 age group of the Jewish population increased from 37 per cent in 1948 to 41 per cent at the end of 1956. Those over 45 rose from 19 per cent in 1948 to 23 per cent at the end of 1956. There was a gradual decrease in the proportion of the population of working age.



## DISTRIBUTION

The largest proportional increases in population occurred in the Negev and upper Galilee: 22 per cent in Beersheba county, 18 per cent in Ashkelon county, and 13 per cent in the Safad county. In Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa the rate of increase was only 2.2 per cent, as against a national average of 4.7 per cent.

At the end of 1956 urban population constituted 71.3 per cent of the total, as compared to 70.8 per cent at the end of 1955. The rise was largely the result of the annexation of areas formerly listed as rural to the municipalities of Petach Tikva, Rehovot, and Kiriath Bialik in 1956. The medium-sized and small towns, especially in the Negev, had population increases above the national average. Beersheba gained 25 per cent and Migdal-Ashkelon 20 per cent. The number of the independent *ma'abarot* (transitory camps for immigrants) fell from 23 to 14, and their population was down 16 per cent.

In the farm working population the largest increase (10 per cent) took place in the workers' small-holders settlements. The kibbutz population increased by only 2.4 per cent, while that of the collective small-holders settlements fell 14 per cent.

In 1956 most of the populace was concentrated in large settlements. Two-thirds of the population lived in 28 settlements, each with over 10,000 inhabitants, while another 16 per cent lived in 67 settlements of from 2,000 to 10,000 persons. The remaining 17 per cent lived in 808 settlements of less than 2,000 persons each.

Of 903 settlements at the end of 1956, 131 were without local self-government. Of the 134,000 persons (7.1 per cent of the total population) in these settlements, 108,000 were in Arab and Bedouin villages: the rest were mainly in *ma'abarot*.

*Economic Developments*

A survey of manpower made in June 1956 indicated that there was no increase in the civilian working force as compared to November 1955. Only slight changes occurred in the vocational structure.

TABLE 3  
PROPORTIONATE DISTRIBUTION OF CIVILIAN WORKING FORCE  
BY BRANCH OF ECONOMY

Branch	Entire Population		Jews	
	Nov., 1955	June 1956	Nov., 1955	June 1956
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries ...	17.6	17.7	15.0	14.7
Industry (Quarries incl.) .....	21.5	20.9	22.1	21.5
Building and Public Works .....	9.3	8.3	9.1	8.4
Electricity, Water, and Sanitary Services .....	2.0	2.9	2.1	3.0
Commerce, Banks, Insurance .....	13.5	12.5	14.0	13.0
Transport and Communications..	6.6	6.4	6.8	6.6
Government Services .....	21.2	23.2	22.2	24.3
Personal Services and Entertainment	8.3	8.1	8.7	8.5

## NATIONAL INCOME

The 1956 national income was estimated at I£ 2,090,000,000, compared to I£ 1,751,000,000 in 1955. Of this 19 per cent increase, more than half represented the rise in prices. Real national income increased about 8 per cent and real per capita income almost 3 per cent.

In 1956 the agricultural production increased considerably, rising from 11.9 to 13.1 per cent of the national income; industry grew at the same rate as in 1955. Building's share in the national income decreased from 7.2 per cent in 1955 to 6.1 per cent in 1956.

In 1956 imports of goods and services totaled \$529,000,000 (I£ 953,000,000 at the official rate of exchange), as against \$433,000,000 in 1955.

## INDUSTRY

Industrial production continued to rise in 1956 and 1957. Output value of industry and mining in 1956 was estimated at I£ 1,235,000,000, as against I£ 1,055,000,000 in 1955, a rise of 17 per cent. However, prices of industrial products went up about 10 per cent, so the actual output of industry rose only 7 per cent. The value added by manufacture was estimated at I£ 438,000,000 in 1956, or 20.5 per cent of the national income, as against I£ 372,000,000 in 1955.

Employment in industry rose only 2-3 per cent, so that production per worker went up 6-7 per cent. This increased productivity was mainly due to improved machinery. There were also some improvements in efficiency in industrial plants which increased productivity with insignificant capital investments. In the first four months of 1957 the index of industrial production went up 9 per cent, compared to the corresponding period in 1956; consumption of electricity by industry in the first two months of 1957 was up 11 per cent.

Supplies of raw materials for industry were considerably larger in 1956; those from local agriculture increased by 25 per cent. The supply of raw materials for the food processing industry was double that of 1955. It was hoped that by the summer of 1957 local cotton would furnish 80 per cent of the needs of the textile plants.

## INDUSTRIAL EXPORTS

Industrial exports went up from \$52.3 million in 1955 to \$58.8 million in 1956, a rise of 12 per cent. There was a rise of 2-3 per cent in prices of industrial exports, so that the volume of exports increased by about 9 per cent. The improvement was due largely to an increase in exports of cut diamonds and processed foods. Exports of tires and handicrafts also rose. Exports of building materials, chemicals, machines and equipment, textiles, and hides showed only a slight growth. There was a marked decrease in exports of motor vehicles and metal products.

In the first six months of 1957 exports rose to \$38.5 million, compared with \$29.4 million for the same months of 1956, an increase of 31 per cent.

Exports of potash in the 1957 period were nine times those of a year earlier. Exports of cardboard containers were six times as high and those of

steel pipes 2.5 times, while exports of cement, tires, pharmaceuticals, and stamps doubled. Exports of cut diamonds were up 38 per cent. Nine per cent of the total industrial production was exported.

#### INVESTMENTS

Investments in industry (excluding quarries, oil, and electricity) went up from I£38 million in 1955 to I£105 million in 1956, a rise of 27 per cent. Rising prices contributed partially to this growth, which at constant prices was estimated at 17 per cent. Imports of machinery and equipment rose markedly (25 per cent), but there was little increase in industrial building.

Gross investments increased by 12 per cent, from I£551 million in 1955, to I£615 million in 1956. The Sinai campaign arrested this trend. The share of public bodies (governmental agencies, Jewish Agency, local authorities) in the gross volume of investments was 57 per cent in 1956, 55 per cent in 1955.

#### AGRICULTURE

Gross agricultural production in 1955-56 was I£528 million, compared to I£429 million in 1954-55, a rise of 23 per cent. Since prices were up 4 per cent, the real increase in production was about 18 per cent. The irrigated area was about 1,000,000 dunams, compared with 950,000 at the end of 1955. The improvement was the result of good weather and an increase in the area under cultivation, as well as the extension of immigration. Thirteen per cent of the agricultural output was exported.

Investment in agriculture in 1956 was estimated at I£125 million, compared with I£121 million in 1955. Agricultural exports increased in 1956 by 28 per cent to \$43.8 million, from \$34.2 million in 1955. This was largely due to a better citrus season and higher prices. Citrus exports in 1956 were 11 per cent greater than in 1955, and formed 92 per cent of the agricultural exports. They brought in \$40.2 million, compared to \$31.7 million in 1955, an increase of 27 per cent.

In the first half of 1957 agricultural exports rose 22 per cent to \$43.4 million, compared to \$35.5 million in the corresponding period in 1956. Citrus exports in 1956-57 were 8,190,000 boxes, compared to 7,850,000 boxes in the preceding season. Prices also rose because of the frost in Spain during the winter of 1955-56.

#### BUILDING

Construction in 1956 was valued at I£220 million, as against I£193.7 million in 1955. But rising costs of building materials and labor accounted for the entire increase. In 1957 the need for housing for the increasing immigration led to an increase in building which reached a feverish tempo in May and June. The building of 69,700 rooms was started and completed in 1956, and the total addition of residential rooms in 1956 was 83,300 rooms. There were an average of 2.4 persons per room in 1954, 2.2 in 1956. At the end of April 1957, there were 127,000 persons in temporary living quarters: 50,000 in *ma'abarot*, and 76,400 in hut colonies.

### SHIPPING

Early in 1957 the port of Eilat was developed, so ships of 7,000 tons could anchor. The Sinai campaign opened the Gulf of Aqaba for ships bound to Eilat. It was hoped that in 1957 the weight of cargo ships passing through Eilat would reach 60,000 tons.

### EMPLOYMENT

There were no significant changes in the level of employment in 1956, compared with 1955. The average number of registered unemployed in the first quarter of 1957 was 16,000, as against 12,300 in the corresponding quarter in 1956. In April and May 1957 the average of registered unemployed was 12,000, as against 12,200 in the same months in 1956, despite the increased immigration in 1957.

### PRICES

The average level of prices went up 8.5 per cent in 1956, compared with 1955. Prices continued to rise in 1957. In the first half of 1957 the consumers' price index was 7 per cent higher than in the preceding year, while building costs were 7.6 per cent higher.

### INDUSTRIAL UNREST

The steady rise in prices made it impossible to hold the line in wages. In January 1956, the Histadruth had reluctantly called for a country-wide wage increase ranging from 5 to 15 per cent. When in April 1956 negotiations began at the Ata textile plant employing 1,800 workers, the workers demanded that their wages be raised accordingly. They also insisted on the right to veto any dismissals of workers by the management. Both demands were rejected by the management, and after a year and a half of negotiations, the workers went out on strike on May 10, 1957. The Ata workers had the support of the Haifa Labor Council, under whose jurisdiction they came. It was called, however, over the opposition of various Mapai cabinet members and the secretary general of the Histadruth, Pinhas Lavon. It was the largest strike which had ever occurred in Israel.

### FOREIGN TRADE

Imports rose 9 per cent in 1956 to \$363 million, as against \$334 million in 1955. Because of rising prices, the actual quantity of imports increased only by 2 per cent. Exports rose from \$89 million in 1955 to \$106.5 million in 1956, and their physical volume was up 13 per cent. The unfavorable balance of trade was \$256 million in 1956, as against \$245 million in 1955, an increase of 4 per cent.

Revenue from tourists went down in 1956, due to political tension in the Middle East, and the Sinai campaign, during which the United States banned tourism to the Middle East.

## *Education*

In 1956 there were 310,455 pupils (including 24,659 Arab pupils) in 9,864 elementary classes. Of these, 68.6 per cent attended secular state schools, 24.8 per cent to religious state schools, and 6.6 per cent were enrolled in other schools.

In 1956 there were 3,398 students in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, compared with 3,180 in 1955. Of these, 1,491 studied humanities and social science (including education); 741, mathematics and natural science; 492, medicine, pharmacology, and dentistry; 397, law; and 251, agriculture. There were 25 students in the classes for librarians. In 1957 there were 306 students studying for their Ph.D.

In the Israel Institute of Technology in 1957 there were 2,021 students: 347, in construction engineering, 149, in architecture, 379, in mechanical engineering, 338, in electrical engineering, 111, in sciences, 164, in chemical engineering, 104, in agricultural engineering, 62, in aeronautical engineering, and 200, in evening classes in mechanical and electrical engineering.

In the Weizmann Institute for Science in 1957 there were 150 scientists working in ten departments. In the Tel Aviv University in 1956 there were 200 students studying law and political science. In the School for Law and Economics in Tel Aviv there were 1,057 students in 1957. Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan had 137 students in 1957, and there were 140 in the Bezalel Art School in 1956.

## *Religious Activity*

On February 15, 1957, Zerach Warhaftig, the deputy minister for religion in the Israel cabinet, announced in the Knesset that forty new synagogues would be established in new settlements during 1957. In 1956, the government allocated loans for the construction of twenty-nine new synagogues. Another 300 synagogues had received outright grants for repairs and extensions, to the amount of I£5,000,000. The same day, a system of regional rabbinic offices was set up to serve some 400 settlements established in scattered areas in Israel during recent years. At least 60 per cent of these settlements lacked the full-time services of a rabbi. The first regional centers were begun in the Tiberias, Haifa, Ramleh, and Rehovot areas. The government also assisted 150 *yeshivot* and rabbinical institutions with a combined student body of 6,500. The budget for the *yeshivot* totaled some I£3,000,000 a year, of which I£500,000 was provided by the ministry of religious affairs.

On August 9, 1956, Benjamin Mintz, the chairman of the religious Poale Agudat Israel, reported that Poale Agudah was sponsoring fifteen settlements where 5,000 Jews lived, four of the settlements in dangerous border areas. One thousand children were enrolled in the Poale Agudah schools.

Israel continued to be the scene of conflict between the extreme Orthodox and other elements of the population. On August 5, 1956, eleven members of the Neturei Karta ultra-Orthodox group were arrested following a clash with the police. Part of the group had stoned the police when they attempted

to dismantle a road block in the Mea Shearim district of Jerusalem which the group had set up to prevent road traffic on the Sabbath. On September 1, 1956, a similar clash resulted in one death and twenty wounded. On September 2, the Israel cabinet appointed a committee of inquiry to investigate these recurrent Sabbath riots in Jerusalem.

On September 8, 1956, Rabbi Amram Blau, leader of the Neturei Karta group, was again arrested in Jerusalem with fourteen of his followers on a charge of illegal assembly. According to police chief Levy Abrahamov, this marked the twentieth Sabbath demonstration in Jerusalem during 1956, eighteen of them organized by the Neturei Karta. On October 6, 1956, it was announced that Rabbi Blau had been arrested 153 times since 1934 for disrupting Sabbath traffic.

On June 5, 1957, the Special Inquiry Commission absolved the police department of Jerusalem from blame for the death in a riot last September of a member of a crowd demonstrating against "desecration of the Sabbath." Judge Eliahu Mani, chairman of the commission, recommended in his report that full protection be given all citizens, and called on all elements in the city to cooperate to keep the peace. Two nonreligious members of the commission called for a law prohibiting Saturday motor traffic, especially in parts of the city where 75 per cent of the residents objected to such traffic. Two religious members of the commission called for a law barring all motor traffic in the country "in order to preserve the sacred character of the Sabbath."

Members of the commission charged that the Neturei Karta constituted a "fanatic religious group," which exploited the Sabbath demonstrations "to combat the state and undermine authority through extreme activities which went beyond peaceful manifest actions." The commission members also criticized counterdemonstrators whose activities, "if countenanced by the authorities would lead to riots." On July 2, 1957, Premier Ben Gurion promised religious party members of his cabinet that a national Sabbath observance bill, expected to provoke sharp difference of opinion, would be presented to the Knesset. Ben Gurion asked the ministry of religious affairs to prepare the draft, when Justice Minister Pinchas Rosen refused.

On the insistence of religious elements, a bill enabling town and village authorities to restrict pork consumption in areas under their jurisdiction passed its third reading in the Knesset in Jerusalem the first week in December 1956. On January 6, 1957, Tel Aviv was the first city to pass such legislation; on January 27, the Jerusalem municipality did likewise.

On July 30, 1956, the chief rabbinate of Israel issued a formal prohibition against the establishment of the Reform movement in Israel. This was the latest development in an Orthodox campaign to prevent Nelson Glueck, president of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in the United States, from setting up a synagogue in the library of the projected American School for Archaeology in Jerusalem. However, on August 12, 1956, the Jerusalem Municipal Council voted to approve a building license for the school, and on June 24, 1957, construction began without public announcement.

The ministry of education instructed all government schools on February

14, 1957, not to force pupils to bare their heads in classrooms or at meals. The action followed a complaint that a student had been punished for refusing to remove his hat in a classroom.

On April 17, 1957, the 20,000 Druse in Israel were given equal status as an independent religious community. They were to have their own courts and keep their own marriage registrations and other rights accorded to all other religious communities in this country. This would make the Arab-speaking Druse population independent of the Moslem community.

On April 15, 1957, an international Jewish Bible Society was formed in Jerusalem at the National Bible Conference. The society was to publish educational materials for Bible study among Jewish groups over the world. The first such project would deal with the Book of Isaiah.

In October 1956 the fourth annual session of the seminar for rabbis and teachers from the Diaspora, conducted by the Jewish Agency department for Torah education and culture, opened in Jerusalem. For the second year Yeshiva students and young rabbis began a year's study in Israel. The students attended Yeshivat Hadarom near Rehovot and the Merkaz Harav Yeshiva in Jerusalem. The department was also conducting fourteen correspondence courses in various branches of Jewish study, such as Bible, Talmud, Jewish philosophy, and ritual laws. The courses, conducted in Hebrew, Yiddish, English, French, and Spanish, were drawn up to meet the requirements of all types of students—teachers, Yeshiva students, beginners, and study groups.

### *Personalia*

Haim Ariav, deputy chairman of the Knesset, died in Tel Aviv on June 6, 1957, at the age of sixty-two. Deborah Baron, winner of the Bialik Prize for her short stories, died in Tel Aviv on August 20, 1957, at the age of sixty-nine. Aaron Barth, director general of the National Bank of Israel, Israel's largest bank, died in Tel Aviv at the age of sixty-seven, on June 2, 1957. Lazar Braudo, a founder of the Zionist movement in South Africa, and president of the South African Zionist Federation for many years, died at his home in Tel Benyamin on September 3, 1957, at the age of seventy-six. Maurice Hinds, Israel minister to Uruguay, died on February 13, 1957, at the age of seventy-three in Montevideo, Uruguay. Rabbi Jacob Friedman, the Hossiatiner Rebbe, and last of the Chasidic Rozien Admorik dynasty, died in Tel Aviv, on October 24, 1956, at the age of seventy-five. Shmuel Abba Horodetzki, noted author and scholar on the history of the Chasidic movement, died in Tel Aviv at the age of eighty-six, on May 25, 1957. Joel Mastbaum, Yiddish novelist and newspaper writer, died in Tel Aviv at the age of seventy-three, on April 12, 1957. Yehuda Mozes, publisher of *Yedioth Achronoth*, died in Tel Aviv on October 14, 1956, at the age of seventy. Mordechai Narkiss, director of the Bezalel National Museum in Jerusalem, died on March 27, 1957, at the age of fifty-eight, in Jerusalem. Rabbi Elimelech Neufeld, Mizrachi leader and member of the presidium of the World Zionist Organization, died in Jerusalem on October 14, 1956, at the age of sixty-four. Yeheskel Moshe Neumann, journalist, author, playwright,

and drama critic, died in Tel Aviv on September 23, 1956, at the age of sixty-three. Yitzhak Shenhar, Hebrew writer and translator, died in Jerusalem on June 18, 1957, at the age of fifty. Moshe Schwabe, professor of Greek and Latin literature at the Hebrew University, died in Jerusalem on September 11, 1956, at the age of sixty-seven. David Shimoni, leading Hebrew poet, died in Tel Aviv on December 10, 1956, at the age of seventy. Dr. Moshe Wallach, founder and director of the Shaare Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem, died on April 8, 1957, at the age of ninety-one.



## Middle East

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THE BRITISH, French, and Israel attack on Egypt in October and November 1956 (see p. 376) had major repercussions in the Middle East during 1956-57. Early in November 1956, the Soviet Union threatened to send volunteers and otherwise assist the Egyptians against the invading British, French, and Israelis. This threat was forestalled by the compliance of the invading forces with the United Nations (UN) resolutions calling for their withdrawal. By the end of December, British and French troops had withdrawn from Egypt, turning over the positions which they had occupied in the Suez Canal zone to the newly created United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF).

The UNEF was established under a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 7, 1956. Just eight days later the first UN troops, forty-five Danes, landed in Egypt. Ultimately about 6,000 soldiers from ten nations—Canada, India, Brazil, Colombia, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Indonesia, Finland, and Yugoslavia—were sent by the UN to the Middle East to patrol the sensitive armistice borders between Egypt and Israel. The UNEF, under the command of Canadian Major-General Eedson L. M. Burns, also chief of staff of the UN Truce Supervisory Organization, was the UN's first international police force.

Immediately after the departure of the invaders, a UN salvage fleet began to clear the Suez Canal. This fleet, composed of German, Swedish, Italian, and Belgian ships, completed its work by April 1957, and normal traffic was then restored.

However, there was still no agreement on control and use of the waterway. In April 1957 Egypt published a declaration reaffirming its right to run the canal and collect tolls. The document pledged Egypt to submit complaints to international arbitration, abide by the decisions of an international tribunal, set aside 25 per cent of all gross receipts for maintenance and development of the waterway, and limit unilateral toll increases to one per cent within any twelve-month period.

By June 1957 even France, the nation most adamantly opposed to Egyptian control of the canal, accepted the *de facto* situation. On June 16, the freighter *Picardie* became the first French ship to use the canal in seven months, after paying transit tolls to Egypt's Suez Canal Authority. In June also, two Soviet destroyers passed through the canal, the first Russian warships to use the waterway since World War I.

The UN reported that the economic impact of the Suez crisis was largely localized and brief. Industrial output in Egypt and Israel fell off, but agricultural production was largely unaffected. One cause of the attack on Egypt

had been its blockade of the Suez Canal to Israel and Israel-bound shipping. Although Egypt continued to assert the right to blockade Israel and Israel-bound shipping after the reopening of the canal, restrictions were relaxed on non-Israel ships en route to or from Israel ports. However, the Egyptian blockade of the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba was broken by Israel's seizure early in November 1956 of Sharm el Sheikh in southern Sinai, from which Egypt had dominated the entrance to the Gulf. After the demilitarization and occupation of Sharm el Sheikh by UNEF forces, shipping continued to pass freely between Elath and the Red Sea.

The British and French quickly handed over the northern end of the Suez Canal Zone to the UNEF. But several months passed before Israel withdrew behind the 1949 armistice line. Late in December 1956, Israel began to withdraw its troops from Sinai, and Indian troops moved east from the canal zone. But Israel refused to move its troops from either the Gaza strip or Sharm el Sheikh. Its position was that unconditional withdrawal would lead to reestablishment of the conditions which had led to the October 1956 invasion. Before obeying the UN resolutions calling for withdrawal, Israel wanted a guarantee from the United States that no Egyptian blockade of the gulf would be tolerated, a UN order stationing the UNEF indefinitely at Sharm el Sheikh to ensure freedom of passage, or an agreement among nations bordering the gulf, including Egypt, to permit free passage by ships of all nations. In return for leaving the Gaza area, Israel asked that the UN retain civil and military control there, and that no Egyptian troops or officials return. At the end of the month Israel agreed, on the basis of certain "assumptions" stated by the United States, to withdraw its troops from all Egyptian territory. They were replaced by the UNEF early in March 1957. Shortly afterward, Egypt reestablished a civil administration in the Gaza area. The UNEF continued to be stationed on the 1949 armistice demarcation line and at Sharm el Sheikh.

### *Eisenhower Doctrine*

During this period Soviet diplomacy made great inroads in the area, particularly in Syria. Early in January 1957 President Eisenhower asked Congress for authorization to use United States armed forces against aggression in the area by Communist or Communist-dominated countries. The President stated that he would use this authority only in "hour-by-hour" contact with Congress if United States troops were requested by the nation or nations under attack; and only in keeping with the treaty obligations of the United States and the charter of the UN. This declaration came to be called the Eisenhower Doctrine (*see* p. 212). The President also asked Congress for authority to use up to \$200,000,000 of previously appropriated foreign aid funds for special military and economic projects in the area. A resolution granting the President the authority he asked was approved by Congress, and was signed by the President on March 9, 1957.

As in Greece and Turkey under the Truman Doctrine, the United States was assuming a role which Great Britain, for political and economic reasons, was no longer able to fulfill.

## *Jordan Crisis*

The Arab world regarded the Jordanian crisis of April 1957 as the first demonstration of the Eisenhower Doctrine. On April 4 Jordan's Premier Nabulsi said that his country would accept Soviet aid if it were offered and rejected United States offers as aimed at cutting Jordan's ties with Egypt. On April 6 Nabulsi announced a policy of "positive" neutrality toward the United States and the Soviet Union.

On April 10 King Hussein dismissed the Nabulsi government. Several shifts in government followed, and there were mass demonstrations on behalf of Nabulsi, leader of the first government to be popularly elected in Jordan's history. The king reacted by calling for the resignation of chief of staff Major General Ali Abu Nuwar, who was an ardent admirer of Nasser. By the end of April, the king had imposed martial law, dissolved parliament, and rounded up and arrested most of the opposition, which he termed leftist and Communist. He also accepted a grant of \$10,000,000 in aid from the United States; he specified, however, that this aid was not given under the Eisenhower Doctrine or from the special funds provided in connection with it. On April 25, the United States sent the Sixth Fleet to the Eastern Mediterranean. This was generally interpreted as a gesture of support for King Hussein in his efforts to liquidate leftist political influence. Following the overthrow of the Nabulsi government, Jordan moved rapidly out of the Egyptian-Syrian orbit, and assumed a decidedly anti-Communist international position. Jordan's relations with the two leaders of the Arab neutralist bloc—Egypt and Syria—rapidly deteriorated, each side accusing the other of subversion, and of serving foreign powers.

### LEBANESE POLITICS

The Eisenhower Doctrine also became a factor in Lebanon's internal politics when that country received forty jeeps armed with anti-tank rifles from the United States on June 8, becoming the first Middle East nation to receive direct military assistance under the new American policy. The equipment arrived while Lebanon was in the throes of a hotly contested election in which the government emphasized its pro-Western sympathies. Although the opposition contained pro-Nasser and neutralist groups, there were also many who favored close ties with the United States and even supported the basic premises of the Eisenhower Doctrine. The elections of June 9, 10, and 16, 1957, gave the government of Premier Sami al-Sulh an overwhelming victory. It was widely believed in the Arab world that the government owed its victory to American interference, though little evidence was offered to support this charge.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAQ

The doctrine had no appreciable effect on relations with Iraq. The replacement of veteran Premier Nuri al-Sa'id by Senator Ali Jawdat on June 17 caused no shift in the country's foreign alignments. Iraq exchanged propaganda barrages with Egypt and Syria for most of 1956-57. But Iraqi

relations improved with Jordan and Saudi Arabia, as those nations moved away from their former neutralist positions. Internal development of Iraq continued on a grand scale. But the impressive economic expansion was accompanied by no social planning or fundamental social change. The concentration of power in the hands of a few large land owners continued to prevent any long-term planning for the benefit of the Iraqi people as a whole.

#### EGYPT AND THE WEST

Egypt reacted coolly, if not with hostility, toward the Eisenhower Doctrine. In the spring and summer of 1957 Egypt and Great Britain began negotiations concerning British-sequestered property and Egyptian frozen sterling; later, Egypt negotiated with France on economic matters. The United States, however, continued its economic pressure on the Nasser government. Some \$40,000,000 of Egyptian hard currency continued to be blocked in the United States. Not only economic and technical assistance, but CARE shipments and the dispatch of Salk vaccine to Egypt were still suspended at the time of writing (October 1957). A request from the Cairo government for surplus American wheat went unfulfilled. The United States took the position that it could not justify such help to Egypt when that country was refusing to bargain on major issues connected with the Suez Canal. The gap was filled by the Soviet Union. Consequently attacks on the United States government continued over Radio Cairo, and the Egyptian press maintained a barrage of anti-American propaganda, while the Soviet Union received favorable treatment in Egyptian communications media. Nevertheless, the Nasser government cracked down on Communists within the country. During the first national elections under the new constitution in July 1957, many candidates suspected of being Communist fellow-travelers were crossed off the electoral list by the authorities. After the balloting was completed, several individuals were arrested and tried for suspected Communist ties.

#### SYRIA AND THE WEST

Relations between Syria and the West deteriorated sharply during 1957. The Syrian government bitterly opposed the Eisenhower Doctrine and its assumptions that a "vacuum" existed in the Arab world. Immediately after the invasion of Egypt, the Syrian government cut off diplomatic ties with Great Britain and France, and the Iraq Petroleum Company's pipeline across the country was blown up by the Syrian army. It was not until some months after the withdrawal of the invading forces from Egypt and Gaza that the Syrian government permitted work on rehabilitating the vital oil artery.

During 1956-57 the Damascus government, a coalition of Socialists and nationalists, concluded a number of commercial agreements with the Soviet Union and with other countries behind the Iron Curtain. Although there were no precise figures available as to the amounts involved in these transactions, some estimates placed Soviet economic and military assistance to Syria at about \$100,000,000.

The Soviet aid to Syria was accompanied by large numbers of technicians and an interchange of high level official visits. The United States became increasingly concerned about the extent to which Syria seemed to be drifting

toward the Soviet Union. Relations between the United States and Syria reached a new low in July, following Syrian charges that American diplomats in Damascus were conspiring to overthrow the government. Three American diplomats were expelled by the Syrian government on August 13, 1957, and the United States retaliated by ordering Ambassador Farid Zeneiddine and one of his aides to leave Washington. Shortly after the incident there was a shake-up in the command of the Syrian army, and on August 17 Afif Bizri became chief of staff. Some circles accused him of Communist sympathies.

There was also increased tension between Syria and its neighbors. In July 1957 there were shooting incidents in the Lake Huleh region along the frontier with Israel. On various occasions, King Hussein's government in Amman accused the Syrians of harboring Communists who had fled from Jordan, while Syria charged the king with selling out his country to the imperialists. In August and September 1957 the air was filled with rumors of troop concentrations along the Turkish and Syrian frontiers, and statements by the United States and the Soviet Union aroused apprehensions of a widened conflict.

But toward the end of September, the tensions in the area seemed to abate. The United States began to modify its charges of Communist domination of Syria, and Syrian excitement about the dangers of American imperialism lessened. Relations among the Arab states themselves also eased. Jordan, which had seemed to be in danger from Syria, and to which the United States had shipped arms for defense against Communist aggression, now announced that there had never been any fear of invasion by any Arab nation, and that all Arab nations were friends. The new apparent inter-Arab amity reached a climax when, through the intercession of King Saud of Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister Ali Jawdat of Iraq paid a friendly visit to Damascus. This was considered important, since Iraq was supposedly the most strongly anti-Communist and pro-Western of the Arab nations, and Syria the most anti-Western and pro-Soviet. A policy based on creating a coalition of pro-Western, or at least anti-Communist, states to oppose those Arab nations which were sympathetic to the Soviet Union, seemed for the moment ineffective in the face of the sentiment for Arab unity. Every important political group in the Arab world, from the leftist Arab Socialist Resurrection Party to the right-wing Muslim Brotherhood, emphasized the concept of unity. In Lebanon alone, some groups were not sympathetic to the Pan-Arab idea because they feared the loss of traditional prerogatives which safeguarded the status of minorities in that country.

## EGYPT

The growth of nationalism and its repercussions during the year directly affected the status of minorities in the area. At the time of writing (October 1957) Egypt still had the largest Jewish community of any Arab League state. But its Jewish population was only about half what it had been the

previous year, as a result of events consequent on the invasion by Great Britain, France, and Israel.

Since the outbreak of the Palestine war in 1917 there had been a steady decline in the number of Jews in Egypt. There were no accurate statistics, but the best informed estimates placed the number of Jews before 1947 at 67,000. Between the Palestine war and October 1956, some 20,000 Jews were believed to have left the country, leaving approximately 45,000 to 50,000 at the time of Israel's attack. Estimates of the Jewish community at the beginning of October 1956 indicated 15,000 to 20,000 stateless persons, 4,000 British subjects, 8,000 to 10,000 Italian subjects, 4,000 to 5,000 Egyptian citizens, and the balance (10,000 to 15,000) of French, Greek and other nationalities.

Following the French, British, and Israel attack on Egypt, there was an immediate surge of anger in government circles against subjects of Great Britain and France, and against the Jewish community, which the Egyptians identified with Israel and Zionism. Official pronouncements by Jewish community leaders pledging support to Egypt were of no avail in the face of a number of official acts and many officially inspired incidents.

Large numbers of British and French subjects, including many Jews, were rounded up and expelled from Egypt and their property sequestered. Military proclamation no. 4 published on November 8 placed under the management of a custodian the properties of "persons interned or placed under surveillance" and "all persons who reside outside of the Republic of Egypt but pursue activities which are prejudicial to the security of the state." Military proclamation no. 5 sequestered British and French property.

This proclamation was accompanied by a list of more than 400 names, at least 95 per cent of Jewish individuals. These individuals represented the greater part of Egyptian Jewish economic life, and their contributions had been the main sustenance of Jewish religious, educational, social, and welfare institutions. Property sequestered under these proclamations was placed under custodians responsible to the minister of finance.

The sequestration measure indirectly affected the livelihood of a much broader circle of Jews, since several thousand Jewish employees of sequestered firms were discharged. Many Jews in firms which were not sequestered also lost their positions.

Another piece of emergency legislation directly affecting the Jewish community was the decree of November 22, 1956, amending the nationality law of 1950. Naturalization was always difficult for certain minority groups in Egypt, including Jews. Article 1 of the new decree stipulated that "neither Zionists, nor those against whom a judgment has been handed down for crimes of disloyalty to the country or for treason," were to be considered as Egyptians. This article further stated that "no request for the delivery of a certificate of Egyptian nationality will be accepted from persons known as Zionists." There was no definition of what constituted a Zionist.

Although several hundred Jews were among the French and British subjects arrested, interned, and expelled from the country, only about 250 Jews who were neither French nor British received official expulsion orders. Most of these—mainly stateless persons—were interned in a Jewish school in Cairo until they were either released or deported. Other formal measures

against Jews included the expulsion of Jewish members by organizations such as the Gezira Club in Cairo and the Alexandria Yachting Club.

By far the most devastating impact on the Jewish community was caused by "unofficial" actions. These included midnight surprise visits by police officers who ordered Jews to leave the country within a few days, and the mass discharge of Jews from their jobs. There were only a few isolated incidents of physical maltreatment and no mob violence. In this respect the situation contrasted sharply with the outbreaks against Jews that had taken place in 1947-48 and in 1952.

The effect of these measures, accompanied by widespread economic difficulties, was to undermine the morale and stability of the Jewish community of Egypt. A mass flight developed, and more than half the Jewish community had left by the end of September 1957. In many instances, where one member of a family happened to be a French or British subject, or one of those arrested on some other grounds, a chain reaction led to the departure of many more individuals besides the one directly affected.

When the flight began, thousands of people flocked to the rabbinate offices and to consulates and embassies seeking advice, assistance, and means of escape. The port at Alexandria and the airfield at Cairo were jammed with refugees leaving Egypt. Government officials initially showed little leniency, often arbitrarily confiscating possessions of the refugees, thousands of whom left with hardly more than the clothes on their backs.

The measures taken by the Egyptian government against the British, French, and Jewish communities were protested by the governments of Great Britain, France, and Israel in the United Nations in December 1956. The United States government also expressed "deep concern" about reports of maltreatment of Jews. United States Ambassador Raymond A. Hare was instructed to impress the administration's attitude upon Egyptian authorities at every opportunity. On December 25, 1956, Premier Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia asked Egypt to cancel measures taken against Jews holding Tunisian passports.

In November 1956 representatives of the International Red Cross (IRC) were sent to Egypt to assist stateless individuals affected by the crisis. By the middle of 1957 more than 8,000 Jews had been assisted by the IRC to leave the country. Most of these stateless persons were sent to Greece or Italy on IRC-chartered ships.

By spring 1957 the exodus from Egypt slowed down. Nearly half of the Jewish community had left. Increasingly, Jews leaving the country were permitted to take larger amounts of personal property with them. In February 1957 Jewish schools in Cairo were reopened. In January individual property was returned to Jews who were neither French nor British subjects. On April 21 Finance Minister Al-Qaysuni cancelled military proclamation no. 4 appointing a custodian over property of Jews effective May 4. The same date an order placing Jews under house arrest or police supervision was cancelled. On May 4, Jews who had been banned from social organizations such as the Cairo Gezira Club and the Alexandria Yachting Club were readmitted.

By mid-1957, the immediate pressures on Egyptian Jews were lessened, and the large-scale exodus had halted. But the morale of the remaining

Jews was badly undermined. Many families were broken, and an important segment of the influential and wealthy leadership of the community was gone. It became increasingly difficult to finance the communal institutions, schools, synagogues, and clinics. Jewish schools often were attended by only a token number of children. The large Jewish hospital in Cairo, taken over by the government in November 1956 for war casualties, continued under military occupation, although the government began to pay rent to the Jewish community for its use. Although the ban on employment of Jews in certain business establishments was lifted, many positions held by Jews before November 1956 were now occupied by new personnel and were no longer available. Many middle class Jews could find no way of earning a livelihood; faced with the prospect of living on charity, they decided to leave Egypt. Jews were not the only minority group to leave Egypt in large numbers after October 1956. The Sinai attack led to a stress on Islam in Egypt's struggle against the West. This affected Christians as well as Jews. There was a considerable exodus from the large Greek colony, and the matter was discussed between President Nasser and the Greek government.

### *Jewish Education and Religious Activity*

Before November 1956 there were six principal Jewish schools in Egypt: three in Cairo, two in Alexandria, and one in Tanta. The latter, not expected to reopen, was administered by the Alliance Israélite Universelle. Whereas the largest Jewish school in Cairo had 2,000 students in 1956, less than a fourth of that number attended classes in September 1957.

About one-third of the remaining Egyptian Jewish community of some 20,000 lived in Alexandria. Only a few families were left in Tanta, Mansurah, and Port Said. Most Jews still lived in Cairo.

There was great concern in the community about the continuation of religious life, not only because of the pressure of economic conditions, but also because of the inability to replace religious leaders. Chief Rabbi Haim Nahoum was eighty-five years old. Other rabbis had left Egypt, and there were no replacements. For the time being, rabbinical functions were performed by laymen with some training in and knowledge of religious leadership.

### LEBANON

There were a few Jews in government service in Lebanon, two of whom served in the Beirut municipality. At the American University of Beirut, and in French institutions of higher education, there were a number of Jewish professors.

Jews were active in the communal life of Lebanon. They were accepted as social equals and there was little overt anti-Semitism. In the 1957 national election about 3,000 Jews, or 90 per cent of those eligible voted.

The exact number of Jews in Lebanon could not be determined because



of the continuous irregular flow in and out of the country. It was estimated that in 1956-57 there were between 6,000 and 6,500 Lebanese Jews in Beirut, where they were concentrated in the Wadi-Abu-Jamil district. In Sidon in southern Lebanon there were between 200 and 250 Jews, and a few families lived in Tripoli in the north. All but about 100 Lebanese Jews were Sephardic, originating from many countries on the Mediterranean coast, mainly Turkey and Syria. After the Palestine war in 1948, Lebanon's Jewish population had actually increased by the influx of several hundred families who fled from Syria and Iraq. The community remained relatively wealthy, and continued to maintain excellent social contacts with leaders in the country's business, political, and social life. Although most Jews were engaged in commerce, there were in 1956-57 a number of Jewish physicians, pharmacists, dentists, lawyers, and engineers in Beirut. A number of industries and banks were Jewish-owned.

#### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITY

A community council of twelve led the Lebanese Jewish community and made decisions of importance. The Alliance Israélite school was the largest Jewish educational institution, with over 1,000 students and about 60 teachers, a dozen of them Paris-educated. After the Sinai incursion a number of Jewish refugee children from Cairo entered the Beirut Alliance school. In Sidon a small Alliance school had about fifty students. A Talmud Torah in Beirut, with over 250 students and about a dozen teachers, was supported largely by contributions from abroad.

The community maintained a Jewish infirmary (Kupat Holim) served by a volunteer physician.

There were about a dozen synagogues, but only one ordained rabbi in the country. The rabbi was Ashkenazic and did not speak either Arabic or French, the languages of his Sephardic congregation. He served as president of the religious court and was assisted by five laymen. A variety of relief and welfare funds and organizations cared for the needy Jews, who numbered perhaps 300 or 400.

## SYRIA

The total number of Jews in Syria in 1957 was estimated at about 5,300, of whom 2,500 lived in Damascus, about 2,000 in Aleppo, and about 900 in Kamishli near the Turkish frontier in the north. They were the remnant of a once prosperous and influential community that had numbered more than 30,000 in 1947. But in 1957, the communal institutions in Aleppo and Damascus received a large portion of their support from abroad.

#### *Civil Status*

Although prior to 1948 the Jewish community in Syria was well-integrated as a minority group, after the Palestine war its status declined greatly. In

Syria, the most intensely nationalist of the Arab nations, most Jews were suspected of loyalty to Israel or Zionism, and were therefore subject to police surveillance.

It was difficult to obtain permission to leave the country, and serious problems arose in matters having to do with property or business and commerce. Because of the intensity of feeling in Syria about Zionism and Israel, it was not likely that the Jewish community would again be integrated into the main life stream of the nation without an over-all settlement of the Palestine conflict.

### *Community Organization and Activity*

In Aleppo two schools had a total of some 400 students and about twenty-five teachers. There were also two synagogues, a clinic, and a poor fund. The Aleppo community was headed by a rabbi.

A council of seven to nine members headed the Damascus Jewish community. There were two Jewish schools, a Talmud Torah and the Alliance school, with a total of about 450 students and about twenty-five teachers. About one-third of the Damascus Jewish community received relief from a poor fund and medical treatment from a Jewish clinic.

The community in Kamishli had no leadership or communal institutions. Its members were very poor and badly in need of outside assistance. Because of the nearness to the Turkish frontier, the community was subject to the closest police supervision and Jews could not leave the area without special permission.

## IRAQ

In 1957 a remnant of about 5,000 Jews remained in Iraq out of the pre-1948 community of over 130,000. All but about 300 lived in Baghdad, the capital. A small community of about 300 Jews lived in Basra, where before 1950 there had been more than 10,000 Jews. One Jewish family remained in Mosul, and about eighty Jews in Diwaniwa.

Because of Iraq's vast prospective economic development and expansion, and its lack of skilled and trained technicians, administrators, and teachers, the Jewish community was a valuable asset. Opportunities for minorities, including the Jews, were very great. The recent improvement of Iraq's economic condition consequently led to great improvement in the status of all minority groups. The impact of the political events of 1952, which led to the mass exodus of Jews from the country, had passed, and the Jewish remnant in Iraq seemed to be rapidly reintegrating into the mainstream of community life from which they were so precipitously excluded after the Palestine war.

### *Community Organization and Activity*

The community in Baghdad was actively engaged in commerce and participated fully in communal social life, although no Jews were now active in politics. An administrative committee of five members, appointed by the ministry of justice, headed the community. Before the exodus in 1952, there had been a general council of sixty members elected by the Jewish community and directed by a lay council. The leader of the Jewish community in 1957 was Rabbi Sasoon Khaddouri, over eighty years old. There was a shortage of qualified rabbis. Provisional religious guidance was arranged by the community council, which sought to prepare a few young men to assume rabbinical duties.

Schools included a small Talmud Torah with about forty students, the Menachem Daniel Primary School, with about 350 boys and girls, and the pride of the Jewish community, the Frank Iny School. More than 500 boys and girls studied in the latter institution, which had a staff of twenty-three. In 1956-57 the budget of the Baghdad Jewish community was 45,000 Iraqi dinars (\$126,000), of which 22,000 dinars were allocated to the Frank Iny School.

The Baghdad Jewish community administered its own communal property. Jewish community property in Mosul and Basra was administered by a custodian of Jewish property, since there were few Jews remaining in either town. A large Jewish hospital had been nationalized by the Iraqi government in 1952 and subsequently paid for. About 20 per cent of the community received some social welfare assistance.

DON PERETZ