Domestic Affairs

On October 17, the House of Commons opened its doors for the first time to the electronic news media. At a cost of $5 million, Canada bought itself non-stop, unedited radio and television coverage of everything that was said in the House. In a unique way, Canadians were able to watch their political leaders and elected representatives at work. The actual substance of the discussions, however, was largely discouraging. The bad news about the economy in 1977 was stunning. Almost no one talked anymore about great times being ahead.

During 1977, the national unemployment rate stood at 8.4 per cent, the highest since the depression of the 1930's. Inflation accelerated, and the real income of workers fell. The Canadian dollar was devalued by more than 10 per cent, and Canada borrowed large amounts of money abroad to repay the interest on previous foreign loans. The federal government's $8.5 billion financial deficit was at a record level and promised to go even higher in the next year.

Particularly disturbing was the news that major natural resource exporters, such as Inco and Falconbridge, were cutting Canadian production and laying off Canadian workers. With oil reserves also dwindling, Canada was losing the "resource security blanket" on which politicians and bureaucrats in Ottawa had long relied to carry Canada through hard times.

During 1977, the spectre of a dismembered Canada continued to trouble the nation. More money, as well as people, left the province of Quebec, although exact figures were difficult to determine. There was hope that there would be sufficient time to work out a new arrangement that would please both Quebec and the other provinces before the 1979 referendum that Prime Minister René Levesque of Quebec had promised. Some widely-suggested concessions included granting Quebec a role in immigration and communications, and a voice in appointments to the Senate and Supreme Court. Some Canadian politicians and economists suggested a constitutional restructuring of the country to concede the existence of deux nations. In November 1977, Premier Levesque visited Paris and was accorded all the honors normally given to a head of state.

Newspaper headlines during the year were dominated by stories of wrongdoing attributed to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Two government-appointed
commissions investigated the undercover methods of the agency's intelligence branch. The Mounted Police were accused of illegal break-ins, thefts, tampering with the mail, and international espionage.

Many Canadians continued to express confidence in the Mounted Police. There was no doubt, however, that the stock of the Mounties, one of the nation's enduring symbols, reached its lowest point in history. The unfolding drama, while providing the public with inside glimpses of police intelligence work, raised grave moral questions. Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau took the position that any laws jeopardizing national security had to be changed, and that the Mounties should not be held accountable for any illegal activities carried out in the name of national security.

**Foreign Relations**

Relations between Canada and the United States improved greatly during the year. There was a widespread feeling that the insecurity bred by the Parti Québécois victory in the Quebec elections had led many English-speaking Canadians to regard Americans as their allies in the fight to keep Canada a united nation. Prof. Louis Balthazar of Laval University in Quebec City wrote: “The Parti Québécois government has contributed to the creation of a completely new climate for Canadian-American relations as a whole, a climate that is likely to result in the links between Canadians and Americans being strengthened, and to the drawing of a veil over old quarrels.”

The two countries signed a pipeline agreement to assure the uninterrupted flow of oil and natural gas across each other's territory. The United States government also opted for the construction of a pipeline through Canada to carry natural gas from Alaska to the lower 48 states. If approved by the Canadian Parliament, the project would be the largest private venture ever undertaken.

The United States agreed to hold off on those portions of the Garrison diversion project in North Dakota that Canada contended would cause flooding and pollution in Manitoba. At the beginning of the year, the project—a $550 million irrigation scheme—was considered to be the most important issue outstanding between the two countries.

On January 1, Canada extended its fishing limit to 200 miles; on March 1, the United States did the same. The extension brought up problems of maritime boundaries, with all that this implied for the future development of underwater minerals. The two countries quickly agreed to an interim arrangement that would allow orderly maritime commerce until a permanent agreement could be negotiated.

In 1977, Canada registered a success in the raising of the St. Lawrence Seaway tolls, which the United States had opposed. One issue that was being pursued aggressively by the Canadian government was a clause in the United States Tax Reform Act (which took effect at the beginning of 1977) that disallowed as a tax write-off the costs of United States citizens attending conventions in other countries,
Canada included. There was considerable sympathy in the United States Congress for Canada's case, since it was estimated that Canadian hotels experienced a direct loss of $35 million in the first seven months of the year through cancellations due to the act. At the same time, Canada had a deficit of $781 million in its travel account with the United States in the first six months of the year.

**Intergroup Relations**

There was growing concern over manifestations of racism in major Canadian cities. An Ontario Task Force on Human Relations reported in 1977 that Canadians were living in an ever more diverse and heterogeneous society. In 1951, 19 per cent of Toronto's residents had been born outside the country. By 1971, as the population doubled, the number of foreign born had jumped to 37 per cent. In the last six years, Toronto had attracted 31 per cent of Canada's immigrants, and by 1976 close to 60 per cent of the new arrivals were members of visible minorities—Asians, West Indians, and Africans. The report indicated that "there is in Toronto a body of racist opinion and a broad spectrum of racist attitudes which [manifest themselves] as ethnic jokes, harassment and name-calling." The situation was undoubtedly quite similar in Montreal.

A public opinion poll conducted by the Data Laboratories Research Consultants of Montreal for Weekend Magazine showed that 88 per cent of Canadians believed in some kind of supreme being or cosmic force, and that 73 per cent had very strong or somewhat strong religious beliefs. Only 5 per cent had no religious affiliation at all. The overwhelming majority of Canadians were professed Christians: 46 per cent Protestant; 41 per cent Roman Catholic.

**Jewish Community**

**Demography**

The Jewish population of Canada in 1977 was estimated at 305,000. Leading Jewish centers were Toronto (115,000); Montreal (115,000); Winnipeg (20,000); Vancouver (12,000); and Ottawa (7,500).

A survey conducted by the Jewish Camp Council (JCC), a United Jewish Appeal (UJA) beneficiary agency, found that 24 per cent of the campers came from single-parent homes. JCC operated four camps in Ontario. "We were aware that the single-parent families were on the increase," said JCC executive director John Bernstein, "but this ratio of one in four really astounded us. We're beginning to catch up with the rest of the community." As a direct result of this finding, the Social Planning Committee of the Toronto Jewish Congress (TJC) decided to focus its attention on single-parent families, as well as on the steadily increasing number of singles in the Jewish community. An in-depth study was planned to determine what supportive services were needed.
In a submission to the Quebec provincial government, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) indicated that 18 per cent of the Jewish community of Montreal, or some 20,000 individuals, were living at or below poverty level. Many of these people were over 65 years of age, and a variety of services were required for them. It was noted that the government had not yet given approval for two additional floors to the Maimonides Hospital and Home for the Aged. The situation was so drastic that the Jewish community was paying $350,000 a year to private nursing homes for the care of 53 indigent old people.

A report by Jean Lee of the Toronto Jewish Family and Child Service estimated that about 13,000 people, or 13 per cent of Toronto's Jewish population, were living at or below poverty level.

**Immigration**

A new Canadian immigration act enshrined in law for the first time such fundamental principles as non-discrimination, family reunification, humanitarian concern for refugees, and the promotion of Canada's economic, social, demographic, and cultural goals.

Under the new act, the sponsored dependent category was replaced by the family class. Canadian citizens would now be able to sponsor the immigration of a wider range of relatives, including parents under the age of 60. It was anticipated that relatives now eligible for nomination by Canadian citizens would receive the same kind of preference they enjoyed under the previous regulations. The act contained guidelines intended to protect Canada against terrorists and organized crime. It confirmed the obligations Canada had assumed as a party to the United Nations' Convention and Protocol on Refugees, provided for special selection standards for refugees, and gave persons who claimed refugee status new protection under the law.

In 1976, the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) had handled 315 new families, as compared with 456 in 1975. The number of immigrant families from the Soviet Union dropped from 324 to 186.

A two-day conference in Montreal brought together 40 professionals from across the country to discuss problems relating to Jewish immigration and the integration of newcomers. It was noted that more Russian immigrants were anxious to settle on the prairies, far from Montreal and Toronto, where Jewish immigrants had made their homes ever since the first Jews came to Canada in the 18th century. Social workers in the Canadian west had been swamped with clients that they were too inexperienced to handle.

Final statistics for 1977 were expected to show that the number of Israelis emigrating to Canada was down only slightly from the 1975 peak of 1,668. The population flow between the two countries was now almost entirely one way. In 1976, as in 1975, fewer than 300 Canadians had emigrated to Israel.
Communal Activities

The 18th Plenary Assembly of the Canadian Jewish Congress was held in May at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal. The number of registered delegates and alternates came to 1,015. Several hundred persons attended as observers. Elected to office were Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut, president, and David Satok, chairman of the national executive. It was announced that Steve Ain would become national executive director, and that Alan Rose would serve as executive vice-president.

Uppermost in the minds of the delegates was the question of the future of Quebec Jewry in the wake of the victory of the separatists in that province. Significantly, one of the 24 resolutions adopted called for increased efforts by CJC to protect civil rights.

A joint research project of the Allied Jewish Community Services (AJCS) and the CJC to determine the future of the Jews in Quebec was unveiled at the convention. Called the Quebec Policy Research Institute, the project aimed at ascertaining how many Jews were leaving the province and why. In addition, it was to study legislation which seriously affected Jews in such areas as education, health, welfare services, business, and the professions. The study was headed by McGill University law professor Irwin Cotler; Jack Kantrowitz was named coordinator of research. A committee of 15 lay people—five from AJCS, five from CJC, and five from the community at large—was to supervise the project.

A gloomy picture of the Jewish community, in which nearly every organization was in dire financial straits, was painted by Milton Harris, president of the Toronto Jewish Congress, at the second annual meeting of the organization in March. Harris made several five-year projections based on the rate of increased income from 1975 to 1976 in the UJA drive, and the rate of increased expenditures in local and national programs. In 1982, he maintained, UJA would raise $20.5 million as compared with $18.9 million in 1976, a rise of 1.5 per cent. Local and national program expenditures during the same period would go from $5.6 million to $10.8 million, a 93 per cent increase. The United Israel Appeal (UIA) allocations would decrease 33 per cent, from about $12 million to $8 million.

Allocations totalling $5,901,900 for Canadian Jewish welfare and educational services were approved by the executive of TJC, which disburses funds raised by UJA. The allocations, which covered the fiscal period July 1, 1977 to June 30, 1978, were only 4.4 per cent higher than the previous year. Ronald Appleby, chairman of TJC's Budget and Finance Committee, called it an austerity budget "which reflects the fact that the 1977 UJA campaign did not raise sufficient funds and thus limited the community's ability to fund all the needs to the extent we would have liked."

The budget allocations for Jewish education totalled $3,097,281, an increase of 5.8 per cent over the previous year. Local social service agencies would receive $1,134,409, an increase of 1.6 per cent. National agencies (CJC, JIAS, and UJRA)
were allocated $1,342,105, an increase of 1.4 per cent. The TJC administrative budget of $378,450 represented an increase of 4 per cent.

**Community Relations**

The Canada Israel Committee (sponsored by the Canadian Zionist Federation, CJC, and B’nai Brith) protested the use of public funds by the Quebec arm of the Canadian University Service Overseas for the distribution of Arab League propaganda, and for printing of anti-Israel pamphlets and articles in its monthly magazine.

The Quebec Jewish community felt anxious at the candidacy of Roger Delorme for Parliament. Delorme, a Montreal television broadcaster, had made frequent anti-Zionist and antisemitic remarks. CJC deplored as inadequate a statement by Joe Clark, leader of the Federal Progressive Conservative Party, that Delorme would abide by the party’s policies on Israel despite his own publicly stated anti-Zionist views. Jews in Quebec and elsewhere who were members or backers of the Conservative Party were embarrassed by the turn of events. Delorme, however, was defeated in the election.

Three synagogues in western Ontario were vandalized during the election campaign. In each instance, an anti-Israel message was scrawled on the walls of the building. Gerald Klein, president of the London (Ontario) Jewish Community Council, declared that the "acts of vandalism have serious racial overtones. All kinds of people have been living in London for generations in friendship and peace, and vandalism against a house of worship is against all the principles on which our society is based." The London *Free Press* editorialized that "sooner or later, the kind of people who throw paint on a synagogue and leave hate literature at its doors are bound to expose themselves. An alert community may then be able to identify, arrest, and convict such people of a crime which has no place in our democratic Judaeo-Christian society."

In December, three self-proclaimed neo-Nazis went on trial in Toronto for, among other things, distributing antisemitic propaganda, painting swastikas on synagogues, and conspiring to throw smoke bombs in a stadium where Israeli athletes were competing. The accused—36-year-old Don Andrews, 20-year-old Dawyd Zarytshansky, and 29-year-old Wayne Elliot—faced an array of charges including arson, malicious damage, conspiracy, and possession of explosives. At year's end the trial was continuing.

A dispute between the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and the Musicians' Guild had as one of its central issues the demand of the Guild that no performances be scheduled on either Yom Kippur or Easter Sunday. The director general of the Orchestra stated in a written communication: "I reiterate our promise that we will do the utmost to avoid scheduling, in future years, concerts on the Day of Atonement."
A number of changes in the Ontario Human Rights Code were suggested by the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Included were recommendations for legislation, within Provincial jurisdiction, counteracting the Arab boycott. The Commission also advocated the permissibility of "class-action complaints from individuals who believe that they have suffered discrimination as a group." It asked for provisions to "require all police, high school, and elementary students and some university students to take mandatory human rights courses." In support of these recommendations, the Commission noted that "Ontario is becoming more complex, creating an increasing scope for inter-group tension, racial abuse, violence of the mind and body and various forms of hate literature."

**Zionism and Israel**

In October, the Toronto Zionist Council observed its 70th anniversary, and was hailed in the community for its efforts on behalf of Zionism and Israel over the years.

The Canadian Reform movement established Kadima, potentially the largest national Zionist organization. A drive for membership in Reform congregations over the 1977 High Holy Days resulted in close to 3,000 adherents. Formed, in part, as a reaction to trends in Israel questioning the legitimacy of liberal Judaism, Kadima became a bona fide member of the Canadian Zionist Federation and was seeking representation at the World Zionist Congress. There were indications that the Conservative movement was considering a similar plan.

Phil Granovsky, national president of UIA, accused the Jewish Agency and the Israeli government of not paying sufficient attention to the Canadian Jewish community. At a meeting of the Agency's board of governors in Jerusalem, Granovsky declared: "Canada is now the second largest producer of cash after the United States. It is my firm conviction that our campaign... does not receive the attention from Jerusalem that is warranted." In July, at a meeting of the Jewish Agency assembly in Jerusalem, Granovsky was elected chairman of Keren-Hayesod United Israel Appeal, the worldwide fund-raising body. This was the highest post in the international Jewish field ever attained by a Canadian.

The Canada Israel Committee took the government to task for its voting record at the United Nations, charging that the government "unnecessarily bent over backwards to be "evenhanded" in the Arab-Israel dispute. It was suggested that the Canadian government's lessened support for Israel in the United Nations was due to significant changes in the world economic landscape, the increased prestige accorded the Palestine Liberation Organization by the international community, and the passage by the United Nations of 50 anti-Zionist resolutions in the past five years.

A new project of the Hadassah-Wizo Organization of Canada was announced at the 27th biennial convention in Jerusalem. It involved the restoration of the old Tel Aviv Museum from which Israel's independence had been proclaimed. To be renamed the Hall of Independence, the building would house the scroll of
independence, documentary material, photographs, and a recording of David Ben-Gurion's speech proclaiming the founding of the state.

Despite an estimated 10 to 15 per cent decline in population in the communities it served, UIA of Ontario raised the same amount of money as the year before.

Arab Boycott

In December, leaders of major Jewish organizations expressed dissatisfaction with the Canadian government's policy toward the Arab boycott. Trade Minister Jack Horner and External Affairs Minister Don Jamieson reported in the House of Commons that although the government had not changed its policy of opposing the boycott, there were problems in making public a list of those Canadian firms that the government knew to have been asked to include boycott clauses in their sales contracts.

According to the Financial Post, Canada was sixth on the list of countries most often blacklisted by the Arab boycott, and 243 Canadian companies and organizations were on the boycott list. Canadian exports to the Middle East totalled $600 million in 1975, compared to $130 million in 1971.

Soviet Jewry

During the year, a variety of activities on behalf of Russian Jewry took place throughout the country. Five hundred people attended a "Call to Action" meeting for Soviet Jewry held at the Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue in Toronto on March 30, and sponsored by the Canadian Committee for Soviet Jewry (CCSJ). The audience was asked to participate in sending protest postcards to Soviet party chief Leonid Brezhnev, mailing a small packet of matzot to the Russian ambassador in Ottawa, and providing information on prisoner of conscience Anatoly Shcharansky to members of Parliament. Hundreds of items were mailed. CCSJ acknowledged the assistance of the Toronto Action Committee for Soviet Jewry, the Toronto Group of 35, and the Youth Council for Soviet Jewry.

Coinciding with a November 7 celebration held at the Soviet consulate in Montreal to mark the 60th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, a demonstration for Soviet Jewry in general, and Anatoly Shcharansky in particular, was arranged by the Montreal Group of 35. Taking part in the demonstration was Shcharansky's wife. During her visit, Mrs. Shcharansky spoke at a special assembly and participated in demonstrations held in Montreal and Ottawa.

On December 4, about 350 persons attended a Chanukah ceremony in front of the Court House in Vancouver, arranged as part of the worldwide observance of Solidarity Week for Soviet Jewry. In Toronto, a candle-lighting ceremony took place on the lawn of Beth Tzedec Synagogue, where a menorah was specially erected by the Toronto Committee for Soviet Jewry. The Solidarity Week was dedicated to the cause of Anatoly Shcharansky.
CCSJ maintained almost weekly telephone contacts with three Jewish activists in Moscow: Vladimir Prestin, Pavel Abramovitch, and Viktor Yelistratov. All three men had been out of work since applying for exit visas some years ago.

A panel discussion, dealing mainly with the civil and human rights of Soviet Jews, took place in Toronto on February 5. The seminar was part of the mid-winter meeting of the Canadian Bar Association and was sponsored by its civil liberties section for Association members and guests.

**Holocaust Observances**

Over 1,500 people attended the annual Yom Hashoah commemoration, which was held on April 14 at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue in Toronto. The speaker was Dr. Howard Roiter of the University of Montreal. A pictorial display by Yad Vashem was on view in the foyer of the synagogue.

More than 600 persons were present at a Yiddish lecture, and over 250 persons at a French lecture, given by Leopold Treeper on June 20 and 21, respectively, under the sponsorship of the Holocaust Memorial Committee of CJC and several Montreal organizations.

A memorial service to commemorate the Holocaust victims took place at the Bnai Abraham Synagogue in Winnipeg on the evening of April 14. The following day the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was commemorated in front of the YMHA community center, with civic, provincial, and federal government representatives participating. During the ceremony a proclamation was read designating April 15–22 Holocaust Memorial Week.

Hamilton Jewry viewed an exhibition entitled “The Holocaust and Resistance,” and participated in a mass rally which was followed by group discussions.

**Religion**

During 1977, leading rabbis, in comments and letters to the *Canadian Jewish News*, expressed the view that the relationship between the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform branches of Judaism in Toronto was slowly deteriorating, with the political and religious debate in Israel serving as the catalyst. Rabbi Herbert Feder of Conservative Congregation Beth Tikvah declared: “Orthodoxy has been increasingly boycotting meaningful dialogue with the Conservative and Reform. This is fruitless and sabotages our necessary kinship. A decade ago,” he added, “communication was not ruled out. Now we no longer meet. There is certainly no arena in which individual rabbinic spokesmen talk as human beings. And that’s a disgrace.”

The formation of Kadimah, a Reform Zionist organization, was the subject of dispute. Rabbi David Schochet (Lubavitch) stated that the formation of Kadimah was an “unforgivable move. It has been organized to counteract religious influence in Israel.” Rabbi Gunther Plaut of Holy Blossom Temple (Reform) countered Schochet’s statement by remarking: “If they are willing to dissolve Mizrachi then
we will dissolve Kadimah. If Israel adopts a restrictive interpretation of what constitutes proper religious practice, that will bring about alienation in the Diaspora.”

At the biennial convention of the Canadian Council of Liberal Congregations in Hamilton, Rabbi Gunther Plaut declared that the entire matter of religious divorce for Reform Jews must be reconsidered. He predicted the polarization of Jewish points of view into two main camps, the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox. “By definition,” he argued, “this means that we will move closer to Conservatives and they to us. We ought to welcome this new alliance. We both need it.”

The theme of the convention was “Prospect and Retrospect.” In his keynote address, Rabbi Bernard Baskin of Temple Anshe Sholom (Reform), the host congregation, set the tone when, following an analysis of the philosophy of Reform Judaism, he said that “the trend is unmistakable. The direction is toward tradition.”

In March, over 50 religious and lay leaders, Jewish and Christian, attended a luncheon meeting at the Samuel Bronfman House in Montreal, arranged by the national religious department of CJC, in association with the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews and the Montreal Committee for Catholic-Jewish Relations. The meeting was addressed by Marcel Dubois, a renowned Catholic theologian and leader of the interfaith movement in Israel, on the subject “The Christian Outlook on Israel.” During his stay in Montreal, Dubois addressed a number of other Jewish and Christian gatherings.

Jews and Christians from across Canada met in Ottawa at an interfaith colloquium to consider the quality of life in the country. This was the first joint undertaking of official Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish bodies. The colloquium, “The Quality and Sanctity of Life,” was sponsored by the Canadian Council of Churches, the Canadian Catholic Conference, CJC, and the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews.

A new independent Jewish organization designed to foster interest in Judaism, the Association for the Living Jewish Spirit was formed in Toronto. Rabbi Reuben Slonim served as chairman of the Leadership Committee. According to Felix Eckstein, secretary-treasurer, the purpose of the new group was to offer members insight into the meaning of Judaism and the task and destiny of the Jewish people.

**Jewish Education**

In a sharp reversal of tradition, TJC called for Ontario government funding for Jewish day schools and for all independent schools in the province. A resolution approved by the TJC executive declared: “Because of the rising costs and growing deficits in our Jewish day schools and the growth of enrollment in them, the Toronto Jewish Congress deems it essential to continue attempts to obtain funding from government sources.”
During 1977, the Jewish school system was plagued by unprecedented deficits, resulting in a 10 per cent across-the-board tuition increase. Projections indicated that TJC would have to allocate close to $3 million in subsidies for education during the year, with some $325,000 of that directed to the administrative arm, the Board of Jewish Education. Presenting the financial report of the Toronto Associated Hebrew Schools, budget chairman Ron Heller indicated that the schools, facing an accumulated deficit just short of $1 million, were "to all intents and purposes bankrupt." The Eitz Chaim School showed a deficit for the year of $600,000 in accumulated debts. The Associated Hebrew Schools and the Eitz Chaim School accounted for some 2,200 students, well over one-third of the entire day school enrollment.

Negotiations over the experimental plan to integrate the Associated Hebrew Schools' junior high school into the public system in North York were stalemated. Minister of Education Thomas Wells reiterated his opposition to public funds being given to any school where religious courses were compulsory. Late in the year the North York Board of Education decided to test in the Supreme Court of Canada the legality of integrating a Jewish school into the public system.

In Quebec, Jewish day schools were under pressure to increase the hours of French instruction from the present 8 hours a week to 14 or 15 hours. Carl Laxer, chairman of the Association of Jewish Day Schools (AJDS), complained that "more French instruction will reduce the time available for Jewish studies." In November, AJDS received a letter from Education Minister Jacques Yvan Morin offering 60 rather than 80 per cent funding to almost all of the schools. The previous year, the day schools had received a total of $1.8 million from the government.

Joe Ain, president of Allied Jewish Community Services, explained what he called "the financial facts of life about Jewish education." He stated:

Jewish schools in Montreal are funded in four ways: school fees, the schools' own campaigns, allocations from Combined Jewish Appeal (AJCS), and provincial per capita grants. Government grants total more than $6 million and, should a situation develop whereby some or all of the government funds were to be discontinued, the schools would be compelled to devise other fiscal resources. Allied Jewish Community Services, through its Combined Jewish Appeal which now supplied $500,000 directly to day schools, will have to make additional grants to schools as one of several means of meeting whatever financial problem may arise.

The future of the 22 Jewish pre-schools in the Montreal area was put in doubt following the January implementation of new regulations governing the operation of day care centers and nursery schools. The new ruling transferred jurisdiction over these schools from the Social Affairs Ministry to the Education Department. Opponents claimed that the new regulations would so alter the structure of the pre-schools that they would cease to exist.

École Maimonide, a day school maintained by the Sephardic community, rejected a Ministry of Education proposal for a new classification. The Ministry suggested an "ethnic public" status, which would provide the school with 100 per cent subsidization, while placing hiring, curriculum, and teacher evaluation in the hands of a
public school commission. Jean-Claude Lasry, the school's president, declared: "I'd rather close the school and hold classes in a shopping centre than accept the proposal as it now reads. The only thing that would remain of the school as we know it now would be its name."

**Jewish Culture**

The National Library of Canada received what was believed to be its largest single gift—a $2 million collection of Hebrew books and manuscripts belonging to Jacob M. Lowy of Montreal. The collection included Hebrew and Latin incunabula, Talmud editions, a Flavius Josephus collection, rare Bibles, and Hebrew books dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries. The collection was to be kept intact under the name of the "Jacob M. Lowy Collection" and housed in the main building of the National Library. Its quarters would allow space for scholars to do research.

In June, a $6.5 million complex housing the Koffler Center of the Arts, the Leah Posluns Theatre, and the physical education wing of the YM-YWHA was officially opened. The Koffler Center was hailed as one of the three major "Y"-linked Jewish cultural centers in North America.

The Jewish Historical Society of Canada issued the first edition of its semiannual journal. The editor was Rabbi Jonathan Plaut of Windsor; contributing editor was Dr. Stephen Speisman of Toronto, director of Canadian Jewish Congress, Central Region archives.

The Jewish Book Month observance in Montreal was attended by an estimated 1,200 persons. The opening lecture was given by Chaim Potok. Activities for Jewish Book Month in Montreal included lectures, the publication of essays and poetry by students, and the exhibition of books of Jewish content in many university and public libraries across the city.

The first Toronto Book Fair was well publicized and attended. Speakers included Irving Howe, Lucy Dawidowicz, Howard Blum, Zalman Abramov, Chaim Grade, Matti Meged, and Danny Siegel. Arrangers of the fair were the Jewish Public Library, TJC, the YM-YWHA, and the Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations.

An estimated 10,000 people attended the Yiddish Music and Theatre Festival, sponsored by the National Committee on Yiddish, at Hampstead Park in Montreal in August, 1977. The CBC Festival Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Victor Feldbrill, presented a concert in observance of Toronto's Jewish Music Festival at Beth Tzedec Synagogue. The orchestra, conducted by Boris Brott, participated in a concert held at the Beth Tikvah Synagogue. Included was the composition "From the Diary of Anne Frank" by Oskar Morawetz. A number of Jewish choirs in Toronto presented an "Evening of Jewish Choral Music" at the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue. A new composition by Srul I. Glick was featured.

A Jewish Cultural Council was set up in Toronto by TJC as an extension of its Educational and Cultural Committee. The aim of the Council was the
encouragement of Jewish cultural arts and informal Jewish education. Representation on the Council was open to all synagogues, community agencies, and organizations.

An unusual attempt to bring together scholars in the fields of literature, rabbinic studies, and biblical history took place at a symposium in Ottawa on "Biblical Literature: Rabbinic and Modern Perspectives." Close to 50 people from throughout North America and Israel attended the three-day symposium co-sponsored by the Ottawa Jewish Community Council and Carleton University.

Publications

*The Abramsky Variations* by Morley Torgov deals, in a manner both serious and amusing, with three generations of a Canadian Jewish family in search of meaning and identity.

Matt Cohen's sixth novel, *The Colours of War*, explores the intricate relationships between fathers and sons, husbands and wives, against the background of rural Ontario.

The Governor General's Award for Poetry was presented to Joe Rosenblatt of Toronto for his collection *Top Soil: Selected Poems*. Rosenblatt was editor of *Jewish Dialogue*, a Toronto-based literary periodical which publishes short stories and poems. Also honored was Miriam Waddington for her collection of poems *The Price of Gold*. Myra Paperny of Calgary was among the winners of the Canada Council Children's Literature Prize.

*Spanning the Generations* by Evelyn Kallen is a study of Jewish identity, based, in part, on a doctoral dissertation done for the department of anthropology at the University of Toronto.

The Summer 1977 issue of *Jewish Dialogue* was given over entirely to "Lost Boryslaw, Memories of a Galician Youth." The recollections were those of Meilech Schiff, an 85-year-old Montreal resident and retired carpenter.

Wayne Edmonstone wrote *The Making of a Critic*, about Nathan Cohen, the highly regarded late drama critic of the Toronto Star.

Nachman Shemen's *Sanctity in Jewish Family Life* was written in Yiddish and published in Israel.

In *Past Redemptions* David Birkan of Toronto deals in sonnet form with the traditional 54 portions of the Pentateuch, striving to find contemporary relevance in biblical events and personalities.

*Out of Place* by poet Eli Mandel focuses on the quest for Jewish origins in the small communities of the Canadian prairies.

*The Noise of Singing* and *Dark Caves* by Abraham Ram are short novels about Montreal Jewish life and a perplexed academic, Moe Tabb.

The 18th Plenary Assembly of CJC recognized the importance of Yiddish literature in Canada. It was pointed out that three writers—the late Melech Ravitch, Rachel Korn, and Yehuda Elbarg—received the highly coveted Itzik Manger Prize
in Israel. Among Yiddish writers who received awards from the J.J. Segal Fund in Montreal over the years were S. Dunsky, Y. Elberg, M. Husid, the late Melech Ravitch, Chava Rosenfarb, M. M. Shafir and J. Zipper.

**Personalia**

Philip G. Givens, a former president of the Zionist Organization of Canada, was appointed Judge of the Ontario Provincial Court and member of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Commission. Willie Rudy was re-elected to a third term as Mayor of Ste. Sophie, Quebec.

Jewish Canadians awarded the Order of Canada included: David Golden of Ottawa; Sol Kanee of Winnipeg, former president of CJC and former director of the Bank of Canada; Sam Steinberg, of Montreal, head of a grocery chain bearing the family name; G. Sydney Halter, Q.C. of Winnipeg, the first Football League Commissioner, known as "the Czar of Canadian football"; Louis Applebaum of Toronto, well-known composer and musicologist; Muriel Kovitz, chancellor of the University of Calgary; Murray Koffler, of Toronto, pharmacist, hotel-owner and patron of the Weizmann Institute, Mount Sinai Hospital, the YMHA Arts Centre in Toronto, and other institutions.

As a result of the spring 1977 election, the number of Jewish MP's in the Ontario legislature was reduced by two. This was accounted for by the pre-election withdrawal of two Toronto Liberals, Vern Singer and Philip Givens, the defeat of Liberal-turned-Conservative Marvin Shore in London, and the election of David Rotenberg in Singer's former riding. The other three Jewish members of the legislature sat in the previous assembly. They were Larry Grossman of St. Andrews-St. Patrick; Liberal leader Stuart Smith of Hamilton West; and New Democrat leader Stephen Lewis of Scarboro West. Lewis resigned his position as leader of the NDP, although he continued to hold his seat in the Legislature.

In the provincial election in Manitoba, 5 Jewish MP's were elected. They were Sidney Spivak, the former leader of the Conservative Party, who was made minister without portfolio; Saul Cherniak; Sidney Green; Saul Miller; and Abe Kovnats.

Norman Vickar of Melfort, Saskatchewan, was named Minister of Industry and Commerce of the government of Saskatchewan, thus becoming the first Jewish cabinet minister in the history of that province. Sydney M. Harris, past president of the Canadian Jewish Congress and chairman of the board of governors, was appointed a provincial court judge. Named Dean of Arts and Sciences of the University of Toronto was economist Arthur Kruger. He was the first Jew to hold this post. He served as the first dean of Woodsworth College, the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Education. Allan Gotlieb, deputy minister of Manpower and Immigration for several years, was appointed Under-secretary of State for External Affairs, the second highest post in the ministry.

Victor Kugler was awarded the $10,000 Nicholas and Hedy Munk Brotherhood Prize. Channeled through the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, the prize
was given to him for providing shelter to the Otto Frank family in Amsterdam when such an act meant risking execution by the Nazis.

Retiring from their long held rabbinical posts were Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut of Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple; Rabbi Samuel S. Stollman, spiritual leader of Shaar Hashomayim, Windsor, Ontario; and Rabbi Israel Freedman of St. Catharines, Ontario. Dr. Ernest Klein, world-renowned etymologist, received honorary degrees from Guelph and McMaster Universities in Ontario on consecutive days in May. Shmuel Ovnat, Israel's consul general in Toronto for the past five years, left to take up his new ambassadorial post in Burma. Montreal-born Martin Park was appointed the new executive director of the Toronto YM-YWHA. He succeeded David Andrews, who served as director for 25 years. Andrews, in turn, assumed the new post of executive vice-president.

Among Canadian personalities who died in 1977 were: Moishe Myerson, veteran community worker, deeply devoted to a variety of Jewish causes; Michael Garber (75) of Toronto, former president of both the Zionist Organization of Canada and CJC; Sara Gittel Salsberg (94), active in support of Jewish education, and a matriarch of Toronto's Polish Jews; Selma-Marguerite Marguilies (95), of Montreal, a founder of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO) in 1917 and of Ayanot, the first agricultural school for girls in Palestine; Alan Mills (63), Canadian folk singer and actor; Esther Volpe (82), active in women's groups for over six decades; Dr. Abraham I. Willinsky (91), one of the pioneer Jewish doctors in Toronto, and chief urologist at the Toronto Western Hospital until 1946; and David Green (82) of Toronto, who served as president of the Hebrew National Association for many years.

BERNARD BASKIN