

Eastern Europe

Soviet Union

IN THE FALL of 1967 the Soviet Union celebrated the 50th anniversary of the October revolution. There were festivities in Moscow in which all the Soviet satellites of Eastern Europe and representatives of Communist parties of other areas participated. The powerful propaganda machinery of the state worked overtime to rewrite history and present the past as a logical preparation for the policies pursued by the present collective leadership of the KPSS (Communist party). The emphasis in official writings and oratory was on Lenin, who was at the helm from 1917 to 1924. The Communist propagandists made every effort to pass lightly over the period from some thirty years before, during and following the Second World War, during which the country experienced the unspeakable horrors of Stalin's reign. Little was said about the years of the Khrushchev regime.

Judging from available material and reports in the Soviet press, three men were at the top of the collective leadership: Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the party; Alexei Kosygin, chairman of the Council of Ministers, and Nikolai Podgorny, chairman of the Supreme Soviet. Shifts of considerable political importance occurred in the top party echelons. Alexander Shelepin, one of the diehards of the so-called Komsomol group, was downgraded. After losing his post as a secretary of the Party, he was relegated to the chairmanship of the Central Council of Trade Unions. However, he retained his membership in the Politburo. An incidental result of the downgrading of Shelepin was the abolition of the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, the unit responsible for cultural exchanges. According to Soviet specialists, the head of this committee, Sergei Romanovsky, also belonged to the Shelepin Komsomol group. There also was a shift in the KGB (Secret Police), with Yuri Andropov, a Party secretary, replacing Vladimir Semichastny, a close associate of Shelepin, who was demoted. It is noteworthy that the status of Mikhail Suslov, erstwhile Party theoretician and "guardian of the law," seemed substantially weakened. Like Shelepin, he represented the conservative element that opposed Kosygin's group of practical technicians, favoring changes and reforms in the economic management of the country.

The internecine struggle at the top of the Party also was reflected in the

continuing confrontation between "liberals" and "conservatives" in the academic world, in art, and more particularly, in the centuries-old Russian tradition, among poets and writers. The ideologists and the conservative wing of the writing profession continued to criticize the "liberal" Soviet magazine *Novy Mir* which, Soviet conditions permitting, followed the generous policies of the so-called "thick" journals of old Russia. Their constant target was *Novy Mir's* editor, the well-known poet Alexander Tvardovski. Although they could not touch Tvardovski, they did succeed in removing Boris Zaks, the assistant editor, and Alexander Dementyev, the secretary of the editorial board. Tvardovski struck back at his critics, declaring that *Novy Mir* would continue the publication of short stories, novels, and memoirs, exposing the shortcomings and mistakes of contemporary Soviet society.

The struggle for liberalizing the regime took a still more militant form when Alexander Solzhenitzyn, the well-known author of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch*, wrote a letter to the Fourth National Congress of Soviet Writers, which met in Moscow in May, demanding that "The no longer tolerable oppression our literature has been enduring from censorship for decades . . ." be removed. The writers' Congress firmly replied: "We have no other interests than those of the people, expressed by our party."

There were reports predicting the abolition of literary censorship, but nothing of the sort occurred by year's end. In October Minister of Culture Yekaterina Furtseva stated that Soviet authorities would not permit publication of Boris Pasternak's novel *Dr. Zhivago*. Indicative of the mood in government circles was also the fact that the amnesty proclaimed in connection with the 50th anniversary of the October revolution did not extend to Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, the writers who in 1966 were condemned to forced labor on charges of publishing abroad material hostile to the Soviet state (AJYB, 1967 [Vol. 68], p. 378). Three young intellectuals, Yevgeny Kushev, Vladimir Bukovsky, and Vadim Delone, went on trial and were condemned to prison for organizing a demonstration in January protesting the arrest of the editors of a clandestine magazine, *Phoenix*. The editors, Yuri Galanshov, Vera Lashkova, Alexander Ginsburg, and Alexei Dobrovolsky, were to be brought to trial early in 1968. There were also reports that four men belonging to academic and literary circles in Leningrad had been convicted and sentenced to up to fifteen years for "plotting to overthrow the government." These repressive acts, directed particularly against intellectuals, provoked a new wave of protests. A group of about 180 Moscow intellectuals, writers, academicians, and others urged the Supreme Soviet to take measures assuring freedom of the press and abolishing censorship.

In a way, all these events testified to the truth of Svetlana Allilueva's assertions, after her escape from the USSR, that a new and non-Communist mood had taken hold among educated groups in Russia. Soviet citizens celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Soviet Union undoubtedly had better living con-

ditions, better pensions, and higher wages, but they did not yet have the freedoms formally guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution.

Economic Policies

The policies, enunciated at the 23rd Congress in 1966 and confirmed at subsequent Central Committee meetings, continued in 1967. The economic reform, introducing profit as the central element of industrial management, spread throughout the country. According to Soviet sources, about 40 per cent of Soviet industry worked under the new profit-oriented planning and management system, that resulted in a 10 per cent increase in 1967 production. In agriculture, the transfer of some 400 state-operated farms to a self-supporting profit system had substantially reduced costs of operation and improved efficiency.

Also, in order to assure the flexibility needed in a sophisticated economic setup, the entire management of Soviet planning was undergoing substantial overhauling. Interest on capital, which heretofore had been supplied by the state without charge, was now permitted. (It is interesting that in 1967, one of every four persons in the USSR had a savings account in one of the 73,000 branches of savings banks.) In an attempt to speed up economic reform, Soviet authorities also decided to impose fines of up to 20 per cent of value on all defective merchandise or incomplete sets of equipment. While the state encouraged industrial initiative through bonuses paid from realized profits to managers of various enterprises, it nevertheless maintained overall control of the Soviet economy.

Nationalities Policy

The Soviet press has been devoting considerable attention to the theoretical and practical problems of nationalities. More than 130 nations and peoples were living in Soviet territory, including 53 republics and autonomous and national regions with their own state systems. Some 22 of these had populations of more than a million. In theory, all these national groups were equal and had the right to live their own cultural life. The Soviet Union claimed that it had solved the question of nationality by obliterating racial inequality, prejudice, and discrimination. "Our state was born with the principle of free self-determination of peoples including the right of separation" proclaimed a *Pravda* editorial of November 16, 1967.

The actual situation was quite different. Stress among the various nationalities and their common suspicion of "Big Brother" (the Russians) had survived the years of revolution and the Second World War. In some of the areas inhabited by minorities, the policy of russification created conflicts with the local intelligentsia, in the schools and at universities. Coincident with the celebration of the 50th anniversary, Moscow authorities solemnly exonerated the Crimean Tartars from the charge of collaboration with the Nazis during

the occupation, on which Stalin had exiled them to Caucasia at the end of the war. However, they will not recover their former land, since the Crimea is now a part of the Ukrainian Republic. Five other minorities, the Balkars, the Karachai, the Kalmyks, the Chechen, and the Ingushi, had been absolved as early as the mid-1950s of charges arising from the Nazi occupation. The Volga Germans' legal rights, that had been abrogated in 1941, were restored in 1965, but their autonomous republic was not reestablished. Obviously, the Kremlin leaders did not care to explain, amidst the fanfare of the October festivities, why the Crimea, which had been the homeland of the Crimean Tartars, was now an organic part of the Ukraine. Nor did they explain why they, as well as the Volga Germans, were now "national" groups deprived of their former "national" territories to which the 1936 fundamental laws of the Soviet Union entitled them.

Foreign Policy

While the Soviet Union continued its policy of coexistence, the Kremlin leaders did not try to conceal their grave concern over developments in China and near the Soviet-China borders. It was openly conceded that China was the most serious potential danger to peace, and the Soviet military repeatedly emphasized in their organ, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, the dangerous provocations of the Chinese Communist leadership. When, in the spring of 1967, Brezhnev appealed for Communist unity to aid the struggle in Vietnam, Peking replied that "under no circumstances will we take united action with [you], who are rank traitors to the Vietnam revolution serving as adviser to U.S. imperialism and top accomplices of U.S. gangsters. "

The escalation of American military efforts in Vietnam created a mood of apprehension in Moscow, but thus far Moscow has not gone beyond anti-American propaganda and accelerated shipments of military supplies, such as MIGs and missiles to Hanoi. There were reports that one of the factors in the downgrading of Shelepin and his friends was their hawkish proposals of a more active anti-United States policy.

At the same time, the Soviet Union intensified its military aid to selected countries all over the world. Since 1955 it provided to non-developed nations \$5 billion worth of military supplies, about \$500 million in 1967, including tanks, planes, and all kinds of arms. It was estimated that some 3,000 Soviet personnel, civilian, and military, were working abroad in advisory and other capacities. This arms diplomacy has been a relatively late development in Moscow foreign policy, but one that was having considerable impact on the situation in Asia, North Africa, Latin America, and, of course, the Middle East (pp. 188-92).

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The number of Jews in the Soviet Union at the end of 1967 was estimated at 2,568,000, slightly more than 1 per cent of the total population of some 236,000,000. This estimate was based on the assumption that the natural increase of the Jewish population was the same as that of the general population: 17 per 1,000 in 1959, 1960, and 1961; 15 per 1,000 in 1962; 14 per 1,000 in 1963; 13 per 1,000 in 1964; 12 per 1,000 in 1965; 11 per 1,000 in 1966; and 10 per 1,000 in 1967. Until new Soviet census data become available, this is the only practical method of arriving at a figure. The 3 million estimate cited in the press therefore appears to have no valid basis, even if, as it might well be, the natural increase of the Jews differed from the general rate.

Communal and Religious Life

Unlike other Soviet nationalities, the Jews had no schools of their own. They had been closed under Stalin and were never reopened. Since the authorities in fact regarded all Jewish communal activities with disfavor, no Jewish social agencies or other institutions caring for special Jewish needs existed. There were altogether 97 synagogues in the Soviet Union in 1965.* (The total of 62, cited in some American sources, seems to have no valid basis.) There was, of course, no way of checking this figure. But the lack of Jewish religious facilities becomes obvious even from Rabinovitch's official figure of 97—an average of one synagogue for some 25,000 Jews. According to reports, there were also *minyons* and chasidic *shtiblach* frequented by old and young Jews with a commitment to traditional Judaism. Apparently these *shtiblach* served as a channel for transmitting Jewish values to the upcoming generations. Surprisingly, some of the young men who, under the new regulations, came to Israel in 1966 and early 1967 had a knowledge of Talmud.

One of the pressing problems of Soviet Jews was the continuing need of rabbis. The death of the old rabbis left many large Jewish communities without religious leaders. Rabbi Judah Leib Levin continued as rabbi of the Moscow synagogue, but he was completely isolated, as were some 40 other rabbis serving Jewish communities in the Soviet Union, among them Rabbi Chayim Klebanov in Leningrad and Rabbi Israel Schwartzblatt in Odessa.

The Moscow yeshivah Kol Jacob apparently had no students. Synagogue officials spoke of "temporary" difficulties, such as residence permits, but the fact was that the yeshivah was not functioning. Attempts to send Soviet Jewish students to yeshivahs outside the USSR were unsuccessful. Under these circumstances there was considerable fear that Soviet Jewry might soon

* Shlomo Rabinovitch, *Yidn in Sovietyen Ferband* (Moscow, 1965), p. 47.

face a critical shortage of religious personnel imperiling the existence of a regularly functioning synagogal system.

A central Jewish body, rabbinical or synagogal, was not permitted. However, central religious organizations existed, not only for the Russian Orthodox Church, but also for the Baptists, Moslems, and other religious groups. The relaxation of the post-Stalin years has enabled Orthodox priests to participate in international conferences, but Soviet rabbis could not go abroad. Nor were they permitted to visit the Holy Places in Jerusalem, although Soviet Moslems could go to Mecca. Metropolitan Nicodim, who headed a three-man Soviet church delegation, came to New York in November for a month's stay. On that occasion he told representatives of the Synagogue Council of America that he saw no reason why Soviet authorities should not permit Rabbi Levin to visit the United States at the council's invitation. He suggested that such an invitation should be sent through "proper channels."

Religious articles, such as prayer shawls, phylacteries and prayer books, remained unobtainable. Despite many promises, the 10,000 prayer books, which were to have been issued before the 1966 High Holy Days, had not been published by the end of 1967. In September Rabbi Levin wrote to Rabbi Bernard Poupko of Pittsburgh that the "overcrowded schedules of our publishing houses, which are preparing for our 50th anniversary celebration," interfered with the completion of the prayer book, which, he said, "will be completed in the near future." Rabbi Poupko made it known that Aron Vergelis, editor of *Sovetish Heymland*, whom he saw on his recent trip to the Soviet Union, promised that it would be published. The arrival of a shipment of *etrogim* and *lulavim*, sent by the Canadian Jewish Congress to the Moscow Central synagogue for Sukkot, was acknowledged by Rabbi Levin. It is interesting to note that the Jews of Dushambe (Tadzhikistan) had enough prayer shawls and phylacteries to satisfy local needs, and that the Jews of Bukhara (Soviet Asia) in many ways lived a more Jewish life than those in the European USSR.

It was reported from Moscow that the Jews there did not experience difficulties with respect to supplies of *matzot* for Passover. The bakery of the Central synagogue was to produce about a hundred tons, a quantity sufficient to satisfy local needs. Prospective customers were required to furnish the bakery with flour and to pay 1 ruble 50 kopeks per kilogram of *matzot*. According to Manassah Mikhailovitch, president of the Moscow synagogue, over 11,000 families had brought flour for *matzot* by mid-March. Similar arrangements were authorized in Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa, Tbilisi, Vilna, and many other cities.

Soviet authorities reportedly decided to make available a place of worship to the Jews of Tallin (Estonia), whose old synagogue had been closed in 1965 (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 370). Authorities in Kaunas (Lithuania) expropriated the town's Jewish cemetery, creating a serious problem regarding ritual burial.

Despite the overtly hostile attitude of the Soviet authorities and social pressure for conformity, Soviet Jews have maintained their attachment to tradition. The powerful attraction to things Jewish was particularly evident among young people, who grew up without Jewish education and often in homes where Jewishness no longer existed. They participated in increasing numbers in Passover services, and came to the Moscow synagogue on Purim to hear the reading of the Book of Esther. Tourists who spent the High Holy Days in the Soviet Union, estimated Yom Kippur attendance at the Moscow synagogue at about 10,000. Thousands of Jews, many of them young people and children, packed the street outside the synagogue, which was filled to capacity. Tension and tears marked the *Kol Nidre* prayer. On the eve of *Simhat Torah*, over 20,000 Jews, young and old, danced with Torah scrolls and sang Israeli songs in the streets near the Central synagogue. For years *Simhat Torah* has been the day on which Moscow Jews expressed their Jewish feelings. But this year the dancing took on added significance because it was not a simple matter for Moscow Jews openly to demonstrate their Jewishness in view of the Soviet government's anti-Jewish campaign following the Arab-Israeli war. Even the official Soviet press agency *Novosti* conceded that a large number of young Jews had participated in *Simhat Torah* festivities, which they called a folk custom without particular religious significance.

Antisemitism and Discrimination

Anti-Jewish propaganda increased after the Arab defeat in June, but vicious antisemitic attacks appeared in the press long before the Middle East crisis. Nikolai Gribachov, well known for his antisemitic writings in connection with the "doctors' plot" in 1953, was appointed to *Sputnik*, a Soviet monthly digest published by the *Novosti* press agency. Official Soviet propaganda attacked Jewish religious concepts. A passage in an anthology, *Fundamental Questions of Scientific Atheism* (published by Mysl, Moscow, 1966), maintained that "Jewish nationalism . . . states . . . that God predestined the Jews to rule the world" and that the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' accordingly was to be applied only to Jews. More anti-Jewish propaganda was fed to the not too unreceptive public by Soviet authorities, who emulated the well-known Tsarist policy of accusing Jews of crimes against the fatherland. Thus, *Moscow Pravda*, on February 24, carried at the bottom of the last page (an important spot) an article by A. V. Diatchenko, entitled "The Fall," which claimed that a certain Solomon Borisovitch Dolnik, a retired engineer accused of spying for Israel, was given "the task of spreading among Soviet citizens anti-Soviet and Zionist pamphlets, prepared by Israeli diplomats." Dolnik, the author continued, "reproduced this anti-Soviet slander, and stuck it into the [coat] pockets of believers [who were] in the synagogue vestry." Upon the instigation of the Israelis, the story went on, Dolnik later "prepared a disgusting falsification—he made a paper swastika" and, through various manipulations, made it appear as evidence of "the desecration of a Jewish

tombstone." A photograph of this evidence was sent abroad for use in anti-Soviet campaigns. Dolnik was also said to have gathered secret information for Israeli intelligence. Diatchenko did not give details of the outcome of the trial, except to say that "the traitor received what he deserved." There is no information on Dolnik, his role, or how this story about him was concocted. However, there can be no doubt concerning the obvious implications of the "trial" or, at least, of Diatchenko's article in *Pravda*. The story has all the elements of the familiar scenario: a pious Jew, a synagogue, disloyalty to the fatherland, espionage. Its effects on religious Jews going to the synagogue for daily prayer are obvious.

There was evidence of continued exclusion of Jews from top positions in Party and state posts. In 1966 there were only five Jews among the 1,517 members of the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet. According to available data, 1965 membership in soviets at all levels was 2,010,540; of these 8,124, or less than one-third of one per cent of the total, were Jews (*Vestnik Statistiki*, Moscow, #3, 1967). Benjamin Dimshitz, deputy premier and chairman of the State Committee for Material Technical Supplies, was the only Jew in the Party's Central Committee. No Jews were in the ruling Politburo, or in top policy-making positions in the army or foreign office. No Jewish names were among the many top military men who were honored on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the October revolution. Many Jews did play important roles in specialized fields of the arts and sciences because of their training or talent. However, in an April interview in the United States, Svetlana Allilueva, spoke about restrictions imposed on some Jewish students.

Western Reaction to Soviet Antisemitism

The restrictive measures against Jews in the Soviet Union evoked a wave of protests by both Jewish organizations and non-Jewish groups in the West. In England, the Board of Deputies repeatedly interceded in behalf of their fellow Jews through the Labor government and, more particularly, Prime Minister Harold Wilson. Twenty-two American writers called on their colleagues in the Soviet Union to help restore Jewish cultural institutions. The presidents of 25 national Jewish organizations affiliated with the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry called upon Soviet leaders to "eradicate the irrational factors that have determined policy toward Jewish citizens and to allow the reestablishment of communal institutions." The Conference initiated many other efforts to bring the sufferings of Soviet Jewry to public attention. In New York, in February, Protestants, Catholics, and Jews held a 24-hour vigil for Soviet Jews, which was addressed by Norman Thomas and others. In May the United States formally protested to the Soviet Union the "antisemitic aspersions" by a Soviet delegate against Morris B. Abram, United States representative to the United Nations Human Rights Commission. During business debates, the head of the Soviet delegation reportedly

told Abram, who is also president of the American Jewish Committee, that he was "obeying the orders of the Zionists and Jews of America."

The plight of Soviet Jewry created a stir also in liberal circles, particularly in the American and European labor movements. Following a special report prepared by a study group, the Socialist International, meeting in Zurich in October, stated that the present situation of Soviet Jews gave "greater cause for alarm than at any other time since the Stalinist persecution of Jews in 1948-53," and announced a campaign to arouse public opinion over their plight. Condemnation of Soviet anti-Jewish propaganda was also voiced by the left-wing New York paper *Morgn Freiheit* (July 2, 1967), *Di Naye Presse*, a left-wing Paris paper (July 6, 1967), and by many leftist intellectuals and writers.

The Israeli Chief Rabbinate designated December 25 a worldwide day of prayer for Soviet Jews, "to identify with them and to pray that they may soon be free to practice their religion."

Culture

While Soviet authorities continued to look without favor on all Jewish activities, there still were strong stirrings of initiative in various fields of Jewish culture. This activity was doubtless encouraged by the more liberal climate in Moscow, to which the liberal *Novy Mir*, under the editorship of Alexander Tvardovski, contributed. In opposition to the prevailing official attitude, it repeatedly commented on the Nazi holocaust, as it affected the Jews. In its issue #4, 1967, *Novy Mir* carried the poem "Datskaya Legenda" (Danish Legend) by Vl. Lifshitz, which described the Nazi order forcing Danish Jews to don yellow badges, and the Danish people's resistance to this order. In the very next issue (#5, 1967), *Novy Mir* published "The Young Hero in Soviet Literature" by Ph. Svetov, about Anatoly Kuznetsov's novel *Babi-Yar* and the horror of the Nazi massacre of Jews in Kiev.

In 1967 four books in Yiddish were published by Sovietski Pisatel: *Undzer Gas* ("Our Street") by Zalman Wendroff; *Geklibene verk* ("Selected Works"), a volume of poetry by Leib Kvitko; *Lider, balades, poemes* ("Verses, Ballads, and Poems"), by Itzik Fefer, and *Bay zikh in der heym* ("In My Home"), selected verses by Mendel Lifshitz. These books were issued in 5,000 to 7,500 copies, each. Another new publication was a volume of poems by Abraham Reisin, Leib Kvitko, Itzik Fefer, Samuel Halkin, and others, with musical scores composed by Rivka Boyarskaya, the well-known writer of Yiddish children's songs. Thus, from 1948 through 1967, twenty Yiddish books appeared in the Soviet Union. *Sovetish Heymland*, edited by Aron Vergelis, continued to appear twelve times a year, each issue containing some 150 pages of literature, criticism, bibliography, and other material. Of late, the quality of its material and its coverage of general Jewish news was much improved. The *Birobidjaner Shtern*, the only Yiddish newspaper in the Soviet Union, appeared three times a week.

Many projects in the field were initiated by writers' unions, academic research institutions, and other interested groups. The Moscow Art Publishing House decided to issue an eight-volume edition of Sholem Aleichem's works in Russian. The present series will include many works omitted from the six-volume edition, published on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the author's birth. In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Sholem Aleichem's death (AJYB, 1967 [Vol. 68], p. 385), the Soviet postal administration in Kiev issued a postcard with his portrait. In Odessa, flowers were laid at the grave of Mendele Mocher Sforim. They were sent by the Social and Cultural Union of Polish Jews in Warsaw and Polish Yiddish writers on the 50th anniversary of his death.

Two Yiddish writers, M. Mogilevitch and Pinie Kiretchevsky, read from their works at a special meeting of the Ukrainian Writers Home in Kiev. The readings were followed by a translation for the benefit of non-Jewish listeners. The Odessa writers' group celebrated the 60th birthday of the Yiddish writer Jeremiah Druker, which was marked also in the Russian and Ukrainian press. In Birobidjan, a three-day seminar was held on problems of Yiddish literature there.

Many academic institutions worked in the field of Jewish scholarship. The historian Arkady Waksberg did a study of the celebrated Beilis trial, which pointed out that antisemites and Russian reactionary elements used the "ritual murder" accusation for political purposes, and that Russian liberals protested the trumped-up charges. The Academy of Sciences of Georgia was in the process of issuing a photostatic copy of the old Tanach manuscript, with an introduction by George Tseretelli. The Soviet Academy of Sciences issued a volume on Palestine (*Paletinski Sbornik*), edited by N. Pigulevskaya, in its series devoted to the history and philology of the Near East. Also in 1967, two students, specializing in Hebrew, were graduated from Leningrad University. Vadim Lazo's thesis dealt with medieval Hebrew manuscripts and Vitaly Sheinin's was a translation, with commentary, of S.Y. Agnon's *A Simple Story*.

The Soviet Union had no legitimate Yiddish theater. But professional and amateur music and art ensembles were active in many parts of the country. The Yiddish Drama Ensemble of Vilna celebrated its 10th anniversary with a performance in the Great Hall, which drew an audience of some 1,200, including representatives of Yiddish art ensembles in Kovno, Tallin, Kishinev, Riga, Dvinsk, and other cities, and guests from Kiev, Grodno, and Moscow. Most of the 150 artists were workers, technicians, and white-collar employees. As part of the 50th anniversary celebration, the Vilna ensemble was scheduled to present a special revue and, under the direction of Leonid Lurie, a play by L. Shaus, *Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letzten veg* ("Don't Ever Say This Is the Last Road"), dedicated to Itchak Witenberg, the hero of the Vilna resistance.

In January the Czernovitz Art Ensemble presented in Leningrad and Riga a new program called *Glicklekhe bagegenishn* ("Happy Encounters"), with Sidi Tal. Also in January the Moscow Drama Ensemble, directed by Benjamin Schwartzer, presented a series of recitals in Perm, Nijni-Tagil, Kamensk-Uralsk, Magnitogorsk, Sverdlovsk, Kirov, Novosibirsk, and many other cities in Siberia. In addition to Sholem Aleichem's *Tevye der milkhiker* and *200,000*, the ensemble presented dramatic sketches of Lermentov. In the spring, Moscow celebrated Schwartzer's 75th birthday, with the participation of Russian stage directors. The Leningrad Drama Ensemble, featuring Faivish Arones, presented Sholem Aleichem's sketches, *Kasrilovker glikn*, with music by Shimon Tombank, in Yalta, Sotchi, Sinferopol, Frunze, Alma-Ata, Samarkand, Tashkent, Kislodovsk, and Evpatoria. After performing in Caucasia and the Crimea, the group went to Kharkov, Kremenchug, Poltava, and Kiev, in the Ukraine. The Birobidjan Drama Circle, under the direction of Moishe Bengelsdorf, continued its activities. In the spring of 1967 the Soviet authorities designated it a Folk Theater.

Many Jewish artists presented their works in cities with Jewish populations. Sofia Seitin gave a Yiddish and Russian reading from the works of 19 Yiddish poets in Leningrad in January and, two months later, in Moscow. In January Rosa Golubiev, accompanied by Leib Ostrovsky, gave a song recital in Gomel. One of her selections was a song about Babi-Yar. Nehama Lifshitz presented a program of songs in Moscow and Leningrad, and a new Soviet Yiddish singer, Klementina Shermel, gave recitals in Vilna, Odessa, and elsewhere. Mikhail Aleksandrovitch achieved considerable success in recitals of classical compositions and folksongs. His recording of Gevirtig's song, *Vos makhstu epes, Moyshela*, created a sensation. Rubina Kalantarian, the well-known Armenian jazz singer from Leningrad, included in her repertoire the popular Yiddish song, *Ikh dermon zikh freitik oyf der nakht*.

Among 203 persons receiving state prizes during the year, 29 were Jews: in science, Lev Zilber; in technology, Piotr Shames, Semion Granowsky, Moisei Neierman, Yuri Sagolovitch, Immanuel Lifshitz, Nina Kaplan, Moisei Kaplan, Vladimir Zusman, Aron Kobrinsky, Mark Minkin, Vladimir Brener, Grigori Nurok, Rubin Fidel, Joseph Shifrin, Moisei Morgulis, Israel Vinokurov, Dora Rabinovitch, Jakob Rausin, Lev Levin, Mayer Kaufman, Vladimir Abovski, Girsh Shagal, Alfred Liberman, Boris Gorenstein, Abram Levinski; in film production, Evgeny Gabrilovitch; in architecture, Avram Miletzky, Leonid Linovitch. Three Jews who received the Lenin prize for 1967 were Gersh Budker, Ilya Lifshitz, and Abram Lass. In 1967 the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences reportedly had nine Jewish members—seven physicists and two humanities scholars.

It was reported that Joseph Brodsky, a Russian Jewish poet who had been convicted of being a "social parasite," was released from prison, rehabilitated, and permitted to return to his work. In Dvinsk, a plaque was mounted com-

memorating the great Yiddish actor and director Michoels, who was born in that city.

Commemoration of the Catastrophe

The creation of the anti-Fascist resistance group in the Kovno ghetto in 1942 was marked at a special meeting in the Kovno Museum of the Revolution, with speakers lauding the efforts of the Kovno Jews. A monument to 1,000 Jewish victims of the Nazis was erected at the cemetery of Tcherkask (Caucasia); others were erected in Proskurov, Ukraine, and Kreslavka, Latvia. In October commemorative meetings for the Jews killed by the Nazis were held in Kovno and Riga.

A. Kaminkovitch, who had been a major in the Red Army during the Second World War, devoted many years to collecting archival material, memoirs, and photos on Nazi crimes, mostly those perpetrated against the Jews. From time to time he exhibited this material and lectured on it in various cities of the Soviet Union, including Moscow, Rostov, and Sotchi.

Death of Ilya Ehrenburg

Ilya Ehrenburg, one of the five Jewish members of the Supreme Soviet who had survived Stalin's executions of Jewish writers in 1948–52, died on August 31, at the age of 76. He was also one of the leading members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, created by Stalin in 1942 essentially for propaganda purposes in the all-out Russian war effort. Ehrenburg's novel, *The Thaw*, symbolized the beginning of the post-Stalin liberalization. In his memoirs, *Men, Years, Life*, many pages were devoted to Jewish life and Jewish writers. The Jewish press was not kind to Ehrenburg, and even accused him of having been a party to the Stalinist persecutions of Yiddish writers. Yet, he said at a public celebration of his 70th birthday in Moscow in January 1961, that, though he was proud to be a Russian writer, he would proudly and vigorously assert his Jewish nationality "as long as there is even one antisemite" (AJYB, 1962 [Vol. 63], p. 369). He had also expressed the grief of a Jew returning to Kiev in a poem about Babi-Yar, written in 1944. Abraham Suckever, the well-known Yiddish poet-partisan from Vilna, who knew Ehrenburg well, described him as a good and proud Jew in a warm, sympathetic piece (*Di Goldene Kayt* #61, 1967, published by Histadrut, Tel Aviv).

Personalia

Zalman Wendroff, the well-known Yiddish writer, celebrated his 90th birthday in 1967. *Sovetish Heymland* celebrated the 70th birthday of the Yiddish actor Moishe Goldblatt. In connection with the 50th anniversary of the October revolution, Sonia Frei of *Sovetish Heymland* received the Order of Merit. A new settlement in the region of Archangelsk was given the name

of the Soviet Jewish pilot Ilya Katunin, who was killed in battle in 1942. Katunin was born in Gomel.

Shmul Senderei, the well-known Jewish composer, died in Moscow in August, at the age of 62.

LEON SHAPIRO

Poland

WLADISLAW GOMULKA continued to dominate political life in Poland in 1967. Joseph Cyrankiewicz remained in the post of prime minister, but there was no doubt that, as first secretary of PPZR (Communist Party), Gomulka was top man. Edward Ochab, as chairman of the State Council, was Poland's formal head. Although there were reports of continuing struggle between the so-called "liberals" and the hard-line "partisans," Gomulka maintained his "centrist" position, and there was no political figure of sufficient prestige to challenge his power.

One of the reasons for the regime's durability was that Gomulka, who came to power as a result of a very real popular discontent with the Soviet policy of encroachment and the June 1956 Poznan riots, now was a loyal supporter of the Kremlin. When de Gaulle, during his state visit to Warsaw in September, emphasized his support of the Oder-Neisse frontier and invited Poland to assert greater independence from the Soviet Union, Gomulka's response was immediate and unmistakably clear. Addressing the Sejm in the presence of de Gaulle, Gomulka bluntly reiterated the importance of Poland's alliance with Russia, which protected his country against Germany and put it "in a durable and important place" in Europe, "a place our fatherland had sought in vain since the 18th century." A month later Gomulka again stated that "the Soviet socialist motherland has always given Poland political support and brotherly help . . . and this since the birth of people's Poland" (*Pravda*, Moscow, Oct. 29, 1967). Earlier, in March, Poland had signed a treaty of friendship and mutual help with the East German Democratic Republic.

The uneasiness and discontent among writers and intellectuals continued. A number of writers protested the rigidity of the current cultural policy, a move which some observers connected with the expulsion from the party of Leszek Kolakowski, the well-known philosopher and educator. The official Polish line in dealing with intellectuals was further revealed by the conviction of Nina Karsow, a survivor of the Treblinka death camp, and secretary to the blind Polish writer Szymon Szechter. Both had been arrested in August 1966 on charges of trying to smuggle literary writings of Szechter out of the country. She was sentenced in October to three years in prison for "harboring anti-state material." Szechter, who received permission to emigrate to Israel, refused to do so without Miss Karsow. The eighth plenum of the Cultural Committee of the PPZR, held in September, devoted much time to a comprehensive critique of ideological weaknesses, deviations of intellectuals, etc. Those official deliberations contained little that could give

comfort to the protesting writers. (Official sources gave the total 1966 PPZR membership as 1,895,000.)

Again and again the Communist leadership expressed concern about the state of Polish agriculture. About 85 per cent of the arable land was being privately farmed, 13 per cent consisted of state farms, and less than 2 per cent of so-called collective farms, with altogether 32,616 agricultural circles.

Tension between the Polish government and the country's episcopate continued. Authorities denied a passport to Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski to attend the meeting of the Vatican Synod in Rome. This time, the Cardinal was accused of meddling in foreign affairs during de Gaulle's visit, though the two had not met. Zemon Kliszko of the Politburo and Jerzy Stachelski of the Health Ministry, met with Bishops Zygmunt Choromanski and M. Kleespasz to discuss problems of the relationship between state and church. Official spokesmen emphasized the need for continuing the dialogue, a position taken also by the pro-regime Catholic ZNAK group, which had five deputies in the Sejm. The most difficult question facing both parties was the extent of state supervision of Catholic seminaries. Meanwhile, Archbishop Karol Wojtyla of Krakow was made a Cardinal, and there were reports of reconciliation efforts between Cardinal Wyszynski and ZNAK, which asked two of its representatives to visit the Cardinal.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

An estimated 25,000 Jews lived in Poland in 1967. While some observers considered this figure too high, it would appear to be reasonable if one includes some 5,000 Jews who did not identify with the Jewish community and generally live under assumed Polish-sounding names. There were very few Jewish departures from Poland, particularly since emigration to Israel ceased with the Israeli-Arab war and the rupture of diplomatic ties with Israel (pp. 193-94).

Jewish communal life was coordinated by the Communist-dominated Cultural and Social Union of Poland. Although, officially, the Union had 26 local affiliates, it encountered increasing difficulty in promoting Jewish activities, particularly among the younger generation. In line with the decisions taken in 1966 by its fifth congress, the union organized special commissions to activate local organizations and help them in their work. In 1967, a host of special commissions were functioning in Warsaw and provincial cities. Six dealt with clubs, 14 with education and culture, 20 with books and publications, 16 with women's activities, 18 with social welfare, 14 with child care and children's colonies, 8 with economic activities, 8 with ORT, and one, with administration. Seven others were working on special tasks assigned to them by the union's presidium. Altogether, 750 militant activists were involved in these 112 commissions. Taking into account the 259 members of local union committees, 91 members of the so-called control commissions,

and 76 members of the courts of honor, some 1,200 activists—or about 5 per cent of the total Jewish population—were in fact promoting Jewish activities in Poland.

In February the Cultural and Social Union appealed to Jewish organizations the world over to protest the revival of nationalistic activities in Western Germany and to request stronger action against neo-Nazis. A similar appeal was made regarding the United States presence in Vietnam.

There were no changes in the leadership of the Union. Leib Domb continued as President, and Edward Reiber as Secretary General.

Religious Life

Jewish religious life in Poland continued to deteriorate. There were no rabbis, *mohalim*, or synagogue personnel. Religious services were conducted by older congregants. The youth showed little interest in religious activities. Concern over the deterioration of Jewish cemeteries and acts of desecration by vandals continued. In June vandals uprooted tombstones and defiled the monument to Nazi victims at the Jewish cemetery in Przemyśl. The presidium of the Cultural and Social Union appointed a commission to look after Jewish historical monuments and cemeteries, but the task was of such large proportions that little could be done without massive help from the state. Plans have been made to rehabilitate the well-known Geza cemetery.

There was a sufficient supply of kosher meat and *matzot* for families observing *Kashrut* and Passover. Ten kosher kitchens, supervised by the Union of Jewish Religious Congregations (Wa'ad Ha-kehillot) fed about 500 persons daily. The Wa'ad claimed a membership of about 7,000 in 20 local *kehillot*; Izaak Frenkel continued as its president.

Jewish Education

Responsible militants continued to appeal for intensified efforts in Jewish education. Many writers in the *Folks-shtimme*, official organ of the Cultural and Social Union, and various speakers emphasized the importance of giving the youth a Jewish education. In 1966–67 the Cultural and Social Union organized 20 special courses in Yiddish, but there was little enthusiasm for the project among the young. This lack of interest also placed the Yiddish state schools in a critical situation. Five such elementary schools existed, in Wrocław, Legnica, Łódź, Szczecin, and Wałbrzych; the schools in Łódź, Wrocław, and Legnica provided also a secondary school (*lycée*) program. Reports in the Polish Jewish press indicated that their activities were constantly declining, also because of a continuing lack of competent teachers in Jewish subjects. It was felt that, unless a drastic change occurred, the Jewish schools, or, more accurately, the programs of Jewish subjects in these schools, would gradually be abandoned. Recently, the Cultural and Social Union introduced in all cities with a Jewish population afternoon courses

in Yiddish, Jewish history, Jewish literature, etc., much like those offered in Jewish communities in the West.

Social Welfare

At the end of 1967 the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare closed the general welfare program, supported by the JDC in Poland since 1957. (The JDC, prominently associated with Jewish welfare work in Poland since the end of the First World War, had been forced to give up its activities in 1949, but was permitted to resume them in 1957.) Care of the aged and invalids, and all other forms of social assistance were taken over by local welfare committees which, in cooperation with the Cultural and Social Union, tried to provide for needy and lonely Jews. According to a report in *Folks-shtimme* (Oct. 17, 1967), Jewish officials considered it "our duty to see to it that no one in need shall be left without assistance. When we find someone in need we will report this fact to the National Committee of Social Welfare."

Producer Cooperatives

A national conference of Jewish producer cooperatives was held in Szrod-borow in late December. Edward Reiber, chairman of the Economic Commission of the Cultural and Social Union, reported a total of 16 producer cooperatives for 1967. They employed some 2,000 persons, 80 per cent of whom were members of the Cultural and Social Union. The total value of the 1966 production was 255 million zlotys. In accordance with a prevailing agreement, the cooperatives allocated to the Union, out of the profits, the sum of 1,828,000 zlotys. Many cooperative employees had been trained by ORT, whose schools reportedly trained some 13,000 persons in the course of the last nine years. In the fall of 1967 the Polish government closed the ORT program.

Cultural Activities

Under the direction of Israel Felenhendler, the Cultural and Social Union's 1967 program was quite comprehensive. It included celebrations and commemorative meetings, marking the 25th anniversary of the United Polish Workers Party (Communist); the 24th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto rebellion; the 20th anniversary of the existence of the Jewish publishing house Yiddish Bukh; the 50th anniversary of the death of Mendele Moicher Sforim; the 30th anniversary of the Dombrowski Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, and the 30th anniversary of the Congress of Yiddish Culture in Paris. While the program was impressive in both scope and subject matter, union officials acknowledged increased difficulties in promoting Jewish cultural activities. Here, too, there was the problem of finding properly trained people to replace those who were reaching retirement age. A special cultural training program

organized in Szrodborow in December was attended by 70 responsible militants of the union.

Among activities designed to attract women, who represented between 40 and 50 per cent of the membership in some of the local affiliates of the union, were special seminars. At the beginning of the year, it was also decided to organize a "Sunday university" for Jewish students of Warsaw and Lodz. Students in Szrodborow were to assemble twice a month for intensive training in Jewish history and literature and discussions of problems facing Jews in Poland and elsewhere. The union continued sponsorship of some 30 art and music ensembles and some 40 youth clubs.

Yiddish Bukh, under the editorship of Leib Domb, issued ten books of poetry, prose, history, and folklore in 1966. Plans for 1967 included the publication of an anthology of Mendele Moicher Sform's works; volumes of the writings of Kalman Segal, Moshe Broderson, and Berl Mark, and a Yiddish-Polish dictionary. Since its inception 20 years ago, Yiddish Bukh has issued 350 titles in editions totaling 1.5 million copies. Its anniversary celebration included a competition organized by *Folks-shtimme* among readers, in which 291 subscribers in 67 cities participated. The Jewish Historical Institute was engaged in research projects, which, of late, emphasized the continuity of Jewish life in Poland. An exhibit of photos of old synagogues and old cemeteries in southeastern Poland, opened at the Cultural and Social Union in Warsaw in the spring and drew a large and sympathetic audience.

The Yiddish State Theater gave a public performance of S. Ansky's play *Tog un nacht*, directed by Khavel Buzgan. At the same time, the Polish art world marked the 50th anniversary of the work of the distinguished actress-director Ida Kaminska. A book, especially prepared for the occasion, noted that she had played 124 roles and directed 69 plays. During its visit to New York, in the fall, the Yiddish State Theater presented Jacob Gordin's *Mirele Efros* and Berthold Brecht's *Mother Courage*. The great qualities of the group were stressed by the Yiddish and general press. The State Theater has set up a studio for the training of a new generation of Yiddish actors.

Commemoration of the Catastrophe

In April 1967 the international monument to the victims of Auschwitz was officially unveiled. Among the more than 100,000 persons who attended the event were many delegates from abroad, some 70 from Israel. The official address was delivered by Prime Minister Joseph Cyrankiewicz, who had been an inmate of Auschwitz. The press release of Cyrankiewicz's speech made no special mention of the Jews as victims of the holocaust, nor did the head of the Soviet delegation do so. However, the delegate from Strasbourg, France, devoted most of his talk to the Jewish tragedy. The inscription on the monument is given in 19 languages, including Yiddish and Hebrew.

LEON SHAPIRO

Czechoslovakia

THE ECONOMIC stagnation and political unrest characteristic of Czechoslovakia's recent history (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 384) led to a Communist party leadership crisis in December 1967. The old party bureaucracy first applied repressive measures, then offered concessions to the opposition, and eventually attempted to save itself through the intervention of the Soviet Communist party. Leonid I. Brezhnev, First Secretary of the Soviet party, visited Prague on December 8, and it seemed at the time that he succeeded in shoring up the position of Antonín Novotný, President of Czechoslovakia and First Secretary of its Communist party. However, three weeks later the Central Committee removed Novotný from his party post, while retaining him in the more representative position of head of state.

Alexander Dubček, until then chief of the party's Slovak branch, succeeded Novotný as First Secretary of the state-wide party organization. At the September meeting of the Central Committee, Dubček criticized the government's economic policies and asked for heavier capital investments in Slovakia. Unlike Novotný, he was not directly implicated in the bloody purges and judicial frame-ups of the late forties and early fifties. He was also reported to be more conciliatory in his attitude to the writers and artists who had openly clashed with Novotný and his immediate collaborators.

The Writers' Congress of June 1967

At the fourth Congress of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union in Prague at the end of June, the cultural and political tensions exploded. Israel was one of the topics cited by the critics in their attacks on the government's sterility, bureaucracy, and abuse of power. Czechoslovakia's pro-Arab policy during the June Israel-Arab war (p. 194) was denounced by a number of writers, who stood their ground even when the official proceedings of the congress ended with a partial victory for the party apparatus. Subsequently, the three most prominent spokesmen of the opposition, Ludvík Vaculík, Ivan Klíma, and Antonín J. Liehm, were expelled from the party. Another critic, Jan Procházka, was expelled from the party's Central Committee of which he was a candidate member. *Literární Noviny* ("Literary News"), the official publication of the Writers' Union, was placed under the direct control of the Ministry of Culture and Information. It had been a weekly of wide circulation. As soon as it became the mouthpiece of the official line, it lost most of its readers.

The Central Committee of the Writers' Union, elected at the June meeting, had six Jewish members: Jiří Fried, Norbert Frýd, Eduard Goldstuecker, Erich Kolár, Arnošt Lustig, and Juraj Spitzer. The best known among them was Eduard Goldstuecker, a Kafka expert, professor of German literature at Prague's Charles University, a former ambassador to Israel, and himself a victim of the Stalinist period, who was considered a moderate.

The Death of Charles H. Jordan

On August 14 Charles H. Jordan, the executive vice-chairman of the Joint Distribution Committee, and his wife Elizabeth arrived in Prague for what was described as a brief vacation. On the evening of August 16 he left his hotel room to buy a newspaper. When he failed to return, Mrs. Jordan alerted the police and the United States Embassy. Jordan's body was found on August 20 in the Moldau river. An autopsy disclosed that he had died of drowning. Czech officials and newspapers intimated that he had committed suicide, a possibility flatly contradicted by his wife, by spokesmen of the Joint Distribution Committee who had been in constant touch with him, and by his personal friends, many of whom had received postcards written in Prague on the day he disappeared.

At the memorial service for Charles Jordan held in New York a month after his death, Mordechai Kidron, Israel's ambassador to the international organizations in Geneva, stated that Jordan had been "the victim of a crime that must not go unpunished." That he had been a victim of foul play was generally accepted. What remained unknown was who had ordered his death and whether it had been brought about by the Czechoslovak secret service or by agents of an Arab diplomatic mission in Prague.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The approximately 18,000 Jews of Czechoslovakia remained under the administration of two central bodies, the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Lands, in Bohemia and Moravia, and the Central Association of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia. The Prague, Pilsen (Plzeň), and Aussig (Ústí), communities in Bohemia and the Bruenn (Brno) and Ostrau (Ostrava) communities in Moravia were each subdivided into a number of synagogal congregations. In Slovakia there were no regional units. The local congregations were the constituent bodies of the Central Association, under the chairmanship of Benjamin Eichler. Chief Rabbi Richard Feder was the only rabbi for the Western parts of the country; Chief Rabbi Eliáš Katz in Bratislava and District Rabbi Moses Friedlaender in Košice were the rabbis in Slovakia.

A special congress of delegates of the Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Lands met in Prague on January 29. Its main purpose was to select a new chairman to succeed František Ehrmann who had resigned. František

Fuchs was elected chairman; Bedřich Hellmann, vice-chairman, and Bedřich Veselý was placed on the executive committee. In his inaugural address, Fuchs expressed the hope that plans to commemorate the one-thousand-year-old history of the Jews of Prague and the 700th anniversary of the erection of the Old-New Synagogue in Prague would provide an opportunity for Jews and non-Jews everywhere to voice their sympathy for Czechoslovakia's Jewish community and Socialist regime.

However, in August the government cancelled the preparations for the observance of the two anniversaries and plans to use them as major tourist attractions. In September Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld, president of the American Jewish Congress, called the cancellation "another hostile act by Czech authorities, echoing the hard-line antisemitism emanating from Moscow." In response, the press attaché of the Czechoslovak embassy in Washington stated to the *New York Times* (September 6, 1967) that "it would be improper to speak of a cancellation because his Government had never announced the anniversary as an official state program, but had merely agreed to restore a number of synagogues in time for the celebrations." Before the controversy arose, the Prague authorities put a stop to the sale of special commemorative stamps depicting Jewish monuments and art objects from the priceless collections of the city's Jewish State Museum.

Cultural Activities

Věstník (Gazette) continued to be published as the official monthly of the Jewish religious communities in Czechoslovakia. Its editor-in-chief Rudolf Iltis, was also responsible for a multigraphed German-language quarterly, *Informationsbulletin*. Neither publication as much as mentioned the Arab-Israeli war.

The Jewish State Museum of Prague published two issues of the semi-annual *Judaica Bohemiae* containing scientific and historical essays and book reviews, written partly in German and partly in French. *Židovská ročenka* ("Jewish Year Book"), with the Jewish Calendar for the year 5728, was issued in August. As in previous years, it contained contributions by Rabbis Feder and Katz, as well as literary articles and poetry.

A travel film on the Jewish architecture and memorabilia of Prague, with the Hebrew title *Ir va em be-Yisrael*, attracted considerable attention. It was released in Czech, German, English, Russian, Spanish, French, and Hebrew versions. Of the many Czechoslovak art films that won world-wide acclaim, several dealt with Jewish themes. The most noteworthy shown in the United States, in addition to *The Shop on Main Street*, were *The Fifth Horseman is Fear* by Zdeněk Brynych, based on a story by Jana Bělohradská, and *Diamonds of the Night* by Jan Němec, from a story by Arnošt Lustig. Lustig wrote the screenplay for *Dita Saxová* ("Edith Sax"), the life story of a Jewish girl during and after the war.

Outstanding among the new books by Jewish writers was Max Brod's *Der*

Prager Kreis ("The Prague Circle"; W. Kohlhammer, Germany, 1966), a partly autobiographical, partly historical, and partly polemical volume about the German-Jewish writers of Prague, mainly Franz Kafka, Franz Werfel, and the poet Oskar Baum. Of book publications in the Czech and Slovak languages, the most important were Jan Bohun's *Zranená jazva* ("The Open Scar"), Ludvík Aškenazy's *Vajíčko* ("The Egg"), and Hana Žantovská's *Boží údolí* ("God's Valley"), all of which deal with the specifically Jewish aspects of suffering in totalitarian societies.

Personalia

Otto Muneles, the leading authority on the history, genealogy, and the names of Czechoslovakia's medieval Jewish population, consultant to the Jewish State Museum, and organizer of its library as a center of Jewish studies, died in Prague on March 4, at the age of 68.

Hungary

THERE WERE no changes in the party leadership in Hungary in 1967. János Kádár continued as the head of the party, and Bela Biszku, his second in command, as secretary of the Central Committee. Jeno Fock became prime minister, succeeding Gyula Kallai, now speaker of parliament. As of December, the government was continuing its policy of slow change, in the political set-up and the economic life of the country. The new parliament, elected in 1967, tried to assume a more important legislative role.

The new economic plan, called N.E.M. (New Economic Model), was to begin in January, 1968. Its essential feature, the profit element, was to provide the needed incentive to both workers and management. Preliminary regulations, already in effect, clearly reduced the role of central management in investment activities and increased the flexibility and responsibility of local enterprises. Local councils were given much greater autonomy in planning and management. A new labor code, replacing the one adopted in 1951, specified the respective roles of trade unions and management, and regulated by specific government decrees many areas of labor relations. The authorities indicated that the 1966 economic plan was fulfilled, and that national income rose by about 6 per cent. The party stressed the importance of the cooperative movement in both agriculture and industry. In agriculture, the producer-cooperatives accounted for more than two-thirds of the total output. They also assumed a larger role in industrial undertakings, and provided steady employment for some 230,000 workers. Including consumer and marketing groups, the total 1967 membership in the cooperatives was about 3,500,000.

In September Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin visited Budapest and signed a new twenty-year treaty of Soviet-Hungarian friendship. The signatories agreed to strive for peaceful coexistence in Europe and to broaden cooperation in all spheres of mutual interest. Kádár used the occasion to criticize the negative policy of Mao Tse-tung, and again rallied his party to the "Moscow line."

Reports that Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty, in political asylum at the American embassy in Budapest since 1956, had decided to risk the consequences of the 1949 charges against him in order to leave the embassy, proved to be groundless. There was continuing communication between the Holy See and Hungary, looking toward the settlement of questions of concern to the Catholic Church. Dr. Jozsef Bank, titular Bishop of Materiana, took an oath of allegiance to the republic and became apostolic administrator of the Gyor

diocese. A delegation of the Hungarian Reformed Church, headed by Dr. Tibor Bartha, participated in deliberations of Protestant bodies in the United States in January. It was reported from Budapest that a reformed clergyman and two laymen, associated with Dr. Bartha, were arrested in mid-August and that the homes of several Protestant ministers were searched by police.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The total Jewish population of Hungary in 1967 was estimated at about 80,000, including some 10,000 who did not participate in Jewish religious or communal activities.

Community Organization and Religious Life

Jewish communal and religious life was coordinated by the Central Board of Jewish Communities (Magyar Izraelitak Orszagos Kepviselete). The Central Board maintained contact with Jewish communities and organizations abroad. In April it officially received a World Jewish Congress delegation, headed by Nahum Goldmann. The Central Board included both the Orthodox and Neolog (Conservative) communities, but the individual congregations maintained their own forms of worship. Rabbi Jenő Schuck was Chief Rabbi of the Orthodox, and Rabbi Imre Benoschofsky of the Neolog community. Alexander Mandula and Ludwig Braun were the heads of the Orthodox Department of the Budapest Religious Community.

There were over 30 synagogues in Budapest, and services were conducted regularly, particularly on the Sabbath and holidays. With the help of a special grant by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, a number of synagogues were repaired, among them the Dohány Street, Hunyadi Square, Bethlen Square, Páva Street, Magyfuvaros Street, and Javorka synagogues. The religious community maintained a *mikweh*, a *Hevra Kaddisha*, and supervision of *kashrut*. Budapest had nine kosher butcher shops that supplied all the kosher meat needed. Neither was there a shortage of *matzot* which were baked in a state factory under religious supervision. While Jews in Hungary enjoyed a considerable degree of religious freedom, there was a decline in religious observance, particularly circumcision and religious marriage, as the older generation was disappearing (p. 192).

Welfare, Education, and Culture

The Central Board continued its program of Jewish welfare and education. Some 15,000 to 18,000 persons, mostly the unemployable advanced in age, received cash relief. Kosher communal kitchens furnished some 2,000 noon meals daily. Two Jewish orphanages, one for boys and one for girls, cared for 22 and 33 children, respectively. A 224-bed communal hospital and four homes for aged and disabled persons were maintained.

The Budapest Jewish Theological Seminary, the only institution of its kind

in Eastern Europe, continued to function under the direction of the well-known scholar, Rabbi Alexander Scheiber. In 1967 it had ten students, seven Hungarians, two Czechs, and one East German. In the spring, Eliahu Avinery, Karl Rosenbaum, and Franz Raj, received ordination. The Jewish *gymnasium* (secondary school) had an enrollment of 86, 34 boys and 52 girls. Its old building was in urgent need of repair. The *Yeshiva Qetannah* (primary day school) had 18 students, eight of them in the post-*bar mitzvah* group. Some 30 Talmud Torahs provided traditional Jewish education to several hundred children in Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Pecs, Miscohc, and Tarcal. The Seminary, the *gymnasium*, and the primary school were supported by a grant from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture.

The Central Board continued its vast program of Jewish research and scholarly publication. In 1967 the 10th volume of the well-known *Monumenta Hungariae Judaica* (1150-1760), edited by Rabbi Scheiber, appeared in Budapest; volumes 11 and 12 were in preparation. This project was financed by a grant from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and, since 1965, from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. The third volume of documents on anti-Jewish persecutions in Hungary, edited by Elek Karsai, also appeared during the year. (The first two volumes were published in 1958 and 1960.) Plans were under way to publish a special volume commemorating the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Budapest Theological Seminary.

Antisemitism

In April 18 persons were brought to trial for participating in the murder of Jews under the fascist regime. While anti-Jewish acts were forbidden by law, national, racial, and religious prejudices were very much alive. According to a sociological study conducted by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, it still was substantial, particularly among city residents. The study also revealed that, in business, the managerial group showed much less anti-Jewish prejudice than persons in subordinate positions and workers.

Personalia

Geza Seifert, president of the Central Board of Jewish Communities, was awarded the Cross of a Chevalier on his 60th birthday.

LEON SHAPIRO

Rumania

IN 1967 Rumania accelerated its drive for greater economic and political independence within the East European Communist block (p. 195; AJYB, 1967 [Vol. 68], p. 403). Relations with its Communist neighbors varied, seemingly for pragmatic reasons. A warm welcome was extended to Bulgarian Premier Todor Zhivkov, who arrived in Bucharest in mid-April with a party-government delegation to confer about joint hydroelectric and trade programs. Both sides called for bilateral cooperation in various commercial fields, and stressed that differences should be discussed in a "comradely manner" and in "a spirit of mutual respect."

Rumanian party leaders failed to attend a European Communist party conference in Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia), in April, because, it was officially explained, "no agreement could be reached in advance on the character, purpose and proceedings of the conference." Radio Bucharest noted on April 24 that several other national parties did not participate. The next day, the Bucharest publication *Scinteia* reported an increase in direct contacts with other Communist parties, listing 15 party delegations that recently visited Rumania, and Rumania party missions to nine countries. The publication stressed the need for each party to be allowed to find its own way, and championed individual or bilateral approaches for collective and multi-lateral agreements. Rumania also sent a mission to participate in Peking's May Day celebration.

However, in a review of Rumanian foreign policy in the National Assembly on July 24, Nicolae Ceausescu, first secretary of the Rumanian Communist party, affirmed as its keystone close ties with the Soviet Union and other Communist nations. Ceausescu called for more consultation among Communist nations; reaffirmed his country's adherence to the Warsaw Pact, and suggested new forms of East European economic cooperation. Endorsing a Soviet proposal for pooling Communist efforts on behalf of North Vietnam, he had some cordial words for the USSR, and some harsh ones for "American imperialism." At the same time, Ceausescu stood firm on differences between him and the Soviet Union regarding the events in the Middle East and a proposed international treaty to bar the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Many diplomats interpreted the speech as an effort to make Rumania's independent policies more acceptable to the Soviet Union.

Reorganization at Home

In a series of moves, approved in June and made public in July, Ceausescu widened the role of the party and asserted his own authority by reducing the

influence and power of the secret police. In what was considered the most significant internal development in years, he called on the Securitate, one of the most rigid security systems in Eastern Europe, to "respect the legitimate right of citizens" to criticize the mistakes of officials.

Ceausescu established a Council of State Security to supervise the activities of the Securitate and put it under party control. It was the council's task to see that "the most important problems are debated on the basis of analysis of facts, avoiding the erroneous practices of the past." In July Ceausescu announced that the new procedures would prevent the arrest of citizens "without a proper case" and the interrogation or arrest of party activists without the approval of the relevant party bodies. These measures continued a process, begun when Ceausescu took control in 1965, to insure the subordination of the state apparatus to the party, and to strengthen his personal position. By the end of the year it was still uncertain whether the security shakeup was to be taken as a sign of growing liberalization. However, the mid-year attacks on some abuses within the party emphasized that the worst period was "years ago," and that corrective measures had since been taken.

At the beginning of December a three-day party conference approved a consolidation of power, naming Ceausescu president or chairman of the State Council, as well as party first secretary. The *New York Times*, in an editorial the same day, hailed the move as "more than a personal victory," for it was "the strongest endorsement yet for the line of stubborn but canny Rumanian nationalism that has resisted Moscow's" struggle for East European hegemony. Proposed economic and organizational reforms were also approved.

In a shift of party leadership, Chivu Stoica, the former chief of state, was named a secretary of the 140-man Central Committee. This move made Stoica's position in party hierarchy equal to Ceausescu and to his associate Paul Niculescu-Mizil. These three were in sole control of the Secretariat, the Executive Committee, and the Standing Presidium, the three most important party organizations. The former secret police chief and Interior Minister, Alexandru Draghici, was dropped as a party secretary and appointed deputy premier, a minor position.

In order to strengthen Rumania's economy and guarantee independence within the Warsaw Pact alliance, broad organizational reforms to modernize the country's economic administration and make its products internationally competitive were also approved at year's end. The new plan, to become effective in 1968, was designed to increase economic decentralization and profits. It provided for the replacement of the strongly centralized system of the Stalinist period.

Under the old system, individual state enterprises were responsible for showing a profit and could not rely on the state budget to make up deficits. The new plan grouped them into new industrial "centrals," with power to make some of their own important decisions, to borrow capital from special

banks, and deal directly with Western businessmen. It also held workers accountable for performance and deducted pay for absenteeism. Much of the old system of production premiums was replaced by bonuses, tied to over-all profits. Many workers voiced their objections to these aspects of reform, especially in view of expected rent increases. However, the party maintained that rent had accounted for less than 5 per cent of the average worker's salary, compared with 11 per cent in 1953. The tendency to double or even treble rents continued, while special provisions to subsidize rent increases for the lowest paid workers were approved for the next two years.

The economic proposals were described by government officials as "perfections of the existing system," rather than radical reforms. Drastic economic changes, they feared, could cause inflation and unemployment.

In the meantime, the Rumanian economy expanded at the high rate of 12 per cent annually. The Council of Ministers also decreed in April that about 600 consumer items would be cut in price. It was the fourth such cut in ten years and would reportedly save consumers about 300 million lei per year (about 25 cents per month per inhabitant).

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Estimates of Rumania's Jewish population varied. Official communal statistics, based on registration with local communities or congregations, claimed about 100,000, in a population of nearly 20 million. Estimates by Jewish groups outside the country varied between 80,000 and 110,000.

By and large, the proportion of elderly persons was growing, placing additional financial burdens on community institutions. For economic reasons, the government granted the right of emigration to persons over 60, who, however, had to renounce certain rights and claims, including pension payments made during productive work years. Following the June six-day war, the small emigration ceased.

Communal and Religious Life

In the last 20 years, the number of Jewish communities in Rumania has decreased from over 200 to about 72. Community life, now much reduced, continued to be dominated by religious institutions. These were supervised by the Federation of Jewish Communities, the recognized representative body of Rumanian Jews. Its president, Chief Rabbi Moses David Rosen, served as deputy in the Rumanian National Assembly.

The Bucharest seminary remained closed for lack of interest. One Rumanian student studied at the Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest, the only one functioning in Eastern Europe. About 20 synagogues continued to hold Friday night services in Bucharest, but with only two or three practicing rabbis.

In January the Federation announced the completion of a fence of prefabricated sections around the ancient cemetery at Yassy. The rehabilitation

and maintenance of cemeteries, especially in towns where only few, if any, Jews were living, was a major ongoing project of the Federation (AJYB, 1967 [Vol. 68], p. 405), financed solely by the scattered communities. Cemeteries in many provincial towns including Cluj, had already been restored; others were expected to be completed shortly. The Federation repaired *mikvot* (ritual baths), damaged in World War II, in several communities. Plans were also developed to repair synagogues and other community buildings; in Bucharest new Federation offices were constructed with government aid.

In April the JDC office in Geneva announced it had reached an agreement with the Federation of Jewish Communities, providing for special needs of Rumanian Jews. Operations of the JDC had been halted in 1949. The signing of the document by the late Charles Jordan, then JDC executive vice-chairman, and Rabbi Rosen, was followed by a reception at the office of religious affairs in the prime minister's office. With JDC help, the Federation established eight kosher canteens, serving more than 1,300 persons on Passover, and provided grants and food parcels to 4,000 Jews for Passover celebrations at home. By the end of 1967 a large-scale program of social assistance had been organized and records on thousands of cases prepared.

Culture

The Bucharest Yiddish Theater, a state theater entitled to government subsidy, continued to stage classical and contemporary plays, as well as variety shows. A drop in attendance, especially of young people, resulted in a curtailed schedule. At the suggestion of the government, other groups gave performances in the theater when it was not used by the Yiddish actors.

A 94-page Hebrew calendar, published by the Federation, with lists of legal and Jewish holidays, candle-lighting time, historical events, and brief descriptions of Jewish holidays, sold about 12,000 copies.

A daily half-hour program in Yiddish, broadcast by Radio Bucharest overseas, was heard also in Rumania. Occasional programs followed a Communist pro-Arab line, but were not anti-Israel.

According to Rabbi Rosen, *Revista Cultului Mozaic*, the government-subsidized bi-weekly published in Rumanian and Yiddish, with some Hebrew, had a circulation of about 10,000. Trying to remain "politically noncontroversial," the paper carried little news about the Middle East conflict. It continued to publish general articles, historical essays, and news of religious or cultural value, as well as reports on Jewish community life throughout the world.

Contact with Communities Abroad

In 1967 contacts between Rumanian Jews and Jewish leaders and organizations abroad were intensified. Serving as spokesman for his community and unofficial emissary of his country, Rabbi Rosen completed an eight-week visit to the United States at the beginning of the year. He met with leaders

of many Jewish groups, including the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, the United Synagogue of America, and the American Jewish Committee. He also visited Jewish institutions, and addressed conferences in several different cities across the country. The climax of the visit was a kosher dinner reception given for Rabbi Rosen by the Rumanian Ambassador to the United Nations, Professor Gheorghe Diaconescue. United States Ambassador to the United Nations Arthur Goldberg, who attended, brought greetings from President Lyndon B. Johnson and hailed the visit as a contribution to better understanding between the two countries. He praised the Bucharest regime for its human understanding of the Jewish minority. Representatives of Jewish groups attended.

On a tour of Rumania and other East European countries in mid-April, a World Jewish Congress (WJC) delegation visited Jewish institutions and attended a special Friday night service at the Choral synagogue, the largest in Bucharest. The delegation was received by Professor D. Dogaru, director of the department of religious affairs. Nahum Goldmann, WJC president, praised the Jewish community's efforts to maintain a Jewish life in a Socialist country, and stressed the importance of continuing relationships between Jewish communities.

At the end of 1967 Rabbi Rosen returned to the United States to confer with several Jewish organizations, among them JDC and UJA, and met a number of civic and political leaders, including New York Senator Jacob Javits.

When Rabbi Rosen left the United States, he went to Israel to participate in a special ceremony at Hechal Shlomo, the seat of the chief rabbinate, marking a gift of Torah scrolls from Rumania. Israel Minister of Religion Zerah Warhaftig thanked Rumania for having permitted the transfer of more than 3,000 scrolls to Israel. By year's end nearly 500 had already been distributed, with priority given to congregations of Rumanian Jews and synagogues having no scrolls or only very few.

JERRY GOODMAN