Western Europe

Great Britain

Domestic Affairs

The dominating event of 1979 was the defeat at the polls of the Labor government, and its replacement by a Conservative administration headed by Margaret Thatcher. In the general election on May 3, the Conservatives secured an overall majority of 43 seats. In part, the Labor government’s unpopularity was due to a rash of strikes that lasted through the winter and into April; among the strikers were lorry drivers, hospital workers, and grave diggers. The Labor government was also embarrassed by the failure of its plans for devolution in Wales and Scotland; in separate referenda, four out of five Welsh voters opposed devolution, while the majority in Scotland was so small that the legislation lapsed.

The new Conservative government introduced a strict monetarist policy aimed at curtailing the growth of credit and restricting public expenditure. It removed all exchange controls and foreswore any attempt at a wage policy. Plans were also announced for curbing excessive trade union power. However, in November, the government had to increase the minimum lending rate from 14 to 17 per cent in order to restrain the growth of credit. Moreover, it had little success in controlling wage inflation, which, by the end of the year, was again approaching 20 per cent. Nor was industrial investment showing any sign of picking up. An engineers’ strike was settled, but at year’s end a threatened strike in the steel industry brought back memories of the previous winter of discontent.

All 301 right-wing National Front (NF) candidates in the general election were defeated; they gained a total of 191,267 votes, compared with the 114,415 votes obtained by 90 candidates in the previous general election. To counter the NF election effort, the Board of Deputies of British Jews issued some 2.5 million leaflets attacking the group. Leaflets were also distributed by the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), which reached agreement with the Board to keep in touch on an “informal friendly basis, exchanging information and ideas, and resolving . . . differences in a sensible fashion.” After violence occurred at NF marches through London’s Southall and Leicester in April, Board of Deputies president Lord Fisher condemned the policy of confrontation as practiced by the Socialist Workers’ party, Socialist Unity, and
other groupings of the extreme left. Their actions, Fisher stated, gave the NF “massive publicity, unmerited sympathy, and cast the neo-Nazis in the role of upholders of free speech.”

Relations with Israel

In March Prime Minister Callaghan publicly pledged Britain’s complete support for the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, “the first significant step toward a comprehensive settlement of the problems in the Middle East.”

Britain’s concurrence in the increasingly pro-Arab pronouncements of the European Economic Community brought a complaint from Zionist Federation (ZF) chairman Eric Moonman. In response, Lord Carrington, the Conservative foreign secretary, stated that “the government’s view is that the provisions of Resolution 242 for Israeli withdrawal apply to East Jerusalem just as to the other occupied territories; we have never recognized the validity of Israeli actions which purported to change the status of the city.” Carrington summarized government thinking in a speech at the United Nations in September, which stressed the need for Israel to cease its settlement policy in the occupied territories. Such settlements, he argued, prejudiced chances of progress in the autonomy talks. They also made it more difficult to achieve a comprehensive Middle East settlement “based on the effective application of Resolution 242 in all its parts.” A broad international consensus, Carrington stated, recognized that Resolution 242 was incomplete in not taking account of the political rights of the Palestinians. “This, I believe, is an area in which Resolution 242 may be supplemented,” he added. The British government believed that a settlement which did not “command the broad assent of the Palestinian people” could not last. However, if the Palestinians were to exercise the right to determine their own future as a people, “this had to be in the context of a negotiated peace settlement which guaranteed Israel’s right to a peaceful and permanent existence within secure boundaries.”

There was no change in the official attitude toward the PLO. As Prime Minister Thatcher put it in October:

We condemn without reservation Palestinian terrorism including terrorist acts carried out in Israel, and the occupied territories for which the PLO claims responsibility. Nevertheless the government continues to regard the PLO as primarily a political umbrella grouping whose views can not be ignored in the search for a comprehensive Middle East settlement. Without Palestinian acceptance, a lasting peace will not be possible, and the PLO plays an important part in the determination of Palestinian attitudes. We shall continue to urge on them acceptance of Resolution 242 and Israel’s right to exist within secure and recognized boundaries. Until they take this step, their wish to be accepted as a responsible party to the Arab-Israel dispute is likely to remain unfulfilled.

In September a new group, United Kingdom Palestine Coordination, opened a far-reaching campaign in support of the Palestinian cause. In October the general management committee of the Hackney North-Stoke Newington branch of the
Labor party passed a motion declaring "its opposition to the Zionist State of Israel" and fully supporting "the struggle of the Palestinian people for the liberation of their homeland and the establishment of a non-sectarian secular society in Palestine." In December the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding called on Great Britain to "take the initiative" in recognizing the PLO and reconvening the Geneva Conference.

In August the Jerusalem district court rejected a libel action by Christopher Mayhew and Michael Adams against the Israeli newspaper *Maariv*, ruling that their criticism of Israel and Zionism in *Publish It Not: The Middle East Cover Up* was, in fact, Nazi-like in character.

In April ZF's Jews in Arab lands committee drew the attention of United Nations secretary-general Kurt Waldheim to the plight of Syrian Jewry. In June the same committee protested against the executions of Habib Elghanian, the president of the Iranian Jewish community, and Mukhtaran Bascohen, an Iranian Jewess.

In October, despite Israeli protest, Britain agreed to sell Jordan 270 tanks.

**Arab Boycott**

With Britain's exports to the Arab world at over £3,000 million in 1978, government reaction to the recommendations of the select committee on Lord Byer's foreign boycott bill (see AJYB, 1980, Vol. 80, p. 199) was limited to new, firmer guidelines issued by the Department of Trade. The guidelines, which aimed at encouraging British businessmen to trade with both Israel and the Arab countries, restated government opposition to "all trade boycotts that lack international support and authority. Government policy is to maintain friendly relations with the Arab states and Israel, and it is therefore against the introduction into commercial documents and transactions of clauses and undertakings which are intended to restrict the commercial freedom of British firms to trade with all countries in the Middle East." Despite this, however, the foreign office decided in November to continue authenticating negative certificates of origin.

Although British imports from Israel increased in 1978 (to £189.2 million, from £159 million in 1977), British exports to Israel declined (to £243.6 million, from £274 million in 1977) as a result of the boycott, according to Lewis Goodman, retiring chairman of the Anglo-Israel Chamber of Commerce, which during 1979 held a series of seminars to promote trade with, and investment in, Israel. By August an upturn in trade was evident; British exports to Israel in the first six months of 1979 stood at £145 million, 15 per cent higher than in the comparable period in 1978, and imports at £120 million, up by 14 per cent.

In September the National Coal Board agreed to sell the Israel Electricity Board 250,000 tons of coal annually over a three-year period.

In February the Bank of England and the Treasury consented to the sale of Israel Bonds in Britain.
JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The Jewish population of Great Britain was estimated to be 410,000. Leading Jewish population centers were London (260,000), Manchester (35,000), Leeds (18,000), and Glasgow (13,000).

The Board of Deputies' research unit reported in July that synagogue marriages continued to decline; there was a total of 1,291 in 1978, 86 fewer than in 1977. The greatest proportional loss, with 89 marriages in 1978 as against 103 in 1977, was experienced by the traditionalist Orthodox element. Among the modern Orthodox, 895 marriages were recorded in 1978 as compared with 953 in 1977, while in the Reform-Liberal sector, the respective figures were 266 and 278. Total burials, at 4,901 in 1978, showed an increase of 152 over 1977, but were very close to the general community average. No synagogue grouping married more people than it buried, but Reform's proportion of young people marrying, at 13.6 per cent, continued to significantly exceed its proportion of deaths among the aged (9.8 per cent).

Communal Affairs

The revised constitution of the Board of Deputies, which came into force in June, implemented some of the recommendations that had been put forward in the Wolfkind and Mishcon reports. Innovations included provision for a youth committee and a ban on the election of deputies over 72 years of age as honorary officers or committee chairmen. Further plans, as announced by Greville Janner, the new Board of Deputies president, included the formation of a press and public relations committee whose purpose would be to change the Board of Deputies' image as "a public talking shop."

Lack of care facilities for an increasing elderly population continued to be a cause of communal concern. Hammerson House and Westmount, residential establishments managed by the London Jewish Housing Committee (LJHC), had a joint waiting list of 400. In December LJHC closed its waiting list for sheltered flatlets at 500, though organization director Alan Silverman indicated that government finance for further projects was available if suitable sites could be found. LJHC also provided flatlets for 223 people through such groups as the B'nai B'rith Housing Society, which opened its North-West London project in June, and the Westlon Housing Association, which, in March, acquired a Hendon, London site.

Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) executive director Melvyn Carlowe warned that spiralling inflation and government social-service cutbacks threatened JWB's residential establishments which had 432 places. JWB had reduced its waiting list to 150-170 by introducing such services as meals-on-wheels, friendship clubs, and day centers (including Michael Sobell House in North-West London, which was officially opened by Princess Margaret in September), and looked forward to making
still further progress in this regard when its Redbridge project opened (see AJYB, Vol. 80, 1980, p. 201), and if Birchlands Jewish Hospital in Wandsworth were transferred to Nightingale House, the home for aged Jews, as was mooted. Nightingale House had a waiting list of 300, according to executive director Asher Corren. In November work began on the first housing project for the elderly sponsored by the Leo Baeck Housing Association.

In December Jewish Blind Society (JBS) chairman David J. Lewis stated that because of the growth in number of elderly Jewish blind, JBS had acquired a site in London for a residential establishment.

In December Stuart Young, co-chairman of the Central Council for Jewish Social Services, announced the formation of an advisory council on the elderly that would investigate needs and suggest improvements in existing services.

In March plans were announced to extend Ravenswood Village's care for the mentally handicapped. In July Sidney Frosh, joint treasurer of the Jewish Children's Welfare Organization, reported that Norwood Homes for Jewish Children had purchased a building in Hendon to house handicapped children. In September the Barnet borough council gave its approval to a plan to erect a sheltered housing block on the Michael Sobell site to accommodate 20 disabled youth.

A National Jewish Youth Council was formed in January with the aims of attracting more Jews into youth movements, developing a unified youth policy, and pressuring communal organizations to increase resources for youth activities. In July the Council obtained representation on the Board of Deputies and the Conference of Solidarity with Israel.

In December Britain's Union of Jewish Students voted to secede from the World Union of Jewish Students.

In April the Board for Jewish Sport was formed.

Zionism and Aliyah

In June the conferences of ZF and the Mizrachi-Hapoel Hamizrachi Federation ratified a merger agreement to form the United Federation of Zionists. However, the plan had still not been implemented by year's end.

In May the Board of Deputies voted to accept Poale Zion as an affiliated organization.

In July Malvyn Benjamin, co-chairman of the Herut Movement of Great Britain, was appointed a judge of the Zionist Supreme Court.

Britain's aliya figure for 1978 stood at 1,005; this was 23 per cent higher than in 1977. The rise, attributed to more and better information being available about opportunities for settling in Israel, continued in the first eight months of 1979, when 949 people went on aliya.
Soviet Jewry

June Jacobs, chairman of the National Council for Soviet Jewry (NCSJ), stated in February that her organization had “no policy to press for withdrawal” from the Olympic games, and only sought to ensure that Israel participated on an equal basis. However, in November NCSJ called on the International Olympic Committee to urge the Soviet government to release Soviet Jewish prisoners of conscience before the games took place in Moscow.

Continued efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry frequently centered around individual refuseniks. Thus, in June, Ida Nudel Day provided an opportunity for a delegation of prominent women, organized by Conscience, to approach the prime minister. Political conferences were also utilized to obtain support, e.g., London and Liverpool members of the 35s (Women’s Campaign for Soviet Jewry) collected signatures at the Blackpool trade union congress in September; former refusenik Wulf Zalmonson addressed a gathering at the Labor party conference in September; and a delegation of Manchester 35s met with Prime Minister Thatcher at the Conservative party conference in October. In addition, there were protests by the 35s during a Soviet computer exhibition at Wembley in October and during a performance by “stars of the Soviet Union” from Lithuania at Glasgow’s King’s Theatre in November.

Non-Jewish support for Soviet Jewry was forthcoming in a variety of ways. In May the Greater Manchester Council decided to withhold subsidies to visiting Soviet delegations until “the USSR demonstrates that it has ceased persecuting its citizens in accordance with the Declaration of Human Rights.” In October the Sheffield City Council urged Soviet authorities in Donetsk in the Ukraine to commute death sentences imposed on four Jews. In December the prime minister and foreign secretary renewed their pledge to continue efforts for “basic human rights for Jews as well as for other minorities in the Soviet Union.”

In May an all-party parliamentary committee was set up to demand details of the fate of Raoul Wallenberg.

Religion

Synagogue Affiliation in the United Kingdom, 1977, published by the Board of Deputies’ research unit, placed total synagogue membership at 111,000, a decline of 6 per cent from the 1970 figure. Most of the decline was in Greater London, and was explicable in part by migration to surrounding areas and by decreased multiple memberships. A breakdown of membership in London indicated a shift from the modern Orthodox to both the traditional Orthodox and Progressive groups. The number of congregations (368 in 1970; 351 in 1977) and synagogue buildings (345 in 1970; 315 in 1977) fell because of amalgamations and closures arising from high operating costs.
In April the United Synagogue (US) set up a committee of honorary officers to review its financial structure and make recommendations for equitable communal taxation and simplified accounting methods.

Despite substantial salary increases for US ministers, readers, beadles, and clerical staff, there were ten major synagogue posts vacant in the 200 synagogues under the chief rabbi's jurisdiction. There was a shortfall in religious functionaries being trained at Jews' College; the school had produced only 12 ministers and nine cantors over the past seven years. In November Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits, in association with US and Jews' College, presented a scheme designed to change the system of appointing ministers. The plan called for the creation of a placement committee and the development of a career structure whereby ministers could expect promotion to more important posts over time.

There were no shortages of personnel in the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues, which had 23 synagogues, or in the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB), which had 29 congregations. A Leo Baeck College spokesman reported that 60 rabbis had been ordained since the school had opened in 1956. In July RSGB launched a £1 million appeal to establish a Reform Foundation that would fund an education department and provide material assistance to newly developed synagogues.

In April Chief Rabbi Jakobovits refused to join the Beth Din of the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations and several raseh yeshivot in a blanket denunciation of Reform and Liberal Judaism. He stated: "Where we differ (with the traditionalist Orthodox) is in how we deal with them (Reform and Liberal Judaism). I operate a clear line of demarcation. On matters on which we are united—Soviet Jewry, Israel, Jewish defense, Jewish-Christian relations—we cannot write them off."

In November the Federation of Synagogues announced that non-political religious Zionist societies would be established in all its synagogues.

The National Council of Shechita Boards launched a campaign in June to encourage the purchase of home-produced poultry products. This followed the announcement of expansion plans by the United Kingdom distributor of Empire Kosher Products, which were imported from the United States. An agreement in principle to amalgamate was reached in August by the Federation of Synagogues' Kashrus Board, the Sephardi Kashrut Authority, and the Kashrus Commission.

In June the US Council approved the appointment of Rabbi Isaac Dov Berger as full-time dayan of the London Beth Din.

**Jewish Education**

Five thousand more day school places in the 1980's were among the aims of the chief rabbi's Jewish Educational Development Trust (JEDT), which in October appealed for £1 million over a five-year period. Other objectives included a better balance between primary and secondary educational facilities (currently there are
five places in the former for every three in the latter); more nursery schools; an improvement in the quality of education; selective assistance to Jewish schools, particularly in less affluent areas; and increased contacts with Jewish pupils in non-Jewish schools. In the 1970's, JEDT had helped build six schools providing 1,400 places; had supported the expansion of four other schools serving over 3,000 pupils; had given financial assistance to ten schools to expand their Jewish studies offerings; had mounted rescue operations to ensure the continuation of three schools; and had provided teacher-training scholarships to over 100 individuals.

The total number of pupils attending classes administered by the London Board for Jewish Religious Education rose slightly to 9,251 in 1978. A fall in the number attending synagogue classes (6,249 in 1978 as against 6,407 in 1977) was more than offset by increased attendance at withdrawal classes. Classes in developing Jewish areas increased significantly. Following a Board decision, education fees for children of US members were raised so as to provide additional funds for teachers' salaries. It was hoped, said Board chairman Ronald Rabson, that more teachers would be available as a result.

New projects related to education included a program announced by Youth Aliyah providing tuition according to the English system for British secondary school pupils in Israeli schools, and a combined Jews' College-US scheme offering a wide range of courses on various facets of the Jewish tradition. Rabbi Jonathan Sachs, who was in charge of the latter project, explained that there was a new sense of urgency within Jews' College to bring its activities to the community at large.

In August B'nai B'rith First Lodge of England decided to establish a senior fellowship in memory of Sir Israel Brodie at the Oxford Center for Post-Graduate Hebrew Studies.

Publications

The *Jewish Chronicle* -Harold H. Wingate Literary Awards went to Emanuel Litvinoff for his novel, *The Face of Terror*, and to Nelly Wilson for her biographical study, *Bernard Lazare*.

Aspects of Zionism were treated in *Letters to my Israeli Sons* by Lynne Reid Banks; *The Left Against Zion*, edited by Robert Wistrich; and *The Palestine Triangle: The Struggle between the British, the Jews, and the Arabs, 1935–1948* by Nicholas Bethell. *Suez: The Double War* by Roy Fullick and Geoffrey Powell covered one episode in Israeli history. Other books about Israel included *The Land of Israel* by Hilla and Max Jacoby, and *The Israeli Air Force Story* by Murray Rubenstein and Richard Goldman.

Works on Jewish-Gentile relations included *Britain and the Jews of Europe* by Bernard Wasserstein; *Mussolini and the Jews* by Meir Michaelis; *Anti-semitism in British Society, 1876–1939* by Colin Holmes; *Political Anti-semitism in England, 1918–1939* by Gisela C. Lebzelter; and *Final Journey: The Fate of the Jews in Nazi Europe* by Martin Gilbert.
Aspects of contemporary English Jewish history were studied in The Streets of the East End by William J. Fishman; Bright Star of Exile by Lulla Rosenfeld; The Rothschilds at Waddesdon Manor by Mrs. James Rothschild; and A Coat of Many Colours: Memoirs of a Jewish Experience by Chaim Raphael.

Other Jewish historical works included The Jewish World, edited by Elie Kedourie; The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, Vol. II, by Emil Schürer, revised and edited by Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar; Civilizations of the Holy Land by Paul Johnson; and Ebla: An Archeological Enigma by Chaim Bermant and Michael Weitzman.

Religious studies included Shabbethai Sofer and his Prayer-Book by Stefan C. Reif; The Book of Daniel by Andre Lacocque; Two Prague Haggadahs, edited with an introduction by Chimen Abramsky; and A Backdoor to Heaven by Lionel Blue.

Works on Jewish art included Vision of the Temple by Helen Rosenau; Judaism by Michael Kaniel; and Hebrew Manuscript Painting by Joseph Gutmann.

Among notable works of fiction were Spring Sonata by Bernice Rubens; Raspberry Reich by Wolf Mankowitz; Sleeps Six by Frederic Raphael (who also published Cracks in the Ice, a collection of essays); Almonds and Raisins by Maisie Mosco; The Intruder by Gillian Tindall; and The Lost Tribe by Jack Ronder.

Personalia

British Jews who were made life peers in 1979 included Harold Lever, chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the Labor government; Sir Myer Galpern, former deputy speaker of the House of Commons; and George Strauss, former "father of the House" and one-time minister of supply. Knighthoods were conferred on Isaac Hai Jacob, Q.C., senior master of the Supreme Court and Queen's remembrancer; Raphael Tuck; and Montague Levine, Prime Minister Callaghan's physician. Harry Kenneth Woolf was knighted on his appointment as a High Court judge.

British Jews who died in 1979 included Sir Mark Henig, former lord mayor of Leicester and one-time chairman of the English Tourist Board, in January, aged 67; Alfred Bermel, leading Stepney personality, in January, aged 78; Arnold Harris, communal worker, in January, aged 84; Sissie Laski, Sephardi communal personality, in February, aged 84; Sir Israel Brodie, emeritus chief rabbi of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, in February, aged 83; Heinz W. Cassirer, philosopher, in February, aged 75; Claude Rogers, painter, in February, aged 72; Dennis Gabor, professor of applied electronic physics and Nobel Prize winner, in February, aged 78; Sir John Cohen, food retailer and philanthropist, in March, aged 80; Yvonne Mitchell, actress and writer, in March, aged 53; Leslie Paisner, solicitor, in April, aged 70; Sir Leon Bagrit, automation and electronics expert, in April, aged 77; David J. Kamhi, Semitic scholar, in April, aged 44; Maurice Orbach, communal worker and Zionist, in April, aged 76; Professor Alfred Bloch, engineer, in May, aged 74; Berty Gudansky, vice president, Federation of Women Zionists, in May, aged 75; Eric Ceadel, orientalist and Cambridge University librarian, in June, aged
58; Isidore Walton, Glasgow property magnate and philanthropist, in June, aged 66; Sir Charles Clore, industrialist, financier, and philanthropist, in July, aged 74; Sir Richard Jessel, banker, in July, aged 83; Reverend Dr. Reuben Brookes, Birmingham minister and author, in August, aged 65; Sir Otto Kahn-Freund, international law expert, in August, aged 78; Sir Ernst Boris Chain, bio-chemist and Nobel Prize winner, in August, aged 73; Reverend Isaac Livingstone, doyen of Anglo-Jewry, in September, aged 94; Professor Asher Winegarten, economist and statistician, in September, aged 57; Solomon Teff, Board of Deputies president 1964–1967, in September, aged 87; Rabbi Leib Lopian, joint principal, Gateshead yeshiva, in September, aged 69; Maurice Bannister, musician, in September, aged 82; Samuel, Lord Fisher of Camden, retiring Board of Deputies president, prominent in communal service, socialism, and local government, in October, aged 74; Leslie Grade, impresario, in October, aged 63; Sonnie Bloch, publisher, in October, aged 61; Harold Hyam Wingate, businessman and philanthropist, in October, aged 78; Sir Louis Halle Gluckstein, lawyer, civic leader, parliamentarian, and communal personage, in October, aged 82; Sir Ben Lewis Barnett, former deputy director-general, General Post Office, in November, aged 85; Rabbi Yaacov Gardyn, former rosh hashochetim of the London Beth Din and the Board of Shechita, in November; Ben Zion Beinart, Barber Professor of Jurisprudence, Birmingham University, in November, aged 65; Sydney Tafler, character actor, in November, aged 63; Anne Posnansky, honorary vice president, Federation of Women Zionists, in December; Jack Solomons, boxing promoter, in December, aged 77; Jack Ronder, author, in December, aged 55; Abba Bornstein, Orthodox communal leader and Zionist, in December, aged 79.
France

Domestic Affairs

In 1979 the gap widened between the partners in the Socialist-Communist opposition coalition, with Communist secretary-general Georges Marchais accusing Socialist leader François Mitterrand of supporting Giscard d'Estaing's administration. On September 20, for the first time since the defeat of the left in the 1978 presidential elections, there was a summit meeting of Socialist and Communist leaders. Their disagreements persisted, but they decided to "encourage any convergences that might manifest themselves."

Inside the Socialist party, the conflict grew more bitter between Mitterrand and Pierre Rocard, an aspirant to party leadership whose popularity in the polls rose at the same time that Mitterrand's steadily declined. This development raised the possibility that Rocard might become the coalition's presidential candidate in the 1981 elections. At the 23rd Communist party congress in May some intellectuals openly dissented from the party line.

Antisemitism

There was a running debate as to whether antisemitism in France was on the rise or on the wane. To judge by the public opinion polls, overt antisemitism, i.e., a categorical rejection of Jews, was clearly declining. Thus, more Frenchmen today than in the past were prepared to accept a Jewish president of the republic, or a Jewish son- or daughter-in-law. At the same time, however, there was strong evidence of a rise in racist sentiment, which, for the moment, expressed itself primarily in a hostility toward Arabs.

Any consideration of the status of antisemitism had to take account of the ideological ascendancy of the "New Right." Reaping a great moral and political harvest from the malaise and decrepitude of French Marxism, "New Right" ideologues, such as Louis Pauwels and Alain de Benoist, advanced ideas very close to some elements of late 19th-century racism, the precursor of Hitlerian ideology. The "New Right" intellectuals spoke out in opposition to Judeo-Christian morality and praised not only classical Greek paganism, but also pre-Christian German and Celtic paganism. The proponents of these ideas were highly cultivated men, trained in science and philosophy; their style of writing and debate was refined, free of the vulgar language found in most racist propaganda. "New Right" spokesmen denied that they were antisemitic, pointing out that they did not seek discriminatory measures against Jews, and condemned Nazi crimes. Their racism, however, had clearly dangerous implications.
One organization which was considered part of the "New Right" was Groupe-ment de Recherche et d'Étude sur la Civilisation (Research and Study Group on Civilization), which organized a colloquium in Paris in December. Some young Jews claiming to be members of the Organisation Juive de Défense (Jewish Defense Organization) attacked the meeting hall where the colloquium was being held and, in the ensuing brawl, people on both sides were wounded.

Various Jewish delegations went to Cologne to attend the trial of Kurt Lischka, a Nazi who was accused of responsibility for deporting French Jews. The delegations marched through the streets of the Rhine city where, according to reports, young Germans repeatedly expressed their sympathy and solidarity.

In Paris, anti-Jewish graffiti proliferated, mostly in subway corridors, but also on the walls of synagogues, including the great synagogue on the rue de la Victoire. The usual message was "Les Juifs dehors!" (Jews Out!).

There was a hint of antisemitism in the campaign against the legalization of contraceptive devices, a measure associated with Simone Veil, a former cabinet minister who was now president of the Council of Europe. At the Council headquarters in Strasbourg, demonstrations by peasants against price-setting formulas for agricultural products were accompanied by antisemitic harangues of Veil.

The broadcast of Holocaust in France did not have the great impact it had in West Germany, although it was widely discussed in high school classes and other forums. Criticism of the production in the press and elsewhere faulted its "fabricated" quality.

In December Pierre Goldman, a staff member of the extreme-left newspaper Liberation, who had been released from a long prison term the year before, was shot dead near his Paris home. A clandestine organization calling itself "police honor" (although completely unknown to the authorities) claimed responsibility. It was believed that the killing was a protest against Goldman's acquittal at a second trial (in 1976) for murder, after being found guilty in the first. Although it was not certain that antisemitism was the motive for his assassination, it seemed probable, and the crime was attributed to one of France's extreme-right, pro-fascist, antisemitic groups. Nothing came of the police investigation.

Goldman, a tragic figure in the post-war generation, was a fascinating personality. The son of a Polish immigrant and Jewish resistance fighter, he became a militant in various Communist youth movements. Subsequently, he joined the ultra-revolutionary underground, became a guerrilla in Latin America, returned to Paris where he evaded military service, and took to crime. Charged with four holdups and a murder, Goldman confessed to the former crimes, but vigorously denied the latter one. He spent six years in prison, during which he acquired several university degrees and wrote a moving book, Mémoires obscures d'un Juif polonais né en France ("Dark Memories of a Polish Jew Born in France"), in which he showed an acute Jewish consciousness, and rejected all connection with the anti-Israel, pro-Palestinian attitudes of his leftist friends. After his release, Goldman joined the staff of
Liberation, but also wrote for the Jewish press, especially L’Arche. He was 35 years old the day he died.

At lunch time on March 26, a violent explosion shook the area of Le Foyer Medicis, a Paris kosher restaurant frequented by Jewish university students, leaving some 30 wounded. Because the attack occurred the day after the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty had been signed, it was assumed that it was the work of "Palestinian" terrorists. No organization claimed responsibility, and the police failed to find the perpetrators. The day after the incident, Jewish and anti-racist organizations held a protest rally in front of the wrecked restaurant.

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

In her report to the annual meeting of the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU, United Jewish Philanthropic Fund), Secretary-General Nicole Goldman predicted that the number of "social cases" requiring assistance would decrease progressively as a result of general material prosperity among Jews in France. The budget report by FSJU treasurer David de Rothschild indicated that the organization's 12 million franc deficit had been reduced by half, following an agreement with the Jewish Agency on a new formula for apportioning funds between Israel and local programs. The FSJU budget was expected to increase.

On November 22 a special meeting of the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives en France (CRIF, Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France) discussed possible action against the projected visit of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chief Yasir Arafat, which was considered an "offense to the Jewish community." It was decided to undertake an information campaign exposing the PLO's true aims and its direct responsibility for terrorist murders in Israel and elsewhere.

Immediately after his accreditation, the new Israeli ambassador, Meir Rosenne, was received by Jewish organizations, including the World Jewish Congress, FSJU, and CRIF. Avi Primor succeeded Abraham Ben-Ami as director of services for the Jewish Agency. Primor was also delegate-general of the World Zionist Organization.

A new organization, Renouveau Juif (Jewish Renewal), was created to gather Jewish youth into a mass movement. Its chief promoter was Henri Hajdenberg, a
young lawyer, who felt that the French Jewish community was showing increased vitality but seemed unable to properly channel it. Hajdenberg's aim was to develop a "Jewish power politics" in France modeled on the U.S. pattern. Renouveau Juif enjoyed the approval of the Jewish Agency, as it supported the Israeli government without reservation and vigorously opposed Giscard d'Estaing's Middle East policy.

It was estimated that 1,700 French Jews went on aliyah in 1979.

Religion

As the retirement of France's octogenarian chief rabbi, Jacob Kaplan, drew near, the question arose as to who would be his successor. Kaplan declined to take a stand on the matter, thus leaving the choice to an electoral college made up of delegates from all the Jewish communities in the country. The leading candidate was thought to be Strasbourg's chief rabbi, Max Warchavski, who, like Rabbi Kaplan, was a Zionist. The post of chief rabbi of Paris, vacant since 1978, had not yet been filled by year's end.

Institutionalized religious life in France continued with little change. Only 15 per cent of Jewish schoolchildren received a religious education. On the other hand, 90 per cent of deceased Jews were buried in traditional religious manner.

If there was little change in the pace of community-sponsored religious life, there was a noticeable growth in activity by marginal groups such as the Lubavitcher hasidim, whose proselytizing attracted more and more attention in various circles of Jewish youth, including the assimilated. The Lubavitcher activists did not propagate a specific hasidic doctrine, but rather encouraged the observance of basic religious commandments. Only a short time ago, the militant hasidim were mostly Yiddish-speaking East Europeans, but now almost all spoke French and many were of North African origin. The contemporary Jewish scene in France, certainly in Paris, was being greatly affected by their distinctive presence.

The synagogues at Reims and Dijon celebrated their 100th anniversaries in 1979. Among those present at the ceremonies were municipal authorities, regional representatives to the national parliament, and Chief Rabbi Jacob Kaplan. In honor of the Dijon centennial, the postal authorities issued a stamp bearing a picture of the synagogue. The synagogue at Drancy, a Paris suburb, which had been badly damaged by an accidental fire in 1978, was restored; the Communist mayor attended the rededication.

Jewish Education

The Maimonides School of Paris, the first Jewish lycée (high school) in France, acquired land on which to erect a new building accommodating 750 students.

At the initiative of FSJU, three forums, one in Paris and two in the provinces, were held on ways of spreading Jewish culture. The participants expressed great
concern about widespread Jewish illiteracy in France, and gave thought to the possibility of creating "people's universities" offering Jewish studies.

Courses in modern Hebrew were being taught in about ten high schools in the Paris region and in about 20 others in the provinces. This development reflected the growing acceptance of Hebrew as a first or second living language meeting the requirements for the baccalaureate examinations.

In Paris, Yiddish was taught on the university level at the School for Eastern Languages, at the Faculty of Letters, and at the Centre Universitaire d'Études Juives (CUEJ, University Center for Jewish Studies). There were also teaching chairs in Judeo-Spanish (Ladino) and Judeo-Arabic.

**Jewish Culture**

Neo-Yiddishism, as a cultural expression with a non-Zionist, if not anti-Zionist, political connotation, was a growing tendency among young Jews who had broken wholly or partly with the anarchic leftism of the May 1968 "revolution." The neo-Yiddishist movement aligned itself more or less with the regionalism or autonomism now popular among several of France's ethnic groups—Corsicans, Bretons, and Languedocians. Among Jews, it created a paradoxical situation—regionalism without a region. The concrete expressions of this trend were productions of some plays and the reading of Yiddish works in French translation. At the end of the year a new periodical reflecting neo-Yiddishism, *Combat pour la Diaspora* (Fight for the Diaspora), was launched; its young promoters, some of them former members of leftist groups or the Communist party, preached secular Jewish cultural autonomy.

Parallel to the Yiddish trend, in a cause and effect relation to it and with the same generation of French Jews involved, one could see the outlines of a Sephardic cultural and political revival which expressed itself in terms of a principled support for diasporism. Toward the end of the year, an Association of Arab Jews was organized, with a pro-Palestinian bias, but with very meager resources. A Spanish-language branch of Sephardism functioned mostly around the Hispanic studies departments of the universities which offered Ladino.

**Publications**

There was a surge of novels by Jews of North African origin. *Balace Bounel* (Éditions Ramsay), by Marco Coscas, which won a literary prize, is a humorous, folkloristic evocation of the Jewish community in a small Tunisian town. *Sud profond* ("Deep South," Éditions des Autres), by Maurice Partouche, is about Jewish childhood in the Algerian city of Oran.

*Le sang de l'autre* ("Blood of the Other," Albin Michel), by Henri Mechoulam, is an important historical work about Jewish fate under the Spanish inquisition.

*Un peuple de trop sur la terre* ("A Superfluous People on the Earth," Presses
d'Aujourd'hui), by Wladimir Rabi, is a diatribe against the Jewish establishment in France. Rabi is a well-known Jewish leftist.

The 1979 WIZO Prize went to Nous autres Juifs ("We Other Jews," Hachette), by Arnold Mandel.

**Personalia**

Joseph Kessel, the famous novelist, reporter, and member of the Académie Française, died in Paris in July. Born in Argentina of Polish and Russian Jewish parents, he was brought to France as a young child, fought in the Air Force during World War I, and in the 1920's won great fame for his reportage and adventure stories. He was one of the first French authors to write, in a novel entitled Terre d'amour ("Land of Love"), about Jewish Palestine. He became a correspondent during Israel's War of Independence. His introductory address to the French Academy after his election included a clear declaration that he was a foreign-born Jew.

Arnold Mandel