Eastern Europe

Soviet Union

The 24th Congress of the Communist party, which had been scheduled for 1970 (AJYB, 1971 [Vol. 72], p. 40), was held in Moscow in April. Some Western observers saw in the postponement a sign of a political struggle within the Soviet leadership. While there may have been a conflict among the members of the ruling Politburo, no major policy changes were adopted. Also, the proceedings clearly indicated a desire on the part of the Kremlin bosses to maintain a show of continuity, even though some new individuals were placed into new and important positions. In his concluding speech to the Congress, Communist party head Leonid I. Brezhnev stressed the unity of his regime, noting that all 25 men who had been members of the Politburo or in the Party secretariat before the Congress were reelected by the new Central Committee.

The new Politburo, elected on April 9, consisted of 15 members including Brezhnev as general secretary, and Aleksei N. Kosygin and Nikolai Podgorny, who retained their posts as premier and chairman of the Supreme Soviet, respectively. The Politburo membership included leaders from the Ukraine, Latvia, Georgia, and Kazakhstan; none of them was Jewish. As far as could be ascertained, the 383 members of the new Central Committee, candidate-members, and members of the Central Control Commission included only four Jews: Benjamin Dymshits (Central Committee), Aleksander Chakovskiy (candidate-member, Central Committee), and David Dragunsky and Vladimir Peller (Central Control Commission).¹

It was reported that the membership of the Communist party totaled some 14,500,000. There were no reliable data on how many of them were Jews. Significantly, two of the foreign Communist parties represented at the Congress stressed the need to maintain the autonomy of Communists in countries other than the USSR. Nicolae Ceausescu of Rumania and Enrico Berlinger of Italy pointed out that different social and economic conditions made it necessary for them to take account of their own peoples’ needs in pursuing the goals of Socialism.

While the Communist bosses stressed their “monolithic unity of purpose” in continuing in the “Leninist way,” opposition and almost overt dissidence

¹ Pravda, Moscow, April 10, 1971.
increased among the intelligentsia and various national groups. The Soviet authorities used all means at their disposal to fight this opposition. Political dissidents were subjected to police persecution, administrative harassment, and detention in mental institutions and labor camps. Issues of Samizdat publications (Chronicle of Current Events, an illegal publication) listed the names of hundreds of individuals who had been arrested and imprisoned, or detained for psychiatric treatment.

The well-known Soviet geophysicist and Stalin-prize winner Nikolai Samsonov, who died during the year, had been detained for eight years in a Leningrad mental institution for writing a letter to the Central Committee criticizing Stalin’s policies. Boris Talantov, a mathematician, died in the prison hospital in Kiev; he had been arrested for writing about the situation in the Russian Orthodox Church. Natalia Gorbanevskaya went on a hunger strike to protest being confined in a mental clinic (AJYB, 1971 [Vol. 72], p. 400). Vasily Chernyshev, a mathematician who had been arrested for oppositional “thinking” and placed in a special mental clinic as a schizophrenic, addressed an appeal for help to the Soviet intelligentsia. The writer Vladimir Bukovsky was facing trial for protesting the detention of dissidents and nonconformists in mental hospitals. Biologist and writer Zhores M. Medvedev, who was placed into a mental hospital in 1970, wrote A Question of Madness, a detailed journal of his experiences which was available abroad. The secret police arrested many Ukrainians, among them the writer Ivan Svitlichny, on suspicion of nationalist activities in Kiev and Lvov.

In February members of the Committee for Human Rights, headed by the well-known Soviet scientist Andrei Sakharov, Valery Chalidze, and Andrei Tverdokhlebov, were warned by the Moscow prosecutor’s office that the existence of the committee was in violation of Soviet law and that its members were liable to prosecution. In 1971 Samizdat issued a special Alexander Solzhenitsin volume on his conflict with the Communist leadership over the 1970 Nobel Prize, his expulsion from the Union of Soviet Writers, his pronouncements on various aspects of Soviet life, and a short biography. In August Solzhenitsin addressed an open letter to the minister of state security (police) protesting the tapping of his telephone and subjection to constant surveillance by agents. Samizdat also reported that the well-known cellist Mstislav Rostropovich incurred governmental displeasure and was subjected to harassment because of his friendship with Solzhenitsin.

Meantime the trend toward the rehabilitation of Stalin was indicated by the elimination of unfavorable reference to him in the new edition of the memoirs of former Ambassador Ivan Maisky. Nikita Khrushchev, who denounced Stalin in 1956 and opened up a new era of change in the Soviet Union, passed away in Moscow on September 11, at the age of 77, and was buried in a private ceremony. At the same time Yevgeni Evtushenko, celebrated author of Babi-Yar, called for an end to “forbidden themes” in literature in an address to the Fifth Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers.
Andrei Sinyavsky, convicted in 1966 for having published stories and literary criticism abroad under the name of Abram Tertz (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 368), was released from prison and was living quietly in Moscow.

According to available information, opposition groups in the Soviet Union could be classified roughly as follows: (1) neo-Communists advocating the reform of the Soviet regime to make it similar to the Dubček government in Czechoslovakia; (2) constitutionalists standing for the strict enforcement of the rights guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution; (3) liberals fighting for human freedoms and the liquidation of peasant kolkhozy; (4) neo-Slavists continuing in a way the old Russian Slavophile tradition (unlike the other dissident groups, they were strongly antisemitic); (5) Christian socialists and democrats following the prerevolutionary ideas of some of the old Russian thinkers; (6) various nationalist movements—Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Tartar, etc.; (7) those demanding free emigration of Jews to Israel.

While all these currents in the main represented the thinking of the intelligentsia and workers, dissidents appeared to have succeeded in penetrating closed army circles. The reply of military and Party authorities was intensification of political work among army and navy personnel.

There was evidence of an increasing interest in religion, particularly religious art (icons), and of opposition based on the views of the Church. It is noteworthy that the major trends developing in the Soviet Union—general political opposition, spiritual reawakening, and the Jewish movement for emigration of Jews to Israel—paralleled to a certain extent the ideological divisions in 19th-century Russia which included, among other elements, Westerns, Slavophiles, and, in the Jewish area, Hovevei-Zion.

**Economic Policies**

Soviet administrators continued to discuss the need for thoroughgoing reform in state management of industry and agriculture. In the early stages of this debate the trend was away from highly detailed central planning and toward more local decision-making. Later, however, the reformers felt that this type of management would tend to disrupt the market, and they looked for an intermediate system that would guarantee general supervision and at the same time reinforce local autonomy.

According to reports, the current five-year plan (to be completed in 1975) fell short of the expected increase in labor productivity; on the other hand, it met production goals in heavy industry. Labor shortages continued to plague certain industries. There was a return to the trend of promoting private farm markets selling produce grown by peasants on their small private plots. Premier Kosygin, in cooperation with the heads of seven other Communist countries, continued his efforts at economic integration for the creation of a powerful economic bloc in the Soviet area.
**Foreign Relations**

While the Russians were suspicious of President Richard M. Nixon's planned trip to Peking, they nevertheless studied the problems of reconciliation with the United States and an end to the cold war. At the same time, they stepped up their ideological attack against China and its present leadership of "traitors to Marxism and Leninism." Mao was represented as an arch-devil and Maoist doctrine as a mixture of ideas taken from Confucius and Trotsky. The Peking Communists were accused of seeking to provoke a nuclear war between the USSR and the United States. The Kremlin leaders were concerned over China's activities on the world scene, particularly its effort to spread its influence to the Balkans, the Middle East, and Asia.

As though to underline the growing danger the Chinese represented to the Soviet Union, a special program of scholarly research on China was announced in the press, thus putting the Chinese in the camp of antagonists along with the "capitalist-imperialists" of the West. *Russkoye Pole* ("The Russian Field"), a new motion picture which was being shown in all Soviet republics, pictured Soviet soldiers being killed in fighting the Chinese on the Soviet-Chinese borders and made clear that the "quiet" Russian fields are not far from "the enemy"—China. *Krasnaya Zvezda*, the Red Army newspaper emphasized that the Chinese army was militarizing the country in preparation for war with Russia. It was therefore important that Soviet support of India in its war against Pakistan permitted the Kremlin strategists to obtain access to the Indian Ocean and, in a way, establish a base for political and military activities on the southern flank of China.

The Soviet Union continued its unqualified support of the Arab nations. A conference of seven Soviet countries (Rumania was not represented) in Moscow in August, which Brezhnev attended, decided to continue the aid to the Arabs in the Middle East conflict as well as to the Communists in Indochina. In fact, the Soviet Union increased its military supplies to Egypt in 1971, sending additional MIG squadrons to augment the estimated 152,000 Soviet personnel in that country. Yugoslav President Tito quoted Brezhnev as having told him that all Soviet military personnel would leave Egypt and other Arab countries once a Middle East peace settlement was achieved. (The subsequent departure of Soviet personnel occurred in 1972.)

The Kremlin leaders continued their policy of reconciliation with Europe. In the fall of 1971 Brezhnev visited France and succeeded in strengthening Soviet-French commerce, cultural exchange, and cooperation in other areas.

**Jewish Community**

At the end of 1969 the Jewish population of the Soviet Union was estimated at some 2,620,000. This figure, computed on the basis of official Soviet
estimates made between the censuses, was considered by many specialists to be much below the actual size of the Jewish community. The 1970 Soviet census showed a surprising decline in the Jewish population, from 2,268,000 in 1959 to 2,151,300 in 1969. Some students of Jewish demography have uncritically accepted the figures supplied by Moscow which show that the expected normal increase in the Jewish population not only had not occurred, but that the population actually had declined by between 116,000 to 117,000. These students have suggested that assimilation, natural decrease, and the desire to hide Jewish identity may account for this phenomenon.

It is not possible for us here to go into the details of this important question. However, it must be pointed out that the claimed decrease cannot be explained in terms of regular demographic processes (AJYB, 1971 [Vol. 72], pp. 402-404). If the aim is to establish the number of Jews living in the Soviet Union, it is questionable whether one should accept improbable figures supplied by a not overly friendly source. The problem, of course, is one of methodology. There must be agreement on a proper definition of the concept "Jew." Here one must take into account the fact that a "hidden" Jew, or an assimilated Jew, remains a Jew and should be counted as such until, under changed conditions, Soviet Jews might be able to decide freely on their Jewishness or it might otherwise become possible to establish criteria for determining who is a Jew in Russia.

A.M. Maksimov, in his study of population movements in the Soviet Union from 1959 to 1970, stated that the number of Jews declined by 5.2 per cent during that period. According to him, there was going on in the USSR "a process of fusion of nations which, under the conditions of a socialist society, has the character of friendship and bears no resemblance to assimilation in bourgeois society." While it cannot be denied that Jews in the Soviet Union were undergoing a process of assimilation, it is necessary to define terms. Assimilation has been going on for many decades, and some aspects of Jewish life have changed. But this does not make a non-Jew of a Jew. The process of "friendship" was particularly noticeable among Jews living in Slavic areas of the Soviet Union, where adult Jews, "by suggestion" or on their own initiative, tried to "pass" into the Russian or Ukrainian group. Soviet writer Yaakov Kantor, in his analysis of the 1959 census, included in the total Jewish population so-called hidden Jews, and this is, of course, a proper approach to the complicated problem.

Under the circumstances described, it was not possible to determine the exact Jewish population in the Soviet Union. It therefore was felt that the only way to keep within a realistic range was to continue for the time being to calculate the Jewish population of the Soviet Union on the basis of the 1959 Soviet census (AJYB, 1970 [Vol. 71], p. 463). Taking into account the differences in natural increase between the urban and peasant populations,

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and the present structure of the Jewish family, this writer estimates that the Jewish population has increased by about 9 per 1,000, from 2,620,000 (1969) to an estimated 2,644,000. This figure will have to be revised when new data becomes available. In a speech given in Denmark in December 1971, Premier Kosygin indicated that there were some 2,500,000 Jews in the Soviet Union (New York Times, December 6, 1971).

**Communal and Religious Life**

There were no changes in the communal and religious life of Soviet Jewry during the year under review. Soviet authorities did not encourage Jewish national activities. They did not permit Jewish agencies in the social and welfare fields. There were no Jewish schools in the Soviet Union, not even in the so-called Jewish autonomous region of Birobidjan. Jewish central communal or religious organizations were not permitted.

It should be reported that the situation with regard to Moslems, both in Russia proper and in the Asiatic Soviet republics, was quite different. In fact central Moslem religious organizations functioned in these areas and provided many religious services for their people. The same was true for the Armenian Apostolic Church in Armenia, under Catholicos Vazgen, which was also active with respect to the large Armenian group abroad. Similarly, the Russian Orthodox Church has achieved a certain recognition by the authorities. In June Metropolitan Pimen of Krutitsy and Kolomna was enthroned as the fourteenth Patriarch. Following the traditional ceremonies at the Moscow cathedral he was greeted by numerous foreign dignitaries, including Jan Cardinal Willebrands representing Pope Paul VI; Dr. Eugene Garson Blake of the World Council of Churches, and many others. While the Orthodox Church in Russia still faced serious problems and while Solzhenytsin in a recent open letter to Patriarch Pimen protested the persecution of Church activities by the Soviet regime and the Church's silence in the face of many hostile moves by the godless authorities, a certain accommodation between the government and the Church was discernible, with both parties acquiescing in an accepted status quo.

Nothing of this sort was provided for the Jewish religious communities. The separate *dvatsadkas* (20 individuals who organize and obtain a permit to establish a place of worship) were not afforded the opportunity to meet and plan for religious services customarily provided by the synagogue. While other religious groups had seminaries for the training of clergy, the Moscow Yeshiva Kol Jacob was not functioning, and the situation was desperate in most of the religious communities where the older rabbis were dying out.

Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin of the Moscow Central Synagogue died on November 17, 1971, at the age of 76. One of the last of the old-time Russian rabbis, he had visited the United States in 1968 in an effort to penetrate the isolation imposed on Soviet Jews by the government. Only after a long period did the Moscow Jews get a new rabbi, 59-year-old Yaakov Fishman, who had
received his training and ordination under Rabbi Levin at the Moscow yeshivah. He first served as rabbi in Pern, but soon relinquished his pulpit to return to Moscow (AJYB, 1959 [Vol. 60], p. 210). Rabbi Fishman was chosen by the Moscow synagogue's lay board headed by Efraim Kaplun. Two qualified Soviet rabbis who might have replaced Rabbi Levin—Rabbi Oppenheimer of Kuibishev and Rabbi Lubanov of Leningrad were not acceptable to the Soviet authorities because of their advanced age. The choice of Rabbi Fishman was apparently approved by the Council for Religious Affairs, which could have vetoed this important appointment.

The lack of ordained rabbis and modern rabbinical training facilities which would interpret religious doctrine to younger Jews prompted many Jewish intellectuals interested in religion to turn to Christian thinkers and Christian thought, and some became converts.

There was no precise information on the number of synagogues in the Soviet Union. According to official Soviet sources, there were 97 in 1965, including the so-called shtiblakh of hassidic Jews and some regular minyonim. Since many religious Jews, particularly from Georgia, left the Soviet Union, it may be assumed that some prayer houses were closed or otherwise disbanded, thus reducing the official 1965 figure of 97. At best, there was one synagogue for every 25,000 to 30,000 Jews.

There were reports of administrative interference with efforts by Jews to maintain religious activities. Thus authorities in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) thwarted the attempt by local Jews to build a new synagogue within walking distance of where the community's Orthodox lived. The old synagogue had been damaged in an earthquake and could not be used. The authorities in Riga closed the entrance to the Jewish mass graves at Rumboli. In Kiev, the Ukrainian administration interfered with putting Hebrew inscriptions on tombstones in the Jewish cemetery. There were also reports of cases of Orthodox Jewish prisoners who were forbidden to keep their heads covered.

Despite administrative interference, however, there was an upsurge of religious interest and feeling among younger Soviet Jews. As has been the case in recent years, the synagogues were crowded during the High Holy Days in 1971, also with many younger Jewish men and women. Tens of thousands danced and sang Hebrew songs outside the Moscow Central Synagogue on Simhat Torah. Among them were Jews from Kiev, Riga, Rostov, and other places. It was clear that this outpouring of religious and national feeling had become an open expression of Jewish religious and national identification. While there were police agents all around, they did not interfere with the celebration. Only after 11 p.m. did the police begin to urge the Jews to disperse and go home. Jews also came to the Moscow synagogue on the Sabbath to demonstrate their national feelings and solidarity.

The authorities did not interfere with the baking of matzot; the supply

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3 S. Rabinovitch, Yidn in Soviet Farband (Moscow, 1965) p. 47. A figure of 102, including minyonim, was given by the late Rabbi Levin during his visit to the United States in 1968 (AJYB, 1969 [Vol. 70]. p. 390).
was large enough to fill the needs of observing Jews in central areas. The situation in some provincial cities was less satisfactory, since proper facilities were not always available and the local administration was less than willing to help solve some of the technical problems of baking kosher matzot. There was a continuing lack of sidorim and of religious literature. Prayer shawls, phylacteries, and mezuzot were generally unobtainable and commanded exorbitant prices on the black market. A pressing problem facing observing Jews was that the dearth of competent rabbis made religious divorce virtually impossible.

Antisemitism and Discrimination

Official Soviet propaganda has been denying that Soviet Jews have been subjected to discrimination and special treatment. However, it was obvious that the religious and cultural rights of the Jewish minority had been curtailed and that there was deep distrust and unwillingness on the part of the authorities to permit Jewish activities even within the limited scope permitted other national groups. Some 55 years after the revolution, the Jews of the Soviet Union were still in the "special situation" in which they had been under the czars. That a Jewish problem existed in the USSR was recognized by the writers for the illegal Samizdat, who reported that strong antisemitic feelings were present even among certain groups of religious dissidents for whom the Jews continued to be "a foreign, unassimilable body" within Russian society. Recently there has been a trend in the Russian and various other republics to glorify national tradition. But none were particularly interested in noting the Jewish contribution to Russian life during the past century.

Soviet authorities gave perfunctory warning to local officials against ethnic bias in job appointments; but Jews continued to suffer discrimination in the capital and especially in the various republics and autonomous regions. While there were Jews in responsible positions, none held top policy-making posts. Deputy Premier Benjamin Dymshits, member of the Central Committee, was the exception. There were no Jews in top army posts and practically none in the Foreign Office.

Jewish students experienced serious difficulties in gaining admission to universities: some were denied normal advancement in keeping with their academic standing. An open letter in Samizdat addressed by G. Svirsky to V. Mishin of Gorky University described this situation: In 1970 Mishin published a study, Social Progress, in which he appealed for what he called "national equalization" in the field of education. He complained that there was great inequality; that at times the percentage of students of Armenian and Georgian origin was twice as large as their proportion in the total population, and that for Jewish students the rate was seven times as large. Svirsky pointed out that if Mishin's formula were accepted, the number of Jewish students today would represent about 1.1 per cent of the total, a figure much lower than it had been under the czarist quota system. Svirsky called Mishin's proposal a formula for intellectual genocide.
Jewish Resistance

Despite the repressive measures, opposition grew both in Russia proper and among the various national groups. No one can tell how long the Soviet authorities will tolerate (if “tolerate” is the proper word) the behavior of a Sakharov, a Solzhenytsin, and others who have openly criticized the regime and requested changes in the social and political setup. The same situation prevailed among the Jews, who fearlessly and persistently continued their efforts toward national self-expression and the right to lead a Jewish life. Many Jews took part in the general dissidence, but most remained within the Jewish national movement.

There was no way of determining the scope of Jewish dissidence or the precise number who requested permission to emigrate to Israel because they did not see any future for themselves in the Soviet Union, and increasing numbers used every possible method to obtain the necessary exit visas. They submitted petitions to the Supreme Soviet and Communist Central Committee; they organized protests and sit-ins. An appeal to Jews throughout the world to remember the Jewish writers, teachers, and intellectuals executed under Stalin in 1952 was sent to Israel by the widow and son of one of the victims, the poet Peretz Markish. On August 12, the anniversary of the murder, Jews picketed the Supreme Soviet.

A petition signed by some 900 Jews requesting permission to go to Israel was submitted to Soviet authorities, and a copy was sent to the United Nations. The petitioners complained that there was “no Jewish culture . . . in the USSR” and no possibility of living a Jewish life. During Rosh Ha-Shanah Jewish activists in Moscow openly distributed the text of the petition, giving the addresses of the signers. In another action some 100 Jewish protesters in Moscow demanded to see officials of the Central Committee of the Communist party. After some initial difficulties, five of them were received by the officials. In Vilno (Lithuania) 60 Jews organized a sit-in at Communist party headquarters, protesting refusal of exit visas to Israel, and 11 Jews from Lithuania who had requested emigration permits went on a hunger strike in Moscow. Some 2,500 Jews from all over the Soviet Union gathered in Kiev during September to observe the 30th anniversary of the Babi-Yar massacre. One group sent a message to the Israeli government asking for help to “return home to the Jewish state.”

In connection with the increasing protest among the Jews, Samizdat reported that in many cases Soviet authorities forcibly prevented Jewish travelers from coming to Moscow; some were taken from trains going to the capital and others, in Vilno and Riga, were refused railroad tickets. The authorities released a barrage of propaganda both in the country and for use abroad. They were particularly incensed by the World Conference of Jewish Communities on Soviet Jewry held in Brussels, Belgium, which appealed to international opinion for support of Soviet Jews in their efforts to gain the
right to live their own cultural and religious life and the right to emigrate to Israel.

Soviet readers were informed that the Brussels conference was organized by "Zionist provocateurs" to cover up the criminal moves of Israel, and that the choice of Brussels as the site of the conclave was dictated by the fact that NATO headquarters was located there, thus implying cooperation with "the Western strategists of the cold war" (Izvestia, February 20, 1971). According to Izvestia, the "Zionist hooligans," with the help of United States police authorities, were creating "riots" around Soviet consular and diplomatic buildings.

Apparently uneasy about protests from various groups in the West, Soviet propaganda agencies published a series of anti-Zionist articles by V. Bolshakov, under the title "Anti-Sovietism, the Profession of Zionists." Reminiscent of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the series contained a recital of unconnected events and names of various writers from Czechoslovakia, the United States, and Russia, and concluded with the not very new Soviet allegation that the Zionists were under the protection of United States monopolistic capitalism (Izvestia, February 18, 1971).

A special round-table discussion was arranged by the Soviet press agency Novosty in cooperation with Sovetish Heymland and the Union of Soviet Writers. The participants, Aron Vergelis, David Dragunsky, and other Jewish apparatchiks, expressed indignation at "the continuing anti-Soviet propaganda . . . of the Zionists" (Izvestia, February 18, 1971). Later, on March 23, the Soviet authorities organized in Moscow the first countrywide meeting of Jewish religious congregations, rabbis, cantors, and lay leaders. Representatives of the communities of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa, Baku, and many other cities participated. All speakers read from prepared texts. A resolution was adopted reflecting official rejection of "the claim of the rulers of Israel . . . to defend us . . . against nonexistent wrongs or restrictions." Outside the Moscow Synagogue where the meeting was held, dozens of Jews explained to newsmen that the participants did not speak for Soviet Jewry.

Arrests and Trials

A wave of arrests and trials of Jewish activists and of some who had applied for exit visas to Israel continued unabated. In Riga (Latvia) four Jews were brought to trial on charges of antisocial activities and sentenced to from one to three years in prison camps. In Odessa, Reiza Palatnik was convicted of distributing anti-Soviet literature and was sentenced to two years in prison. The trial of the twelfth defendant in the 1970 Leningrad trial (AJYB, 1971 [Vol. 72], p. 407), Vulf Zalmanson, who, as a lieutenant in the army, was not tried with the others but was to be court-martialed, took place in Leningrad. The public was barred. Zalmanson was convicted and sentenced to ten years in a special regime corrective labor camp.
In Leningrad nine Jews also were tried on charges of belonging to an Israel-directed Zionist organization connection with “anti-Soviet activities” and of distributing the illegal Zionist publication Yton. Gila Butman was sentenced to ten years in a special regime corrective camp. Mikhail Korenblit was sentenced to seven years; Lassal Kaminsky and Lev Yagman to five years; Vladimir Mogilev to four years; Solomon Dreizner, Viktor Boguslavsky, and Lev Korenblit to three years, and Viktor Shtilbans to one year. In Sverdlovsk, Valery Kukui was sentenced to three years in a general regime camp for anti-Soviet activities and Zionist propaganda.

In Kishinev (Moldavia) nine Jews were brought to trial for anti-state activities in connection with the 1970 Leningrad plot to hijack a plane to Israel. David Chernoglaz was sentenced to five years imprisonment; Anatoly Goldfeld to four years; Aleksander Galpern to two-and-a-half years; Harry Kirshner, Semyon Levit, Hillel Shur, Lazar Trakhtenberg, and Arcady Voloshin to two years; David Rabinovitch to one year.

Samizdat publications reported many other arrests in connection with Jewish national activities. Forty-nine Soviet Jews were serving sentences in prisons and labor camps in the fall of 1971, and hundreds of others had been interrogated, arrested, or otherwise harassed by the authorities. The same source revealed some 20 Jews in the notorious Potma labor camp staged a one-day hunger strike in December to commemorate the Leningrad trial.

In May the Moscow Committee on Human Rights addressed a communication to the Supreme Soviet concerning the persecution of “Jewish repatriates.” The statement emphasized that Zionism was not an anti-Soviet movement, as claimed in the Soviet press. Its author, V. Chalidze, and co-signers A. Sakharov and A. Tverdokhlebov, pointed out that the aim of Zionism was to reestablish a Jewish state, and appealed for a cessation of persecution of “repatriates” on the ground that no one can “abrogate the right of a man to leave a country.”

The situation of the Soviet Jews provoked strong condemnation in the West. Special actions on behalf of Russian Jewry were undertaken in the United States, Israel, and West European countries. In the United States these actions centered around the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (p. 498), which systematically brought the anti-Jewish repression in the USSR to public attention. Soviet authorities did not look with favor upon the conference activities, and the Soviet press often made scathing attacks on it and its constituent agencies.

Culture

The Soviet bosses maintained their negative attitude toward Jewish cultural activities, stating again and again that the Soviet Jews needed no Yiddish cultural programs. Of fate, even Sovietish Heymland propagated for assimilation, taking a position similar to that of the authorities. Nevertheless,
there were in the Soviet Union hundreds of thousands of Jews who spoke Yiddish and many others who were connected with, and interested in, the continuation of multi-faceted cultural activities, whether conducted in Yiddish, Hebrew, or Russian. In many cities interested local groups promoted such activities.

The Moscow Yiddish Drama Ensemble, under the direction of Benjamin Schwartser (whose 80th birthday was celebrated during the year), performed in Sverdlovsk. Among the performers were Sonia Binik, Polina Einbinder, I. Spivak, and L. Fryer. Young Russian-oriented actors eager to work under Schwartser have been studying Yiddish in order to be able to do so. The 40-member Kishinev Studio of Jewish Drama directed by M. Shternel appeared both in its native city and outside. The Moscow Art Group, in which Joseph Kolin was active, performed in Odessa, Kherson, Nikolaev, and Chernovitz. Anna Guzik and her ensemble performed in Moscow; the singer Anna Sheveleva gave concerts in Birobidjan. The Birobidjan Theater Group and its song and dance ensemble were active. Authorities limited the activities of the Kovno Yiddish Drama Ensemble to the Kovno area and, according to reports, it refused to give further performances until it would again be permitted to perform in other Soviet cities. Various cultural events were sponsored by trade unions, academic institutions, and local clubs. Birobidjan Radio maintained a daily Yiddish broadcast.

In July the Yiddish-language monthly publication *Sovetish Heymland*, edited by Aron Vergelis, celebrated its 10th anniversary. It reproduced in its pages the work of many Jewish artists, among them Aleksander Tishler, Tankhum Kaplan, Meir Axelrod, Mark Klionsky, Amshe Nurenberg, Hersh Inger, Joseph Chaikon, Zinovy Tolkashev, Vladimir Tsigel, and Yury Kuperman. It also published pieces about many writers who had left for Israel—Yosif Kerler (July), Zema Telesin and Rachel Beimvol (August, October), and the singer Nekhama Lifshitz (August)—accusing them of having betrayed the ideals of the socialist fatherland. An article containing authoritative pronouncements on antisemitism by the classical writers on Marxism-Leninism appeared in the September issue.

A doctoral dissertation devoted to the work of Emanuel Kasakevitch, who wrote both in Yiddish and in Russian, was submitted to Gorky University by Viola Idinova. A bibliographical yearbook issued in Minsk by the publishing house Belorus contained, among 389 items, 19 entries devoted to Yiddish writers in the Soviet Union. Three Yiddish books became available, one dated 1969 and two dated 1970: *Bam Neman* ("By Neman"), by Josif Rabin; *Gezang und Shvert* ("Song and Sword"), by Motl Gartsman, and *Unruiker Vint* ("Turbulent Wind"), by Motl Grubian. Reports of other books to be published in 1971 could not be verified. Between 1948 and 1971 only 35 Yiddish books appeared in the Soviet Union.

Much-coveted state prizes for special achievements in various fields were awarded to 228 persons. Among the recipients were 26 Jews: four of a total
of 59 in the field of science; 20 out of 61 in technology; and two of a total of eight for motion picture production (Pravda, November 7, 1971).

**Soviet-Israeli Relations**

There was no change in Soviet-Israeli relations in 1971. The Kremlin continued its strongly pro-Arab policy. In his report to the 24th Congress of the Communist party in April, Brezhnev indicated that the "hot point" of possible international confrontation was the critical situation in the Middle East. He demanded that "the aggressor" immediately vacate all Arab lands taken in the 1967 war (Izvestia, April 14, 1971). The Soviet press continuously criticized United States policy in the Middle East and indicated that "American pressure" on Israel was only a cover-up to permit even closer relations between the military group in the United States and Israel.

Meantime the Socialist International, after some heated debate at its meeting in Helsinki, adopted a pro-Israel stand. While the Kremlin did not have diplomatic relations with Israel—they had been broken off in 1967—it did maintain unofficial contacts with selected Israeli groups and individuals. In August six prominent Israelis, including Dan Miron, Nathan Yalin-More, Yaakov Riftin, James Rosenthal, Moshe Eidelberg, and Ruth Lubich, visited Moscow and were warmly welcomed by the so-called Soviet Peace Committee. Late in June Viktor Louis, a Soviet journalist well known in the West, visited Israel, ostensibly in a private capacity. The indications were that there was increasing Soviet attention to Israeli matters, and there were reports that Soviet-initiated contacts continued.

In the course of 1971 a dramatic change occurred in Soviet policy toward Jewish emigration. While some small groups left the Soviet Union, i.e., some Volga Germans, there was nothing comparable to the exodus of Jews. Although Jewish applications for exit visas generally resulted in harassment, loss of jobs, and even arrests on trumped-up charges, Soviet authorities permitted a steady flow of departures. A significant segment of those permitted to leave were professionals—physicians, engineers, architects; many were young activists. A substantial number came from the Georgian community and from other traditional religious groups. According to available data, some 14,000 Jews left in 1971, about 13,000 for Israel and the rest for other countries, including the United States and Canada.

It is difficult to understand the motivation for the sudden shift in Soviet policy, but the following factors may have been influential: (1) the desire to get rid of activists and thus deprive local communities of the most dynamic and potentially dangerous elements (similar tactics were applied by the Kremlin in the 1920s and 1930s with regard to both Russian and Jewish dissidents); (2) the desire to get rid of Jews from the former border countries in the Baltics and in Moldavia where they constituted a more advanced and culturally Western-oriented element; (3) the desire to get rid of Jews in
some of the Caucasian areas (Georgia) where the Russians had difficulties enough with the fiercely nationalist local population.

It may well be that the change in emigration policy was an interim arrangement pending the establishment of a stable, uniform policy. It should be noted that Andrei Sakharov of the Committee on Human Rights addressed an open appeal to the Supreme Soviet to permit emigration of both Jews and non-Jews who for personal reasons sought to leave the USSR. Soviet propaganda made much of some isolated cases of Soviet emigrants to Israel who returned to the USSR. In his speech in Denmark, Kosygin accused the Israeli government of creating difficulties for those who wanted to return to their “fatherland.” He insisted that there was no Jewish problem in Russia, except the one “born in the West.”

Personalia

Shike Driz, a well-known Yiddish poet, died in February, at the age of 63. David Wendrov, a veteran Yiddish writer whose career spanned some seven decades including many years in the United States and Argentina, died in Moscow in October, at the age of 94. Mikhail Romm, a prominent Soviet film director, member of the Communist party who was connected with the “liberal” Russian intellectuals, died in Moscow in November, at the age of 70.

Leon Shapiro
Poland

In the course of 1971, Edward Gierek, the new leader of the Communist Party (PPZR), continued the purge of those Party and state bosses who were held responsible for the December 1970 riots (AJYB, 1971 [Vol. 72], p. 411). Minister of the Interior Kazimierz Switala, who apparently had given orders to fire at workers protesting in Gdansk, was replaced by Franciszek Szlachcic, a close associate of Mieczyslaw Moczar, the anti-semitic Partisan leader and one of the initiators of the anti-Zionist campaign in Poland. Moczar, who was one of the new members of the Politburo, did not, however, remain in that position for long; in the fall of 1971 he was ousted from both the Party secretariat and the Politburo. Josef Cyrankiewicz, former premier, also was ousted from the Politburo. Boleslaw Piasecki, leader of the pro-Communist Catholic Pax organization, was appointed to the Council of State headed by the president of Poland. (Piasecki, a prewar fascist, had been a Soviet agent in the period immediately after the end of the war.) At the same time, Arthur Starewicz, a Jew who had remained in the top Party secretariat job of conducting day-to-day affairs throughout the anti-Jewish campaign, was later transferred to an unimportant post. Another Jew, Eugenius Szyr, still held the post of deputy premier minister in mid-1971.

According to official sources, the economic difficulties that had given rise to the December 1970 riots gradually were being overcome, although problems continued to plague certain areas of industry. Total industrial production in the first half of 1971 was up by 6.8 per cent over the corresponding period in 1970.

While Gierek succeeded in resolving the crisis, Poland continued to suffer from social tensions. Following the riots, the Catholic Church appealed for "freedom of conscience and freedom of religious life." It was taking a conciliatory line, a fact the hierarchy brought to the attention of churchgoers. Monsignor Agostino Casaroli was sent by the Vatican to Poland for talks with the leaders of the government. A Congress of Polish Writers was convened in February 1971, at which the Party spokesman called for a "climate of trust." Some previously banned writers have recently appeared in print.

Jewish Community

Accurate information on the number of Jews in Poland was not available. The best estimate was about 8,000, including a large number of aged persons.
receiving various state pensions. There was also a small unidentified number of Jews who had either converted or changed their names, or both, and had completely assimilated. In addition to those Jews who had left Poland for Israel, a total of some 2,500 had gone to Denmark, several hundred of them in 1971. Departures of small numbers of Jews continued, although no exit visas were given to those in high positions in the army or in the Party.

Communal and Religious Life

Liquidation of Jewish communal activities in Poland continued. While the Gierek government stopped overt anti-Jewish propaganda in the press and other media, this change of policy, if change it was, came too late to have an impact on Jewish life. In December former secretary of the Polish Communist party, Edward Ochab, circulated among members of the Party Congress a letter accusing Gomulka of using anti-Zionism as a cover-up for antisemitism. The letter compared Gomulka’s methods with Stalin’s “doctors’ plot.”

The remnant of the Polish Jewish community felt that Jewish life in Poland was at an end. The Cultural and Social Union was still in existence, but it was under the direct control of the Polish authorities and had lost most of its social functions. Its president, Edward Reiber, was in fact a state functionary working under strict instructions from the Ministry of the Interior. Since the liquidation of the Jewish cooperatives, the government has paid for the now greatly reduced budget of the Union and its few remaining local affiliates.

Jewish religious life had disintegrated. Continuing emigration reduced the membership of the few existing congregations; there were no rabbis, cantors, or mohalim. Very few religious services were conducted, even during the High Holy Days. The condition of Jewish cemeteries continued to deteriorate; in many places, no caretakers were available.

The Jewish home for the aged in Warsaw, erected by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, was opened to non-Jews. While, according to agreement, kashrut was to be observed, the institution was gradually losing its Jewish character. The home’s synagogue was closed because, the authorities said, “there was no minyan.” According to reports, there were many old Jews in need of a home for the aged, but, under present circumstances, there clearly was little hope that they would be admitted to the home in Warsaw.

Cultural Activities

There were no Jewish schools, and most Jewish cultural programs—art ensembles, choirs, drama circles—had been liquidated. Yiddish publishing had practically disappeared. The Yiddish weekly Folks-shlimme continued publication, but it was subject to rigorous control. In November some 150
Jewish journalists, artists, writers, and remaining Jewish militants met in Zrodborow, near Warsaw, to celebrate the paper's 25th anniversary. Yiddish as an instrument of Jewish life in Poland was rapidly disappearing. The overwhelming majority of Jewish youth did not know Yiddish, and its use was not encouraged even by the remaining Jewish Communist groups. The only readers of Yiddish publications were aged pensioners.

The Yiddish State Theater still operated, but there was in fact only a small Yiddish audience for its productions, and the theater played mostly to non-Jewish groups. Chewel Buzgan, who took over the theater after the departure of Ida Kaminska, died in Warsaw, in May. There is a question whether the theater will be able to survive for long, even in its present limited form.

The Jewish Historical Institute continued its activities under the strict surveillance of the Party. Its Bulletin No. 77 (January–March 1971) recorded the 20th anniversary of the publication. The new editors, Josef G. Barsin, Marian Fuks, Anatol Lestschinski, and Ruth Pups, worked “in close cooperation” with the authorities. There were no younger scholars who eventually might bring new energy to the research work. The Institute's library consisted of 50,000 volumes, including some 1,200 books of great museum value; 920 manuscripts dating from the 10th century, and some 1,000 Jewish ritual objects which were rescued during the holocaust. Under present circumstances, it was doubtful whether the Institute would continue to exist as a separate Jewish research unit. Recent emigrants from Poland reported its eventual absorption into the general Polish historical research institutions.

The Domb Affair

Leib Domb, president of the Cultural and Social Union from 1962 to 1968 and manager of its publishing arm, Yidishe Bukh, was dismissed from his posts during the Gomulka “anti-Zionist” campaign in 1968. Since then, he had been living in obscurity. His request for an exit visa from Poland, unlike similar requests of many Jewish Communists, was refused by the authorities. It now has become known that Domb, who had acquired that name while in the Communist underground (according to his documents, his name is Leib Trepper), was the head of a Soviet spy ring operating under the code name “Red Orchestra” in Belgium and France during World War II. He was arrested in Russia in 1949, released in 1955, and returned to his native Poland, where he was active in Jewish community work. The fate of Domb, whose health has been failing, aroused sympathy among many Jewish and non-Jewish groups in the West. Thus far, efforts undertaken abroad in his behalf have been unsuccessful.
Rumania

DURING 1971 Rumania continued on its independent way toward “socialism” in both domestic affairs and foreign relations. After the enunciation of the Brezhnev doctrine, Rumanian Communists maintained that one “socialist state” should not intervene in the affairs of another “socialist state.” They emphasized the need to withdraw all foreign forces (meaning essentially Soviet forces) from the soil of friendly nations. The Warsaw Pact maneuvers held throughout Eastern Europe aroused great concern in Rumania since much of the territory involved was not far from its borders. Bucharest strongly protested against military maneuvers on foreign soil. Of course, this independent stand did not endear Rumania to the Kremlin leaders. But despite veiled threats from Moscow, Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu, who also headed the Communist party, stubbornly maintained his independent position and instituted no significant change in policy.

Foreign Relations

President Richard M. Nixon came to Bucharest in 1969, and Ceausescu returned the visit in 1970. This exchange of visits at the highest level indicated a desire on the part of both the United States and Rumania to regularize and expand trade relations and, more importantly, to create a political climate that would permit them to enjoy a warmer relationship.

In 1970 Ceausescu also visited China as a part of his policy of maintaining friendship with all countries and as an unmistakable manifestation of Rumanian neutrality in the Soviet-Chinese dispute. Following Ceausescu’s return from China there were obvious signs of Soviet displeasure with the newly developing situation; Moscow regarded with great suspicion the prospect of expanded Chinese activities in Eastern Europe and among the nations of the developing world.

In the course of 1971 criticism of Rumania was voiced also in Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Later in the year, however, the Soviet Union slowly reversed its negative attitude, stopped its threats of retaliation and military intervention, and took steps to ease the tension between Moscow and Bucharest. A new ambassador, Gheorghe Bardus, was sent to Moscow, where he was received with special warmth by Premier Nikolai Podgorny. On this occasion the Moscow press stressed the importance of unity in the “socialist camp,” thus marking a change in line from that taken by the Kremlin in 1970 after Ceausescu’s visit to China.
Continuing foreign contacts and good-neighbor policy, Ceausescu visited President of the Council of Ministers Todor Zhivkov of Bulgaria and President Tito of Yugoslavia. Rumanian Premier Ion Gheorghe Maurer visited Greece and Turkey; Foreign Minister Corneliu Manescu made an official five-day visit to France. In the summer of 1971 a Rumanian delegation headed by General Ion Tutoveanu went to Peking to repay an earlier visit to Bucharest of a high-ranking Chinese military delegation headed by Li Tesheng, chief of the political administration of the Chinese Army. Although from time to time Moscow continued to criticize Rumania's policy and its foreign contacts, Bucharest quietly reassured the Soviet Union that Rumania's independent foreign policy was not in contradiction to its friendship and loyalty to the Kremlin and to the Communist goals of both countries.

At the same time, to counteract Soviet pressure, a joint session of the Central Committee of the Communist party, the State Council, and the Cabinet of Ministers was held on August 19, at which the over-all foreign policy of the Ceausescu regime was fully endorsed. This session of the top organs of party and state stressed the success of the ongoing foreign policy and instructed all appropriate institutions to proceed with the tasks set forth in conversations with them, and in agreements made with the visited countries. Speaking to a group of military cadets in August, Ceausescu reiterated that the principles of equality of rights, respect for independence and national sovereignty, and noninterference in internal affairs should govern international relations.

**Internal Controls**

While Rumania in many ways was looking westward, its internal structure continued to be based on a one-party regime with all the essential elements of a Leninist power system. The government generally was tolerant of cultural and intellectual life as long as basic ideological principles were not questioned. In July, however, steps were taken to "purge" cultural endeavors from "alien, foreign influence." The immediate victim of the new directive was Bucharest night life, since rock music was specifically identified as a "pernicious bourgeois influence." Musicians were ordered to change their attire, so that they would not resemble foreign "hippies." In October Rumania withdrew from participation in the International Frankfurt Book Fair in protest against the publication in West Germany of a German translation of a book by the Rumanian writer Paul Goma, who had had censorship difficulties in his native land. According to press reports, the hero of Goma's book was imprisoned in Hungary in the aftermath of the uprising in his country.

In any event, the authorities increased control over writers and intellectuals, particularly the traditionally Western-oriented. Writers were invited to reflect in their work "the great socialist construction of their country." A special effort was made to bring into line the state bureaucracy, directors of
commercial enterprises, engineers, and scientists who had frequent contacts with Western colleagues and who often neglected the principles of "socialist ethics."

In speeches clearly intended to impress the free-wheeling younger generation, Ceausescu stressed the need for constructive work and seriousness on the job. Emphasizing the role of the Party, he suggested it conduct a periodic review in each sector of Rumanian society to ascertain the "political correctness" of the activities of the responsible individuals. While the authorities undoubtedly had decided to tighten control over opinion-shaping social groups, most Rumanian intellectuals were not too fearful of the new measures and did not consider them a crackdown on cultural activities. At a plenary meeting of the top Party organs in November, Ceausescu declared that the ideological move should not be viewed as a return to a "Stalinist" past and that there was no need to fear the return of "illegal administrative procedures."

**Economic Situation**

Although the 1971–1975 five-year plan was being carried out, Rumania encountered many difficulties in the process of becoming an independent, industrially-advanced country. Special measures were taken to increase worker productivity and the supply of consumer goods, especially food. The manufacturers also promised to provide the latest fashions and otherwise to try to satisfy the tastes of the public. The authorities gave high priority to the construction of facilities to accommodate the large numbers of tourists expected from neighboring Balkan countries, Western Europe, and America. According to the new electrification plan covering the period 1971–1980, nuclear power plants were to be constructed which, if and when completed, would greatly advance technical and industrial development.

Trade between the United States and Rumania expanded considerably. Trade between the two countries was expected to exceed $90 million in 1971. In January the establishment of a Franco-Rumanian Bank was approved, and it was hoped that this would lead to a large increase in trade between Rumania and France. Although Rumania had made considerable efforts to intensify industrialization, it continued to have difficulty in obtaining sufficient Western credits for the needed expansion.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

According to official communal figures for 1971, the Jewish population of Rumania was 100,000, the second largest in Eastern Europe. Some 50,000 Jews resided in Bucharest. There was no substantial emigration of Jews during the last year or so. The Jewish community was faced with the fact of an aging population that was experiencing difficulty in maintaining the creative Jewish life of the past.
Communal, Religious, and Cultural Activities

Within the present government set-up and the political limitations it imposed, Jews enjoyed economic, cultural, and religious rights. Jewish activities were coordinated by the state-recognized Federation of Jewish Communities, the only Jewish representative body in the country. The president of the Federation was Dr. Moses Rosen, Chief Rabbi of Rumania and a member of the National Assembly; Emil Shekhter was secretary general. Daniel Segal was the president of the Bucharest Jewish community. Dr. Rosen's standing in the general life of Rumania afforded him many opportunities to enlarge Jewish activities throughout the country. Seventy-six communities with some 130 synagogues, 19 of them in Bucharest, were affiliated with the Federation in 1971. Among the rabbis were Dr. Ernst Neuman, Rabbi Naftali Halpert, Rabbi Otto Rapoport, and Rabbi Pinkus Wasserman. The closing of Rumania's only yeshivah a few years after its establishment in the 1950s created a serious problem for the religious Jews.

The Federation conducted a comprehensive program of educational activities for both children and adults. It maintained 13 Talmud Torahs in Bucharest, Botosani, Yassi, and elsewhere, with a total of about 190 pupils. Steps have been taken to increase both the number of Talmud Torahs and pupils, but there were many obstacles in the realization of this plan. Special courses in Hebrew attended by more than 300 persons were conducted in seven cities.

Jewish choirs were organized in three cities, and continuing lecture series were offered throughout the communities. The Federation organized communal Hanukkah celebrations in 12 communities; Rabbi Rosen visited a number of them and participated in their festivities. In Bucharest Rabbi Rosen conducted Hanukkah services in the central synagogue, with the participation of its choir and that of the Talmud Torah, which were conducted by Hayim Shvartsman. The Hanukkah and other celebrations attracted large numbers of children and young persons. Some 20 communities held sedorim, with a total of some 3,000 participants. Two hundred tons of matzot were distributed to all who needed them by Federation matzot centers. Kosher meat and Passover wine also were provided.

In 1971 Dr. Rosen published a volume of Judaica, *In the Light of the Torah*, which was warmly received by the community. The Federation issued a Jewish calendar. The one for 5732 (1971–72) contained, besides the customary information, special prayers, such as Yiskor and Kaddish, and benedictions. The Federation's bi-weekly newspaper, *Revista Cultului Mozaic*, written in three languages (Rumanian, Yiddish, Hebrew) and edited by Victor Rusu, was the only periodical with Hebrew text in Eastern Europe. The Federation also maintained a Jewish museum and a library of some 70,000 volumes, including many old and rare items.
Among the secular institutions outside the Federation was a state-supported Bucharest Yiddish theater which had its own building with some 300 seats. The Federation covered its budget in the main from its own income; but it also received state funds that paid for part of the salaries of religious personnel and of administrative employees of religious bodies. The government assisted the Federation in other ways, including the printing of its newspaper in a state-owned printing shop.

The Federation maintained lively contacts with many Jewish organizations, such as the World Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. The Foundation supported some of the Federation's cultural and educational activities. Dr. Rosen made frequent visits to Jewish communities abroad, especially in the United States.

Senator Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut, who visited Bucharest in June, attended Sabbath services in one of the city’s synagogues.

**Social Welfare**

The large number of Jewish aged, sick, and invalids required the establishment of a special relief program. With the help of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Central British Fund of London, the Federation distributed cash grants and food packages, and otherwise provided assistance to some 10,000 needy persons, including those in homes for the aged and institutions. Nine kosher restaurants maintained by the Federation in Bucharest, Arad, Oradea, Galati, Dorohoi, Timisoara, Yassi, and Cluj provided a total of about 1,500 meals daily. The number doubled during Passover.

**Relations with Israel**

Rumania has maintained an active friendly exchange program with Israel in both the economic and cultural fields, despite continuing Soviet pressure to join the anti-Israel camp. Rumanian exports to Israel in 1971 were reported to have amounted to some $27 million; Israeli exports to Rumania, to some $10 million. Commercial and industrial relations between the two countries were expected to continue to develop. For example, Israel ordered from Rumania the construction of two ships, at a cost of about $9 million. Tourism reached significant proportions, for thousands of Israelis of Rumanian origin visited their former homeland annually.

In 1969 Rumania and Israel raised their diplomatic missions to the rank of embassies. Rumania’s independent policy regarding Israel was expressed again and again by its representatives at the United Nations and in many pronouncements by its top leaders. At the same time, Rumania maintained friendly relations with Egypt and advocated a political solution of the Middle East conflict.
There were reports that the friendly relations with Israel would soon permit a visit of Israeli Premier Golda Meir to Bucharest. (The visit took place early in 1972.) In April Rabbi Rosen went to Israel, where he participated in many religious ceremonies and visited with Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs Zerah Warhaftig. He also attended a meeting of the Society for Israeli-Rumanian Friendship. Earlier, in January, Israeli Minister of Agriculture Hayim Gavti had come to Rumania, met with Jewish leaders, and visited many Jewish institutions.

Commemoration of the Catastrophe

A meeting commemorating the victims of the 1941 pogrom action in which an estimated 11,000 Jews were murdered took place in Yassi on June 30. Local and county officials participated in the ceremonies; Rabbi Rosen represented the Jewish community. Three days before, Rabbi Rosen had conducted a religious service at the Yassi Jewish cemetery. The Federation of Jewish Communities decided to place on the walls of the synagogue in Cluj the names of the city's Jews who had perished in the holocaust.

Leon Shapiro
Bulgaria

Among the countries of the Soviet bloc, Bulgaria has remained the most orthodox and faithful follower of the Kremlin line. First Secretary of the BCT (Communist party) Todor Zhivkov continued to be boss of both the party and the state machinery; but there was some evidence that younger party militants were looking for some way to counterbalance the power concentrated in his office. Zhivkov has been in power for more than 17 years, and it was natural for the new generation of party members representing the modern technological establishment to hope for change.

In the meantime, the economy was advancing; food was plentiful and the quantity of consumer goods was adequate. Bulgaria and the Soviet Union agreed to proceed with the integration of their economic systems. Bulgaria was receiving substantial credits from Moscow to pay for Soviet-supplied machinery needed to implement the country's sixth five-year plan (1971–1975).

The close relationship between Bulgaria and the Soviet Union was deeply rooted in old Slavic national and cultural traditions, including strong similarity of language. Imperial Russia had always been considered the great protector of Bulgaria, and the Soviets have inherited this deeply felt conviction. In June and July, 1971, Bulgarian warships joined the Soviet navy in its maneuvers in the Mediterranean. Joint action in this all-important strategic area was expected to continue.

Jewish Community

Demography

Data on the Jewish community in Bulgaria, compiled in the course of the official 1965 census, have been published (Godishnik, Sofia, Vol. VI, 1971, pp. 111–135). According to that census, the Jewish population stood at 5,108. However, this figure must be accepted only as a base, since the census criteria defining a Jew were not known, and some Jews may not have registered as Jews in 1965. The number of those who have “passed” into the general population could not be determined. In view of the fact that there were no mass departures of Jews from Bulgaria in the last several years, the total number of Jews in Bulgaria in 1971 was estimated at 7,000.

According to the 1965 data, over 45 per cent (2,319) of the Jews, both men and women, were gainfully employed. The majority of them were
either state employees or workers in state enterprises. Data on occupational
distribution in Sofia, the capital city, indicated that most of the Jewish
employed were in management, education, accounting, planning, and the
free professions. Almost all Jewish youths continued their education beyond
the primary level—in high schools, vocational institutions, and universities. At the time, there were 72 Jews among the top scientific personnel, including
two Academy members, 14 professors, and 56 associate professors and senior
research fellows (Yevreiski Vesti, Sofia, September 14, 1970). While in
1934 over 40 per cent of Bulgarian Jews used Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) as
their spoken language, in 1965 over 97 per cent used Bulgarian.

Communal and Religious Life

Jewish religious life in Bulgaria continued to disintegrate. While the
Jewish Religious Council (formerly Consistoire Israélite) continued to exist,
there were no qualified rabbis. Religious services, if any, were conducted by
laymen sufficiently knowledgeable in matters of ritual. There were few
religious marriages; few bar mitzvahs were celebrated, and the younger
generation was losing all connection with Jewish tradition. The synagogues
in Sofia, Samokov, and Verdin were restored as cultural monuments, and
all, including the Sofia Central Synagogue, were opened to tourists. The
synagogue in Burgas was transformed into an art gallery and the synagogue
in Pazardlik into a museum.

The Social, Cultural, and Educational Society of the Jews of the People's
Republic of Bulgaria, a secular, ethnic organization created in 1957 which
had branches in the provincial cities of Plevni, Burgas, Yambol, Varna, and
others, and a central board in Sofia directed the remaining Jewish activities.
However, following decisions by the Bulgarian Communist party, separate
Jewish cultural activities were, in fact, liquidated. Jewish health organiza-
tions, vocational schools, credit cooperatives, and other enterprises had been
merged in the mid-1960s with corresponding local agencies and taken over
by the state. The essential tasks assigned to the Society were “fighting Zion-
ism,” “unmasking the fascist, imperialist policy” of Israel, and promoting
the speedy integration of the Jews into Bulgarian society. Dr. Josif Astrukov
was the Society’s chairman; Michael Semo its vice-chairman; Avram Kalo,
it secretary; and Robert Beraha chairman of the Control Commission, one
of the Society’s top organs.

Cultural Life

The Social, Cultural, and Educational Society conducted a continuous
program of lectures, concerts, meetings, and other activities in Sofia and in
the provincial cities, most of them related to Communist political propaganda
and, particularly, to “building a Socialist society in Bulgaria” and “developing
a strong fatherland." There were no Jewish schools and no Jewish education programs for children or youths, since such endeavors were considered a remnant of the bourgeois past.

The Jewish Research Institute, an independent study organization, was absorbed by the Hebraic section of the Institute of Balkan Studies of the Academy of Science. When the Jewish Research Institute became part of the academy, all valuable books and ritual objects from the now defunct synagogues were transferred to it. An inventory showed that 13,000 books, including 7,000 in Hebrew and Ladino dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries, were collected. It was reported that the academy was preparing for publication a study of the history of the Jews in Bulgaria and of their economic condition under the People's Republic.

The Social, Cultural, and Educational Society continued publication of its bi-weekly *Yevreiski Vesti* (Jewish News), with Isidor Solomonov as editor. Besides regular Party material and propaganda, the newspaper reprinted articles of Jewish interest from the Moscow *Sovetish Heymland* and from Jewish publications in Poland, Hungary, and elsewhere. In 1971 the Society published the sixth volume of its *Yearbook (Godishnik)*. The members of its editorial board, headed by David Benvenisty, were Ely Eshkanazy, Israel Mayer, Isak Moskona, Jana Molhova, Clara Pinkas, Mancho Rachamimov, Renata Nathan, Solomon Levi, and Salvator Israel. The 1971 volume of *Godishnik* included articles on the history and on the present situation of the Jews. A major part of its pages, however, was devoted to "The 10th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party and Its Historic Decisions" (p. 6).

If anti-Jewish feelings existed in Bulgaria, they were not openly expressed. A number of Jews were active in the arts, sciences and literature. The authorities have paid homage to many Jews who played a role in the revolutionary movement, the resistance, and the cultural life of the country. Streets have been named for Jewish personalities in Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Plevni, and elsewhere. There were also many tablets commemorating Jews who had lost their lives in revolutionary struggles. Jewish life and acts of Jewish heroism were depicted in many works of art, novels, and music. Among the novels were those of Dimiter Dimov, Dimiter Talev, and Emil Manov.

**Attitude Toward World Jewry and Relations With Israel**

The Bulgarian government strongly discouraged contact between Bulgarian Jews and Jewish communities abroad. With the exception of the Soviet Jewish community, the Bulgarian community was the only one in Eastern Europe that was completely isolated from the Jews of the West. It rejected all ties with worldwide Jewish organizations and showed no interest in receiving outside support for its cultural endeavors.
Following the rigid Soviet line, the Social, Cultural, and Educational Society vehemently protested against the Brussels Conference organized by Jewish groups in all parts of the world to protest the status of Soviet Jews, discrimination against Jewish cultural endeavors in the USSR, and the trials of Soviet Jewish activists. In a special declaration released to the press, the Society affirmed that the Soviet Jews were "full-fledged and equal citizens of the USSR," and that the Brussels Conference was a Zionist provocation and a "reactionary conclave" (Yevreiski Vesti, March 8, 1971). The Society also issued a special statement strongly condemning the activities of Meir Kahane and the Jewish Defense League in the United States (Yevreiski Vesti, January 21, 1971).

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Bulgaria followed Soviet policy and broke diplomatic relations with Israel. In subsequent deliberations on the conflict in the United Nations, the Bulgarian delegation took an uncompromising stand against Israel. The Jewish Social, Cultural, and Educational Society followed a similar line in both its propaganda activities and its official organ. Among other items, Yevreiski Vesti of March 8 carried an ideological piece by Professor Ruben Avramov under the title, "Zionism, the Vanguard Column of Anti-Sovietism," in which the "Tel Aviv racists" were accused of all possible sins, including responsibility for the war in Vietnam.

Leon Shapiro