By 1992 it looked as if the road to reform in the former USSR would be longer and more difficult than anticipated. The breakup of the Soviet Union in late 1991 and its partial replacement by the much looser Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) had created expectations both there and among many in the West that the successor states would move quickly to market economies and democratic political systems. However, in almost all of the successor states a combination of factors sent the economy into a tailspin: the introduction of some free prices and the resulting inflation, the dismissal of many employees from state-owned, unproductive enterprises, and the need to renegotiate economic relations among the independent parts of what had been a single state. The struggle between radical economic reformers, moderate reformers, and antireformers was a major political issue outside Central Asia, where other issues were more salient. In Russia, and to a lesser extent in other republics, the constant struggle between the executive and the legislature meant unstable governments and an inability to formulate, let alone implement, policy. It also seriously impeded the movement to political and economic restructuring.

In the Russian Federation, the lifting of price controls on most items sent prices skyrocketing. More goods than ever began to appear in shops, but their prices put them beyond the reach of most citizens. In the political arena, the Democratic Russia movement, the main reformist grouping, fell apart. Boris Yeltsin failed to build a democratic party or a movement that would be his political base and was forced to replace the 36-year-old economic reformer Yegor Gaidar as prime minister. The new prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, a former official of the Soviet oil and gas ministry, was widely regarded as less committed to economic reform than Gaidar.

Ukraine, the second largest of the European states, was tranquil. Former Communist party ideological secretary Leonid Kravchuk held the reigns of power firmly, but resisted the introduction of economic reforms. There were tensions with Russia
over the presence on its territory of formerly Soviet missiles, and over control of the former Soviet Black Sea fleet, based in the Crimean city of Sevastopol. Belarus appeared to be the most conservative of the European republics in the CIS. The former Communist nomenklatura remained in power, and there were few signs of economic reform.

The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had led the way out of the Soviet Union by being the first to declare independence. Though there was a change in government in Estonia, its economy showed signs of stability coupled with serious attempts at reform. A major issue was the new citizenship law, which Russians claimed discriminated against them. Latvia's economy, which had begun to deteriorate in 1990, got worse. Proposed guidelines on citizenship would apparently disenfranchise those who came to Latvia after 1940, mostly Slavs from other republics. In Lithuania, where over 80 percent of the population is Lithuanian, more liberal citizenship requirements were adopted. Economic reform was more modest in Lithuania than in the other Baltic republics. In all three republics, Russian troops remained and were the subject of intensive talks between Russia and the Baltic states.

In Central Asia, in every republic except Kyrgyzstan, authoritarian governments ruled, headed by former high officials of the Communist party. In all parts of Central Asia, Europeans and Russian speakers felt uneasy, perceiving that official policies favored the indigenous peoples, especially in culture, education, and employment.

In the Caucasus, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh continued; however, Armenia was more stable politically than her neighbors. Azerbaijan had three presidents within as many months. In Georgia, an armed rebellion against President Zviad Gamsakhurdia eventuated in the return to power of former Soviet foreign minister (and previously first secretary of the Georgian Communist party) Eduard Shevardnadze. The economic situation deteriorated, as it did in neighboring Azerbaijan and Armenia.

In Moldova, part of Romania before 1940, Russians and Ukrainians had split off and created the Dniester Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic in 1991, which called for the restoration of the Soviet Union and its military power. In Moldova, the cultural activities of national minorities such as Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, and Gagauz were supported by the government. In the Dnester Republic, though Moldovans were the largest single nationality, Moldovan culture was suppressed.

Thus, the first year of post-Communism was marked by economic downturns nearly everywhere; ethnic violence in the southern areas of what had been the USSR; in some places, political instability; and, in others, the maintenance of or return to power of Communist officials.

Relations with Israel

Uzbekistan was the first Central Asian state to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan followed suit, leaving Turkmenistan
as the only predominantly Muslim republic that did not have relations with the Jewish state. Armenia established diplomatic relations in April. By year's end, Israel had diplomatic relations with 13 of the 15 states that had emerged from the former Soviet Union (Moldova was the other state with which Israel had no formal relations).

The Jewish Agency for Israel had 60 permanent representatives in widely scattered parts of the former Soviet Union. They were joined by agency officials who came in for brief periods, and by employees of the Liaison Office (Lishkat Hakesher) of Israel's Foreign Ministry. The division of labor between these two organizations was not clear, and each seemed to develop its own local clientele.

**Anti-Semitism**

The American Jewish Committee commissioned a survey of attitudes toward Jews, which was conducted in March and April by the Russian Center for Public Opinion and Market Research. In general, the survey found wide variation in attitudes from state to state in the former USSR and from issue to issue. The researchers found that Jews are held in high regard as workers, but many felt that Jews avoid physical work and place too high a value on money. Majorities of between 56 and 95 percent supported giving Jews equal access to employment and higher education, but only 19 to 56 percent would allow Jewish parties or social-political organizations to function. In comparison with survey results from 1990, there was a discernible increase in anti-Jewish sentiment, especially in Belarus, Latvia, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. Ukraine and Moldova showed somewhat improved attitudes, while the smallest change was recorded in Russia. The researchers noted that other groups—ethnic, social, and political—are often viewed more negatively than Jews. For example, when asked to assess the level of influence that each of 15 groups has in society, 1 percent (Moldova) to 15 percent (Belarus) said Jews have too much influence, but government bureaucrats, politicians, mass media, and political parties were cited much more frequently.

Anti-Semitic graffiti and newspaper articles were reported in Samara (formerly Kuibyshev), Tomsk, several cities in Ukraine, especially in West Ukraine, and in Tallinn. Many graves in the old Jewish cemetery in Tartu, Estonia, were destroyed by vandals in July, and a bomb exploded in Tallinn's Jewish day school. The Jewish cultural club in Penza, Russia, was vandalized.

In Russia, where the media were now more free than at any time since the revolution, one result was that anti-Semitic publications appeared without hindrance. Some extreme examples were the newspapers Russkoe Voskresenie (Russian Resurrection) and Russkie Vedomosti (Russian News). The former identified itself as the organ of the "Russian National-Liberation Movement" and claimed a circulation of 40,000. It quoted from Mein Kampf and featured a portrait of Adolf Hitler. It called anti-Semitism "the national liberation struggle against the yoke of the kikes [zhidy]." "Kikes" were defined "not as a nation but as a criminal profession" who
“are united by the most rabid hatred of the rest of mankind (in Russia, that means Russians).” The paper went on: “Every Russian must be an anti-Semite. If a person is not an anti-Semite, he is either a fool or a scoundrel.” The party proudly identified itself as both Stalinist and Nazi, the former because “in 1937 he shot the Leninist kike swine who murdered millions of Russians by shooting them for ‘anti-Semitism’ or in the famine of the 1920s and 1930s,” and the latter because “We are for such [national] socialism (and, in general, any system) wherein there are no kikes in power” (no. 7/15, April 1992).

Russkie Vedomosti, the organ of the “Russian party,” claimed a circulation of 10,000. The party’s program “recognizes the guilt of Zionism in seizing power in October 1917,” and also its guilt for Soviet terror, civil war, and genocide of the Russian people. “Zionism should be tried publicly and Zionists should be deported from Russia” (no. 5, 1992).

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The last Soviet census was taken in January 1989 and enumerated 1,445,000 Jews. Emigration had reduced that number by the end of 1992 to about 970,000. The population was further eroded by internal processes, including low fertility, high mortality, and intermarriage. Demographer Mark Tolts calculated that in 1991 in the Russian republic the number of births to Jewish mothers was only 3.9 per 1,000, and the number of Jewish deaths exceeded these births by 24.2 per 1,000. In that year, only 587 children were born in Russia to families where both parents were Jews, a decline of 55 percent from 1989. The median age of Jews in the European republics was over 50, whereas in Central Asia it was a bit above 30. The age structure of former Soviet Jewry and ongoing emigration seemed to portend drastic and prolonged population decline. A possible mitigating factor is the reclaiming of Jewish identity by people who had been registered as non-Jews but now chose to identify as Jews, most often in order to qualify for emigration. No figures or reasonable estimates are available on the number who might fall into this category. However, it is unlikely that this would halt or even significantly slow the rapid decline of the Jewish population in the former Soviet Union.

Emigration

In 1992, 109,360 Jews emigrated from the former Soviet Union to Israel (64,057) and the United States (45,303). It is estimated that several thousand more immigrated to Germany. According to a New York Times report (March 23, 1992), some 26,000 Soviet Jews had gone to Germany since the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, though many appeared to be non-Jewish members of families in which some mem-
ber was Jewish. Direct flights to Israel replaced the transit stations in Bucharest, Budapest, and Warsaw.

Several thousand Jews left war-torn Tajikistan for Israel. In Moldova and the breakaway Dniester Republic, about 2,400 Jews fled, mainly to Odessa, and about 850 continued to Israel. About 1,500 Jews in Abkhazia were caught in the fighting between Georgians and Abkhazians. The Jewish Agency evacuated some 200 to Israel.

**Communal Affairs**

The breakup of the Soviet Union led to the splintering of the emergent national Jewish organization, Va'ad, which had been founded in 1989. Jewish communal life began to take on a more local and regional character, paralleling the autonomist tendencies in the former Soviet Union as a whole.

In April, Va'ad of Russia (the Federation of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Russia) was established at a convention in Nizhny Novgorod (formerly Gorky). Thirty-two cities were represented by 113 delegates. They represented local Jewish religious and cultural organizations that were estimated to encompass about 6 or 7 percent of the Jewish population. Nearly half of those organizations were founded in 1989 and thereafter. A survey of the delegates by sociologists Vladimir Shapiro and Valery Chervyakov revealed that over three-quarters of the local organizations had fewer than 100 members, but that larger numbers participated in their activities, which were mostly cultural and educational. Few of the delegates reported personal encounters with anti-Semitism in the previous few months, and most regarded favorably the prospects for the development of Jewish life in their cities. Still, only a third thought that emigration would decline, and only 42 percent of the delegates averred that they themselves would never emigrate. Most saw cultural and educational activities and assistance to the needy and disabled as the primary tasks of the Jewish national movement. Interestingly, over half said their spouses were not registered on their Soviet passports as being of Jewish nationality.

The third congress of the formerly all-Soviet Va'ad convened in Odessa in May. Three hundred and twenty delegates came from as many locales in 12 republics of the former Soviet Union. (Armenia and Turkmenistan, where there are few Jews, and Lithuania, the most independent-minded of the republics, sent no delegates.) Shapiro and Chervyakov surveyed these delegates as well and found that, overall, the levels of membership in the non-Russian organizations were lower than in Russia. Most were registered with local authorities, and very few reported hostility to them or to Jewish activities on the part of those authorities. As in Russia, the main activities of the organizations were in welfare, culture, and education. Sixty percent of the delegates estimated that 30 percent or less of the Jewish population in their respective locales were involved in Jewish public, cultural, and religious life. Few reported anti-Semitic encounters, and most thought the prospects good for the development of Jewish communal life. Only about a quarter thought emigration
would decrease, and the same proportion said they themselves did not intend to
emigrate at any time. Perhaps surprisingly, 39 percent said they believed in God,
or were inclined to such belief. Thirty-five percent had spouses not registered as Jews
but, they said, only 19 percent of the spouses did not consider themselves Jewish.

The congress elected 13 directors of the Va'ad, each representing a republic. Retired
colonel Yuri Sokol, who had established an independent Moscow Jewish
Cultural and Educational Society, and Zinovy Kogan, leader of the Hineni group
associated with the Reform movement, were elected representatives from Moscow.
This was interpreted as a defeat for Va'ad cochairman Mikhail Chlenov, who, along
with some others, was charged with misuse of Va'ad funds.

In Ukraine, two national organizations emerged, one headed by Yosef Zissels,
associated with the Va'ad, and the other by Ilya Levitas. The Zissels group charged
the Levitas group with being too closely associated with the Ukrainian government.
In October the Levitas group convened a congress of Jewish organizations in
Ukraine, with 72 delegates representing 22 local organizations. Levitas was elected
chairman of the Jewish Societal Council, whose function was said to be to represent
Jewish interests to the Ukrainian government.

In Estonia and Latvia, Jews felt threatened by policies directed against Russian
speakers, since most Jews considered Russian their mother tongue, and most had
come to the republics after World War II. In Lithuania, a Jewish museum was
established, headed by Emanuelis Zingeris, a young Jewish member of Parliament.
His cochairman of the Jewish community, the distinguished writer Grigory Kano-
vich, complained at a World Jewish Congress meeting in July that while all other
faiths were getting back confiscated houses of worship from the government, the
many synagogue buildings in Lithuania had not been returned to the Jewish commu-
nity. Lithuanian law allowed former owners to reclaim nationalized private property
only if they were citizens of Lithuania and resided there, thus excluding most
surviving Lithuanian Jews, who lived abroad.

Religion

An association of rabbis of the Commonwealth of Independent States was formed,
which included about 30 rabbis in the several republics. Adolf (Avraham) Shaye-
vich, the last Soviet-appointed rabbi of Moscow's Choral Synagogue, was elected
president of the association. Head of the bet din (rabbinical court) was Rabbi
Pinchas Goldschmidt, who had come to Moscow from Israel.

In the cities of Brest-Litovsk and Gomel in Belarus, Jews appealed to local
governments to regain control of former synagogue buildings. In the Russian cities
of Khabarovsk (Siberia) and Perm similar attempts were made, and the Perm
synagogue was handed over to the community.

Lubavitcher (Chabad) Hassidim continued their struggle to regain possession of
12,000 volumes in the Lenin Library in Moscow, which had been confiscated by the
state from the library of Rabbi Yosef Yitzhak Schneerson, leader of the movement
until his arrest and expulsion from Russia in 1929. The Hassidim organized demonstrations in front of the library in downtown Moscow. During one of these demonstrations, in February, Russian-born Israeli Ze'ev Wagner was arrested. He was released within a few days. Russian officials issued contradictory statements on what they intended to do with the books. The mayor of Moscow, Gavril Popov, and several prominent Jews criticized the Hassidim for their tactics in attempting to regain the books.

Education

There were said to be 27 Jewish day schools and over 130 Sunday and afternoon schools in the CIS. Of these, 6 day schools and 60 Sunday schools were operating on the basis of agreements between the Israeli Ministry of Education and local governments. Some of the day schools were sponsored by local communities, as in Riga and Vilnius, whereas others were supported by the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform movements, the Jewish Agency, and the Israeli government. These movements and agencies also supported Jewish summer camps in many parts of the CIS. Jewish universities, organized and funded by local initiatives, were operating in Moscow and St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad). Touro College of New York established a branch in Moscow. New York's Jewish Theological Seminary and the YIVO Institute sponsored and staffed a Judaica department in the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow.

Moscow had two day schools, several Sunday schools, and nineteen Jewish kindergartens. St. Petersburg had three day schools. The community day school in Tallinn, Estonia's capital, had been established in 1990 and enrolled 330 children. Riga's community school, a pioneer of this type of education, had 400 students. The first Jewish secondary school opened in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, and reported an enrollment of over 500. Before 1989, not a single Jewish school of any kind had existed in the Soviet Union.

Culture

A Jewish press had emerged in the late 1980s, consisting mostly of local newspapers. The economic downturn caused some of them to cease operations, but several dozen continued to publish in 1992. St. Petersburg's Ami (Narod Moi) (My People) claimed a circulation of 20,000, and the Moscow Evreiskaya Gazeta (Jewish Gazette), which saw itself as a national newspaper, said it was read by 25,000–40,000 people. These newspapers reported local, national, and international Jewish news and contained regular columns on Jewish history and religion and Israeli news.

Israel's National Library concluded an agreement with the Lenin Library in Moscow to microfilm more than 2,500 rare Jewish manuscripts in the Baron Ginzburg collection. Other local and foreign scholars, as well as Judaica students from the Russian State University for the Humanities, were exploring Judaica holdings
of central and provincial libraries, most of which had lain unused and even uncatalogued for decades.

The Jewish Agency for Israel and the Liaison Office of Israel's Foreign Ministry promoted cultural activities aimed at encouraging immigration to Israel. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) had 12 offices that worked to assist local communities in social services, education, religion, and culture. A network of Judaica libraries in many localities was supported by the JDC.

The first international festival of Jewish music was held in Vilnius in April-May. Local musicians were joined by others from Israel, Europe, and the United States as well as other parts of the CIS. A Marc Chagall Museum and a Jewish cultural center were scheduled to open in the artist's birthplace, Vitebsk, Belarus.

After 32 years of publication, the Yiddish monthly Sovetish Haimland ceased publication. Declining readership, due mainly to emigration and death, rising costs, and drastic reduction in government subsidies—the defunct Soviet Writers' Union had funded the journal on behalf of the state—were given as the causes of the closure. Attempts were under way to publish a successor journal, Di Yiddishe Gass.

In Central Asia's largest republic, Kazakhstan, Jewish cultural associations were active in five communities. The cultural center in Almaty (formerly Alma Ata), the capital, claimed 700 members. The 4,000–5,000 Jews of Kyrgyzstan were divided about equally between Ashkenazic and "Bukharan" (Central Asian) Jews. In the capital of Bishkek (formerly Frunze), the synagogue served mostly Bukharan Jews, while the cultural center served mainly Ashkenazim. A choir, two dance groups, and a library of over a thousand volumes were sponsored by the cultural center. In Tajikistan, the civil war was driving Jews out. All cultural activities and even most religious functions came to a halt because of the chaos in Dushanbe and other cities. However, two cultural centers in Dushanbe, one Bukharan and the other Ashkenazic, were coordinating emigration and evacuation with the Jewish Agency. In the capital of Uzbekistan, Tashkent, the separate Bukharan and Ashkenazic communities maintained a vigorous level of activity. Synagogues, cultural centers, a newspaper, a library, adult education classes, and even a dating service were supported by the communities. At least seven other cities in Uzbekistan had organized communities, but they were being eroded by emigration.

ZVI GITELMAN
Eastern European Countries

In 1992, the third year after the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, the countries in the region were grappling with a number of issues common to them all, to greater or lesser degrees. Among these were the continuing difficult economic transformation (including questions of privatization and restitution of property that had been confiscated or nationalized by the Communist state), a political shift to the right, and rising nationalism and racism, including manifestations of anti-Semitism. Despite these difficulties, efforts to renew Jewish life in the countries were consolidated, commemorations of the Holocaust were given prominence, new initiatives were launched to preserve and protect Jewish monuments, and new endeavors came into being aimed at furthering interreligious dialogue and combating anti-Semitism.

Bulgaria

Zhelen Zhelev, a candidate of the ruling Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) party, won Bulgaria's first direct presidential election in January. Internal conflicts within the party led to a change in the government at the end of December, with Lyuben Borisov Berov unseating Filip Dimitrov as prime minister. Berov had the support of the Turkish nationalist party. The National Assembly completed arrangements for land privatization, but other promised reforms stalled, and there was growing labor unrest. The economic convulsions resulting from Bulgaria's change to a free-market economy caused shortages of many goods and services and sent annual inflation soaring to 100 percent.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Bulgarian Jewish community numbered about 6,000, about one-third of them over 60 years of age, many of them elderly, ailing pensioners particularly hard hit by high inflation. About 1,700 Jews received small monthly cash grants provided by the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). Some 80 to 90 percent of Bulgaria's Jews lived in Sofia.

The community was divided between elderly Holocaust survivors, some of whom had managed to keep a few religious traditions alive during the Communist years, and younger, secularized people who had little knowledge of Judaism. (Virtually all of pre-World War II Bulgaria's 50,000 Jews survived the Holocaust; all but about 5,000 of them emigrated to Israel in the years immediately after the war.)

Under the Communists, Jews in Bulgaria were not persecuted outright, but
religious observance was discouraged and Jewish cultural and educational activities were limited. Only two synagogues, one in the capital, Sofia, and one in Plovdiv, remained consecrated, and only a few elderly people attended services. Jews tended to be regarded as an ethnic rather than a religious group. There was a Jewish association with branches in various towns and cities, but it was a totally secular social and political organization under the control of the state.

After the ouster of the Communists, Bulgaria's Jews, particularly the younger, postwar generations, many of whom were the children of mixed marriages, began a process of deepening self-awareness of their cultural and spiritual heritage. They had to start their learning experience virtually from scratch.

Contacts were established with international Jewish organizations, and in March 1990 a new group, Shalom, took over the premises and activities of the former state-run Jewish association. Classes, study groups, camps, and other groups were founded with the help of the JDC, which was allowed to begin operating in Bulgaria in 1990, the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, and other organizations.

Shalom, supported in part by the JDC and in part by small enterprises owned by the Jewish community, had 17 branches throughout the country and remained the country's main Jewish social and cultural organization. One of its projects was the initiation of a publishing venture aimed at reprinting major Jewish works of various types. In 1991 the JDC had helped fund and organize community seders at Passover, the first time the state had allowed any public celebration of Passover and the first time most participants had ever taken part in the Passover rite. This year some 2,700 Jews attended seders in 10 different locations in Sofia and the provinces.

The revival of Jewish awareness was particularly intense among young people. Many youth groups and classes on Jewish subjects were either established or expanded. Some 450 youngsters attended three Jewish youth camps during the year, and more than 100 young people attended twice-weekly talmud torah classes. A Jewish elementary school was established in Sofia, with an enrollment of 125, as well as a Jewish kindergarten attended by 25 children. Membership in the Union of Jewish Students doubled. Two American JDC Service Corps volunteers began working in Bulgaria in the summer of 1992, training both adult Jewish teachers and Jewish youth leaders as well as teaching courses in Sofia and advising Jewish groups in provincial towns.

The cultural awareness of the community was enhanced by an ambitious program coordinated with the worldwide "Sepharad '92" celebration, marking the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of Jews from Spain. (Bulgarian Jews are Sephardic and many older people still speak Ladino.) The program included exhibitions of Jewish artwork and sacred objects, concerts, lectures, and seminars.

Czech and Slovak Federative Republic

Political developments leading to the dissolution of the Czechoslovak federation dominated the events of 1992. Elections in June dealt heavy losses to liberal and
centrist politicians, bringing to power conservative, free-market-oriented Vaclav Klaus in the Czech Republic and populist nationalist Vladimir Meciar in Slovakia. The vote clearly demonstrated the Czech-Slovak polarization and resulted in the negotiated decision to split Czechoslovakia into the two independent states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as of January 1, 1993.

Jews had reason to be concerned as the movement toward autonomy for the Czech and Slovak communities gained momentum. In Slovakia, particularly, the changing political scene was marked by overt nationalism with anti-Semitic overtones. Within a year of the ouster of the Communists, Slovakia had seen a movement to rehabilitate Father Josef Tiso, the pro-Nazi World War II Slovak president who was responsible for the deportation of thousands of Jews to Nazi death camps. In March, neo-fascists rallied in Bratislava to mark the 53rd anniversary of the creation of the Slovak independent puppet state, headed by Tiso. A key speaker was Stanislav Panis, a Holocaust denier and member of Czechoslovakia’s federal Parliament.

Signs of anti-Semitism, however, were countered by efforts in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia to combat it as well as to honor Holocaust victims. Various political leaders, including Slovakia’s Vladimir Meciar, condemned anti-Semitism. In May President Vaclav Havel, who made it a frequent practice to condemn all aspects of racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism, warned of anti-Semitism in the electoral campaigns. The same month, a major international conference on anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe took place in Prague. Toward the end of the year, the Prague weekly Politika, the only Czech publication actively encouraging anti-Semitism, came under criminal investigation and in December was forced to cease publication. Among its articles was a spurious list of “Jews and Jewish half-breeds in contemporary Czech culture.” In Slovakia, the owner of a publishing house that printed the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and other anti-Semitic material was also taken to court.

Several articles in the Slovak press acknowledged that Slovak collaborators were as guilty as the Nazis of crimes against Jews; nationwide TV featured a documentary on Slovak deportations; and an international symposium on the Holocaust was held in the Slovak town of Banska Bystrica.

In late March the 50th anniversary of the first wartime deportation of Jews from Slovakia (March 25, 1942) was marked with commemorative ceremonies, meetings, media coverage, and the unveiling of Holocaust memorial plaques in a number of Slovak towns. (Some 57,628 Slovak Jews were deported to Nazi death camps between March 25 and October 20, 1942.) In June, ceremonies attended by hundreds of local residents and guests from abroad marked the 50th anniversary of the deportation of Jews from the town of Kolin, east of Prague. In August workers began reinscribing the names of the 77,297 Bohemian and Moravian Jews killed by the Nazis on the walls of the historic Pinkas Synagogue in Prague. The names had originally been inscribed there in the 1950s, when the synagogue was dedicated as a Holocaust memorial, but they were removed by the Communists—probably for political reasons—during more than 20 years of restoration work on the building,
when it had been closed to the public. On October 21, Slovak leader Vladimir Meciar joined Israeli ambassador to Czechoslovakia Yoel Sher in unveiling a memorial to the 6,000 Jews who were deported to Nazi camps from the city of Nitra.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

About 6,000 people in Czechoslovakia, evenly split between the Czech Republic and Slovakia, identified themselves as Jews. An unknown number of others of Jewish birth or background did not acknowledge their Jewish heritage. Half of Czechoslovakia’s Jews were grouped in three main communities. The largest was in Prague, with about 1,100 formally affiliated members, followed by the slightly smaller communities in the Slovak cities of Kosice and Bratislava. Most of the rest of the country’s Jews were scattered in four other communities in the Czech Republic and eleven others in Slovakia, where regular services were held, usually in small prayer rooms. The communities were grouped in the Federation of Czech Jewish Communities, based in Prague, and the Federation of Slovak Jewish Communities, in Bratislava.

Most Jews, particularly in the smaller communities, were older people, many of them survivors of the Holocaust. There was also a younger generation made up of people born after World War II and their children, many of whom began discovering or rediscovering their Jewish roots only after the ouster of the Communist regime. In the Czech Republic particularly, where Jews traditionally were highly assimilated and intermarriage was common, many of the younger people who considered themselves Jews were not Jews according to Jewish law. In late 1992, about two dozen of these individuals—and a handful of non-Jews—were studying in Prague in preparation for formal conversion. The question of who could legitimately be considered Jewish created some friction within the Prague community, as some Orthodox members refused to accept people without Jewish mothers as full-fledged community members. A Reform havurah was begun in Prague, aimed at instilling a Jewish identity in children of mixed-married couples who felt uncomfortable in the mainstream community.

Jewish spiritual life in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia received a boost in the latter part of 1992, when new rabbis were installed in both republics. On the eve of Rosh Hashanah, Karol Sidon took his place as rabbi of Prague, and on November 9, he was inaugurated as chief (and at the time only) rabbi of the Czech Republic. Sidon, a former dissident playwright, was the son of a Jewish father who died in the Terezin (Theresienstadt) ghetto concentration camp and a non-Jewish mother. He made a formal conversion to Judaism in 1978 and received his rabbinic ordination in Israel. In the late summer, Lazar Kleinman, a Romanian-born Orthodox Jew from Australia, was installed as rabbi of Kosice, in eastern Slovakia—at the time, the only rabbi in Slovakia. Kleinman, whose declared plan was to concentrate on transmitting Jewish culture and religion to young people, opened a Jewish kindergarten soon after his arrival. He admitted, however, that he had antagonized
some of the older members of the community within two months of his arrival, particularly by his attempts to modernize the slaughtering and butchering of kosher meat.

Numerous Jewish educational and cultural groups expanded their operations throughout 1992, particularly in the larger cities. Ranging from the Czech-Israel Friendship Society to the Maccabee sports club, most of these groups were founded after removal of the repressive Communist-era restrictions on Jewish religious, cultural, and educational activities. Kosher kitchens supported by the JDC functioned in Kosice and Bratislava, while in Prague the community ran a kosher restaurant in the 400-year-old Jewish Town Hall, whose profits helped provide subsidized meals for community members. The Prague Jewish community, in fact, had become largely self-financing as of January 1, 1991, thanks to income generated by property that had been confiscated by the Communists and was restored by the new regime.

Jewish cultural events and exhibitions took place throughout the year, both in Prague and in the provinces. These included exhibitions such as “Where Cultures Meet” (an exhibit on Czechoslovak Jewish history originally mounted at Israel’s Beth Hatefutsoth), the staging of new plays about Franz Kafka, and a festival of Jewish music held in Prague in November. The rock group Shalom, whose songs and logo make overt use of Jewish symbolism, sold more records, CDs, and cassettes than any other Czechoslovak band in 1992. Shalom’s leader, Peter Muk, a Gentile who studied Hebrew, always wore a yarmulke offstage, and regularly attended Friday-night services at Prague’s Reform Bet Simcha havurah, became a target for right-wing skinheads, who heckled the group’s concerts.

A number of initiatives were undertaken to repair or conserve Jewish monuments, including a fund-raising project for the synagogue in Pilsen, on the 100th anniversary of its construction. In a ceremony in Washington, in March, the United States and Czechoslovakia signed an agreement to protect and preserve monuments, historic buildings, and other sites, primarily damaged synagogues and abandoned Jewish cemeteries. Work on a detailed survey of all Jewish monuments in Czechoslovakia was carried out under the sponsorship of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America’s Heritage Abroad.

Hungary

The economic changes in Hungary contributed to rising unemployment, a 30-percent annual inflation rate, and a widening gap between rich and poor. Particularly hard hit were pensioners on fixed incomes, including thousands of members of the Jewish community.

Another problem that intensified in 1992 was the rise of political anti-Semitism, as exemplified by the faction of the ruling Democratic Forum party led by writer Istvan Csurka, who published anti-Semitic articles in the Democratic Forum’s newspaper, made inflammatory anti-Jewish statements on radio, and wrote a mani-
Skinhead groups also caused some concern. Police in January seized neo-Nazi propaganda leaflets, but at least two anti-Semitic newspapers were sold openly, and revisionist articles on the Holocaust appeared in the mainstream press. On October 23, black-shirted skinheads shouting anti-Semitic slogans disrupted an official ceremony marking the anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian uprising. They expressed support for Csurka and called for the resignation of President Arpad Goncz. President Goncz—labeled an agent of Tel Aviv by Csurka—had paid an official state visit to Israel a month earlier. In November Hungarian foreign minister Geza Jeszensky minimized Csurka’s importance, telling an American Jewish Committee delegation that “the more anti-Semitism is mentioned, the more difficult it is to smooth the problem.” Only a few days earlier, a bomb scare had forced evacuation of Budapest’s Jewish community center during an address by Israeli ambassador David Kraus to a meeting sponsored by the Hungarian-Israeli Friendship Society, and leaflets attacking Jews signed by a group calling itself “Hungarian Realists” had been found on a train. They charged that Jews occupied too many top positions in Hungary’s scientific, cultural, and media communities and said Hungarians would not be “slaves and servants” of the Jews.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Hungary was the only country in East-Central Europe whose Jewish community was large enough to be a real presence. With an estimated 100,000 to 130,000 Jews, Hungary had the third largest Jewish population in Europe (outside the former USSR) after France and England. Most Budapest Jews were highly assimilated into mainstream society—as most Budapest Jews had been for decades before the Holocaust—and many had little to do with the organized Jewish community. Jews were active in the arts and professions, and there were several Jews in Parliament, including Rabbi Tamas Raj.

About 90 percent of Hungarian Jews lived in Budapest, which had all the infrastructure for a fairly normal, if still limited, Jewish life. Budapest Jews mainly adhered to the Reform—called in Hungary Neolog—rite. The Orthodox and Neolog communities had separate organizational and administrative structures. In 1992, regular services were conducted in about a score of synagogues, ranging from the Dohany Street Synagogue, the largest in Europe (now undergoing restoration), to small prayer rooms. Only three of them were Orthodox, and one Sephardic. There were two kosher restaurants in Budapest, as well as several kosher butchers, bakers, and grocers, a kosher wine merchant, and a kosher sausage factory. The Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) supported a network of kosher canteens, which in 1992 provided daily kosher meals for more than 1,000 elderly people and also functioned as social centers for the elderly. There was a Jewish newspaper, Uj Elet, a rabbinical seminary—during the Communist era, it was the only one in the
Eastern Bloc—with a research library, and there were several Jewish nursery, elementary, and high schools, with a total enrollment of nearly 1,200. Demand was such that enrollment could have been doubled if there were enough room and financing.

Jewish organizations, including the JDC and the World Jewish Congress, maintained offices in Budapest in the building of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities.

Many Jewish community activities centered on instilling Jewish culture and religion in young people and on caring for the elderly. The Jewish summer camp at Szarvas, sponsored by the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation and the JDC, carried out a year-round schedule. Some 1,500 young people attended various programs at the camp, including 370 young Jews from other Eastern and Central European countries. Some 900 visiting parents also took part in special programs, and a special “family week” drew more than 250 children from war-torn former Yugoslavia and 70 from Czechoslovakia.

Outside Budapest, a few thousand Jews lived in scattered towns and cities, including about 20 locations where there were small organized Jewish communities of up to several hundred members, most of them elderly Holocaust survivors. Synagogues still belonging to the Jewish communities existed in many of these towns, but most were rarely used, either because the tiny size of the Jewish community made worship in a large building impractical, or because of the poor condition of the building. The major provincial Jewish communities were in Miskolc, Debrecen, and Szeged, where there were kosher canteens for community members, sponsored by the JDC. There was also an old-age home in Szeged. Jews in more isolated communities were able to get kosher meat from these towns.

In February a joint delegation representing the Roman Catholic Church and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations met in Budapest with the primate of the Hungarian Catholic church, the papal nuncio, and leaders of the local Jewish community, as part of a fact-finding trip to Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Throughout the year a number of cultural events and ceremonies commemorating the Holocaust took place. In January President Goncz and other dignitaries attended a ceremony held outside the Dohany Street Synagogue marking the 47th anniversary of the liberation of the Jewish ghetto from the Nazis. At the end of April, Hungarian Righteous Gentiles were honored at Budapest City Hall in the first Holocaust memorial ceremony ever held on state or city property in Hungary. Ambassador Kraus of Israel, President Goncz, and Speaker of the Parliament Gyorgy Szabad attended.

A series of Jewish-related events were held in Budapest during the first ten days of May, including a “Taste of Israel” week in which a chef from the King David Hotel in Jerusalem prepared the meals for a luxury hotel in Budapest.
Poland

As Poland continued its move toward a free-market economy, a bitter power struggle between President Lech Walesa and the government and Parliament erupted. In June the five-month-old rightist government led by Jan Olszewski was ousted after Interior Minister Antoni Maciarewicz presented Parliament with a list of public figures, including Walesa, alleged to have been secret-police informers under the old Communist regime. After lengthy political battles, a more centrist coalition led by Hanna Suchocka was installed.

Jewish-Catholic relations continued to broaden through 1992, with a number of initiatives and events. On May 25, the third annual Kosinski Jewish Heritage Award was presented by the widow of Polish-Jewish writer Jerzy Kosinski to the cochairmen of the Polish Council of Christians and Jews, Jewish leader Stanislaw Krajewski and Reverend Waldemar Chrostowski. The award honored their "dedication and devotion to the cause of preservation of the Jewish presence in Poland."

Jozef Cardinal Glemp was removed from the post of archbishop of Gniezno when the boundaries of Polish dioceses were redrawn in the spring. He was replaced in the Gniezno post, which is the diocese traditionally held by the Polish primate, by Archbishop Henryk Muszynski, president of the Polish episcopate's Commission for Dialogue with the Jews and a longtime champion of Jewish-Catholic dialogue. Some observers saw this as an indication that Muszynski might eventually be appointed Glemp's successor as primate. In February, as part of a trip to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, a joint delegation including representatives of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) and Catholic representatives met with Muszynski and other senior Polish Catholic officials including Glemp, local Jewish community leaders, and the papal nuncio. In July a Jewish-Catholic delegation from the United States, organized by the Center for Christian Jewish Understanding at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut, and led by Archbishop William Keeler of Baltimore and Rabbi Jack Bemporad of Lawrence, New York, prayed and held four days of talks with Polish Roman Catholic leaders on a trip that encompassed Warsaw, Krakow, Czestochowa, and Auschwitz.

At Auschwitz, both of these interreligious groups checked on the construction progress of the new convent for Carmelite nuns, whose presence in an old theater building abutting the Auschwitz camp had for years elicited Jewish protests. The Interfaith Center for Information, Meetings, Dialogue, Education, and Prayer that was to form part of the complex housing the new convent opened in the late summer, and the new convent building itself was nearly completed by the end of the year. Work continued on implementing changes at the Auschwitz camp museum, aimed at correcting the Communist-era disinformation that virtually denied the overwhelming Jewish character of Auschwitz victims. The deputy director of the museum said the facility needed an estimated $42 million for essential restoration and maintenance work alone. In November Germany announced that it would
provide Poland with $6 million for Auschwitz restoration.

Israeli president Chaim Herzog visited Poland in May. In addition to meeting with President Walesa and other senior officials, he visited Auschwitz, where a monument commemorating this first visit by a president of Israel was erected at the building of the Auschwitz museum detailing Jewish suffering under the Nazis.

Relations between Israel and Poland grew stronger on many fronts. Tourism was up, and in December, 50 Israeli companies sent representatives to Warsaw to meet with agents of 450 Polish firms seeking joint ventures. A few Israelis were reported to have settled in Poland. In September a branch of the Polish-Israeli Friendship Society was opened in Oswiecim—the Polish town where the Auschwitz camp is located.

There were numerous Holocaust-related events throughout the year. During the last week of April and first week of May, 5,000 Jewish youths, Holocaust survivors, and visiting dignitaries from 42 countries participated in the third biennial March of the Living, a trip that took them first to Holocaust sites in Poland and then to Israel. The Polish part of the trip culminated in a two-mile march from Auschwitz to Birkenau. Elsewhere in the country, several new monuments to Jewish Holocaust victims were dedicated, and commemorative ceremonies were held. On July 19, a ceremony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the destruction of the local Jewish community was held in Radomysl Wielki, at the monument erected in 1987 to Jewish Holocaust victims. The ceremony was attended by about 100 local townspeople, as well as 14 Jews, including survivors from the town and people who traced their ancestry to Radomysl Wielki. On November 9, a Holocaust memorial was dedicated in the old Jewish cemetery of Staszow, in a ceremony attended by 350 to 400 people. The event was covered extensively in the local media, which called it “a pioneer development in improving Polish-Jewish relations.”

Such positive steps continued to be offset by isolated incidents of anti-Semitism. These included—in addition to scrawled graffiti—the desecration of Jewish cemeteries in Warsaw, Wroclaw, and elsewhere; demonstrations by skinheads and supporters of various ultranationalist political parties; and publication of anti-Semitic tracts and periodicals. A number of public-opinion polls indicated that about half of the population disliked or distrusted both Jews and foreigners; about one-fifth to one-third could be considered anti-Semitic to some extent; and about one in seven Poles was decidedly anti-Semitic. In some cases, anti-Semitic manifestations were linked with anti-German displays by Polish nationalists. In Silesia—once part of Germany—there was concern at mounting ethnic German nationalism, particularly the fact that a growing number of monuments were being erected that honored German soldiers killed in World War II.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Fewer than 10,000 people who considered themselves Jews lived in Poland, which before the Holocaust was home to 3.5 million Jews—Europe’s biggest Jewish com-
community. Only a few thousand of these currently had active contact with Jewish organizations; an unknown number of others either did not know about their Jewish identity or did not admit it.

About 85 percent of Poland's Jews were over 60 years of age; many were elderly Holocaust survivors, living isolated lives supported largely by the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), whose welfare activities included regular cash assistance to more than 3,000 people. Despite the fact that Poland's post-Communist economic "shock therapy" seemed to be bearing fruit, with shops full of locally produced and imported goods and a rise in industrial production, by the end of 1992 inflation remained around 40 percent and unemployment had grown. Against this background, the JDC carried out a detailed evaluation of the needs of elderly Jews, most of whom existed on minuscule pensions. This raised fear among some elderly Jews that funds would be cut off.

Poland's Jewish religious organization, the Union of Jewish Religious Congregations in Poland (JRCP), an Orthodox body, maintained synagogues in four cities and prayer rooms in ten other locations around the country. Rabbi Menachem Joskowicz, a Gerer Hassid originally from Lodz, came from Israel to be rabbi of Warsaw in 1988. Friction developed between Joskowicz and Lodz-born rabbi Z.W. Moreino, who divided his time between Lodz and New York, over rival claims to the title of chief rabbi of Poland.

The JRCP got a tiny amount of income from the granting of kashrut certificates, mainly for kosher vodka, but otherwise all of its funding came from the JDC, which among other things paid for its infrastructure and the maintenance of functioning synagogues and cemeteries. JDC also provided the community with religious supplies and funded kosher canteens in six cities. In 1992 these provided about 70,000 free meals for needy elderly Jews and their sometimes non-Jewish spouses, few of whom kept kosher homes.

In addition to the religious organization, most of whose active members were elderly, the second main Jewish organization in Poland was the secular cultural organization, the TSKZ—the Social and Cultural Association of Polish Jews, which also received its funding from the JDC. The TSKZ, which under the previous regime was run by the Communists and was staunchly antireligious, ran clubs in about 16 cities, mostly frequented by older people. With the institution of democracy in Poland, the TSKZ lost much of its pro-Communist stigma and was freer to sponsor lectures, performances, and other cultural and educational programs.

A small but steadily growing phenomenon, which began in the late 1970s and greatly increased after the fall of Communism, was the rediscovery of Jewish roots by young people who sought to reconnect with the Jewish world. The work of the New York-based Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, which had taken the lead in initiating activities aimed at renewing Jewish life among younger people, was given impetus by the presence of American-born rabbi Michael Schudrich, who in September became the foundation's full-time representative in Warsaw. At least 400 Jews aged 15–45 took part in foundation-sponsored regular Jewish study programs
in various cities, and some 220 people attended the Jewish summer camp at Srodbo-row, near Warsaw, which also was the scene of monthly cultural retreats. A new club, the Jewish Forum, was established in Warsaw by professionals, intellectuals, and business people attempting to attract unaffiliated Jews to some sort of association with Jewish life.

In June Krakow hosted its third biennial Jewish Culture Festival—a ten-day extravaganza of concerts, films, theater presentations, seminars, conferences, and exhibits. In July and August the Jewish Research Center of Krakow's Jagiellonian University ran its second intensive summer research program, encompassing a wide range of classes and field-study sessions on Polish Galician Jewish history. The Jagiellonian research center and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw increasingly became centers of Jewish scholarship and research, though most of their staff members and students were not Jewish.

Much work was done this year on documenting and restoring Jewish monuments, including a survey of all Jewish cemeteries sponsored by the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad. Restitution of formerly Jewish property was a continuing issue, and in Krakow, city officials sent a letter to world Jewish organizations asking for help in locating heirs to Jewish property in the city. Also in Krakow, the Temple (Reform) Synagogue, built in 1862 and the only intact 19th-century synagogue still standing in Poland, was the scene of three concerts dedicated to the memory of the city's former Jewish community and in honor of its tiny contemporary Jewish community. They were sponsored in part by the New York-based World Monuments Fund, which began work on a full restoration of the synagogue.

Romania

Romania's economic situation continued to be one of the most difficult in the region, with annual inflation in 1992 topping 200 percent, many shortages, and a sharp drop in purchasing power. The country's rapidly aging Jewish community was hit hard by the harsh conditions, particularly as the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) was forced to cut its budget to help meet new costs in other countries. (The JDC budget for Romania was over $4.2 million in 1990, and about $2.7 million in 1992.)

General elections in 1992 brought to power a government based on the conservative Democratic National Salvation Front, which had the support of extreme nationalist parties, although these parties were not members of the coalition. They included the anti-Semitic Greater Romania (Romania Mare) party, which won nearly 4 percent of the vote, and the nationalist Romanian National Unity party, whose primarily anti-Hungarian policy also had overtones of anti-Semitism, which won about 8 percent.

Leading government officials expressed support for the Jewish community, but anti-Semitism in various guises and manifestations remained a constant in Romania.
Anti-Semitic slogans were daubed on walls and subways, a monument in the northern city of Iasi to the 1941 pogrom there was vandalized with scrawled slogans, and tombstones in at least one historic Jewish cemetery were desecrated. Virulently anti-Semitic articles appeared in the press, particularly in the weekly newspapers Romania Mare, organ of the Greater Romania party, and Europa, as well as in numerous other extreme right-wing nationalist papers. The shrill attacks also included denials of the Holocaust. Both Romania Mare and Europa featured, among other things, repeated rabid attacks on Romania’s Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen, who in March revealed that he had received death threats. (Rosen had received such threats in the past and for years traveled with a bodyguard.) Along with extreme right-wing nationalist political parties, various groups openly identifying with the fascist Iron Guard also fomented anti-Semitism.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

About 400,000 Romanian Jews survived the Holocaust, and almost all of them emigrated to Israel. Of the current population of about 14,000 to 15,000 Jews, about half lived in Bucharest. The remaining half were scattered around the country, where there were organized Jewish communities in about 60 locations, only 5 of which had more than 600 members. More than 75 synagogues were in active use, including more than two dozen where daily services were held, and virtually all of the 750 Jewish cemeteries were tended on a regular basis.

Most of Romania’s Jews were over 60, many of them elderly Holocaust survivors who for some reason did not go to Israel. On the whole, the community was aging quickly and its numbers were dwindling. Members of the younger generation of Romanian Jews were, as one 24-year-old Bucharest student put it in 1991, “raised in the tradition of ‘next year in Jerusalem.’ It is a dream built up from childhood.” They generally made aliyah, usually after completing their studies, though after the fall of the Communist regime, some admitted to being torn between wanting to leave—for purely economic if not religious reasons—and wanting to stay, in order to contribute to the building of a new Romania.

Under Communism, Romania’s Jews lived under somewhat different circumstances than Jews in other Communist states. Romania was the only East European Communist state that did not break off diplomatic relations with Israel in the wake of the Six Day War in 1967. Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu allowed emigration to Israel (although he eventually demanded payment for each Jew permitted to leave) and permitted the JDC to engage in large-scale social work through the Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania (FEDROM). FEDROM was able to coordinate activity in local communities in a highly organized way. There were Jewish educational programs, old-age homes, clinics, kosher restaurants, meals-on-wheels programs, and even children’s choirs. Ceausescu’s policy toward Jews and Israel was clearly aimed at winning support in the West, and was a major factor in Romania receiving “most-favored-nation” trading status from the United States.
The success of Ceausescu's policy and the survival and relative well-being of the Jewish community were due in large part to Chief Rabbi Rosen, who, even before Ceausescu, played a delicate political game in which he traded support for the regime for better conditions for Jews and the possibility for them to emigrate. After the fall of Ceausescu, Rosen was sharply criticized by some for having been too close to the regime and for having kept silent about Ceausescu's corruption and oppressive policies. He and his supporters pointed to what was achieved as vindication of his behavior.

After the fall of the Ceausescu regime, Rosen was outspoken in warning of an anti-Semitic revival in Romania. In speeches and interviews this year Rosen continued to warn against the activities and media propaganda of the nationalist Romania Mare party and other groups. He reiterated his advice to Romania's remaining Jews to emigrate to Israel if the political climate did not improve. Rosen's 80th birthday was marked by high-profile celebrations attended by local leaders.

One question relating to a Jewish future in Romania was that of establishing new, younger community leadership to fill gaps left by death or emigration. In 1992 JDC brought a rabbi and two other functionaries to Bucharest from Israel. FEDROM operated ten kosher restaurants in various cities, which in 1992 served more than 670,000 meals. There were four Jewish old-age homes, two in Bucharest and two in the provinces, and also a network of medical clinics. About one-fifth of Romania's Jews received special winter relief grants from the JDC to enable them to heat their homes and buy food and clothing, and JDC-funded food packages for 2,900 Jews, containing sugar, cooking oil, powdered soup, and other hard-to-get staples, were increased from 8 a year to 12.

In Cluj-Napoca, in Transylvania, the Dr. Moshe Carmilly Institute for Hebrew and Jewish History at Babes-Bolyai University, the only academic institute of its type in Romania, founded in 1990, carried on with a full program of scholarly work and university courses. About three dozen students attended courses in Jewish history, art and literature, Hebrew, and biblical studies. Research work included ongoing efforts to inventory, catalogue, and register Jewish documents in the archives and libraries in Transylvania, and also to begin an inventory of Jewish architectural monuments in Transylvania. In October the institute organized an international conference on Central and Southeast European Jewish literature, art, music, and folklore. Included in the program was a concert of works by Jewish composers from Transylvania as well as an exhibition of works by Jewish painters from northern Transylvania who were killed in the Holocaust.

**Yugoslavia/Ex-Yugoslavia**

The civil war involving Slovenia, Croatia, and what remained of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) spread to Bosnia-Herzegovina in the spring, touching off what would become Europe's bloodiest conflict since World War II. The 5,000 to 6,000 Jews in what had been Yugoslavia could not help but become involved in a
number of ways. Jews or Jewish interests were to a certain extent exploited by Serbian and Croatian propagandists. Serbs and Croats and their supporters appeared to try to win Jewish support for their own side by accusing the other side of being more anti-Semitic.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

The most drastically affected Jewish communities were those of Sarajevo, where about 1,000 Jews lived before the war, and the scattered small outlying communities elsewhere in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Aided by Jewish leaders in Zagreb and Belgrade, the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) organized three airlift operations of hundreds of people—Jews and non-Jews—from Sarajevo in April. Six bus convoys between August and the end of the year brought hundreds more people from Sarajevo to Split, on the Croatian coast. The last and largest convoy brought out 394 Jews and non-Jews. By the end of the year, JDC and local Jewish communities had helped about 900 Jews (and 900 non-Jews) escape from Bosnia. The JDC, meanwhile, supported by CBF-World Jewish Relief (UK), and with the cooperation of local Jewish communities in Serbia and Croatia, arranged care and housing for the refugees. A special Passover seder was held in Belgrade for Jews airlifted from Bosnia. By December, about 1,200 Jewish refugees had emigrated to Israel and elsewhere from ex-Yugoslavia.

Meanwhile, as Serbian fighters maintained sniper positions in the historic old Jewish cemetery on a hillside above Sarajevo, the local Jewish social and philanthropic organization, La Benevolencija, became a highly respected key link in distributing nonsectarian aid from a variety of sources within Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia. In addition, it ran a soup kitchen and pharmacy serving more than 1,000 people a day.

Outside the war zone, Jews in Zagreb, Belgrade, and elsewhere coped with the emergency situation and tried to expand Jewish cultural and religious activities. The Jewish community-center complex in Zagreb, damaged by a terrorist bomb in August 1991, was reopened with a gala ceremony on Rosh Hashanah after a full-scale restoration.

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