The Australian Labor Party (ALP), led by Prime Minister Paul Keating, continued in office throughout 1992. The opposing federal coalition of the Liberal and National parties was led by Dr. John Hewson. In state elections in October, the ALP retained power in Queensland but lost to the Liberals in Victoria and Western Australia. Economic issues dominated political debate at all levels, for the nation was still suffering under a severe recession, with unemployment higher than at any time since the Great Depression.

Israel and the Middle East

Addressing the biennial conference of the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA) in May, Prime Minister Keating maintained that Australia’s policy toward the Arab-Israeli dispute was “a balanced one which takes account of political realities in the region. . . . Australia is not only committed to Israel’s security, but also recognizes the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. This allows, logically, for the possibility of their own independent state if they so choose.”

Only a few days earlier, the government had announced a decision to lift the ban on official contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that was imposed by the Hawke administration during the Gulf War. According to Keating, this decision was “consistent with our long-established aim of encouraging the forces of moderation rather than extremism within the PLO.” There had been no change in the government’s basic policy, he said. “We do not accept the PLO’s claim to be the sole representative of the Palestinian people, but we do accept that the organization represents the view of a significant proportion of them.” He added, “Australia has long expressed its opposition to Israel’s continued settlement activity in the occupied territories. As friends of Israel, we have to say that we regard such activity as an obstacle to peace.”

The decision to reopen contacts with the PLO had been announced—not in Parliament but in a news release—by Minister for Foreign Affairs Gareth Evans three days before he departed on a 12-day visit to six Middle East countries, which was still in progress when Keating addressed the Zionist group. The announcement
came, ZFA president Mark Leibler told Paul Keating at the conference, "as a bolt from the blue. ... Senator Evans has given the PLO an enormous and unwarranted boost." The decision was condemned by the federal Liberal-National opposition, which accused Keating, an ALP right-winger, of "paying off his debt" to the left of his party for ensuring his election as leader. Coalition leader John Hewson assured the ZFA conference that the opposition was committed to its policy of not engaging in official dialogue with the PLO "until there is clear evidence that the PLO accepts Israel's right to exist, is genuinely committed to the peace process and is prepared to back its words on both these matters with consistent action." The opposition, he added, would press the government to reverse its decision.

The decision was the subject of an official protest to the government by Israel's ambassador, Zvi Kedar. In August Governor-General Bill Hayden, a former federal ALP leader, dismayed Jewish leaders when he met with the PLO's Australian representative, Ali Kazak, in Canberra. The meeting was the first since the lifting of the ban on contact with the PLO.

During his Middle East visit in May, Foreign Affairs Minister Evans honored an undertaking to raise the plight of Syrian Jews with the government in Damascus. His other activities, however, provoked communal anger. Australian Jewish News political analyst Bernard Freedman asserted that Evans "set out deliberately to promote the role of the PLO in the Middle East peace process." In Beirut, for instance, Evans said that the Israelis "mightn't like it very much, but the PLO are a reality." In Cairo he met Nabil Shaath, a senior adviser to Yasir Arafat, dubbing him a force for moderation within the PLO. In private meetings with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy, he repeated his oft-voiced criticism of Israeli settlement activity as an obstacle to peace and his charges of human-rights violations in the territories.

Immediately upon arrival in Israel he undertook a private tour, arranged by the Australian embassy, of UNRWA-administered Palestinian refugee camps on the West Bank. Later he met with Palestinian peace-talks negotiators Faisal Husseini and Hanan Ashrawi in Jerusalem. At a concluding press conference in Israel, Evans explained Australia's decision to renew ministerial-level dialogue with the PLO as "a recognition of its decision to back the peace process and an effort to encourage moderate Palestinian elements under the unruly organizational umbrella." He also said that despite Australia's strictures, she "is and always will be a friend of Israel," and reiterated Australia's traditional commitment to Israel's right to live in secure and recognized borders.

Evans's statements on his Middle East tour drew a barrage of criticism from mainstream Australian Jewish leaders. ZFA president Mark Leibler captured the communal mood when he termed Evans's statements "hostile, one-sided, provocative and quite antagonistic." Evans assured a joint delegation of the ZFA and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) in June that there had been no change in the government's attitude. Pressed by Prime Minister Keating to redress the balance of his criticisms of Israel, Evans repeated this assurance at Jewish public
meetings in Melbourne and Sydney in July and August. He also conceded that his comments lacked balance, and agreed that he should have used his media opportunities to contrast Israel's human-rights record with those of its Arab neighbors and to emphasize the precarious situation of the enemy-encircled Jewish state. Evans's assurances failed to dispel Jewish unease completely; however, when Evans addressed a Jewish audience in Sydney in August, Mark Leibler stressed that the community's differences with him had been resolved. And Leslie Caplan, president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry paid tribute to him as a "tried, true and tested" friend of Israel.

In July Keating told a joint delegation of ZFA and ECAJ leaders that no talks would be held with the PLO unless they were for a specific purpose, and that the government would desist from such dialogue if it was deemed to imperil peace negotiations. In October Evans approved revised guidelines for Australia's voting at the UN, which were expected to result in less support for extreme anti-Israel resolutions. Under the new guidelines, for example, Australia would resist the use of "inflammatory and excessive language" as well as any description of the PLO as "the sole representative of the Palestinian people."

**ARAB BOYCOTT**

Documents obtained by the Zionist Federation of Australia under the Freedom of Information Act revealed that successive Australian governments, while refusing to sanction the Arab trade boycott against Israel, deliberately avoided applying antiboycott measures. Moreover, certain Foreign Affairs and Trade Department officials and other public servants had actively helped Australian companies to comply with the boycott. In February a joint delegation from the ZFA and the ECAJ raised the boycott issue with Foreign Minister Evans, who promised stronger Australian government action domestically and internationally to oppose the boycott. Evans stopped short of agreeing to introduce legislation to prohibit compliance with the boycott, but he did instruct nongovernment trade organizations, the chambers of commerce, and the Australian Manufacturers' Export Council that they must not use government-authorized certificates of origin to support the boycott. Meanwhile, the current combined trade between Australia and Israel was only $A200 million. The Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce resolved to improve trade, and a delegation of Australian business leaders traveled to Israel in an effort to stimulate its growth.

**OTHER MATTERS**

Following a visit to Australia by Gideon Spiro, a representative of the Israeli Committee for Mordechai Vanunu, a group of Australian senators joined an international campaign calling for the release of the Israeli antinuclear activist and convicted traitor.
In receipt of advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Immigration rejected the application for refugee status of self-described Israeli intelligence agent Ari Ben-Menashe, who was living in Sydney. Ben-Menashe, who complied with an order to leave Australia, had claimed publicly that he was involved in the U.S.-Iran arms-for-hostages deal, that $A82 million worth of arms was shipped to Iran via Western Australia in 1987, and that $A8.5 million was donated to an Australian political party to facilitate the operation. He said he wanted to stay in Australia because he feared he would be "unjustly dealt with" if he returned to Israel, where he could be tried in secret for infringing that country's official secrets law.

In March Prime Minister Keating promised World Zionist Organization chairman Simcha Dinitz that he would support moves to establish regular El Al air service between Australia and Israel. Prime Minister Keating, whose support was necessary owing to the security factor, was as good as his word, and in September the federal cabinet approved the start of negotiations. In November Australian and Israeli aviation officials held talks in Canberra regarding security arrangements. Weekly direct flights between Melbourne and Tel Aviv were expected to commence in mid-1993.

**Anti-Semitism and Extremism**

Australia had very little anti-Semitism, by international standards. Most significant anti-Semitism stemmed from a few extremist sources. An upsurge in reported acts of intimidation against Jews and Jewish property apparently peaked during the Gulf War. However, the economic recession provided a spawning ground for racism, which was directed mainly against Asian immigrants. The right-wing, populist Australian League of Rights, which had successfully infiltrated economically distressed rural areas, remained the most significant single and continuous source of racism, as well as of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism.

According to investigative journalist David Greason, the Citizens' Electoral Council (CEC) movement, a former subsidiary of the League, was the main backer in Australia of the extreme right-wing, anti-Semitic organization led by Lyndon LaRouche in the United States. Greason alleged that LaRouche sympathizers had seized control of CEC branches in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria, and that the LaRouche organization was also linked to the Western Australian Rural Action Movement. The LaRoucheites had attracted support from people connected with the Committee to Save the Children in Iraq, which in January held a rally outside the U.S. consulate in Melbourne. One speaker was Don Veith, head of a group called Friends of LaRouche in Australia. He helped to establish the Victorian Community Alliance, an independent umbrella group linked to the anti-Semitic far right, which fielded about 40 candidates in the Victorian state election in August. The Committee to Save the Children in Iraq was also associated with the pro-Libyan former far-right activist Robert Pash, who published LaRouche material in his
Also linked with the LaRouche organization were two parliamentarians: Dennis Stevenson, a member of the Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly, and Denis Collins, a member of the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly. Both had made anti-Semitic allegations under cover of parliamentary privilege.

The Australian Press Council, a body that arbitrates complaints about newspaper items, made the significant ruling that "if a newspaper item is found offensive by some people, that is not sufficient grounds to condemn the publication . . ." The ruling came in response to a complaint brought by Prof. W.D. Rubinstein against the Weekend Australian for publishing an allegedly anti-Semitic review of his book The Jews in Australia: A Thematic History . . . 1945 to the Present. Rubinstein denounced the Press Council's decision, claiming that it would enable newspapers to print objectionable criticism of Jews and other minorities. "In order to obtain a sympathetic ruling," he said, "we now have to show something is out and out Nazism." In another important test case, the Press Council dismissed a complaint from Jeremy Jones, director of the Sydney office of Australia/Israel Publications, over the Sydney Morning Herald's use of the term "Polish Jew" in a report on former Melbourne businessman Abe Goldberg. However, the Press Council urged "caution in the use of ethnic-religious labels" such as that under consideration, and noted that the complaint "highlights the sensitivity to such phrases and their capacity to give offense."

Invited by the Jewish quarterly journal Generation to comment on the way Jews and Jewish issues are depicted in the Australian media, Terry Lane, a regular Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) broadcaster and newspaper columnist long noted for jibes against Israel and its supporters and against multiculturalism, inveighed against "the Zionist lobby in this country." Asserting that criticism of Israel was not tolerated, he announced that he would "never write or speak on the subject of Israel or Palestine ever again. . . . To the Zionists I say: you win. . . ."

At Melbourne University, an anti-Semitic campaign, denounced by the university authorities, was directed against three Jewish candidates for editorial positions on the student newspaper.

Michael Phillips, a Jewish Immigration Department official who publicly accused senior immigration bureaucrats of racism toward Asian asylum seekers, claimed that top bureaucrats told him that Jews should not be involved in determining refugee status because they were not impartial. Bureaucrats allegedly cited former human rights commissioner Justice Marcus Einfeld, who had called Australia's deportation of Cambodian asylum seekers a "national shame."

Allegations by federal Liberal parliamentarian Ken Aldred and Deakin University lecturer Barbara Smith that Jewish trust beneficiaries resident in Israel were involved in large-scale schemes to avoid paying Australian income tax were denied by Taxation Commissioner Trevor Boucher and his deputy. The focus of Aldred and Smith's charge was leading tax attorney Mark Leibler, whose clients, Aldred claimed, received favored treatment from the Taxation Office because Leibler was
an adviser to the commissioner and a member of the National Tax Liaison Group. Leibler disputed Aldred’s claim, accusing him of being extremely selective in quoting from Taxation Office documents. He added: “The context in which Mr. Aldred’s observation was made was clearly designed to suggest . . . impropriety on the part of the Australian Jewish community.”

Immigration

Owing to Australia’s high unemployment, the federal government took steps to reduce immigration, which went into effect March 1. Among measures proposed for further cuts was a reduction in “concessional” family migration, which brought in many workers with poor English, few skills, and little immediate chance of finding jobs, among them many migrants from Russia and Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, some 1,100 Jews from the Commonwealth of Independent States (the former Soviet Union) were among the first to be allocated places in Australia’s new “special-assistance” migration category. This category was intended to help people who had a special need to resettle in Australia but did not meet the United Nations definition of a refugee. The main criteria used for selecting people in the special-assistance category were: the degree of distress individuals suffered because of severe disorder or violence; whether a person was a member of a disadvantaged or oppressed minority; and the extent of the person’s link with Australia. The total quota for refugee, humanitarian, and special-assistance migrants was 12,000 for the year.

Meanwhile, the Liberal opposition had committed itself to requiring an English-language test for all nonrefugee applicants. Liberals claimed that an English-language test would prevent some of the low-skilled, non-English-speakers from coming to Australia, where they either joined the unemployment ranks or were disproportionately represented in declining industries and occupations. The Liberals also advocated a two-year moratorium on welfare payments to new immigrants.

Walter Lippmann, president of the Federation of Australian Jewish Welfare Societies, criticized the “harshness” of the government’s requirement for sponsorship guarantees for parents ($A3,500 per individual, $A5,000 for a couple) and urged his colleagues to continue supporting the efforts of the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils to modify this requirement, which would seriously hamper Russian Jewish immigration. Lippmann also urged continued support by the Jewish community for a nondiscriminatory, humanitarian immigration program, including family reunion. The latter was particularly relevant to Jews from the former Soviet Union.

Nazi War Criminals

Ivan Timofeyevich Polyukovich was committed by the Adelaide Magistrates’ Court to stand trial on charges of having committed atrocities against Jews in Ukraine in 1941-43; his trial was expected to take place early in 1993. The same court found that there was insufficient evidence to justify bringing to trial Mikhail
Berezowsky, who was charged with killing 102 Jews from the Ukrainian village of Gnivan in 1942. A third Adelaide resident, Heinrich Wagner, was accused of involvement in the killing of over 120 Jews, including the shooting of 19 young children of mixed parentage, in the Ukrainian village of Israylovka in 1942, and with the murder of a railroad construction worker in 1943. His committal hearing was still proceeding at year’s end. All three men were charged following inquiries by the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), set up by the federal government in 1987. In accordance with a federal cabinet decision taken in 1990, the SIU closed on June 30; further investigation of possible war criminals in Australia was handed over to the federal police. The War Crimes Amendment Act, under which charges were brought, remained on the statute book.

In August the federal cabinet endorsed a decision by Attorney General Michael Duffy to abandon the investigation of an unnamed Melbourne man alleged to have committed atrocities against Jews in Latvia. The decision dismayed Jewish leaders, who made it clear to the government that they expected any future cases brought under the still existing war-crimes legislation to proceed. Attorney Bob Greenwood, former director of the SIU, declared that the man in question would have been charged with “thousands of murders,” and that his would have been the biggest war-crimes trial in the world except for John Demjanjuk’s in Israel. He accused the government of dropping the case because it would have been “internationally significant; they didn’t want the publicity,” and said he had been told by politicians that there must be some limit to expenditure in such matters and that they “cannot take any further risk of divisive influences in Australian politics.” In a letter to World Jewish Congress cochairman Isi Leibler, Attorney General Duffy denied that the case had been abandoned for primarily political reasons. He claimed that “a realistic assessment” of the evidence led to the conclusion that there was little likelihood of a successful prosecution and stated that the cabinet had decided against any more special funding for war-crimes investigations, “with the exception of any inquiries necessary to support the current prosecutions.”

Meanwhile, Efraim Zuroff, director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, claimed that new material available since the breakup of the Soviet Union was providing dozens of new leads that seemed to implicate former residents of Ukraine and the Baltic states now living in Australia. Zuroff castigated the closure of the SIU, and his implied charge that Australian Jewish leaders had taken a passive stance on the issue led to a heated exchange of correspondence in the *Jerusalem Post*. Zuroff’s headline-grabbing tactics had long worried Australian Jewish leaders who, while zealous for war-crimes prosecutions, did not want to alienate the general public by being too visible in the cause, which they preferred to promote as humanity’s in general. In the words of Isi Leibler, the Wiesenthal Center’s “long, poorly researched lists of alleged criminals that sent Australian investigators on exorbitantly expensive and mostly futile wild-goose chases halfway around the world” had undermined “quiet, unpublicized” efforts to bring the perpetrators of atrocities to justice.
Demography

The Australian federal census, taken every five years, asks an optional religious question. Results from the 1991 census, released in early 1993, showed a 7.7-percent increase in the number of persons who declared themselves to be Jewish by religion since the last census in 1986: numbers rose from 69,089 to 74,386. The number of declared Jews by religion rose in all states, with Queensland showing a remarkable 62.6-percent rise in Jewish numbers in only five years, from 2,631 to 4,278 (many of these are believed to be Jews from other states vacationing at Queensland resorts such as the Gold Coast). More Australian Jews continued to reside in Victoria (Melbourne), with 33,862 Jews (up from 32,385 in 1986, a 4.6-percent increase), followed by New South Wales (Sydney), with 29,614 (up from 28,197, or 5.0 percent); Western Australia (Perth), 4,221 (up from 3,919, a rise of 12.8 percent); South Australia (Adelaide), 1,304 (up from 1,144, a 14.0-percent rise); the Australian Capital Territory (Canberra), 530 (up from 501, a rise of 5.8 percent); and the Northern Territory (Darwin), 143 (up from 98, a 45.9-percent increase). Since 23.4 percent of Australians fail to give a religious denomination on census forms, most demographers put the number of Australian Jews far higher, at about 100,000 or more. The Jewish Welfare Society in Melbourne maintained a master list of all Jews in Victoria, believed to be about 95 percent complete; the list contained about 47,000 names, nearly 40 percent more than the 1991 census figure of 33,862.

According to a report entitled Multicultural Australia, issued by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and using data from the 1986 census, Jews formed the largest ethnic group (32 percent) among native-born Australians with higher education. Among Australian-born people with overseas-born parents, Jews had the lowest unemployment rate (4 percent). However, according to the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, the rate of unemployment in the Jewish community of Melbourne, Victoria (the state hardest hit by recession) was marginally higher than the national figure of 10.7 percent, reflecting the fact that the self-employed and those in senior and middle management were the worst affected.

The New South Wales edition of the Atlas of the Australian People, compiled by Prof. Graeme Hugo and issued this year, showed Jews as one of the most spatially concentrated ethnic groups in New South Wales. It also showed that the South African component in Australian Jewry had risen markedly since 1981. The compiler added his voice to those calling for the question on ancestry to be restored to the 1996 census; the question was included in 1986 but deleted in 1991.

Communal Affairs

Jewish communal life occurred against the backdrop of economic recession; fund-raising for welfare services and other communal requirements was difficult.
However, financial mismanagement rather than the recession was blamed when the Jewish Community Council of Victoria reported a cash-flow crisis that made it difficult to meet basic operational costs. A healthy balance in 1990 had in 1992 turned into a colossal deficit, and bank liabilities had more than doubled in two years.

Michael Marx was elected president of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies, replacing Gerry Levy. Isi Leibler of Victoria was elected president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) at its year-end conference, for an unprecedented fourth term (though not consecutive, since the position alternates between Melbourne and Sydney). He replaced outgoing New South Wales president Leslie Caplan. In a break with custom, Leibler allotted portfolios and consultancies to elected and drafted councillors from New South Wales (Sydney) as well as from his home state, and the ECAJ's administrative headquarters remained in Sydney instead of moving to Melbourne, as it normally did when the presidency rotated between the two capitals. The position of Sydney-based ECAJ executive director Jeremy Jones, who had served under Caplan, was upgraded to executive vice-president. Leibler announced his intention of holding three meetings a year of the full council, instead of monthly meetings, as in the past.

The Zionist Supreme Court in Jerusalem,upholding an appeal by the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA), unanimously allocated an extra 11th seat to the Australian delegation at the 32nd World Zionist Congress, held in Jerusalem in July. The decision was ascribed to Australia's "excellent performance against a criteria table which includes aliyah, education, membership of Zionist organizations and youth activities." At the congress, ZFA president Mark Leibler was elected to the board of governors of the Jewish Agency, joining two other Australians on that 74-member body.

Returning in January from a visit to Israel, where he had meetings with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Defense Minister Moshe Arens, World Jewish Congress cochairman Isi Leibler predicted an enhanced role for the WJC in the Asia-Pacific region in view of the enthusiasm he had found in Israel for trade and diplomatic links with Asian nations, combined with a recent softening of attitude on the part of the latter. Israeli Foreign Office bureaucrats asked Leibler to return to China and India to pursue projects he had initiated in those countries in 1991. Accordingly, in February he had talks in Beijing and New Delhi with high officials, including Chinese vice-premier Wu Xueqian and Indian prime minister Narasimha Rao.

The Jewish Crisis Center merged with the large, long-established Australian Jewish Welfare Society (AJWS) to form a single social-welfare agency for Melbourne Jews. The AJWS came under fire from Russian clients who held that legal action was wrongfully taken against them for failure to make loan repayments.
Religion

In March Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth visited Australia with his wife, Elaine. He told meetings in Melbourne and Sydney, arranged by the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs, that if Progressive Jews agreed to satisfy the requirements of Orthodoxy on the issues of divorce and conversion in the interests of Jewish unity, he would applaud their "statesmanlike, visionary and courageous" initiative. During Chief Rabbi Sacks's visit, the National Council of Jewish Women urged him to give priority to solving within Halakhah the problems associated with divorce, especially the problem of agunot (deserted wives).

Also during his visit, Rabbi Sacks endorsed the very narrow election victory of Rabbi Philip Heilbrunn of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation as president of the Association of Rabbis and Ministers of Australia and New Zealand (an Orthodox organization), following a challenge to the validity of the electoral process by supporters—mainly but not entirely Chabad-Lubavitch rabbis—of the losing candidate, Rabbi Chaim Gutnick of Elwood Talmud Torah. Reflecting the recent rightward drift of Australian Jewish Orthodoxy (which under Rabbi Heilbrunn's leadership now extended to the hitherto lax-to-moderate St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation), and especially the influence of the Lubavitcher movement, the rabbinic association's conference in March unanimously passed a resolution—moved by Rabbi Selwyn Franklin of Sydney's Central Synagogue—alerting Australian Jewry to the great potential for "messianic redemption" now at hand and encouraging the study of those parts of Torah that deal with the concepts of redemption and increased observance of mitzvot, with the intention of hastening the messianic redemption.

Like the adherents of Rabbi Menachem Schneerson elsewhere, the Australian Lubavitcher community viewed world events such as the Gulf War, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the return of Soviet Jews to Israel as indications of the imminence of the messianic redemption. In May the Melbourne bet din (Rabbis Sholem Gutnick, Shlomo Rudzki, and Jacob Schreiber) placed an advertisement in the Australian Jewish News endorsing Rabbi Schneerson as the messiah. The advertisement was greeted in the community with widespread derision. Progressive leaders such as Rabbi John Levi were openly scathing, and so were many Orthodox, among them Rabbi Selwyn Franklyn, Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky, rabbi emeritus of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation, and Rabbi Boruch Zaichyk of Melbourne's Mizrachi Center, who declared that the bet din's statement "borders ... on heresy," which provoked a furious rejoinder from the three dayanim. Before long, the story had broken in a bemused national press and was featured on national television.

Meanwhile, the Lubavitch movement had more mundane preoccupations. Denying persistent rumors of impending financial disaster, Rabbi Yitzhok Dovid Groner of Melbourne's Yeshivah Center admitted that the center had been severely affected by the recession, and that plans for additional buildings had to be postponed. Rabbi Yisroel Rosenfeld, who used his home in the outer Melbourne suburb of Waverley as a Chabad House, was forbidden by the local council to use the premises as "a
place of worship,” following complaints from neighbors worried about excessive noise, parking congestion, and a threat to property values.

Temple Beth Israel in Melbourne, Australia’s largest Progressive congregation, also admitted to a financial crisis. Heavily in debt to the bank for loans borrowed for the expansion of its premises during the previous decade, the congregation imposed a controversial one-time levy in addition to its normal, rather steep, annual membership fee. Meanwhile, Rabbi Brian Michelson, an American, joined the temple following the departure of Rabbi Daniel Schiff. The temple’s senior rabbi, Rabbi John Levi, predicted at the Australia-New Zealand Union for Progressive Judaism’s Sydney conference in November that the future of Progressive Judaism in Australia would be secured by immigration from North America, which would occur because the “social structure of the United States is coming apart,” and also from South America.

In June the Gold Coast Temple Shalom’s new synagogue began holding regular Friday-night services. It had no minister, but Rabbi Uri Themal, head of Queensland’s Bureau of Ethnic Affairs, officiated monthly. In August Bet-Yossef: The Caro Synagogue, an Orthodox congregation founded by Jews of North African and Middle Eastern origin, was opened in the Sydney suburb of Bondi in premises belonging to the Adath Yisroel Congregation. Aimed especially at former Israelis, fluent Hebrew speakers, and young couples, the congregation soon claimed a regular Sabbath attendance of 60 to 100. Services were led by members and by rabbis visiting from Israel. The congregation charged no membership fees but relied on donations to fund its activities. The estimated 40 Jews in the far north Queensland city of Cairns, who the previous year had organized High Holy Day services for the first time, continued to develop their community. They formed a district committee of the Jewish National Fund, and, under the supervision of Rabbi Moshe Cohen of Brisbane Hebrew Congregation, a representative of the Brisbane *hevra kadisha* (burial society) consecrated a Jewish burial site in the Cairns cemetery.

At the start of the year, Perth, in Western Australia, became the second Australian capital city to have an *eruv* (an area designated by rabbinic authorities within which Orthodox Jews may carry personal items and wheel baby carriages on the Sabbath). In June, Melbourne’s *eruv* was extended to parts of suburban Bentleigh, East Bentleigh, and Chadstone, to meet the demands of congregants of the Chabad House in Bentleigh.

During the year, the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation celebrated the 150th anniversary of its founding. The North Eastern Jewish War Memorial Center in the Melbourne suburb of Doncaster, whose numbers had grown thanks to recent immigration from South Africa, celebrated its 30th anniversary.

The Orthodox-Progressive dialogue group in Melbourne, which was under the leadership of Isi Leibler (Orthodox) and Walter Jona (Progressive), continued to function and sponsored a major public seminar at Temple Beth Israel. But a genuine breakthrough toward conciliation on tendentious issues, such as the role and status of women in Jewish law and liturgy, remained elusive.
Jewish-Christian Relations

In April the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference issued a set of guidelines for Catholic-Jewish relations. The guidelines strongly urged Catholic clergy, nuns, teachers, and laypeople to foster mutual understanding and respect between Catholics and Jews, to encourage interfaith dialogue, to confront anti-Semitism by instituting "a frank and honest treatment in our history books, courses and seminary curricula," to avoid proselytizing, and to "make an honest effort to understand the link between the land [of Israel] and the [Jewish] people." Conference organizers explained that the need for guidelines had become apparent for several reasons: the increased number of anti-Semitic incidents in the previous two years; growing interest in interfaith relations in Australia's increasingly pluralistic society; the large number of Holocaust survivors in Australia who "still find themselves exposed to denials of the Holocaust, attempted relativizing of the event and impatience with Jewish sensitivity"; evangelist activity; the upsurge of fundamentalism; increased awareness of Jewish concerns through contact with Jews; and "the close bonds that unite" the two faiths. Rabbi Raymond Apple, chairman of the New South Wales Council of Christians and Jews and senior rabbi at Sydney's Great Synagogue, welcomed the guidelines as a "landmark in interreligious history." The Executive Council of Australian Jewry participated in their official presentation in Sydney in November.

Formal relations with the Anglican Church also improved this year. In April a group from the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies and the ECAJ met with Archbishop Donald Robinson of Sydney at his request. The archbishop briefed the delegation on his visit to Israel and the Middle East earlier in the year, undertaken on behalf of the Australian Council of Churches. He had returned with a positive attitude toward Israel and a desire to improve relations with the Jewish community. In August Bishop John Reid of South Sydney successfully introduced a motion at the Anglican General Synod of Australia proposing that the church should formulate guidelines for relations with Jews.

In November the ECAJ and the Uniting Church in Australia (an amalgam of Presbyterian moderates, Methodists, and Congregationalists) agreed to improve communication. The move was encouraging because relations between the Uniting Church and the Jewish community had been badly strained owing to anti-Israel material issued by the church the previous year.

Jewish-Muslim Relations

Rabbi Brian Fox of Temple Emanuel in the Sydney suburb of Woollahra told the Community Relations Advisory Committee (CRAC) of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies in August that the Jewish community should open formal dialogue with local Muslims. He expressed similar views in separate meetings with Progressive and Orthodox colleagues in Melbourne and Sydney, becoming the first
mainstream Jewish leader since the Gulf War to urge such a course. Before that war there had been informal contacts between other rabbinic leaders and leading Muslims. CRAC chairman Peter Wertheim said he believed that, while there was little possibility that Jews and Muslims in Australia could agree on Middle East issues, they could present a united voice on the immigration debate and the campaign against racism.

In September Belgrade-born Sunni Muslim sociology lecturer Sheikh Abdullah Nu'man, a former member of the Islamic Council of Victoria, gave an eloquent and moving speech on "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia-Herzegovina before a large Friday-night congregation at Melbourne's Temple Beth Israel. Invited to the temple by Rabbi John Levi, Sheikh Nu'man (who several years earlier had read a passage from the Koran in an "interfaith prayer for peace" at the temple) spoke of Muslim-Jewish cooperation in his former homeland and drew parallels between "ethnic cleansing" and the Holocaust. He also joined the congregation in worship.

Many Australian Jewish leaders, including ECAJ president Leslie Caplan, added their voices to the growing worldwide condemnation of atrocities against Muslims and others in "concentration camps" in Bosnia. Earlier in the year, some 25 Jewish and Muslim women attended an informal and unadvertised meeting sponsored by the Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission and organized by Commissioner Molly Jedwab. Discussion covered Jewish and Muslim divorce law, dress requirements, discrimination, and the problems experienced by Muslim women during the Gulf War. Ms. Jedwab planned to establish a women's issues working group within the commission, in order to facilitate further dialogue.

**Education**

Monash University in Victoria opened the Center for Jewish Civilization in April and appointed Dr. Evan Zuesse as its first lecturer in modern Jewish history; he began teaching in June. Deakin University, also in Victoria, announced plans to establish a center for Jewish studies, to coordinate current and future courses. Deakin already had a Jewish studies program on its Toorak campus, but envisaged that it would require several years to develop a comprehensive sequence of courses, which it hoped would eventually be available for off-campus students via correspondence. Courses in Jewish studies were also available in New South Wales at Sydney, Macquarie, and New South Wales universities.

An estimated 90 percent of Jewish children in Australia received some form of Jewish education, through all-day schools, part-time after-school classes, or Sunday school. Figures available from the Sydney-based Australian Coordinating Committee on Jewish Day Schools indicated that the national enrollment for these schools had increased 2 percent at the start of 1992, though overall Sydney and Melbourne figures remained the same as the previous year. Queensland, with a new school—Sinai College, which opened in Brisbane in 1991—recorded an increase, while figures dropped in Adelaide and Perth. The secular Bialik College was the fastest-
growing Jewish school in Melbourne, where a substantial increase at the primary level forced the addition of extra classes. While a few children had transferred to Bialik from other Jewish day schools, most of the new students came from non-Jewish private and state schools. Also in Melbourne, the Jewish Secular Humanist Society opened a Sunday school in February. Its classes, open to students between the ages of 8 and 16, had a cultural and ethical focus and included a course in modern Hebrew.

Culture

A four-day conference on Sephardic Jewry was held in Melbourne in September to mark the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of Jews from Spain. A visiting American expert on Hebrew poetry, Prof. Ezra Spicehandler, headed the panel of speakers. Barrie Kosky, acclaimed young director of the Gilgul Theater in the Melbourne suburb of St. Kilda, staged a popular production of *The Dybbuk*, which earned him two top national awards.

Early in the year, the program schedules for the Hebrew and Yiddish broadcasts of SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) radio in Melbourne and Sydney were revised, and Hebrew programs were substantially reduced. Yiddish programs were less severely cut, but there was widespread discontent among Jewish listeners over the new time slots for those programs. Consultation with SBS chiefs revealed that SBS had acted only on the basis of estimates of language groups, not on ethnic population figures. As a result, the Yiddish programs were to be restored to a Friday time slot.

Publications

Among notable Jewish books appearing this year were *The Enduring Remnant: The First 150 Years of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation 1841–1991* by Joseph Aron and Judy Arndt; *Life Is a Corridor* by Rabbi Dr. Shalom Coleman, rabbi emeritus of the Perth Hebrew Congregation; *The Journal of an Australian Rabbi*, the posthumously published memoir of Rabbi Dr. Israel Porush, former chief minister of Sydney's Great Synagogue, issued by the Australian Jewish Historical Society; *The Future Is Past*, the self-published reminiscences of Melbourne communal personality and left-wing activist Evelyn Rothfield; *Things Could Be Worse*, a collection of interconnected stories by Lily Brett, focusing on a Jewish central character; *Between Yesterday and Tomorrow* by Matylda Engelman, a novel exploring the tensions confronting Holocaust survivors and their descendants in Australia; and *Aviva Gold*, a children's story by Jean Holkner.

Personalia

David Levine became a justice of the supreme court of New South Wales. Michael Rozenes was appointed federal director of public prosecutions. David Rosalky
became head of the treasury of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Australia's ambassador to the United Nations, Peter Wilenski, was named head of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Prominent businessman Sir Peter Abeles retired as managing director of the international transport giant TNT and of the domestic airline Ansett Australia. In December Yehuda Avner became Israel's ambassador to Australia, succeeding Zvi Kedar.

Warrants for the arrest of former Melbourne textile magnate Abe Goldberg and a business associate, Katy Rochelle Boskovitz, were issued by the federal police, working with the Australian Securities Commission, over the multimillion-dollar collapse in 1990 of the Linter textile and investment group and alleged fraudulent borrowing and misconduct. Boskovitz was arrested, but Goldberg remained free in his native Poland (where he was reputedly the representative of a New York export company), which had no extradition treaty with Australia. (Some sources said he was surreptitiously living in California.) Robyn Greenburg, convicted of fraud following the demise of a women's investment and finance group in Western Australia, was sentenced to 17 years in prison. Some saw the harsh sentence as inspired by anti-Semitism, others by sexism.

Australian Jews who died during the year included musician and singing coach Werner Baer, a former assistant director of music at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, choirmaster at both the Great Synagogue, Sydney, and Temple Emanuel, and founding musical director of the Sydney Jewish Choral Society, in January, aged 77; Harold Collins, Australia's oldest Jewish Gallipoli veteran and a founding member of the New South Wales Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women (NAJEX), in January, aged 99; Rose Gutnick, wife of Rabbi Chaim Gutnick of Melbourne and matriarch of a well-known rabbinic family, in January, aged 65; Lily Solvey, a communal activist known particularly for her work as organizing secretary of Victoria's United Jewish Education Board for over 30 years, in January, aged 69; Adelaide WIZO leader Esther Levy, in April, aged 73; Reb Moshe Pinchas Kantor, founder of a well-known Jewish bookstore in Melbourne and of the Caulfield Beth HaMidrash, and active for decades in Orthodox causes, in May, aged about 80; Estelle (Stella) Spray, a founder of the Gold Coast, Queensland, Progressive Jewish community and incumbent president of the Gold Coast's Temple Shalom, in July, aged 75; Sydney sculptor and arts patron Dennis (Zdanek) Wolanski, in September, aged 75. Eliezer Berkovits, the eminent American/Israeli theologian who died this year in Israel, had been rabbi at Sydney's Central Synagogue, 1946–50.

HILARY RUBINESTEIN