On October 20, 1961, the 22nd congress of the Soviet Communist party ordered the removal of Stalin's body from the Red Square mausoleum where it had lain beside that of Lenin. Stalin was reburied near the Kremlin wall, among the graves of lesser leaders of the Soviet Union. The moving of Stalin's body was a dramatic climax to the de-Stalinization campaign which had been going on since the 20th congress in February 1956. It was clearly intended to destroy the Stalin myth and convince the Soviet people that Nikita S. Khrushchev's policy of "victory through peaceful competition" with the West also meant liberalization at home. The Stalinist period was described, to use Khrushchev's words, as "the times, hard for our party and our country, when nobody was safe . . . .," when "thousands of absolutely innocent people perished."

At the same time the congress returned to the charges against the so-called "anti-party group" defeated by Khrushchev in 1957. For the first time Khrushchev publicly included ex-President Klementi Voroshilov in the group. Apparently in accordance with the "principle of socialist legality," the leaders of the "anti-party group" had at the time of writing not been subjected to special repressive measures, nor had they been brought to trial.

The 22nd congress approved the comprehensive new program submitted by Khrushchev. This included a 20-year economic plan designed to impress the Soviet people and inspire them to greater efforts.

The congress brought many new men to the top. Of the 175 members of the key central committee, 110 were new. Khrushchev, Frol Koslov, Mikhail Suslov, and Otto Kuusinen were the only leaders named to both the 11-man presidium and the 9-man secretariat—the two top policy-making bodies. Frol Koslov was officially designated as second party secretary, while Khrushchev, as first secretary, remained boss of party and state.

**Ideological Split**

The 22nd congress brought a new crisis in the doctrinal split between Khrushchev and the Chinese Communist leaders over the inevitability of...
armed conflict with the capitalist world. Khrushchev repeatedly attacked the "cult of personality" and linked the "Stalinist diehards" with resistance to his effort to insure "peaceful relations" with the West. Accusing his rivals of trying to continue the methods of Stalinist tyranny, he singled out the leaders of Albania and charged them with "embarking upon a road of sharp worsening of relations with our party and with the Soviet Union." Chou En-lai, the Chinese Communist premier, objected to the public denunciation of Albania and, in an obvious protest against Khrushchev's move, left Moscow and returned home. The Chinese Communist press openly rebuked the Soviet leadership and praised the "Leninist-revolutionary fidelity" of Albania. While many delegates of fraternal parties repeated Khrushchev's charges against Albania, some, including representatives from North Korea, North Vietnam, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaya, Burma, and North Africa, failed to voice their support of the Moscow line. Assessing the debates of the 22nd congress, Polish Communist leader Wladislaw Gomulka indicated that the causes of Stalin's crimes went much deeper than the Soviet theory of the "cult of personality" seemed to indicate. He also stated that the split with and over Albania represented a deep difference on foreign policy.

FOREIGN POLICY

Soviet leaders continued to press for a general "peace settlement," but on their own terms. The Geneva negotiations for a ban on nuclear testing collapsed in September 1961 after the Soviet Union exploded a number of hydrogen bombs, including the largest ever exploded.

Soviet leaders continuously demanded conclusion of a peace treaty with East Germany and threatened to conclude such a treaty with or without the West. They maintained that the status of West Berlin would have to be renegotiated in the event such a treaty were concluded. At the 22nd congress Khrushchev withdrew his year-end deadline for an East German peace treaty.

SITUATION OF THE JEWS

Jewish religious and cultural activities were maintained in Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, in that order of intensity. Jewish communities in those countries continued to have contacts with Western Jews. The Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw actively helped in the preparation of the exhibit on "The Life and the Revolt of the Warsaw Ghetto," organized in Paris toward the end of 1961 by the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine. The institute's director, Berl Mark, and its general secretary, Adam Rutkowski, went to Paris to help in arranging the exhibit. Jewish life in Bulgaria was disintegrating, and there were reports that Chief Rabbi Asher Hananel of Sofia had been arrested on charges of illegal transactions in foreign currency and had begun to serve a prison term. Jewish activities in the Soviet Union proper were discouraged by the authorities, and Jewish
religious observance was becoming increasingly difficult. A wave of arrests and removal of religious leaders and members of synagogue boards took place in many cities of the Soviet Union. Jewish leaders in Moscow and Leningrad were sentenced to prison on charges of espionage.

Leon Shapiro

Soviet Union*

JEWISH POPULATION

The census of July 1959 (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], pp. 284–85) reported 2,268,000 Jews in the Soviet Union. The natural increase of the Soviet population was about 17 per 1,000 in both 1959 and 1960. If this was the Jewish rate also—a somewhat uncertain hypothesis—there were about 2,345,000 Jews in the USSR at the end of 1960, 1.1 per cent of the total population.¹ The Jews were the eleventh largest group among 108 nationalities and peoples composing the Soviet Union. Additionally, in 1961 there were more than 5,700 Karaites, existing as a separate national group, of whom 13.8 per cent spoke their own Tatar dialect. According to the 1959 census, 124,100,000 persons, including 10,200,000 belonging to non-Russian nationalities, gave Russian as their native tongue, including about 1,797,000 Jews, or 79 per cent. Some 471,000, or 21 per cent (including, perhaps, small numbers of Georgian, Bokharan, or Dagestani Jews who might have indicated their local dialects), gave Yiddish as their native tongue.² Some scholars believed that the actual number of Jews in the USSR exceeded the figure given by the census figure, on the supposition that because of discrimination, many Jews preferred to describe themselves as Russian, Ukrainian, or Byelorussian (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], pp. 284–85). At least for the present, it would seem better to accept the figure of 2,345,000, the 1959 census figure adjusted for estimated natural increase.

Communal and Religious Life

The de-Stalinization program initiated by Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev in 1956 brought far-reaching changes in Soviet society and in the attitudes of the Soviet population. The Jewish community, however, was much less affected by the “thaw.” The “liberation from Stalinist shackles” failed to alter the widespread anti-Jewish sentiment of the public and many leaders, and hostility to organized Jewish life continued. Nothing was done to restore

¹ For meaning of abbreviations, see p. 497.
² SSSR o tsifrakh v 1960 godu (Moscow: Kratki Statisticheski Sbornik, 1960), pp. 64, 350.
² Idem. Also, Vsesoyuznaya Perepis Naseleienia (Moscow: Gospolitisdat, 1958).
Jewish communal life or to accord Jews the rights and privileges enjoyed by other national minorities in the USSR. Jewish communal institutions and schools, which had functioned in the Soviet Union until 1948, were not re-established. Soviet leaders, from Khrushchev down, repeatedly indicated that they were not considering any revision of the policy of forced assimilation, since "the Jews themselves do not wish a separate Jewish cultural identification." In 1961, however, they permitted the publication of a Yiddish bimonthly magazine, *Sovetish Heymland*, for the first time since 1948 (see below).

Religious Jews continued to experience all sorts of difficulties. There was a constant dearth of kosher food, and only at great personal risk could Jews employed in various state enterprises observe the Sabbath and religious holidays. Circumcision was extremely difficult to arrange, and there were reports of public trials of "reactionary" Jews offending in that respect. There was a constant shortage of prayer shawls, phylacteries, and *mezuzot*. (A handwritten Jewish calendar for the year 5722 [1961–62] was mimeographed and distributed by the Leningrad community.) Production of religious articles was actively discouraged by Soviet authorities, and their importation was not permitted. Packages containing religious articles sent to Soviet Jews from abroad were returned to the senders on various pretexts. Only the communities of large cities like Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev received permission to bake *matzot*, and even there in insufficient quantities. In 1961 Israeli Jews received numerous appeals from relatives in the Soviet Union for *matzot* for Passover. The Soviet authorities did not prohibit individual receipt of *matzot* from abroad.

The Moscow yeshivah, Kol Jacob, had 20 students in December 1960. (Visitors reported, however, that there were only 11 students in the autumn of 1961.) Rabbi Simeon Treblink, who headed the academic staff of the yeshivah, died in May 1961. Subsequently there were reports that the board of the yeshivah had been disbanded and Rabbi Judah Leib Levin relieved of all administrative duties at the school. He remained the chief rabbi of Moscow.

It was difficult to establish the precise number of synagogues in the Soviet Union (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], pp. 286–87). In January 1961 Moscow Radio announced that 150 synagogues were actively functioning in the USSR in 1961, about half of them in Moldavia and the Ukraine. But in the spring of that year Paul Dazhorozny, vice chairman of the Soviet Council of Religious Cults, told Rabbi Stuart Rosenberg of Toronto, Canada, that there were only 100 synagogues in the Soviet Union. JTA reported on December 21, 1960, that the Leningrad Jewish community had been permitted to build a new synagogue and was expected to receive 55 acres of land for a cemetery. There were frequent reports that synagogues had been closed in many places, including Saratov, Krementschug, Poltava, Czernovitz, Stalino, Soroki, and Novgorod-Volinsk.

There was no central Jewish religious body comparable to the organized hierarchies administering the affairs of the Orthodox church, Islam, and
other religions. The local Jewish religious corporations were isolated from one another and without adequate religious guidance. In many places there was nobody to take responsibility for the synagogue once the older generation disappeared from the scene. Soviet leaders officially maintained that they had no objection to the establishment of a central Jewish religious organization, but that a request for it had to come from Jewish religious circles, and the absence of such a request showed that the local units did not wish to relinquish their independence. But under Soviet conditions only the government could initiate a new organizational form for the Jewish communities.

There were reliable reports that the synagogue attracted many even among the younger generation. Jewish students told foreign visitors that they went to services on all important Jewish holidays, and that when the synagogue was full they congregated outside the building. It was reported that about 1,500 persons regularly attended Sabbath services at the main synagogue in Moscow, and that 5,000 Jews were there on Yom Kippur. Some 15,000 Jews filled and surrounded the Leningrad synagogue on Simhat Torah. In the opinion of many who were intimately familiar with Soviet Jewry, the maintenance of synagogues was vital to the survival of Jewish life in the Soviet Union, particularly in those areas where there was no secular Yiddish tradition.

**Antisemitism**

Soviet leaders continued their policy of excluding Jews from important positions in the state. Careful examination of available data indicated that there were no Jews in the upper echelons of the Communist party or of the Soviet government. The only identifiable Jew among the members of the Central Committee was V. E. Dimchitz, first deputy chairman of the Central Planning Office. There were only two or three Jewish members in the Supreme Soviet, representing less than .25 per cent of the total membership.

Recent visitors to the USSR reported that discrimination against Jews was particularly marked locally and in the national republics, whose autonomy was growing. Jews had difficulty in obtaining promotion to higher executive positions, and when staff was curtailed they were the first to go. To be accepted into a university, Jewish applicants had to be in the highest scholastic group, and even then their chances were better at provincial schools.

In newspapers throughout the Soviet Union the Jewish religion was singled out for abuse, and persons with Jewish names were used as prototypes of swindlers, speculators, and loafers—e.g., *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, Moscow, December 15, 1960, *Pravda Ukraini*, Kiev, January 3, 1961, *Sovetskaya Moldavia*, Kishinev, January 11, 1961, and *Kommunist*, Saratov, January 11, 1961. On October 2, 1960, the Moscow satirical magazine *Krokodil* published a series of cartoons, including one that showed Judas offering to sell Jesus for dollars; Judas looked like the Nazi Stürmer's "typical" Jew. In 1960 the Soviet Academy of Sciences published *Reaktionnaya Sushchnost Yudaism* ("The Reactionary Essence of Judaism"), by M. J. Shakhnovitsch,
depicting Judaism as a reactionary doctrine serving the interests of the bourgeoisie and the clergy.

Anti-Jewish discrimination in the Soviet Union was called to the attention of the UN by many Jewish organizations in the West. In January 1961, replying to formal charges which these organizations submitted to the sub-committee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Valentin I. Sapozhnikov denied "slanderous statements by some Jewish organizations" and cited the Soviet constitution's guarantee of freedom "for all peoples regardless of race."

A public celebration of the 70th birthday of Ilya Ehrenburg took place in January 1961 at the Moscow Writers' House. The veteran Soviet writer declared: "I am happy that I belong to the ranks of Russian writers. . . . I know that some people are wondering about these words, and I remember the years when, on all corners, one heard cries against 'passportless vagabonds.' . . . Yes, my passport does not say 'Russian' but 'Jew.' . . . I am a Russian writer, but so long as there is even one antisemite, I will continue, when asked about my nationality, to answer with pride and vigor, 'a Jew'" (Folks-shtimme, Warsaw, February 7, 1961). Continuing his memoirs, Men, Years, Life (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], p. 290), Ehrenburg wrote about Polish Jewry, the hasidic movement, and Peretz Markish's poetry. On antisemitism, he quoted the late Polish Jewish writer, Julian Tuwim: "But there is no place of rest in this world of ours for a Jewish wanderer with a mad song . . ." (Novy Mir, Moscow, September 1961). Ehrenburg had not always spoken so. His statement at his birthday celebration and his emphasis on things Jewish in his writings in Novy Mir seemed intended to challenge Russian writers and intellectuals who tolerated the prevalent anti-Jewish attitudes.

General David Dragunski, who often acted as an official spokesman of Soviet Jewry, stated during a visit to Paris in November 1961 that "vestiges of antisemitism still exist in the Soviet Union," but the Soviet government "is about to liquidate the last traces of racism and popular antisemitism" in Russia. He added that "more than 100 Jews hold the rank of general in the Soviet army," but gave no details. Specialists in Soviet affairs doubted that this was so. On the assumption that Dragunski's figure had some basis in reality, he may have included not only generals on active service but also those who had served in World War II and had been retired.

Repressions Against Jewish Communal Leaders

There were reports of a wave of arrests of Jewish communal leaders in many cities of the Soviet Union. Three leaders of the Jewish community of Leningrad, G. R. Pechersky, E. S. Dinkin, and T. A. Kaganov, were arrested by the authorities on the charge of criminal contact with and supplying information to "an embassy of one of the capitalist states" and were tried in October 1961. Pechersky was sentenced to imprisonment for 12 years, Dinkin 7 years, and Kaganov 4. According to some reports, the severity of the sentences was partly due to the fact than on Simhat Torah, earlier that month, thousands of young Jews had gathered around the synagogue dancing
and singing (New York Times, November 12, 1961). Three leaders of the Moscow Jewish community were arrested and tried on similar charges some time at the beginning of October 1961. This group included Grigoryi Roshal, Goldberg, and an unidentified third man. All received three-year prison sentences. In an English-language article distributed by the Soviet press agency Tass, Igor Orlov denied that Jews were being persecuted; Israeli agents had "involved some Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality into their espionage activities." The Israeli government termed the Tass allegations "libelous and without any foundation . . . they do not contain a word of truth." On November 28, 1961, JTA reported that the Soviet authorities had removed several heads of Jewish religious congregations—Bardokh (Kiev), Fried (Minsk), Kaob (Vilna), Jeruzalinski (Tashkent), and Zilberman (Riga).

It was difficult at the time of writing to assess the full significance of the Leningrad and Moscow cases. But it was obvious that the accusation of espionage against the leaders of two of the largest Jewish communities did not augur well for the Jews of the Soviet Union.

**Mass Graves**

Soviet authorities continued to ignore the Nazi slaughter of Jews at Babi-Yar, near Kiev, where a great number of Jews—estimates ranged from 35,000 to 80,000—were killed or buried alive in September 1941. Nothing had ever been done by Soviet authorities to honor the memory of those Jewish victims. In 1959 the Kiev municipality proposed that the ravine be filled in and a public garden be created to commemorate the "Soviet citizens" who perished under the Nazis in 1941. Nothing ever came of the proposal, and the Jewish mass graves at Babi-Yar remained untended. Early in 1961, however, a mud slide precipitated by reclamation work in the Babi-Yar vicinity killed 145 persons and injured 143 (New York Times, April 1, 1961). Persons who visited Kiev after the cave-in reported that the accident deeply affected the neighboring population, who somehow associated it with the 1941 horrors perpetrated at Babi-Yar. It was reported that peasants went to church to light candles and pray for the Jews who were killed, and that in many parish churches Orthodox priests conducted memorial services and spoke about the victims of the slaughter.

On September 19, 1961, Literaturnaya Gazeta published "Babi-Yar," by the young Soviet poet Evgeny Evtushenko, which created a stir in the Soviet Union. The poem spoke of Jews as victims of centuries of persecution, mourned the fact that the Jewish victims of Babi-Yar had been forgotten, and implied that there was antisemitism in the USSR. While the publication of Evtushenko’s poem in Literaturnaya Gazeta had obviously been sanctioned by Soviet authorities, it was nevertheless severely attacked in many newspapers. The well-known critic Dmitry Starikov condemned Evtushenko’s "illiterate and thoughtless words" and accused him of fostering nationalist emotions (Literatura i Zhizn, Moscow, September 27, 1961). Starikov suggested that there was no specifically Jewish catastrophe, misquoting from Ilya Ehrenburg’s war writings. In October 1961 Literaturnaya Gazeta pub-
lished a letter to the editor from Ehrenburg protesting against Starikov's interpretation of his writings. A number of Russian students demonstratively applauded Evtushenko on Moscow Poetry Day (New York Times, October 9, 1961), but some young Soviet poets condemned him for lack of understanding of real social issues and for conceptual confusion (Komsomolskaya Pravda, Moscow, October 4, 1961).

**Culture**

There were no Jewish schools, no Jewish theater, and no organized Jewish adult-education activities in the Soviet Union. Soviet Minister of Culture Ekaterina Furtseva told André Blumel of the pro-Soviet France-USSR organization that if the Soviet Union did anything for Jewish culture it would be not for domestic reasons but to please the Soviet Union's friends abroad (Jewish Chronicle, London, February 3, 1961).

During the period under review, Soviet authorities made an important concession by permitting the publication in Moscow of the bimonthly Yiddish magazine *Sovetish Heymland*. The first issue, of which 25,000 copies were printed, contained 128 pages and was dated July-August 1961. Except for two references to Khrushchev in the introduction and one page of excerpts from the new program of the party, the magazine was devoted to stories and poetry. It carried a list of 112 Soviet Yiddish writers to be published in future issues and announced that Aaron Vergellis would be editor-in-chief, with Nahum Oislander, Abraham Gonter, Hirsh Dobin, Moses Taiff, Busi Miller, Jehiel Falikman, Sophia Frey, and Rebekah Rubin members of the editorial board. It was too soon to tell whether *Sovetish Heymland* would have autonomous cultural merit or whether it would serve essentially propagandistic and apologetic purposes.

Two Yiddish volumes previously promised by Gospolitisdat appeared in 1961. Asher Schwartzman's *Ale lider un briv* was published in 10,000 copies, and David Bergelson's *Oisgeveylte werk* in 30,000. Soviet publishing agencies continued to issue translations of Yiddish works in Russian and other Soviet languages. *Sovetish Heymland* reported that about 60 such volumes had already appeared. Later it was reported that the last of the six-volume Russian edition of Sholem Aleichem's writings had been published. This translation, by Mikhail Shambadal, I. Slonim, L. Yudkovitch, R. Rubin, B. Plavnik, B. Ivanter, I. Taitz, Mikhail Zoshchenko, I. Gurevich, B. Tcherniak, and others was published in an edition of 225,000 copies. Translations of Peretz Markish, Aaron Vergellis, Shifra Cholodenko, Shike Driz, Noah Lurie, and Joseph Rabin were expected to appear in 1961.

Although the 503 professional theaters in the Soviet Union did not include one Yiddish theater, a considerable number of Yiddish programs were presented throughout the Soviet Union by various concert ensembles and amateur groups. An estimated 300,000 persons attended these concerts in 1961 (*Sovetish Heymland*, July-August 1961, p. 128). Thus a Yiddish group from Czernowitz, under the direction of Cidi Tal, visited Leningrad, Moscow,

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Tscheliabinsk, Frunze, Saratov, and other places. Featuring the actors Jacob Golman and Raya Mastoshovska, they presented a musical revue, *In a mazel-dike sho* ("Good Luck!"), by Motel Saktzler, with music by L. Shkolnikov and A. Misky. The singer Emil Horowitz presented a traditional repertoire in many cities; in Leningrad his concert drew an audience of 1,200. The Yiddish Drama Circle of Vilna, consisting of 50 amateurs, presented plays by Moses Kulbak, among others. It was warmly received wherever it appeared. In November 1960 the Yiddish Drama Collective of the Central Council of Trade Unions in Lithuania presented its fifth play, *Hershele Ostropolter*. The Jewish Choir of Riga gave many performances of Yiddish, Russian, and Latvian songs. It was also reported that 21 recordings of Yiddish songs by Nehamah Lifshitz, Sarah Fibich, Zinovyi Shulman, and others were issued in the USSR for both internal sale and export. Altogether, 41 such recordings had appeared (*Folks-shtimme*, Warsaw, May 24, 1961).

A new volume of drawings illustrating Sholem Aleichem's *Tevye der milkhiger* ("Tevye the Dairyman") was to be published. Prepared by the Leningrad Jewish painter Tanhum (Anatoly) Kaplan, the album was the first part of a two-volume edition of 50 drawings, with an introduction by Ilya Ehrenburg. (At the New York exhibit of lithographs by 25 Soviet artists in November 1961, there were many works by Kaplan on Jewish subjects.) It was reported that among the works presented at the Leningrad exhibit of the Russian Jewish sculptor Mikhail Weinman was a design for a monument to the victims of Auschwitz.

In December 1960, a commemoration of the 65th birthday of the late poet Peretz Markish was held at the Central Writers' House in Moscow. An exhibit of Markish's works was displayed in the lobby of the building. Among the Russian writers who spoke on this occasion were Vsevolod Ivanov and Semyon Kirsanov. Motel Grubian read Yiddish poems dedicated to Markish.

Paltiel Shapiro, professor of Hebrew philology at Moscow University, died in August 1961. He was completing a Hebrew-Russian dictionary at the time of his death.

Jews occupied a considerable place in Soviet science. Candidates for the 1961 Lenin Prize included 73 Jewish scientists specializing in physics, mathematics, geology, engineering, automation, architecture, and other fields (*Folks-shtimme*, Warsaw, December 7, 1960). In 1959 the 310,000 scientific workers in the USSR included 30,600 Jews (*Narodnoe khosiaistvo SSSR v 1959 godu*).

**Relations with Israel**

Soviet policy toward Israel continued hostile. Soviet propaganda continuously pictured Israel as a tool of imperialism and dwelt on the unbearable conditions under which workers allegedly lived in Israel. Some of this propaganda, apparently written to impress Soviet Jews, charged that ultra-reactionary Zionist elements, headed by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, pursued a policy of savage repression not only against Arabs but also against Jews from Asia and Africa (*Trud*, Moscow, January 6, 1961). In a broadcast
to Arab countries, Moscow Radio accused Israeli scientists of having participated in the explosion of the French atomic bomb in the Sahara in 1959 and charged that Israel was preparing an atomic bomb with the assistance of France (Jewish Chronicle, London, December 23, 1960).

In June 1961 three Soviet artists came to Israel for a series of performances with the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra. These musicians, the pianists Lev Vlasenko and Maria Karandasheva and the violinist Mikhail Weinman, were the first Soviet artists to visit Israel.

In June 1961 the first secretary of the Israeli embassy in Moscow, Jacob Sharett, was charged with espionage and ordered to leave the Soviet Union. Israeli spokesmen categorically denied the accusation. After Soviet officials again accused Israel of spying in connection with the Leningrad case (see p. 369), in the Soviet Union, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion declared that “there is nothing Israel can do to improve relations with the Soviet Union under present circumstances. . . . Whatever Israel does will only be held against her by Moscow.”

**Eichmann Trial**

The Soviet press contended that Israel wanted to avoid a full-scale trial of Adolf Eichmann and that there was collusion between Israel, Bonn, and the United States to suppress aspects of the case that might put the Zionists in an unfavorable light or lead to the exposure of certain West German leaders.

Moscow Pravda (April 8, 1961) accused Western Germany and its leaders of harboring Nazi criminals, including the newly-appointed inspector general of the West German army, Friedrich Foertsch, and State Secretary Hans Globke. Jews were not mentioned, Eichmann being identified as the killer of millions of people. The Soviet press also accused Israeli leaders of sheltering “Nazi criminals” in the service of the Bonn government (Pravda, June 28, 1961). While the Soviet writers could not avoid mentioning Eichmann’s part in the mass murder of the Jews, they systematically played down Jewish martyrdom and emphasized Eichmann’s “crimes against humanity.” In general, Soviet propaganda used the Eichmann trial to discredit not only the “ruling circles” of West Germany, but also “international reactionary Zionist circles,” whom the Soviet writers accused of fomenting various anti-Soviet plots in collaboration with Nazi criminals (New Times, Moscow, No. 12, 1961).

**Birobidjan**

The population of the “Jewish Autonomous Region,” estimated at about 163,000, included some 25,000 Jews. Soviet sources indicated that there were many libraries, choirs, schools, etc., in the region. But few, if any, appeared to be Jewish institutions. The Birobidjaner Shtern continued to appear three times a week, but it was reported that Jewish life in the territory had completely disintegrated.

Leon Shapiro
Poland*

During the year ending June 30, 1961, the government of Wladislaw Gomulka continued its "centrist" course. Polish intellectuals called for more freedom of expression and for a return to the liberal promises of 1956-57. Even the party ideologist and leading Marxist philosopher Adam Schaff complained that Marxism was failing to attract the new creative generation. Julian Hochfeld, former Socialist and current Communist member of the Sejm (parliament), appealed for objectivity in scholarly research. But at the same time a new and more rigid "cultural line" was demanded by Wincenty Kresko, representing the Communist party, and Minister of Culture and Art Tadeusz Galinski, who urged writers and artists to "move closer to the people" and to express "the needs of the laboring masses." Galinski attacked the prevailing trend toward abstract expressionism in painting, modernist music, etc., and invited writers to create "realistic" literature. And after a four-year period of comparative freedom, Polish universities restored compulsory instruction in Marxist and Communist doctrine. A new law barred religious instruction from public schools and decreed that school work must be based on the "principle of scientific education." Nevertheless, Poland remained the most liberal state in the Soviet sphere.

From time to time there were rifts in the truce between the state and the Catholic church. During the 1961 electoral campaign, Gomulka charged that the church took orders from foreign powers, and official spokesmen repeatedly criticized the church's claim that Poland's national existence was linked with the fate of Roman Catholicism. For his part, Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski protested against the continuing inroads of the state into the area of "sacred family rights" and against the state policy of promoting atheism, particularly among the youth. But for the time being there was no desire on either side for a rupture, despite government interference with many church activities, particularly those outside the specifically religious field. Taxes were levied on various enterprises conducted by the neo-Catholic Pax movement which, although denounced by the Vatican, continued to claim allegiance to basic Catholic doctrine. The Pax group, under the leadership of Boleslaw Piasecki, an extreme rightist in prewar Poland, tended to adapt Catholic religious beliefs to the "Communist reality" of present-day Poland.

In the April 1961 elections to the Sejm, 98 per cent of the votes were cast for the regime's single list of candidates. This included token representation of non-Communist elements, including a small group of Catholic deputies who occasionally took an independent line.

* For meaning of abbreviations, see p. 497.
JEWISH COMMUNITY

There were reports in 1960 and again in 1961 that additional Jews would be repatriated from the USSR, but there were only individual cases of repatriation in both years. In the second half of 1960 about 2,000 Jews left Poland, most to Israel and some to Western Europe and Australia. In the first half of 1961 only about 300 Jews left. Little more movement of Jews from Poland was expected. The existing Polish Jewish community apparently consisted largely of persons who had chosen, for personal or political reasons, to remain in Poland.

Although estimates of the Jewish population varied, previous figures appeared to require substantial revision downward. It was estimated that there were altogether about 32,000 Jews in Poland in mid-1961.

Communal Life

The small Jewish community went about its business without governmental interference but was beset by many internal difficulties and was split three ways. The central Jewish communal organization, the Cultural and Social Union of Polish Jews, under Communist direction, conducted a variety of Jewish activities in Warsaw and in the provincial cities, always in accordance with current party slogans. The religious Jews were organized in the Union of Jewish Religious Congregations (Wa'ad ha-Kehillot). A third group consisted partly of repatriates from Russia and partly of local, mostly assimilated Jews who were out of sympathy with the Yiddishists of the Union and foreign to the religionists of the religious congregations. The Cultural and Social Union continuously objected to the Wa'ad ha-Kehillot's participation in welfare activities, but at the time of writing, the structure of Jewish communal life in Poland remained unchanged.

The widespread Jewish activities of the union were largely dependent on substantial government grants, whose future availability was uncertain. The union's leadership decided to launch a new membership drive and prepare for eventual changes in the union's charter (*Folks-shtimme*, Warsaw, December 22, 1960). At the end of 1960 the union reported a membership of 6,000, affiliated with 27 local groups in as many cities. It was also reported that about 25 per cent of the membership were activists who carried on most of the organization's work. Hersh Smoliar and David Sfard continued as president and secretary general of the union.

Antisemitism

Foreign visitors to Poland reported that antisemitic feeling was still strong among the populace but that the government was doing everything it could to combat prejudice. To celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Berek Joselewicz, the legendary Jewish hero of the fight for Polish independence, the city council of Kock decided to build a monument in his honor, since he fell in battle nearby and was buried in the local cemetery. Many new Polish films used Jewish themes, usually with fairness and sympathy.
Maksymilian Belgart, a former member of the German police who was responsible for the murder of many Jews and Poles, was condemned to death by the military court of Lublin. Siegfried Mikolaiski, a worker in Danzig, received a prison sentence of five years for having praised the crimes of the Nazis.

**Religious Life**

In 1961 the Union of Jewish Religious Congregations reported 23 congregations with a total membership of about 2,000. A religious calendar for 1961–62 listed the following cities with local congregations: Bielsko Biala; Bytom; Czestochowa; Dzierzgonow; Gdansk Wrzeszcz; Gliwice; Katowice; Cracow; Lignice; Lodz; Lublin; Nowy Sacz; Sosnowiec; Swidnica; Szczecin; Tarnow; Walbrzych; Warsaw; Wloclawek; Wroclaw (2 congregations); Zary, and Zgorzelec. Small Jewish schools (hadarim), with a total enrollment of about 600 children, were functioning in 20 cities. Religious congregations distributed 1,000 kosher meals daily and maintained five mikva’ot.

Yiddish clubs and similar groups arranged Hanukkah celebrations throughout Poland in December 1960, and children were told about the heroic Hasmoneans. Religious Hanukkah celebrations were also organized in all the 23 congregations, and special talks were held on the meaning of the holiday (Folks-shtimme, January 3, 1961). The authorities undertook the restoration of many old synagogue buildings considered to be of historical importance.

Isaac Frenkel was president and Chaim Rattner vice president of the religious congregations. David Percowitch, the aged rabbi of Warsaw, died in April 1961. Rabbi Asher Zibers, who had been his assistant, ministered to the religious needs of the Jews of Warsaw. Rabbi Perlow served in Wroclaw. In many places, experienced older laymen helped in the management of religious affairs.

**Jewish Education**

The state-supported Yiddish schools continued to experience difficulty in teaching Yiddish literature to Jewish children who knew little or no Yiddish. While some of the lessons were given in Yiddish, the teachers were often forced to use Polish and even Russian words when dealing with the children who were recent repatriates from the USSR. The following schools functioned in 1960: a Sholem Aleichem school in Wroclaw; Peretz schools in Walbrzych, Szczecin, and Lodz, and schools in Lignice, Dzierzgonow, and Bielawa. The schools in Lignice, Lodz, and Wroclaw conducted a secondary program at the lycée level. Precise information on the total enrollment in Yiddish schools was not available, but it was estimated at about 1,200. During the period under review a number of children’s clubs were organized by the Cultural and Social Union, mostly in cities where there were no Yiddish schools, to give supplementary Jewish education to Jewish children studying in public schools. With the help of JDC, about 2,500 Jewish children attended summer camps during the summer of 1961.
Social Welfare

JDC continued its welfare program, operating through local relief committees consisting of representatives of both the Cultural and Social Union and Wa'ad ha-Kehillot. In mid-1961 JDC help was reaching about 12,000 persons, including some 2,000 aged, invalids, and sick; about 3,600 beneficiaries of JDC-supported feeding programs, and 350 students. JDC also supported the kosher kitchens of the religious congregations and provided capital to producer cooperatives. ORT's vocational education program was training about 2,000 individuals.

Producer Cooperatives

Jewish producer cooperatives functioned under the aegis of the Cultural and Social Union. About 25 per cent of the income of the cooperatives went into the treasury of the union, thus helping it to meet its large budget of expenditures for social activities. At the end of 1960 there were 16 Jewish producer cooperatives, compared with 11 at the end of 1959. Production of the cooperatives in 1960 was over 78 million zlotys, compared with about 57 million in 1959 (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], p. 294). In the first half of 1961 two new cooperatives were established. The 18 cooperatives employed some 1,600 workers, including some non-Jews. The cooperatives produced a variety of goods and provided Jewish artisans with stable employment. Problems facing the cooperatives included improving the skills of members and securing better housing facilities. A special commission of the Cultural and Social Union dealt with these problems and with such matters as improving sales methods and conducting relations with the authorities.

TABLE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF JEWISH PRODUCER COOPERATIVES, MID-1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bytom</td>
<td>Im. Anielewicza</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzierzno</td>
<td>Wspolna Praca</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gliwice</td>
<td>Im. Lewartowski</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legnica</td>
<td>Postep</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lodz</td>
<td>Farmedia</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rozvoj</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Osnowa</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swidnica</td>
<td>Specyfica</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szczecin</td>
<td>Specyfica</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dobrobyt</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warsaw</td>
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<td>Odrodzenie</td>
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<td>Wroclaw</td>
<td>Ineka</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wielobranzowa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robotnik</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zary</td>
<td>Im. Boh. Getta</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18
Cultural Activities

Jewish cultural activities in Poland were adversely affected by emigration, but the Cultural and Social Union made strenuous efforts to maintain them. At the beginning of 1961 there were three Yiddish people's universities and ten reading circles, as well as nine dance and art groups with 213 members. There were also twelve libraries, but only five were fully functioning. A special campaign for the establishment of Yiddish art groups was undertaken in January-February 1961.

Between 1945 and 1961 Yiddish Bukh had published 265 Yiddish books with a total of 1,300,000 copies. These included 61 in history, most of them prepared by the Jewish Historical Institute; 86 original titles in fiction; 46 in poetry; 27 in social-cultural studies; 15 in criticism, and 30 in various other fields.

The Jewish Historical Institute continued its research activities as a part of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Under the direction of Berl Mark, the institute's publication Bieter far geshikte and a quarterly bulletin in the Polish language continued to appear regularly.

The Communist Folks-shtimme conducted a continuous campaign for subscribers but apparently achieved little success.

The 75th birthday of Abraham Morewski, the Yiddish actor-director and well-known writer of memoirs, was celebrated in March 1961. Stanislaw Wygodski received the 1960 literary award of the weekly Nowa Kultura. Much of Wygodski's writing dealt with Jewish life and the tragic fate of the Polish Jews.

Three Israeli actors—Samuel Rodenski, Samuel Segal, and Elijah Goldberg—went to Poland in August 1961, at the invitation of the Polish ministry of culture, to give readings in a number of cities.

Commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto Revolt

The 18th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto revolt was celebrated throughout Poland. Among the foreign guests was Sir Barnett Janner, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and a Labor MP. After the official ceremony in Warsaw, Sir Barnett visited the Gesia cemetery and recited there the traditional kaddish. The ghetto revolt was recalled in April 1961 in Trybuna Ludu, the Communist party's Warsaw newspaper. Notes and articles on the uprising also appeared in numerous provincial papers. A special radio program was presented by the Lodz radio on April 18, 1961.

It was reported that a monument had been erected on the grave of the famous cantor Gershon Sirota, who had perished in the Warsaw ghetto and was buried in the Gesia cemetery.

Eichmann Trial

The capture and trial of Adolf Eichmann were extensively covered by the Polish press. Unlike the Soviet writers, the Polish writers emphasized that Eichmann's victims were Jews. They pointed out that most of Eichmann's activities were connected with death camps in Poland. For instance, the
central organ of the Communist party, *Trybuna Ludu* (December 1960, January 1961) carried a series of articles by Zofia Krzyzanowska explaining the Nazi “final solution.” As time went on, however, the Polish press criticized Israel, charging collusion between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany, where, allegedly, known “war criminals” still occupied important positions. On the whole, however, the treatment of the Eichmann case was sympathetic and took note of Jewish martyrdom.

LEON SHAPIRO

Czechoslovakia

**During the period under review (July 1960 to June 1961) the religious activities of the Jewish congregations in Czechoslovakia continued undisturbed. Whatever assignments were given to the dwindling community by the government were fulfilled with the usual display of loyalty. On May 15, 1960, for example, the chairman of the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Lands, František Ehrmann, speaking at Hodonín for “Czechoslovakia’s citizens of the Jewish faith,” stated that “a higher than average number of people in our ranks, and especially of our youth, had realized on the basis of their own experiences and their own thinking that only Marxism-Leninism had a truthful conception of the world.”**

In the May 1961 *Věstník* (“Gazette”) of the Jewish Religious Communities in Czechoslovakia, Ehrmann recalled that of the members of Po’ale Zion, “a considerable part joined the Marxist left (in 1920). . . . The Marxist members of this Jewish socialist party broke with the reformist and nationalist minority in their own ranks, accepted the 21 conditions of entry into the Third International, and formed the small but active Jewish Communist party of Czechoslovakia.” *Věstník*, in an unsigned editorial, also extolled the Communist party of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic as a “consistent fighter against racism, nationalism, and antisemitism, as the victorious power which created our happy homeland . . . and under whose leadership Czechoslovakia developed into a modern, socialist state, the first after the Soviet Union.” *Věstník* editorials also linked the United States with German militarism, neofascism, and antisemitism, reflecting the deepening tension between East and West.

Similarly, a protest of the Council of Jewish Communities against the murder of Congo ex-Premier Patrice Lumumba in February 1961 called for the dismissal of UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, whom it accused of sharing the moral responsibility for the shedding of blood in the Congo. In August 1961 *Věstník* published an “Appeal to the Whole World,” adopted in East Berlin in May 1961 at a conference of representatives of the Jewish organizations of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and the Ger-
man Democratic Republic. The appeal stated that "16 years after the destruction of the fascist powers, the western part of Berlin had been transformed . . . into a dangerous center of unscrupulous war propaganda, espionage, and diversionist activities against the socialist countries, the guarantors of our real and equal rights, against the forces of peace everywhere in the world, and against world Jewry and its interests." Linking the Eichmann trial with Nazis "who still wield power in the German Federal Republic," it called on the Jews of all countries "to cooperate with all people who are endeavoring to prevent a new world catastrophe, a new world conflagration." It was signed by the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Lands, the Central Association of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia, the Cultural and Social Union of Polish Jews, the Central Board of Hungarian Jews, the Association of Jewish Communities in the German Democratic Republic, and seven East German Jewish congregations.

Věstník gave extensive coverage to the Eichmann trial. Concentration-camp survivors with knowledge of Eichmann's activities in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia were invited to submit affidavits to the Union of Anti-fascist Fighters in Prague. In reporting on the trial, the Czechoslovak press accused the government of Israel of trying to suppress information on former Nazis and being mainly interested in good economic relations with Adenauer's "Fourth Reich."

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The estimated number of Jews in Czechoslovakia was 18,000 (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], p. 383, and the Jewish Year Book, London, 1960, p. 171). Věstník for October 1960 reprinted the figures of the Jewish Year Book, including the estimates for Czechoslovakia and the other Iron Curtain countries, thereby accepting their validity. The more detailed figures in Die Aussäen unter Tränen . . . (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], p. 300) were slightly higher: 5,000 for the religious community of Prague, including all of central Bohemia; 1,000 for the community of Usti (Aussig), covering the northwestern Sudeten area, most of them Jews from the Subcarpathian Ukraine (Zakarpatská Ukrajina), which was ceded to the Soviet Union in 1945; 500 in Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad), comprising the westernmost district of the Sudetenland, of whom about 80 per cent were reported to be new settlers from the Subcarpathian Ukraine; 400 in the region of the religious community of Liberec (Riechenberg), in East Bohemia, and 350 in South Bohemia with the administrative center in Plzeň (Pilsen). The Moravian figures, according to the same source, were 900 for the east and south, belonging to the community of Brno (Bruenn); 450 for central Moravia, served by the community of Olomouc (Olmetz); 500 in the north around Ostrava (Ostrau), and 300 in the eastern districts belonging to the religious community of Hodonín (Goeding). For all of Slovakia, with 42 religious communities not subdivided into synagogal congregations, the total number of Jews was given as approximately 10,000.

The three cities with substantial numbers of Jewish inhabitants were
Prague, with close to 5,000 Jews, Bratislava (Pressburg) with about 3,000, and Košice (Kaschau), with 1,500.

**Jewish Political Prisoners**

The 40th anniversary celebration of the founding of the Czechoslovak Communist party on May 14, 1921, was the occasion for a plenary session of the executive committee of the party at which President Antonín Novotný reviewed the history of Communism in Czechoslovakia. His speech contained the first formal revision of the charges against Rudolf Slánský, the one-time general secretary of the party, and his co-defendants, who were executed in the fall of 1952 as “Zionist-imperialist-Titoist conspirators” (AJYB, 1957 [Vol. 58], p. 323; 1960 [Vol. 61], p. 269). In the new version, Slánský was charged only with having introduced harmful anti-Leninist methods into the party, having suppressed democracy inside the party, and having created an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and denunciations and a wrong cadre policy (*Rudé Právo*, May 14, 1961).

The London *Jewish Chronicle* of December 16, 1960, reported that more than 30 Jews, including prominent Zionists, were released from prison as a result of a political amnesty. Among them were Josef Buechler, a former secretary of the Zionist organization in Bratislava who had been sentenced in 1950 to 23 years; Arpad Goldstein, sentenced to 10 years, and Rabbi Jacob Birnbaum, sentenced to 23 years. Also reported as “recently” released from prison were about 30 Jews who had been arrested in connection with the Slánský affair (*Jewish Chronicle*, December 23, 1960).

**Communal Organization**

The 80th birthday of Chief Rabbi Gustav Sicher and the 86th birthday of Moravian District Rabbi Richard Feder, August 21, and 26, 1960, respectively, were celebrated by festive gatherings in Prague and Brno. On October 5, 1960, Rabbi Sicher died and on April 16, 1961, Rabbi Feder was installed as chief rabbi for the Czech lands. The installation was attended by representatives of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches.

Rabbi Sicher had held rabbinical offices for 55 years. His last prewar rabbinate was at the synagogue of Prague-Vinohrady (Weinberge). In 1939 he emigrated to Palestine but returned in 1945, when he was invited to become chief rabbi of Prague. Rabbi Feder had ministered to the small congregation of Kolín before the war. A survivor of the concentration camp of Theresienstadt, he resumed his rabbinical duties after the war and was named district rabbi of Moravia in 1953.

With Rabbi Sicher’s death, the rabbinical body for the Czech lands was reduced to two, Chief Rabbi Feder and District Rabbi Bernard Farkaš. In Slovakia Chief Rabbi Elias Katz, District Rabbi Solomon Steiner, and Rabbi Gustav Wald continued in office. In February 1961 the administrative functions of the Jewish religious communities in Liberec and Karlovy Vary were taken over by the communities of Ustí, Prague, and Plzeň, respectively, thus reducing the number of administrative centers (communities) from five to three. The congregations of Liberec, Jablonec, Varnsdorf, and Česká Lípa
were attached to the community of Usti; Karlovy Vary and Mariánské Lázně, to Plzeň; and Hradec Králové, Náchod, Trutnov, and Turnov, to Prague.

Cultural Activities

The 12-page monthly *Věstník* was published regularly, as was the mimeographed quarterly *Informationsbulletin*, in German, for readers outside of the country. The editor of both publications was Rudolf Ilitis, executive secretary of the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Lands.

The *Informationsbulletin* listed all Czechoslovak publications, broadcasts, theater events, etc., which dealt with Jewish themes. It also listed the works of Jewish authors and artists, or authors and artists of Jewish origin, of whom the most prominent appeared to be the film director Jiří Weiss; the writers and poets Ludvík Aškenázy, Arnošt Lustig, František Gottlieb, F. R. Kraus, and Norbert Frýd, and the composer Karel Rainer. In its spring 1961 issue it reprinted a lengthy document addressed by the Czechoslovak Association for International Relations to the Federation of Associations for the United Nations in Geneva. Presented as an answer to the question, "Is there antisemitism in Czechoslovakia?,” the letter rebutted the charge of anti-Jewish actions by calling attention to the many protests of Czechoslovak organizations against antisemitic manifestations in West Germany and in other non-Communist countries and especially against the outrages of the Nazis and the Nazi period.

The publishing house Československý Spisovatel brought out posthumously Jiří Weil’s last novel *Mendelssohn on the Roof*, which deals with Heydrich’s reign of terror and Jewish life in Prague and Theresienstadt. André Schwarz-Bart’s *The Last of the Just* appeared in a Czech translation. Jan Otcenášek’s novel *Romeo, Julia, and the Dark*, the love story of a Jewish girl and a Christian boy, was translated into German, and translations into Russian, Danish, Japanese, English, and Estonian were in preparation. The motion picture, directed by Jiří Weiss, was an international success.

Sholem Aleichem’s *Menachem Mendel* was translated into Czech by Josef Markovič and published in April 1961. The publishing firm Naše Vojsko announced a collection of children’s war diaries, including the diary of David Rubinowicz, previously translated into four languages. Among the non-Czech plays performed in Czechoslovak theaters in 1960 and 1961 were *The Diary of Anne Frank*; Erwin Sylvanus’ *Korczak and the Children*, a Warsaw ghetto drama, and Erich Maria Remarque’s *The Last Act*. Ladislav Mňačko’s Slovak novel *Death is Called Engelchen*, one of whose heroes is a Jewish girl enlisted with anti-Nazi partisans, was made into a TV drama.

The *Zidovská Ročenka* (“Jewish Year Book”) for the year 5722, including a Jewish calendar and customary, was issued in August 1961. It contained translations from Sholem Aleichem, Judah Leyb Peretz, and Franz Werfel; contributions by Rabbis Feder, Katz, and Farkaš, and articles and stories by Lev Brod, Ladislav Fuks, Olga Herbenová, Hana Volavková, Rudolf Ilitis, František Gottlieb, and others.
Hungary*

JÁNOS KÁDÁR’S regime showed that it believed the mood of the 1956 revolution to be a problem of the past. Apparently judging that there was no longer any need to combine economic appeasement of the masses with police repression, it pursued a more rigorous economic policy.

Thus, in 1960 and 1961 the collectivization of agriculture was extended to nearly 90 per cent of the arable land. Despite government disclaimers of compulsion, it was admitted that over 700 persons had been arrested because of “growing opposition to collective agriculture,” among them 52 for terrorist acts and 15 others for arson (Neue Zürcher Zeitung, June 28, 1961). In the industrial sector, production quotas were sharply increased, but the regime avoided a premature resumption of enforced production of capital goods at the expense of consumer goods.

In 1961 the Kádár government introduced new and more repressive measures against the Roman Catholic church. While avoiding interference with religious services and permitting a limited measure of voluntary religious instruction, it initiated the prosecution of church representatives for “activities hostile to the state.” Thus, in June 1961, 11 leading Catholic priests and laymen were sentenced to prison terms ranging from six months to eight years, with loss of civic rights. According to the Neue Zürcher Zeitung (June 20), the sentences were based solely on confessions, the prosecutor offering no other evidence of guilt, and conceding that some of the defendants had offended only “spiritually” against Communism. In July the Budapest correspondent of the Milan daily Il Giorno (July 1, 1961) reported that Karoly Olt, the Hungarian minister of church affairs, had confirmed the arrest of another group of 60 leading Catholics. Vatican circles maintained that the number of Hungarians arrested for similar reasons was between 200 and 300.

At the same time, the Kádár regime indicated an unmistakable interest in normalizing its relations with the United States and improving trade and cultural relations between the two countries. It appeared anxious to have Washington discontinue its practice of raising the question of the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolution before the United Nations every year.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

Jewish religious and cultural activities flourished, although their future depended solely on the will of the regime. More than 2,000 bar mitzvahs were publicly celebrated during 1960. There was intensive voluntary Jewish religious education, particularly in Budapest. The Budapest Jewish museum was

* For meaning of abbreviations, see p. 497.
substantially enlarged. The renowned Budapest rabbinical seminary functioned regularly, with Alexander (Sandor) Scheiber as director, and in April 1960 ordained two new rabbis. Several yeshivot continued active. There were also 18 Talmud Torahs in Budapest. In the other communities religious instruction was given to about 1,000 pupils aged 6 to 14, in addition to about 500 pupils in 34 Orthodox Talmud Torahs. The Jewish community's weekly organ *Új Élet* ("New Life") appeared regularly, bearing a religious message to its readers. There were 18 synagogues in Budapest and attendance was high at their religious services. Many study and lecture courses were arranged by the Budapest community.

That the Kádár government did not contemplate any direct restrictive measures against Jewish community life in the immediate future was indicated by the state subsidies regularly allocated to the community organization as well as to the Catholic and Protestant churches. The withdrawal of subsidies would, in itself, critically affect religious life in Hungary in general. And in September 1961 the government permitted the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to furnish microfilms of the famous David Kaufmann collection of ancient Hebrew documents to New York University.

There were no indications of official antisemitism, such as had been promoted by Mátéyás Rákosi during his tenure of power. Tales of Jewish conspiracies against the system (like those introduced at the Rajk trial) were no longer invented, despite the important role of many Jewish intellectuals in the 1956 anti-Soviet revolt. While very few persons of Jewish origin held posts on cabinet or party-secretariat levels, there was in general no discrimination in employment against Jews. Some rightist antisemitic activity appeared to be continuing, perhaps inspired by the antisemitic and pro-Nazi activities of Hungarian Nazi refugees in Western countries. In May 1961 the Associated Press reported that three Hungarians were imprisoned for up to five years for defacing the walls of a West Hungarian town with swastikas and Nazi slogans. The men had also desecrated graves in the local Jewish cemetery.

Spokesmen of the Kádár government in the West endorsed the Eichmann trial in general terms, on the basis of "its special interest to Hungary, since our country was one of those where his activities took an especially heavy toll" (*Jewish Chronicle*, London, April 14, 1961). But at the same time the government and the Jewish community leadership echoed Soviet propaganda identifying the West German regime with Nazism. The community organ *Új Élet* also made quite an issue of Israel's sale of small arms to West Germany (see p. 351).

In August 1960 the executive committee of the Central Board of Hungarian Jews and the Hungarian committee of WJC declared in a joint resolution that because of the "extremely reactionary political attitude of WJC," Hungarian Jewry had decided to leave its ranks. The resolution accused WJC of thanking West Germany for its reparations payments; failing to protest against West German rearmament; defaming the Soviet Union with charges of antisemitism, and "supporting aggressive Western policy." Neither
the withdrawal of the Hungarian community from WJC nor its original decision in 1957 to join that organization could be considered as free and spontaneous acts of the Jewish community.

The last remaining tie with Jewish life in the West was represented by small CJMCAG subsidies to the Central Board of Hungarian Jews for the support of its publishing activities, mainly on the history of the Nazi holocaust in Hungary.

In the year under review, books published in Budapest with CJMCAG help were *Monumenta Hungariae Judaica (1600–1740)*, volume 6, edited by Alexander Scheiber and Fülöp Grünwald, and *Documents on Anti-Jewish Persecutions in Hungary, May–June 1944*, edited by Ilana Benoschofsky and Elek Karsai.

Soviet antagonism toward Israel contributed to the sense of isolation prevailing among Hungarian Jews and seriously limited the possibility of their emigration to that country. During the period under review, a limited number of persons over the age of 55, Christians and Jews, were granted individual exit permits for emigration to Western countries. But the government consistently refused to permit any special group emigration to Israel, even for the humanitarian reason of reuniting disrupted families.

**Rumania**

In June 1960 the third congress of the ruling Rumanian Worker’s (Communist) party was held in Bucharest. It was attended by representatives from the Soviet satellites in Europe and from Communist parties in other parts of the world. Premier Nikita Khrushchev headed a delegation of seven high-ranking Soviet officials. The congress was a significant international meeting from the start, a demonstration for Moscow against the Chinese.

On March 5, 1961, general elections to the parliament and regional and local administrative bodies took place. Soon afterwards radical reforms were announced, including amendments to the constitution, reforms in the agrarian cooperatives, and expansion of farm collectives. Official reports purported to provide statistical proof of the success of socialization in agriculture. A Bucharest dispatch to the New York *Times* of March 20, 1961, for example, based on official data, stated that “82 per cent of crop land is under socialization.”

In contrast, the New York publication of the democratic parties of Romania in exile, *Romania*, reported (September 1960) widespread unemployment and growing unrest among the peasants because of rapid collectivization and mechanization. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of April 29, 1961, reported the

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* For meaning of abbreviations, see p. 497.
suppression of peasant uprisings in several villages around Bucharest and Cluj, with scores of injured and a number of dead. After a visit to Rumania, Gaston Coblentz of the New York Herald Tribune wrote on May 9, 1961: "The population is subject to a higher degree of totalitarian pressure than is the case at present in Bulgaria to the south or post-rebellion Hungary to the west."

A study, entitled "Loi, terreur, et résistance en Roumanie," published as a supplement to the June 1960 issue of the Paris organ of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, Preuves, reported:

The government tries by all means to maintain an antisemitic movement that can create an important diversion. It argues, in effect, that since Jews have access to important positions in political and economic life, in the administration and the police, they are readily available for antisemitic purposes. What is more, this policy accords well with the Russian example, a thing that seems always to be reassuring to the Rumanian rulers. Dismissals and downgrading to subordinate jobs seem to have touched the Jews more profoundly than the arrests of Zionists.

While in most respects the Rumanian regime faithfully imitated the Soviet model, it differed in according the Jews the rights of a national minority.

Hundreds of guests from the Arab countries attended a youth congress in Bucharest at the end of 1960. According to the London Jewish Chronicle (September 16, 1960), the Rumanian authorities employed Jews to lecture to students from Egypt, Syria, and other Middle Eastern countries on the evils of Zionism. La Nation roumaine, published by refugees in Paris, commented: "In this way the Rumanian Communist regime tries to make amends for its great sin in permitting the emigration of Rumanian Jews to Israel." There were regular Arab-language broadcasts.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Jewish population of Rumania was estimated at about 200,000.

There was little news about Jewish life in the period under review (July 1960 to June 1961), in contrast to the abundance of other information on life in Rumania.

In April 1960 La Nation roumaine reported the release from prison in March of a Jewish journalist, Leonard Kirschen, Bucharest correspondent of the Associated Press. He had been arrested in 1950 and sentenced to 25 years for espionage on behalf of the United States.

The London Jewish Chronicle of August 12, 1960, quoted a Paris Le Monde report that several of the Jews arrested and sentenced in 1959 for attempted emigration to Israel had been released from prison. Similar reports were published by JTA and others. Besides Butza Weiss, allegedly a niece of Theodor Herzl (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], p. 306), among those reported to have been released were some Zionist leaders, including M. Merdler, Miriam Zilberman, Israel Hart, Jancu Geinber, Zoltan Wurzel, and Rabbi Aryeh Leib Halpern.
It was not known how many were still in prison. Since there were no reports of new arrests, it appeared that after the 1959 persecutions of Zionists (AJYB, 1961 [Vol. 62], pp. 305-06) the wave of terror against them had subsided. But the scarcity of news about Jewish life in Rumania—unusual even for a country behind the Iron Curtain—seemed to indicate that the fear inspired by the 1959 suppressions had not been dissipated.

The only publication of the Jewish community in Rumania was the *Revista cultului mosaic*, published in Yiddish, Hebrew, and Rumanian. It was reduced from a fortnightly to a monthly. Under the editorship of Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen, it limited its reporting more than ever to religious matters, sermons of the chief rabbi, etc., and avoided any reference to the nonreligious life of the Jewish community.

In the general elections Rabbi Rosen was elected deputy from Tudor Vladimirescu, a district in Bucharest inhabited mainly by Jews. Other Jews were elected to parliament and to municipal governments, but information on their numbers and identity was not available. At the only district voters' rally for Rosen, speakers included a number of non-Jewish candidates and government officials.

Jewish matters were considered in greater detail only once. An article celebrating the “Day of the Republic” (*Revista cultului mosaic*, December 1960), and limited almost entirely to religious affairs, praised the government for the complete equality accorded the Jews, citing as evidence the rebuilding of war-devastated synagogues, the *matzot* bakery in Cluj, the preparation of kosher Passover wine, the yeshivah in Arad, the publication of a Jewish calendar, and the publication of the *Revista cultului mosaic* itself. The article pointed out that the rabbis and other employees of the Jewish community, like government employees, received salaries and pensions from the state and benefited from health insurance. They were also entitled to vacations in a special government-maintained vacation home, equipped with a kosher kitchen and a ritual bath, in the resort town of Borsec.

In January 1961 the president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Rumania, Israel Bacal, died. A director of the legal department of the ministry of industry who had received a number of medals and other distinctions, he was regarded as trustworthy by the regime. The January 1961 *Revista cultului mosaic* published eulogies and a biography of the deceased as well as many condolences from high officials, including the secretary of the Council of Ministers, and from such foreign sources as the Jewish communities of Poland and Hungary and Rabbi Kurt Wilhelm of Sweden. There was no announcement in the *Revista cultului mosaic*, or anywhere else, of plans to replace the late president either by election or appointment.

The anniversaries of the two bloodiest pogroms of the Nazi period (January 21, 1941, in Bucharest and July 29, 1942, in Jassy), which were formerly observed annually at the cemeteries of the two cities with the participation of government officials, apparently went unnoticed in 1960 and 1961; no reports of any commemorations appeared either in Rumania or abroad.
A Rosh ha-Shanah message of the Federation of Jewish Communities, published in the Revista cultului mosaic, paid the usual lip service to religion but failed to mention any Jewish activities.

Cultural Activity

According to a Bucharest dispatch in the Warsaw Folks-shtimme (October 1, 1960), the summer seasons of the Yiddish theaters of Bucharest and Jassy were very successful. The companies played in parks and toured the country. Most of the plays performed were Communist propaganda pieces by Romanian authors in Yiddish translation, but plays by such Yiddish authors as Abraham Goldfaden, Sholem Aleichem, and the American Yiddish playwright Jacob Gordin were also included. There were also performances of “The Diary of Anne Frank,” Berthold Brecht’s “Threepenny Opera,” and an adaptation from Balzac.

To judge by the attention accorded the Yiddish theaters in the Rumanian press, they were still held in high esteem. Reviews of Yiddish plays, with high praise for the plays and the actors, appeared regularly in the central literary journal Contemporanul.

The Jewish theater in Jassy, according to Folks-shtimme for May 11, 1961, observed the anniversary of the late Rumanian Yiddish poet Eliezer Steinbarg and the 125th anniversary of Mendele Mokher Sefarim. The anniversary of the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto was also commemorated in the Jassy theater.

Folks-shtimme for February 21, 1961, mentioned a number of Yiddish folk-song recordings released by the state record factory in Rumania.

A paperback propaganda novel entitled The Victor, by an obscure author, Meier Rispler, seemed to have been the only Yiddish book published by the Rumanian state publishing house in the period under review.

Eichmann Trial

The apprehension and trial of Adolf Eichmann apparently aroused feelings of profound satisfaction among the Jews of Rumania. Rabbi Rosen mentioned the trial in his Passover sermon.

Even though Rumania was never officially occupied by the Germans, German Nazis were active in the campaign to murder the Jews. During the regime of Marshal Ion Antonescu the German embassy in Bucharest included a special representative, SS Obersturmführer Gustav Richter, who served as an expert advisor to the Rumanian government on “the Jewish question.” About half of the 800,000 Jews in Rumania before World War II perished in ghettos and mass murders. The Nazis directed the mass deportations of the Rumanian Jews to the ghetto in Transnistria. The Jews of northern Transylvania, incorporated into Hungary by Hitler’s verdict of Vienna (August 31, 1940), shared the lot of the Hungarian Jews and were deported to the gas chambers in Poland. Out of a prewar Jewish population in northern Transylvania of more than 150,000, only 30,000 survived Eichmann’s deportations.

The proceedings of the Eichmann trial were reported in the Rumanian
press by the official agency Agerpress and by Tudor Vornic, a special cor-
respondent of the central party organ Scânteia. The reports adhered to the
official party line that Israel was trying to cover up the alleged Nazi activities
of the West German government.

Vornic wrote in May that the course of the trial could be understood only
as reflecting full agreement between Bonn and Tel-Aviv. He asserted that
neither Attorney General Gideon Hausner nor any of the judges really
wanted to go to the heart of the matter for fear of disturbing the economic
and commercial relations between Israel and West Germany or damaging
the reputation of Hans Globke (see p. 339), "who helped formulate the
racial legislation of Nuremberg." The reporter quoted an Israeli journalist as
saying: "How can they go to the roots of Nazism at a time when the Bonn
government is preparing millions of marks of credits for Israel?" In general,
the press played up the trial, pointing out that the Rumanian Jews were
saved by the rapid advance of the Soviet forces.