

Western Europe

Great Britain

Domestic Affairs

THE YEAR 1978 OPENED AMID OPTIMISTIC EXPECTATIONS that North Sea oil would flow in abundance and help the country overcome its balance of payments problems. There also seemed to be good prospects for industrial growth. By spring, however, it became clear that this scenario would not materialize, and that the government was unsuccessfully trying to reconcile a relatively tight monetary stance with an expansionary fiscal policy. On the favorable side, inflation was kept in single figures, unemployment fell slightly from 6 to 5½ per cent, and the gross national product rose by 3–3½ per cent.

The government survived, but it was widely believed that Prime Minister James Callaghan's surprise decision in autumn to postpone elections was attributable to a lack of confidence in the result. The minority Labor government retained the confidence of the House of Commons by a narrow margin, but it was defeated on a number of issues.

Nationwide opposition to racism was affirmed in February by a Conservative party decision to nominate a representative to the all-party Joint Committee Against Racialism (AJYB, 1978, Vol. 78, p. 217), which already included members from the Labor and Liberal parties, the British Youth Council, the National Union of Students, as well as ethnic and religious groups, including the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The Committee campaign, launched in April, culminated in September in a rally attended by 2,000 people; in July two leaflets were issued to "alert the people against the dangers which racist organizations such as the National Front [NF] pose to Britain's democratic traditions."

The Jewish community's fight against the Front, strengthened in February by Zionist Federation (ZF) support for its campaign, was marred by controversy surrounding the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), which had strong links to the anti-Zionist extreme left. However, year-end meetings between the Board of Deputies, ZF, and ANL representatives gave hope of reconciliation.

A survey conducted by *New Society* magazine in May showed one in four young white people interviewed in South Hackney and Shoreditch (both underprivileged

urban areas of London often described as NF strongholds) supporting or prepared to support the Front. Yet, while NF fielded 900 candidates in local government elections in May, none was returned to any of the 32 borough councils in Greater London or the 80 English metropolitan and district councils outside it. In the Greater London Council area, NF put forward 602 candidates (as against 91 in 1977) but won a reduced share of the poll in many places where it had previously done well, and failed to achieve its declared aim of replacing the liberals as the electorate's third choice. Voting figures in parliamentary by-elections provided further evidence of NF's electoral decline.

The formation in August of a new all-party Parliamentary Deposit Reform Group to promote reform of the system whereby anyone could deposit £150 and stand for Parliament, followed the failure in May of Greville Janner, MP's Representation of the People (Deposit and Nominations) Bill to obtain a second reading. The Bill, introduced in March, was designed to make it more difficult for NF to use the parliamentary electoral process to disseminate its doctrines at the public's expense.

Relations with Israel

The British government, as the Queen put it in her speech marking the opening of Parliament, supported "all endeavors to ensure a just and lasting peace in the Middle East." In February, following talks with President Sadat, Prime Minister Callaghan stated the government's view that "Israel should show flexibility in negotiations, but that Israel's security is paramount." In March Foreign Secretary David Owen reiterated that Britain regarded Israeli settlements in occupied territory as illegal. In July Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Frank Judd argued that it was in the interest of Israel to face up to the implications of United Nations Resolution 242 and accept the need for withdrawal from the occupied territories. In September Great Britain urged its Common Market partners to back U.S. diplomatic efforts to gain Arab approval for the Camp David agreements.

The official British view was that no role in the negotiating process was possible for the PLO until it recognized Israel's right to exist. However, requests for the closure of the PLO office in London, following an attack on a bus in Israel in April and the killing of an El Al hostess in London in August, brought no change in the government policy of tolerating the presence of PLO representatives. "There is no legal bar to the operation of a PLO office here while its activities remain within the law," said Judd. A request that El Al security guards be allowed to retain weapons outside the Heathrow airport area was turned down, but the British Airport Authority announced that El Al check-in desks at Heathrow would be protected by bullet-proof screens. In July 11 Iraqi diplomats and embassy employees were expelled from Britain in connection with Arab terrorist activities in London.

There were 354 pro-Israel and 68 pro-Arab MP's, according to a survey carried out for ZF. Of 95 MP's who held ministerial posts, 39 (including 7 Cabinet

ministers) were pro-Israel; the 19 members of the Tory Shadow Cabinet included 8 pro-Israelis.

The resignation in November of Secretary of State for Trade Edmund Dell reduced the number of Jews in the Cabinet to three and the overall total of Jewish ministers to ten. In May Malcolm Rifkind, MP reported that there were nine Jewish Conservative MP's compared with two in 1970. The Conservative Friends of Israel, with 117 members (out of a total of 280 Conservative MP's), was the largest political lobby in Parliament.

Ian Mikardo's defeat in Labor party executive elections in October left only two Jewish members, but in the party's Socialist co-operative section, prominent pro-Arab John Cartwright, MP was replaced by pro-Israeli Leslie Huckfield. For the first time an Arab representative was officially invited as a delegate to the Labor party conference.

In February the National Organization of Labor Students voted to affiliate with the pro-Arab Labor Council for the Middle East. In April the National Union of Students conference reintroduced the "no platform for racists and fascists" policy which had been the basis for earlier anti-Zionist campaigns at universities and colleges.

The launching of a new campaign on behalf of Syrian Jewry resulted in over 90 MP's signing a motion in the Commons in July, and a petition to UN Secretary General Waldheim in September.

In April *Al Sabah*, an ultra-nationalist Arab-language newspaper that had been suspended by the Jordanian government in 1975, began publication in London. In October the Press Council rejected a complaint by Eric Moonman, MP against the *Sunday Times*, for its "Insight" team's investigation into allegations of torture of Arab prisoners in Israel. In December *Middle East International*, the monthly organ of the pro-Arab lobby, became fortnightly.

Arab Boycott

While British exports to Israel showed a modest increase (from £237 million to £274 million) between 1975 and 1977, exports to Arab countries doubled (from £1,386 million to £2,702 million). There was no way to measure the impact of the boycott.

The nine-man Select Committee under Lord Redcliffe-Maud which the House of Lords had established after Lord Byer's Foreign Boycotts Bill (see AJYB, 1979, Vol. 79, p. 220) had secured a second reading in February, decided in August not to recommend its reintroduction for a third. The Committee was persuaded by government and business community spokesmen that anti-boycott legislation would damage British interests in the Arab world. The Committee felt, however, that the government should take a close look at cases where public funds were used to support boycott-related transactions. In addition, it argued that government departments and embassies should cease authenticating signatures on "negative certificates

of origin"; should take all diplomatic opportunities informally to reduce the incidence of secondary and tertiary boycotts; and should undertake an initiative within the European Economic Community (EEC) to develop a common European policy toward the boycott, and in support of EEC's fundamental principle of nondiscrimination.

In May suspicions were voiced that the Post Office's £4 million telecommunication contract with Libya (its third in two years, bringing the total order to £11 million) contained a boycott clause. In June an Anti-Boycott Coordinating Committee spokesman pointed out that the reported refusal by Delta-T Devices, a British firm, to deal with Israeli companies which refused to denounce Israel's actions in Lebanon was the first case in which commercial dealings had been openly linked to expressions of political opinion.

British Secretary of State for Trade Edmund Dell voiced concern that the "extra-territorial" aspects of the U.S. Export Administration Act infringed on Great Britain's jurisdiction and could harm British trade and employment. The matter came up in relation to British Petroleum Trading Ltd., a subsidiary of British Petroleum, which was half-owned by the British government, and had government-nominated directors on its board. The company cooperated with the Arab boycott.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The Jewish population of Great Britain was estimated to be 410,000. Leading Jewish population centers were London (280,000), Manchester (35,000), Leeds (18,000), and Glasgow (13,000).

Synagogue marriages fell slightly in 1977, to 1,378 (19 less than in 1976 and 180 below the 1973-7 average), the Board of Deputies research unit reported in June. Although the largest losses, said unit director Barry Kosmin, occurred in the Reform synagogue movement, which appeared to have reached its peak in the early 1970's (184 marriages in 1977, as against 203 in 1976 and an average of 217 in 1973-7), in overall percentage terms there was hardly any movement among the three main religious groupings. The right-wing Orthodox segment of the community, however, continued to grow. In Greater Manchester there was a marriage boom which accounted for 195 of a total 422 provincial marriages; Manchester was the only provincial center in which marriages exceeded burials. More typically, in Wales only 16 people married, while 59 died; in Scotland 90 married, while 157 died. Burials and cremations under Jewish auspices totalled 4,749, which was 319 fewer than in 1976 and 111 below the 1973-7 average. Following the national trend, the proportion of cremations increased.

Increased Jewish marital problems caused the Jewish Marriage Education Council to establish a special divorce counselling department in February. In July Asher

Fishman expressed concern at the United Synagogue Council about the large number of Jews divorcing in civil courts, without application for a religious *get*. In 1977 the London Beth Din received 226 applications for *gittim*, and wrote 145.

Communal Activities

Concern about the needs of the elderly was voiced by Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) executive director Melvyn Carlowe in April. Six organizations had waiting lists totalling 614 people, many of whom had applied to more than one agency. The organizations were the Jewish Home and Hospital at Tottenham, the Jewish Blind Society, the Association of Jewish Refugees, Hammerson House, Nightingale House (which was being renovated at a cost of £1½ million), and JWB itself, which in December announced a £2.7 million residential project in Redbride, to be completed in two to three years.

The B'nai B'rith Housing Society announced a new departure in April, providing flatlets in North-West London not only for 95 elderly Jews, but also for single people. In May the Duke of Gloucester opened the Westlon Housing Association's first venture, the Annette White Lodge, which was to provide sheltered housing for the elderly in London's East Finchley. In April the Abbeyfield Camden (Jewish) Society opened the first Jewish Abbeyfield House, a communal living scheme for the elderly.

In February, after 90 years' service to Jewish migrants, the Jews' Temporary Shelter amended its constitution to become the JTS Housing Fund, which made available interest-free loans for immigrant housing. In April the 40-year-old Central British Fund for Jewish Relief and Rehabilitation changed its name to World Jewish Relief. In October the Linath Hazadak Aid Society closed after 50 years of helping London's East End Jewish poor.

In March the Ranulf Association was formed to provide housing for the mentally handicapped. In May the Jewish Autistic Society was established to work with local authorities in the area of residential and day centers for autistic and similarly handicapped Jewish children, and to provide counselling. In July Norwood Homes for Jewish Children expanded its program to include the deaf and autistic, making it the leading welfare organization for Jewish children in Britain. In October the Haven Foundation's home for mentally handicapped adults, administered by JWB in London's Crouch End, was officially opened.

In January the first national Jewish youth solidarity conference established a standing committee to promote greater coordination between the various youth movements and the establishment of local youth councils. In May work began on a £250,000 youth center adjoining London's Western Synagogue and on a £300,000 Oxford and St. George North London Jewish Center. In July the Association of Jewish Youth (AJY), which operated four centers, announced that it was looking for additional full-time staff. In September work began on a £700,000 Brady-Maccabi youth and community center at Edgware, Middlesex. In October a new

extension to the Barkingside Jewish Youth Center (an amalgamation of the Cambridge and Hackney Clubs and the Stepney Jewish Lads' Club) was dedicated.

In October Pierre Gildesgame instituted an annual £1,000 Jewish Youth Leader-of-the-Year award to focus communal attention on the area of youth work.

Zionism

In May some 80,000 people attended "Twelve Hours for Israel" in London's Earl's Court. It was the biggest single gathering in the history of Anglo-Jewry and included a speech by Israel Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and a 7,500-strong youth cavalcade from all over England.

ZF, which in February formed a Committee for Youth Affairs comprising representatives of Jewish and Zionist youth organizations, grew in strength. After leaving Mizrachi in June, the Federation of Synagogues returned to ZF. In December the Progressive Religious Organization of Zionists, established by the Reform and Liberal synagogues in July, also affiliated with ZF. At year's end, ZF and Mizrachi had yet to agree on the terms of a merger that was required by the World Zionist Organization (WZO) as part of a reorganization plan.

In April the Joint Israel Appeal (JIA) set up a new National Leadership, Development and Recruitment Committee designed to build up a total of 5,000 active campaigners over a three-year period to canvas the estimated 100,000 Jewish families in Britain. JIA currently received 15,000 to 18,000 donations annually, said Committee chairman Monty Sumray, which meant that only 15 per cent of the population was being reached.

Britain's *aliyah* figure for 1977 of nearly 1,000 was the best since 1972, according to WZO. The 1977 level was 4 per cent above that of 1976, but was still much below the 1969 peak of over 1,700.

Soviet Jewry

British concern over Soviet Jewry found expression in May when the Foreign Office described the trial of Yuri Orlov as "very disturbing." A Labor party statement in July condemned the trial of Soviet dissidents, but the party's International Committee rejected a Liberal party invitation in September to join a campaign against Moscow as the venue for the 1980 Olympic Games.

The British Soviet Jewry movement rejected the advice of Foreign Secretary David Owen that it broaden the focus of its concern. Jewish organizations throughout the country continued their activities, which included marches, e.g., in Manchester in March, with ex-refusnik Silva Zalmanson as guest of honor; demonstrations, e.g., in London in April, to mark the opening of a world campaign on behalf of Vladimir Slepak, organized by the National Council for Soviet Jewry; petition campaigns, e.g., in London in July, in support of Ida Nudel and Maria Slepak, under

the aegis of the 35's; and lobbying, e.g., in Glasgow in December, where the soviet deputy minister of culture was staying.

In September the Liverpool City Council voted to end its "twinning" link with Odessa, and requested the Association of Municipal Authorities to call on other local governments to take similar action.

Religion

In July Jews' College principal Rabbi Dr. N.L. Rabinovitch criticized the United Synagogue's (US) belt-tightening plan, which called for the shifting of synagogue personnel to those places where they could be of greatest use, without reducing the availability of religious services. Rabinovitch contended that lay leaders should not have the authority to cut synagogue budgets or eliminate religious functionaries. What was required, he maintained, were more rabbis and more synagogues.

An editorial in the *Jewish Chronicle* pointed out that there were four vacant ministerial posts in London alone, and that between 1971 and 1978 only two rabbinic graduates had emerged from Jews' College. There was also a shortage of cantors.

In July the US Council decided to impose levies on members to help meet the building costs of two fledgling congregations at Belmont and Pinner. Plans were completed for a new US *mikva* at Kingsbury Green, London.

Despite the chief rabbi's proposal that women be given a place on synagogue boards, in June the US Council approved a clause of the Scheme of the United Synagogue Act excluding women from office.

With the admission of a 28th member, the Hampstead Reform synagogue, the Association of Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB) grew to four times its original size. According to chairman Jeffery Rose, it was the fastest growing religious organization in Britain. In October the RSGB assembly of rabbis adopted proposals requiring ritual immersion for converts and a traditional form of *get* for divorce.

Although agreement in January between the chief rabbi, haham, and London Beth Din *dayanim* seemed to clear the way for a merger of London's three separate kashrut authorities, it emerged that this was conditional upon the new body's coming under the Shechita Board's administration, which was unacceptable to the kashrut authorities. In August London Board for Shechita treasurer H. Cansino reported a decline in the drift from kashrut observance. Throughout the year, the National Council of Shechita Boards expressed concern about imports of Empire Kosher Poultry Products from the United States.

In October the massacre of the Jews of York in 1190 was commemorated with a plaque at Clifford's Tower, York Castle, unveiled by the Archbishop of York and Jewish religious authorities, including the chief rabbi.

Jewish Education

Among all sectors of the Jewish community concern was expressed that the growth in Jewish education was not being matched by the availability of qualified teachers. Edward Conway, administrative director of the chief rabbi's Jewish Education Development Trust (JEDT) committee on teacher training, wrote in the *Jewish Chronicle* in March that the number of Jewish day schools had grown from 23 in 1954 to 57 in 1977, and the number of pupils attending them from 4,460 to 12,780. There was a critical shortage of teachers to serve these students. ZF education director Shoshana Eytan highlighted a similar problem at ZF Trust's 13 schools (8 in the provinces and 5 in London), which were attended by some 5,000 pupils. A report by JEDT in September indicated a number of steps that had been taken to deal with the shortage of teachers; several educators had been invited to make recommendations on ways of better recruiting and training teachers; the Trust had extended financial support to the Hebrew University and Bar Ilan University to enable teachers to attend training courses at the two institutions (40 participated in 1978); and the London Board for Jewish Religious Education, with the support of JEDT, had sent six students to Israel for a one-year foundation course prior to three years of teacher training in Britain. In April the Council for National Academic Awards authorized Jews' College and the North London Polytechnic to offer a joint Jewish studies program for prospective Jewish day school teachers, leading to a B. Ed. degree. This program replaced the Trent Park scheme, which over a six-year period had provided some 20 teachers for Jewish schools.

JEDT gave £100,000 and £1.8 million to help cover the construction costs of new Jewish primary schools in Leeds and Kingsbury (London), respectively. A. Brown, the director of the London Board for Jewish Religious Education, indicated that his group had under its jurisdiction 7,000 talmud torah pupils, 2,500 day school pupils, and 1,500 pupils in non-Jewish schools who received some religious education. In July, for the first time in 12 years, delegates from the Federation of Synagogues attended a Board meeting.

In December the Hillel Foundation reported a healthy increase in the number of students attending educational and social activities under its auspices. US was contributing toward the cost of maintaining a full-time councillor for Jewish students at universities in London.

In August the Yakar Educational Foundation acquired premises in Stanmore (London) for residential seminars, weekly courses, and special lectures covering a wide range of Jewish topics.

In May a fellowship in Holocaust studies was endowed at the Oxford Center for Post-Graduate Hebrew Studies.

Publications

The *Jewish Chronicle*-Harold H. Wingate Literary Awards went to Dan Jacobson for his novel *Confessions of Josef Baisz*, and to Lionel Kochan for his study *The Jew and his History*.

Other historical works published during the year included *The World's Greatest Story: The Epic of the Jewish People in Biblical Times* by Joan Comay; *Diamonds and Coral: Anglo-Dutch Jews and Eighteenth Century Trade* by Gedalia Yogev; *Karl Marx and the Radical Critique of Judaism* by Julius Carlebach; *Jewish Socialist Movements 1871-1917* by Nora Levin; and *The Jewish Intelligentsia and Russian Marxism* by Robert J. Brym.

Zionist history was represented by *The Zionist Revolution* by Harold Fisch; *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel* by Simon Schama; *Exile and Return: The Emergence of Jewish Statehood* by Martin Gilbert; *Palestine: Retreat from the Mandate* by Michael J. Cohen; *The Economic War Against the Jews* by Terence Prittie and Walter Henry Nelson; *The Jewish Paradox* by Nahum Goldmann; *Education, Employment and Migration: Israel in Comparative Perspective* by Paul Ritterband; and *The Plumbat Affair* by Elaine Davenport, Paul Eddy, and Peter Gillman.

Religious publications included *Judaism for Today: An Ancient Faith with a Modern Message* by Liberal Rabbi John D. Rayner and Bernard Hooker; *The Mannah Machine* by George Sassoon and Rodney Dale; *The Day that God Laughed* by Hyam Maccoby; *Hadar Ha-Karmel* by Rav Mayer Lerner, edited by J.D. Feld; and *Donum Gentilicium: New Testament Studies in Honour of David Daube*, edited by C.K. Barrett, E. Bammel, and W.D. Davies.

Volumes of essays were *Janus: A Summing Up* by Arthur Koestler; and *Russian Thinkers* by Isaiah Berlin, edited by Henry Hardy and Aileen Kelly.

Among notable works of fiction were *The Shadow Master* by Elaine Feinstein; *Now Newman was Old* by Chaim Bermant; *Mother Russia* by Robert Littell; *Family Business* by Anthony Blond; *A Five Year Sentence* by Bernice Rubens; *The Chelsea Murders* by Lionel Davidson; *The Face of Terror* by Emanuel Litvinoff; *Said the Old Man to the Young Man* by Arnold Wesker; and *On Margate Sands* by Bernard Kops.

Two further volumes (XXII and XXIII) of the *Leo Baeck Year Book*, edited by Robert Weltsch, also appeared.

Personalia

British Jews who received honors in 1978 included Gerald Bernard Kaufman, minister of state for the Department of Industry, who was made a privy counsellor, and Vivian David Lipman, director of ancient monuments and historic buildings, Department of the Environment, who was made a commander of the Royal Victorian Order. Knighthoods were conferred on Hans Lee Kornberg, Sir William Dunn

Professor of Biochemistry, Cambridge University; Peter Wendel Seligman, businessman; and Andrew Shonfield, director of the Royal Institute for International Affairs. Victor Mishcon, who received a life peerage, became Baron Mishcon of Lambeth in Greater London.

British Jews who died in 1978 included Rudy Sternberg, Lord Plurenden, businessman, in January, aged 60; Michael Fenton, founding member of the Royal College of General Practitioners, in January, aged 77; Harold Abrahams, British and international athletics champion, in January, aged 78; Lord Lyons of Brighton, Labor party publicity adviser, in January, aged 59; Harold Poster, philanthropist and Zionist, in January, aged 66; Leo Genn, actor and lawyer, in January, aged 72; Marcus Lipton, Labor MP and Zionist, in February, aged 77; Jacob Halevy, Zionist leader, in February, aged 79; Lionel Jacobson, businessman and philanthropist, in February, aged 72; Ephraim Rosenberg, celebrated cantor, in February, in Netanya, aged 61; Joseph Wainstein, Yiddishist, in February, aged 88; Eli Munk, rabbi, in March, in Jerusalem, aged 77; Ronnie Waldman, top BBC executive, in March, aged 63; Itzhak Nathani, leader of British Mapam, in March, aged 74; Arthur Sigismund Diamond, eminent jurist, in March, aged 80; Charles Landstone, *Jewish Chronicle* theater critic, in April, aged 87; Julain Braunschweg, founder of London's Festival Ballet, in April, aged 80; Robert Vas, Hungarian-born British film-maker, in April, aged 47; Rowland Benson, professor of mechanical engineering, Manchester University, in April, aged 53; Alfred Diamond, businessman and communal worker, in April, aged 76; Jack Hart, boxing referee, in May, aged 78; Andrew Kampfner, rabbi and educator, in May, aged 59; Bruno Jablonsky, aeronautical engineer, in May, aged 85; Serge Krish, musician, in May, aged 91; Joseph Rosenwasser, British Library assistant keeper of oriental manuscripts and printed books, in June, aged 69; Roy Cowan, Jewish humorist, in June, in Australia; Sascha Lasserson, violinist, in July, aged 88; Kopel Kahana, eminent talmudist, in July, aged 83; Moses Dryan, Glasgow rabbi, in July; Mavis Ronson, photographer, in August, aged 42; Lucjan Blit, Polish socialist journalist and academic, in September, aged 73; Cecil Aronowitz, violinist, in September, aged 62; Jack Emanuel Winocour, barrister, journalist and writer, in September, aged 65; Helen Kapp, painter, in October, aged 76; Edmond Kapp, caricaturist, in October, aged 87; David Glass, professor of demography, London School of Economics, in October, aged 67; Edwin Herbert, 2nd Viscount Samuel, administrator, in Jerusalem, in November, aged 80; Professor Aron Holzel, pediatrician, in November, aged 69; Hans Liebeschuetz, medieval historian, in November, aged 85; Arthur Lehman Goodhart, historian, in November, aged 87; Katerina Wilczynski, artist, in November; Lou Praeger, dance band leader, in November, in Majorca, aged 70; Julius Unschorfer, rabbi, in December, aged 59; Sir Julius Salmon, director of the J. Lyons restaurant chain, in December, aged 75; and Edgar Lustgarten, author and broadcaster, in December, aged 71.

LIONEL AND MIRIAM KOCHAN

France

Domestic Affairs

THE DIN AND TURMOIL of the national legislative election campaign dominated events in the early months of 1978. Constant quarreling between the Socialists and Communists, the partners in the left coalition, kept changing the prognosis for the outcome of the election. As the quarreling increased, nothing seemed less likely than harmony between the two groups, if the left did come to power. The Communists, fearing large Socialist party gains, tried to maneuver Socialist leaders, most notably François Mitterrand, into embarrassing positions. They spread rumors that the Socialists had little desire to change the system in France and wanted only to replace their rightist rivals. At the same time, professionally conducted polls showed the left retaining, even increasing, its following. Thus, despite the deep schism between the Communists and Socialists over the Common Program to which both sides had been so strongly committed, hopes for a left victory, i.e., a left coalition with a virtual majority, were not abandoned.

In Jewish circles there were debates over how best to deploy the Jewish vote, which, although not a determining factor, was not entirely without weight in the large cities, especially in the Paris region. The official position of Jewry remained what it had always been: the Jewish community was a religious, not a political, entity and would therefore not issue directives or otherwise try to influence Jewish voters. This formal call for "confessional" non-intervention in politics, however, begged the question that was troubling most Jews: how would the outcome of the elections affect Franco-Israeli relations? The Communists' pro-Arab bias should have moved many Jews with leftist views to choose government majority candidates, many of whom ostentatiously called attention to their pro-Israel sympathies. But the old conditioned reflex was still there—the fear of antisemitism on the right. While there are no statistics on this matter, there is reason to believe that the majority of French Jews voted for the left, even if without enthusiasm. Many leftist Jewish groups in France, Zionists included, campaigned for Jewish support of the Common Program on the assumption that the socialists would dominate the left coalition and thus determine foreign policy.

In the first round of the parliamentary elections, held on March 12, the left coalition won 48.95 per cent of the vote; the government coalition won 46.8 per cent, with the remainder going to various small groups. (A clear majority was needed to govern.) This result did not meet the expectations of the left, which had been counting on 52 per cent in this round. Neither did the returns altogether dissolve fears in the governing majority, which was not yet prepared to claim a victory,

despite the probability that it would win more votes in the second round. During the next week, the Socialists, Communists and Left Radicals quickly ratified an agreement on the Common Program, notwithstanding many months of bitter disagreement over the matter. The second round of elections on March 19 was a victory for the governing majority, giving it 290 seats in Parliament, against 201 for the opposition.

The defeat of the left sounded the death knell of the Common Program. The Communists blamed the Socialists for the failure at the polls, charging them with having sabotaged the Program. The Socialists counter-attacked with charges that the Communists had deliberately undermined the coalition out of fear that the Socialists would dominate it. In the Communist party, several groups of dissident intellectuals called party policy and leadership into question. In the Socialist party as well, internal conflicts broke out, and by early 1979 the rivalry between François Mitterrand and Michel Rocard (former leader of the leftist Unified Socialist party whose position was now to the right of Mitterrand's) came out into the open.

Among the dissidents in the French Communist party—self-defined as “Communist critics”—were several Jews. One of them, Jean Elleinstein, the historian, had considerable influence among Communist students. Elleinstein advanced the idea that a new theory of socialism was needed, and that none of the principals of Marxist-Leninism could be taken for granted. Thus he, though personally a dejected Jew, was not prepared to challenge the nationalist conception of Jewishness. During a debate on the subject at the Jewish community center in Paris, he said it was appropriate to refer to Soviet Jews as “prisoners of Zion.” This attitude sharply differed from that of other influential Jewish Communists who clung to the old ways and preached assimilation. For example, André Wurmser, one of the leading writers for *L'Humanité*, continued to defend Soviet policy on the Jews and, in the face of all the evidence, denied the existence of Soviet antisemitism.

Guy Konopnicki, the Jewish leader of a Communist student group, went even further than Elleinstein. He demonstrated with Zionist students against Soviet antisemitism in front of the USSR offices, wearing a conspicuous Jewish insignia on his arm. Konopnicki gave literary expression to his views in a satirical book, *Long Live the 100-Year Anniversary of the French Communist Party*.

Foreign Affairs

The issue that enlivened foreign policy debates was European unity. Fear of a supranational European community, dominated by West Germany and directed by the United States, became the propaganda cry of both orthodox Gaullists and Communists. On this issue the division was not between left and right; there was far greater agreement between former council president Michel Debré, a fanatical Gaullist, and Communist party Secretary General Georges Marchais, than between Marchais and Mitterrand, the Socialist leader.

There was no significant change in the French attitude toward the Middle East conflict. Israel was still condemned, either explicitly or in broad hints, because it refused to accept the Palestinian state extolled by the PLO. France's resentment against her omission from all talks dealing with the Middle East peace treaty was reflected in sour comments about the Camp David agreement and the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Begin and Sadat. The pre-Six Day War friendship between France and Israel appeared to be finished, with no probability of renewal in the foreseeable future.

Antisemitism

The offices of MRAP (the communist-inspired Movement Against Racism and Antisemitism and for Peace) in and around Paris were attacked several times. In March 1978 the Paris office of Betar, the right-wing Zionist youth group, was dynamited; the explosion happened at night, so that no one was injured, although there was heavy damage. On July 14, Bastille Day, explosives placed at the apartment of Jean Dutourd, a contributor to the afternoon daily *France-Soir*, destroyed his home completely. A group belonging to the "Franco-Arab Rejectionist Front" claimed responsibility for the terrorist act against this non-Jewish writer, who was accused of being at the service of Jewry, and whose paper was charged with being an organ of Jewish interests. On May 20 three armed Palestinian terrorists managed to enter the El Al waiting room at Orly airport, where passengers were gathering before boarding a plane; the attempted attack failed, and all three terrorists were killed, as was a French security officer.

In April 1978 the synagogue in Drancy, a Paris suburb, was destroyed by fire. Drancy was the point of departure for tens of thousands of Jews sent in boxcars to Auschwitz during the German occupation. The immediate suspicion was that the fire was the work of terrorists, but after a police investigation it was judged to be accidental.

Heated discussions of the Darquier de Pellepoix affair ran for weeks in the Paris press. De Pellepoix, a virulent antisemite long before the war, had been commissioner of Jewish affairs in the Petain government, and had collaborated closely with Gestapo specialists in Jewish deportation. After the liberation, he found refuge in Spain, but was condemned to death *in absentia*. A reporter for the widely circulated liberal weekly *L'Express* went to Madrid to interview de Pellepoix, who was ill and intellectually deteriorated. When asked about his anti-Jewish activities, he declared that his antisemitism was well justified. De Pellepoix categorically denied the reality of the Holocaust, stating that at Auschwitz "they gassed only lice." The interview stirred up a storm of protest, with some people accusing the magazine's editors—among them a number of Jews, including the eminent Raymond Aron—of having given scandalous publicity to the obsessive, maniacal Jew-hatred of a war criminal. Others praised the editors for focusing on the barbarity of the Nazis and their French collaborators. The affair made the younger generation aware of an episode

in French history they knew little about; the subject, after all, received scant attention in the history books used in primary and secondary schools.

On the heels of the de Pellepoix affair came the case of Robert Faurisson, a professor of literature at the University of Lyon whose political position was unclear, but who had not been considered an extreme rightist. Launching into research far removed from his own specialty—the history of Hitler's concentration camps—he arrived at the conclusion that the gas chambers had never existed, that they were a pure invention whose purpose was to serve not truth, but tourism. "Gas Chambers and Crematories as a Tourist Attraction" was the title under which he lectured on the events of World War II. After he became the target of hostile student demonstrations, Faurisson suspended his lectures. MRAP and LICA (the International League Against Antisemitism) brought suit against him.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The Jewish population of France was estimated to be 650,000. Paris was the leading Jewish center, with a population of 300,000. Other important Jewish communities were Marseilles (65,000), Nice (20,000), Lyons (20,000), and Toulouse (18,000).

Communal Activities

The decline in contributions to the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU, United Jewish Philanthropic Fund), which began more than two years ago, continued through 1978, causing concern among leaders of Jewish social service agencies. FSJU concentrated on assisting business enterprises and cultural organizations.

Full-time Jewish schools, in Paris as well as the larger provincial cities, were badly hurt by a lack of funds. In the most important secondary schools—Yavneh and Maimonides in Paris, Sarcelles in the Paris suburbs, Akiba in Strasbourg, and others in Lyons and Marseilles—many scholarship requests were denied. There was also a shortage of teachers. As a partial remedy, an investment fund for Jewish schools was created with some help from the Israel government, which was deeply concerned about Jewish education in the Diaspora as an indispensable means of promoting Zionist ideology and encouraging *aliyah*. (The *aliyah* figure for 1978 was estimated to be around 1,000, and was made up primarily of intellectuals, religious Jews, and retired individuals.)

In May Israel's 30th anniversary was celebrated with great fanfare, not only in the big cities with large Jewish communities, but also in towns with few Jews. In many cases, municipal officials other than Communists participated.

Due to a lack of funds, the *Centre d'Information Pour le Moyen-Orient* (CIPM, Middle East Information Center), a documentation and liaison agency whose purpose was to counteract Arab propaganda, was closed down. Its demise caused great concern in Jewish circles.

One serious problem facing religious French Jews, particularly of the Consistory, was a severe shortage of rabbis. There were many reasons for this shortage, but one of them certainly was the meager salary paid French rabbis (except in Alsace and Lorraine, where a concordat provided for remuneration by the state). Another factor was that many of the most committed and best-educated rabbis were precisely those who gave up on the idea of living in France and went to Israel.

The central Consistory (still formally "of Israelites in France and Algeria"), as well as the Paris Consistory, were badly handicapped by the economic crisis and a lack of power. Nevertheless, in the Paris region, Consistory president Jean-Paul Elkanan and other leaders made a strong effort to promote religious observance. In Paris and its suburbs there were 62 Jewish community groups, 82 talmud torahs, and scattered post-bar mitzvah classes; the majority were subvented by FSJU. The Consistory organized *Tikavatenu*, a youth group whose purpose was to encourage the observance of Judaism.

Culture

There was a revival of interest in Yiddish language and culture, reflecting in part the growth of regionalism and ethnic autonomism in France. The award of the 1978 Nobel Prize for literature to Isaac Bashevis Singer greatly strengthened this trend, particularly among children of East European immigrants to France who were seeking "roots." This somewhat romantic neo-Yiddishism even attracted some Sephardic Jews of North African origin. A very active organization, the *Société pour la culture et la langue yiddish* (Society for Yiddish Culture and Language) was formed.

At the annual arts festival in Avignon, young actors presented a series of theater performances, "*Le Chant juif profond*" ("Deep Jewish Song"), which featured examples of Yiddish, Spanish-Jewish, and Arab-Jewish folklore.

Publications

Ce que je crois ("What I Believe," Grasset), by André Chouraqui, is the spiritual biography of a Jewish religious liberal. Brought up in a small Algerian town, Chouraqui from high school onward followed the pattern of most educated, middle class Jews in the country, taking the royal road to full integration into French culture, hence assimilation. As a student in Paris during the critical period of the late 1930's, he experienced a spiritual crisis which led him to return to the religion of his childhood. The process of return was intensified and broadened during his war years in the underground resistance. Chouraqui became a Zionist, serving as a

lawyer for the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* before moving to Jerusalem, where he pursued political and literary careers.

Another Algerian Jew, Shmuel Trigano, wrote a book a few years ago that demonstrated an original approach to Jewish spiritual life. His second book, *La Nouvelle Question Juive* ("The New Jewish Question," Gallimard), a penetrating view of the present crisis in Jewish civilization, concludes with a categorical condemnation of what Trigano calls "Jewish modernity."

Jacques Givet's *Le genocide inachevé* ("The Unfinished Genocide," Plon) is a sharp attack on leftist intellectuals who support the Palestinians and scorn Israel. Givet considers the anti-Zionism of these intellectuals to be a continuation of the eternal anti-Judaism that, on the one hand, denies Jewish existence and, on the other, blames Jews for existing.

The publication in French of a collection of essays *Fidélité et Utopie* ("Loyalty and Utopia," Calmann-Levy), by Professor Gershom Scholem, awakened the interest of the educated public, Jewish and non-Jewish, in the work and personality of this historian of Jewish mysticism.

Since Isaac Bashevis Singer won the Nobel Prize, almost all of his works have been published in French. The most recent was *Shosha* (Stock), a novel.

L'Amant ("The Lover," Calmann-Levy), an Israeli best-selling novel about the 1973 Yom Kippur War by Avraham B. Yehoshua, appeared in a French translation.

Vivre à Gurs ("Living at Gurs," Maspero), by Hanna Schramm and Barbara Vormeier, deals with one of the largest camps in the south of France under the Petain regime. There were thousands of German Jews at Gurs, but the two former inmates who wrote this account were non-Jewish anti-Nazis.

Les Juifs et l'idéologie ("The Jews and Ideology," Julliard), by Henri Arvon, is a penetrating study of socialist antisemitism.

Nous autres Juifs ("We Other Jews," Hachette), by Arnold Mandel, is a panoramic view of Jewish existence on several levels.

The 1978 WIZO Literary Prize was awarded to Leon Poliakov for *Europe Suicidaire* ("Suicidal Europe," Calmann-Levy).

ARNOLD MANDEL