

Western Europe

Great Britain

Domestic Affairs

THE POLITICAL WORLD was startled by the news of Prime Minister Harold Wilson's resignation in March 1976. He was succeeded by former Foreign Secretary James Callaghan, elected by the parliamentary Labour party after three ballots. The precarious position of the government was emphasized both in March, when three by-elections showed a fall in Labour votes and a rise in Conservative —though no party lost a seat it had previously held; and in April, when the resignation of one Labour Member of Parliament reduced the party's voting strength to 314, as compared with 316 for all other parties. In February 1975 Margaret Thatcher had replaced Edward Heath as leader of the Conservative party. In June of that year, in a 64.5 per cent turnout, 67.2 per cent of those who went to the polls voted for the United Kingdom to stay in the European Economic Community (EEC).

On the economic front significant changes of policy took place. Foremost among these were the imposition in July of a limit of £6 per week on pay rises and the introduction of more food and government housing subsidies. These measures were taken to combat a rapidly rising rate of inflation, which in May was running at 30 per cent per annum. In this way the Labour party, which had won power in 1974 by asserting the principle of free collective bargaining, reverted to a policy of compulsory wage controls after only a year. There were still doubts whether the Trades Union Congress would agree to the change; it did so at its annual conference in September by a majority of two to one. The deflationary effect soon became apparent: the annual rate of inflation was reported in December to have declined to 14.9 per cent and unemployment to have passed the million mark.

In other respects, the government pursued an interventionist policy in the economy through a newly established National Enterprise Board, which was reflected in the take-over of British Leyland in April and governmental assistance to the British branch of Chrysler in December. A more hopeful development of the year was the first deliveries of oil from the North Sea.

In February 1976 the problems caused by cost inflation and the demand for

improved public and welfare services led to the issuance of a White Paper designed to cut public expenditure. This would hold back public expenditure in 1979–80 to much the same level, measured at constant prices, as had prevailed in 1974–1975. The White Paper provided for reductions in defense spending, food subsidies, housing subsidies, new roads and transport services, and educational facilities. Compensation to the nationalized industries for their policies of price restraint was also to be phased out. These measures provoked intense controversy inside the Labour party and were only accepted in the House of Commons when the government made them an issue of confidence.

On the day Harold Wilson announced his resignation, he emphasized at a news conference that he did not expect his successor to adopt radical changes in policy, particularly on economic issues, but to carry out present policies with renewed vigor. Indeed, on April 5, the day Callaghan was chosen as the new Prime Minister, he called on the factions of his party to unify behind efforts to rescue Britain from its long-term economic decline. In June the government successfully secured the adoption of a new policy aimed at limiting wage and salary increases to 4.5 per cent, to succeed the prevailing maximum increase of £6 a week. The fact that the number of strikes in the first five months of 1976 was lower than in any comparable period since 1968 demonstrated the acceptance of the policy of wage restraint. This, combined with a reduction in the rate of inflation and an improvement in the balance of payments, gave a more hopeful augury for the future of the economy.

Elsewhere in the United Kingdom the demands of Scottish nationalism were met in part by a White Paper on devolution (November 1975). But there was no relaxation of tension in Northern Ireland. Although the last detainees were released in December, this did not prevent bomb attacks in London and Manchester (January, August, and October).

Middle East Policy

In April Britain refused to provide Libya with either submarines or combat aircraft in a deal rumored to amount to £1,000 million, on the grounds that their supply would prejudice chances of finding a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict. Prime Minister Harold Wilson told the House of Commons that the decision was made within the policy framework announced to Parliament in June 1974 by Minister of State at the Foreign Office David Ennals (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 291).

This was reiterated in November, when Israel Ambassador to Great Britain Gideon Raphael was assured that the main principles guiding British policy in the Middle East had not changed and no new commitment to sell arms to Egypt was made during President Anwar al-Sadat's London visit. The assurance followed rumors of a large British arms deal with Egypt not dispelled by the denial of David Ennals, minister of state in charge of Middle East affairs, in the Commons in June that such an agreement was signed when Egyptian Deputy Premier and Foreign

Minister Ismail Fahmy came to London that month. However, Foreign Minister James Callaghan did sign agreements with Egypt on investment protection and on economic, industrial, and technological cooperation.

VOTE ON ISRAEL IN UN

Britain joined the United States in a sustained, but unavailing, effort to prevent the UN General Assembly from passing, on November 10, 1975, the resolution branding Zionism as "a form of racism and racial discrimination." Using unusually forceful language, chief British delegate Ivor Richards pointed out that the resolution's confusion of racism and racial discrimination with nationalism "can only serve to undermine the right of the State of Israel to exist. The UK categorically rejects and will oppose any such move."

Amidst communal protest, the Board of Deputies passed an emergency resolution denouncing "the latest international libel perpetrated against Israel and the entire Jewish people by the Arab-Communist dominated Assembly of the United Nations." A motion deploring the resolution and supporting a declaration made on behalf of all EEC members rejecting any notion that Zionism was racist was tabled in the House of Commons in November. A December Gallup poll, based on representative samples in four countries, showed that only one in four of the British public agreed with the resolution that Zionism was a form of racism or racial discrimination, compared with one in four in France, and one in six in West Germany and Switzerland.

In December Britain voted for a Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its air-raid attacks on Lebanon (vetoed by the U.S.) on the grounds that "there can be no justification" for such large operations. It rejected the right of any government to take such action. In the same month Britain and the United States walked out of a Paris conference of intergovernmental experts of UNESCO in protest against a vote to define Zionism as "a form of racism and racial discrimination."

PARTY POLITICS AND ISRAEL

In January a pro-Israel group within the Conservative party was launched with the support of nearly 90 M.P.s, including Tory leader Mrs. Thatcher. Fears aroused by the February appointment as principal Opposition spokesman on foreign affairs of Reginald Maudling, one-time supporter of Alec Douglas-Home's policies, and by his November speech which was interpreted in some quarters to signify a dramatic change in Conservative Middle East policy, were allayed in December when Mrs. Thatcher declared that the party continued to believe that any Israeli-Arab settlement must be based on UN Resolution 242. The party also supported the government's vote against the anti-Zionist resolution in the UN and condemned terrorism in any form, no matter for what cause.

In June the Labour party's pro-Arab faction, organized in the Labour Middle East Council, initiated a campaign to bring about "a revision of Labour's pro-Zionist attitude" with a pamphlet *Labour and Palestine* written by David Watkins, M.P., who succeeded Christopher Mayhew as chairman of the group (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 289). The Council's membership was 26, less than one quarter of that of the pro-Israel Labour Friends.

Over 100 Young Liberals walked out of the September Liberal Assembly at Scarborough after the national conference rejected a motion by Mayhew to allow London Palestine Liberation Organization representatives to address it. A Liberal party Middle East policy statement in October attempted to reconcile older members' pro-Israel sentiments with Young Liberals' pro-Arabism by calling for both "the recognition by the Arabs of Israel's right to exist" and an end to Israel's "territorial occupation" of Arab territories acquired since 1967. It also supported the right of the West Bank and Gaza Palestinians "to determine their own future through their own chosen representatives." Whereas current government policy fully supported Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's initiatives and refrained from any direct involvement in peace-making efforts unless it was invited to do so by both sides, the Liberals advocated a British effort, in cooperation with its partners in the European Economic Community (EEC), particularly France, based on Security Council resolutions.

TRADE WITH ISRAEL

Concern over the widening trade gap between Britain and Israel was deepened when April figures showed record British exports to Israel of £219,235,398 in 1974 (£32 million more than in 1973), with half the total comprising rough diamond exports; while imports only rose £9 million to £78,700,968, giving a trade imbalance of £140 million. The gap continued to grow in the first seven months of 1975 when British exports to Israel were worth over £144 million and imports only £59 million.

The May agreement providing for closer trade links between Common Market countries and Israel and creating an Israel-EEC free-trade zone roused hopes that Israeli exports to Britain would increase. Among attempts by the London Chamber of Commerce to stimulate trade was a "Trade with Israel" forum in July, attended by representatives of some 70 leading firms, and a trade mission to Israel planned for March 1976. British businessmen invited to join the mission were informed that Israel was "traditionally a good market for British goods" and "neither selling to Israel, other than war materials, nor the participation in British export promotion there infringes the 'Arab boycott' rules."

In November, after talks in Israel between British Secretary of State for Trade Peter Shore and Israeli Minister for Industry and Commerce Haim Bar-Lev, a standing committee of senior Trade Department officials and the Israel Embassy's economic team was formed to replace the former mixed working party to boost mutual trade.

PLO

Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, explaining his decision to grant visas to representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) wishing to attend the September Westminster Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference as observers, disclaimed in August government responsibility for the invitation. He wrote to Eric Moonman, M.P., who had intervened on behalf of 100 M.P. signatories of an all-party motion condemning the IPU's invitation to PLO:

My concern in this matter as Home Secretary is to decide whether or not foreign citizens who wish to enter this country should be allowed to do so. The power vested in me to refuse entry on the grounds that the presence of such a citizen would not be conducive to the public good should be used only to safeguard national interests and not to express moral approval or disapproval of a particular visit. Applications for visas from any members of the PLO are considered in accordance with this principle and not in relation to the desirability or otherwise of the IPU's decision. On this basis I can find no grounds on which it would be proper for me to refuse entry to the individuals concerned.

Protests against the presence of PLO representatives by all Jewish communal organizations culminated in September with a 2,000-strong rally in Trafalgar Square which, in view of IRA bombs exploding in central London streets, became a massive condemnation of terrorism generally. Simultaneously, 1,500 Arab supporters held a rally, organized by the General Union of Arab students and sponsored by Free Palestine, the General Union of Palestinian Students, the Palestine Action Campaign, and the Young Liberal Movement, which called for the destruction of the State of Israel and British recognition of PLO.

The IPU meeting adopted a resolution affirming PLO as a representative of the Palestinian people and "a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East." It called for the immediate and total Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, and accused Israel of "acts of repression and the violation of human rights" there. It also "urged the parliaments of the world to refuse to provide any aid and assistance likely to enable Israel to maintain its occupation." Under a revised rule, every organization which has observer status at the UN, as well as international bodies, will be eligible to attend IPU conferences.

Arab Boycott

According to Anglo-Israel Chamber of Commerce chairman Lewis Goodman, the growing impact of the Arab boycott since the Yom Kippur war required a new posture by Anglo-Jewry: the substitution of new forms of organizational action and methods for the low profile it had maintained in the past. He told communal representatives who met in April to set up an Anti-Boycott Coordinating Committee (ABC), an umbrella organization comprising the Chamber, Board of Deputies, Zionist Federation, B'nai B'rith, and Trade Advisory Council, that many British firms were showing a weak-kneed attitude and bowing to Arab pressure. Several had

cancelled their affiliation to the Chamber. The establishment in March in London of an Arab-British Joint Chamber of Commerce could further intimidate them. ABC's basic claim, Goodman said in December, was "to educate the business community and general public about the iniquities of the boycott and the damage which submission to it causes to British business and jobs." It would also act as a lobbying organization.

Despite the warning in October by Stephen Willis, executive director of the British Overseas Trade Group, a semi-official body sponsored by the Trade Department to promote British trade, that British business and even jobs were being lost to competitors because of unjustified fears of the boycott; and despite repeated representations by Jewish organizations, Secretary of State for Trade Peter Shore announced in November that there would be no government direction to British companies on the boycott and no intervention to stop its operation. He affirmed the condemnation by consecutive British governments of any boycott that lacked international support and authority. He specifically deplored the Arab boycott which deprived "both Israel and the Arab states of the very considerable benefits that trade, investment and the transfer of technology can bring" and was inconsistent with EEC agreements with these states for improving the flow of trade. However, he concluded, "it must be for our exporters to decide how they will deal with the situation which they currently face in doing business with the Middle East."

A memorandum on the boycott drawn up earlier, in July, by chairman Martin Savitt and executive director Jacob Gewirtz of the Board of Deputies defense and group relations committee, and its representatives on ABC, warned that, in view of the growing number of British firms now dealing with some Arab countries which refused visas to Jews, it was "inevitable that companies will be increasingly reluctant to hire Jews." This constituted discrimination on grounds of ethnic and national origin and an offense under the 1968 Race Relations Act. The September Government White Paper on racial discrimination suggested, however, that exceptions be extended to permit discriminatory selection of prospective employees under Section 63 including selection to meet "a training and trade commitment to an overseas country." Both the Board of Deputies and Anti-Boycott Committee made representations to the Home Secretary "against what appears to be a flagrant violation of the spirit of the proposed new Race Relations Act for the sake of political and economic expediency."

In October Gulf-Oil (Middle East), an American-owned company also operating in Britain, gave the Race Relations Board satisfactory assurances that it would not in future discriminate on the grounds of color, race, or ethnic and national origins. According to the Board's South Metropolitan conciliation committee in August, the company had practiced unlawful discrimination by withdrawing its offer of a secretarial post to a London woman after she had married a Jew. This was the first test case involving allegations of discrimination in employment resulting from the Arab boycott or fear of Arab economic retaliation.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography and Communal Data

For every 100 Orthodox Jews dying in 1974, only 63 Orthodox Jews married in synagogue; for every 100 Liberal deaths there were 73 Liberal synagogue weddings, the Board of Deputies' statistical and demographic research unit, now directed by Dr. B. Kosmin, reported in May. The Reform sector showed a positive balance, with 120 marriages for every 100 deaths, continuing the trend of the past 25 years during which Reform's share of all synagogue marriages rose from 7 to 14 per cent. In 1974 Orthodox marriages constituted 79.0 per cent of the total, compared with 79.4 per cent in 1973 and an average 81.5 per cent over the period 1968–72, when an average annual total of 1,880 marriages took place; Reform 14.2 per cent, against 13.5 and 11.5 per cent, and Liberal 6.8 per cent, against 7.1 and 7 per cent, for the respective periods.

Deaths in 1974 numbered 4,866, compared with 4,755 in 1973 and an average of 4,917 over the 1968–72 period, with the Orthodox forming 85 per cent, Liberals just over 6 per cent and Reform between 7.3 and 8.1 per cent.

From this the statistical unit concluded that "the true level of assimilation—out-marriage with persons neither ethnically nor religiously Jewish and whose children could not automatically be married in a synagogue—is approximately 20 per cent, i.e., less than one in five." In its view, the rapid increase in civil marriages among members of Christian denominations suggested that "in some ways Judaism is more successful in retaining its hold over its adherents than are the organized Christian churches in this country."

On the other hand, a survey by sociologist Dr. Gerald Cromer showed that 56.5 per cent of all youngsters in 40 Jewish sample families in the "typical" London suburb of Wembley would be prepared to marry out, and only 15 per cent of parents would take forceful preventive action. The conclusions drawn from this inquiry into attitudes of the middle-class Jewish family toward intermarriage and the extent to which they threatened communal survival had been published in the *Jewish Journal of Sociology* in December 1974.

In August consultations took place between Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits and the Haham of the Sephardi community, and representatives of the Liberal and Reform movements, thought to center on differences in views on conversion, marriage, and divorce. In February the Chief Rabbi's office had indicated to the *London Jewish Chronicle* that "at a time like this, far from accentuating and perpetuating our differences, we ought to make a supreme effort to narrow and eliminate them."

The Chief Rabbi has always favoured continued research and consultation on all matters concerned with conversion. . . . He has been particularly concerned to avoid family tragedies resulting from the present divisions and the estrangement from traditional practice."

In December the Jewish Marriage Education Council, under the direction of

Rabbi D. Okolica, invited London ministers to attend a series of seminars on marriage counseling designed to supplement their training, particularly in view of a sharp rise in divorces among Jewish couples.

A study of "The political attitudes and behaviour of British Jews" by Dr. Ofira Seliktar published by Strathclyde University in February showed that "Jewish conservatism in religion is complemented by Conservatism in politics," finding that among the strictly Orthodox, 75 per cent were Conservative, 20 per cent Labour and 5 per cent Liberal, while among Progressives 30 per cent were Conservatives, 60 per cent Labour and 10 per cent Liberal.

Chief Rabbi, United Synagogue, and Religious Life

Concern with the professionalization of the communal civil service, advocated by Chief Rabbi Jakobovits in a March address to B'nai B'rith, and the rationalization of United Synagogue organizations dominated the year. United Synagogue salary scales for all religious and lay officials were raised in March to reflect their status and duties, as an incentive for young men to enter the ministry and a way to fill vacancies on the London *Bet Din*. Salaries for *dayanim* were almost doubled from £4,287 to £8,000. At the same time, an annual surcharge on membership fees, varying from £5 to £9, was instituted.

In June United Synagogue co-treasurer Victor Lucas, describing the increasing number of deficit constituent synagogues as "the danger flashpoint," ordered the nine synagogues in question to cut expenditures drastically, while in December co-treasurer Mark Kleiner warned of an expected rise in the constituent synagogues' overall deficit from £37,000 in 1975 to about £56,000 in 1976 unless expenditures were reduced and incomes increased immediately. He advocated "rationalization in the form of better deployment of personnel serving the synagogues in one neighborhood" and a reduction in the number of synagogues "in areas where fewer could adequately cater for existing communal needs the community can no longer afford to keep empty buildings for emotional reasons." Although, in November, Stoke Newington synagogue officials asked the *Bet Din* to call in for arbitration eight United Synagogue officials to prevent it, the synagogue's closure on the grounds that it was spiritually and financially nonviable (AJYB 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 294) took place as scheduled, in January 1976.

In December it was announced that 21 of the 22 members of the council of district synagogues had agreed to apply for constituent status so that a unified United Synagogue council, proposed in July, could be established as a first step in an organizational and financial restructuring of the United Synagogue. It had been announced in September that Spitalfield Great Synagogue in London's East End was to become a mosque.

Kashrut and Shehitah

Rationalization to combat declining demand and an attempt to cut retail kosher meat prices led to the December closure of the City Meat Wholesalers' Waltham Abbey abattoir, source of 35 per cent of London's kosher beef and 45 per cent of its kosher lamb. London Board of Shechita president Mark Kosky stated that there had been a 10 per cent decline from 1974 levels in kosher slaughtering. In the last decade consumption of kosher beef had fallen 30 per cent, of veal 55 per cent, and of lamb 20 per cent. The closure was expected to save £25,000 a year and thus prevent a further rise in *shehitah* fees. The Board ratified one fee increase in March following a pay rise for poultry staff, and another was forecast after the Board's cattle staff received pay increases in August.

In January the National Council of Shechita Boards formed a committee to consider the implementation of *shehitah* regionalization schemes in view of Common Market regulations to be introduced over the next few years (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 295). Council secretary Jack Brenner declared that tens of thousands of pounds would be needed to bring London's new kosher poultry abattoir up to EEC standards, and many provincial abattoirs would probably close for lack of requisite funds. In October a consultative and information center aimed at strengthening and safeguarding *shehitah* for the Jewish communities throughout Europe was established in London at a conference organized by the Council and attended by ten European Chief Rabbis.

In July Myer Harris, treasurer of the Kashrus Commission, reported that the expansion of rival kashrut organizations seriously threatened the Commission's survival. His 1974 accounts showed an unprecedented drop of 9 per cent in the number of functions supervised by the Commission; supervised hotels decreased from 10 to 6. In August representatives of the Kashrus Commission, the Federation of Synagogues, and the Sephardi Kashrut authorities decided to work for closer liaison and cooperation between their respective authorities.

In February the Board of Deputies Committee of Enquiry into Passover food prices (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 295) exonerated manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and the supervisory authorities from suspicions of excessive profiteering. Still, recommended prices at Passover were generally 50 per cent higher than in 1974.

Jewish Education

According to a biennial survey prepared by Dr. Jacob Braude for the Institute of Jewish Affairs, the number of Jewish children in Britain and Ireland attending Jewish day schools and attached nurseries had risen from 11,804 in May 1973 to 12,700 (7.5 per cent) in May 1975. Enrollment was up 4 per cent at elementary schools and 15 per cent at secondary-grammar schools (age-group 11-15), partly as a result of the establishment of two new schools and of parents' increased readiness

to send their children to Jewish secondary schools. Forty primary schools, 15 of them state-aided, employed 403 full-time and 248 part-time teachers, while 17 secondary and grammar schools (five state-aided) employed 271 full-time and 114 part-time teachers. Over 50 Israeli Jewish-studies teachers were sent by Jewish Agency departments to Britain for limited periods. The survey further reported that in September some 800 children did not find places in Jewish schools. London's largest school, the Jewish Free School Comprehensive School, for example, received 320 applications for 240 first-year places.

Only 10 per cent of London's 27,000 Jewish children of school age attended both Jewish primary and secondary schools, and 16 per cent only secondary school, according to the first survey of London's Jewish religious instruction ever conducted by the statistical and demographic research unit of the Board of Deputies. These figures compared unfavorably with those in the large provincial communities of Manchester and Liverpool, where about three-quarters of all Jewish children attended Jewish primary school, and about one-third and over two-thirds, respectively, secondary school. Professor Sigbert J. Prais, in his summary of the survey, estimated that even if the new Jewish day schools proposed by the Chief Rabbi in 1971 (AJYB, 1972 [Vol. 73], p. 464) were established, they would only accommodate half of London's children in day schools in some 15 years. The likelihood of building additional privately-sponsored Jewish day schools in the foreseeable future was small in view of economic conditions.

In October A. L. Brown, director of education of the London Board of Jewish Religious Education, reported declining attendance in part-time Hebrew classes in older established communities like Hackney, Stamford Hill's New Synagogue, and Golders Green. Areas of growth were Hertfordshire and the southwest Essex borders. At the end of 1974, the Board had 6,800 children on its rolls, a decline of four to five per cent over the past six years. In March the Board announced pay rises for its teachers, at a total annual cost of £30,000. In May the Board decided to charge tuition fees of up to £10 per annum for children over eight attending classes. In December the Board announced revised and less stringent requirements for tests to decide whether a bar-mitzvah should be allowed to read from the Torah. An inquiry commission, set up in January 1974, found that current regulations in force since 1972 had not resulted in an overall improvement of education standards or mid-week attendance.

In June Carmel College, Britain's only Jewish public school, announced cuts in staff, scholarships, and sports facilities for economic reasons. For the same reason, it was proposed that Jews' College redeploy property to combat an expected 1975 deficit of over £80,000. In December an educational center to supply Hebrew teachers with materials and aids opened in Jews' College. Operating on an annual budget of £1,000, it is part of the Faculty for the Training of Teachers program run under the auspices of the London Board, Jews' College, and the Jewish Agency Torah Department.

In March, following a meeting of educators and others working in the field of

Jewish education, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported the formation of a standing conference of Jewish educational organizations.

At the Universities

Fifteen full-time undergraduates and 14 full-time graduate students registered at the department of Hebrew and Jewish studies of London's University College, directed by Professor Chimen Abramsky. Under a new scheme, 11 students from other departments of the college were taking unit courses in Hebrew and Jewish studies.

In August the British Association for Jewish Studies, open to scholars academically engaged in the field, held its first annual conference following a January founding meeting which elected Geza Vermes, reader in Jewish studies and professorial fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, as first president.

Closer scholastic links between Cambridge University and Israel appeared to be in the offing after Stephan Reif, director of Cambridge's Taylor-Schechter Geniza Research Unit, visited Jerusalem in January, and an exchange of visits in November by Haifa Technion president Amos Horev and Professor Sir William Hawthorne, Master of Churchill College, Cambridge, which emphasized mutual concern with science and technology.

A £20,000 scheme to be funded by equal contributions from the communities involved and the National Chaplaincy Board for the appointment of five more chaplains for student bodies in London, Yorkshire, the southwest and south coast areas and covering several other university towns was approved by the Board president, Chief Rabbi Jakobovits.

In August Michael Copeland was appointed Hillel's national director to lead a nationwide education program on university campuses in cooperation with the Youth and Hechalutz department of the Jewish Agency. In October Rabbi Michael Rosen was appointed student councillor at Manchester's Hillel House for some 6,000 Jewish students in the Greater Manchester area.

Welfare

A Jewish proletariat, "whose needs must not be forgotten," still exists in the inner city, stated an August Board of Deputies research unit report which was largely based on 1971 census returns. It dealt with the London Borough of Hackney where some 28,000 Jews form 14 per cent of the population, making it one of the most important centers of Jewish settlement in Britain (in London, only Barnet has a larger Jewish population and a higher proportion of Jews; in the provinces, only Greater Manchester). Although those who could afford it had left Hackney on retirement, the report said, there remained a "residentially stable but slowly declining population of elderly people," of whom some 500 were reaching retirement age each year. "Increasingly composed of aged and poorer persons or of the Chassidic

sects," this borough, the report concluded, "will continue to make calls on the community's welfare services for many years." A similar situation in Stamford Hill moved the Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) in May to open a residential home, while in April Norwood launched a scheme, in conjunction with the Lubavitch Foundation, to deal with hardship cases among Orthodox families with children.

In June JWB chairman Lionel Leighton described cooperation between Norwood, JWB, and the Jewish Blind Society in a North-West London social services project (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 296) as a "gigantic leap" in terms of communal commonsense." Prevented by the Charity Commission in July from spending part of the £1.25 million proceeds from the sale of its South London site on projects in Israel, Norwood pledged £269,000 towards building a new wing at Ravenswood village for severely mentally handicapped children, and in August assumed responsibility for a new residential center for Jewish deaf children in South Woodford.

Cooperation to save administration costs and increase efficiency was the order of the day. In March the Central British Fund (CBF) and British OSE, which had previously appealed for funds jointly, amalgamated, with OSE restructuring as CBF's medical committee. The September closure of CBF's Otto Hirsch Home at Kew could be the start of a quarter-century process of winding up its residential care for elderly victims of Nazi persecution. In April British ORT established a technical assistance company, ORTEC, to make its experience in technical and vocational training available to more governments, international agencies, and social service organizations.

In July Britain's only Jewish maternity hospital, the Bearsted Memorial Foundation, received a year's reprieve from threatened government closure. It was reported in December that in the latter part of 1975 some 70 per cent of the hospital's patients were Jewish, compared with 18 per cent the previous year. In November the London Jewish hospital in Stepney also faced closure threats.

Zionism and Aliyah

In 1974 emigration to Israel increased 12 per cent, to 832 from 740 in 1973. In the first seven months of 1975, however, it resumed the almost constant decline registered since 1970, falling 10 per cent: to 323 from 359 in the comparable 1974 period. Eight per cent of families and almost 26 per cent of single people who had gone on *aliyah* returned to Britain, Jewish Agency emigration department chief in Britain, Yitzhak Mayer, told a national emergency conference on *aliyah* in London in March. The major recommendation of the conference, called by the Zionist Federation (ZF) *aliyah* committee and the World Zionist Organization (WZO) immigration department, was the establishment of an independent national public body to promote *aliyah* and represent the interests of prospective British immigrants in their relations with the Israeli authorities. There were also recommendations for action to be taken by the ZF's *aliyah* committee, enlarged by representatives of the Mizrahi-Hapoel Hamizrachi Federation, WZO immigration department, British

Aliyah Movement, and other organizations directly concerned: a wide-ranging propaganda campaign with financial assistance from the Joint Israel Appeal (JIA); the creation of an Israeli advice bureau network; continuation of negotiations between ZF and Jewish Agency chairman Pinchas Sapir for a public body of British Jews to have a major role in determining *aliyah* policy in Britain and the selection of emissaries to WZO's immigration department, and the promotion of *aliyah* by prominent Israelis visiting Britain for fundraising campaigns.

A committee headed by Michael Sacher, the only British member of the Jewish Agency Executive, was appointed by Sapir in January to look into ways of increasing the efficiency and reducing expenses of the British Zionist organization. In May the Sacher committee recommended cuts of up to £75,000 in total annual expenditure on Israeli emissaries to Britain (estimated in May at over £150,000 for 32 full-time emissaries) who should only be appointed with the approval of Britain's ZF's Israel office. In August it also called for a sweeping rationalization of Jewish Agency educational activities in Britain, including the initiation of discussions by the Agency's Jerusalem office on the unification of its general education and Torah departments. The committee further proposed: changes in salaries of Israeli teachers employed by the Agency in Britain and in Jewish day-school curricula and a radical reorganization of Jewish and Zionist activities at British universities to be sponsored by the Jewish Agency, based on pilot surveys showing the need for "a significant charter for the resuscitation and rebuilding of our previously dominant position at the universities" and suggesting a detailed program for stimulating interest among university staff and students alike.

According to Malvyn Benjamin of Herut, organizer of a Committee for a Secure Israel formed in February by right-wing Zionists to strengthen public relations work on Israel's behalf, particularly on university campuses, the Zionist cause had "reached its lowest ebb and the existing institutions have been unable to stem the increasing support for the Arabs." The ZF national conference in October urged adequate financial and organizational support of Jewish and Zionist groups active on university campuses because of the anti-Zionist and anti-Israel propaganda campaign by Arabs and their supporters. The conference, which elected Labour M.P. Eric Moonman as chairman, also agreed to a youth levy by constituent bodies and affiliated organizations to meet the specific needs of youth organizations affiliated directly or indirectly to ZF, and set up a new ZF youth affairs committee to strengthen the Federation's links with youth movements.

For Soviet Jewry

In December the Board of Deputies approved the decision of a London conference of 200 delegates and observers to establish a National Council for Soviet Jewry to coordinate British campaign activities. Representatives of all interested communal organizations convened in February 1976 to form the council, which was linked to, but not controlled by, the Board. In April 1976 representatives of over 25

Anglo-Jewish youth organizations formed a National Youth Council for Soviet Jewry.

Protests on behalf of Soviet Jewry continued by the various organizations acting independently or together. Motions were placed on House of Commons order papers by members of the All-Party Parliamentary Committee for the Release of Soviet Jewry: in January, for example, some 150 M.P.s called on the Soviet government "to show tolerance of and respect for all religious opinions, and in particular to release those Jewish prisoners of conscience at present suffering in Soviet prison camps for no reason other than their wish to emigrate to Israel." Appeals signed by persons prominent in all fields were handed in at the prime minister's residence, the Foreign Office, and the Soviet embassy; in May, for example, an unprecedented plea came from the Bishops of Warrington, Winchester, Hulme, Birkenhead, Stockport, Tonbridge, and Lancaster, urging the Soviet government to spare the life of Russian Jew Mikhail Leviev, who had been sentenced to death (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 380). Hunger strikes were held on a nationwide scale in April in sympathy with Soviet Jewish families refused permission to emigrate. And demonstrations were staged, one of 200 persons in London's Hyde Park in October, which was called by the Universities' Committee for Soviet Jewry and the Union of Jewish Students' Campaign for Soviet Jewry.

The planned April visit of former KGB chief Alexander Shelepin heading a trade union delegation evoked a motion in the House of Commons opposing the visit until the Soviet Union ceased harrassment of Jews wishing to emigrate to Israel. The Board of Deputies sent telegrams to the prime minister, the foreign secretary and trade union leaders urging that the problem of Soviet Jewry be raised with the Russian visitors. A demonstration outside the Soviet embassy by 200 people, including the Chief Rabbi and Haham, which was to take place during Shelepin's visit, went on despite his early departure.

The Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry staged as many as three demonstrations daily during the ten-day May visit of a group of Russian parliamentarians. In August the organization announced as part of its International Women's Year program, a plan to collect 500,000 signatures of prominent British women on a nationwide petition appealing for human rights for Soviet Jewry.

Race Relations

Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women (AJEX) officers repeatedly warned of danger from the spread of racialism associated with Britain's economic difficulties and of antisemitism fomented by Arab sources and nurtured by extremist groups, particularly the right-wing National Front (NF). In September AJEX national chairman Ronald Shelley stated that his group was working with community relations councils to improve all forms of race relations at a local level, and with the Council of Christians and Jews nationally and locally to prevent racialism and discrimination. AJEX members were being placed in organizations like the UN

Association to try and prevent extremist organizations from fostering antisemitism in the guise of anti-Zionism. Defense seminars were being organized throughout Britain to advise Jewish groups about the nature and aims of the extremists. Democratic Defence, an organization to combat fascism, founded by Paul Rose, M.P., was inaugurated in February in Manchester. In October the Board of Deputies of British Jews announced the appointment of a director of security to "advise the Jewish community throughout the country on the appropriate measures required."

In April Michael McLaughlin, chairman of the British Movement, an NF breakaway group, was convicted by a court of stirring up racial hatred against the Jews during the October 1974 election campaign, when he was responsible for publishing and mounting posters saying, among other things, "The Jews have Israel—let the British have Britain."

A September government White Paper on racial discrimination proposed to dispense with the necessity to prove subjective intention to stir up racial hatred in prosecutions brought under Section 6 of the 1965 Race Relations Act, which was "too restrictively defined to be an effective sanction." But it did not put forward proposals to extend the criminal law to deal with the dissemination of racialist propaganda "in the absence of a likelihood that group hatred will be stirred up by it." Cases brought would therefore still need to prove in court that the material in question was offensive and likely to stir up racial hatred. The Paper pointed out that the present law did not penalize the dissemination of ideas "based on an assumption of racial superiority or inferiority or facts (whether true or false) which may encourage racial prejudice or discrimination." A bill to strengthen the Race Relations Act, introduced into Parliament in February 1976, was based on the White Paper.

Jacob Gewirtz, executive director of the Board of Deputies defense and group relations committee, maintained in September that the removal of the need to prove intent would be "a significant step in curbing the hatemongers. The effect can only be salutary—purveyors of race-hate will now think twice before rushing into print." *Spearhead*, a national journal published from the NF offices, on the other hand, discussing action against Richard Harwood's *Did Six Million Really Die?* (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 300), stated "we are not concerned here whether the contents of the book are true or false. What is alarming is the outcry that the public should not be allowed to read them and judge for itself." In June, when copies of a second printing of the book were distributed in schools, Gewirtz reported that his department planned to distribute *The Holocaust*, published by the Yad Vashem, as a countermeasure.

Another provision of the White Paper would "make it unlawful for a club or other voluntary body to discriminate as regards the admission of members or the treatment accorded to members" on racial grounds, although exemption would be granted to small voluntary bodies, "bona fide social, welfare, political and sponsoring organizations whose main object is to confer benefits on a particular ethnic or national group."

Books and Publications

History was again a major theme in recently published books, among them Martin Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism*, which dealt with the era from the spread of Greek power by Alexander the Great to the time of Jesus; J.S. Levi and G.E.J. Bergman's *Australian Genesis, Jewish Convicts and Settlers 1788-1850*; William J. Fishman's *East End Jewish Radicals 1875-1914*, which won the 1975 *Jewish Chronicle* book award; another study of London's East End, *Point of Arrival*, by Chaim Bermant, who also published *The Walled Garden*, an overall picture of Jewish family life, which was also the subject of Franz Hubmann's *The Jewish Family Album*, edited by Miriam and Lionel Kochan.

The Nazi period continued to attract interest with *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe*, Reuben Ainsztein's effort to revise the victim-image of Diaspora Jewry; *Dachau 1933-1945*, the official history of the camp; Austin Steven's *The Dispossessed*, the story of the 70,000 German and Austrian Jews who arrived in Britain, and *The Hitler Youth*, H. W. Koch's study of the technique of indoctrination and manipulation which produced it.

Middle East history comprised not only Zionist histories like Noah Lucas's *The Modern History of Israel* and analyses of the Yom Kippur war, such as *The War of Atonement* by Major-General Chaim Herzog; *The Yom Kippur War*, an enlarged version by the Sunday Times Insight Team of their 1974 *Insight on the Middle East War*, and *The Making of a War, The Middle East from 1967 to 1973*, by *Daily Telegraph* Beirut correspondent John Bulloch. There were also Arab-oriented studies, among them *Publish It Not: The Middle East Cover-Up*, Michael Adams and Christopher Mayhew's attempt to prove that British media and the parliamentary Labour party conspired to conceal the truth about Israel from the British public; *The Road to Ramadan*, by Mohamed Heikal, former editor of the Cairo newspaper *Al Ahram* and Nasser's friend and adviser; *Revolutionary Transformation in the Arab World*, by Walid Kazziha, an objective account of the Arab nationalist movement, and *Black September*, an analysis of the terrorist group by Christopher Dobson of the *Sunday Telegraph*. Richard Clutterbuck wrote *Living with Terrorism*, which dealt with terrorism in general.

Zionist history through personalities was found in *Nahum Sokolow: Life and Legend*, by Florian Sokolow, son of the Zionist leader; *Mark Sykes: Portrait of an Amateur*, by Roger Adelson; volume 1 of Richard H. Crossman's *The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*, and volume 5 of *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizman*, edited by Hanna Weiner and Barnett Litvinoff, covering 1907-1913, the dormant years of Zionism.

Other biographical works of note included *Prince of Fences: The Life and Crimes of Ikey Solomons*, 19th-century British criminal, by J. J. Tobias; Robert Skidelsky's controversial study of the enigma of the split career of Oswald Mosley, and *Prisoner of Honour: The Dreyfus Affair*, by David L. Lewis. In the sphere of autobiography was *Related Twilights: Notes from an Artist's Diary*, by Josef Herman. Verging on

fiction were the second volume of Maurice Edelman's projected trilogy *Disraeli Rising*, which took the British statesman to his appointment as chancellor of the exchequer, and *Sarah and After*, in which novelist Lynne Reid Banks retold the stories of the Patriarchs through the eyes of their wives.

More scholarly was the study of *Moses* by David Daiches, who also published *Was: A Pastime from Time Past*. A World War I poet was the subject of two biographies: *Isaac Rosenberg: The Half Used Life*, by Jean Liddiard, and *Isaac Rosenberg: Poet and Painter*, by Jean Moorcroft Wilson (a memorial exhibition of his paintings, poems, and letters took place at the National Book League). *Escape into Siege: A Survey of Israeli Literature Today*, by Leon I. Yudkin, studied more topical themes.

Directed to the student of Judaism were *Zohare ha-Shas*, by Rabbi Judah Leib Indech, Vol. 1, edited by his son Jonah Indech; *Pesikta De-Rab Kahana: Rabbi Kahana's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days*, translated from Hebrew and Aramaic by William G. Braude; *Theology in the Responsa*, by Louis Jacobs, and *To Heaven with Scribes and Pharisees: The Jewish Path to God*, by Reform Rabbi Lionel Blue.

Notable works of fiction were Elaine Feinstein's *Children of the Rose*, the second volume of Emmanuel Litvinoff's trilogy, *Blood on the Snow*, Bernard Kop's *Partners*, Bernice Ruben's *I Sent a Letter to My Love*, Michael Kustow's *Tank*, and Elie Wiesel's *The Town Beyond the Wall*.

Festschriften of the year included *Studies in Jewish Legal History*, edited by B. S. Jackson, in celebration of Professor David Daube's 65th birthday, and *Astride Two Cultures: Arthur Koestler at Seventy*, edited by Harold Harris.

A relevant study of the contemporary scene was *Jewish Youth Work in Britain*, by Sidney Bunt.

In November a Jewish Literary Trust was established to insure the future publication of the *Jewish Quarterly*.

Press and Broadcasting

In December a controversial correspondence in the British Broadcasting Corporation's weekly, *The Listener*, culminated in a demand by members of the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding for an "impartial inquiry" into the "Zionist bias" of BBC's Jerusalem correspondent Michael Elkins, and in the rejection of the demand by BBC director-general Sir Charles Curran.

In December controversy followed the publication in *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Observer* of an advertisement from the Iraqi embassy inviting Jews who fled to Israel "to return home." Only *The Guardian* published the full text submitted. Coincidentally, on the same day, a declaration signed by over 20 peers and 120 M.P.s in support of Israel and Zionism was published in *The Observer* by the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Friends of Israel.

Personalia

Among life peers created in 1975 were Sir Leslie Lever, Sydney Jacobson, and Sir Rudy Sternberg. Knighthoods were bestowed on Dr. Peter Bernhard Hirsch, F.R.S., Isaac Wolfson, professor of metallurgy at Oxford university; Harold Montague Finniston, chairman of the British Steel Corporation; Alderman Louis Sherman, chairman of the London Boroughs' Association; John Woolf, film producer, and Anthony Baruh Lousada, patron of the arts. Joel Barnett, M.P., chief secretary to the treasury, was appointed a Privy Counsellor; Sir Sebag Shaw, a judge of the High Court, was promoted to Lord Justice of Appeal; Lord Goodman was appointed Master of University College, Oxford, beginning October 1976.

British Jews who died in 1975 included: Sir Aubrey Lewis, eminent psychiatrist, in January, at the age of 74; John Slater, actor, in London in January, at the age of 58; David Diringer, epigraphist, orientalist, and world authority on the alphabet, in Cambridge in February, at the age of 74; Rabbi Isaac Rudnick, *dayan* of the Federation of Synagogues Bet Din since its inception in 1966, in London in February, at the age of 71; Max Gluckman, research professor of archaeology at Manchester university, in Jerusalem in April, at the age of 64; Reginald Howard Wilenski, distinguished art critic, in April, at the age of 88; Richard Rudolf Waltzer, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic scholar, in Oxford in April, at the age of 74; Julius Jung, champion of refugees to Britain, in May, at the age of 81; Ralph Pinto, leading member of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation, in June, at the age of 80; Solli Marcus, national chairman of Mapam in Britain and social worker, in London in July, at the age of 53; Professor Maurice Freedman, professor of social anthropology at Oxford university, in London in July, at the age of 54; Fania Jezierski, first national chairman of the Pioneer Women's Movement in Britain, in July; Aaron Steinberg, eminent Jewish historian and scholar, for many years director of World Jewish Congress cultural department, in London in August, at the age of 84; Erwin Bossanyi, Hungarian-born artist and stained glass window designer, in London in August, at the age of 84; Dayan Dr. Isidor Grunfeld, member of the London Bet Din from 1939 to 1956, in London in September, at the age of 75; Erna Auerbach, art historian and painter, in September; Otto Kurz, professor of the history of the classical tradition at London university, in London in September, at the age of 67; Isidore and Mariana Ostrer, financiers and pioneers of British film industry, in September, at the age of 85, and in December, respectively; Miriam Sacher, an honorary president of the Federation of Women Zionists and a founder member of WIZO, in London in October, at the age of 83; Hyman Joseph Osterley, until 1969 executive director of the JNF, in October, at the age of 77; Sir Geoffrey Duveen, philanthropist, in November, at the age of 92; Emeritus Professor Werner Ehrenberg, physicist, in London in December, at the age of 74; Rabbi Dr. Georg Salzberger, Liberal rabbi, in London in December, at the age of 93; Maurice Edelman, politician, author, journalist, and communal figure, in London in December, at the age of 64.

France

Domestic Politics

THE YEAR 1975 saw a progressive weakening of the effects of the enchantment that prevailed at the time President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing took office. His style, half progressive-conservative on the British model and half Kennedyesque, and his stress on "quality of life" came up against the economic crisis and, along with it, the moral crisis which has affected France since the end of the Gaullist "great era," expressing itself in a sort of general sullenness.

The economic crisis showed itself in the number of unemployed: almost 1.3 million at the end of 1975. This figure was not particularly upsetting because of the fate of the unemployed; current social legislation gave them substantial benefits, in some cases as much as 90 per cent of their salaries, so that one could hardly say that they were reduced to poverty. Unemployment was significant rather for its general economic implications. For years one had come to take for granted, as if it were a natural process, the growth of production, consumption, exports, and average income. The Marxist theory of the inevitable cyclical crises of capitalism, leading to a chronic crisis, seemed completely outdated. The recession, although in no way dramatic in its effects, suggested it might be necessary to adopt with some resignation a certain setback to one's hopes, and that was disquieting. The other phenomenon making itself felt was inflation, with a steadily rising rate of increase in the cost of living. The government's efforts to stop, or at least to slow down, this increase failed. Hence the president's popularity declined, and his proclaimed desire for an "unfreezing" of relationships, especially political ones, came to naught.

The Left, despite internal differences, hoped to win the legislative elections of 1978 with its "common program." It was united in its refusal to halt its continual assault on the governmental majority. Certain ministers were special targets, chief among them Interior Minister Michel Poniatowski and Premier Jacques Chirac.

During the year the Left underwent unprecedented internal stresses. Dissension between the Socialist and Communist partners showed itself in rather virulent form. The Communists were upset and mortified by the steady Socialist gains at the polls in by-elections; they were particularly dismayed that the Socialists were taking root in the factories, an altogether new phenomenon. They accused François Mitterand and other Socialist leaders of playing a double game and of considering the reestablishment of a "third force" that could eventually offer its support to the center-right government coalition. As the attacks intensified, Mitterand's at first very moderate response became increasingly sharp. For some weeks a vehement controversy went

on, in the press and on the air, between the two principal allies in the "common program." Events in Portugal—the Stalinist tactics of the Portuguese Communists and the resultant unsettled situation—intensified the polemic in France, as the Communists violently attacked, and Mitterand defended, the Portuguese Socialist leader Mário Soares.

Toward the end of the year the quarrel somewhat subsided. Government repressive measures in the army—the arrest in December of antimilitarist leftists trying to organize trade unions in the barracks—led to joint protest activities by the Socialists, Communists, and trade union federations demanding their release. In this case both parties held exactly the same position: they rejected the revolutionary antimilitarism of the leftists, but opposed the government's repressive measures.

At the end of the year, when the UN General Assembly passed the resolution equating Zionism with racism, the French Communists expressed their approval with certain restrictive nuances, while the Socialists (except for the left-wing faction known as CERES, Centre d'Études et de Recherche d'Économie Socialiste) condemned it. Although the Socialist party, as a whole, had thus far taken positions on the Middle East which were rather pro-Israel and, in any case, never hostile to that state, the situation has now changed in that the flood of pro-Arab and, especially, pro-Palestine Liberation Organization propaganda has affected some sectors of the Socialist movement. One of the new leaders of French Socialism, former Deputy Michel Rocard who had been the leader of the PSU (Unified Socialist party) but left it to rejoin the party of Mitterand, always showed a fierce hostility to Israel and maintained close contacts with the two Middle Eastern "socialist" parties, the Ba'ath in Syria and Iraq. As leader of PSU, Rocard had sent a delegation of his party to Syria, and had also brought about and announced with fanfare a break between PSU and its Israeli counterpart, the Mapam. Rocard was now rising in the French Socialist party, and some even regarded him as Mitterand's heir apparent.

Foreign Policy

The government's foreign policy was suffering from the same loss of momentum as its domestic policy. Here too Giscard d'Estaing's flying start has run into hesitations, obstacles, and dead ends.

In the year-end issue of the daily *France-Soir*, commentator Benoit Rayski summed up the balance-sheet excellently: "The calculated and relaxed coolness with which the Soviets received Giscard in Moscow; the president's unsuccessful Algerian trip, which failed to prevent a serious deterioration of Franco-Algerian relations; the troublesome hesitations which marked Giscard's stay in Egypt, were all events contributing nothing to an image of a strong and determined France."

The "troublesome hesitations," as Rayski called it, led to contradictory communiqués regarding Giscard's stop in the Sinai during his December 10–15 visit to Egypt. When the Egyptians pressured him to inspect the troops in the Sinai, he at first refused because he regarded it as a gesture of excessively anti-Israel

appearance. He later acquiesced, but curtailed the visit and the ceremonial as much as possible. On that visit, Giscard assured Egypt of complete French support. He also committed France to partnership in an Egyptian plant manufacturing defense weapons.

Earlier, on July 5, President Giscard visited the United Arab Emirates, signing an agreement for technical and cultural cooperation. The visit to Paris of Iraqi Vice President Saddam Hussein, September 5 to 10, brought the signing of an agreement for nuclear cooperation.

There was lively exchange of other diplomatic visits. The Cuban Foreign Minister Carlos Rafael Rodriguez visited France from January 15 to 17. President Anwar al-Sadat of Egypt visited Paris from January 27 to 29. On February 3 and 4 a Franco-German summit meeting took place in Paris. On February 17 Giscard d'Estaing met the Shah of Iran in St. Moritz, Switzerland. On February 22 and 23 he met with Juan Carlos, then Franco's designated successor and later King of Spain, at Chambord, France. Walter Scheel, President of the German Federal Republic, visited France from March 21 to 24. At the beginning of May Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon arrived in Paris for a brief "private visit." From October 14 to 17, President Giscard visited the Soviet Union, laying a wreath on Lenin's tomb. From November 6 to 8 he paid a visit to Tunisia, the first by a French president since Tunisian independence. On November 12 the prime minister of Czechoslovakia, Lubomir Strougal, visited France. From November 15 to 17 a summit economic conference took place at Rambouillet; West Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Japan took part. From December 3 to 5, President Moktar Ould Daddah of Mauritania visited France.

Relations with Israel

In its statements on subjects relating to French Middle Eastern policy, government officials were always careful to stress France's support for Israel's right to exist. At least in style, Giscard's policy seemed less anti-Israel than Georges Pompidou's had been. A visit to Israel by Health Minister Simone Veil even gave some hint of a slight return to cordiality in Franco-Israeli relations. At the UN, France voted against the resolution equating Zionism with racism. This resolution also brought lively protests from various French circles that were neither Jewish nor traditionally pro-Israel. Thus an article in *Nouvel Observateur* by editor Jean Daniel, who usually was quite critical of Israel, told the Arabs and their various supporters, "Too much is too much." The Algerian radio complained of a pullback from the pro-Arab French position of the Pompidou government. Nevertheless, the fundamental continuity of this policy since President de Gaulle's shift, or more exactly about-face, in 1967 was clearly shown by the French government's authorization at the end of the year for the opening of a PLO Information and Liaison Office in Paris, a propaganda office which in practice enjoyed all diplomatic prerogatives. After presenting his credentials in December 1975, the new Israeli Ambassador Mordechai Gazit de-

scribed Franco-Israeli relations as “friendly in spite of certain differences of opinion.”

POPULAR REACTION

The UN Assembly’s resolution equating Zionism with racism produced the Jewish demonstrations customary when there is a “hard blow” against Israel. There were marches with banners, rallies, protest meetings, as well as proclamations and more proclamations by the remaining pro-Israelis in French political life. As usual, the intellectuals signed petitions, notably Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre, although Sartre had been one of the sponsors of the leftist daily *Liberation* which gave unreserved approval to the defamatory anti-Zionism of the UN resolution.

The Jewish demonstrations in favor of Israel lacked the spirit of those which had taken place in 1967 at the time of the six-day war or, more recently, during the Yom Kippur war. As for the outsiders—the general public, the newspaper-reader, radio-listener, and television-watcher—they were only mildly interested in knowing whether or not Zionism could be identified as a form of racism. It was not a matter of conscience for the average Frenchman, who regarded the question with complete indifference.

Antisemitism and Terrorism

During 1975 there was no increase over the normal incidence, or change in character, of such local antisemitic manifestations as slogans inscribed on fences and in the corridors of the Paris Metro. The picture continued the same: more or less leftist anti-Zionism combined with run-of-the-mill, traditional antisemitism. In February the old Jewish cemetery at Fontainebleau, 44 miles from Paris, was desecrated by vandals. The police investigation was fruitless. In October a bomb damaged the home of French Grand Rabbi Jacob Kaplan; fortunately, no one was injured. Before this bombing, 15 rabbis of the Paris region had received threatening letters. The attack was not claimed by any anti-Jewish or anti-Zionist group, and the police investigation failed to find the culprits.

On June 27, during a police search of an apartment in the Latin Quarter used as a terrorist hangout, two policemen and a Lebanese turned informer after he had been arrested were shot dead by one of the residents. The killer, a Venezuelan known as Carlos, escaped. The investigation revealed that Carlos had been one of the principal traveling terrorists in the service of the Palestinian *fedayeen*, and that it was he who had planned and carried out the 1974 bombing of Le Drug-Store in St. Germain des Prés, owned by the Jewish and pro-Israel Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 306).

There was, during the year, some let-up in violence in the pro-Palestinian demonstrations of leftist high-school and university students. This relative diminution was certainly not due to any repentance or reconsideration on the part of the circles in

question. In 1975 the juvenile agitators forgot to some extent their invectives against "Zionism-colonialism," since their energies were almost entirely absorbed with events in Portugal.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Organizations

Jewish communal life continued to be dominated institutionally by the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU—United Jewish Philanthropic Fund). FSJU was not only, as in the past, an organization for the division and distribution of funds to educational, cultural, philanthropic, and religious institutions and groups. Changes put into effect in recent years have converted it into the principal Jewish communal structure, an inclusive framework uniting religious and nonreligious Jews and followers of various ideologies and parties within the Jewish political spectrum, but with Zionist and religious tendencies remaining dominant. It was now possible to belong to FSJU as an individual and be a candidate for its governing bodies, which were elected by universal suffrage. In short, FSJU sought, so far as possible, to create a substitute for the traditional type of *kehillah* in a country where that type of community could not be established. This was because religious status was regarded as the domain of individual conscience and therefore not legally recognized, and because purely religious activities, such as synagogue worship, kashrut, marriage, and funerals were the domain of the numerically very weak Consistoire Central de France.

FSJU's aim of attracting a very large number of Jews did not materialize. In spite of a sustained membership campaign designed to bring the "Jew in the street" into an organic relation with Judaism, he remained outside. FSJU had 17,000 individual members in 1975. Elections took place on January 28 in 18 regional constituencies and in Paris; there were 550 candidates for seats on the national committee. Numerous young people became delegates or received positions of responsibility. The very limited success of the venture indicated no fundamental change in the situation in which most French Jews remained outside any organized Jewish structure.

The role of FSJU should nevertheless not be underestimated. Almost all Jewish activity in France, from day-to-day social assistance to higher education in Jewish culture (e.g., through the CUEJ—Centre Universitaire d'Études Juives), was taking place under its aegis, or with its participation.

The principal leaders of FSJU (aside from its appointed permanent staff) were its president, Guy de Rothschild, and the other two members of the executive committee, Armand Lévy and Professor Albert Najman. Its budget for 1975 was almost 30 million francs. Three-quarters of its resources came from collections within France, to which the American Joint Distribution Committee contributed \$1 million. One-quarter of the budget was devoted to philanthropic activities, the remain-

der to education (including a network of schools), religious assistance, and cultural institutions and activities.

There were about 5,000 students in the primary and secondary schools subsidized by FSJU. There were, in addition, schools under partly private auspices and institutions maintained by other organizations, such as the ORT schools and the Centre Universitaire d'Études Juives. As in 1973 and 1974, numerous applications for enrollment in the Jewish schools had to be rejected because of lack of room and teaching personnel.

Unemployment resulting from the economic crisis increased the number of those receiving assistance from FSJU, particularly Moroccan and Tunisian Jews and other foreign nationals, since foreign workers were the first to be laid off. Toward year's end some Jewish refugees fleeing the fighting in Lebanon arrived in France. These, as a rule, needed no financial assistance, for most of them were the families of well-to-do businessmen with resources of their own.

The Conseil Représentatif des Juifs de France (CRIF) was headed by Jean Rosenthal. It engaged in a number of activities of a political nature. In January President Giscard received Grand Rabbi Kaplan and Professor Ady Steg as representatives of CRIF. They protested against Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues's handshake with PLO leader Yasir Arafat when the two met at the end of 1974. In October CRIF joined with many other groups in protesting against the execution of revolutionaries in Franco Spain. At the end of the year it organized large demonstrations in Paris and Toulouse against the opening of a PLO Paris office. During Hanukkah, CRIF arranged a large pro-Israel demonstration in the great Paris synagogue in the Rue de la Victoire. Baron Alain de Rothschild had brought to the synagogue a torch from Modine in Israel, a sacred center of ancient Jewish resistance.

During 1975 the Consistoire Central de France celebrated the 80th birthday of Grand Rabbi Kaplan. He and Grand Rabbi Max Warschawski of Strasbourg officiated at the celebration of the centenary of the Châlons-sur-Marne synagogue, which, after having been shut down for a long time, again had regular services since the arrival in the city of new Jewish immigrants from North Africa. The Consistoire tried its best to subsidize the religious requirements of the provincial communities, but the desired results could not be achieved everywhere.

The Lille Community

A brief investigation conducted by this writer in the major industrial, commercial, and university city of Lille in northern France, furnished evidence of a deplorable situation in Jewish religious and cultural life. The core of Lille's Jewish community dates back to 1870, when Alsatian Jews migrated to the interior of France after the German annexation of Alsace. Beginning in the 1920s, there was also a large immigration to Lille of Jews from Eastern Europe, among them factory workers, artisans, peddlers, small businessmen, and students. The community's cultural, religious, and political life was very intense; Zionists, Bundists, and Communists

were all active. There was *aliyah* to Israel from Lille as early as 1936.

In 1975 the Jewish community of Lille, still consisting of several hundred families, vegetated in lethargy. There was almost no cultural life. Lille had a large and beautiful old synagogue, but services, for which it was difficult to assemble a minyan, took place only on the Sabbath. There was neither a *mikveh* nor a kosher butcher. The very few Orthodox families had their meat sent from Paris. The weak local section of the Union des Étudiants Juifs de France (UEJF—Union of Jewish Students of France) had no contact with the official community. The Hebrew courses given at the university were taken only by non-Jewish students. Action in behalf of Israel was limited to some financial contributions and occasional meetings, held under the aegis of the pro-Israel Socialist mayor to mark either a time of stress or celebration for Israel. After hearing speeches of somewhat hollow eloquence, those attending again went their separate ways. Even the Jewish Communists, who had long maintained their allegiance to the party, were on the way to extinction. The adult children of the Yiddish-speaking “reds” had discarded the “Communism of papa,” along with his lay Judaism and his Yiddish, and prospered in good jobs. The relatively recent immigrants from North Africa, very few and rather indifferent, discarded their Jewish past in much the same manner.

But there were still Jewish marriage ceremonies and, more usually, religious funerals. That was why the post of rabbi was preserved, though its incumbents often changed. In 1975 it was occupied by the 24-year-old Rabbi Jean Lévy, the youngest member of the French rabbinate.

Balance Sheet: Three Views

The year 1975 seemed an appropriate time in the contemporary history of the Jews of France—it marked a quarter of a century of the post-liberation era—to ask three Jewish personalities, who were independent but closely integrated into Jewish life over which they exerted strong influence, to draw a balance sheet of that period. I therefore asked Emmanuel Lévinas, Léon Poliakov, and Emile Touati: “What do you think of the quarter century just past from a Jewish point of view?”

Emmanuel Lévinas, an eminent philosopher, professor at the Sorbonne, introduced in France the philosophy of the German school of phenomenology. By the same token, he was responsible for the rise and spread of Sartre’s existentialism, which evolved from phenomenology. An expert on the Talmud and the exegesis of the Talmud, Professor Lévinas has also headed the Oriental Jewish teacher’s training school of the Alliance Israélite Universelle.

Léon Poliakov, the internationally renowned authority on the history of antisemitism and on Nazi crimes against the Jews, and author of books which are classics in these fields, has been director of studies at the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (National Center of Scientific Research).

Sociologist and economist Emile Touati, a descendant from a long line of West Algerian rabbis, has been political editor of the periodical *Information Juive*.

The three answers follow.

Emmanuel Lévinas: I think that the events, actions, critical situations, and uneasiness which tend to uproot Jews in effect implant and reimplant in them Jewish consciousness. In 1945–1946, immediately following the liberation, there was in France a very strong awakening of a sense of Jewish belonging. The moral and emotional climate was such as to make a true renaissance of Judaism in France seem probable.

But as the economic and social position of the Jews was restored, the process of assimilation resumed. Then the birth of Israel and the constant danger in its difficult development again and again reactivated Jewish consciousness by causing it anxiety. It is especially this critical situation—one that is becoming ever more critical—which prevents Jews who are on the road to assimilation, or who are completely assimilated, from following the road to its end: complete dejudaization. In this sense one can say that the fact of Israel has awakened and consolidated Jewish consciousness even more than the trials and trauma of the Nazi Holocaust.

The profound motivation underlying this relationship of cause and effect—Israel in peril stimulating the Jewishness of the Diaspora in security—can remain hidden or confused for those involved. As for me, I believe that it involves an intrusion or intervention of the supernatural into history.

Léon Poliakov: In regard to the state of French Judaism in our time, I can only speak in terms of contrasting impressions. In the Paris suburb where I live and where North African Jews form 10 per cent of the population, I see how crowded the synagogue and Talmud Torah are, and to what extent our North Africans have revived Judaism. On the other hand, however, there is a striking contrast between generations. Nothing hastens the abandonment of old traditions like emigration and exile. Thus in Paris one finds, in the Sorbonne for example, excellent Talmudists doing brilliant work in biology or mathematics. But the actual way of life, the weakening of family influences, the increased role of primary and secondary lay schools in shaping the personality, the influence of the mass media, are all factors favoring assimilation and flight.

Yet never before have Jewish tradition and Jewish wisdom received so much favorable attention in the West from intellectuals, both Jewish and non-Jewish. I cannot make any predictions about the future. I believe only that it is uncertain from many points of view. All I can do, therefore, is to adhere to my own maxim that historians are not prophets.

Emile Touati: I believe that the chief gain of French Judaism in the last quarter-century is the growth and manifestation of a Jewish ethnic consciousness, which took the place of the old vague confessionism and the ideology of assimilation. This new consciousness is still only a point of view and a sentiment. To become fruitful it must seek and discover its coordinates and its content: a natural and authentic Jewish culture.

Books

A French translation of a work by Amnon Kapeliouk, Israeli journalist and occasional contributor to *Le Monde*, was published by Albin Michel under the title, *Israel: la fin des mythes* ("Israel: The End of the Myths"). Jacques Fauvet, editor of *Le Monde*, wrote the preface to the volume. The author, a member of the extreme left wing of Mapam, drew on the experience of the Yom Kippur war to level an indictment against the political leaders of Israel who, in his opinion, have systematically missed every chance for peace with the Arabs because they spent and lost time believing in the myth of Israel's invincibility. The book had a large sale and considerable success in French leftist circles and among Arab intellectual political émigrés in Paris.

Être un peuple en Diaspora ("To Be a People in Diaspora"; Maspéro), by Richard Marienstras, is an argument for cultural, national Jewish life in the Diaspora. The author believes that in the context of a new awakening of the ethnicity in France (Corsicans, Bretons, Occitans, etc.) Jewish cultural autonomy for French Jews is possible and necessary.

Emile Ajar was revealed only very recently as a writer of importance. His *La vie devant soi* ("Life Looks at Itself"; Mercure de France) is a picaresque tale describing the poor and marginal Jews, Arabs, and blacks of the Paris district of Belleville, where the majority of residents are Tunisian Jews. The two principal characters are a sick old Jewish woman, who had been a prostitute and deportee, and her pupil, an Arab boy and the child of a prostitute. This book, folksy, fable-like, and droll, and expressing good anti-racist attitudes, is not without its attractions, although the novelist's artifice in achieving his effects shows through the surface "spontaneity." Emile Ajar intrigued the public by his rather ostentatious reserve. Nobody knew just who he was. He gave no interviews and the single photo of him showed his face more or less hidden. The Goncourt Prize for 1975 was awarded to his book, but it was learned a few days later that he refused it. The scraps of Yiddish and Hebrew scattered through his story indicate the author's Jewish origin. Some believed he originally came from Vilna.

Souvenirs obscurs d'un juif polonais né en France ("Somber Recollections of a Polish Jew Born in France"; Editions du Seuil) is the astonishing autobiography of Pierre Goldman, convicted and sent to prison at Fresnes for various holdups, some of which he admitted, but also for a murder, which he vehemently denied. The son of a hero of the Nazi occupation, Goldman came out of the young Communist resistance. In revolt and outside the law, he broke with orthodox Communism and associated with ultra-leftists, particularly with young black Africans, becoming first a borderline case and then a delinquent. In his book, the product of a true writer of great culture and intelligence, Goldman displays a proud and sorrowful Jewish consciousness. It is unquestionably a literary work of great value, as all critics agreed. Goldman was considered for one of the major literary prizes; the imprisoned writer refused, declaring he had not written the book to win laurels, but to get a

review of his trial. Goldman won his point: his case was appealed, and on May 4, 1976, he was acquitted of murder charges by a court in Amiens.

Je reviendrai sur les ailes de l'aigle ("I Shall Return on the Wings of the Eagle"; Editions de la Table Ronde), by the Catholic writer Michel de Saint-Pierre, is a strongly pro-Israeli novel, but one with many shortcomings, among them unfamiliarity with the Jewish circles the author attempted to describe. His principal character, a Jewish lawyer who has become a fervent Catholic, marries a woman who is equally fervent in her Jewish faith, a union described as raising no problems, as if it were the most natural thing in the world. On the couple's table, on the Sabbath eve, stand a seven-branched candelabra, which the Christian novelist confuses with the traditional Sabbath lights. Other equally bizarre and inappropriate items fill this well-intentioned story.

Juifs du Languedoc, de la Provence, et des États français du Pape ("Jews of Languedoc, Provence, and the French Papal States"; Albin Michel) is a descriptive historical account of the Jews of southern France, especially those in the Comtat Venaissin, who were the subjects of the Pope until that area was integrated into the Kingdom of France. The author, Armand Lunel, is a well-known novelist who is, himself, from the Comtat and has written other books describing the world of his ancestors in the Carpentras ghetto. In his childhood he still heard and spoke the Judaeo-Provençale language which is now extinct. He had received the Théophraste Renaudot prize for *Nicolo Peccavi*, one of his novels based on Jewish traditions.

Victor Malka's *Le Judaïsme* ("Judaism"; Editions du Centurion) is an explanatory breviary in which the author very briefly summed up the principal characteristics of religious and national Judaism, with special emphasis on the philosophy and history of Zionism. Elie Wiesel's *Célébration Biblique* ("Biblical Celebration"; Seuil) is a lively projection of the component elements in the Midrash on the major parts of Scripture.

The essayist and novelist Manès Sperber, a long-time resident of Paris who writes in French and German, received the George Büchner prize for 1975 from the city of Darmstadt. Heinrich Böll, winner of the Nobel prize for literature, presided over the presentation ceremony. Sperber received the prize for all his works, including novels and essays. Two new books by Sperber, one describing the recollections of a Jewish child in Galicia and Vienna during World War I, have already appeared in German and are to be published in French in 1976.

Personalia

Robert Aron, writer and outstanding historian, especially of the Vichy period, author of a number of works on Judaism, Jewish theology, and Jewish-Christian relations, died in Paris on April 19, at the age of 76.

German-born, French-trained Grand Rabbi Henri Schilli, under whose direction

the Rabbinical Seminary of France lost its rigorous severity, died in Paris on May 20, at the age of 69.

Mendel Mann, a Yiddish novelist who, as a Polish national, had fought in the ranks of the Red Army during World War II and then lived in Israel before coming to Paris to become editor-in-chief of the Paris Yiddish daily *Unser Wort*, died in Paris on August 29, at the age of 59.

ARNOLD MANDEL

Belgium

Political Situation

THE WITHDRAWAL by the National Iranian Oil Company from a project to build a state-controlled oil refinery near Liège (AJYB, 1974–75 [Vol. 75], p. 438) caused the collapse in January 1974 of the coalition government of Socialists, Social Christians (left and right wings), and Liberals (conservative), headed by the Walloon Socialist Premier Edmond Leburton.

The Socialists maintained their long-standing demand for state control over energy, but their coalition partners had strong doubts about the refinery's potential profit-making capacity and oil-supply guarantees. According to independent observers, Belgium was making a poor deal by agreeing to pay the prevailing market price for Iranian crude oil. The government decided to accept the project if Iran would give new guarantees on the price and supply of oil. Iran refused and pulled out of the project. The Socialists, regarding the matter as a test case for their political principles, resigned and called for a general election in the belief that the question of oil would be a good campaign issue.

Deputy Premier Léo Tindemans, leader of the Flemish Social Christians, tried to form a new government, but failed to obtain the support of the Walloon members of his party who were against a minority coalition government. Parliament was dissolved, and a general election was called for March 10, the tenth parliamentary vote since the end of World War II. In the newly elected Chamber of Representatives, the Social Christians held 72 seats (a gain of 2.2 per cent); the Socialists, 59 (a loss of 0.5 per cent); the Liberals (Flemish and Walloons), 30 (a gain of 0.1 per cent); Walloon and Brussels Federalists (including the Walloon Rally, French-speaking Front, and the Democratic and Pluralist Liberal party), 25 (a loss of 2 per cent); the Flemish People's Union, 22 (a loss of 0.9 per cent), and the Communists, 4 (a loss of 0.1 per cent). The gains of the Social Christians and the losses of the federalist parties, particularly in the Walloon and Brussels regions, were contrary to expectations. The Liberals gained in the North but lost in the South, while the reverse was true for the Socialists.

Premier Tindemans was unsuccessful in forming a majority with the Socialists (the latter refused to renew a coalition with the Liberals, strong supporters of free enterprise) owing to serious disagreements on the fundamental issue of regional autonomy, on abortion-law reform, state intervention in industry, and education policy. On April 25, after long negotiations, he finally formed a minority government of Social Christians and Liberals which was five seats short of a majority in

the Chamber. It had the tacit support of the Federalist parties, which were expected to join the coalition at a later stage. Although only the Walloon Rally did so, on June 11, it gave the coalition a parliamentary majority.

At issue was the two-thirds majority required to pass the law giving autonomy to French-speaking Wallonia, Flemish-speaking Flanders, and the bilingual Brussels district. The Walloon Rally entered the coalition on the promise that the government would immediately propose a bill for provisional regional devolution which did not require a two-thirds majority. A law, enacted on August 1, 1974, reconfirmed the existence of three regions: Wallonia, Flanders, and the Brussels district, limited only to the 19 communes pending agreement on its boundaries. Each region will be under the jurisdiction of a regional council, a kind of legislative body composed of senators from a corresponding linguistic region, and of a Ministerial Council of Regional Affairs, composed of a minister and state secretaries appointed by the cabinet for each specific region. Special provisions were taken to adapt the composition of the Brussels regional institution to its particular bilingual situation until complete regionalization is achieved. These institutions will act in an advisory capacity.

Potentially the most serious crisis for the coalition arose over the "arms deal of the century," the unpopular government's decision, made after a bitter year-long debate, to reequip the Belgian Air Force with American-made General Dynamics F-16 fighter planes, at an approximate cost of 30 billion Belgian francs. Some 200,000 persons marched through Brussels protesting that the money should have been used to improve economic conditions. All but four cabinet members of the Walloon Rally would have preferred the French Dassault Mirage F-1, to lay the groundwork for a truly integrated European aerospace industry. The party finally supported the government decision in June 1975 to avert an internal split. The government had chosen the F-16 because it was preferred by Belgium's three NATO partners, Holland, Denmark, and Norway.

Language Conflict

Language controversies reemerged at the beginning of 1975, when the council of the greater Brussels commune of Schaerbeek set up in the town hall six public inquiry desks for affairs conducted in French, two for foreigners, and one for the Dutch-speaking population, claiming that this ratio corresponded to the respective importance of each group. The Volksunie objected to the decision as violating the bilingualism of the Brussels area, and a controversy ensued that erupted into almost weekly violent demonstrations led by a Flemish protest group, the Taal Aktie Komitee (Language Action Committee).

The Permanent Commission for Linguistic Control declared the desks to be illegal, but Roger Nols, the French Federalist burgomaster of Schaerbeek, ignored the decision. The case went before the Council of State (Conseil d'État), the highest administrative court of the country, which ruled that, in conformity with regula-

tions in the Brussels 19 bilingual communes, all desks must deal both in French and Dutch. The Volksunie insisted that the judgment be immediately implemented, but, as a matter of solidarity, the Walloon Federalists and the Walloon Social Christians of the coalition supported the French Brussels Federalists in this matter as well as in the latter's demand that earlier decisions favoring an increase of French-speaking personnel in three other public services be also implemented. At the request of the heads of the majority parties, who were anxious to avoid a split on this issue, parliament, on April 29, 1976, adopted a proposal providing that all Council of State decisions on the application of language laws must be implemented in full, and without delay.

Amnesty for Nazi Collaborators

On December 19, 1974, the Volksunie submitted a bill in parliament providing for the establishment of a state commission which was to study measures to eliminate the "antisocial (sic!) consequences of [post-war] repression and expurgation" of convicted Nazi collaborators. The party hoped that the government would handle the amnesty question together with the language conflict in which it had promised to work for the reconciliation of the Belgian communities. Amnesty, it held, also was a "community problem," which could be solved by eliminating the "unfair" aftermath of the war.

In the Flemish region, a large campaign in support of the bill was launched with a petition signed by 430 burgomasters of Flemish cities and villages (with the exception of Antwerp, Mechelen, and Hasselt) who were joined by more than 200 other personalities. The national organizations of Jewish servicemen, former resistance fighters, and deportees signed a manifesto expressing their absolute opposition to any form of amnesty. A House of Representatives motion, March 25, 1976, to take action on the bill was supported by the Flemish Social Christians and Flemish Liberals, but opposed by the Flemish Socialists who rejected the idea that the amnesty question had a linguistic implication. The Socialists were joined by most of the Walloon and Brussels French-speaking deputies, and the motion was defeated by a vote of 98 to 81, with three abstentions.

Institutional Reform

The government's proposal of merging the Belgian communes was ratified by parliament in December 1975. Based on geographic, economic, social, cultural, and financial considerations, the law provided that the number of communes be reduced from the current 2,359 to 589 during the period 1977-1982, with most of the consolidation to be achieved by January 1977. The result will be the disappearance of 95 per cent of the communes with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, which could no longer efficiently govern themselves.

Economic Situation

In 1974–1976 Belgium experienced the worst recession of the postwar period, caused by such worldwide conditions as inflation, unstable exchange rates, the increase of raw-material costs, and the energy crisis. The economic decline began in mid-1974 and seemed to have touched bottom by the last third of 1975. Investment in industry fell, private consumption was at a standstill, and exports declined. The NGP fell by about 2 per cent in 1975. Industrial production was reduced by 10.2 per cent, with raw materials and intermediary goods 13.5 per cent lower than the year before. The number of unemployed rose from 147,799 in January 1975 to 229,236 a year later, representing 7.1 per cent of the labor force. In protest, the Catholic and Socialist unions organized several joint massive street demonstrations.

The retail price index continued to rise, until it reached 12.7 per cent in 1974. The government tried to contain inflation by imposing on May 7, 1975, a two-month freeze on prices, followed by a three-month period in which the freeze was gradually lifted. While the consumer price index again showed an annual rise of 12.8 per cent in 1975, provisional data for 1976 indicated a possible down trend. Wages continued to be automatically linked to the cost-of-living index.

Lower productivity in almost all sectors of industry and wage rises have sharply increased the cost per unit produced, affecting the competitiveness of products for export on which the economy so heavily depended. The Federation of Belgian Enterprises (employers) and the government have therefore tried to modify the linkage of wages to the cost of living, which, they claimed, was responsible for two-thirds of industrial wage increases. The unions rejected this claim and, to protect the purchasing power of the workers, refused to discuss the matter. After protracted negotiations, begun in June 1975, a compromise was reached, and on April 1, 1976, the government instituted an economic recovery law, which, it said, imposed restrictions “equally” on all social classes and which provided measures to stimulate investments in industry, and exports. Another law promulgated simultaneously dealt with aspects of state control over energy and other vital sectors of the economy. The recovery plan was preceded by a law governing the national budget for 1976, aimed at avoiding a deficit and its attendant inflationary effects, enacted on January 5, 1976. The measure revised procedures of computing taxes, social benefits, and state allocations to provinces and communes. A provision on university financing provoked strikes that disrupted Belgian universities for some five weeks at the end of 1975.

Foreign Policy and Public Opinion

At the beginning of November 1975 King Baudouin went to Saudi Arabia to return King Feisal's visit to Belgium in 1967. It was the first official visit to that country by a Belgian sovereign. The Saudi Arabian embassy in Brussels required the members of the royal party and the accompanying journalists to furnish proof

of baptism and certain guarantees concerning origin. When several newspapers refused to acquiesce to such demands, the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave the required guarantees.

The Comité de Coordination des Organisations Juives de Belgique (CCOJB) issued a communiqué (October 31) protesting against this racist inquiry and the fact that the ministry had given in to the arbitrary Saudi Arabian demand. Two major press associations also reacted strongly by publishing a statement expressing astonishment that the ministry had given the required guarantees without the knowledge of the journalists, who had refused to do so.

At the end of the visit, King Feisal and King Baudouin issued a joint communiqué expressing satisfaction with the progress of the European-Arab dialogue and agreeing to help bring about in the Middle East "a just and lasting solution taking into consideration the national rights of the Palestinian people, which must be recognized by all." They further decided to move quickly on a proposed agreement on economic cooperation. According to Minister of Foreign Affairs Renaat Van Elsenlande, no political strings were attached to this agreement, although some newspapers reported a Saudi Arabian demand for the opening of a Palestinian Liberation Organization office in Belgium (*Le Soir*, November 9-10). The fact is that Belgium's position on the Middle East remained unchanged since the November 6, 1973, resolution issued by the European Council of Ministers (AJYB, 1974-1975 [Vol. 75], p. 440).

ATTITUDE ON UN RESOLUTIONS ON ISRAEL

In a press interview on Belgium's stand during the 1975 UN General Assembly session, Foreign Minister Van Elsenlande deplored "the unfair resolution" on Zionism (p. 97). "This vote," he declared, "goes against the spirit of tolerance without which the community of nations cannot survive, and substitutes immediate political considerations for respect for the fundamental principles of the Charter." It was, he continued, a new expression of a policy advocated by certain countries seeking to deprive Israel of UN membership. Belgium was convinced that "the realization of peace will imply UN guarantees to all parties. How can we persuade Israel of the soundness of this policy if its rights are denied in the organization whose role is that of the guarantor?"

Van Elsenlande went on to explain Belgium's stand on the various UN resolutions on the Middle East. While his country recognized "the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people" and consequently its "right to a national identity," he said, it abstained from voting on the PLO participation in the Geneva conference because the final Egyptian proposal did not refer to Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. The proposal, his government felt, encouraged the establishment of a Palestinian state of an undefined territory, and although it supported such a state, it refused to see it established at the expense of Israel. For the same reasons Belgium voted against the proposal to create a UN committee in support of Palestinian rights. The minister concluded by saying that the Assembly's resolutions were wrong "for

the cause of peace . . . and for the cause of the UN because circumstantial arguments had prevailed over respect for the law.”

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON ZIONISM RESOLUTION

A debate on the UN Zionism resolution in the House of Representatives indicated three points of view, which crossed party lines. The pro-Israel Flemish Socialist Wim Geldolf on November 14 proposed a resolution, supported by the presidents of almost all parties, expressing the indignation of the House about this “inexplicable” UN resolution; backing the stand of the Belgian delegation to the UN, and asking the foreign affairs minister to take all necessary action to enhance regard for the fundamental principles of the UN Charter. Three deputies who were members of the Association Belgo-Palestinienne (see below), and three others, including a Communist party representative, proposed that the resolution be amended to read as follows:

The House regrets the resolution which in summary manner equated Zionism with racism. The House believes, as recently maintained by the UN General Assembly and by the (Belgian) Minister of Foreign Affairs, that a solution of the Middle East problem is possible only by recognition of the Palestinian people’s right to self-determination and the participation of its representatives in all international consultations aimed at restoring peace in that part of the world and the security of all nations who live there.

This formulation was rejected by Jean Maurice Dehousse, Walloon member of the Belgian Socialist party’s bureau who, with the support of the president of the Walloon Rally, suggested that the resolution state the House’s “indignation” at the General Assembly resolution which by its “inadmissible manner . . . only makes the solution of a delicate conflict more aleatory;” that “the solution must necessarily respect Israel’s right to existence and security, as well as recognize and implement the national rights of the Palestinian people.” Two of the amendment’s sponsors agreed to modify the wording by substituting “deplores” for “regrets” and adding that “the resolution makes the solution of the Middle East more difficult,” and that such a solution must also be based on “the State of Israel’s right to existence.”

The Senate resolution, submitted by Socialist Guy Spitaels with the support of the president of the Brussels Liberals, the national president of the Liberals, and three senators, was adopted without amendment. Formulated quite differently, it stated:

Democratic opinion everywhere has been agitated by the UN vote on the resolution. This vote is to be condemned in all respects. The vote is equivalent to a refusal to admit the existence of the State of Israel created by the United Nations themselves on the morrow of the Holocaust of 1940–1945. It constitutes an unjustifiable assault on the philosophical and moral principles which have made [Israel’s] establishment possible. It creates an obvious threat to the peace efforts so essential to the Middle East. It also jeopardizes the UN, whose reputation and quality are severely affected by such votes.

The Senate's resolution concluded with an appeal to "the government to translate into concrete measures the indignation moving the Belgian people." While these resolutions, as expressions of the moral positions of the two chambers, have no legal value, they clearly express parliament's general disapproval. And even though a minority group showed more explicit sympathy for the Palestinian cause, no parliamentary representative went so far as to negate the State of Israel.

PRESS AND ORGANIZATION REACTION

Most of Belgium's leading newspapers condemned the UN resolution on Zionism. Only *La Cité*, an organ of the Catholic trade unions, reproduced a statement on the resolution released by the Association Belgo-Palestinienne, which was established in the first half of 1975 under the auspices of the Brussels left Catholic periodical *La Revue Nouvelle* and had among its 32 founders parliamentary and trade-union representatives, university professors, and journalists. Charging that the "Zionist project" in Palestine and the State of Israel has *necessarily* led to the segregation of the native population, the statement maintained that "a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict rests on the restitution of the Palestinian people's national rights and cooperation between Arabs and Jews in rejecting all forms of religious, social, or ethnic discrimination."

Since its establishment during the Yom Kippur war, the Rassemblement Belge pour Israël has developed strong influence on public opinion (AJYB, 1974-1975 [Vol.75], p. 441). In November 1974 it campaigned throughout the country to collect the signatures of distinguished individuals for a petition protesting against the anti-Israel UNESCO resolution. A year later, it organized a public meeting at which representatives of the Socialists, Social Christians, Liberals, and Federalist parties stigmatized the Zionism resolution and accused the UN of causing strife instead of working for world peace, which was its original purpose.

Other organizations having more specific aims also helped mobilize public opinion for Israel. Among these was the Belgian Friends of the Hebrew University, which on the occasion of the university's 50th anniversary organized an Israel visit by a Belgian delegation headed by the French and Flemish ministers of education and by State Minister Pierre Vermeylen, who received an honorary doctorate from the university. On that occasion the delegation inaugurated on the Jerusalem campus the new Queen Elisabeth of Belgium Archaeological Institute, a project of the Belgian Friends.

A Belgian Committee for the Weizmann Institute was founded in February 1974 by Belgian scientists and industrialists. State Minister Théo Lefèvre, who had been its first head, was succeeded after his death by Professor Jean Brachet of Brussels University. A Théo Lefèvre Foundation was established for a chair in honor of the Belgian statesman at the Weizmann Institute.

Trade with Israel

There has been an expansion of trade with Israel. In November 1975 exports to Israel from Belgium (including Luxembourg) reached \$135 million (a 6 per cent rise from the year before), exceeding imports from Israel by \$54 million (a drop of over 12 per cent). Trade has been operating within the framework of the European Common Market (EEC) which on June 29, 1970, had signed a preferential trade agreement with Israel for a period of five years. Negotiations, begun in 1973 for a more comprehensive agreement based on EEC's new Mediterranean policy, led to a new trade agreement in May 1975, which established free trade between Israel and EEC for an unlimited period. Israel obtained important concessions for its agricultural products, an extended transition period before the abolition of tariffs on European industrial goods, and participation in EEC's credit and investment projects.

The agreement brought strong objections from the Arab countries, with Algeria in the forefront, which threatened the Euro-Arab dialogue about to begin in Cairo in June. The EEC reassured the Arab states that it was following an evenhanded policy in the Middle East and that similar agreements with the Maghreb countries were in the offing.

Support of Soviet Jewry

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOVIET JEWRY

In April 1975 Senator Guy Spitaels, professor at Brussels University, invited a number of Belgian personalities for the purpose of establishing an organization in support of Soviet Jewry. The new body, the Belgian National Council for Jews in the Soviet Union, had among its members four state ministers, two state secretaries, more than 50 senators and deputies, university rectors and professors, and Jewish communal leaders. The Council's aim was to denounce and to fight against the discriminative measures imposed on Soviet Jewry. It called for a European Parliamentary Conference, which was held in Brussels on October 10 with 35 parliamentary delegates from 12 countries participating.

The conference heard reports by Ian Mikardo (Great Britain) and Ed van Thijn (Holland), as well as corroborating evidence from two recent Jewish Russian emigrants. It resolved to work for the implementation of the resolutions contained in the Declaration of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, particularly those on the rights of individuals to leave their countries and to be reunited with their families. It further decided to set up a permanent interparliamentary committee, with its seat in Brussels, and recommended that each country establish a parliamentary association of its own. Provisions were also made for a collective approach to the Soviet delegation to the UN and for once again bringing the problem of Soviet Jews before the Council of Europe.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

On January 29, 1976, the 18-nation consultative assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg adopted a recommendation (No. 778) to its Committee of Ministers to transmit to the governments of member countries the request to "take up vigorously" treatment of the Jews in the Soviet Union with the Soviet authorities, asking them to "give up their present practices, put an end to the vexations, trials and antisemitic campaign, grant Soviet Jews the rights guaranteed by the Soviet Union constitution, authorize all Jews who wish to emigrate to do so, and see to it that no obstacle hinders that emigration."

The Assembly also discussed the problem of Soviet Jewish emigrés. It considered a report of a parliamentary commission, which stated that a small percentage of Soviet Jews who had immigrated to Israel left the country after a certain period because they could not adapt themselves to Israeli society. Most of them went to the United States, Canada, and Australia, but some chose Belgium, France, West Germany, and Italy.

SOVIET-JEWISH EMIGRÉS IN BELGIUM

The arrival in Belgium of some 1,075 Jews of Russian origin between August 1974 and April 1975 caused some embarrassment to the Belgian authorities, the Jewish community, and the welfare agencies. Efforts were made to facilitate, if possible, their return to Israel, or to insure their emigration to other countries. In view of Belgium's difficult economic situation, the Belgian Foreign Affairs Minister declared, these migrants were considered transients. He expressed the hope that most of them would be accepted by countries of their choice for permanent settlement. In the meantime, most of them were being supported by non-Jewish organizations: Caritas Catholica, Tolstoy Foundation, and the Ecumenical Council, in cooperation with the United States Refugee Program and the International Rescue and Relief Committee. Several Jewish organizations, an ad hoc association, and a number of volunteers cooperated with the Jewish welfare agencies to provide supplementary assistance on an individual basis in accordance with the position adopted by the European Council of Jewish Community Services meeting in Brussels on November 16 and 17, 1974.

WORLD CONFERENCE OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES ON SOVIET JEWRY

The Second World Conference of Jewish Communities on Soviet Jewry was held February 17-19, 1976, in Brussels (p. 153). The Comité de Coordination des Organisations Juives de Belgique (CCOJB), which hosted the first conference, again offered to be host. For several months preparation of the Conference became the focal activity of CCOJB and a number of religious Jews not affiliated with it. For the meeting itself, some 250 Belgian Jews worked with the local staff. More than a

thousand delegates from 32 countries and many world personalities attended.

Before the Conference convened, it was having wide repercussions. It piqued the Soviet Union, which saw it as an anti-Soviet propaganda campaign, despite repeated denials by its organizers. It angered the Arab countries, which regarded it as a Zionist maneuver to impair relations between Belgium and the Arab states, and as a nuisance for Europe and the international community at large. In Brussels, the ambassadors of Iraq, North Yemen, Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria, as well as of the Soviet Union, submitted official protests. The PLO representative denied rumors of violent retaliation against Belgian interests by some members of his organization. He stated, however, that PLO considered the Conference "a hostile act and a provocation," and that it intended "to use all diplomatic and economic means to protest against the Conference and to try to limit its consequences" (*La Libre Belgique*, February 19, 1976).

A spokesman for the Belgian Foreign Ministry pointed out that the Conference was a private assembly and that Belgium traditionally acted as a host to those of widely divergent opinions (*Le Soir*, February 1-2, 1976). This statement was repeated by Belgian ambassadors in different Arab countries (*La Libre Belgique, op.cit.*). A communiqué issued by the information bureau of the League of Arab States stated that "the Belgian government has informed us that no member of the cabinet will participate in the Conference's deliberations," and referred to commercial agreements between Belgium and the Arab states (*Notre Temps*, February 26, 1976). Indeed, no cabinet members were on the Conference's Belgian Patronage Committee. Socialist Guy Spitaels, president of the National Belgian Committee for the Jews in the Soviet Union; the Brussels Liberals; the Walloon and French Brussels Federalists; the Social Christian trade union general secretary, and the burgomasters of Brussels and Liège were among the patrons—but no representative of the Social Christian party or the Socialist trade union. The Chief Rabbi of Belgium and the president of the Protestant Synod were also mentioned, but not the archbishop. However, the Catholic National Commission for Christian-Jewish Relations was represented. Despite strong pressures on the government, the Belgian authorities in many ways expressed their solidarity with the Conference's objective. The national police took some of the tightest security measures ever used for a conference; ministers participated in some social events around the conference. The city of Brussels gave a reception for some 2,000 persons including a number of political personalities. Brussels and Louvain universities received the academic delegates to the Conference, while the National Belgian Committee for Soviet Jewry acted as host of a number of parliamentary delegates (*Regards*, No. 101).

RUSSIAN AND ARAB REACTIONS

The Soviet information agency Novosti held two press conferences at which Russian Jewish emigrés explained why they wished to return to Russia. At a press interview organized by the Arabs, Antwerp Deputy Tijl Declercq presented a decla-

ration signed by 46 members of parliament expressing regret that the Conference was held in Brussels and that several Belgian officials had participated. French Brussels Federalist deputy Georges Clerfayt described such activities as "an exploitation of Europe's sense of guilt towards the Jews because of World War II." Ezzedine Kalak, director of the PLO office in Paris, said that the Palestinians must have the same right to return to their land, as demanded by the Jews. Soviet immigration to Israel, he declared, was "an obstacle to peace" in the area (Belgium's English-language news weekly *The Bulletin*, February 27, 1976). It was also announced that a Palestinian congress would be organized shortly.

Palestinian Symposium

The congress, in the form of a symposium, was held in Brussels on May 13-15, 1976. Yasir Arafat sent a message of gratitude to the organizations "instrumental in making this gathering possible": Section Belge de l'Association Parlementaire Euro-Arabe, the Association Belgo-Palestinienne, the Belgisch-Arabishe Vereniging, and Naim Khader, the unofficial PLO representative in Belgium. Professor Jean Salmon (Brussels University) chaired the meeting; other Belgian speakers were Messrs. Jean Rigaux (Louvain University) and Marcel Liebmann (Brussels University). According to the organizers, two main conclusions were drawn from the symposium. The participants agreed that "any increase of anti-Jewish antisemitism (sic!) any place in the world is contrary to the aspirations and interests of the Palestinian people." A PLO delegate insisted on his organization's determination to fight "antisemitic manifestations wherever they occur: in the United States, in Europe, in the Arab world, or in the Soviet Union." The second point on which "qualified PLO representatives" insisted was that "all Jews now living in Israel will have the right to become citizens of the future Palestinian state if they so desired." Formulations in the PLO Charter of 1964, which ran counter to this principle, were declared to be out of date: ". . . [the participants] clearly expressed the wish to see these Charter formulations thoroughly revised" (letter from Jean Delfosse, director of *La Revue Nouvelle* and member of the symposium executive committee, and Professor Marcel Liebmann, addressed to *Notre Temps*, May 27, 1976).

Jewish-Christian Relations

In collaboration with the Sisters of Sion, the National Catholic Commission and the Belgian Protestant Council, with the participation of the Katholieke Raad voor Israel, Utrecht (Holland), were publishing a regular bulletin giving detailed information on the progress of relations with the Jews. Professor Luc Dequeker of Louvain University succeeded former Prime Minister Gaston Eyskens as head of the National Catholic Commission in accordance with a September 28, 1974, decision by the Belgian Bishops' Conference.

As a result of Dequeker's intervention, the dean of the Brussels Cathedral placed

a warning in front of the cathedral's Chapel of the Holy Sacrament reiterating a December 30, 1968, statement by the diocesan authority, which recognized as false the accusation made against the Brussels Jewish community in 1369-1370. The stained-glass windows and tapestries in the cathedral (showing Jews driving knives through holy wafers and blood flowing from the host), it stated, should be understood in the "context of time and place," and should not lead to a misinterpretation of the Holy Sacrament devotion in the cathedral.

After the 1974 anti-Israel resolutions in the UN and UNESCO, the International Council of Christians and Jews, of which the Belgian interfaith groups were members, met in Cologne on November 19 to 21, 1974. It issued a communiqué expressing "its deep concern about the measures which have just been taken and which implicitly questioned the right of the Jewish people to its political identity, as implemented in the State of Israel. The Council feels that it must forcefully remind Christians and all mankind of the essential and lasting link binding the Jewish people to the land of their ancestors. The Council is deeply disturbed by the Christian authorities' silence and the failure to react." In explanation of the ICCJ statement, the Belgian interfaith *Bulletin* maintained that the Vatican continued to persist in its nonalignment and nonintervention policy regarding Israel, and refusal to recognize the Jewish state. In the present circumstances, this policy gave moral encouragement to the Palestinian thesis implying the negation of the State of Israel.

On December 2, 1974, the Belgian Catholic Commission issued a press statement reacting to the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize award to UNESCO. It declared that the Commission had expressed to the Vatican its concern over the political implications of this reward and the hope that the Holy See would take necessary measures to correct the political bias and religious impression this prize conveyed.

The Vatican's long awaited "Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate*," published on December 1, 1974 (p. 421), was favorably received by the members of the Belgian Catholic Commission, but its president regretted that it failed to respect the Jewish specificity by omitting any reference to the State of Israel. Sion Sister M. H. Fournier added that no mention was made of the present status of Judaism in salvation, nor of the link between the Jewish people and the Land of Promise: "A Christian cannot seek to understand the Jew as he is (quoting the Guidelines) without referring to this link."

A year later, the *Bulletin* strongly reacted against the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. In an open letter to Belgium's Chief Rabbi Robert Dreyfus, Father Georges Passelecq, secretary of the National Commission, expressed the Commission's "disgust, indignation and anger" over this violation of human rights. The *Bulletin* also stated its approval of the Vatican's refusal to endorse two highly controversial recommendations of the Islamic-Christian conference held in Tripoli, February 1976, condemning Zionism as "a racial aggressive movement," affirming the "national rights of the Palestine people and the right to return to their homeland" and declaring the "Arabism of the city of Jerusalem."

The Institutum Judaicum, organized on November 10, 1975, to foster dialogue

between Jewish and Christian scholars, held a symposium on "Written and Oral Traditions" at Louvain University. Eleven participants of diverse philosophical thought discussed the role of the Bible in Jewish and Christian milieus and literature.

Interfaith groups were active in different parts of the country, organizing conferences of Jews and Christians for the advancement of mutual understanding and tolerance.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

There probably was no substantial change in the size and distribution of the Jewish population. The 1974 estimate was 35,000 (AJYB, 1974-1975 [Vol. 75], pp. 445-46).

Religious Life

GENERAL FEATURES

Chief Rabbi Robert Dreyfus, six rabbis, and 16 cantors served the 13 recognized congregations in Belgium. Since the constitution stipulated that the government pay salaries and pensions of the clergy, the Ministry of Justice earmarked in its 1976 budget 9 million Belgian francs for the "Israelite clergy," or 0.52 per cent of the total allocations to clergy. There were five congregations in Greater Brussels (the "Main Community," with 928 members; the Orthodox communities *Machsiké Hadass* (Anderlecht), *Ahavath Shalom* (Schaerbeek), *Ahavath Reim* (Saint-Gilles; recognized on December 30, 1971), and the Sephardic community (Schaerbeek); in Antwerp, the main community *Shomrei Hadass*, the ultra-Orthodox *Machsiké Hadass*, the "Portuguese" or "Turkish" congregation, and one congregation each in Liège, Charleroi, Ghent, Ostende, and Arlon.

Chief Rabbi Dreyfus estimated that some 5,000 heads of families, half of the total, were members of these congregations. However, there were several other communities that were not officially recognized, such as the hasidic congregations in Antwerp and the Liberal synagogue in Brussels. Religious attendance generally remained poor, except for the High Holy Days. In small communities, Sabbath attendance became a serious problem. In Antwerp, however, an estimated 40 per cent of the total adult population attended weekly services, an unusually high proportion for Belgium. Indicative of the intensity of Jewish life in Antwerp, when compared to the much larger community of Brussels, is the following data: there were three mohelim in Antwerp, two in Brussels, one in Liège; five shohetim in Antwerp, two in Brussels, none in other cities; the use of the *mikvah*, which was declining in most communities, continued to be extensive in Antwerp, where the

Machsiké Hadass in September 1975 inaugurated a huge building with ritual baths, swimming pools, and a ballroom. (It was financed mainly by members, with the government contributing to the construction of the swimming pools and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany participating on a smaller scale.)

In Brussels, communities cooperated in various religious activities, such as supervision of kashrut and education, while in Antwerp each community had its own kashrut supervision and school. Also, the less Orthodox community in each city tended to concentrate worship in one building, while the Orthodox scattered in several places. The concentration of synagogues and communal institutions in a small area was an important factor in communal cohesion and intensity of religious participation in Antwerp.

To counteract the progressive secularization of the Brussels Jews, the rabbi of the Main Community, like the rabbi of the Orthodox congregations, preached Mizrachi (Religious Zionist) ideology. All the officially recognized rabbis (including the Chief Rabbi) were either Mizrachi or Agudat Israel in outlook. This was true also of the majority of Antwerp Jews, while in Brussels the secularists, particularly secular Zionists, predominated. Here, adherence to the so-called consistorial concept would have widened the gap between the members of the community and its leaders. Typical of the new ideological approach was that the term "Israelite," which was directly associated with the consistorial concept of Jewish identity and often used in the past, was now avoided in the Main Community's *Bulletin* and in the rabbi's sermons. Another indication of the change was the distribution to all known Jews of a booklet on Pesach, which was edited and published by the Brussels Orthodox rabbi, in collaboration with Chief Rabbi Dreyfus, and contained a message from the Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem M. Schneerson.

SHEHITAH

The ninth assembly of the Conference of European Rabbis, held in Knokke October 20–24, 1974, and attended by some 100 rabbis, discussed the Eastern European Jewish communities, spiritual absorption of Soviet Jewish emigrés in Israel, Soviet Jewish returnees in Europe, and the problem of assimilation and intermarriage. In the course of the conference, a delegation composed of the nine Chief Rabbis of the Common Market was received by Altiero Spinelli, one of the vice-presidents of the European Commission, the executive body of the Common Market, and by President François-Xavier Ortoli's principal private secretary (chef de cabinet). During the meeting, the Commission's representatives promised the delegation to inform Chief Rabbi Dreyfus on all questions handled by the Commission which might affect Jewish precepts and ritual. Chief Rabbi Dreyfus had negotiated with the Commission before to make certain that the uniform method of animal slaughtering to be required by EEC of its nine member countries was compatible with *shehitah*. Originally, the commission wanted mandatory stunning

of animals before slaughter, which would have been contrary to Jewish law.

A humane slaughter bill, introduced in the Belgian parliament during the 1974–1975 session, was aimed at regulating slaughter in the country. After a meeting between Jewish religious leaders and high government officials at which *shehitah* was explained, the Minister of Justice agreed to exempt kosher abattoirs from the regulation. Parliament approved, but certain members thought the exemption should have been based on administrative rather than legal grounds, arguing that slaughtering without previous stunning should have been forbidden. Most of the representatives agreed that freedom of religion would be meaningless if religious groups were not granted the right to observe ritual.

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

In celebration of the centennial of the official recognition of the Brussels, Antwerp, Liège, Ghent, and Arlon Jewish communities, the Antwerp community Shomrei Hadass (some 1,200 members) arranged a brilliant ceremony for February 5, 1976. The list of the honor committee was impressive, including the Archbishop of Belgium, the presidents of the two chambers of parliament, the Prime Minister and 18 cabinet members, seven state ministers, and a large number of Belgian personalities. The first rabbi of the community, Dr. H. Medalié, conducted the thanksgiving service in its so-called Dutch synagogue, which had been inaugurated in 1893. After the ceremony, P. N. Ferstenberg, president of the community, spoke of the friendly relations between the authorities and the community, a fact endorsed by the Antwerp mayor and the governor of the province. In a scholarly address, the Prime Minister emphasized that Antwerp Jewry was an integral part of Belgian society, that it possessed, at the same time, distinctive religious and cultural values which enriched the life of the country. He spoke of the contributions to humanism of such contemporary Jewish thinkers as Emmanuel Levinas, whose influence on Belgian Catholic philosophy was considerable. The Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique was represented by Chief Rabbi Dreyfus and its vice president, Jean Bloch, former president of the National Union of Belgian Reserve Officers.

Education

Through the efforts of the Consistoire Central, the number of students taking the weekly two-hour course of Jewish religious instruction in official schools has considerably increased. During the school year 1974–1975, 43 teachers taught these courses to 899 pupils in 139 primary, secondary, and technical schools throughout the country. The teachers were supervised by Chief Rabbi Dreyfus for the French community and by Jacob Hyman for the Flemish community, both appointed by the Consistoire. In the French region (including French-speaking sector of Brussels) there were 35 teachers and 751 students, an increase of 12 per cent over the year before, in 89 schools of Brussels, Liège, Charleroi areas. About the same number

of children attended Jewish private schools in Brussels. In the Flemish region (including Flemish-speaking population of the Brussels area), the majority of Jewish children attended Jewish day schools. Weekly religious instruction was given by 8 teachers to 148 students (153 in 1973–1974) in 40 schools in Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, and Mechelen. While no data were as yet available for the year 1975–1976, five new teachers were reported to have been appointed. The teachers' salaries were paid by the government.

The Jewish communities, with government subsidies, conducted four day schools, two each in Brussels and Antwerp. In Brussels enrollment has increased in the last three years: at Ganénoú (secularist, with kindergarten and primary grades) from 195 in 1973 to 248 in 1975; at Ecole Israélite-Maïmonide (traditionalist, with kindergarten, primary, and secondary), from 408 in 1973 to 509 in 1975. Both schools were planning to construct new buildings, with the government covering part of the cost. In Brussels, the rabbis and some community leaders had been advocating a merger of the two schools, but Ganénoú's board of directors feared that this would mean their school would thereby lose its secularist character. After years of silent opposition, the Main Community now listed Ganénoú in its almanac, after an agreement on kashrut and curriculum. But the school was not listed as a recognized institution of the community.

In Antwerp, the day school enrollment was much larger: In 1974–1975 the traditionalist Tachkemoni had 761 students in its kindergarten, primary and secondary grades. Yesode ha-Torah—Beth Jacob, Orthodox, had a total of 1,252 pupils in these grades, a technical department, and a teachers' school for girls. The school also opened a senior high-school department for boys in October 1975. In the past boys of that age had received their Jewish education at the community's Yeshivah Etz Hayyim, or had gone to non-Jewish public schools. Despite the feared competition from the newly opened boys' department, the Yeshivah boarded some 90 young men in 1975–1976.

Other forms of Jewish education were provided by the Talmud Torah, community centers, and youth movements. Some 780 youngsters belonged to the five Zionist youth movements in the country. Much was done also to promote adult Jewish education. In cooperation with the Jewish Agency local institutions in Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, and Liège have organized Hebrew classes. In 1975–1976 the Institut Universitaire d'Études du Judaïsme Martin Buber, the free faculty of Jewish studies, offered 235 hours of courses in Hebrew language, Jewish literature, history, sociology, and thought on the campus of the Brussels University. Lectures were given by 22 professors from Belgium, France, and Israel. The seminars in history, currently devoted to World War II and the Holocaust, attracted a large number of Jewish and non-Jewish academics and students.

Community Affairs

ANTWERP

The Jewish welfare organization *Centraal Beheer van Joodse Weldadigheid en Maatschappelijk Hulpbetoon* (Central Jewish Administration for Welfare and Social Assistance) had a 1975 budget of 47 million Belgian francs for its comprehensive program including a home for the aged, social services, a medical-psychiatric outpatient clinic for adult and child counseling, a premarital and marriage counseling department, youth and adult vacation camps, financial aid to needy Jews, etc. Since the waiting list for the home for the aged has for some years exceeded the capacity of the present building (95 in 1975), all administrative services will be moved to a newly acquired house in the center of town to make room for some 170 to 180 boarders as well as facilities for post-hospital care and for mentally disturbed old people. The *Centraal* was funded mainly with dues paid by its 2,186 members (1,786 regular members and 400 members of the Ladies' commission), proceeds from a gala ball, and money from collection boxes. Its activities were limited to social services, which were available equally to all Jews regardless of orientation.

In the field of culture, the impact of the Romi Goldmuntz Center, founded in 1970, has been growing. Among its activities were a cinema club, a painting and crafts workshop, courses in ballet, drama, and the plastic arts. Its members had access to the sports program of *Maccabi*. The center was also used frequently for weddings, bar mitzvahs, and dances. Many of its activities were open to the general public, and its facilities were used by non-Jewish organizations. Some ultra-Orthodox Jews objected to some of its cultural programs and the social mixing.

BRUSSELS

The approach to communal affairs was quite different in this city. Here, the *Centrale d'Oeuvres Sociales Juives* conducted a fund-raising campaign for 17 autonomous institutions. In 1975 it allocated 15,384,939 Belgian francs as follows: for social services (mainly the *Service Social Juif* and the home for the aged), 47.75 per cent; education and culture (*École Israélite-Maïmonide*, *Ganénou*, *Martin Buber Institute*), 38.15 per cent; youth and adult activities (mainly the two community centers), 11.08 per cent; two children's vacation camps, 3.02 per cent. However, funds allocated did not cover budgets so that additional funds had to be raised on an individual basis.

Inadequate resources were the result of lack of coordination between the fund-raising agencies; a low degree of cooperation with the fund-raising campaign by some of its recipients; lack of integration with the *Magbit* (campaign for Israel), and duplication of services. Despite the divisions within the *Centrale*, the funds it collected were a demonstration of the unity the Brussels community desired. Each

donation was an acknowledgment of the concept of pluralistic communal needs. Thus, while the results obtained may not have been satisfactory in financial terms, they were considered rewarding as an indication of the community's viability. Each institution represented not only a particular service, but also a different shade of opinion.

Although the financial situation was difficult, the Service Social Juif (SSJ) was able to maintain its professional staff and services including family assistance, direct subventions, aid to refugees, golden-age clubs, youth and student services, an employment bureau, legal aid, and a medical and psychiatric center. SSJ was currently trying to raise funds to implement its program of improving the quality of life for underprivileged members of the community. The capacity of the modern Heureux Séjour home for the aged was 108 persons in 1974.

The Centre des Jeunes (CDJ) community center, which was supported by the Centrale and the Main Community and whose activities had been overshadowed for some years by the Centre Communautaire Laïc Juif (CCLJ), revised its policy. It was now attracting new members, and general attendance at its activities was improving. Both centers were members of the Comité de Coordination des Organisations Juives de Belgique (AJYB, 1974-1975 [Vol. 75], p. 448). One important CDJ event was a lecture by Menahem Begin, president of Likud, cosponsored by the local B'rith Herut ha-Zohar. In the CDJ bulletin the editorial of March 1976 (No. 7) stated: "... we [Jews] residing in Brussels, Antwerp, or London must not give advice to those living within range of enemy guns." The February *Bulletin* had scored CCLJ for its political views, attitudes toward the Israeli-Arab conflict, and relations with other community organizations, which, it said were at odds with the majority views in the community.

CCLJ, which on many occasions demonstrated its solidarity with Israel, advocated free discussion on all issues. A number of its leading members established a Jewish Movement for Israeli-Arab Peace (Mouvement Juif pour la Paix Israélo-Arabe). The group issued a manifesto, with 260 signatures, which declared: "True, Israel cannot slacken its vigilance before permanent peace is established. But it is also true that security is not predicated on a territorial expansion policy, but rather on a policy of reconciliation between men and peoples." The statement also defended the Palestinians' right to their own state, as long as it is established "by the side of the State of Israel" (CCLJ organ *Regards*, No. 104). The Mouvement, the CCLJ, and the Jewish Alumni jointly invited Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, to speak on his recently published book, *Où va Israël* ("Where Is Israel Going"; Paris, 1975).

Under the auspices of the Consistoire a commission was set up to study a plan to create a roof organization for dealing with matters not strictly religious in nature. The decision was to establish the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de Belgique (CRIB; Representative Council of Jewish Institutions of Belgium) "to represent and, if necessary, defend the rights, interests, and aspirations of the Jewish community and its members, and to inform Belgian authorities and public opinion,

as well as international organizations and authorities, of its stand on all questions regarding Jews." It will express, "at any moment and by appropriate means," the community's "feelings of sympathy and affection toward the State of Israel." Thirty-four personalities and associations of Brussels, Liège, Antwerp, and Charleroi, and 28 members of the Consistoire were invited to the first meeting of the founding assembly at the Consistoire on December 16, 1975. There were objections to several of the proposed charter articles, the method of choosing individual members, the representativeness of certain associations, and to what they considered the Consistoire's veto power in CRIB's executive board, one-third of whose members were to be approved by the Consistoire. The assembly was adjourned until the commission could propose amendments to the controversial articles.

Zionism

No Zionist elections have been held in Belgium since the 25th World Zionist Congress in 1960. In February 1975 the Zionist Federation, governed by a steering committee composed of representatives of the various Zionist parties, launched a membership campaign which was based on the new criteria of affiliation established by the 27th Congress (1968).

Two new tendencies surfaced in the Zionist movement. Active members of the Magbit Young Leadership proposed to form a nonpolitical Zionist association for the defense of Zionism and the State of Israel, but the plan was never carried out. The second new development was the creation of the Rassemblement Pour un Judaïsme Rénové (Rally for a Revived Judaism) by members of the Jewish Movement for Israeli-Arab Peace, which was to affiliate with the Zionist Federation for the purpose of defending its ideas at the Zionist Congress. The new group campaigned for membership throughout the country.

Antisemitism

On the weekly television quiz game for high-school students, "A vos marques" (On Your Mark), one student chose a question on the UN Zionism resolution in the current events category. Students were questioned by a journalist who, with a panel, judged them for delivery, knowledge of subject, soundness of reasoning, and debating ability. The journalist began by citing from Ben Zion Dinur's *The History of the Haganah*, which ascribed to the first Israeli Minister of Education the statement that "there is no room for non-Jews in our State. If the Arabs don't want to go, we will push them out and, if needed, we'll kick them out, but they will have to go." He then asked the contestant whether or not the Zionism resolution was justified in view of that statement. The student answered that although racism was never justified, the Israelis could not tolerate the thought of being oppressed again in the land of their ancestors, for the Jewish people had too long been the victim of racism. The journalist interrupted him, saying: "There is in the Talmud the

following quotation: the best Gentile is the dead Gentile. The Gentile is the goy, that is the non-Jew." The student, who knew nothing about the Talmud (nor did the journalist), again tried to explain, and was commended by the journalist for having well defended his point of view without letting the questions upset him.

In February 1976 Markus Pardes, an attorney and president of the Centre des Jeunes, wrote in the name of the CCOJB to the director of the network to obtain information on the journalist and the program's producer, and to protest against these slanderous and truncated references. The director refused to identify the journalist and tried to minimize the incident, although he expressed regret about the reference to the Talmud. He said that the nature of the quiz implied that kind of provocation, and insisted that the journalist, himself, had expressed high praise of the student's performance.

The case was brought to the attention of the Prime Minister, who stated that "certain remarks were inadmissible, besides being superfluous," and promised to discuss the matter with the minister in charge of national radio and television. The incident was given wide coverage in the Jewish press, which published the correspondence, the transcript of part of the broadcast, and the reactions of several politicians. As a response to that program, Rabbi M. Kahlenberg wrote in the Main Community's bulletin, *Kehilatenou*, a scholarly article demonstrating the grandeur of the Sages in their attitudes toward mankind.

War Criminals

In May 1975, on the initiative of the Union des Déportés et Ayants-Droit Juifs de Belgique, the organization of Jewish deportees and war victims, seven young Belgian Jews broke into the Schleswig (West Germany) home of Ernst Ehlers who, during the Nazi occupation, had been Gestapo chief of security services and police in Belgium. They were arrested and released after paying fines totaling DM 7,000. Four members of the RTB television crew, who had filmed the incident for a program to show that Ehlers and three other Nazi officers, indicted in 1962 by West German courts for deporting 25,437 Belgian Jews, still had not been brought to justice, were released without penalty. Ehlers had been working as a magistrate in the town of Schleswig. Mrs. Beate Klarsfeld, well known for her campaigns against Nazi war criminals, accompanied the group as an observer and later joined it in Brussels for a press conference. In February 1976 the Schleswig-Holstein Ministry of Justice announced that the court refused to open the trial because of lack of documentary evidence that Ehlers had been aware of the fate of Jewish deportees.

Publications

Among books published during the period under review were: Betty Garfinkels' *Belgique, terre d'accueil: Problème du réfugié 1933-1940* ("Belgium, Land of Ha-

ven: *The Refugee Problem 1933–1940*”; Brussels, 1974), an analysis of Belgium’s policy on refugees and discussion of Jewish and non-Jewish refugee-aid agencies, with a preface by State Minister Pierre Vermeylen; Maurice Zermatten’s *Itinéraire de David Ferdman* (“David Ferdman’s Itinerary”; 1974), a tribute to Ferdman, by a group of his friends on the occasion of his 75th birthday, for his eminent role in the Belgian resistance, particularly the Comité de Défense des Juifs (AJYB, 1974–1975 [Vol. 75], p. 452); *La Presse juive en Belgique et aux Pays-Bas* (“The Jewish Press in Belgium and Holland”; Editions de l’Université de Bruxelles, 1975), a revised edition of a study by the Centre National des Hautes Etudes Juives (*ibid.*); *Eeuwfest van de Israelitische Gemeente Antwerpen, 1876–1976* (“Centenary of the Antwerp Israelite Community, 1876–1976”), edited by Anna Marinower, general secretary of the Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique, and published by the Shomrei Hadass community to commemorate the official recognition of the Jewish communities in Belgium; Jacques-Gerard Linze’s *Humanisme et judaïsme chez David Scheinert* (“David Scheinert’s Humanism and Judaism”; Paris, 1976), an essay on the literary career and work of this Polish-born Jewish writer in Belgium, recipient of several French and Belgian academic awards; René Kalisky’s *Sionisme ou dispersion? Les Hébreux, les Juifs, les Israéliens* (Zionism or Dispersion? The Hebrews, the Jews, the Israelis”; Verviers, Marabout university, 1974), a historical essay arguing that Zionism was not only the basic ideology of the state of Israel, but also served as a permanent historical, religious, and cultural reference for the Jews in the Diaspora; Sylvain Salomon Brachfeld’s *Uw Joodse buurman* (“Your Jewish Neighbor”; Antwerp/Amsterdam, 1975), a presentation of Judaism, Jewish life, and Jewish customs designed for the non-Jewish reader, with a chapter devoted to the history of the Jews in Flanders; Willy Szafran’s *Louis-Ferdinand Céline: Essai psychanalytique* (“Celine: Psychoanalytical Essay”; Editions de l’Université de Bruxelles), showing that Céline’s antisemitism had little to do with political events of his time, but merely served as a catharsis for his own neurosis.

Belgium had some 22 Jewish journals: one weekly, one fortnightly, seven monthlies, two bimonthlies, one quarterly, one annual, and some nine irregular publications. Although the Antwerp *Belgisch Israelitisch Weekblad* (BIW) was the only weekly printed in the country, the Paris daily *Unser Wort*, largely distributed in Belgium, published every Thursday a page entitled *Unser Wort in Belgien* which was edited by a Belgian correspondent of the paper. Several other Jewish periodicals printed in France, Israel, Germany, and Switzerland were also circulating in Belgium. The *European Travel Guide for Jews*, in French and English, was published annually by BIW under the auspices of the Belgian National Tourist Office. The 1976 edition contained a brief account of the history of the Jews in some 25 European countries, addresses of kosher hotels and restaurants, Jewish institutions and services, and general and Jewish information of interest to tourists. The monthly *Regards*, organ of the Centre Communautaire Laïc Juif of Brussels, celebrated its tenth anniversary and 100th issue in January 1976. Messages of congratulations received from Jewish and non-Jewish personalities in Belgium, France, and Israel were published in the anniversary issue.

Personalia

The community mourned the death of several notable Jews. Max (Mordouch) Berkovitch, for 28 years president of the Ghent Jewish community and its delegate to the Consistoire, died on November 9, 1974, at the age of 65. Hélène Beer, gifted writer and recipient of several Belgian literary prizes, for 20 years director of the Belgian Friends of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, died in Brussels on January 26, 1975, at the age of 61. Szaja D. Kaminski, since 1964 chairman of the executive board of the Athénée Maimonides school in Brussels, died on January 7, 1976, at the age of 57. Salomon Max Schweid, honorary president of Keren Kayyemet le-Yisrael in Antwerp and vice-president of the Antwerpsche Diamantkring, died in Antwerp on February 3, 1976, at the age of 72. Maurice Baum, treasurer of the Athénée Mamonides and an active member of the Zionist Federation, died in Brussels on February 5, 1976, at the age of 72. Reuben Léon Melamedoff (Melamed), for over 40 years first cantor of the Antwerp Shomrei Hadass community, died in Antwerp on March 12, 1976, at the age of 93.

WILLY BOK

Italy

Politics

THE FIRST HALF of 1975 was dominated by the campaign for the June 15 elections of 15 (out of a total of 20) regional, 86 provincial, and 6,300 municipal councils, which involved the entire electorate, with the exception of South-Tyrol. A turn to the left had been anticipated ever since the May 1974 divorce law referendum upset all forecasts (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], pp. 324–25). The election outcome, too, was unexpected in that, contrary to forecasts, the Communists, not the Socialists, made major gains in a countrywide sharp turn to the left. No doubt, the fact that the 18-to-21-year-olds for the first time were given the vote contributed to the outcome.

Of the 34.9 million valid votes cast in the elections for local administrative bodies, the Christian Democrats (DC) polled 35.5 per cent (a loss of 3.2 per cent since the 1972 general elections), the Communists (PCI) 32.0 per cent (a gain of 4.9 per cent), the Socialists (PSI) 12 per cent (a gain of 2.4 per cent), the Social Democrats (PSDI) 5.6 per cent (a gain of 0.5 per cent), the Republicans (PRI) 3.2 per cent (a gain of 0.3 per cent), the Liberals (PLI) 2.5 per cent (a loss of 1.4 per cent), the neo-fascist Movimento Sociale Italiano-Destra Nazionale (MSI-DN) 6.8 per cent (a loss of 1.9 per cent), the new extreme left Party of Proletarian Unity (PDUP; actually an outgrowth of leftist groups of similar persuasion which had polled 3.1 per cent of the vote in the 1972 elections), having run only in a part of the country, obtained 1.5 per cent (a loss of 1.6 per cent) of the votes.

What emerged from the results was that the PCI came in strength dangerously near to the Christian Democrats, and that, with another modest PCI gain and a further erosion of the DC (both assumptions justified by the dynamics of the landslide), the DC would lose its relative majority and with it the lead which it had held uninterruptedly for the last 30 years. This was probably all the more so, since the Great Left, or Popular Front (PCI, PSI, PDUP), polled 45.5 per cent of all votes.

The turn to the left was more accentuated in the industrialized north (with some 45 per cent of the Italian electorate), where the Christian Democrats lost 3.6 per cent, and the Communist party advanced by 6.2 per cent, than in the central region (with about 20 per cent of the electorate), where DC lost 2.9 per cent and PCI gained 5.1 per cent, and in the South (22 per cent of the electorate), where the respective figures were a loss of 2.7 per cent and a gain of 2.9 per cent.

In Sicily and Sardinia (the two islands with about 11 per cent of valid votes), where only provincial elections took place, results surprisingly diverged. In the

former the turn to the left was very much attenuated: the Christian Democrats lost 1.1 per cent and the Communists gained 1.7 per cent. In Sardinia, differences within the DC and social unrest brought results similar to those in northern Italy: DC lost 6.7 per cent and the Communists gained 7.2 per cent.

The election outcome threw the Christian Democrats into complete disarray. Their first reaction was to make Party Secretary Amintore Fanfani the scapegoat. When he refused to resign, he was ousted in July in an unprecedented action, by a majority vote of the party's National Council. After a week of severe internal fighting, the Council elected as his successor its chairman, Benigno Zaccagnini, a physician and member of the Aldo Moro group, in what was then seen as a provisional solution. Apart from personal ambitions and rivalries, the situation of the DC was precarious. If they either accepted the ever more insistent Communist call for a "historical compromise," or gave in to the Socialist push for a new economic model, they would lose their right-wing voters, just as they had lost part of the left in June.

The Socialists, deeply disappointed because their gains were too modest when compared with their forecast 15 per cent victory and the large PCI gain, made a quite successful effort to show that they were still able to tip the scale. They decided to form, where possible, popular-front local governments with the Communists, keeping them "open to all anti-fascist parties" of the so-called "constitutional arc." Where no popular-front majority existed, the Socialists tried to draw PCI into local governments on the pretext that this would make for "democratic representativeness." With few exceptions, DC refused to enter local coalitions with the Communists; but the Social Democrats and Republicans did not resist the logic of the bandwagon.

Within a few weeks there was a radical change in local power throughout the country, with far-reaching consequences for the future. Apart from the increase of "red," popular-front regions from three to six, the governments in six of the remaining nine regions were formed by "great lay coalitions," *i.e.*, PCI, PSI, PSDI, and PRI, with the Christian Democrats in "loyal constructive opposition," which in some cases involved previous agreements on programs and budgets. Popular-front coalitions were formed in 49 of the 94 provinces and in 39 municipal boards of their main towns, and important cities like Turin, Genoa, Naples, and Venice elected Communist mayors. In this way, the influence of PCI came to exceed by far its electoral victory. Similarly, the Socialists, without whom it was impossible to achieve popular-front or left-of-center majorities almost anywhere, succeeded in gaining in the local governments as a whole about four times as many seats as their percentage of the vote would have warranted. In some places all of their elected councillors sat in local governmental seats. Even the Communists were astonished at such eagerness to attain power and positions.

The Communists made the best of prevailing conditions. Local administration, especially in the central and southern parts of the country, had been mismanaged for decades. It would take little more than some order and long overdue moderniza-

tion of the administrations for the PCI to consolidate the consensus which in the June elections most probably had been only a vote of protest. There were setbacks, however; in some popular-front managed municipalities, scandals involving construction licenses broke.

The smaller democratic parties (PSDI, PRI, PLI) were hard hit by the June elections, whether they lost or made slight gains. The general turn to the left very soon moved many of the elected Social Democrat councillors to go over to the Socialists and support the establishment of popular-front municipal councils, as in Milan. The Republicans were deeply disappointed because they, too, had been certain of a "great victory" which would give them also numerical weight in influencing events. The Liberals reacted badly to a bad defeat: internal strife between the conservative right wing and the "young Turks" on the left almost caused a split and ended in victory for the latter; but it was very doubtful whether this would save the party from total disappearance. Their efforts to form a unified democratic lay alliance with the Social Democrats and the Republicans were continuing, so far without success. The neo-fascists, who fell back to their pre-1972 level, were politically completely isolated.

Aldo Moro's government of Christian Democrats and Republicans, with the support of the Socialists and Social Democrats, could claim a good many overdue legislative achievements since it came to power in November 1974: majority was now attained at the age of 18; a new family law was passed; far-reaching reforms were instituted in radio and television; democratization of the schools was achieved by the establishment of councils elected by teachers, students, and their parents; the recent income-tax reform was amended. These strides no doubt were the result of a better rapport between the two parties, but the government was continually harrassed by the Socialists and the three big trade unions, while the Communists showed tolerance and moderation.

There were some accomplishments also in the economic field. The payment balance improved considerably; part of the oil deficit was covered by the otherwise favorable trade balance; the inflation rate decreased to 17 per cent at the end of 1975, against 26 per cent at the end of 1974. Industry, on the other hand, showed signs of deterioration. Production was still shrinking at the end of the year (9.5 per cent less than in 1974). Squeezed between the high and still rising labor costs (plus 30 per cent) and diminishing demand, many enterprises were forced to ask the state-owned industrial holding companies (IRI and GEPI) for help. Too-long-delayed investment activity resulted in outmoded industrial plants which posed a threat to international competitiveness. Only agricultural production increased.

An economic plan outlined by the government toward year's end would provide \$40 billion in subsidies and credits for industrial reconstruction or conversion during the next five years, and unemployment benefits for a period of four years to workers who would lose their jobs as a consequence of the industrial renewal. The plan was accepted as a basis for discussion, even by the Communists and trade unions; but it was rejected by the Socialists on the pretext of "benefiting only big capital" and, on December 31, they put an end to their already diminished participa-

tion in the left-center coalition, forcing the Moro government to resign on January 7, 1976.

It soon became evident, however, that the Socialist move was motivated only by party interest. Convinced that they could retrieve some of their 1975 election losses, they headed straight toward the dissolution of parliament and new elections by making ever more demanding conditions for a reentry into a coalition with the DC. The latter formed a new one-party government, again led by Aldo Moro, and prepared for elections. It held a party congress in February, which unanimously decided that DC would not enter any coalition with Communists. Moro's formal resignation on April 30 triggered the dissolution of both houses of parliament by president Giovanni Leone, with the Moro cabinet remaining as caretaker government until after the elections.

The impact of political events on the economy was a heavy drain on the currency caused by the massive flight of capital. This forced the government, on January 20, 1976, to close the official foreign exchange market, with a resultant considerable decline of the lira and danger of a rising inflation rate. Adequate countermeasures, such as credit restrictions and an increase of the discount rate, were denounced by the left and the trade unions as endangering employment.

After a heated campaign, the Christian Democrats surprisingly made a marked recovery in the general elections of June 20, from 35.5 per cent in 1975 to the 1972 level of 38.7 per cent. Equally unexpected, even for the PCI leaders, was the further Communist gain from 27.1 per cent in the 1972 and 32 per cent in the 1975 general elections to 34.4 per cent of the votes cast. The Socialists' losses were considerable, giving them 9.6 per cent of the vote, as were those of the Social Democrats (3.4 per cent), and of the Liberals (1.3 per cent). Of the small parties, only the Republicans just about maintained their strength with 3.1 per cent of the vote. The MSI-DN shrank further to 6.1 per cent, against their peak performance of 8.7 per cent in 1972 and 6.8 in 1975.

The great disappointment of the left was that the Christian Democrats remained the strongest party, and that the "left alternative" Popular Front (PCI, PSI, "Popular Democracy," and Radical party) reached only 46.6 per cent.

The new parliament retained a comfortable left-of-center majority (350 out of a total of 630 deputies), but the former coalition partners refused to support a one-party DC government led by Giulio Andreotti, except by abstentions admittedly aimed at making it also dependent on Communist abstention. The extreme fragility of the government became apparent in the August 11, 1976, confidence vote in parliament, with 258 deputies voting for, 44 against, and 303 abstaining, although the debate indicated rather wide support of the government program which gave some hope that that strange kind of majority might last for a while, at least until the Socialists would change their mind and reenter the coalition with the DC. For the first time since 1946, Communists were elected as speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and as chairmen of seven of the 27 commissions in the Chamber and the Senate.

Foreign Policy

CHAIRMANSHIP OF EEC

In the second half of 1975 Italy had its turn to chair the European Economic Community. The preliminary meetings of the "dialogue between the EEC and 20 Arab countries," agreed upon in June in Cairo, took place in Rome in July and in Abu Dhabi in November under the chairmanship of Foreign Minister Mariano Rumor. He succeeded in calming Arab anger at the Strasbourg European Parliament's strong condemnation on July 6 of the terrorist bombing in Jerusalem. He also stood firmly against their request that the PLO officially attend the planned general meeting. Actually, PLO members were included in the Arab delegations, but only as advisers to one or the other Arab country.

The European Parliament, during its November session, adopted a strong censure of the UN resolution on Zionism without a dissenting vote, with the Communists abstaining. In December, in the presence of a Knesset delegation headed by Abba Eban, the European Parliament requested the EEC Council of Ministers to take adequate measures to intensify trade between the EEC and Israel (within the framework of the July preferential trade agreement, which also drew Arab protest) to reduce Israel's trade deficit. At the same time it asked that an anti-boycott clause be written into all similar commercial treaties of the EEC with "third countries."

MEDITERRANEAN PEACE

In May when Aleksei N. Kosygin visited Libya where he concluded an important arms deal, the Italian foreign ministry strongly questioned the true purpose of Qaddafi's armament program because of Libya's proximity to the Italian shores. Nevertheless, Italy favored a step-up of its moderate sale of armored cars and small naval combat units, trying, at the same time, to get a larger share of Libyan general investments. Qaddafi demanded, as a condition, compensation for damages Libya suffered during 30 years of Italian colonial rule (actually Italy's investment was larger than any profit it derived) and, particularly, during the African campaign in World War II.

Italy favored all efforts to make the Mediterranean "a sea of peace," aiming at a partial withdrawal of the huge Soviet and American fleets. Apart from its constant pressure to impose "Mediterranean-mindedness" on its EEC partners, Italy supported Malta's request—particularly during Gromyko's visit to Rome in June—that a statement be included in the Helsinki declaration on European security and cooperation advancing the desirability of a similar declaration by all Mediterranean countries. Similar considerations led to the important November 10 agreement with Yugoslavia which finally settled the thorny question, open since World War II, of the Trieste "zones" by establishing definite frontiers. The agreement not only considerably improved relations between the two countries, but also strengthened

Yugoslavia's capacity to resist Soviet pressure toward the Adriatic Sea, a matter obviously in Italy's interest as well.

MIDDLE EAST

At the end of a state visit to Saudi Arabia early in March 1975, Italian President Giovanni Leone emphatically affirmed in a statement to the press in Riyadh that "the protracted Israeli military occupation of all the territories referred to in Security Council Resolution 242 must be brought to an end," adding, however, that the full implementation of that resolution would constitute a guarantee of "the territorial inviolability and security of all the states in the region." He pledged that "the Italian government commits itself to the Saudian as well as to all [the other] Arab friends . . . to leave nothing undone to persuade all governments directly concerned to accept this position, working toward this end in bilateral contacts, on the international level, and in the sphere of political cooperation with the other countries of the European Community."

Commenting on the statement, the Milan *Corriere della Sera* of March 4 wrote, "Italy has never gone so far," and *Il Sole-24 Ore* ("The Sun-24 Hours") of March 5 called it "the political price for Saudian readiness to reinforce the economical links with Italy," skeptically adding that such readiness was still to bear fruit. According to Italian journalists, the late King Feisal nevertheless remained ostentatiously sullen toward Leone (to the latter's despair) because of the reference to "security for all countries . . ." and Leone's omission of the desirability of the "liberation of Jerusalem." If all these pledges and promises have so far been scarcely put into action, it was mostly because of Arab insatiability. In fact, Italy could not avoid voting against the November UN anti-Zionist resolution and abstaining on the Arab UN Security Council draft resolution, which was vetoed in January 1976. Concrete economic results might derive from Mariano Rumor's talks in Egypt in May regarding Italian investment in the Suez Canal zone. However, Sadat's request that Italy furnish some \$50 million worth of arms met with reluctance because Egypt was a "front-line country," an attitude supported even by Communist leader Giorgio Amendola in a much-noted article in the party's daily *l'Unità*.

Relations with Israel

The strong reaction of the Italian cultural world against UNESCO's anti-Israel votes in October and November 1974 had not abated. Since the listing alone of protests, meetings, or letters to the editor would exceed the length of this survey, only a few examples must suffice. The Italian PEN club published a flaming protest and the Free Writers' Union organized a collective trip to Israel as proof of solidarity; further interpellations were made in the Senate; Minister of Cultural Assets and Environment Giovanni Spadolini was Italy's official representative at the European convention for culture held at the Weizmann Institute in Israel (where a permanent

European pavilion, donated by the German Federal Republic, was inaugurated); Spadolini stated in Israel, and again after his return, that he had convinced himself on the spot of the falseness of the charges against Israel with regard to its archaeological excavations.

In response to the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism, 98 intellectuals, mostly university professors, including Ignazio Silone and Nobel-prize winners Giulio Nata and Eugenio Montale, signed a letter to the presidents of the two houses of parliament and the premier, calling for energetic Italian action to have it revoked. Undersecretary of State Francesco Cattanei strongly criticized the resolution on the occasion of the UN's 30th anniversary celebration. An important debate on the resolution in parliament on November 18 showed rare unanimity in its rejection, though the various parties differed in their rationale. Thus, while the Communist speaker called for "realism" in view of the fact that 70-odd nations had approved the resolution, Minister of State Mario Pedini, speaking for the government, said the UN resolution was "unacceptable." Several days later a crowded public meeting against the resolution, held in a Rome theater, was addressed by former president Giuseppe Saragat and by Spadolini.

Public-opinion surveys showed that the broad masses were uninformed on Zionism in general, on what happened in the UN in particular, and, incidentally, also on the United Nations as such. However, the entire press, with the exception of the extreme leftist, sided with Israel in this matter. The pro-Communist Rome *Paese Sera* recalled the fascist regime's use of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and, quite exceptionally for that paper, reprinted the resolutions on the UN vote adopted by the Israel-Italy Association and the Jewish Youth Federation of Italy (FGEI). The Milan *Giorno*, though generally considered close to Arab crude-oil interests, nevertheless wrote: "Even the shadow of persecution triggers rejection in us." *L'Unità* expressed disagreement with the resolution, warning the Arabs that by introducing ideological strife into the UN they would lose credibility and support in West European countries. The Turin *La Stampa* compared the UN resolution with the Slánský trials in Czechoslovakia, in which the defendants' Zionist affiliation in their youth was sufficient ground for conviction, and reminded the readers that the 1960 rash of swastika drawings and antisemitic provocations in Western Europe were later discovered to have been the work of Soviet agents commanded by General Agaya of KGB.

A Mapam delegation, headed by Naphtali Feder, was guest of the Italian Socialist party in May. They issued a joint communiqué declaring that peace in the Middle East should be based on the UN Security Council resolutions and on the recognition of the rights of the Palestinians. It also demanded the gradual demilitarization of the Mediterranean Sea. The Israelis also contacted other Italian political parties, including the Communists who suggested the following action: first, Israel's withdrawal from occupied Arab lands, then acceptance of, and guarantees for, Palestinian national rights and "aspirations," and finally consideration of Israel's request for secure and recognized boundaries.

The visit was well covered by the Socialist press, but with a trace of condescension. Rather suspiciously, it protested, in January 1976, the Italian abstention in the Security Council vote on the Arab draft resolution; the Socialist party filed an interpellation in parliament to the same effect.

A three-man delegation of the major trade unions—Italian General Confederation of Labor (GCIL; Communists and Socialists), International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (CISL; Christian Democrats), and Italian Union of Labor (UIL; Social Democrats, Republicans and Socialists)—which earlier had sharply protested the UN resolution “in the name of all Italian workers,” toured Israel in December for four days as guests of Histadrut. Significantly, only the trade-union weekly made mention of it in Italy.

Public Events

In April President Leone attended commemoration services for the victims of Nazism—resistance fighters, Jews, Yugoslavs, and Gypsies—murdered in the rice mills of San Sabba near Trieste, the only extermination camp the Nazis had installed on Italian soil and now a national museum. At the same time, the Italian television network presented an impressive documentary on the tragedies in San Sabba, hinting at “mysterious forces” which wanted to hide proof that would incriminate some Trieste residents. In fact, only five years ago—27 years after the event—penal action had been initiated by the Trieste court. The trial of the camp’s only surviving SS commander, Joseph Oberhauser, as fugitive from justice began in February 1976. He has been living in Munich and refused to come to Italy to stand trial. The court found him guilty and, on April 29, sentenced him *in absentia* to life imprisonment. Proceedings against accused Italians were scheduled to begin later.

A “historical exhibition of a minority’s contribution to the fight for freedom” showing Jewish participation and suffering during the Nazi terror in Italy (1943–45) toured Rome, Milan, Naples, Florence and smaller cities in autumn and winter. Apart from photographs, posters, and newspaper clippings from that period, two documentary films were shown. *The 81st Blow* was a composite produced by Jaquot Ehrlich, David Bergmann, and Haim Guri of partly unedited films and photographs depicting the Nazi conquests and the impossibility of individuals and nations to face or believe the horror. *Requiem for 500,000* used Nazi documentaries of the Warsaw ghetto from its beginning to the revolt in 1943, which happened to be discovered and purchased in Warsaw by a Neapolitan Jew, Gianfranco Moscati. All political parties, except the extreme right, cooperated by arranging for showings throughout Italy. Press coverage was extensive and attendance exceeded expectations.

Antisemitism

Antisemitic incidents of the usual kind were rarer in 1975. There were wall-smearing, telephone and letter threats, and another desecration of the Leghorn

cemetery by hooligans, who also defaced a Christian chapel. One incident was serious and had wide repercussions and important legal consequences. On May 18 the walls of the imposing Jewish school in Milan were smeared with swastika-adorned phrases reminiscent of Auschwitz deeds ("Jewish bastards, we'll make soap of you"). Nine days later Molotov bombs were thrown against the school gate, causing moderate damage but no injuries. Protests by political parties and Jewish and non-Jewish organizations followed. The culprits, mostly minors, were soon caught and tried, with the Milan Jewish community and the *Unione delle Comunità Israelitiche Italiana* (Union of Italian Jewish Communities) acting as civil plaintiffs, a procedure never before admitted in similar cases in Italian courts. The verdict applied, also for the first time, the 1952 Scelba Law making political extremism (in particular fascism) a punishable offense and the May 1975 amendment, which extended the law to racism. Two of the hooligans were sentenced to seven-month terms and a fine of \$200 each, two others to six months and \$150 each; all four were further ordered to repair jointly the damages and to pay the *Unione* \$650 as moral indemnification, which the *Unione* allocated to aid families of deportees. Four other youngsters were pardoned or acquitted. The prison terms were set aside, except in one case of previous conviction. All defendants appealed.

Arab anti-Israel propaganda, which had large funds at its disposal, was very active. Whole-page insertions in large-circulation dailies (which brought protests from some readers); floods of posters, particularly in the universities; documentaries shown upon payment in cinemas, and a shamelessly evident infiltration in the mass media caused much concern in Jewish circles. A transmission by the state-owned television network giving a grossly one-sided picture of life in Palestinian training camps raised a storm of protest, especially from the *Unione*, because of the careful translation of the battle songs (e.g., "We will eat their flesh piecemeal"). Protests also followed the provisional release on \$50,000 bail of Sedif Eldin Moulham, the so-far unconvicted murderer of the El Al (Catholic) employee Vittorio Olivarez in April 1973, the last Arab terrorist in Italian prisons, especially since he was not stopped from leaving the country shortly after his release.

Support of Soviet Jews

In March Socialist deputy Ruggero Orlando submitted a formal inquiry to the Foreign Minister about what steps he intended to take in view of the continued persecutions of Soviet Jews.

In June, during Gromyko's visit to Rome, Jewish youths demonstrated in front of the Aeroflot offices with posters asking freedom for Soviet Jews, the reunion of families, the revocation of convictions, and the release of prisoners. In November a nonsectarian women's group organized a conference in Florence for the study of the "situation of Jews in the USSR, in particular the problems of separated families." Delegations from all democratic parties and from many organizations attended; the PCI sent observers. Elena Sakharov, who was in Florence for health

reasons, addressed the meeting. The conference adopted a resolution calling on the USSR to implement fully the Helsinki Declaration "in a spirit of friendship toward all nations . . . including its own peoples."

The Vatican

The Communist victory in the June elections alarmed the Vatican. Rumors had it that a personal letter from Amintore Fanfani to Pope Paul VI, blaming the Vatican for having contributed to that victory by remaining neutral, spurred action. In an October speech, which aroused wide attention, Ugo Cardinal Poletti, Vicar of Rome, warned the faithful that unless they energetically fought Marxism, the next elected mayor of the "City of God" would be a Communist, and Rome would become a city "without God." Christianity, he declared, was incompatible with Marxism. The Cardinal's speech proved to be the signal for a vast concerted anti-Marxist campaign by the Italian Church, in which the Pope actively participated. A campaign of this kind had not occurred since the days of Pius XII, whose teachings were, in fact, widely propagated. The Church also strongly intervened against the referendum for legalizing abortion, scheduled for spring 1976, and against the pertinent law before the parliament. Both were delayed because of the dissolution of parliament in April 1976.

At the same time, the Vatican imperturbably pursued its *Ostpolitik*. The Pope refused to receive West Berlin Mayor Klaus Schütz, since he insisted on being accompanied by the West German ambassador to the Holy See. The Pope's "foreign minister," Msgr. Agostino Casaroli, visited East Berlin in June, thereby arousing the distrust of West German bishops. The East German government requested, among other things, that the bishops in its territory form a separate episcopal conference—so far there has been one conference for both West and East Germany—and that Alfred Cardinal Bengsch, the bishop of both sectors of Berlin, be a member of the East German group.

On June 26 the Pope received Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko, according to a Vatican spokesman for talks on peace in the Middle East, the Helsinki Conference, then in its final stage of preparation, and the problems of the Catholic Church in the USSR. In his Christmas address to the Cardinals, the Pope expressed concern over the state of the Church in certain regions of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Roumania, and the hope that the full implementation of the Helsinki Declaration would bring an improvement.

The renewed anti-Communist stand of the Church was by no means irreconcilable with its *Ostpolitik*, Msgr. Casaroli explained in an informal conversation. In keeping with Vatican's international policy, it endeavored, above all, to ensure for its faithful freedom of prayer and religious education, and the maintenance of its organizational structures (hence the importance of the nomination of bishops), wherever the Church was being oppressed. This has been the purpose of all contacts with the East European Socialist countries, and the Church, from its notoriously

weak position, would patiently go to any lengths to achieve it. In Italy, on the other hand, Casaroli continued, the Church has freely expressed its point of view on all social questions, one obviously antagonistic to the materialistic, godless, totalitarian doctrine of Marxism. It was up to the Catholic faithful to make their political choice accordingly.

It was doubtful whether the more active intervention by the Church affected the June 1976 general elections in any way. In fact, many anti-Communists—along with other traditionally anti-clerical circles—protested as strongly as PCI against this “interference by the Church in internal politics.” Besides, a good many of the lower clergy sympathized with the leftist parties and, since the Catholic Church no longer was as monolithic as in the past, Catholic dissident groups have been multiplying in Italy. Quite sensational was the decision of six intellectuals of repute who had been very active in Catholic affairs (and a Protestant pastor) to run as independent candidates on the Communist slate, despite the Italian episcopate’s warning that this meant automatic excommunication. All seven were elected.

Understandably, the Vatican was worried about the Lebanon civil war, in which Catholic-Islamic relations were at stake. In November the Pope sent Paolo Cardinal Bertoli to Beirut as mediator in an effort “to put an end to the fratricidal warfare and to resolve differences with mutual understanding in a fraternal dialogue.” The papal welfare institution Cor Unum sent massive aid.

In November the American historian Robert Katz was sentenced by a court in Rome to a prison term of 14 months and a fine of \$700 for offense to the memory of Pope Pius XII in his book, *Death in Rome*, and its film version, *Reprisal*. The film’s producer Carlo Ponti and its director, Yorga Cosmatos, were sentenced to six months’ imprisonment. The sentences were set aside and appealed. It was the niece of Pius XII, Elisabetta Rossignani Pacelli, who had brought suit against Katz for reiterating in his book that SS official Eugen Dollmann and Pater Pankratus Pfeiffer had informed the Pope in advance of the March 24, 1944, Nazi reprisal massacre of 335 Italian and Jewish hostages in the Ardeatine ditches outside Rome and had asked him to intervene, but that he had done nothing to prevent it. The key witness in the long trial, which again stirred up the decade-long controversy, was Dollmann himself, who was interrogated in Munich by the Italian judge. He claimed to have been misquoted by Katz, that he had advised Katz accordingly but had received no reply, and that the second, unchanged edition of the book appeared thereafter.

RELATIONS WITH JEWS AND ISRAEL

The fourth annual meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee in Rome (January 7–10, 1975), which concluded with an audience with the Pope, was a promising beginning to Vatican-Jewish relations in 1975. In a joint communiqué the committee called the Vatican’s “Guidelines and Suggestions for Relations of the Church with Judaism” (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 333) an encouraging

step in the practical application of the conciliar declaration on Jews "Nostra Aetate" (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], pp. 58-59), opening "new avenues for further clarifications of important and sometimes controversial issues." The Jewish delegation, the communiqué continued, expressed appreciation of the Guidelines, "particularly the condemnation of antisemitism (the "Declaration" had only deplored it), the recognition of the continuing development of Jewish history and religious tradition, also after the rise of Christianity, the encouragement of studies of Judaism in Catholic education, and the call for joint social action." However, the "Jewish side" raised questions about several aspects of the Guidelines, including "their failure to note the essential significance of peoplehood and land in Jewish faith," and about the reference to the "obligation of Catholics to witness to their faith within the context of the dialogue." Since the Jewish delegation felt the latter reference to be an invitation for Catholic missionary activity among Jews, the Catholic delegation made it clear that nothing in the document "should be understood as an attempt at proselytizing Jews." The meeting also discussed the concept of human rights in the Christian and Jewish traditions, decided to pursue its study, and envisaged future practical cooperation in the field.

During the audience with the Pope on the last day of the meeting, significant speeches were made. Gerhard Riegner, secretary general of the World Jewish Congress, said in part:

We welcome the condemnation of antisemitism at a moment when that old hatred is once again being disseminated by enemies of the Jewish people. We are happy that Christians have been invited to endeavor to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience. We hope that this effort will lead to a greater appreciation of the essential significance that peoplehood and land hold in the Jewish faith. We deeply appreciate the recognition given by Your Holiness, in the recent address [Christmas 1974] to the Sacred College, to the place of Jerusalem in the longing and also the love of the Jewish people.

Riegner then recapitulated the position of the Jewish delegation in the Liaison Committee and concluded with: "May He who established peace in Heaven grant it also to all humanity." This was the first time that words from the Kaddish were quoted in the Vatican and in the presence of a Pope.

In his rejoinder, the Pope mentioned the "difficulties and confrontations . . . which have marked relations between Christians and Jews over the past two thousand years," but reminded his listeners that "there have also been between us down the centuries elements other than confrontations to wit, what was done by the Catholic Church during the last war, in Rome itself, under the energetic impulse of Pius XII—as we personally testify—and by numerous bishops, priests, and members of the faithful, to save innocent Jews from persecution, often at the peril of their own lives." Paul VI also recalled the "connections, often too little remarked upon, between Jewish and Christian thought," such as "the influence exercised . . . in the most exalted spheres of Christian reflection by the thought of the great

Philo of Alexandria"; the numerous reference of St. Thomas Aquinas to the work of Moshe ben Maimon, particularly "his explanations of Mosaic Law and the precepts of Judaism," and the expansion of Aquinas' thought, in its turn, in the medieval "scholarly tradition of Judaism," indicated by the existence "in the Latin West at the end of the 13th and in the 14th century [of] a whole Jewish Thomistic school." This, according to the Pope, proved "that at different periods and at a certain level there has been a real and profound mutual esteem and a conviction that we had something to learn from one another."

Paul VI expressed the sincere wish that "in a manner appropriate to our age and thus in a field that to some extent exceeds the limited domain of merely speculative and rational exchanges, a true dialogue may be established between Judaism and Christianity." According to him, the presence at the audience of Johannes Cardinal Willebrands, chairman of the Vatican Commission for Relations with the Jews; Roger Etchegary, Archbishop of Marseilles, and Francis J. Mugavero, Bishop of Brooklyn, "are clear indications to you of the sincerity and collegial decision with which the Catholic Church desires that the development at this time of that dialogue with Judaism to which the Second Vatican Council invited us by its declaration 'Nostra Aetate'." Recalling the "recent solemn reaffirmation [in the Guidelines] of rejection by the Catholic Church of every form of antisemitism," the Pope expressed certainty "that you on your part will correspond, according to your own perspectives, to our effort, which can only have meaning and fruitfulness in reciprocity." The Pope, too, then referred to his address to the College of Cardinals on December 23, 1974 (in which he spoke of Jewish links with Jerusalem), and concluded with expressing for all present, "but more widely for the entire Jewish people our best wishes of happiness and peace."

The audience was extensively reported on the front page of *Osservatore Romano* of January 11, 1975, under the heading, "Dialogue and Mutual Respect for Better Understanding and Cooperation."

In an editorial dedicated to the commemoration in Florence of the Catholic philosopher Jaques Maritain, *Osservatore Romano* pointed out that the central thought in Maritain's works were the Jews and the fight against antisemitism, and continued:

[Maritain] raised a cry of horror at Nazi atrocities; he helped at the creation of the State of Israel; he was one of those who inspired the Vatican Council. His theology on Judaism is contained in his philosophy of justice . . . in his concept of Christian faith. . . . Maritain called the Jewish State a "gift of God" . . . "To wish the disappearance of Israel means to wish to nullify the return finally granted . . . means to wish for a new outrage against it, means to wish that it become once more the victim of aggression."

Much quoted by others on the occasion was Maritain's so topical statement, "The anti-Israeli is no better than the antisemite." The commemoration ceremony, conducted by Marcel Dubois, Dominican Father Superior of the House of Isaiah in Jerusalem, was attended by Msgr. Charles Moeller, vice-president of the Vatican

Commission for Relations with Judaism, Israeli ambassador Moshe Sasson, and many Jewish and non-Jewish personalities.

Among seven new members nominated to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (announced in December) three were Jews: Beniamino Segre, professor of mathematics at Rome university, former president of Lincei, the most prestigious Italian Academy of Sciences; Michael Sela, professor of immunology at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovoth, also visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and professor at the College of France, and Victor Weisskopf, nuclear physicist who emigrated to the United States in 1937 and was professor at Rochester university and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and later became director of the European Center for Nuclear Research in Geneva, Switzerland.

However, Paul VI's policy of maintaining a position of balance between opposing forces continued. In summer 1975 the Pope wrote a cordial letter to Msgr. Hilarion Capucci who was serving a 12-year prison term in Israel for having smuggled arms into the country for al-Fatah (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], pp. 332, 403). The letter quite understandably aroused indignation in Israel. Again, after the Israeli air raid on the Palestinian training camps in Lebanon in November, Vatican Secretary of State Jean Cardinal Villot, in the "name of the Pope who has been deeply wounded in his soul," expressed the "most vivid deploration for the inadmissible gesture of violence, which aggravates the already acute tension in that region," but also the hope that "all sides will put an end to similar acts and show moderation and a real will to achieve peace."

In October the Pope received the new Syrian Ambassador Sami Droubi, who used the occasion almost entirely to pressure the Pope to support the Arab cause, claiming that the Arabs alone possessed the spirit of universalism, justice, and peace, and blaming Israel, without explicitly naming it, for all aggression and violations of human rights. The Palestinian people, he said, implore the Pope to consider their right to existence and their legitimate aspiration for self-determination. In his response, Paul VI prudently confirmed that whereas "no people can be excluded from the human family . . . [it] should not forget its obligations toward the other partners, in this spirit we are attentive to the hopes and sufferings of your people."

In his December 22, 1975, Christmas address to the Cardinals, the Pope in a way abandoned his usual policy of balance and exhorted the responsible leaders of all sides in the Middle East to search for concrete ways to start negotiations, "to establish a favorable climate . . . for the hoped-for conclusion" of the conflict. Said Paul VI: "Even though we are well aware of the tragedies that not so long ago have compelled the Jewish people to seek secure protection in a sovereign and independent state of their own—and, in fact, just because we are aware of this, we would like to invite the children of this people to recognize the rights and legitimate aspirations of another people which also has suffered for a long time, the Palestinian people." Apart from the known difficulties and dangers involved for Israel in such a recognition, the first mention by the Holy See of "a sovereign and independent state of their own" when speaking of Israel was of overriding importance and would

have merited, in the opinion of competent Israeli observers in Rome, a better reception in the Jewish and Israeli press. This was all the more so, since the statement quite clearly set the conditions and limits for "the other people" of their "rights and legitimate aspirations," namely the existence of Israel.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Communal Activities

Italian rabbis convened in Rome in February 1975 to discuss organizational, cultural, and ritual questions. Rome's Chief Rabbi Professor Elio Toaff had resigned in the beginning of the year as chairman of the Rabbinical Assembly, and Milan Chief Rabbi Elio Kopciowski was elected new chairman at an Assembly meeting on December 26.

In April a three-day seminar on Jewish identity took place in the Rome Institute of Higher Jewish Studies, of which the rabbinical school was a part, and was followed up by a six-day seminar in the Jewish vacation home near Leghorn. In April and May the Rome Jewish Cultural Center organized a "Month of the Ghetto," whose motto was, "An ancient lesson for a new way of Jewish living." The event, featuring a series of conferences and guided tours, was very well attended by Italian and foreign Jewish residents and will be repeated periodically.

Elections for the 15-man governing board of the Rome Jewish Community were held in May. According to the new law lowering the majority age, Jewish youths between 18 and 21 for the first time participated in the elections. Most of the incumbent board members were reelected. The election of three new members representing recently arrived Libyan Jews was expected to attenuate that group's tendency toward separatism, especially in ritual.

A three-day seminar on Zionism took place in Rome in December, with 150 persons attending. The relatively large attendance was generally considered an indirect response to the UN resolution.

An allocation of half a million dollars toward the restoration of the five famous synagogues in Venice was confirmed by various Italian and international cultural organizations, and more funds were being raised to extend the work of restoring other old Jewish buildings and monuments in that city. The discovery of an ancient Hebrew manuscript and other objects in an old building in Assisi, 150 miles east of Rome, seemed to confirm that a Jewish quarter had existed in the birthplace of St. Francis.

Casa Italia at Tel Aviv university, a modern, comfortable home for 130 students built with funds raised by Italian Jews, was inaugurated in March. Among the Israeli and Italian personalities at the ceremony was the Italian cultural attaché and director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Tel Aviv, who took the occasion to announce that a chair for Italian language would soon be established at the university.

Youth

The heated controversy over the resolution on Israel, adopted by the Federazione Giovanile Ebraica d'Italia (FGEI; Jewish Youth Federation of Italy) at its annual convention in November 1974 (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 76], p. 336), continued during the first half of 1975. It later gradually subsided because of FGEI board members' appeasing explanation printed in the Jewish press, and also because of their exemplary stand against the UN anti-Zionist resolution. The FGEI's annual convention in Bologna in November 1975, which elected an entirely new board, reaffirmed the Federation's "unconditional support" of Israel's right to survive as a "Jewish democratic sovereign state" and condemned "all actions aiming at its political and physical elimination."

Developments within Jewish youth groups in Rome had contributed much to this outcome. The members of Kadimah, strongly divided on the 1974 attack on Israel, elected a new governing board in April after months of vain attempts at reconciliation, whereupon the FGEI supporters left the organization and founded Dror. The Bologna convention accepted delegations from both groups, but only after endless discussions. The FGEI's situation remained precarious after the convention. The Kadimah delegates found support for their demand for a new and truly representative structure of FGEI as the roof organization of all youth groups. Thus far, there has been little progress in this direction.

Publications

Il Caso Gersen ("The Gersen Case"; Capitol, Bologna), by Annamaria Ferretti, is a political thriller whose main character, a woman police inspector, thwarted the plot of two *fedayeen* against a Jewish diplomat in Rome.

Uomini e donne solamenta ("Men and Women Only"; Edizioni Cappelli, Bologna), by U. Scazzocchio, is a detailed account of the Jewish middle class in Rome in the first 40 years of the century, and of their failure to understand the essence of fascism and to adapt their life accordingly.

Il Sistema periodico ("The Periodical System"; Einaudi, Turin), by Primo Levi, is a collection of short stories on mostly autobiographic Jewish and non-Jewish subjects, which the author, as indicated by the use of chemical elements as titles of the stories, linked in original and artistic manner to chemistry, his profession. The book, like his previous one about his experiences as resistance fighter and Auschwitz inmate, and his return to post-war Italy, was a bestseller for many weeks.

I Cannoni del Sinai ("Sinai Guns"; Edizioni SEI, Turin), by Guido Gerosa, is a thoughtful diary by a war correspondent during the Yom Kippur war. A good part of the book is devoted to descriptions of the people and even historical material. The book is dedicated to the memory of Nick Thomalin of the *Sunday Times* of London, famous for his reports of that war, during which he was killed by a Syrian missile on the Golan front.

Targum Shir Hashirim—Parafrase del Cantico dei Cantici in Aramaico ("A

Paraphrase of the Song of Songs in Aramaic"; Barulli Editore), by Abramo Alberto Piatelli, is an interpretation of the Targum Song of Songs as an allegory.

I Sabra del kibutz ("Sabras of the Kibbutz"; Barulli Editore, Rome), by Amadeo Tagliacozzo, is a thoughtful sociological research of the kibbutz, its history and present situation, problems and development.

Il Libro della vita ("The Book of Life"; Rizzoli, Milan), by Martin Gray, is the autobiography of a Jew who experienced World War II and the death camps, which nonetheless reflects the author's indestructible love for life in the midst of the horrors he suffered and saw.

Rose di Gerico ("Roses of Jerico"; La Procelleria) is a collection of fine poems by Pasquino Fiorenzi, a Catholic priest, which expresses his love for the Jews, and for Israel, his appreciation of its peaceful achievements.

In *Una di Maggio* ("One in May"; Marsilio Editori, Padua), Riccardo Calimani describes Jewish Venice, a rather infrequent subject in literature, in a confrontation between modern youth striving for self-affirmation without guidance and the old living in a world of splendid memories.

In *In Quelle tenebre* ("In That Darkness"; Edizioni Adelphi, Milan), Gitta Sereny deals with the trial in Düsseldorf of Franz Stangl, which she covered as a reporter. After Stangl's conviction and sentence to life imprisonment, Sereny had long conversations with him about his life and career in the Nazi SS Guard, his role in the murder of the mentally ill; his command of Treblinka death camp; his escape from prison after the war, his capture and extradition. The book is an important historical document (Stangl died one day after the last conversation), completed by numerous interviews with Stangl's wife, other relatives, and friends, with survivors of Treblinka, and with priests in Rome who, for unexplained reasons, helped him reach Syria and later Brazil. The author also compared and carefully checked Stangl's story (and lies) with documents and facts, in particular his part in exacting 50 kilograms of gold from the Rome Jewish community in 1943, in the merciless raid on Venetian Jews, and in running the San Saba Nazi death camp near Trieste.

Trenta anni di lotte dello stato ebraico ("Thirty Years of Struggle of the Jewish State"), edited by the Republican party Roman daily *La Voce Repubblicana* ("Republican Voice"), was the first publication of its new series entitled *Quaderni* ("Copy-books"). It is a collection of foreign policy articles by Luciano Tas, which had been published in that daily in recent years. The author has been a member of the editorial board of the Rome Jewish monthly *Shalom*.

Mosè nostro maestro ("Moses Our Teacher"; Edizioni "Esperienze," Fossano), by Augusto Segre, reconstructs the figure of Moses on the basis of the Torah and Midrashic texts, and his impact on the non-Jewish religious, political, and cultural world.

Personalia

Carlo Levi, writer and painter; long-time antifascist who in 1934 had been confined to southern Italy where his world-famous book *Cristo si fermò a Eboli*

("Christ Stopped at Eboli") on the backwardness and misery of the peasants was conceived; resistance fighter; elected senator in 1968 as "independent" on the Communist slate, highly regarded by the Italian Jewish community, died in Rome on January 4, at the age of 73.

Yoseph Colombo, writer and educator, founder and moving spirit of the Milan Jewish day school established in 1938 when Jewish children were expelled from all Italian schools by Mussolini's racial laws; since 1965 editor of the high-level monthly *Rassegna di Israel*, died in Milan on March 16, at the age of 78. The conference room in the new Italy House in Ramat Gan, Israel, will bear his name.

David Schaumann, Chief Rabbi of Genoa, since 1948 headmaster of the Milan Jewish day school which he made into one of the best educational institutions in Italy, for many years chairman of the Italian Zionist Federation, active participant in Jewish organizational life, promoter of Jewish-Catholic dialogue, died in Genoa on July 5, at the age of 65.

Sisa Tabet Lopez, writer, wife of renowned playwright Sabatino Lopez, very active in ADEI-WIZO, editing its periodical and other publications for many years, died in Milan on June 7, at the age of 90.

Antonietta Raphael Mafai, successful artist, pupil of Chagall, Zadkine, and Epstein, militant antifascist during World War II, died in Rome on September 5, at the age of 75.

JULIO DRESNER