MOST SERIOUS ANALYSTS agreed that Argentina was on the brink of a civil war in 1974. How terrorism and guerrilla activity affected the American community in Argentina, for example, was evidenced by the fact that whereas in mid-1973 there had been 1,000 students in the Lincoln School (under the auspices of the American Embassy), by the end of 1974 there were barely 300. The number of Americans living in Buenos Aires decreased from approximately 6,000 to some 1,500 in the same period.

The first major terrorist attack was a bloody raid on the army garrison in Azul (Province of Buenos Aires) on January 19. President Juan Domingo Perón could no longer dominate Argentine politics during the last months of his life, and since his death on the first day of July, the government admitted, over 170 violent political murders had taken place throughout the country. In November the government press secretary admitted to the Foreign Press Association that there were some 200,000 terrorists in the country. Said General Castro Sanchez:

The guerrillas have disfigured the face of Argentina like a monstrous cancer. Indiscriminate attacks, kidnappings, and the assassination of men, women, and children; civilians and military men; members of the security forces; workers and employers, citizens from all walks of life and social conditions, make up today's reality.

In the view of the liberal Unión Cívica Radical party leader Ricardo Balbín, the guerrilla groups operating in the country were "elements in the service of imperialism," and terrorism, which "comes from abroad" was a means of enslaving the country. Captain Humberto Viola was the tenth army officer to be assassinated since leaders of one of the outlawed Marxist Liberation Armed Forces vowed to kill 16 officers to avenge the deaths of a similar number of their comrades in a clash with the army in northern Catamarca in August. In the week of November 26, over 500 guerrilla suspects were arrested. In the last three months of the year, four tiny children were killed by the terrorists. Their threats and bombing attacks forced the resignation of 31 doctors from a hospital in Bariloche.
Montoneros and People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), were the main leftist, and the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA) the main rightist, terrorist organizations. There were some smaller groups that appeared and disappeared. Most of the younger leftists in the Peronist movement were associated with the powerful Montoneros, one of whose leaders, Mario Firmenich, announced in September that his organization would go underground because "the government is no longer revolutionary." Such was the power of the terrorists that Firmenich and Norma Arrostito published an article in La Causa Peronista (which had been banned three times) explaining how former President Pedro Eugenio Aramburu had been murdered. Newspapers were forbidden to publish terrorist threats, and censorship was quite obvious.

Throughout the year, the universities were the scene of violence, demonstrations, strikes, and closings. In August Oscar Ivanissevich succeeded Jorge Taiana as minister of culture and education, an appointment the students fought, but to no avail. Ivanissevich stated that school dropouts were one of Argentina's most serious problems. Terrorist and guerrilla activity had become so rampant that the government declared a state of siege on November 6, which was still in effect at the close of the year.

In November the Argentine Episcopal Conference advanced the theory that "Argentina is suffering an endemic moral crisis" caused by unacceptable methods of repression; the trampling of individual rights; irresponsible dissemination of totalitarian and Marxist doctrines, and the rapid advance of statism.

In February the government, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) and the General Economic Confederation (CGE, representing management) entered into a "social pact" devised to prevent inflationary tendencies by attempting to hold prices and wages at a constant. In the course of 1974, the pact slowly dissipated, until very little of it remained at year's end. The traditional May 1 mass gathering at Plaza de Mayo saw President Perón on the balcony of Government House addressing the many thousands of workers below. His strong criticism of leftist youth called forth repeated shouts against the government. Many analysts agreed this was a turning point in relations between the orthodox Peronists and the rebel leftist forces within the movement.

The nadir of Perón's popularity was reached on June 12, when, in an address to the nation carried on radio and TV he called for the massive support of the Argentine people in combatting a "psychological campaign waged by negative Argentine elements which, in alliance with certain foreign interests, are attempting to annul Argentina's growth in economic, political, and social areas." Accusing what he called irresponsible minorities in business and labor of not complying with the social pact, Perón stated that he would rather not continue in office if he did not have the necessary popular support. This statement triggered quick response. Organized labor called for an immediate demonstration at Plaza de Mayo, and all factories and places of business were closed. Perón, evidently pleased with the turnout and reaction, decided to remain in power.
However, shortly thereafter, on July 1, Perón died of a cardiac collapse at the age of 78, and his wife and vice president, María Estela Martínez de Perón, was sworn in as the 38th president of the nation. Ten days of national mourning followed, with all activity at a virtual standstill. On July 29 CGT and CGE issued a declaration supporting the "continuity of national institutions, democracy, and the process of unity, reconstruction and liberation." This statement, together with the loyalty of the commander-in-chief of the army, Lt. Gen. Leandro Anaya, secured Mrs. Perón's succession. On August 6 president María Perón established throughout Buenos Aires "work groups" to which the public could bring their problems, complaints, and petitions and which thus could combat speculation, shortages of essential consumer goods, and even violence.

The first indication of the eventual government takeover of three privately run television stations in Buenos Aires had been a statement by Perón on May 28 that "TV is preponderantly a cultural medium and, as such, should be in the hands of the state." (Argentina had a relatively high percentage of viewers: 15 TV sets per 100 inhabitants.) A little more than two months later, these stations, together with two others in the interior of the country, were officially taken over by the government. The government had announced the expiration of their operating licenses in October 1973. Although the government announced that it would also seize control of all private radio stations as well, this had not yet occurred at year's end. At the same time a law was passed requiring 75 per cent of all musical compositions and performing artists on TV and radio to be of Argentine origin. This type of xenophobia was responsible for the inferior performances in 1974 at the Teatro Colón, which had previously been one of the world's leading opera houses.

Economic Conditions

Two Jews had much to do with Argentine economic affairs during 1974. José Ber Gelbard was the minister of finance until he resigned on October 22; he was succeeded by Alfredo Gomez Morales. Julio Broner was president of CGE. Perhaps the most significant development was the extensive trade agreements with the Communist countries and Libya. In the automotive industry, the Argentine Ford, Chrysler, Fiat, and General Motors factories sold some $200 million worth of cars and trucks to Cuba. An open-end credit agreement was signed with Russia as a result of negotiations conducted by an Argentine trade mission headed by Gelbard, which visited Eastern Europe in May. Trade agreements in the amount of several hundred million dollars were signed with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania. The trade pact with Libya amounted to well over $100 million. Argentine economists were seeking loans in Europe to cover the payment of the interest ($500 million) on the foreign debt, now estimated at five-and-a half billion dollars. There was a positive trade balance of some $300,000 in 1974.

In August Gelbard announced that "inflation which was 80 per cent in May of 1973, had been reduced to 22.6 per cent, while minimum wages had increased by 75 per cent in the same period." He also stated that, by the end of April, unemploy-
ment was 4.2 per cent, the lowest in many years. Most economists declared that the official government statistics were false; that real inflation at year's end was about 60 per cent (rather than the official 33.1 per cent).

One of Argentina's most grievous problems, according to Gomez Morales, was tax evasion, which, he said, "runs about 50 per cent. Six million people should file returns and yet only 1,674,000 are registered. Only 330,000 pay on time, and 100,000 pay in installments. Some 300,000 file no statements at all, and 570,000 send in returns claiming they are not liable to tax."

An important U.S. State Department mission arrived at the end of November to discuss food and fertilizer production, multi-nationals and their taxation, and oil production. (Argentina is 88 per cent self-sufficient in oil, but imports for the year amounted to $600 million.)

Argentina nationalized International Telephone and Telegraph, Siemens, Standard Electric, and Italo (a Swiss concern) during the last months of the year. The government also took over all retailing of gas under the management of the State Petroleum Company (YPF). Many American executives left the country as a result of terrorist warnings.

In spite of the social pact several very important, and violent, strikes took place. In August Córdoba was the scene of the largest one, that of 7,000 IKA-Renault workers of the automotive union (SMATA). The union's head, René Salamanca, advised the strikers, "Don't pay your debts, especially to Jews." He later denied that he intended any antisemitic slur, claiming he merely wanted to refer to small shopkeepers. In the same month, Agustin Tosco's light and power workers also struck in Córdoba. Both Salamanca and Tosco were left-wing Peronists who provoked the anger of the orthodox Peronist establishment. A 48-hour bus strike paralyzed Buenos Aires on November 28 and 29. The leaders of the union (ENTAP) were arrested.

As 1974 came to a close, a legislative commission was investigating government contracts with the new giant aluminum factory, ALUAR, where Gelbard and other Jews had major holdings, in response to repeated charges that the contracts were detrimental to Argentina's interests. Generally, prices were rising, industrialists were bitterly complaining of the lack of raw materials, and there was a great scarcity of consumer goods.

**Jewish Community**

**Demography**

With regard to population figures, Professor Lazaro Schallman, director of AMIA's cultural department, wrote in *Mundo Israelita* of March 16:

> it is shameful that for the past 10 or 15 years the same (population) figure has been used for the Jewish community of Argentina, as if no one is born or dies here. The arbitrariness of this figure dates from 1950, when certain self-
appointed "leaders" circulated the capricious version that the Argentine Jewish community had 500,000 people. This was challenged by Professor Yedidia Efron who said this number did not remotely represent the truth. His studies led to a total of 326,000 Jews at the end of 1948. Unfortunately, 500,000 has been the figure published for Argentina for the past 25 years. Recently we have been led to believe that the figure is 600,000. The DAIA Center of Social Studies is currently engaged in a scientific study of Jewish demography in Argentina.

However, by year's end, no report had as yet been issued by the Center of Social Studies; but this writer was informed that according to the findings of a demographic study by the Hebrew University's Institute of Contemporary Jewry, which was to appear shortly, Argentina's Jewish community numbered 300,000 (sic!). The vast majority of Jews continued to live in Greater Buenos Aires, with leading centers of Jewish population in the provinces, in order of importance, in: Rosario, Córdoba, Santa Fé, La Plata, Tucumán, Mendoza, and Bahía Blanca.

Communal Organizations

Writers, journalists, lecturers, and Jewish community leaders seemed to agree that in 1974 the crisis of Argentine Jewish life was more acute than ever before. The inroads by extremist left political organizations among Jewish youth was repeatedly decried. This tendency reached its zenith in the latter part of the year when Jewish youth painted on the walls and blackboards of many Jewish schools and organizations such slogans as, "For a Free Palestine," "Freedom for the Palestinians," and "Down with American Imperialistic Zionism."

The Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), the central Ashkenazi organization, continued to be the largest Jewish organization in the country, with 53,486 members as of July. Other statistics offered by AMIA were: 70 per cent of the members paid dues of 1,000 old pesos a month, 29 per cent paid less, and one per cent paid more. Of all members, 38,266 were paid up to date; 5,200 owed back dues, and the rest either had not paid for years or could not be located. AMIA's budget for 1974 was 5.5 billion old pesos, or two per cent higher than in the previous year. For the first time in many years, the fiscal year 1973 ended with a credit balance of 400 million old pesos. The allocation for youth work was 90 million pesos.

In August AMIA celebrated its 80th anniversary, coinciding with the Ninth Congress of the Federación de Comunidades Israelitas (Wa'ad Ha-kehillot, founded in 1952) which united the 124 organized Jewish communities in the country. Of the communities in the interior, 70 per cent numbered between 50 to 70 families, or fewer. AMIA spent some 475 million pesos for social work in 1974, and 50 per cent of its entire budget on education. The Fondo de Ayuda Integral al Necesitado (FAIN) was a fund established during the year to modernize and to make more moneys available for social work. AMIA maintained four cemeteries—Liniers, Berezategui, Ciudadela, and Tablada—so that a large part of its funds derived from funerals. These totaled 2,585 in 1973. AMIA's 80th anniversary bulletin admitted
that "many important intellectuals and social figures are buried in non-Jewish cemeteries."

Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews maintained separate clubs, synagogues, philanthropic agencies, cemeteries, and actions in support of Israel. DAIA (Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas) was the representative body of the leading Jewish organizations in Greater Buenos Aires and the provinces. Its main function was to be spokesman for the Jewish community before the federal and local governments, specifically regarding antisemitism, which was a much more serious problem in 1974 than in earlier years. DAIA periodically published Boletín Informativo, devoted to its antidefamation work, but contained also other articles of Jewish interest. It also continued to sponsor the Centro de Estudios Sociales (Center for Social Studies). The Organización Sionista Argentina (OSA) was the third of the chief institutions of the Argentine Jewish establishment.

Some 40 Jewish organizations existed in the federal capital; the most important were: Sociedad Hebraica Argentina (SHA), a sports and cultural center with its own golf and country club; Nautico Hacoah, a rowing and sports club in the Tigre; Club Atletico Sefaradí Argentino (CASA), the decade-old Sephardi athletic and sports club; OSFA (the Local WIZO); the Hospital Israelita Ezrah, which faced the most severe financial problems which at year's end had not been resolved; the Instituto Judeo Argentino de Cultura e Información; the Latin American section of the World Jewish Congress; B'nai B'rith; Hogar Israelita Argentino para Ancianos y Ninos (a home for 700 orphans and aged people).

The Asociacion Comunidad Israelita Sefaradí de Buenos Aires (ACIS) consisted of Jews of Turkish and Balkan origin. Moroccan Jews maintained the Congregación Israelita Latina; the Asociación Israelita Sefaradí Argentina (AISA) united the Jews of Syrian-Lebanese origin. The Delegación de Entidades Sefaraditas Argentinas (DESA) coordinated the Sephardi actions in support of Israel.

Communal Activities

Under the auspices of the Casa Argentina-Israel Tierra Santa (Argentine House in Israel) the leading Argentine folklorist Facundo Cabral made a film in Israel. The commemoration of the 31st anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, which took place at SHA, featured Pesach Burstein of Tel Aviv and the new Israeli Ambassador to Argentina, Ram Nirgad. In April a National Jewish Welfare Board delegation visited Argentina, as did Arnulf Pins, director of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. The Latin American Congress sponsored a memorial meeting in honor of the hundredth birthday of Stephen S. Wise. Father Carlos Cucchetti received the first Baron de Hirsch prize for his invaluable role in furthering Jewish-Christian dialogue. The 14th regional convention of Keren Kayyemet le-Yisrael was held in May; Shimon Ben Shemesh, world director of the institution, was present.

In June, OSA convened its territorial congress, but only a little more than half the delegates attended. This prompted OSA president Lazaro Rubinson to say:
"There is not only a deficiency in our Zionism, but in our Judaism as well." Liberal Zionist Federation president Saul Patrich also deplored the absence of so many delegates, and spoke of the "monstrous ideological distortions in many sectors of Zionist youth, some of whom are not sure whether Zionism is a Jewish or a Palestinian liberation movement." Commenting editorially on the convention, the official Ahдут Ha'avadah press organ Mundo Israelita decried the absence of so many delegates as indication that "they had no interest in the topics under discussion."

Dr. José Liebermann, author and scientist, won the first prize of the Ministry of Culture and Education for his book, La Argentina contra el Desierto.

The Latin American Office of the American Jewish Committee, under the direction of Jacobo Kovadloff, sponsored five courses at the El Salvador Roman Catholic University’s School of Oriental Studies. Rabbi Esteban Veghazi and Professor Jaime Barylko were among the local lecturers; Jacobo Kovadloff was course coordinator. The Committee office sponsored various lecture series and seminars in Buenos Aires and elsewhere. It also cooperated in the organization of seminars and workshops promoted by several groups, and worked with the local Committees on Behalf of Soviet Jewry and the Jews in Arab Countries. Apart from issuing some publications, the AJC’s Office took an active part in social research and in local interreligious activities.

Sheerit Ha-pleita, the organization of concentration camp survivors, headed by its president, José Moskovitz, sponsored many cultural affairs during the year, chief of which was the memorial service on the Day of the Holocaust and Heroism. The ninth regional convention of Horim, the organization of parents of students at Jewish schools, was held in July, as was the ninth Plenary Meeting of the Latin American Jewish Congress. AMIA gave a testimonial to Mark Turkow, the director of the Latin American section of the World Jewish Congress, who was born in Warsaw, but has been working in Buenos Aires since 1939. At the meeting of the Wa'ad Ha-kehillot in July, José Liebermann described the disintegration of many of the smaller communities in the interior. A serious discussion arose over the feasibility of uniting Wa'ad Ha-kehillot with DAIA to avoid a duplication of efforts. Mundo Israelita commented on the sparse attendance at the sessions.

In August the Argentine Friends of the Hebrew University gave the 1974 Scopus Prize for distinguished service to the Jewish community and to Israel to Mrs. Sara F. Singer. The Sephardi association Shevet Ahim of Rosario celebrated its 50th anniversary. At the ninth Congress of the Wa'ad Ha-kehillot in August, AMIA’s president Jaime Rajchenberg stated there were 3,000 new students in the Jewish school system in 1974. He underscored that the increase of the number of Jewish children receiving a Jewish education must be a foremost goal of the community.

A serious division, marked by heated ideological debates, among Argentine Zionist youth in August resulted in two, rather than one, central organizations: the Confederación Juvenil Judeo-Argentina and the Federación Juvenil Sionista. At year's end there was no indication that the two groups would unite in the near future.
In September DAIA representatives met with Social Welfare Minister José Lopez Rega and Minister of the Interior Alberto Rocamora to protest the rising tide of virulent antisemitism.

YIVO (Yiddish Scientific Organization) celebrated its traditional "YIVO Week" in September. In the same month AMIA sponsored its 27th annual Jewish Book Month, which resulted in the sale of 24,356 books. Of these, 2,274 were written in Yiddish, 4,739 in Hebrew, 15,817 in Spanish and 1,526 were religious books. The book fair was the occasion of dozens of cultural programs, recitals, and lectures, among the last those given by the Israeli-Rumanian writer Jacob Yakar. AMIA also sponsored a Jewish Cinema Club which met during the year.

The devotees of Yiddish theatre were able to see Each One Had 6 Wings, by the Israeli writer Chanoch Bartov, translated locally into Yiddish by Falik Catovski. Another popular play was Jasidiana, based on the Israeli musical Ish Chasid Haya, and produced in the SHA Theatre by the Keren Kayyemet le-Yisrael youth department.

In November FESELA, coordinating committee for Argentine Sephardi communities, met to discuss means of preventing assimilation.

Memorial services and meetings for the former Israeli president Zalman Shazar were held by many of Argentine Jewish organizations, but once again Mundo Israelita wanted to know in its edition of October 19 why so few people attended these gatherings.

In November, President María Estela Martínez de Perón, who had sent Rosh Ha-shanah greetings to the Jewish community, received a DAIA delegation, which presented her with a book of statements by her late husband on Israel and the Jews, entitled Peron and the Jewish People. The Latin American Jewish Congress gave a testimonial dinner to mark the 90th birthday of the late Argentine-Jewish writer, Alberto Gerchunoff, author of the Jewish Gauchos. Another dinner was given by the Friends of the Weizmann Institute to mark the 100th birthday of Chaim Weizmann. Israel Ambassador Nirgad proclaimed Weizmann Year on December 9 at a ceremony OSA sponsored at the SHA theatre. Two days later the 26th anniversary of the founding of the Argentine-Israeli Chamber of Commerce was celebrated.

Earlier, in November, OSA also arranged a program to mark the 27th anniversary of the United Nations proclamation of an independent Israel. José Allende and other important politicians attended. Unión Cívica Radical party (UCR) Congressman Antonio Troccoli condemned UNESCO for ousting Israel.

Education

AMIA's Wa'ad Ha-hinnukh administered the Jewish school system of Greater Buenos Aires. According to its president, Jaime Blanck, the number of Greater Buenos Aires schools and their enrollments as of the middle of June were as follows: 45 kindergartens with 4,086 students; 43 half-day and all-day primary schools with 8,411 students; 12 secondary schools and high-school level Yeshivot with 2,210
students. There were 326 teachers in the kindergartens, 900 in the primary schools and 155 in the secondary schools of Greater Buenos Aires.

Blanck indicated that in the interior of the country, 5,165 students attended 27 Jewish kindergartens, 25 primary schools, 6 secondary schools, and 8 institutions offering night courses, which together employed 387 teachers. In other words, 19,872 students attended Jewish schools throughout the Argentine Republic in 1974, and 1,768 teachers worked in the field of Jewish education. This meant, Blanck calculated, that some 10,000 families were sending their children to Jewish schools. These figures were exclusive of Midrasha Ha-Ivrit, directed by Rabbi Mordecai Edery (Conservative) with about 250 students (plus 40 studying in Israel), and the ORT school with some 850 students.

At a summer seminar given in Huerta Grande, Córdoba in January, the majority of teachers came from the Seminario de Moises Ville, Santa Fé. As a result of the severe inflation and lack of proper salaries, the Histadrut Ha-Morim called strikes in May. In August the Sholem Aleichem schools celebrated the 40th anniversary of their establishment in Argentina. At the same time the Jewish Agency's director of the department of education and culture for the Diaspora, Haim Finkielsztyn, met with the leaders of Wa'ad Ha-hinnukh to study means of intensifying Jewish education in Latin America. WZO president Pinchas Sapir offered a million dollars aid from Israel if the goal of doubling the number of Jewish students within five years were achieved.

In view of the fact that international Jewish money for Argentine Jewish education was scarcer, Keren Ha-hinnukh (Emergency Education Fund) was stepped up; but all indications point to a disappointing campaign. Wa'ad Ha-hinnukh Hamerkazi made an effort to raise the standard of Jewish education in the country by employing two Israeli experts in education, Professor Shlomo Perelmuter and Zeev Bari, who were to help in orientation and curriculum selection, as well as in teaching methods. The Instituto de Intercambio Cultural Argentino Israeli, sponsored by the Israel embassy, offered Hebrew courses to adolescents and adults. AMIA continued to subsidize the student dormitory Moshe Sharet in Buenos Aires for Jewish students from the provinces. Many synagogues and schools offered lecture series throughout the year and maintained their summer camp programs, the largest of which was Camp Ramah of the Conservative Comunidad Bet El.

Religion

Jewish religious life generally continued to be marked by apathy and empty synagogues. AMIA's rabbinate, which had jurisdiction over shehita, kashrut, milah, and gitin, was headed by David Kahana, with the assistance of Rabbis Shelomo Ben Hamu and Menachem Gordon. AMIA's kashrut department was headed by Rabbi Dov Kraschinsky. Five AMIA rabbis paid their respects to President Perón as he lay in state at the national Congress. In July many synagogues held memorial services and prayers to mark his death.
According to Rabbi Kahana, there were only 10 Orthodox rabbis in Argentina, and a total of 25 in all of South America. He thought it would be better for Jews to stay home than to attend "the theatre-like services in the synagogues of the modern rabbis."

In August a well-attended and picturesque dedication of the Marcos Guertzenstein yeshivah took place, with street dancing, a Torah procession accompanied by motorcycle police, and a police band. The school's rosh yeshivah was Rabbi Samuel Levin; Rabbis Josef Lebenson, Efraim Dines, Iehudah Abecasis, and Moises Mone deb were the members of the teaching staff. The students of the yeshivah, which was established with funds donated by the son of the late Rabbi Marcos Guertzenstein of Brazil, were of high-school age.

Temple Emanu-El, a Reform congregation, engaged Robert Graetz, a Reform rabbi who had previously served as spiritual leader of the Conservative ARI synagogue in Rio de Janeiro. Rabbi Graetz, also the Latin American director of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, was Argentinian and trained at Hebrew Union College.

In August the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano (Conservative), the only university-level rabbinical seminary in Latin America, called a meeting of representatives of six Conservative communities and their rabbis: Lamroth Hakol, Nueva Comunidad Israelita, Leo Baeck synagogue, Bet Israel, Templo Shalom (Sephardi), and Comunidad Bet El, for the purpose of establishing a union of non-Orthodox synagogues. The rabbis who attended were Abraham Skorka (Lamroth Hakol), Hanns Harf (Neuva Comunidad Israelita), Reuben Nisenbom (Leo Baeck synagogue and Bet Israel), Mordecai Edery and Marshall T. Meyer (both of Comunidad Bet El and the Seminario). The more than one hundred participants were addressed by Israel Ambassador Nirgad and Haim Avni of the Hebrew University, who had been visiting professor at the Seminario. The six synagogues, representing some 3,000 families, planned to cooperate in youth work, education, synagogue planning, publications, and other projects. A month later, Leo Baeck synagogue and Bet Israel merged under Rabbi Nisenbom's leadership to form B'nei Tikva. These communities had joint services at the Comunidad Bet El to kindle the last Hanukkah candle.

Seminario president Rafael Zuchowicki indicated that graduates of his school were now serving communities in Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina. In 1974 Comunidad Bet El opened a day school, the first Conservative one in South America.

Press and Publications

The rise in the price of paper (150 per cent in one year) and newsprint caused serious problems for the book industry and newspapers. The impact of the steep price rise, and, more importantly, the lack of interest on the part of the Jewish community, was responsible for the small number of books on Jewish subjects published during the year.

Salomon Suskovich, editor, celebrated 25 years (78 numbers) of publishing *Davka*, the only Yiddish language journal of philosophy, which appeared regularly under the auspices of the World Jewish Congress. The Latin American Jewish Congress continued publication of the series on great personalities and events in Jewish history in its popular Jewish Library. At the end of the year, Editorial Paidos, together with the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano and under the supervision of Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer, published in two volumes Edward Flannery's *Anguish of the Jews*, under the Spanish title *Veintitres Siglos de Antisemitismo*.

*Mundo Israelita*, weekly organ of the Mapai party, completed the 51st year of publication. The only remaining Yiddish daily, *Di Presse*, was reported to have serious financial problems. The German-Spanish weekly *Jüdisches Wochenblatt* continued to appear, as did the Mapam fortnightly *Nueva Sión*, and the Spanish fortnightly *La Luz*. The World Council of Synagogues and the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano continued the publication of its Spanish-language quarterly *Majshavot*, devoted to modern Jewish thought and theology. The publication of the literary magazine, *Davar*, issued by the Sociedad Hebraica Argentina, was resumed.

**Zionism and Relations with Israel**

Ram Nirgad, succeeding Eliezer Doron as Israel ambassador, presented his credentials to President Domingo Juan Perón in February in a meeting that was reported to have been most cordial.

The Argentine Jewish community, shocked at the news of the Ma'alot massacre, brought out more than 10,000 demonstrators filling three city blocks, who marched from the center of Buenos Aires to the Israeli embassy. All Jewish business was suspended and stores were closed during the hours of the demonstration; memorial services were held in the leading synagogues.

The 26th anniversary of Israel's independence was celebrated by all active Jewish organizations, the principal ceremony taking place at the Coliseo Theater, with the
participation of Ambassador Nirgad, Israel's Minister of Tourism Moshe Kol, and General Uzi Narkiss.

Aliyah month was observed from April 21 to May 21, with a large number of lectures and programs throughout Argentina (250 according to OSA). But despite the extraordinarily unsettling political, economic, and social conditions in the country, there was no marked increase in aliyah. According to the Buenos Aires office of the Jewish Agency, close to 2,000 Argentine Jewish youth visited Israel during the year to work as volunteers or as part of various youth programs.

Argentina voted for Arafat's presence in the United Nations; but, in November, Argentine authors Jorge Luis Borges and Ernesto Sabato signed the declaration of French intellectuals headed by Jean Paul Sartre protesting the anti-Israeli action of UNESCO (p. 158). The writer Victoria Ocampo cabled her protest to the UNESCO's director general. Practically the entire Argentine liberal press sided with Israel in this connection. AMIA, DAIA, and OSA denounced Argentina's vote on the Palestine issue in the General Assembly in a paid advertisement that appeared in all the leading newspapers.

The trade balance between Argentina and Israel was strongly in favor of Argentina. The last available figures, for 1973, indicated that Israeli import of Argentine goods totalled $44 million, while Argentina bought only $1 million of Israeli goods.

Antisemitism

The major crisis confronting Argentine Jewish life in 1974 was a rise in apathy, disinterest, and assimilation. At the same time, there was an upsurge of virulent anti-Zionism and antisemitism unequalled for many, many years. Evaluating the situation, Jacobo Kovadloff stated in June that "Latin American Jews are increasingly more concerned with the rise of antisemitism on the continent." DAIA protested against a TV drama which presented a most degrading portrait of Jewish life; in February the official government TV channel produced a violently anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist program, "Correspondents Debate," in which language equal to any scathing attack on Jews ever heard was used. After forceful protests by the Jewish press and DAIA, the program was finally withdrawn.

In February, following an Argentine trade mission to Libya and the conclusion of commercial, scientific, cultural, and technological agreements between the two countries, Minister of Social Welfare José Lopez Rega emphasized Perón's ideological identification with Qaddafi regarding the nations of the Third World. He also announced the creation of an Islamic center, and the construction of a mosque in Buenos Aires. (Saudi Arabia's King Faisal contributed $100,000 for the building). Lopez Rega subsequently (February 14) invited a large group of diplomats, governors, military personalities, priests, professionals, businessmen, all of Arab origin, to the presidential residence to explain that the Argentine mission had come to Tripoli "under unfavorable conditions due to the erroneous opinion the Arabs had of Argentina's position," and that things had been made still more difficult by cables.
dispatched to Libya by "Argentine figures of Jewish origin." (The Minister of Finance at the time had been José Ber Gelbard, a Jew.) A Libyan mission paid a return visit to Argentina in March, when a press conference was given by the Peronist Revolutionary Legion at the Peronist party headquarters. It released the following statement: "We must be members of the Third World, whose bases are Argentina and Libya. We clearly are against Free Masonry, Zionism, and international societies. We must immediately abandon all ties with Israel."

Higher courses in Arab culture, sponsored by the department of education and culture of the city of Buenos Aires, were instituted, and scholarships offered to nationals of Syria, Libya, Algeria, Egypt, and Lebanon. The Cinema Committee of the Third World showed films from Lebanon and Syria; one of them, entitled Palestine, Another Vietnam, was made available under the auspices of the University of Buenos Aires.

As Resnizky explained to a plenary session of DAIA in March, Arab strategy was as follows:

1) To persuade the public that the Arabs and Latin Americans are united by a common struggle against American imperialism;

2) To portray Jews as the enemies of the countries in which they live, and thus isolate them from their fellow citizens;

3) To separate Jewish communities from Israel and other Jewish communities around the world by means of propaganda and terror.

In April a memorial mass was celebrated in a local church in memory of Monseigneur Josef Tiso, a condemned Nazi war criminal who had been executed. Among participating groups were the World Congregation of Slovaks, the Slovakian-Argentine Association, and the Argentine Friends of Free Slovakia. Posters also appeared in Buenos Aires announcing a special mass to commemorate the 29th anniversary of Adolf Hitler's suicide. However, the church's priests indicated that no such mass was ever planned, and indeed, none took place.

The favorite term used by the extreme right, particularly some of Perón's followers, was "synarchy," a conspiratorial concept of history expressing belief that an international conspiracy threatened the popular government of Argentina. This word was employed in many antisemitic and anti-Israel articles in the rightist press.

Some of the many anti-Israel and antisemitic newspapers were: Cabildo, Semana Politica, Consigna Nacional, La Prensa Comprometida, Enlace, Patria Peronista, Mundo Arabe, El Descamisado, Militancia, Realidad Nacional.

In October, at a meeting at which the future return of the remains of General Juan Manuel de Rosas, the acknowledged 19th century Argentine dictator who had died in exile, was announced, the call went up: "Mazorca, Mazorca, Judios a la horca!" a rhyme which meant loosely: "Mazorca (name of Rosas' corps of executioners) Jews to the scaffold!" The meeting was attended not only by the Administration, senators, and outstanding people, but also by the acting president of the Senate, José Allende, the second man in line of succession to the presidency. Representatives of such antisemitic groups as Alianza Libertadora Nacionalista, Tacuara, Concent-
tración Nacional Universitaria, Organización Peronista Ortodoxa and Juventud Peronista, were also present. DAIA protested energetically.

All analysts agreed that the University of Buenos Aires was a festering hub of antisemitism. Its rector, Alberto Eduardo Ottalagano, stated on November 15:

The liberal parties will have to split apart because Justicialism (Peronism) is the temporal essence of Catholicism and that is how we shall return to the old way: With Christ or against Christ... We Argentine Catholics possess the truth and reason, and the others have neither truth nor reason, so we will treat them accordingly (sic!).

Ottalagano also stated, "We are here to build the world that Luther destroyed." He and Sanchez Abelanda had been allies of the arch antisemitic Argentine priest, Julio Meinville, who died some years ago.

One of Buenos Aires' most widely read dailies, Clarín, published in its November issue a paid advertisement signed by Argentine Arab youth which demanded the liberation of Palestine. One of Brazil's foremost journalists, Federico Branco, had a long interview with the anonymous leader of the extreme right Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA). In the leading Brazilian newspaper *O Estado do São Paulo*, Branco quoted him as saying that Argentina's enemies were easily identified as the Jews. On the occasion of the interview, Branco was handed a copy of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

At an important, well-attended meeting in December of the Argentine Building Workers Union (UOCRA), Ottalagano gave another important speech in which he stated:

United with the army and the security forces, united with the people and with the idea of the Roman Catholic Church, destiny will be ours... This country rests on three fundamental things: first, the Holy Catholic Church; second, the Armed Forces, and above all, the people united in their trade unions in the CGT and politically in the Justicialist party.

*El Cronista Comercial*’s report on the gathering stated:

The meeting was held amid great enthusiasm, and the speeches were frequently interrupted by shouts of approval and applause. At the end, a group of young people left singing in chorus "en la patria de Perón, ni judío ni mason." [In Perón's fatherland neither Jews nor Masons.] Many joined in chanting the slogan, and in their center was the dean of philosophy, Raul Sanchez Abelenda.

A December 27 announcement stated that Alberto Eduardo Ottalagano, described by the Buenos Aires *Herald* as the "controversial rector," was to be replaced as of January 1, 1975, and that several deans appointed by him tendered their resignations. The *Herald* further commented that his successor was expected to try to reduce the tension at the university produced by Ottalagano's right-wing administration.

Perhaps the most virulent example of violent antisemitic activities took place at the end of December, when the police chief of the Rio Negro Province, Benigno Mario Ardanaz, ordered the publication of the *Supplement to the Order of the Day*
No. 5134, which blamed the "great Jewish Sanhedrin" of trying to control Argentina and the world. The Jews were accused of responsibility for Communism, Marxism, and collaboration with Free Masonry to achieve world domination. The chief asked the population to fight the Jews in every way possible; not to buy their products or have any traffic with them. According to the first press reports, he was said to have immediately been removed from his post by the Minister of the Interior Alberto Rocamora. It was learned later that he had been merely reprimanded. He, himself, published a very lukewarm retraction.

**Personalia**

Berta Gerchunoff, former president of OSFA and active in Latin American women's Zionist affairs, died in Buenos Aires in January, at the age of 85. David Kraiselburd, since 1962 editor of *El Dia* in La Plata, was kidnapped and murdered in June, at the age of 62. Rebeca Soifer, Argentine Jewish pianist who won the Buenos Aires Arts prize in 1961, died in Buenos Aires in July, at the age of 40. Simcha Schwartz, Jewish sculptor whose major work was the memorial at Tablada cemetery for the six million who died in the Holocaust, died in Buenos Aires in August, at the age of 70. Emilio Gutkin, former president of AMIA and *Wa'ad Ha-kehillot*, Argentine representative to the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, member of the WJC executive committee, died in Kibbutz Or Ha-ner, Israel, in October, at the age of 86. Dora Spanier, former president of the Argentine Jewish Home for Children and the Aged, died in Buenos Aires in November, at the age of 58.

**Naomi F. Meyer**
GENERAL ERNESTO GEISEL succeeded Emilio Garrastazu Médici in March as Brazil's president, the first non-Catholic in the country's history to hold this office. He is of German descent, and the son of a pastor. With an estimated population of 110 million, Brazil ranks in size only behind the United States of America in the Western world. It continued to show vigorous economic growth, as indicated by a 10 per cent rise in the 1974 GNP. An uninterrupted petroleum supply was therefore an absolute necessity for economic stability and further development.

At the same time, the economy urgently required new capital investment, and petrodollars, concentrated in Arab hands, were crucial for current and possible future needs. For these reasons the new government's foreign policy of "responsible pragmatism" looked for a new and constructive relationship with the Arab countries, one that could not remain without consequences for the openly sympathetic attitude of former Brazilian governments toward the State of Israel. This position, authorities indicated, was not expected to change substantially even if recently discovered oil fields should transform Brazil from an oil-importing to an oil-exporting country. For government policy reflected not only the current need to secure the indispensable oil supply, but also the prospect of a new market in the Arab world and eventual Arab investment of petrodollars in Brazil.

Diplomatic circles supported the view that there has been no basic change in the Brazilian position toward the countries of the Middle East; only a shift of emphasis. Brazil, in fact, has supported UN Resolution No. 242 since 1967. Clearly, pro-Arab sympathy replaced the earlier policy of "evenhandedness" as a result of the pressures of the oil crisis and the promises by the numerous visiting Arab delegations of investments in exchange for a friendly government stand toward the Arabs in their conflict with Israel. Still, Brazil did not vote for the resolution, passed by the UN General Assembly in October, inviting the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in debate on the issue of Palestine because it was "not sufficiently clear" on Israel's right to exist. This was indicative of the meaning of "responsible" within the context of Brazil's policy of "responsible pragmatism."

Whether the change was one of policy or accent, the fact is that Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Omar Saqqaf could, with immunity, make the following remarks in September, on the occasion of a visit to the Brazil Foreign office in response to greetings by Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira:

It would have been possible for us in Saudi Arabia and for our Arab brothers to attain high levels of development had there not arisen in human history a unique case of aggression, occupation, and expulsion of the native population of a country. I mean, of course, racist Israeli Zionism's aggression and occupation of
Palestine, and the expulsion of its native people, both Moslem and Christian. Until recent years, international Zionism was able to deceive world public opinion by utter distortion of the facts so that it accepted wrong for right, and right for wrong. But, thanks be to God, today everyone accepts the legitimacy of the Arab cause; the truth that the Arabs desire nothing but peace, peace based on justice and on the right of nation.

The incident could not be a matter of indifference to the Jewish community. Benno Milnitzky, president of the Confederation of Brazilian Jewish Organizations, São Paulo Federation president Marcos Firer, and Rio de Janeiro Federation president Eliézer Burlá asked for, and were granted, an interview with General Golbery do Couto e Silva, head of the presidency's department of civilian affairs and a close collaborator of Geisel. They were assured of the government's "absolute respect for the hard-working Jewish community" and of the "high esteem it enjoys for its valuable contribution to the progress and welfare of the nation." But the community was in no way protected against the malicious charge that it supported "international Zionism" and "deceived world public opinion."

**Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism**

Existing antisemitic and anti-Zionist tendencies must be seen against this general background. Antisemitism as such has been limited to some extremist right-wing circles of the former "Integralist" movement (AJYB, 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 415) and ultrareactionary Catholics. There has been little anti-Jewish discrimination in the professions, or in the diplomatic corps and the armed forces. But certain popular prejudices remained deep-rooted, even in the Portuguese language. For example, the Pequeno Dicionário Brasileiro da Língua Portuguesa, a widely used desk dictionary, defines *judeu* (Jew) also as bad man, miser, profiteer, and cynic; and the verb *judiar* as to ridicule, tease, torment.

These old prejudices, as well as the canards of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, which was anonymously published in Brazil, were now being exploited in an anti-Zionist propaganda campaign. Thus, one of the largest real estate brokers inserted in the November 3 issue of the highly respected newspaper, O Estado de Sào Paulo, an advertisement showing what obviously was a young Jew seated on top of a luxury car who suggested to prospective customers that real estate deals were meant to make profit not only for Jews—the Rothschilds and Kohns—who love money as much as prayer, but also for people with Portuguese, Italian or Japanese names; that the firm had 385 "rabbis" (brokers), who were at the disposal of anyone wishing to consult them. The only thing that was more profitable than real estate and beyond the reach of Jews was oil—because it belonged to the Arabs.

The advertisement had strong repercussions in Jewish circles. Councillor David Roysen launched a formal protest in Sào Paulo's city council. The president of the Federation wrote a letter to the advertiser expressing Jewish resentment. The broker's reply gave assurances that any offense to the Jewish community had been unintentional; that many community members were highly esteemed customers and friends of long standing.
When Shimon Peres was Israel's minister of information he said in an interview with the Jerusalem Post that the Emirate of Abu Dahbi bought the very important Brazilian newspaper Jornal do Brasil for $20 million—which would have been in violation of Brazilian law limiting the ownership of the country's newspapers to Brazilians. Nascimento Britto, the paper's director, said it was an outrage for a minister of information to make so irresponsible and false a statement. The fact remained, however, that the Jornal fired all its important Jewish staff members, including Alberto Dines, its editor-in-chief and a staunch defender of Israel, and Nahum Sirotzky, its special correspondent in Israel.

Toward year's end, the Lebanese press announced that the Lebanese government had blacklisted all firms owned by the Klabin group for not complying with the Arab boycott against Israel. Israel Klabin made a public protest against what he called intolerable interference in the affairs of a foreign country, for Brazilian enterprises were subject only to Brazilian law. The government declared it had received no official communication from Lebanon about this matter. It was generally believed that the Lebanese action was not really meant to intimidate Klabin—as the most powerful Jewish financier in Brazil his position was unassailable—but the less important enterprises dealing with Israel.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Communal Relations

On the whole, relations between Jews and non-Jews continued to be good. On many occasions Brazilian authorities and distinguished Brazilian personalities participated in Jewish events and commemorations related to Israel, and Jews and representatives of the State of Israel participated in national celebrations.

Just as in preceding years, the president of Brazil sent his good wishes to the Jewish community on the occasion of the High Holy Days. The governors of the states of São Paulo and Guanabara (Rio de Janeiro), as well as mayors, deputies, and city councillors visited synagogues to show their solidarity with their Jewish fellow-citizens.

Health Minister Mario Machado de Lemos participated in the opening of a surgery department at São Paulo's Albert Einstein Hospital. An outstanding manifestation of solidarity with Brazilian Jews was the response of university circles in Recife to the efforts of a psychiatrist, Dr. Sara Erlich, to establish a Brazil-Israel foundation which would foster high-level cultural relations between the two countries. Scientists of Arab descent, too, wholeheartedly responded to her appeal.

Each year on Yom ha-Azma'ut (Israel's Independence Day), receptions were given by the Israeli consuls in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro for Brazilian officials and personalities. Many distinguished scholars came to the Casa de Cultura de Israel to hear Professor Abel S. Schejter of Tel Aviv university explain the position
of Israeli intellectuals on Middle East problems. Governor Laudo Natel of São Paulo state, and the president of the São Paulo city council, João Brasil Vita, came to the opening of the first Israel Fair to be held in Brazil.

Brazilian Jews similarly shared in national celebrations. The First Army, stationed in Rio de Janeiro, invited Rabbi Henrique Lemle and Commander Benjamin Tissenboim of the Ashkenazi Associação Religiosa Israelita (ARI) to attend the commemoration of the 1935 Socialist land reform revolt. The Jewish club A Hebraica in Rio held a luncheon for government officials on April 21, a national holiday honoring Tiradentes, martyr of the Brazilian struggle for independence.

The Liga Feminina Israelita, Brazilian branch of the International Council of Jewish Women, actively participated in social work in Rio, particularly as it related to the Benjamin Constant Institute for the Blind. The Ashkenazi São Paulo Congregação Israelita Paulista made its facilities available for classes conducted by Mobral (Movimento Brasileiro de Alfabetização), the nationwide, officially sponsored campaign to wipe out illiteracy. (AJYB, 1973 [Vol. 74], p. 330).

Israeli technological assistance to Brazil continued. It was based on an agreement between the two countries according to which Israel has made available its know-how in many areas ranging from agriculture to electronics.

The contribution of Brazil's Jews to the country's art, science, and technology has been very considerable—high above their proportion in the population. To cite but a few events for 1974: Isac Karabtchevsky represented Brazilian music as guest conductor of the symphony orchestras of San Diego (Cal.) and Nuremberg (Germany). When the Ballet de Paris performed in Rio, Henrique Morelenbaum conducted the orchestra. Jewish artists Rogerio Steinberg, Ronaldo Palatnik, Miriam Danovski, and many others were chosen to exhibit their works at the Museum for Modern Art in Rio. Hundreds of paintings by Walter Levy, the surrealist artist, were chosen for an exposition of 35 years of creative art in Brazil.

Professor Henrique Rattner of São Paulo organized for Escola de Administração de Empresas da Fundação Getulio Vargas (Business Administration School of the Getulio Vargas Foundation), the leading school in the field, a seminar on international politics with the participation of such internationally known authorities as Professors Hans W. Singer of Sussex University, Great Britain; Zbigniew Brzezinski of Columbia University; Morton A. Kaplan of the University of Chicago, and Marcos Kaplan of Torquato di Tella Institute, Buenos Aires. Dr. Bernardo Akerman was coordinator of the medical and social aspects of the First International Congress on the Use of Drugs by University Students, held under the joint auspices of the Union Internationale d'Hygiène et de Médecine Scolaire et Universitaire and São Paulo university.

Austrian-born Walter Schwaetzer was named honorary citizen of Rio de Janeiro in recognition of his contributions to the country: equipping the country's airlines with radio stations and for many years directing the maintenance of radar installations on Brazilian warships.
Ecumenism

Interfaith activities have been growing in the large cities. It has become quite an established practice for graduation ceremonies to include ecumenical services in which priests, pastors, and rabbis join. The rabbis of liberal congregations generally responded positively to requests for such participation, and were active in the São Paulo Christian-Jewish Fraternity Council under the co-presidency of Father Humberto Porto and Hugo Schlesinger.

As an introduction to Judaism, a week’s course for Catholic priests was organized in September at Zion College by Father Humberto Porto and Professor Fernando Pugliese, under the aegis of Paulo Cardinal Arns, Archbishop of São Paulo. The closing event of this program was participation in Sabbath services at Congregação Israelita Paulista, conducted by Rabbi Fritz Pinkuss. Cardinal Arns, who addressed the congregation from the pulpit, identified himself as “Paul of the Tribe of Benjamin, your brother.” Some two weeks earlier, he had invited Rabbi Pinkuss to participate in an ecumenical celebration of the 150th anniversary of German immigration to Brazil.

Rabbi Henry I. Sobel, also a frequent participant in ecumenical graduation services, asked a priest and a pastor to come to a Seder at the Congregação Israelita Paulista. At his suggestion, they spoke about the Last Supper stressing the importance of the Seder for the Gospels. A roundtable discussion, “Religious Education in the Era of Technology,” was organized at the Congregação Israelita Paulista by this author. Participants included Rabbi Sobel, Father Porto and Sister Benjamin, coordinator of religious education at Santa Maria College.

Religious Life

On the whole, observance of halakhah has not been important to young Brazilian Jews, who, for the most part had academic training. Parents, however, have been making an effort to give their children some Jewish education which would keep them within the Jewish fold.

One of the Orthodox groups in Brazil, the Habad movement, is Lubavitch in orientation. American-educated Rabbi Shabsi Alpern left his post as director of the Orthodox Institute for Jewish Education (Bet Hinnukh) to dedicate himself to the hassidic Bet Habad. Its headquarters has a small synagogue, study rooms and the rabbi’s office where he receives those seeking spiritual guidance. The rabbi would call the Lubavitcher rebbe in New York if he needs advice in very difficult cases. Fifteen weekly study groups and daily religious services, usually conducted by young people, are available. Anyone can call Bet Habad between ten o’clock in the evening and nine in the morning and receive a spiritual message. Bet Habad also publishes a monthly bulletin. Upon request, Rabbi Alpern would travel to smaller towns to lecture and give guidance. Everything is done to promote Jewish religious practice. Habad youth made 9,000 Hanukkah candles for distribution to the public. All these services are free of charge.
Non-Orthodox congregations like Associação Religiosa Israelita in Rio and Congregação Israelita Paulista in São Paulo attempt to adapt Judaism to the needs of modern man. Services and sermons are made as attractive as possible; though prayers are recited in Hebrew. The result is that Sabbath eve services in these synagogues drew larger crowds than others, with younger people well represented. At least once a month services are being conducted entirely by youths.

There is an acute shortage of rabbis in the provinces. In 1974 High Holy Day services for the 70 Jewish families in the country's capital, Brasilia, were conducted by students of the Petropolis Yeshiva near Rio de Janeiro. Even as large a community as that of Porto Alegre has no rabbis. Rabbi Pinkuss supplied it with prepared sermons, and a father-and-son team to act as cantors. For the first time, the Curitiba community had its own rabbi for the High Holy Days—David Benhayon, a graduate of Tanger Seminary in Rio de Janeiro. Rabbi Robert Graetz of ARI moved to Buenos Aires and was succeeded by Robert Baruch, a young American rabbi.

A growing number of Jewish clubs and community centers throughout the country have instituted High Holy Day services. The famous American cantor Sidor Belarski has been coming to São Paulo every year to conduct services for Hebraica's 7,500 member families. He was joined in 1974 by two young Orthodox folksingers from Israel, the Tsemed Reim duet, who attracted thousands of boys and girls to the services. The club also instituted regular Sabbath and weekday services. The other large São Paulo community center, Circulo-Macabi, made its holiday services more attractive, and also planned to introduce regular Sabbath services. At the same time, there is a growing tendency for congregations to expand their social and cultural activities in what appears to be a general attempt to make Jewish life more complete.

Jewish Education

Brazil has no seminaries for the training of rabbis or teachers of Jewish schools. Students preparing for the teaching profession have to depend on courses offered by the Chair for Hebrew at São Paulo university, directed by Rabbi Fritz Pinkuss, and on complementary courses in literature, history, sociology, and philosophy, offered by the Centro Brasileiro de Estudos Judaicos of the university's faculty of philosophy; and by Professor Arnaldo Niskier and Rabbi Henrique Lemle who occupy the Portuguese-Hebrew Chairs at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and the State University of Guanabara, respectively. Although these courses covered essential areas of Judaism, they do not instruct the future teachers in the principles of education or give them the necessary ideological training. The Hebrew Chairs are, however, important sources of Jewish learning. In 1974 the São Paulo Centro, directed by Rabbi Pinkuss and Professor Nachman Falbel, offered matriculation in Jewish subjects to more than 1,000 students (230 of them in Jewish philosophy courses alone, given by this author), and the Rio universities to over 120 students. Interestingly enough, the courses were largely taken by non-Jewish stu-
dents and in this way effectively promoted understanding of Judaism on the university level. Matriculation for the new Jewish-sponsored Faculdade de Educação, Ciências e Letras Renascença (Faculty for Education, Sciences and Letters) was expected to begin at the end of 1974. Here, too, a mostly non-Jewish student body was expected, although Hebrew and Jewish history were required subjects.

The Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, which gave substantial financial support to the Centro at São Paulo university in the first four years of its existence, indicated it would henceforth limit its assistance to specific research projects on Jewish endeavors in Brazil and the publication in the Portuguese language of fundamental Jewish texts.

Jewish schools were faced with many difficulties. They had to maintain a high educational level to compete with non-Jewish institutions. They also needed more money than other schools, not only to pay for additional teachers of Jewish subjects, but also to enable pupils whose parents could not afford the fees to attend school on full or partial scholarships.

Only 25 to 30 per cent of all Jewish children attended Jewish schools. The number of children participating in the bi-weekly study classes offered by São Paulo Congregação Israelita Paulista and Rio Associação Religiosa Israelita, as well as bar-mitzvah lessons given by some clubs also was relatively small. That meant that the great majority of Jewish children received no Jewish schooling whatsoever.

The São Paulo Board of Jewish Education, headed by Dr. José Knoplich, has been making an effort to bring some uniformity into the ideological diversity of Jewish schools. They were required to be religious or Zionist oriented, and to devote a weekly minimum of ten hours to instruction in Jewish subjects. The Board also published teaching material, such as its series, Biblioteca Popular Judaica (Jewish Popular Library), short biographies summarizing in 30 to 40 pages the lives of important Jewish personalities like David Ben-Gurion, Bialik, and Isaiah, and booklets on important historic events. In Lahorim ("To the Parents"), a small piece enclosed in the widely read biweekly Resenha Judaica, Dr. Knoplich tried to explain the need for, and problems of, Jewish education.

In Rio de Janeiro, Jewish education has been aided by the ORT Institute of Technology which, besides offering professional training to their own students, has entered into contracts with Jewish high schools so that they could comply with recent orders by the Brazilian Ministry of Education that all high school students be trained in a technical skill.

At the university level, Jewish student organizations have been important in developing identification with Judaism. Grupo Universitário Hebraico-Brasileiro, the Brazilian branch of FUSLA (Federação Universitário Sionista Latino-America), was the only such organization with branches in all state capitals. Massada, a Likud-oriented student association, gained much support in São Paulo and Rio due to the work of Israeli lawyer Shelomo Epstein. Other groups were supported by B'nai Brith, WIZO, various synagogues, São Paulo Friends of the Hebrew University and other organizations. Though membership in student organizations has been
increasing of late, it constitutes less than ten per cent of all Jewish university students. The São Paulo Federation established the Departamento de Assuntos Universitários (Coordinating Committee of Jewish Students), which was to unify the work of the various student groups and to increase their influence on the vast majority of Jewish university students who do not identify with Judaism. Success has been slight.

**Cultural Activities**

It has not always been gratifying to plan Jewish cultural events for a public whose economic and social success has dulled their enthusiasm for this type of diversion, especially since the Brazilian theaters, concert halls, and art centers generally offer programs of greater originality and range of choice.

Jewish plays have been produced with varying degrees of success. Among the successful ones was Leon Uris's *Mila 18*, performed in São Paulo by the Circulo-Macabi theatre group and later in Rio and smaller Jewish communities. The most serious undertaking of this kind was the production in Rio de Janeiro of *Gente Dificil* ("Difficult People") by the Israeli playwright Iosseph ben Iosseph. The leading role was played by Bela Genauer, wife of journalist Nahum Sirotzky, and an actress by profession, who, after a visit to Israel, secured the rights to the play, as well as the collaboration of Israeli director Tom Levy. There were also adaptations of Jewish classics, like Bialik's *The Cave of David* and Sholem Aleichem's *The Bewitched Tailor*, performed by youngsters of the Congregação Israelita Paulista under the direction of Iacov Hillel, a very promising young professional.

*Yom ha-Azma'ut*, Day of Jerusalem, Hanukkah, and Purim celebrations were the occasions of some successful shows and artistic performances arranged by Joel Rekem of the Jewish Agency Department of Culture and Education in Jerusalem.

Israeli song and dance ensembles and soloists performed quite often. Ohela Halevi and Chava Alberstein were very well received, also by non-Jewish audiences. The Tsemed Reim folksingers were enthusiastically applauded all over Brazil. The songs of the young girls known as the Yuval Trio delighted the capacity audience, including distinguished official guests, at A Hebraica.

Youth groups and schools enthusiastically participated in the Fourth National Festival of Israeli Dance, the Fifth National Festival of Israeli Popular Music, and the Festival of Chassidic Music, all held in Rio de Janeiro.

The education department of the Congregação Israelita Paulista, headed by Zelig Nachim, arranged a Passover exposition of many ritual objects, books, and pictures related to the holiday and the celebration of the Seder. For the second time, the congregation promoted an art week which enabled local Jewish artists to exhibit their work. São Paulo's Casa de Cultura de Israel (House of Israeli Culture), directed by Elijas Blankfeld, organized an Israeli art exposition at A Hebraica. In collaboration with the *Wa'ad Ha-hinnukh* (Board of Jewish Education), Casa de Cultura held its annual Bible competition for students of the Jewish schools. The
first Jewish Book Fair of works written in Portuguese and Spanish was held in conjunction with the Israel Fair. In Rio de Janeiro, Professor Arnaldo Niskier organized the first intercollegiate Fair of Sciences, at which 62 projects were shown.

Israeli films were generally quite well received. The 1974 offerings were *The Yom Kippur War*, *David Ben-Gurion*, and *Shallah, the Immigrant*, starring the famous Topol. A rather original initiative was the transmission on the Porto Alegre Jewish radio program, "Hora Israelita," of texts in Portuguese translation of *Wisdom of Israel*, an anthology of Jewish texts throughout the ages, edited by Lewis Browne.

Of course, the bulk of Jewish cultural activities consisted of study courses and lectures. Professor Evyatar Friesdal of the Hebrew university, Jerusalem, gave a very well attended course on contemporary Jewish history; he also lectured in Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre. Dr. Israel Eldar of the Hebrew University spoke on contemporary Jewish thought. WIZO, the Women's Zionist Organization, and Pioneiras (Brazilian branch of the World Union of Pioneer Women's Organizations), as well as the Brazilian *aliyah* movement, also sponsored courses. In São Paulo, A Hebraica's People's University for Yiddish, headed by Uron Mandel, offered weekly lectures, as did the Monte Scopus and the Bialik Library in Rio.

Lectures usually attracted only small audiences, but there were some exceptions. Capacity audiences listened to the impressions of Zevi Ghivelder, who covered the Yom Kippur war for the periodical, *Manchete*; to Alberto Dines of *Jornal do Brasil* (p. 279), who answered questions put to him by a group of journalists and leaders of the Congregação Paulista; to Danilo Nunes, a non-Jewish general, judge of the State of Guanabara court controlling state budgets and expenditures, author of *Judas: Traitor or Betrayed?*, who lectured on Franz Kafka and the Jews.

**Books**

The year 1974 saw the publication of a number of works of Jewish interest. Rabbi Henrique Lemle's *Nesta Hora - Dialogo com a Nova Geração* ("In This Hour - a Dialogue with the New Generation"); Rabbi Fritz Pinkuss's article, "Jewish Immigration to Brazil since 1935," which appeared in the jubilee edition of the *Revista da Historia* (publication of the history department of São Paulo university) and another, more extensive study, "Types of Jewish Thinking," serialized in *Revista* and scheduled to appear in book form under the sponsorship of B'nai Brith and São Paulo Federation; a collection of sermons by Rabbi Henry Sobel of the Congregação Israelita Paulista, which appeared under the title *Judaism Is Optimism*.

Marcus Margulis of Rio de Janeiro compiled *Judaica Brasiliense*, a bibliography of Jewish books in Portuguese. He also edited a collection of essays on *Circumcision*, written by him, the Catholic Bishop Monsignor Heladio Correia Laurini, Moises Tractenberg, Moises Cohen, and others. Mrs. Eva Hirschberg, widow of Alfred Hirschberg, who for many years had been a contributor to the *AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK*, was preparing a history of Congregação Israelita Paulista, with the
help of her daughters; Salo Baron's *Historia e historiografia do povo judeu* ("History and Jewish Historians") was published with the financial assistance of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. A Portuguese edition of Lena Kichler Zilberman's *Meus 100 filhos* ("My Hundred Children"), translated from the Yiddish by Bluma Sahm Paves, was also published.

**Personalia**

The Jewish community of Brazil suffered a great loss by the death of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Diesendruck, who had come from Portugal to become rabbi of Congregação Israelita Paulista and later the spiritual leader of the Sephardi congregation Bet Yaakov.

WALTER REHFELD