Review of the Year

OTHER COUNTRIES
Canada

National Affairs

The Meech Lake Accord, a package of constitutional amendments designed to induce Quebec to accede to the 1982 constitution, dominated Canadian public life during 1990. The controversial amendments, which recognized Quebec as a distinct society and enabled the provinces to increase their power relative to the federal government, were agreed to in 1987, with a three-year time limit for unanimous ratification by Parliament and the ten provinces. In order to increase the pressure on the doubtful provinces, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Premier Robert Bourassa of Quebec encouraged the view that failure to adopt the accord would have dire consequences for the country.

After a dramatic final month leading up to the June 30 deadline, the accord failed to achieve the required unanimity, despite frantic last-minute efforts by many of the key political actors. The process of trying to obtain ratification stirred up nationalist sentiments in Quebec that had been dormant for some years. During the months following the failure, support within Quebec for the independence of that predominantly French-speaking province reached unprecedented heights, nearly 70 percent by some counts. The nominally federalist provincial government felt compelled to act in response to the massive public pressure, ultimately promising a referendum on some aspect of the independence issue by 1992.

The national unity crisis, probably the most severe in Canada's nearly 125-year history, had serious implications for the country's Jewish community, nearly 30 percent of whom live in Montreal, Quebec's largest metropolitan area. Montreal's Jews, who are generally federalist and do not welcome the prospect of living in an independent Quebec, were very unsettled by the developments. There was renewed talk of significant population shifts and fear that the departure of a substantial portion of the productive sector of the population would leave the community shrunken and unable to raise the funds necessary to sustain itself at the accustomed level. Furthermore, as the second-largest Jewish community in the country, Montreal plays a major role in all aspects of countrywide community life. Any weakening of it would have deleterious effects on the entire community. And independence, if it should happen, would create new problems as the Canadian Jewish community tried to maintain its processes and programs.
The intensity of the political debate and the anxiety that it generated led to some divisive developments within the Montreal community. Rabbi Moise Ohana, a francophone of Moroccan origin, took a public stance that was perceived as an endorsement of nationalist goals and generated considerable controversy among Jews from both language groups. In an article in the daily newspaper *La Presse* in March, he tried to distance the francophone Jews from anglophone Jews by expressing support for restrictive language policies. He was motivated by the perception that the relatively new Equality party, the most vehement of anglophone groups in opposition to language policies, which received surprising support from anglophone voters in the 1989 election, was led by a Jew, Robert Libman, and was largely a Jewish party. Stressing that the Jews are not monolithic, Ohana claimed that the Sephardic Jews, who are mainly French-speaking, share the logic of the language laws “and the tangible and real affirmation of the French fact in Quebec, which is the goal sought by these laws.” In response, Libman asserted that when he acted politically he was not doing so in a Jewish capacity. Moreover, the quarrel with the language laws was not over the cultural goal per se, but rather the denial of individual rights that such laws entailed. Later in the year, Libman suggested that leaders of the francophone Jews were dividing the community by demonstrating support for Quebec nationalism. In a related development, the Montreal periodical *Tribune Juive* came out in support of sovereignty for Quebec.

In Toronto, Patricia Starr successfully challenged the constitutionality of a provincial inquiry into her activities as a leader of the Toronto section of the National Council of Jewish Women. She was accused of funneling money from NCJW’s charitable foundation to Ontario political candidates. Starr, who denied any wrongdoing, still faced criminal-fraud and election-law charges. The Starr scandal was one of the factors that contributed to the disenchantment of the voters with the government of Ontario premier David Peterson. In a September election, Peterson’s Liberals fell from power and were replaced by the New Democratic party (NDP). Twelve Jews ran for seats in the legislature. Some prominent Liberals, such as Chaviva Hosek and Ron Kanter, went down to defeat. However, Monte Kwinter and Elinor Caplan, both Liberals, managed to win reelection, as did Progressive Conservative Charles Harnick. Veteran NDP politician Stephen Lewis was appointed to head the transition team of Premier Bob Rae.

In British Columbia, the ruling Social Credit party, meeting in Vancouver in October, finally dropped its contentious constitutional clause that called for adherence to Christian principles. It was replaced with a clause that recognized “the supremacy of God and the rule of law.”

The crisis in the Persian Gulf focused attention on the personnel policies of the Canadian Forces. The League for Human Rights of B’nai Brith Canada (BBC) charged in February that Jews and Muslims had been barred from serving in the Middle East since Canada first became involved in peacekeeping operations in 1956. The league pointed to documentary evidence from the 1980s, but military officials denied the existence of such a policy.
Relations with Israel

Canada's foreign policy continued to shift gradually away from Israel and toward the Arabs during the year. Supporters of Israel expressed increasing discontent with the direction and tone of the positions articulated by government spokespersons. In March, for example, after Canada’s UN ambassador, Yves Fortier, told the Security Council that Canada did not accept the permanence of Israeli control over any territory occupied since 1967, Mark Entwistle of the Department of External Affairs (DEA) elaborated that that included East Jerusalem. He added that Canada “opposes unilateral actions which are intended to predetermine the outcome of negotiations,” which essentially meant settlements. The Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) characterized the notion that East Jerusalem was occupied territory and should not be available for the settlement of Soviet immigrants as “destructive and unacceptable.”

In the Security Council, in May, Canada voted for a resolution that would have sent an investigating team to the territories to look into the violence. The United States cast the only negative vote, thereby vetoing the resolution. The pattern of Canada joining with the other members of the council was common during the first year of its two-year term, despite repeated criticism from the CIC and other Jewish groups. DEA spokesman Entwistle stated that the “international community has a responsibility to the Palestinians living in the territories,” but reiterated Canada’s long-term support for Israel’s right to live in peace behind secure borders. Palestinian terrorist attacks, such as the one on May 30 on Israeli beaches, seemed to have no effect on Canadian policy. Even the death of a Canadian teenager, Marnie Kimelman, 17, of Toronto, who was killed by a terrorist bomb on a Tel Aviv beach in July, appeared to leave the policymakers unmoved. Kimelman was the third Canadian woman to die in Israel as the result of terrorist attacks in little over a year.

Prof. David Goldberg, national director of Canadian Professors for Peace in the Middle East, termed Canadian foreign policy insensitive to Israel, in a February speech. He was highly critical of Canada’s UN voting record and its upgrading of relations with the PLO in 1989. He bemoaned as well the media’s unwarranted and unbalanced fixation on Israel. These sentiments were echoed in a November speech by Moshe Ronen, national executive chairman of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC). He charged that “Canada is increasingly being seduced by the UN process” and thus can no longer play the role of honest broker, as it did during the days of the late Lester B. Pearson (1950s and 1960s).

Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark paid a brief visit to Israel in November and met with David Levy, his Israeli counterpart, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, and Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini. In remarks in Israel and later at the UN, Clark emphasized that there was no linkage between the Kuwait crisis and the Arab-Israeli situation. However, he expressed the view that the successful termination of the Gulf crisis would create a window of opportunity for dealing with problems between Israel and the Arabs. Two members of Parliament, Bob Corbett
and Svend Robinson, encountered heavy criticism upon their return home from a Baghdad meeting with Yasir Arafat in November. They sought his help in obtaining the release of Western hostages held in Iraq.

The incident at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem during Sukkot (October 8), in which 21 Palestinians were killed, further soured Canada-Israel relations. Ambassador Fortier indicated Canada's willingness to vote for a hard-line Arab resolution in the Security Council, though the one that ultimately passed was softened in order to avoid an American veto. Major Canadian Jewish organizations came to Israel's defense, blaming Palestinians for provoking the attack.

When a June visit to Canada by Israeli cabinet minister Ariel Sharon was announced, the Canadian Arab Foundation (CAF) went to court to try to bar him from Canada on the grounds that he was a war criminal, that he had allegedly plotted aggressive war in Lebanon in 1982. The suit was of dubious legal merit because it was not clear that the CAF had legal standing to file such a suit. In the event, the petition was denied by the Federal Court.

A major public storm emerged over news of the Ontario Science Center's cooperation with the Arab boycott, as a result of which the center's director-general, Mark Abbott, was forced to resign. At issue was a clause in a contract for a children's science exhibit in Oman that called for a boycott of Israeli firms and goods, despite the fact that Ontario law prohibits such provisions. Although Abbott apologized to the Canadian Jewish community for his error of judgment, the controversy was compounded by the revelation that after officials had been made aware that the clause in question violated public policy, they wrote a new clause that was worded less offensively but appeared to have the same objective.

Several Christian religious organizations sponsored a conference on "Israel and the Occupied Territories" in April. In the keynote address, Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada Michael Peers expressed his opposition to the settlement of Soviet immigrants in the West Bank. He called upon Western churches to promote the Palestinian cause in order to "counterbalance the United States and Israel-dominated analysis of the region's needs." In a response to Peers subsequent to the conference, CJC president Les Scheininger asserted that "it is evident that you have fully thrown in your lot with the Palestinians and, indeed, become their advocate." Shirley Carr, president of the largest labor federation, the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC), speaking in May at the group's convention, called upon Israel "to accept a Palestinian state next to its borders," provided that Israeli security would be guaranteed by the PLO and Arab nations. A number of CLC affiliates proposed radically pro-Palestinian resolutions that did not pass. The consensus resolution called for an immediate negotiated resolution of the conflict through a conference in which the PLO would participate.

The Israeli government went to court in September to attempt to suppress the publication of By Way of Deception: A Devastating Insider's Portrait, by Victor Ostrovsky and Claire Hoy. Ostrovsky, a Canadian and Israeli dual national, purported to reveal the inside workings of the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad, based
on his personal experiences as an agent. Israel claimed that Ostrovsky had violated signed undertakings not to divulge information gained while working for the Mosad and that his revelations could have “dire consequences.” A judge issued a temporary order restraining publication for ten days. After it expired, the Israelis dropped their request because the book had already appeared in the United States. Ostrovsky claimed that Israeli agents had tried to intimidate him into withdrawing the book.

In other Israel-related matters, two new Israeli diplomats arrived in Canada. Itzhak Shelef became the ambassador and Itzhak Levanon the consul-general in Montreal. Charles Bronfman and three Diaspora partners launched a new English-language magazine in Israel, Jerusalem Report, in October. Its backers expected it to provide what they believed would be more balanced coverage than the rival Jerusalem Post, which, under its new owners, also Canadians, had moved from a position highly critical of the Likud-led government to a position much more supportive of it. F. David Radler, president of Canada's Hollinger Inc., owners of the Post, indicated that he was pleased with that newspaper's performance during its first year under new management.

**Anti-Semitism**

There was an alarming number of anti-Semitic incidents during the year in all parts of the country. Most of these involved vandalism of Jewish institutions, such as synagogues, cemeteries, and community buildings. No single thread linked the various incidents, though it appeared that most were of right-wing origin. Others were related to Middle East issues. The annual report of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights listed 210 incidents in 1990 (up from 176 in 1989), of which 150 were characterized as harassment and 60 as vandalism. The figures were the highest since the organization began to keep such statistics in 1982. Particularly alarming was the recruitment of young people into skinhead groups. According to the report, many of them “have now adopted white supremacist and neo-Nazi beliefs.” There was some evidence that several of the desecrations were coordinated, especially those at five synagogues in different cities.

Vancouver experienced three fires set at synagogues in March and vandalism of a cemetery in September. There were two desecrations of Montreal cemeteries, one in April and the other in November, making a total of three such incidents there in little over a year. There were indications of skinhead responsibility in the April incident. Three juveniles were charged in the November action. A similar desecration took place at a cemetery in a Quebec City suburb in May. There was also an attack on a Montreal yeshivah and adjoining synagogue in July, with white supremacists as the suspects. Synagogues were hit in Hamilton in July and Moncton in August. A sign of the seriousness with which the Jewish community viewed the increase in such activity was the offer of rewards by community organizations for information leading to the apprehension of the perpetrators.
In a case from 1989, skinhead Zvonimir Lelas pleaded guilty to three counts of mischief for his vandalism of a synagogue and yeshivah in Toronto. He was sentenced to six months' incarceration, but the Crown appealed the sentence and the Ontario Court of Appeal doubled it to one year. The judges believed that the original sentence was an insufficient deterrent.

In a more direct confrontation, six youths were charged with assault and robbery against Hassidim in the Montreal suburb of Outremont in October. They were accused of attacking at least nine Hassidim in four separate incidents on one night. The intensity of the physical violence against the Hassidim was characterized by one B'nai Brith official as "a pogrom" that "stirs grim memories." The aftermath of the incident was also unsettling to the Jewish community of Montreal. Radio commentator Claude Jasmin, in discussing the incident on his program, charged that the Jews were "the most racist" people in the world. He blamed the Hassidim for creating a negative image for themselves by refusing to integrate. Jasmin had been the center of another controversy in Outremont in 1987 when he also accused the Hassidim of racism in the midst of a fight over a rezoning request by a Hassidic synagogue. Jasmin was later rebuked by the owner of the radio station and ordered to desist from such statements.

In an important legal precedent, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the antihate laws incorporated in Canada's criminal code. By so doing, the Court reversed a lower appeal court's vacating of James Keegstra's conviction for promoting hatred against Jews. (See AJYB 1990, p. 306.) A fine of $5,000 was also reinstated, thus terminating a case that had dragged on through the courts for years. The Court held by a narrow majority that compelling state interests justified the infringement of free expression that is inherent in the antihate legislation.

In a related matter, convicted Holocaust-denier Ernst Zundel was permitted to appeal to the Supreme Court only on the grounds that the statute under which he was convicted was unconstitutional. That appeal was pending at year's end. An earlier conviction in 1985 for publishing lies about the Holocaust was overturned because of legal errors. He was convicted again in 1988 and sentenced to nine months in jail.

After years of legal jockeying, a human-rights inquiry into the matter of Moncton teacher Malcolm Ross finally got under way. Ross had written several books that depict an international Jewish conspiracy and question the historicity of the Holocaust. A parent, David Attis, requested the hearing into the question of whether the school board fostered a climate of anti-Semitism by employing Ross. In testimony, students described the anti-Semitic taunts and harassment to which they were subjected in the school. Ross was represented by attorney Douglas Christie, who had also defended Keegstra and Zundel. The hearing continued into 1991.
Nazi War Criminals and Holocaust Denial

The government continued its prosecution of accused war criminals who had been allowed to settle in Canada, using a new law passed in 1987. Generally the defendants were non-Germans who had allegedly assisted the Nazis in their destruction of European Jewry. The first case tried was that of Imre Finta, a former Hungarian gendarmerie officer. Eyewitnesses testified at his trial during the first half of the year to such acts as supervising the loading of over 8,000 Jews from Szeged into trains headed for extermination camps, scheduling the deportation trains, and in general, in the view of the Crown attorney, playing a key role in the confinement, robbery, and deportation of the Jews. In a vigorous defense of Finta, lawyer Douglas Christie questioned the veracity of the witnesses and denounced the prosecution of his client as “absurd.” He claimed that Finta was only doing his duty and following orders.

In a surprising development, the jury, after hearing six months of testimony, took only 13 hours of deliberation to deliver a not-guilty verdict on all eight counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including forcible confinement, kidnapping, robbery, and manslaughter. Critics of the verdict contended that the judge’s lengthy charge to the jury made it difficult to convict on the manslaughter charge and raised questions as to whether eyewitness identifications could still be credible after 45 years. Several weeks after the May verdict, the prosecution asked the Ontario Court of Appeal to allow a new trial on the ground that the judge had erred in his charge to the jury. Finta also appealed in an attempt to head off the Crown appeal. He charged that the legislation under which he was prosecuted was unconstitutional. The appeal issue was unresolved at year’s end.

Two other war-crimes prosecutions were also in progress. Stephen Reistetter, an official of the fascist governing party in Slovakia during the war, was charged with multiple counts of kidnapping in 1942 in the town of Bardejov, from which some 3,000 Jews were deported. After some legal maneuvering, a commission was sent to Czechoslovakia to gather evidence. The trial was slated to begin in 1991. The merits of gathering evidence abroad were also an issue in the case of Michael Pawlawski, who was accused of complicity in the murder of hundreds of Jews and Poles in parts of the Soviet Union occupied by Germany in 1942. Expectations were that the pretrial phase would be a lengthy one, especially because evidentiary issues were more complex than in the Reistetter case.

The Holocaust-denying historian David Irving visited Canada in the fall and attempted to speak in nine cities, mainly in the West. Several Jewish organizations applied pressure to try to induce those in charge to cancel his appearances. Canada’s multiculturalism minister, Gerry Weiner, denounced Irving, stating that his “sympathies and intentions have no place in our society. They are abhorrent to Canadian values and ideals and are an incitement to racism....” Subsequently, lawyer Christie filed a suit against Weiner on behalf of Irving, claiming that the minister’s statement was malicious and defamatory and damaging to his reputation.

In comparative perspective, Canada’s war-crimes legislation was highly regarded,
according to Winnipeg lawyer David Matas, who addressed a human-rights conference in Boston in April. It was the broadest legislation of its kind in the world and resembled postwar proposals for an international legal regime.

The visit of Arthur Rudolph to Canada in July set off a major dispute. Rudolph, a German who worked as a rocket scientist during the war, agreed to give up his U.S. residence in 1983, when confronted with evidence of his role in the abuse of slave laborers on the V-2 rocket project, of which he was operations director. In an immigration hearing after his arrival in Canada, a government attorney charged that Rudolph had participated in war crimes, specifically the forcible confinement of slave laborers.

Finally, attorney Douglas Christie, who represented Keegstra, Zundel, and Finta among others, was charged by fellow lawyers Don Weitz and Bert Raphael with unprofessional conduct in two separate complaints, referring to the Finta and Zundel trials, respectively. Both asked that the Law Society of Upper Canada (the Ontario bar) take disciplinary action against Christie. A commissioner, acting on Weitz's complaint, recommended that the discipline committee look into the case. Weitz said that he wanted "to teach Christie and other lawyers like him a lesson." In particular, he objected to the badgering of Jewish witnesses, especially Holocaust survivors.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

One demographer predicted a major decline for the Canadian Jewish population over the next 70 years. According to Leo Davids, a York University sociologist, the current population of over 300,000 would drop to about 250,000 by the end of the century and perhaps to 150,000 by 2060. The population numbers were affected adversely by declining birthrates. By 2000, the proportion of the Jewish population under age 14 would be about half (15 percent) of what it was in 1961 (28 percent). In addition, the proportion of people over 65 was increasing from 8 percent in 1961 to an estimated 28 percent in 2000. This meant that the community would face increasing pressure to provide services to senior citizens but would have a shrinking base of younger people to support and run the community institutions.

Whereas Davids's data indicated a long-term problem that was largely the result of assimilation and a low birthrate, the Montreal community was extremely sensitive to short-term population changes due to the peculiar political and economic circumstances in Quebec. A study of the 1986 mid-decade census by Charles Shahar of Allied Jewish Community Services (AJCS) in Montreal showed a Jewish population of about 93,000, substantially below the high of over 110,000 reached during the 1970s, before the election of the separatist Parti Québécois. The renewal of sovereignist sentiment in the wake of the Meech Lake failure suggested that there would be
significant erosion of the community during the next decade, though the differential effect of various scenarios made it difficult to estimate the changes. What was clear, however, was that the problems of the Canadian Jewish community in general, specifically the growing imbalance toward the older age cohorts, were accentuated in Montreal because of the outmigration of people in their 20s and 30s.

Joseph Levy, a sociologist at the Université de Montréal, did a study comparing French-speaking Sephardim in Montreal with French Canadians. He found that the Sephardim had integrated well into Quebec society but still retained a strong sense of Jewishness and an affinity for Ashkenazi Jews. Religious observance was important to only about half of the Sephardim whom he interviewed. Moreover, Levy claimed that up to half of the young Sephardim were intermarrying. A study of Ontario Jews by York University sociology professor Stuart Schoenfeld found that about 25 percent of Jews marrying between 1984 and 1986 wed a spouse who was not born Jewish. Over half of these outmarrying Jews either converted to another religion or maintained a home where elements of both spouses' religions were present.

The issue of poverty among Canadian Jews continued to be a matter of concern. James Torczyner, a McGill University social-work professor, conducted an extensive analysis of 1981 census data and found that as many as 50,000 Jews lived in poverty, nearly one-sixth of the Jewish population. The highest incidence of Jewish poverty was found in the Maritime provinces and the lowest in Ottawa. Montreal's 20 percent was above the average. Those sectors of the population most likely to be impoverished were the elderly, women, recent immigrants, or people living alone or in small families. The proportion of elderly poor or poor people living alone was substantially higher among Jews than among the general population.

There was modest growth in the number of Israelis settling in Canada. In 1989 there were 1,722 immigrants from Israel, added to some 8,000 who arrived between 1981 and 1988. Since 1948, over 40,000 Israelis had come to Canada. Most gravitated to the two major population centers, Toronto and Montreal.

Communal Affairs

The Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) took first steps toward implementing the recommendations of the Lithwick report for the restructuring of that organization. The 1989 report represented a joint effort of CJC and the National Budgeting Conference (NBC) to come to grips with CJC's financial and management problems. One of the major proposals of the Lithwick task force was that the federations assume a greater role in giving direction to Congress. Specifically, the various regions of Congress and the local federations in those regions would have to consult on policy matters. The prospect that CJC would be less independent in developing its positions on issues was troubling to many of its leaders, who believed that its role as a spokesman for the community was being compromised.

Despite the reservations, the national CJC executive did decide to adopt the
recommendations in February, with some minor changes. The vote was 28–15. Supporters of the report saw it as a way to make CJC "truly representative" of the Canadian Jewish community. Harvey Lithwick, who chaired the task force, believed that the changes were essential in order to create a unified community and reduce competition between organizations. Among the opponents, Zave Ettinger termed the changes an "absolute insult . . . to the history of Congress." In any event, the new reality was that a consensus among the federations that provide the funding would now be required for new CJC initiatives.

CJC was not the only Jewish organization that faced major restructuring. The Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) suffered from competition between its constituent organizations, which reduced its effectiveness as the Jewish community's voice on Israel matters. A committee headed by Donald Carr of Toronto, which began looking into CIC's operation in 1989, singled out the Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith Canada (BBC) for pursuing their own agendas to the detriment of CIC as a whole. "Neither of these organizations seems content to permit the CIC to exercise its exclusive mandate with respect to Canada-Israel matters in relation to government or media." The report recommended a revised structure to represent CJC, BBC, the Canadian Zionist Federation (CZF), the United Israel Appeal (UIA), and several local federations, with the constituent members being bound by community discipline. CIC would be the sole voice of the community on Israel-related matters, and the member organizations would have to support the agreed-upon policy at all times. Early reactions to the report from CJC and the other groups were critical.

The Canadian Zionist Federation was beset by serious problems, primarily financial. The organization, which encompassed 17 Zionist bodies, had suffered serious cuts in its budget from Israel during the period after 1987. As a result, staff and programming had to be cut, but not before a substantial deficit had accumulated. At his last meeting as president, David Azrieli announced that a plan to pay off the deficit had been worked out. Kurt Rothschild was appointed interim president until the next national convention.

Several other organizations suffered from inadequate funding. BBC eliminated its support for youth programming and for Hillel on campuses because of a budget crunch that necessitated a $1-million reduction in spending at the end of the year. Several staff members were laid off, though the possibility of reinstating some jobs if a fund-raising campaign proved successful was held out. Despite the cuts, BBC president Marilyn Wainberg claimed that the B'nai Brith Youth Organization and Hillel would survive. "We've just had to retrench, like everyone else," she said. CJC, too, faced budget cuts. NBC reduced CJC's Soviet Jewry budget by two-thirds, much to the chagrin of Soviet Jewry activists, some of whom blamed Congress for not resisting more strenuously. In order to meet the rest of a cut imposed by NBC, CJC also reduced its education and young-adult programming and left certain staff posts vacant.

A major cause of the tight financial situation was the intensive fund raising for
Project Exodus for the settlement of Soviet Jews. Canadian Jewry sought pledges of $100 million—and appeared ready to exceed that sum—which effectively meant that increases in regular annual fund raising had to be foregone. This put pressure on agency budgets throughout the community.

In Montreal, plans for a $20-million capital campaign for improving the physical facilities of Jewish educational and health institutions had to be modified, due to the pressure to divert money to Israel for the settlement of the unanticipated numbers of Soviet immigrants. As a result, it was decided to mount a $10-million drive to meet the pressing needs of three schools only, United Talmud Torahs, Hebrew Academy, and Hebrew Foundation School, with parents of students at the three schools expected to raise about one-third of the total amount.

Even the scaled-down plan encountered resistance. Little more than half of the targeted $10 million had been raised when activity was suspended to leave the field clear for the annual Combined Jewish Appeal. The situation was finally resolved when Allied Jewish Community Services, the local federation, borrowed $6.5 million on behalf of the schools. Ecole Maimonide was added to the original group of three schools that would benefit from the plan.

Canada's Sephardi Jews established a new national organization in May, the Congrès Sépharade du Canada (CSC), with Salomon Oziel of Montreal as provisional president. According to Oziel, one of the new body's objectives was to achieve recognition of Sephardi Jews as a "different cultural identity within the Jewish community," analogous to the status attained by Sephardim in Quebec. Another goal was the preservation of the Sephardi heritage.

The Midwest Regional Conference of the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations met in Toronto at the end of June. Participants came from the United States and several European countries as well as Canada. One of the themes of the conference was how gays could participate more actively and constructively in Jewish communal affairs.

New Jewish community centers opened in Vancouver and Hamilton. York University in Toronto established a Center for Jewish Studies, headed by Prof. Sydney Eisen, which planned to bring together Jewish studies, Jewish teacher training, and exchange programs with Israeli universities within one framework. It also expected to get involved in work on Canadian Jewish public policy.

In the area of Jewish journalism, Alberta's Jewish Star was closed. The founders, Gila and Douglas Wertheimer, decided to sell the independent biweekly publication, which was based in Calgary and had an Edmonton edition, but could not find a suitable buyer. A new paper, the Jewish Free Press, was established to replace it, with Judy Shapiro as editor. Vancouver's Jewish Western Bulletin celebrated its 60th birthday.
Community Relations

After many years of effort, a Jewish coalition led by BBC and CJC succeeded in getting Parliament to pass an amendment to the Divorce Act that would ease Jewish religious divorce proceedings. Under the new law, each spouse would have to remove all obstacles to the other spouse's religious remarriage before the civil divorce decree could be granted by a civil court. In practice this meant that it would be exceedingly difficult for one spouse to use the issue of granting a get as a means to extort concessions from the other spouse.

Quebec's observant Jews were extremely upset over a proposal for a new provincial Animal Protection Act that was drafted and submitted by the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The proposal contained a clause requiring that animals being prepared for slaughter be rendered unconscious before being killed. In effect this would have banned shehitah, Jewish ritual slaughter. A CSPCA background document suggested—inaccurately—that the absence of stunning in Jewish religious practice was "the result of custom rather than a religious requirement. . . ." It also pointed with approval to laws in Sweden and Switzerland that banned shehitah. The CSPCA ultimately withdrew its proposal insofar as it would have applied to kosher slaughtering. Subsequently there was a dispute as to whether the government had ever intended to pass the bill.

Ontario was beset with disputes over the role of religion in the public schools. In January the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled that mandatory religious instruction was unconstitutional, a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because in effect it amounted to Christian indoctrination. In the particular case before it, the court invalidated religious instruction in Elgin County, prompting the CJC's David Satok to observe that "the Court's decision has finally recognized Ontario's multi-religious nature." Yet, in defiance of the ruling, the board of education in Lanark County maintained the Christian content of opening exercises, prompting a coalition of parents and the CJC to fight the practice. Later in the year, the Ontario government decided to replace devotional religious exercises with the academic study of several religious traditions, a move that was welcomed by Jewish representatives.

The issue of Sunday shopping remained delicate and controversial. Three Toronto rabbis, Moses Burak, Irwin Witty, and Joseph Kelman, testified in affidavits filed with the Ontario Supreme Court that Sunday-closing laws reduced Jews to "second-class citizens." A 1989 law allowed a store to open if the owner closed on another day and registered his or her religion with the government. The CJC called the registration requirement discriminatory and unpalatable. The Quebec Sunday-closing law was amended to make it easier for those closing for another Sabbath to be open on Sunday.

Montreal publisher and business leader Pierre Peladeau set off a storm with approving remarks about Hitler that were quoted in a magazine story and with later comments about Jews in the fashion industry. Among his observations was: "I have
a great respect for the Jews, but they take up too much space." A number of organizations, both Jewish and non-Jewish, protested vigorously, demanding a retraction and an apology. The furor led the Université de Montréal to cancel plans to award Peladeau an honorary degree. Eventually Peladeau did issue a statement of regret to the Jewish community and claimed that he had been misquoted about Hitler.

The Peladeau affair illustrated some of the problems that existed between Jews and French Canadians in Montreal. McGill University professor Pierre Anctil urged Jews to engage in dialogue with their French neighbors in order to reduce tensions and eliminate misunderstandings. That advice was followed by a group of Jewish and French Canadian academics, intellectuals, and professionals who met on several occasions. Eventually they issued a manifesto stressing their belief in "the possibility of a shared future which we wish to build together out of a sense of mutual respect."

CJC president Les Scheininger was active in making Jewish views known to leaders of other faiths. When Anglican archbishop Peers circulated an Easter message that focused entirely on the Arab-Israeli conflict and contained a Palm Sunday prayer that many considered an insult to the Jewish people, Scheininger was quick to condemn his action. In June he met with Archbishop James Hayes, the immediate past president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, which had issued a statement that was extreme in its condemnation of Israel with regard to the intifada. As reported in the Canadian Jewish News (June 14, 1990), Scheininger found Hayes and the CCCB to be firmly committed to their position and thus came to the conclusion that the Catholic Church was becoming an advocate of the Arab cause, rather than a mere observer.

Soviet Jewry

A new group composed primarily of immigrants from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the Action Committee for Soviet Jewry, asked the Canadian government to allow large numbers of Soviet Jews to immigrate on the grounds that they were in danger and that Israel could not absorb all those wanting to leave. The committee was critical of decisions taken by Diaspora communities such as Canada to focus efforts on settling Jews in Israel under the circumstances. In contrast, a CJC delegation that met with Joe Clark in June urged him to pressure the Soviet government into allowing direct flights to Israel.

Montreal Yiddish writer Yehuda Elberg visited the Soviet Union and on his return expressed serious doubts regarding the prospects for the Jewish community there. "I just don't see a future," he said. Elberg was particularly disturbed by the evidence of anti-Semitism and the palpable fear of many Jews. Soviet diplomats in Canada tried to play down some of the problems that Elberg reported. For example, the consul in Montreal, Konstantin Grichtchenko, addressing a synagogue audience, claimed that there had been no actual violent incidents against Jews in recent
years and that the government was firmly against anti-Semitism. In an April meeting with CJC representatives, the Soviet ambassador, Alexey Rodionov, denounced the right-wing Soviet group Pamyat as "bigots on the fringe of society. . . ."

The First Canada-USSR Academic Dialogue on Jewish Themes was held in Toronto in December. Some 20 professors from the two countries presented papers on various aspects of Jewish life in the Soviet Union and elsewhere.

Religion

In January, in response to questions posed by the Canadian Jewish News, two Orthodox rabbis commented on the issues of interfaith dialogue and dialogue on theological matters with other movements within Judaism. Rabbi Amram Assayag, president of the Vaad Harabonim of Southern Ontario, saw little use for either type of dialogue. He stated, "Orthodoxy has not moved from its stand in 5,000 years. We are not willing to compromise on halacha." In a similar vein, Rabbi Benjamin Hauer, chairman of the Quebec Region of the Rabbinical Council of America, asserted, "We believe in the ultimate veracity of the Torah, both written and oral, as the immutable word of G-d. All other denominations try to accommodate—they can't accept the implications of Divine revelation." A somewhat different view was expressed by Rabbi Harvey Meirovitch, who had moved to Israel from Toronto and returned there for a lecture, in February, on the subject of tolerance and pluralism in Jewish history. The traditional approach of tolerance recognized alternative formulations of Judaism, but without legitimizing them. Pluralism, by contrast, implies acceptance of differences as legitimate. Meirovitch voiced regret that the idea of pluralism was unacceptable to the Orthodox.

In a lecture in Toronto in March, Rabbi Reuven Bulka of Ottawa tried to steer the Jewish debate away from an emphasis on denominational differences. He asserted that the real struggle was between Judaism and secular values. He also decried increasing polarization within Orthodoxy, calling for moderation rather than extremism.

One Montreal rabbi became engaged in a dispute with supporters of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Rabbi Allan Nadler, of Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, had strongly criticized the Rebbe in an April op-ed article in the New York Times for his involvement in Israeli coalition politics. He was upbraided in a letter from Rabbi Hauer, on behalf of the Montreal Orthodox rabbinate. He suggested a retraction, which Rabbi Nadler declined to offer.

Cantor Eliezer Kirshblum of Toronto resigned from the Conservative Cantors Assembly executive to protest the handling of the decision to admit women members. He claimed that the resolution was "railroaded" through the executive. Nine other Conservative cantors in Toronto stated their total rejection of the decision and indicated that they were considering various unspecified options. In Cantor Kirshblum's view, "What's at stake is the future of the professional cantorate in North America and whether it will be grounded in legitimate halachic tradition."
Rabbi Deborah Brin resigned her post with Congregation Darchei Noam in Toronto because of problems within the Reconstructionist synagogue community. In her resignation statement she said, “I had hoped that the congregation would become willing to deal directly and openly with the challenges of having a woman and a lesbian as their rabbi.” Things that she wanted to discuss became “forbidden topics,” she said. Speaking in April at a Montreal conference, Rabbi Brin called for new rituals that would recognize the equality of women in the fullest sense. She also advocated the creation of a ceremony for gays and lesbians who want to live as couples.

Education

In Toronto, there were 9,258 students in day schools and 6,081 in supplementary schools. These numbers represented about a 50-percent increase over ten years. About half of the Jewish children in Toronto were receiving some form of Jewish education. In contrast, in Vancouver only 1,300 of some 5,000 Jewish children were receiving a Jewish education.

The Alberta Jewish community received indirect and direct government support for its day schools. The Edmonton Hebrew School and Talmud Torah Society (232 students) were part of the public-school system. The government paid for secular studies while the local federation contributed part of the cost of Jewish studies. The Calgary Akiva Academy (110 students) was funded through the Alberta government as a private school. It also received a grant from the local UJA. The Calgary Jewish Academy (380 students) was funded through the separate (Catholic) school board.

Culture

The highlight of the year was the exhibition “A Coat of Many Colors: Two Centuries of Jewish Life in Canada,” which was open from April through September at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec, just across the river from the nation's capital. About half a million people visited the exhibition, which was presented in cooperation with the Canadian Friends of Beth Hatefutsoth. It was initiated by Andrea Bronfman and sponsored by Seagram's and the federal government. Prime Minister and Mrs. Brian Mulroney attended the gala opening on March 31. In his remarks, the prime minister observed that “there is hardly a dimension of national life that has not been improved by the dynamic presence of a large and impressive Jewish community in Canada.”

The curator of the exhibition was Sandra Morton Weizman, who said that its purpose was to show how Jews had been shaped by Canada and what they had contributed to Canada. There were about 300 items on exhibit, selected to tell the story of Jewish involvement in the history, society, and culture of the country. The major areas touched on were law, education, business, charitable and welfare organi-
izations, medicine, the arts, organized labor, and politics. After the Museum of Civilization showing, the exhibition went on tour across Canada for two years. It was scheduled to be shown in 1993 in New York and then at the Beth Hatefutsoth museum in Tel Aviv. A television program based on the themes of the exhibition was broadcast in October.

Another major exhibition on a Jewish theme was "Planets, Potions, and Parchments: Scientific Hebraica from the Dead Sea Scrolls to the 18th Century," which appeared at the David M. Stewart Museum in Montreal from May through September. The curator, Prof. B. Barry Levy of McGill University, gathered some 200 items illustrating the close connection for Jews between the religious and scientific worlds. The Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto opened a new Judaica Gallery featuring Judaica objects from Europe, 1500-1980.

The most significant drama event of the year was the visit of Montreal's Yiddish Theater, directed by Dora Wasserman, to the Soviet Union. The Saidye Bronfman Center's acting group spent three weeks in the USSR in June, giving a total of 15 performances in Moscow, Kiev, and Odessa. At the University of Toronto, the Disenhouse family established a memorial lecture fund for the advancement of Yiddish.

A concert of the Jewish Music Society of Toronto in January included a dance choreographed by Terrill Maguire to a new musical work by Brian Charney, "River of Fire," which was inspired by a kabbalistic legend dealing with souls who ascend to heaven to be purified.

Publications

In a companion book to the exhibition on Canadian Jewry, also entitled A Coat of Many Colors: Two Centuries of Jewish Life in Canada, Irving Abella demonstrates the significant role played by the Jews in Canadian life. The author also documents the effect of the Eastern European immigration late in the 19th century on a previously Anglicized community. The newcomers represented "an alien culture and tradition," thereby encountering hostility that became anti-Semitism.

In Trauma and Rebirth: Intergenerational Effects of the Holocaust, John Sigal and Morton Weinfield present the first empirical study of the long-term consequences of the Holocaust across three generations. Their main finding is that the extent of psychological impairment has been exaggerated.

Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn's The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies is a comparison of a number of examples of mass murder in different historical periods. Although the authors include the Nazi Holocaust in their comparisons, they recognize its uniqueness as "the most carefully conceived, the most efficiently implemented and the most fully realized case of ideologically motivated genocide in the history of the human race. . . ."

Maintaining Consensus: The Canadian Jewish Polity in the Postwar World by Daniel J. Elazar and Harold M. Waller is a study of how Jewish community
organizations govern the community. It examines institutional structures, the political process, policy formation, leadership, and decision making in the countrywide community and in 11 local communities. The authors stress how community governance is changing as the federations become the dominant political actors, largely because of their role in raising and allocating funds.

Lewis Levendel's *A Century of the Canadian Jewish Press* is an exhaustive study of the period 1880–1980. His analysis of the current state of the Canadian Jewish press as "more lap-dog than watch-dog" reflects the problems encountered when community organizations finance the newspapers.

Victor Ostrovsky and Claire Hoy's *By Way of Deception: A Devastating Insider's Portrait* received invaluable publicity from the Israeli government's attempt to suppress it. Although this exposé of the Mossad contains a number of contested revelations, it raises serious questions for Israeli citizens regarding the role of the security services in the political system.

Other new nonfiction books this year included *No Balm in Gilead: A Personal Retrospective of Mandate Days in Palestine* by Sylvia Gelber; *Undiplomatic Notes: Tales from the Canadian Foreign Service* by Sidney Freifeld; *Closing the Doors: The Failure of Refugee Protection* by David Matas and Ilana Simon; *An Everyday Miracle: Yiddish Culture in Montreal*, edited by Ira Robinson, Pierre Anctil, and Mervin Butovsky; *Unfinished Journey*, a biography of David Lewis's family, by Cameron Smith; *Canadian Jewry Today: Who's Who in Canadian Jewry*, edited by Edmond Lipsitz; *The Transliterated English-Yiddish Dictionary* by David Mendel Harduf; *Shylock Reconsidered: Jews, Moneylending and Medieval Society* by Joseph Shatzmiller; *Sefer Ma'amar Mordechai* by Rabbi Mordechai Kalifon; and *A Street Called the Main* by Aline Gubbay.

New works of fiction included *Scorpions for Sale* by Larry Zolf; *Canadian Jewish Short Stories*, edited by Miriam Waddington; *Broadsides* by Mordecai Richler; *Here Comes Hymie: A Novel of Montreal Immigrant Life* by Howard Roiter; *St. Farb's Day* by Morley Torgov; and *The Last Enemy* by Rhoda Kaellis. New works of poetry included *Blendiker Herbst* and *Selected Poems* by Simcha (Sam) Simchovitch.

The following received literary awards this year from the Jewish Book Committee of Toronto Jewish Congress: J. J. Steinfeld for *Forms of Activity and Escape*; Simcha Simchovitch for *Tzaar un Treist* (Sorrow and Consolation); Michael Greenstein for *Third Solitudes*; and Harold Troper and Morton Weinfeld for *Old Wounds*.

**Personalia**

Charles Dubin was named chief justice of Ontario; Eddie Goldenberg was appointed principal secretary to the new Leader of the Opposition in the House, Jean Chrétien; Sandra Kolber was appointed to the board of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; Sen. David Croll was made a member of the Privy Council; Chaviva Hosek became a special adviser on Eastern European affairs to Ontario premier
David Peterson; Judge Sidney Linden was selected chief judge of the criminal division of the Ontario Provincial Court; Judy Rebick was elected president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women; Harvey Webber was reelected president of the Council for Canadian Unity; and Karen Mock was appointed chairwoman of the Canadian Multicultural Advisory Board.

McGill University chemist Leo Yaffe was awarded the Prix du Québec; Reuben Cohen was appointed chancellor of Dalhousie University; Heather Munroe-Blum became the first female dean of the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto; University of Manitoba professor Nathan Mendelsohn received his province’s highest honor, the Order of the Buffalo Hunt, in recognition of his lifelong work in mathematics; and Prof. Irvine Glass of the University of Toronto was named an Einstein Fellow by the Israel Academy of Sciences.

Within the Jewish community, Julia Koschitzky was elected president of United Israel Appeal; Marilyn Wainberg became the first woman president of B’nai Brith Canada; Koschitzky and Sol Lederman were elected to the board of governors of the Jewish Agency; Rhona Blanshay became president of Na’amat Canada and Esther Matlow of Hadassah-WIZO; and Rabbi Baruch Taub received the National Rabbinic Leadership Award from the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

Among leading Jews who died in 1990 were the following: Ray Wolfe, a businessman and major community leader, in January, aged 72; Solomon Birnbaum, a scholar who dated the Dead Sea Scrolls, in January, aged 98; Rabbi Israel Hausman, Montreal Hillel chaplain, in January, aged 58; Ida Baum, the oldest Jew in Montreal, in February, aged 110; Renee Reichmann, matriarch of the Reichmann family, in February, aged 92; Rabbi Stuart Rosenberg, well-known author and Toronto spiritual leader, in March, aged 67; Bernard Wind, Yiddish journalist, in March, aged 79; Rabbi Lipa Wechter, a leading Talmud scholar, in April, aged 79; Harvey Golden, former Montreal Y executive director, in April, aged 86; Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, Toronto native and major figure in the Conservative movement, in June, in New York, aged 66; Johnny Wayne, noted comedian and television personality, in July, aged 72; Max Enkin, community activist, in August, aged 90; Sophie Lewis, wife and mother of noted politicians, in August, aged 78; Sholem Shtern, Yiddish writer, in August, aged 83; Alex Levinsky, former Toronto Maple Leafs player, in September, aged 80; Dr. Daniel Lowe, founder of London’s Yizkor Project, in September, aged 45; Marvin Gelber, former public and community official, in October, aged 77; Ben Hatskin, former Winnipeg Blue Bombers player and founder of the Winnipeg Jets hockey franchise, in October, aged 73; G. Sydney Halter, first commissioner of the Canadian Football League, in October, aged 85; Jacob Lowy, businessman and bibliophile, in December, aged 82; and Ben Milner, longtime leader of the Zionist Revisionist-Herut movement in Canada, in December, aged 73.

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