Western Europe

Great Britain

Domestic Affairs

There was no relaxation in the strict monetarist policy of the Conservative administration in 1980. This policy did have some success in reducing the rate of inflation, which had reached a four-year high in April at 21.8 per cent. However, there was a rise in unemployment, which in December reached a post-war record high of 2,133,000, and an 8 per cent drop in industrial output. It was the private sector which bore the brunt of the government’s policy—particularly those industries which were exposed to international competition. The public sector, which the government was pledged to curb, actually flourished by contrast. Total public-sector pay rose in 1980 by 25 per cent. Moreover, there was no cutback in the amount of goods, services, and above all, labor, which the government consumed.

There was no real sign that the Labor opposition would be able to effectively exploit the government’s embarrassment over the economic situation. In local elections in May, Labor gained at the expense of the Conservatives; in a by-election in Southend East the Conservative majority was cut from 10,774 to 430; in Glasgow Central the government candidate lost his deposit. On the other hand, the “day of action” organized by the Trades Union Congress in May was observed only in a sporadic and patchy way. The Labor party moved to the left when James Callaghan resigned as leader in October and was replaced by Michael Foot. This was accompanied by measures to increase extra-parliamentary influence on the party. It was thought likely that these steps would further alienate the party from the mass of the electorate and thus leave the government all the freer to implement its chosen policies.

Relations with Israel

Britain’s Middle East policy sought to take account of both Israel’s right to exist within secure boundaries and the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to a homeland.
Douglas Hurd, foreign office minister of state for Middle East affairs, called for the participation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip autonomy talks. While the government repeatedly denied that there was any change in the status being accorded the PLO, Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington argued that the organization might now be “prepared to accept a compromise in which Israel and a Palestinian homeland will co-exist in peace.” In May a senior PLO official was received at the foreign office in pursuit of Britain’s support for a European diplomatic initiative. In December Sir John Graham, deputy permanent under-secretary in charge of Middle East affairs at the foreign office, met with PLO leader Yasir Arafat in Beirut.

Although Hurd welcomed the progress made by Egypt and Israel at Camp David and expressed support for continuing negotiations, he said that Britain and her European Economic Community (EEC) partners were “ready to play a full part in the peace efforts.” In February Foreign Secretary Carrington called for the amendment of security council resolution 242 to take account of the Palestinians’ demand for self-determination. In July Prime Minister Thatcher described the EEC Venice statement, proposing the PLO as a partner in the Middle East negotiations and calling for self-determination for the Palestinians, as a useful basis on which the EEC could attempt to work with the parties concerned.

In July Foreign Secretary Carrington said that the continuous expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories made peace more difficult to achieve. Britain’s fundamental commitment to Israel did not extend to her actions as an occupying power, he indicated. Although Britain abstained in a UN vote in July demanding Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories (including East Jerusalem), Lord Chancellor Hailsham stated in November that Britain rejected the move to transfer Prime Minister Begin’s office to East Jerusalem. Since 1967 the British government had maintained that Israel’s rights in East Jerusalem did not extend beyond those of an occupying power, pending an agreed solution to the city’s future.

Jewish communal leaders from the Common Market countries, meeting in London in March, decided to campaign vigorously to persuade their respective governments not to recognize the PLO or to take initiatives liable to upset the West Bank and Gaza Strip autonomy negotiations between Israel and Egypt. Protests about British government Middle East policy continued throughout the year, led by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, which used every opportunity to put its case before the government.

The Conservative Middle East Council, a new pro-Arab parliamentary group, sought to promote understanding and good relations between Britain and the Arab countries. Its immediate political objective was to press “for the recognition of the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people which is a necessary condition for establishing lasting peace in the Middle East.” The Council pledged “to support initiatives such as that currently being proposed by the British and European governments.”

In March Labor Friends of Israel was relaunched, with Doug Hoyle serving as director, and former prime minister Harold Wilson serving as president. In July the
organization's parliamentary group, announcing increased membership of 125, gave unqualified support to the Camp David agreement and urged the PLO to abandon its call for Israel's destruction.

In November five leading Liberal MP's dissociated themselves from a report prepared by a Liberal party mission to the Middle East (led by David Steele), which concluded that no Middle East solution was possible without PLO involvement; that Jerusalem could not be the sole territorial preserve of Israel; that the Jerusalem law had no international validity; and that the West Bank and Gaza Strip should be a Palestinian homeland. The Liberal Friends of Israel Association condemned the report as ill-timed and ill-considered.

During the first nine months of 1980 the British-Israeli trade balance shifted in Israel's favor for the first time, said Cecil Parkinson, British minister of state at the trade department. With British exports to Israel at £175 million and imports at £185 million, Israel was Britain's eighth most important Middle East trade partner.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The Jewish population of Great Britain was estimated to be 390,000. Leading Jewish population centers were London, Manchester, Leeds, and Glasgow.

The Board of Deputies research unit reported in June that total synagogue marriages rose to 1,303 in 1979 from 1,291 in 1978. This was the first rise since 1970. The figure, however, was still below the 1975-1979 average of 1,391. The right-wing Orthodox sector increased its share (taking 8.4 per cent of the total in 1979, as against 6.9 per cent in 1978), as did the Reform movement (15.3 per cent in 1979, as against 13.6 per cent in 1978). The Central Orthodox group lost ground (65.5 per cent in 1979, as against 69.3 per cent in 1978), while the Sephardi and Liberal shares remained virtually unchanged.

Burials and cremations under Jewish religious auspices rose to 4,889 in 1979, from 4,801 in 1978.

In May the Jewish Marriage Council expressed deep concern over the rising divorce rate, and in August the London Beth Din sent notices to United Synagogue members asking "parties involved in civil divorce to arrange a get without delay."

Communal Affairs

Media attacks on Israel and Zionism, coupled with attempts to legitimate the PLO, created a sense of unease in the Jewish community "unlike anything we have experienced since the 1930's," said Board of Deputies secretary-general Hayim Pinner in April. The worsening economic situation, reports of synagogue vandalism (there were seven robberies reported in London's Stamford Hill area over Passover), and frequent National Front (NF) activity heightened apprehension.
In June the Board of Deputies asked Home Secretary William Whitelaw to restrict NF activities by prohibiting marches whose “purpose is, or effect would be, to intimidate, insult, or humiliate any ethnic group or to cause racial disharmony.”

British Jewry's security arrangements were strengthened in July after eight attacks on Jewish property or institutions were reported. In October Jacob Gewirtz, the executive director of the Board of Deputies' defense department, stated that violence resembling the 1980 Paris synagogue attack was possible in Great Britain but less likely because British police were more cognizant of fascist groups and had shown greater awareness of the danger. Home Secretary Whitelaw told a Board of Deputies delegation that the British government would do everything in its power to protect its Jewish citizens.

In November the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) announced a campaign to take to the streets to combat an alleged new wave of violence and propaganda by extreme right-wing groups against black, Asian, and Jewish targets. Seventy-three arrests followed clashes between ANL and British Movement (BM) members during a BM march through London's Paddington area.

In *Anglo-Jewry—An Analysis*, part of an Institute of Jewish Affairs worldwide survey, Jane Moonman argued that the British Jewish community was “the envy of the world” for its fund-raising activities and Soviet Jewry campaign. British Jewry, however, lagged behind in the areas of education, culture, and youth work. Registering awareness of these shortcomings, the Board of Deputies' executive, in April, approved a memorandum suggesting a key role for the Board in establishing a Jewish Cultural Association. In July the United Synagogue (US) council accepted a report on youth and education providing for the establishment of a youth and community service department and the appointment of a director, administrative assistant, and two additional area youth officers.

In June Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) executive director Melvyn Carlowe proposed a new five-year plan emphasizing home aid service for the handicapped, small group housing for the mentally handicapped, expansion of JWB's day care system, and the increased use of voluntary workers. JWB was slated to provide non-financial support at a new League of Jewish Women day center in London scheduled to open in January 1981.

In April the Jewish Blind Society completed the purchase of a northwest London site for a home for the elderly.

Peter Shaw, the new executive director of Norwood Homes for Jewish Children, announced that the organization planned to increase its non-residential aid. Norwood was becoming increasingly involved in work with the mentally handicapped through its association with Ravenswood Village, and Kisharon day school in London's Golders Green.

Nightingale House, the home for aged Jews, accommodating some 400 people, completed negotiations with the department of health and social security to repurchase Birchlands Jewish Hospital, providing 56 extra places. In August the department announced that it would hand back Bearsted Memorial Hospital, North London to the Jewish community for “social service purposes.”
In May the Kenton Jewish Youth Center and the Oxford and St. George North London Jewish Center, Totteridge were opened. A new youth center at London's Western Synagogue was formally opened in July.

In September the British ORT Trust was established to undertake specialist education projects in Great Britain.

Zionism

In May the World Sephardi Federation of Great Britain became the thirteenth organization to join the Zionist Federation (ZF), which claimed a total membership of over 60,000, with more than 600 affiliated societies, organizations, and synagogues. Though merger documents linking ZF and the Mizrachi Federation were signed in March, the merger conference to form the United Federation of Zionists was deferred. Alleged irregularities in the elections held at ZF's biennial conference in May, when Herut gained two key inner executive positions and 23 places overall (as against the United Zionists' ten), were investigated by a three-man board of inquiry. When ZF's executive officers decided not to publish the full findings (a summary which was issued disclosed insufficient irregularities to invalidate the elections), Poale Zion, which won only eight places, suspended all activities with ZF. The boycott was lifted in December after ZF chairman Geoffrey Gilbert provided assurances that future elections would be democratically based.

In April a coordinating committee of students and youth movement members was organized by the Union of Jewish Students and the Israeli Students' Association. The aim of the committee was to counter increased efforts by the PLO to gain recognition, and followed a series of unsettling events: the disruption of "Israel Week" by the Palestinian Solidarity Society at Salford University in January; a demonstration by the General Union of Palestinian Students, the General Union of Arab Students, and the British Anti-Zionist Organization outside London's Hillel House in February; and a successful anti-Zionist debate at University College, Cardiff in March. On the positive side, a Manchester University Union motion condemned the PLO in February, and pro-Arab motions were defeated by the Cambridge Union Society in March and the Oxford Union in November.

The ruler of Dubai gave £750,000 to Exeter University after a conference was organized by the university's center for Arab gulf studies. Following reports by Israeli academics that their applications to participate in the conference were refused, the Academic Study Group on Israel and the Middle East (representing some 600 academics at British universities) asked the Association of University Teachers to take measures against Exeter University for discrimination.

Soviet Jewry

Jewish and non-Jewish groups continued their activities on behalf of Soviet Jewry. In January a petition signed by over 2,000 delegates to the three political party conferences was unsuccessfully presented to the Soviet embassy in London. In
March International Woman's Day publicized the plight of refusenik Ida Nudel; women MP's and members' wives formed the Ida Nudel Committee.

As a protest against the Moscow Olympics, a "competing for freedom" campaign was launched in February, supported by the Union of Jewish Students, the Student and Academic Campaign for Soviet Jewry, and the National Union of Students. In May the National Council for Soviet Jewry held "freedom games" in Birmingham; in July it inserted a petition in The Times condemning the treatment of Soviet Jews. A message from Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to the group stated: "Like you, the government believes that the record of the Soviet Union in human rights is inconsistent with the Olympic ideal."

The National Council for Soviet Jewry petitioned Prime Minister Thatcher in November to urge the Soviet Union at the Madrid conference to free all Jewish prisoners of conscience, and allow them and all refuseniks to be reunited with their families in Israel according to the terms of the Helsinki agreement. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Peter Blaker said that the government intended to draw the conference's attention to the problems of Soviet Jewry. In December a motion supported by MP's from both major parties expressed regret at the Soviet Union's failure to comply with its undertakings in the Helsinki agreement.

At the Madrid conference the British government asked the Soviet Union to reopen inquiries into the fate of Raoul Wallenberg.

Over 80 events were organized throughout the Jewish communal spectrum during Solidarity Week with Soviet Jewry in December.

Religion

In July the US council voted to create a placement committee for ministers, to operate for an experimental two-year period.

In December a 7.5 per cent surcharge was added to the membership contributions required of US synagogue members. The surcharge was intended to cover rising operating costs, as well as to provide for increased allocations to the London Board of Jewish Religious Education and other communal and charitable organizations. Executive committee recommendations dealing with changed communal taxation, recognition of only one type, instead of two, of constituent synagogues, and the extension of the contingency fund to cover all constituent synagogues were accepted by the US council in May.

Remarks by Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits, affirming his faith in an eventual Arab-Israeli accommodation, aroused criticism both in Israel and at home.

A grant from the Jewish Chronicle, announced in April, enabled Malcolm Weisman to continue his work as minister to the small communities.

Following Solomon Gaon's resignation in April as haham and av beth din of the Association of Sephardi Congregations in Great Britain, the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Congregations' board of elders voted for the joint ecclesiastical authority of Abraham Levy as communal rabbi and Pinchas Toledano as posek.
In February Kashrus Commission president Frank Levine cited ecclesiastical problems as standing in the way of further negotiations on the amalgamation of London's kashruth authorities. Salary increases for staff members of the London Board for Shechita led to a 15 per cent rise in shechita fees in September. In December Jack Lopian, president of the National Council of Shechita Boards, announced the establishment of a shechita liaison committee.

In December the Board of Deputies set up a committee of inquiry "to consider and make recommendations on all aspects of the manufacture, sale, and distribution of kosher food with particular reference to Pesach."

**Jewish Education**

Mark Carlisle, secretary of state for education, told the *Jewish Chronicle* the best hope for more funded Jewish school places lay in the granting of aided status to previously independent Jewish schools, as well as in enlargement projects of schools already aided. In October Carmel College, the only British Jewish public school, was invited by the department of education and science to participate in the government's assisted places scheme, providing financial assistance with fees on a sliding scale linked to family income.

In May the foundation was laid for the £2 million Brent Jewish primary school in Wembley, London, to open in autumn 1981 with some 560 pupils. The Jewish Educational Development Trust (JEDT) was to assume responsibility for capital costs, while Brent council would take care of running expenses.

Due to a forecast 41 per cent rise in operating costs, the London Board of Jewish Religious Education decided to cut mid-week classes substantially, to close part-time classes that were no longer economically viable, and to reduce the number of teachers provided for Jewish day schools. However, the Board's planned regionalization and reorganization program, designed to improve the quality of Hebrew school education, would not be affected. That program aimed to cut the number of London Board centers to 35 (from 55), reduce staffing levels correspondingly, and increase the number of centers for post-bar mitzvah students. With teaching staff down from 400 to 250, a reserve pool to fill vacancies could be created. All new teachers would henceforth attend the teacher training faculty administered by Jews' College, the Torah department, and the Board. Currently, 42 teachers were being trained for part-time Hebrew classes, said Board director Michael Cohen.

In April a national campaign to deepen Anglo-Jewry's knowledge of Hebrew prayer and religious practices was launched by the Yakar educational foundation in Stanmore, Middlesex. In October the Midrashah Institute for Israeli Studies was established to assist synagogues and local communities to organize courses dealing with Israel and Jewish life.

In February announcement was made of a Sir Israel Brodie memorial fellowship in modern diaspora studies at the Oxford Center for Post-Graduate Hebrew Studies. In November the Jacob and Shoshana Schreiber fellowship in the history of contemporary Judaism was set up.
Publications

In January the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's London bulletin ceased publication after nearly 60 years of uninterrupted service. In March the Jewish Memorial Council's bookshop in London reopened. A new Jewish bookshop opened to handle Jewish Chronicle publications.

The Jewish Chronicle—Harold H. Wingate Literary awards went to Nicholas Bethell for The Palestine Triangle and to Avraham Yehoshua for his novel Early in the Summer of 1970.


Among other Jewish historical works were Philo of Alexandria: An Introduction by Samuel Sandmel; A Hidden Revolution: The Pharisees' Search for the Kingdom Within by Ellis Rivkin; and Temples and Temple-Services in Ancient Israel by Menahem Haran.


Books about Israel and Zionism were The Israeli Mind by John Laffin; Israel Observed: An Anatomy of the State by William Frankel; People of Old Jerusalem by Papas; Belonging by James McNeish; Lewis Namier and Zionism by Norman Rose; and No Victor. No Vanquished: The Yom Kippur War by Edgar O'Ballance.

Autobiographical and biographical works included No Time for Tears, the first volume of Sidney Bloch's autobiography; Hitler by Norman Stone; and Forty Years a Chief Rabbi (dealing with Anglo-Jewry's first chief rabbi, Solomon Hirschell) by Hyman Simons.

Notable works of fiction were Under Plum Lake by Lionel Davidson; Joshua Then and Now by Mordecai Richler; and Abracadabra! by Wolf Mankowitz. Collections of short stories included Thin Ice by Norman Levine; Oxbridge Blues by Frederic Raphael; and The Silent Years by Elaine Feinstein.

General publications of interest included Yiddish: A Survey and a Grammar by Solomon Birnbaum; The Limbo People, Haim Hazan's study of life in a London Jewish day center; and Jewish Perspectives, an anthology of poetry, prose, and illustrations from the first 25 years of the Jewish Quarterly, selected and edited by Jacob Sonntag.

Personalia

Two British Jews to be made life peers in 1980 were Sir Marcus Joseph Sieff, chairman of Marks and Spencer, and Sir Arnold Weinstock, managing director of
the General Electric company. Professor Max Beloff, principal of University College, Buckingham, was knighted. Ralph Benjamin, chief scientist of the government communications headquarters, was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath.

British Jews who died in 1980 included Erich Kahn, Expressionist painter, in London, in February, aged 75; Mark Wayner, artist, in Saffron Walden, Essex, in February, aged 89; Leslie Zisman, engineer and designer, in February, aged 51; Sammy Fineberg, who, as Sammy Kern, composed popular songs, in February, aged 79; Elizabeth de Rothschild, wife of Edmund, at Exbury, Hampshire, in February; Astor Balfour Sclare, authority on drug addiction and alcoholism, in February, aged 57; Leonard Kirsch, lawyer and communal worker, in March, aged 83; Louis Caplan, former lord mayor of Liverpool and communal worker, in March, aged 68; Erna Nonnenmacher, sculptor, in March, aged 90; Sir Ludwig Guttman, pioneer in treating and rehabilitating the paralyzed, in March, aged 80; Gerald Abrahams, Liverpool barrister, chess master, and writer, in March, aged 72; Ivor Adelman, artist and designer, in March, aged 62; Percy Schwarzschild, stockbroker and communal worker, in April, aged 91; Arnold Sorsby, ophthalmologist, in Worthing, Sussex, in May, aged 79; Mark Goulden, publisher and journalist, in May, aged 78; Michael Oppenheimer, former Jewish Chronicle board of directors chairman, at Edenbridge, Kent, in June, aged 96; Dora Goldstein, treasurer of the Federation of Women Zionists, in July; Peter Sellers, actor, in London, in July, aged 54; Saul Rosenberg, president, Manchester Yeshiva for over 40 years, in July, aged 81; Jacob Leveen, former keeper of the British Museum's department of oriental printed books, in Cambridge, in August, aged 89; Jan Dawson, writer and film critic, in London, in August, aged 41; Margaret Langdon, founder, Delamere Forest School, Cheshire, in August, aged 89; Isaac Michael Duparc, secretary for 48 years, St. John's Wood, London, Liberal Synagogue, in August, aged 99; Jack Widdis, British Communist party activist, in September, aged 65; Hyman Gee, Jewish Welfare Board supporter, in September, aged 82; Meier Tzelniker, character actor and doyen of the Anglo-Yiddish theatrical scene, in October, aged 82; Joseph Cowen, distinguished civil servant, in October, aged 83; Bevis Gordon, psychiatrist, in October, aged 57; Lina Halper, communal worker and major supporter of the Friends of the Hebrew University, in November, aged 96; Cecil Gee, businessman, in November, aged 77; Sir Samuel Salmon, former president and chairman of J. Lyons and Company, a catering firm, in November, aged 80; Gabriel Costa, Sephardi writer, in December, aged 97; Sir Jules Thorn, president, Thorn Electrical Industries, in December, aged 81; Florence Greenberg, Jewish Chronicle cookery correspondent, in December, aged 98; Joseph Zigmond, Lancashire judge, in Manchester, in December, aged 65.

LIONEL AND MIRIAM KOCHAN
France

Domestic Affairs

DOMESTIC POLITICS IN 1980 centered around the presidential election which was scheduled for spring 1981. As soon as it became known that President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing intended to run for a second term, Socialist party leaders mobilized an impressive propaganda push to highlight the country's deteriorating economic situation and weaknesses in foreign policy. In this connection, the Socialist opposition depicted the Warsaw meeting between Giscard d'Estaing and Leonid Brezhnev as a step toward capitulation in terms of the willingness of the European bloc to resist further imperialist initiatives by the Soviets. The Polish crisis and the fall of Edward Gierek, Giscard's friend and preferred partner in East-West dialogue, underscored once again the ineffectiveness of the president's "opening to the East," and bolstered the Socialists' condemnation of this policy.

Rivalry between Socialist leaders François Mitterrand and Michel Rocard developed into sharp competition, as elements within the party called for Rocard to be the presidential candidate. However, a coalition of leaders opposed to Rocard skillfully maneuvered his elimination from the campaign.

Until fall 1980 most political pundits predicted the reelection of Giscard d'Estaing as president. Considering the disunity on the left—there was constant harassment of Mitterrand by Communist party chief Georges Marchais—a Socialist victory appeared unlikely. At the same time, there was growing evidence of deep divisions within the governing majority. The Gaullist fraction grouped around the Republican People's Assembly attacked both the domestic and foreign policies of Giscard d'Estaing and Prime Minister Raymond Barre. Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris, went after Giscard d'Estaing with no more restraint than did the Socialist opposition. Finally, another Gaullist, Michel Debré, expressed an interest in entering the presidential contest.

Politicians of all stripes appealed to Jewish voters, emphasizing their concern for the welfare of the Jewish community and Israel. Even the Communist party, which had launched a clever racist campaign late in the year to attract xenophobic working-class elements, distributed a bulletin for Jews expressing opposition to antisemitism and good intentions concerning peace in the Middle East.

Giscard d'Estaing's tour of the Arab countries in March made a bad impression on French Jews. With some justice, they reproached him for joining the Russians in opposition to the Israel-Egypt peace process begun at Camp David. Nevertheless, Giscard had his Jewish supporters. Simone Veil, president of the reputedly pro-Israel European Assembly and holder of an honorary doctorate from the Hebrew
University in Jerusalem, did not conceal her political loyalty to the president. Among the committed Jews in Jacques Chirac's Gaullist camp was Gérard Israël, deputy in the European Assembly and editor of Les Nouveaux Cahiers ("New Note Books"), the intellectual magazine published by the Alliance Israélite Universelle. As for the Socialist party, it could count on the support of a great many prominent Jews, among them Jacques Attali, an economist active in the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU, United Jewish Philanthropic Fund), and Mitterrand's legal counsel, Robert Badinter, who sat on FSJU's board of directors. Closer to the Socialist rank and file was Roger Ascot, contributor to Combat Socialiste ("Socialist Struggle"), co-editor-in-chief of L'Arche ("The Ark," official organ of the FSJU), and a very active Socialist-Zionist.

Mitterrand visited Israel in December, and expressed his conviction that the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty had achieved positive results. Considering the reserve of most French politicians on the issue, the "yes" to Camp David strengthened his position among Jewish voters. On the other hand, Michel Rocard, the other Socialist leader, visited Beirut, where he clasped the hand of Yasir Arafat. Moreover, the left wing of the Socialist party remained largely prejudiced against Israel.

How French policy toward Israel would evolve in the future could not be predicted in 1980, whichever party came to power.

The Attack in Rue Copernic

On October 3, the day of Simhat Torah, a bomb exploded in front of the liberal synagogue in the 16th arrondissement (district) of Paris, killing four passers-by and wounding several worshipers inside the building. Of the four people killed, one was an Israeli tourist who happened to be walking down the street; the three others were non-Jews who lived in the neighborhood. Several anti-Jewish attacks had preceded this one, but they came at night and caused only property damage to such targets as the Great Synagogue, a Jewish children's home, the Lucien de Hirsch elementary school, and a memorial to the unknown Jewish martyr in the heavily Jewish 4th arrondissement.

In an anonymous telephone call, the Front d'Action pour une Nouvelle Europe (FANE, Action Front for a New Europe), a small, illegal neo-Nazi group, claimed credit for the assault. The police, however, discounted this claim. Searching for other clues, they found one pointing to a man holding a Cypriot passport who had lived under several assumed names. He had been at the scene of the crime, and had abandoned his motorcycle and disappeared after the explosion.

Government officials and the police were convinced that the assault was part of an international anti-Jewish and anti-Israel campaign originating in Colonel Qaddafi's Libya. This view was shared by Jean-Pierre Bloch, president of Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA, International League Against Racism and Antisemitism). Other theories, including the most improbable—such as a "provocation" by the Israel secret service—were advanced by the press.
and later rejected. In an official declaration, Libyan diplomats in Paris claimed that their government respected all religions. Jewish public opinion connected the rue Copernic attack to an incident some weeks before in Anvers, Belgium, where Arabs had fired on a busload of Jewish students, killing one child of French nationality.

The rue Copernic incident aroused considerable feeling in political circles. Mitterrand and other Socialist party leaders visited the synagogue to express their indignation over the act, and their solidarity with the Jewish community. Council president Raymond Barre, not wanting to be left out, made an unfortunate slip of the tongue when he spoke of “four victims, three of them innocent,” thus permitting the inference that the Jewish victim was not. He apologized later. Quite remarkably, President Giscard d’Estaing waited several days before making a statement about the incident, and that statement proved to be quite cool.

Two days after the attack there was an enormous protest march through the central avenues of Paris. The march was led by left-wing organizations and Jewish groups, and bore testimony to a great popular revulsion against the reemergence of racism under the auspices of fascist and neo-Nazi terrorist groups. An estimated 200,000 Parisians marched behind the nation’s most prominent politicians, labor leaders, and intellectuals.

Chief Rabbi René Sirat, as well as Rabbi Michael Williams, the head of the Reform community, attended the funerals of the non-Jewish victims of the rue Copernic attack. The body of the Israeli was taken home for burial.

The repercussions abroad of the rue Copernic attack disturbed official circles. Menachem Begin’s remarks, which seemed to accuse all Frenchmen of antisemitism, evoked an official protest. Some prominent French Jews felt that the rue Copernic incident was being made too much of, and told their friends abroad that, after all, they were not living in a pogrom atmosphere. Jews, they pointed out, had not been the only victims of the 200 terrorist attacks in France since 1970.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

**Demography**

The Jewish population of France was estimated to be 535,000. Leading Jewish centers were Paris, Marseilles, Nice, Lyons, and Toulouse.

**Communal Activities**

On June 8 the members of the Consistory elected a new chief rabbi to replace the octogenarian Jacob Kaplan, who was retiring after a long career of service to the Jewish community. In his sermons and in many direct discussions with government authorities, Kaplan had been a vigilant defender of the State of Israel, and an outspoken critic of the pro-Arab and anti-Israel positions of several successive French governments since 1967.
Of the two candidates for Kaplan's prestigious post, Chief Rabbi Max Warschawski of Strasbourg and Rabbi René Sirat, director of Hebrew education in France, it had been expected that Warschawski would be chosen, but he withdrew at the last minute. Sirat's North African origin was not an unimportant factor in his choice, since Sephardic Jews constituted a majority of the Jewish community. From the moment he was elected, however, the new chief rabbi and the Consistory's leaders stressed communal unity.

Born in Bône, Algeria, Sirat was 50 years old. He studied rabbinics at the Paris seminary, while acquiring a solid university education. Before his appointment, he had directed Hebrew teaching in the secondary schools and universities in France, as well as the study program at the Centre Universitaire d'Études Juives (University Center of Jewish Studies). A militant Zionist, and strictly Orthodox in belief and practice, this spiritual leader was very different from most French rabbis of the past 50 years, who were rather lax in matters of faith—albeit officially "conservative"—and ideologically assimilationist.

The post of chief rabbi of Paris, which had been vacant since the resignation of its former occupant, Meir Jaiès, was filled on June 22 by Rabbi Alain Goldmann.

The elections to the two chief rabbinate s revealed once again the scarcity of rabbis in the capital. To serve 300,000 Jews in Paris, there were, for all practical purposes, only 20 functioning rabbis. In 1980 the rabbinical seminary in Paris had a total of 20 students. Consistory leaders were worried about this situation and were seeking remedies for it.

Renouveau Juif (Jewish Renewal), an organization created in 1979 by Henri Hadjenberg, a lawyer who wanted to build a Jewish pressure group capable of influencing French government policy in the Middle East, did not grow as fast as its promoters and partisans had hoped; it failed to become a Jewish people's movement that could successfully oppose the prudent policy of the community leaders. Jewish Renewal's "12 Hours for Israel" program was a tremendous success, but had little long-term effect. However, the organization did succeed in bringing groups of marginal young Jews into militant pro-Jewish and pro-Israel activity. Jewish Renewal's aim to "vote sanctions" against Giscard d'Estaing in the election scheduled for spring 1981 encountered a great deal of skepticism, and ran into direct opposition from the Conseil Représentatif des Juifs de France (CRIF, Representative Council of French Jewry), the official voice of the Jewish community. Arguments against the "vote sanctions" position were based largely on the absence of an alternative to Giscard d'Estaing, or of any guarantee that the election of Mitterrand would bring a change in French policy. In addition, it was pointed out that Giscard d'Estaing had intervened in behalf of Jews in the USSR, especially the "prisoners of Zion," when he met with Soviet leaders.

For the first time since 1973, both the number of donors and the total amount donated to the Appel Unifié des Juifs de France (AUJF, United Jewish Appeal of France) were slightly higher: $16.5 million from 24,000 contributors in 1980, as against $15.1 million from 23,850 contributors in 1979.
Most of the growth in Jewish education was in the Orthodox sector, which opened a yeshiva-technical school in the Toulouse region under the auspices of ORT, and an extension of the Beth Yaacov school for girls in the Paris region.

Young Zionists were becoming more radical in ideology, tending to repudiate their ties to France. "Our ancestors were not Gauls," their posters on walls in Paris' Jewish quarter proclaimed, appealing for aliyah. The Union des Étudiants Juifs de France (UEJF, Union of Jewish Students in France), however, was almost totally dormant.

Publications

_Le Dhimmi_ ("Subject," Editions Anthropos), by Bath-Yaor (the pseudonym of an Egyptian-Jewish historian), is an exhaustive study of minorities tolerated and maltreated in the Islamic countries over the centuries.

_Le juif imaginaire_ ("The Imaginary Jew," Le Seuil), by Alan Finkielkraut, is a probing study of Jewish identity in contemporary France. The book was one of the year's biggest successes in Jewish literature.

_L'Idéologie française_ ("The French Ideology," Grasset), by Bernard-Henri Lévy, was hotly disputed in both the press and the broadcast media. The author, an ex-Maoist and now a leader of the so-called "new philosophers," argues that the "French ideology" consists of hypernationalism and reaction. Together, he says, they lead to an indigenous French racism.

Léon Poliakov, the distinguished historian specializing in the study of antisemitism, published _La Causalité Diabolique_ ("The Devil as Cause," Calmann Lévy), an analysis of scapegoating.

_Le testament d'un poète juif_ ("Testament of a Jewish Poet," Le Seuil), is a touching account of the plight of Soviet Jews.

Israel Zangwill's _Roi des Schnorrers_ ("King of the Schnorrers") was reissued in French in the Judaic series of Lattes publishers.

_Tikoun_, by Arnold Mandel (Mazarine publishers), is a novel presented as "imaginary biography."

_ARNOLD MANDEL_