AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK
THE ANNUAL RECORD OF JEWISH CIVILIZATION
The 2004 American Jewish Year Book, 4th in the series, continues to offer a chronicle of developments in areas concern to Jews around the world. This year’s volume features an essay commissioned to mark the 350th anniversary of American Jewish life, “The Rise of American Jewry: A History,” by Helen Whitfield. Focusing on how Americans and others have evaluated the aspects of the community down through years and gauging the accuracy of predictions, it sheds new light on aspects for the future.

Events in the Jewish world during—such as the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, the worrisome rise of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism affecting many Jewish communities, and the repercussions of the war in Iraq—are covered in the annual reviews of the various countries. Articles on Jewish life in the United States are “National Affairs,” by Richard T. Green; “Anti-Semitism,” by Jerome A. Zies; and “Jewish Communal Affairs,” by Lawrence Grossman.

(continued on back flap)
The American Jewish Committee acknowledges with appreciation the foresight and wisdom of the founders of the Jewish Publication Society (of America) in the creation of the American Jewish Year Book in 1899, a work committed to providing a continuous record of developments in the U.S. and world Jewish communities. For over a century JPS has occupied a special place in American Jewish life, publishing and disseminating important, enduring works of scholarship and general interest on Jewish subjects.

The American Jewish Committee assumed responsibility for the compilation and editing of the Year Book in 1908. The Society served as its publisher until 1949; from 1950 through 1993, the Committee and the Society were co-publishers. In 1994 the Committee became the sole publisher of the Year Book.
Volume 104 of the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK covers the events of the year 2003. It also marks the 350th anniversary of the arrival, in September 1654, of the first group of Jews to settle in North America.

In “The Future of American Jewry: A History,” an essay specially commissioned to mark this milestone, Prof. Stephen J. Whitfield looks back at the American Jewish experience from an unfamiliar angle—how Jews and other Americans over the years have assessed the future of the Jewish community.

The YEAR BOOK’s coverage of American Jewish life—which, as always, includes articles on national affairs, Jewish communal affairs, and demography—is enhanced this year by the inclusion, for the first time in four decades, of an article on anti-Semitism.

The article on Israel describes in detail the diplomatic, political, economic, and social developments during 2003, and the state’s attempts to achieve security through negotiation, military action, and the erection of a protective fence.

Manifestations of anti-Semitism in many countries—vandalism, physical attacks, verbal abuse, hostile editorials, and biased reporting—continued to be linked to opposition toward Israel. These disturbing events are carefully described in the YEAR BOOK’s regular articles on individual countries, as are important events and trends within the Jewish communities of these countries.

Carefully compiled directories of national Jewish organizations, periodicals, and federations and welfare funds, as well as obituaries and religious calendars, round out the 2004 AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of our colleagues, Cyma M. Horowitz and Michele Anish, of the American Jewish Committee’s Blaustein Library, and the contribution of Rachel Arnold, our assistant, in preparing the index.

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