

# Eastern Europe

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## Soviet Union

THERE WERE no changes in the Soviet leadership, although Leonid I. Brezhnev's periodic absences from Moscow evoked repeated conjectures regarding his political standing and the state of his health. While there may have been serious differences within the Politburo on foreign policy and internal administration, and a generational conflict between the older leaders and the relatively younger members, at the end of 1974 the old leadership was in control of Party and state affairs. There were also reports about the downgrading of some of the younger leaders, particularly former KGB boss Aleksandr Shelepin, who recently was in charge of the trade unions and whose fortunes were said to be declining. As for the "collective leadership," three men were clearly on top: Secretary General of the Party Brezhnev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers Aleksei N. Kosygin, and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Nikolai Podgorny. While Brezhnev's role was that of *primus inter pares*, it is significant that *Kommunist*, the Party organ, pointed out in November 1974 that the collective leadership should insure the Party against possible "subjective efforts" in solving political and economic problems, an apparent allusion to the handling of state affairs by the late Nikita Khrushchev.

There were no Jews in the 16-member Politburo, nor among the seven nonvoting candidate members. While no changes occurred in the highest echelon of the top policy body, there were some replacements in the secondary leadership group. Yekaterina Furtseva, minister of culture and former member of the Party Presidium, whose anti-Jewish bias was well-known, was reprimanded for a questionable financial transaction involving the building of her *dacha* (summer home) outside of Moscow. She was later replaced as minister of culture by Pyotr Demichev, a Politburo candidate-member and a rigid hardliner. Anton Kochinian, Party head of the Armenian Republic, also was relieved of his post, reportedly because of his inability to deal effectively with the rising tide of nationalist feeling in that area. Similar changes were reported to have been made in the leadership of Georgia.

### *Dissidence*

The authorities continued to fight dissidence, while at the same time maintaining a policy of reconciliation with the Stalinist past. During the summer, clearly with

the blessings of the Kremlin bosses, *Molodaia Gvardiia*, a conservative magazine known for its super-nationalist stance and overt antisemitism, published a new novel by Ivan Stadniuk, which dealt sympathetically with Stalin. Ignoring the purges and atrocities which marked his rule, the author portrays Stalin as a "loving father of the people." It was thus in keeping with the current Kremlin line of liquidating Khrushchev's destalinization and restoring a rehabilitated Stalin to Soviet history. Moscow liberals were disturbed by the publication of the novel.

In early 1974 Kremlin leaders had organized a systematic campaign against Nobelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, whose massive study of Soviet crimes, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956*, had been published abroad. Solzhenitsyn insisted that it was necessary that the true facts about Stalin's regime be made known to the Russian public. He appealed to Russian youth to reject the lies contained in official accounts of the Stalin era. Reluctant to arrest Solzhenitsyn and thus create a hero-martyr for dissidents, the Kremlin decided to expel him. On February 12 Solzhenitsyn was seized in Moscow and forcibly put on a plane bound for West Germany, where he was received by his friend and host, the German Nobelist Heinrich Böll. In an attempt to justify Solzhenitsyn's expulsion, Moscow simultaneously unleashed a barrage of propaganda depicting him as a pro-Nazi traitor.

The expulsion provoked sharp reaction both in Moscow and Western Europe. In Moscow, the poet Evgenii Evtuchenko protested the expulsion in an open letter, and was himself sharply criticized by the authorities. Vladimir Voinovich, a Soviet writer and one of the first to come to Solzhenitsyn's defense, was expelled from the Writers Union. A statement challenging the Moscow authorities and defending Solzhenitsyn against the slanderous accusations of the official press was issued by Roy Medvedev, the well-known dissident and Marxist author of *Let History Judge*, a study of the Stalin era.

Andrei Sakharov, head of the Moscow Human Rights Committee, circulated an essay which pointed out that in 1974 some 1,700,000 persons were in Soviet prisons and camps. At the same time, many intellectuals, writers, and artists abroad, among them Italian, Belgian, and other European Communists, joined in a protest against Solzhenitsyn's expulsion. After his arrival abroad, Solzhenitsyn addressed a 51-page open letter to the leaders of the USSR, asking them to grant freedom of religion and of artistic expression to the peoples of Russia, to liquidate the camps and put an end to police brutality. He made it clear that he understood that power would remain in the hands of the Communist Party and that the regime would maintain its authoritarian form. His primary interest, he said, was the fate of the Russian and Ukrainian people. He suggested that measures be taken to develop the northeastern Siberian region of the Soviet Union, where, he said, the future of Russia lay.

The letter created a stir among Soviet dissidents because of its acceptance of authoritarian rule, its focus on Russian religious and national aspects, and the implied rejection of Western political structures, indicating a return to some of the

principles of 19th-century Slavophilism. Many dissidents, including Andrei Sakharov, publicly expressed their disagreement with the position defended by the author of *Gulag*. After Solzhenitsyn's arrival in the West, an acrimonious debate arose between him and an earlier exile from Moscow, Zhores Medvedev, who together with his brother Roy in Moscow, represented what might be called a "free Marxist" opposition to the Soviet regime.

Soviet authorities continued to harass the dissident opposition, forcing the departure of many intellectuals and writers considered dangerous to the regime. Among the writers who went abroad were Vladimir Maksimov, Victor Nekrasov, and Anatolii Krasnov-Levitin. Levitin, who was of Jewish origin, converted to Christianity and became a notable exponent of Greek Orthodoxy. Nekrasov, author of many award-winning works on World War II, was interested in the Jewish tragedy at Babii-Iar and had participated in a 1969 commemoration of the event. Among the political dissidents to leave the USSR was Pavel Litvinov, grandson of Maksim Litvinov, the last Jewish foreign minister of the USSR. Upon his arrival in the United States he showed no special interest in Jewish affairs or the problems of Soviet Jewry.

Soviet authorities maintained strict control in all sectors where dissidence might present particular danger. Lidia Chukovskaia, daughter of the late writer Korneii Chukovskii and herself a well-known novelist, was expelled from the Moscow Writers Union for her defense of Sakharov. Father Dmitrii Dudko, a Moscow priest who attracted wide attention by his sermons on Christianity and Soviet society, was transferred by the ecclesiastical authorities from the Moscow St. Nicolas Church to a rural parish to restrict his activities.

However, despite rigid control, the authorities failed to suppress *Samizdat* and its important underground publication, *Khronika Tekushchikh Sobyti* ("Chronicle of Current Events"). Nor were they able to break up a group of nonconformist artists who, despite intimidation and harassment by KGB, staged an outdoor exhibition of their works in Moscow in September. In October, Valerii Kosolapov, editor of the liberal monthly *Novy Mir* ("New World"), was replaced by the Moscow Writers Union's chief bureaucrat, the poet Sergei Narovchatov. Thus the magazine, which, under its late editor Aleksandr Tvardorskii, had published Solzhenitsyn's celebrated *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, was now in the hands of a Party apparatchik. At the same time, and without serious objection by the authorities, many Muscovites openly honored the memory of Boris Pasternak, author of *Doctor Zhivago* and recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature, who had been the target of an attack by Khrushchev. *Literaturnaia Gazeta* reported (March 27) that a prize had been established in honor of the late writer Aleksandr Fadeev, who had headed the Writers Union during the campaign against "cosmopolitanism" and ferociously attacked the victims of officially-propagated slander.

Piotr Grigorenko, a fighter for human rights, and Iurii Shikhanovich, a dissident Soviet mathematician, were reported to have been released from mental hospitals to which they had been committed.

### *Economic Planning and Nationalities*

The USSR has been engaged in complicated negotiations with the Soviet-bloc nations on economic planning and assignment of financial burdens among the various parties. Whatever the decisions, these countries, which had been able to raise their standards of living, clearly would have to make sacrifices to avoid friction with Moscow. Behind these continuing negotiations was the thorny question of how much managerial freedom should be given to industrial units in East European countries where relative freedom exists. The Soviet Union also continued to press for a trade agreement with the United States (p. 160). The USSR was importing over two billion dollars' worth of Western technology annually which was badly needed to improve and modernize the lagging Soviet economy.

There were signs of continuing tension in relations between the various national groups in many areas of the Soviet Union, which resulted partly from the migration of many Russians to minority republics in the Asiatic parts of the USSR, or to Baltic countries. Historically, the situation in the Caucasian and other areas has been a complicated one. Many of the nationalities—Georgian, Armenian, Bukharian—have resented Russian tutelage, and particularly the breakdown of their traditional ways of life due to the technical bureaucracy imported from Moscow. Objections to this type of colonial policy have been frequently heard among local Communist officials, too, and manifestations of "local nationalism" were treated harshly.

In the fall of 1974 a series of trials took place in Armenia, in which 11 young men were sentenced to prison for participating in illegal activities of the National Unity party of Armenia. There had been another trial in June, and other judicial proceedings were reported to be in preparation, all involving illegal Armenian nationalist activities. In other areas, and especially in Lithuania, there have been subtle restatements of local national identification through the revival of national folk art and research into local history.

### *Foreign Relations*

It was obvious that the Kremlin considered China its greatest enemy. Soviet leaders have recently been especially concerned over Chinese Communist influence on the policies of the Third World and other countries, including Chile and Portugal. They were disturbed about China's overtures to the European Common Market, as well as about Chinese influence in Asia, which clashed with Soviet aims. While continuing to preach "peaceful relations" with China, the USSR maintained some 45 divisions along the 4,000-mile-long Sino-Soviet border, the site of the historical territories of non-Russian national minorities. It was obvious that in arranging for normalization of its relations with the West, the Kremlin hoped to obtain more freedom in exercising its options in the Sino-Russian conflict, and in addition had the important political advantage in the peculiar relative distribution of power among the United States, USSR, and China. In the Middle East conflict, Moscow continued to be overtly pro-Arab (p. 154). In relations with the United States, it

favored continuing the policy of détente, as Brezhnev clearly indicated to President Nixon on his visit to Moscow in June (p. 143).

At the same time, the Moscow Communist leaders initiated a campaign to win friends among the Communist parties outside the USSR and the socialist and workers' organizations in the West. At the preliminary conference of 28 Communist parties, held in Warsaw in October, the Soviet delegation intimated that the Kremlin was ready to go to the All-European Congress of Communist Parties, where differing views and concepts of Communism would be represented. It further advocated that the pre-World War II strategy of "popular fronts" with democratic and left-wing non-Communists be encouraged in all countries where such alliances were possible.

### *Soviet-Israeli Relations*

While there were continuing reports of diplomatic contacts between Moscow and Jerusalem, Soviet leaders maintained a strongly pro-Arab and rigidly anti-Israel stand. The Soviet Union called for a Palestinian state as part of a Middle East settlement. Speaking on the occasion of the anniversary of the October Revolution, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko stressed that the Middle East situation was still "fraught with danger." He called for the resumption of Geneva talks and for the immediate return of all "Arab lands occupied by the aggressor." After an official visit in May 1974 by Premier Abd al-Salem Jallud of Libya, Kremlin leaders pledged to give every kind of assistance to the Palestinian guerrilla movement fighting for its just cause. The Soviets continued to supply the Arabs with sophisticated, modern weapons. At the same time, the Soviet press, radio, and television disseminated their biased presentation of events in the Middle East, including discussions of the 1973 Yom Kippur war in which Israel was called the aggressor. They continued to accuse Israel of committing atrocities against Arab women and children. Soviet propagandists again and again used the image of "Nazi Israel" plotting with China against the Soviet Union. On January 11, 1974, *Sovetskaia Kultura* stated in connection with a visit by Soviet workers to Egypt that "Zionism possesses substantial capital . . . and it can decide the fate of governments and presidents. It controls the information media and organizes subversive activities in many countries."

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

No new information was available on Jewish population of the Soviet Union. There were varied estimates, ranging from the official 1970 Soviet figure of some 2,150,000 to the 3,500,000 suggested by recent émigrés. Until circumstances permit a clear definition of who is a Jew in the Soviet Union, the figure, based on the 1959 Soviet census, and allowing for an approximate 8 per 1,000 increase in 1974, would seem to be some 2,700,000—or 2,680,000, if one takes into account the 20,000 Jews who

left in 1974 for Israel and other countries (AJYB, 1974–75 [Vol. 75], pp. 496–97, 562–63). *Sovetish Heymland* (No. 3, 1974, Moscow) quoted, without comment, the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK world Jewish population figures, including the 1973 estimate of 2,648,000 Jews in the Soviet Union.

Jews lived in some 100 territorial units of the Soviet Union. They ranked fifth in population, after the Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Tatar populations. In many areas, however, particularly in some areas of the RSFSR, there were no Jews at all.

According to recently published data, a significant number of Jews continued to be among senior Soviet academic personnel. In 1973 Jews held 14 per cent of all doctoral degrees in the Soviet Union. A decree of August 28, 1974, prohibited citizens from changing the nationality designation entered on their internal passports at the age of 16. In cases of mixed marriage, the individual (at the age of 16) may choose the nationality of either parent. (A regulation, announced in December, required Soviet citizens in rural areas, who had hitherto been exempt, to obtain internal passports. This will make it easier for them to leave their villages.)

### *Communal and Religious Life*

Jewish communal and religious life continued to deteriorate. There were no Jewish schools, religious or secular, no *bar-mitzvah* preparation classes, and very few *mohalim*. There were only a few rabbis in the country, and some of them did not have the background to give religious counseling to the college-educated Soviet Jew. The large Jewish communities of Kiev, Odessa, and Leningrad were without rabbis. In summer 1974 Rabbi Iakov Fishman of Moscow informed Israel's Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren that the Moscow Yeshivah Kol-Iakov had reopened, with 18 adult and ten younger students. There were no further reports on the activities of the *yeshivah*. However, the Soviet government was said to have given permission for ten Soviet Jews to go to Budapest for rabbinical training at the only seminary in Eastern Europe. Thus far it was known that two had left for Budapest (AJYB, 1974–75 [Vol. 75], p. 497).

The precise number of synagogues in the Soviet Union was not known. The official 1965 figure of 97 seemed no longer valid, especially in view of the emigration of many religious Jews. Information on religious activities generally was difficult to obtain. The number of Greek Orthodox churches now functioning in the Soviet Union was not known; estimates ranged between 3,500 and 4,500.

In December Efraim Kaplun, president of the Moscow Jewish religious congregation, resigned and was replaced by Mikhail Tandetnyi. There was no interference with the preparation of *matzot* in the large cities. The situation in the provinces depended on local officials, who were not always sympathetic to Jewish needs. The Moscow Jewish community baked about 100 tons of *matzot*. Leningrad, too, had the necessary Passover supplies. Passover services were held in Moscow, Leningrad,

Kiev, Odessa, Kishinev, Vilna, Riga, and other cities. In Moscow, they were conducted by Cantors Iakov Gramer and Solomon Kleinman.

Despite the continuing negative attitude of the authorities, many older and some younger Jews continued to show a strong attachment to Jewish tradition. While this attachment may have been in part an expression of a desire for national identification, much of it represented a general religious revival, a groping for spiritual values to relieve drabness and boredom. For many years, on the day of important Jewish festivals, large numbers of Jews, old and young, have assembled around the synagogues in Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities, dancing, singing, and following the services conducted inside the prayerhouses. On October 9, 1974, masses of Jews outside the Central Choral Synagogue in Moscow danced in the streets in celebration of Simhat Torah. There was no interference by the local police, although in some instances the celebrants were asked to disperse because they were blocking traffic around the synagogue. In Lvov (formerly Polish Galicia), police interrupted a Sabbath service conducted shortly before Rosh Hashanah in a *shtibl* and confiscated the Torah scrolls and prayerbooks. The organizers of the service were fined for spreading "religious practices and corruption" among the youth.

There was still no central Jewish religious coordinating body in the Soviet Union. While there was increasing contact with Jewish religious groups outside the USSR, particularly with rabbis in the United States, Soviet Jews were not able to arrange for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. There was still dire need of Jewish religious articles and prayerbooks, which could not be obtained in the country.

### *Conversions*

A phenomenon unprecedented in the history of Russian Jewry was the substantial number of conversions of Jews, particularly intellectuals, to Greek Orthodoxy. In the recent past, two great Jewish Russian literary figures, Boris Pasternak and the poet Osip Mandelstam, had converted to Christianity. Mandelstam's wife, Nadezhda, author of the well-known *Hope Against Hope* memoirs, also converted. Anatolii Krasnov-Levitin, the foremost Christian writer, is of Jewish origin. Some Jewish dissidents who had been regarded as Jewish activists and who left Russia have professed the Greek Orthodox belief, among them the poet Aleksandr Galich. Melik Agurskii, a dissident and activist and son of Samuil Agurskii, an erstwhile leader of Evsektssiia, stated in Moscow in November that he had converted to Greek Orthodoxy, but continued to regard himself as a Jew and a Zionist. It was his belief, he said, that the real renaissance of the Jewish people was related to acceptance of Christianity. The writer Mikhail Meerzon-Aksenov also converted to Christianity. Judging from the statements and writings of these converts, they knew nothing of Judaism. However, the very fact that they found it necessary to convert, although they lived in an atheistic state, bears witness to a profound spiritual crisis of the Jewish intellectual.

## *Antisemitism and Discrimination*

Despite official denials, anti-Jewish bias has become an organic part of Soviet society. Not only non-Jews but also some Jewish intellectuals used objectionable Jewish stereotypes. Some Jewish dissidents who have emigrated to the West have described Jews in a peculiar negative manner in their writings. This negative image of the Jew prevalent in Soviet society may have contributed to the decision of some recent Jewish émigrés to convert to Greek Orthodoxy.

No anti-Jewish laws were enacted in the Soviet Union, but it was obvious that the authorities rigidly curtailed Jewish participation in many important areas of Russian life. Only six Jews were elected to the Supreme Soviet in 1974. Benjamin Dymshits, a deputy premier minister, and the academician Julii Khariton were elected to the 767-member Soviet of the Union. Lev Shapiro, first secretary of the Party in Birobidzhan; Lubov Groisman, a dressmaker from Birobidzhan; Henrik Zimanas, chief editor of *Kommunistas* in Lithuania, and Aleksandr Chakovskii, editor of the Moscow *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, were elected to the 750-member Soviet of Nationalities. (In 1937, under Stalin, 47 of the 1,143 deputies were Jews.) There were no Jews in the top ranks of the Party, or the army, or in foreign affairs posts, or, for that matter, in any department the authorities deemed "sensitive." It was difficult for Jewish functionaries to get promotions, and a *numerus clausus* limited the admission of Jewish applicants to universities. Jewish graduate students at the end of 1973 numbered 3,456, as compared to 4,945 in 1970.

Anti-Jewish writings continued to appear in Moscow, Kiev, and other cities, some of them quite vicious. In April 1974 the Kiev Ukrainian monthly *Liudyna i Svit* called the "Judaic religion . . . intolerant toward [other peoples] . . . identical with Nazi racism." The October 12, 1974 Moscow weekly *Ogonek* (issued by *Pravda*) carried a review of a book on Israel under the title, "Ideology and Practices of Brutality," in which reviewer Dmitri Zhukov said, among other things, that the structure of "Zionist organizations is identical to that of gangster groups;" that "at the end of the last century, a large majority of the capital and industry in the developed countries fell into the hands of the Jewish bourgeoisie." He further maintained that "Israelis raped little [Arab] girls." This type of propaganda has become part and parcel of Soviet "literature" and seems to be sanctioned, indeed inspired, by the authorities. On November 25, 1973, Lev Kornilov asserted in a broadcast from Moscow that the Zionists believe the Jewish army should control the entire world. The well-known scholar, Professor Efim Etkind, was dismissed from the Herzen Institute in Leningrad for being a "Jewish nationalist" whose works on poetry did not reflect the ideals of "patriotism" and "fatherland." *Novy Mir* of September 9, 1974, published a review of New York left-wing writer Paul Novick's book, *The National and Jewish Question in the Light of Reality*, by the well-known critic and propagandist V. Bolshakov. He attacked Novick for recognizing the existence of a Jewish nation, which, according to Bolshakov, was nothing but a figment of the imagination of Jewish clericals and, indeed, a Zionist-imperialist

weapon, and a reactionary obstacle to assimilation—the only proper solution to the Jewish question.

In a recurrence of so-called “economic crimes,” a Moscow court sentenced to death Mikhail Leviev, an employee of a Tadzhikistan shop in Moscow, who was accused of embezzling state funds. According to Leviev’s family, his non-Jewish codefendants received only prison terms. Shortly before his arrest, Leviev, who was diabetic, had retired from his job and applied for a visa to Israel.

### *Jewish Resistance*

Soviet authorities continued their efforts to liquidate Jewish resistance, but without much visible success. Some 30 Jewish activists were arrested at the time of Nixon’s visit to Moscow, most of them without warrants or formal charges. Jews were arrested in many cities outside Moscow, mostly where requests for exit visas had been denied. In Kishenev, 17 Jews were held by the police. Some of the arrested responded by going on a hunger strike. According to reports, many Jewish dissidents went into hiding to escape arrest and police brutality.

In Moscow, a number of Jewish dissidents who had lost their jobs after applying for exit visas were told they faced charges of “parasitism” unless they found other employment. Among them was Sinologist Vitalii Rubin, who had been offered a teaching post at Columbia University, New York, but was prevented from leaving the Soviet Union. A group of Jewish scientists, who had lost their jobs and were denied exit visas, arranged a Seminar on Collective Phenomena and the Application of Physics to Other Fields of Science, to be held on July 1–5. As the date approached, the police took into custody Professor Aleksandr Voronel and several others who were to participate, thus thwarting the efforts of the Jewish scientists.

In the meantime, Soviet authorities freed Silva Zalmanson, who had been serving a ten-year sentence in Potma in connection with the Leningrad trial, and she left for Israel. After many hardships, the well-known dancer Valerii Panov and his wife Galina were given exit visas and departed for Israel.

For months there was conjecture on how many Jews and other Soviet citizens would be permitted to leave the USSR (p. 170; also AJYB, 1974–75 [Vol. 75], pp. 199–234). Some Soviet dissidents, among them Roy Medvedev, warned that too much pressure from the West might prevent, rather than promote, the process of liberalization in the Soviet Union; that although the Kremlin was interested in expanding trade and credits, it would not be willing to pay the price of tolerating interference with internal policy and administration.

Soviet-Jewish emigration to Israel continued, but the 1974 total was 45 per cent lower than the year before (20,000, as compared with 35,000 in 1973). According to reports, the number of Soviet Jews who preferred to go to Western countries, such as the United States and Canada, rather than to Israel, has been increasing: some 4,000, or about 20 per cent of all 1974 emigrants. Among the factors contributing to this shift may have been Soviet harassment of would-be emigrants to Israel and

conditions in Israel: the economy, threat of war, and the difficulties of adjustment, particularly for professionals.

The problem of free emigration from the USSR became a matter of serious concern to the authorities. In 1974 there were several demonstrations at Party offices and the German embassy by Soviet citizens of German origin—the so-called Volga Germans and residents of Latvia and Estonia—who demanded the right to leave the Soviet Union. Altogether some 40,000 applications for exit visas were made by the Volga Germans and others.

## Culture

Jewish cultural needs continued to be ignored by the authorities. There were no Jewish schools in the Soviet Union, no specialized Jewish agencies, no legitimate Jewish theater, and no Jewish newspapers, except for the monthly *Sovetish Heymland* and the provincial, recently expanded *Birobidzhaner Shtern*. But despite the absence of official encouragement and the emigration of many individuals who had been active in Jewish cultural work, Jewish secular cultural activities were pursued in many places.

The Vilna Yiddish Folk Theater expanded its activities: its drama department was directed by Iudl Kats and Boris Landau, its vocal ensemble by Emil Janovskii, its jazz group by Iasha Magid, and its dance ensemble by Nikolai Margolin and Raisa Svichova. The Moscow Yiddish Drama Ensemble, directed by Felix Berman, made an extended tour of Soviet cities, playing with great success in Astrakhan, Saratov, Penza, Kazan, and Kuibishev. Its repertoire included Sholem Aleichem's *Tevye der milkhiger*. Among actresses appearing in Jewish plays were Polina Einbinder, Ana Sheveleva, Marina Gordon, and Lea Kolina. The 75th anniversary of the birth of Beniomin Zuskin, great actor and close colleague of the murdered Shlome Mikhoels, and the 90th anniversary of the birth of the well-known theater critic Jeshua Lubomirskii were noted by *Sovetish Heymland* (No. 6, 1974).

Many painters and sculptors chose Jewish subjects for their works, which were often exhibited in cities throughout the Soviet Union. Among these artists were Mikhail Gurevitch, Josef Chaikov, Shlome Gershkov, Meir Axelrod, Isroel Silberman, and Mendel Gershman.

Four new books in Yiddish became available: *Die Mishpoche Mashber* ("The Family Mashber"), by Der Nister; *Lebn un likht* ("Life and Light"), by Shire Gorshman; *Dos vort* ("The Word"), by Shifre Kholodenko; and *Bam sheyter fun yorn* ("The Years"), by Itche Borukhovitch. Thus, between 1959 and 1974, 51 Yiddish books have appeared in the USSR; none were published between 1948 and 1959.

At a plenary meeting conducted by *Sovetich Heymland*, editor Aron Vergelis stated that its most important task was to reflect contemporary concerns of Soviet Jews. (Yet, the monthly continued to print attacks on Jewish intellectuals and artists who had left for Israel.) *Sovetish Heymland* was host to an Israeli delegation visiting

Moscow at the invitation of *Pravda*, and to representatives of the Soviet-Israel Friendship Society. Both Israeli groups emphasized the need to establish closer contacts between Soviet Yiddish writers and Israeli "progressive" circles.

Leib Wilsker's doctoral dissertation (candidate) on the language of the Samaritans appeared in book form in 1974 under the imprint of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

### *Birobidzhan*

On its 40th anniversary, Birobidzhan, which had been established as a Jewish autonomous region, showed few signs of its original purpose. The Jewish population was about 15,000, in a total population of some 165,000. The amateur Yiddish Folk Theater was still in existence. A group of its dancers and its orchestra performed in a Moscow television program marking Birobidzhan's anniversary. There was the newly expanded *Birobidzhaner Shtern* (p. 381), the Sholem Aleichem Library, and some Yiddish radio broadcasts. But the young people did not know Yiddish, and it was difficult to maintain or promote Jewish activities under these circumstances. According to the 1970 census, only some 2,000 persons in the region indicated Yiddish as their mother tongue; for some 1,700 it was the second language. The secretary of the regional committee of the Party was Lev Shapiro, one of the Jewish deputies in the Supreme Soviet of Nationalities.

### *Commemoration of the Catastrophe*

The authorities continued to discourage commemoration of the Nazi murder of Jews. On December 9 the Soviet police dispersed a gathering of Jews at Rumbuli, near Riga, who came to commemorate the anniversary of the Nazi massacre of the Jews. After the Arab terrorist attack on Qiryat Shemona, a group of Kiev Jews was prevented by the police from placing a wreath on the site of the Babii Iar massacre. The police also prohibited memorial services for the victims of Babii Iar, although a group of 20 later received permission to lay a wreath, but without inscription. On July 28 Kovno (Lithuania) Jews observed the anniversary of the Nazi massacre in the Kovno ghetto. Buna Gutkind of Kovno read a poem written for the occasion.

### *Personalia*

In a Moscow cemetery, a monument was erected to honor the late Yiddish writer, Zalman Wendroff. Itsik Kipnis, the well-known Yiddish writer, died at the age of 80. Aleksandr Dymshitz, the Soviet literary critic and life-long follower of the Party line, died in Moscow on January 1, 1975.

LEON SHAPIRO

## Czechoslovakia

IN THE PERIOD under review (1970–74) Czechoslovakia, now in the seventh year of Soviet occupation, continued to move rapidly toward complete identification with Kremlin policies. The Communist party (CP), from which all elements even remotely associated with the Prague Spring's "Socialism With a Human Face" (AJYB, 1969 [Vol. 70], p. 401) had been eliminated—except for its ailing figurehead president, Ludvík Svoboda, and its general secretary Gustav Husák who added the office of president to his functions in May 1975—reflected the mounting isolation of a single-party government, which was based on a CP membership of 900,000 out of an 11-million population of over 15-year-olds. Claims of over-all consolidation in the economic, social, and cultural areas, and in foreign relations went hand in hand with a continuous stream of exhortations to workers, shop stewards, and teachers regarding their "socialist responsibilities;" with reports on unfulfilled planning quotas, shortage of housing, a rising "economic-crime" rate and what, in terms of Communist orthodoxy, were seen as shortcomings in education, research, the arts, and literature. The public media strove hard to balance facts and government-produced fiction by underlining the military, economic, and social convulsions in the capitalist world. The vast majority of both Czechs and Slovaks outside the CP remained unconvinced that shortcomings in the country must be attributed to the failures of a deviationist leadership of the late 1960s, which, they were urged to believe, had brought the country to the brink of disaster, requiring "salvation" by the USSR.

Soviet occupation apart, the *malaise* of the civilian population grew as a result of increased surveillance by the state security apparatus and paramilitary organizations, and supervision by confidants, not to speak of the streamlining of legislation according to party lines and the transfer of a substantial part of the judiciary to a system of people's judges.

As in the 1950s and 1960s, the Czech and Slovak mass media reflected mounting indifference, corruption, and bribery. The housing shortage continued, while leading party loyalists were able to acquire second homes. Durable and consumer goods displayed at national and international trade fairs were not necessarily available for home consumption. Cultural policies had little impact on literature, the theatre, and the arts in general. Aside from Party literature, a substantial part of the books published consisted of new editions of Czech and Slovak classics and works of pre-1939 authors who had not been banned. A good many recognized writers, as well as scientists, historians, and physicians of the post-World War II period, had left Czechoslovakia. Opposition to the regime remained considerable, as indicated by frequent "Letters to the Editor" and other features in the media, which, though carefully worded, took issue with many official positions.

### *Middle East Policy*

Opposition to government attitudes applied in particular to policy on the 1973 Yom Kippur war. The people did not accept the official line of Israeli "aggression" or "imperialist aims" in the Middle East. In communications to the media, they pointed to the fact that both the USSR and Czechoslovakia voted for the establishment of Israel in 1948; that Czechoslovakia supplied arms and offered military training facilities to the nascent State of Israel before and after 1948; that Israel policy was determined by considerations of survival rather than aggression.

### *Relations with Arabs*

The establishment, however, was primarily concerned with building and expanding trade relations with Arab and African countries and with the "trouble spots" around the globe. Comings and goings of government, trade-union, and CP delegations to and from Czechoslovakia were frequent. This flow of interchange reached its peak during the oil crisis of 1973. Long before the Yom Kippur war, however, what were described as trade unionists from ten Arab countries spent four weeks of "revolutionary practice training" in Czechoslovakia. Thousands of Arab students had already entered Czech and Slovak universities and technical colleges. To facilitate their studies, an Arab-Czech and Czech-Arab dictionary was published in Prague in 1974, and a number of books on Arab countries made their appearance. Indicative of the number of Czech technicians in Arab lands was the evacuation from Egypt alone of 480 Czechs, including 126 so-called tourists, to Bulgaria on October 17, 1973. On this occasion the official Czechoslovak news agency reported that "Czechoslovaks remaining in Cairo, Beirut, and Damascus" were safe and well, and that 15,000 Egyptian "guest workers" were expected to come to Czechoslovakia.

The official attitude to the Middle East conflict was also reflected in a continuous flow of pro-Arab propaganda, vilifying Israel, world Jewry, and the "World Zionist conspiracy," and charging them, among other things, with responsibility for the Prague Spring. Arab-language broadcasts to Asia and Africa were increased from two to two and one-half hours daily during the three years ending 1973. Czech- and Slovak-language broadcasts of 90 minutes daily were introduced in 1973 for industrial workers in those areas. In 1974 Prague permitted the establishment of a Palestine Liberation Organization office at the Communist-controlled International Organization of Journalists, to which, after a visit by Yasir Arafat in May 1975, a general office of the PLO was added. In March 1974 the Czech Red Cross provided aid, including medical supplies, food, and blankets, to the PLO. Seven hundred children from Socialist countries, as well as from Algeria, Egypt, and Syria, spent their holidays in the summer of that year at an international peace camp in Czechoslovakia.

### *Aid to Arabs*

In 1974 an Arab-Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce and an Arab Section at the Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce were established in Prague. At the start of 1973, official Czechoslovak sources reported that in the 25 years ending 1972, exports to Asian and African countries totaled Kč 2,458 million, while imports amounted to Kč 1,488 million. Exports in machinery, equipment, and tools to the two areas came to Kč 1,540 million, or almost three-fifths of the export total. In the lead, with hardware, were the Skoda plant of Plzeň and the Armament Works of Brno. After having supplied Egypt in 1973 with a number of pontoon bridges, which were later used in the Suez Canal crossings, the ČSSR signed an agreement with that country to increase trade volume in 1974 by 50 per cent. Items included were metallurgical products, equipment for a petro-chemical plant, pumping stations, soil-moving machinery, mills, and a power distribution system for 52 switching stations. By the end of 1974 Syria had received 18 turbo-sets and all component parts for an undefined industrial plant. Apart from the reconstruction, at a cost of Kč 190 million, of the Homs I oil refinery, which was destroyed in the October war, Czechoslovakia has contracted for the construction of Homs II and Homs III. Skoda was working on the expansion of the Syrian metallurgical and engineering industries at an undefined cost, while other trade agreements with Syria included the construction of a \$100 million sugar refinery, other industrial plants, and road building projects.

### *Reaction at Home*

The grand scale of foreign aid did little to soften the frustration of Czechs and Slovaks, who were unable to make an adequate selection of shoes, fresh vegetables or fruit, much coveted spare parts for a car or TV set, a new apartment, or a house. The Prague establishment kept a sharp watch for possible scapegoats as a means of diversion. The first targets—in chronological order—were those who had left the country during the Prague Spring and later. At the close of 1970 they were advised that “criminal charges” were being brought against them; that, in the absence of privately practicing lawyers, they had to avail themselves of the services of official legal counsel bureaus against fees up to \$150, and that, if they refused to do so, their relatives in Czechoslovakia would be approached by the authorities. At the same time, these “illegal refugees” (most of them had left the country with valid passports and exit permits which Czech consulates refused to renew after Soviet entry) were threatened with confiscation of any property they may hold. Protests in the West moved Husák to revoke these measures three months later. He insisted that neither he nor Prime Minister Lubomir Strougal had been aware of such demands which, he said, were “not very reasonable since it could not be expected that anyone fleeing to the West would pay for legal representation.” Nevertheless, proceedings *in absentia* before criminal courts continued for some time after publication of this statement.

The Prague government returned to the "illegal refugees" on February 22, 1973, when President Svoboda, to mark the 25th anniversary of the advent of Communist power in the country, announced an amnesty for "illegal refugees as defined in . . . the criminal code, provided they returned or shall return to the territory of the ČSSR before December 31, 1973." It applied to the 90,000 refugees believed to have fled after the Soviet invasion (including an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 Jews), but excluded those who, in spite of Husák's retraction, had been tried *in absentia* and sentenced to prison terms of up to five years, confiscation of their assets and/or dwellings, and forfeiture of wage and pension claims. Only a few hundred were believed to have availed themselves of the amnesty; statistics on returnees have never been published.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

### *Emigration*

During the peak years of emigration (1968–71), some 4,500 Jews left Czechoslovakia with the help of the Joint Distribution Committee and HIAS; several hundred others went through Vienna en route to Britain, Switzerland, and the Federal Republic of Germany; another 850 left for Israel. There were also those, not accounted for by statistics, who went abroad without the aid of official Jewish organizations. Some emigration was still possible in 1971, but it was easier to leave from Slovakia than from Bohemia or Moravia. The authorities imposed an emigration tax ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,300, which, they said, constituted a refund of state expenditures for the education and professional training of the emigrants. Substantial payments also had to be made for the release of personal property. Even so, exit visas were refused to relatives of "illegal emigrants," which made the reunion of many families impossible.

### *Demography*

According to experts, the emigration of 6,000 Jews in 1968–71 has reduced the Jewish population of Czechoslovakia to 9,000. In fact, it can be safely estimated that no more than 8,000 registered Jews were now left. The number of Jews by origin, who were not registered with the Jewish community, could not be established.

The International Council of Jews from Czechoslovakia in London, representing former Czechoslovaks in 16 countries of the free world, attempted to establish the age structure of Jews in Czechoslovakia on the basis of birthday announcements and obituaries published in *Věstník* ("Gazette"), the Prague Jewish monthly, during the year ending December 31, 1974. Of the 204 persons whose birthdays were recorded, 81 (approximately 40 per cent) were in the 50–65 age group: 16 were 50 years old; one was 56; 36 were 60, and 28 were 65. No birthdays were announced for Jews under 50. Of the remaining 123 persons, 56 were in the 70–75 bracket; 43 were

between 76 and 84; 21 were 85–90; two were 94 years of age, and one was 101. Of 152 obituaries, 23 did not give the age of the deceased. Thirty (23 per cent) of the remaining notices indicated ages between 45 and 64; 51 (40 per cent) between 65 and 74, and 50 (39 per cent) between 75 and 96. In the same period, *Věstník* carried only one announcement of birth; only one religious marriage ceremony was conducted, and the “first bar-mitzvah in a decade” was reported from Slovakia.

### *Community Activities*

Until the end of 1971, the Jewish community in Czechoslovakia was permitted to have contact with Jewish organizations in the West on religious and cultural matters; but communal leaders were not permitted to attend Jewish conferences in the West, and, since the beginning of 1972, an number of Jewish delegations from Western countries were refused access to Czechoslovakia.

At the end of 1971 the International Council of Jews from Czechoslovakia inquired about the state of the community. According to information supplied by the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in Bohemia and Moravia, religious services were conducted in all existing communities on the Sabbath and on all festivals. (It was believed that some 6,000 Jews attended synagogue and memorial services, with those in Slovakia showing a stronger commitment to Jewish tradition.) No rabbi was available after the death of Dr. Richard Feder in 1970. Each community had its own cemetery of which it took care. There were, however, “about a hundred” abandoned Jewish cemeteries in localities from which Jews had been deported by the Nazis; no one could effectively look after their maintenance. The Jewish community of Brno (responsible for the communal life in Southern Moravia) declared that religious services were being held in that city, “with the participation of members from neighboring localities” on the Sabbath and all festivals. Fourteen cemeteries were still in use, of which “six were used more frequently” while the others were “in a state of desolation and decay and cannot be maintained, chiefly for lack of funds and manpower.”

In response to the same inquiry, the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia claimed that communal life was continuing in 23 localities, with daily services in Bratislava and three other towns, Sabbath and High Holy Day services in 11 localities, and only High Holy Day services in seven localities. The number of abandoned Jewish cemeteries was put at 600. The town of Galanta had a rabbi; religious functionaries, including *shohatim*, were said to be available in four towns. Kosher meals were served privately in Bratislava, at the restaurant of the Košice community, and, during the tourist season, at Piešťany.

### *Church and State*

The small Jewish community continued to be affected by the intensification of atheist propaganda and antireligious measures. In 1971 communal organizations appealed for donations of prayerbooks, which were “out of print” in Czechoslo-

vakia. Religious literature and the Bible were at the time listed by the Communist press among "pornographic" items seized by customs officials. Beginning in 1971, according to a Czech Ministry of Education and Culture directive, "religion no longer forms part of school curricula and [religious instruction] is permitted only in special school premises upon application by both parents and subject, [and only if] conducted by reliable teachers."

Since 1973 fund raising "in churches, prayer houses and other localities designated for worship" was permitted only with prior approval by the authorities, provided it was "not in contravention of the foreign policy aims of the ČSSR; constitutes no danger to public order, and is socially, culturally, and otherwise beneficial." Voluntary Jewish communal taxes were raised in 1974 by the Jewish communities of Prague, Hradec Králové, Kladno, Kolin, Náchod, Pardubice, Poďbrady, Přeboram, and Trutnov, all in Bohemia.

In Czechoslovakia, Judaism is one of 18 religions to which the constitution pays lipservice in a rather ambiguous fashion:

Freedom of religion is guaranteed. Everyone can adhere to a religious denomination or be an atheist, and can observe religious rites, except where this is in contravention of the law.

The application of this principle was defined by then Czech Minister of Culture Jaroslav Hájek in the February 1972 issue of *Nová Mysl*, monthly organ of the Czech Communist party. In his view,

Marxist ideology is in direct contradiction to the philosophical foundations of idealistic religious thought . . . since the religious faith of the overwhelming majority of denominations is based on bourgeois and petit-bourgeois doctrines serving the reactionary class as a medium to influence the broad masses of religious people who, so far, have had inadequate opportunity to discard their religious prejudices.

The minister insisted that the state would continue a "religious policy meeting the requirements of religious citizens who form an indivisible part of our Socialist society." At the same time, he made it clear that churches and synagogues "cannot represent the social or other extrareligious interests of their members," and were "not entitled to organize public lectures or cultural activities, for instance." In 1949 the state had taken upon itself "the administration of all congregational property and the payment of emoluments to all religious functionaries who, with the consent of the state, are working as ministers in the administration of religious congregations and in institutions for the education of ministers." Ministers, while "remaining employees of their congregations and religious organizations," were sternly reminded that,

. . . in matters of emoluments, holiday arrangements, social security and other contractual commitments relating to their office, they are dependent on the regional national committees [i.e., local CP organizations] of their permanent place of residence. Appointments of ministers and other religious functionaries

. depend on the prior consent of the state, available only to those who are politically reliable and otherwise comply with civil-service requirements.

In a passing allusion to the diminishing size of the Jewish community, Hájek made no reference to the Holocaust, but merely pointed to the "higher average age and, in recent years, emigration." He conceded that between 1966 and 1970 (which includes almost two and one-half years of Soviet presence) the number of children receiving a religious education throughout the country had risen from 22 to 34 per cent: from 13 to 22 per cent in the Czech lands and from 38 to 52 per cent in Slovakia. No facilities for the education of Jewish children or training of rabbis were available during the period under survey.

### *Antisemitism*

Even if the continuous attacks on Zionism and Israel, which followed the Kremlin pattern, were disregarded, the preoccupation of the mass media with matters Jewish was in stark contrast to the shrinking Jewish community. In this respect, Czechoslovakia remained in the lead among East European countries, with the Czech press, radio, and television outdistancing their Slovak counterparts. Jiří Bohátka (believed to be the pen name for an editorial team of "specialists on the Jews"), who had replaced J. F. Kolár after the latter's promotion to the post of director of the People's Publishing House (formerly World of the Soviets) in Prague, brought a considerable volume of inventive venom to his new task. In a broadcast series at the turn of 1971-72, also reprinted in *Tribuna*, Czech Jews were charged with having collaborated with the Nazis in organizing the emigration of a Zionist "élite" to Palestine, a move the Nazi leaders allegedly expected would cause trouble between the British and the Arabs. In exchange, according to the charge, Zionist leaders had agreed to the "quiet deportation of all other Jews" to concentration camps and the gas chambers.

In mid-1972 Benjamin Eichler, since 1955 chairman of the Union of Jewish Communities in Slovakia, was dismissed from his post following a campaign in *Tribuna* alleging, among others, that he had, during the summer of 1968, organized courses for young Zionists in Yugoslavia and participated in unspecified "Histadrut training centers" in Israel. Eichler was permitted to leave Czechoslovakia for Canada in 1973. In the autumn of 1972, Vilém Benda, a half-Jew and since 1962 director of the State Jewish Museum in Prague, was dismissed from his post for refusing to comply with directives to present the period of Nazi occupation as one of cooperation between the Czech Zionist leadership and the Nazis. Upon his return to Prague from a visit to Israel in 1968-69 to discuss cooperation in research, Benda publicly pressed for the restoration of the ancient Pinkas synagogue with its memorial tablets to the 77,000 Nazi victims from Bohemia and Moravia, which continued to be affected by damp rot and underground moisture from the Vltava river. He was replaced by Erik Klíma, a non-Jew formerly in charge of the banned-book section at the University of Prague library. Since then, the State Jewish

Museum has not been accessible to Jewish researchers from Western countries or to the Jewish community in the country.

The anti-Jewish campaign continued with a three-part feature by Bohátka in the *Tribuna* of August 1972, also carried on radio and TV, which purported to investigate the members of the Council of Elders, the Nazi-controlled representative group of the Jews during the occupation. Bohátka's conclusion was that "Zionist screams about antisemitism are a cover for the treacheries of the past and present, which this movement committed against Jewish citizens," and that the Zionists interned in Terezín concentration camp were the "Jewish henchmen of the Gestapo." Bohátka paid special attention to Czech Jews who were no longer alive to defend themselves, or had left the country before and after the war. These had allegedly been associated with the "Police Section of the Council of Elders." Another three-part serial on Prague radio in November 1972 dealt with what was supposed to have been the influx in 1967-68 of a large number of Israelis of Czechoslovak origin as tourists:

They had received special training from the Israeli intelligence service and several indisputable facts reveal that they interfered in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs in 1968. Zionist bodies helped finance the overthrow of the Socialist order in Czechoslovakia. It is estimated that some 400 million dollars were spent on "Operation Czechoslovakia."

English-language broadcasts also attacked the Jewish religious communities for having demanded in 1968 to "maintain contact with foreign organizations," which was described as "an effort to speed up reactionary internal development by demonstrative support from abroad," as well as for their attempt "to enforce the holding of celebrations to mark the millenium of the arrival of Jews on the territory of present-day Czechoslovakia." Reference was made to two former staff members of the Israel embassy in Prague, said to have been "maintaining for a long time relations with Czechoslovak citizens of Jewish origin and receiving espionage information from them," and to the "strange death" of Charles Jordan, executive director of the Joint Distribution Committee, which had been "attributed to the Czechoslovak police." Bohátka described Jordan as an "outstanding Zionist," who had been "sent to Czechoslovakia to bring about a change in the country's foreign policy at a time when it was no longer possible for the Zionists to conduct their activities under the cloak of the Israeli embassy."

In a Slovak-language broadcast at the beginning of 1973, Bohátka charged that Jewish historians, journalists, and research students from Israel, Austria, and the United States, who were touring the country "on the pretext of researching the history of Czechoslovak Jewry," pilfered Czechoslovak archives and "removed documents proving cooperation between Zionist organizations and the Nazis . . . as well as other evidence on secret relations, during the period of the Nazi protectorate, between the Gestapo, the Nazi-directed 'Jewish Council of Elders' in Prague, and the 'Jewish Central Office' for Slovakia." Visiting researchers, he asserted, also made special efforts to "establish evidence of the innate antisemitism of the Czech and Slovak nations."

## *Jewish Defense*

The Prague Jewish leadership urged international Jewish organizations abroad not to make a public issue of antisemitic attacks. Against the advice of the International Council of Jews from Czechoslovakia that the request of the communal leadership be disregarded since it was made under pressure, Jewish leaders in the West abided by it. The sole breach of the silence surrounding Czechoslovak Jewry was a resolution adopted by the British Section of the World Jewish Congress in November 1972. It protested the "continuous vilification of members of the Czechoslovak Jewish community, among them those who are citizens of Israel or of Western countries, on construed charges of cooperation with the Nazi occupants in the deportation of Jews described as 'non-committed,' allegedly to enable a 'Zionist élite' to emigrate to Palestine;" expressed concern at the plan to transform the State Jewish Museum of Prague into an "anti-Zionist-slanted museum," and urged the Czechoslovak government to "give serious consideration to the long-range consequences of this campaign." The Czechoslovak embassy in London refused to transmit the resolution to its government.

At a later stage, Jewish leaders in Prague had manifestly reappraised the community's position in the country and its mounting isolation. At a meeting in Prague in the spring of 1973, marking the 30th anniversary of the dissolution of the Prague Jewish community, František Fuchs was reported by *Věstník* to have declared:

We are witnessing a tendency to clear the assassins and the collaborators and to prevent their punishment, even to promote the theory of Jewish complicity in the Nazi crimes. We must repudiate such efforts. The attitude of Jews during the period of persecution cannot be judged by Nazis or antisemites, nor by those who were bystanders, but only by those who lived through this period or who, in fact, came to our rescue. . . . The [Jewish] leaders then did not betray us, but fought to the best of their abilities with those who organized the resistance.

Fuchs also remembered "with gratitude and pride those who, without hesitation, joined the Czechoslovak forces abroad and were killed in action, or injured on the battlefields of Europe and Africa . . . as well as those who fought on the political and cultural fronts against the Nazi murderers; also the martyrs of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt, of Treblinka and of other annihilation and concentration camps."

This bold stand drew an immediate attack from Bohátka, who asserted in the *Tribuna* that Fuchs had fallen victim to the "historically fictitious . . . legend of a united and suffering Jewish people under Nazi occupation," and chided him for holding views "as though he, himself, had never been a prisoner at the Terezín camp." Bohátka insisted that "Terezín was a town of class warfare, where the majority of assimilated Czech Jews waged a war for the survival of the Czech nation against the Nazi leadership and the collaborationist Zionist self-administration and its executive, the 'Council of Elders.'"

A few weeks later, *Tribuna's* attack on the Jewish leadership took an ominous course. It insisted that a statement made by Fuchs after Warsaw Pact troops entered the ČSSR, as reported in *Věstník* of April 1968, asserting that "the Council of

Jewish Religious Communities was representative of Jewry not merely in the religious but also in the political sphere," was in violation of state law. In fact, *Věstník* had published six demands listed in a declaration by the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in Bohemia and Moravia adopted on April 7, 1968. The first urged rehabilitation of the victims of the political trials of the 1950s and public denunciation of the use of antisemitism in the proceedings; the fourth demanded that, in the future, "international political events not be permitted to threaten the situation of our Jewish community." The others were completely nonpolitical (AJYB 1969 [Vol. 70], p. 406-07). Fuchs was also attacked by Bohátka for having said that "no Jew can agree to the physical annihilation of the population of Israel, for which there have been so many calls of late," ascribing such views to the growing impact of Zionist propaganda on "some elements of religious Jewry." He repeated the charge of a "secret deal" in exchange for Zionist "collaboration with the Nazis," and deplored that the murder of the Jews of Europe was now being exploited "for despicable deals of shady business." After having been handed over to the Nazis, he said, these Jews "reappeared after the war on the credit side of the Zionist movement."

It should be noted that the government-sponsored campaign insinuating the delivery of Jews by Jews to the Nazi gas chambers and concentration camps reached its peak while Czechoslovakia was negotiating an agreement of détente and trade cooperation with the Federal German Republic and was having talks with the United States and Great Britain for the release of gold confiscated from the Nazis when American troops entered Czechoslovakia. The campaign could have been an attempt to discourage compensation and reparation claims by Czechoslovak Nazi victims who were ineligible for compensation under the German laws either because they were unable to prove German nationality or "cultural background," or because they left Czechoslovakia after the 1965 cutoff date set by Germany. If the guilt of the Nazis was mitigated, or entirely eradicated, by lending credence to the canard that Jews (or "Zionists" in Communist parlance) had cooperated in the victimization of their fellow-Jews, one embarrassing item valued at hundreds of millions of dollars could be scratched from the agenda of the Prague-Bonn talks. In fact, the issue of reparations apparently did not come up, and the 260,000 Jewish victims of Nazism have since become an indistinguishable component of the 360,000 "Czech victims of Nazi persecution."

### *Elimination of Leaders*

The press campaign against Jewish communal leaders to which Benjamin Eichler of the Union of Jewish Communities in Slovakia had fallen victim in 1972, was followed in August 1974 by the elimination (styled as "resignation"), in short succession, of František Fuchs; Ota Heitlinger, secretary of the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Lands, and Pavel Kollmann, chairman of the Prague Jewish community. Both Fuchs and Heitlinger had been members of the CP

for some time. Heitlinger had been expelled from the party in 1971, but was reinstated later because he claimed to have established a Communist cell when serving in the Czechoslovak armed forces in the West. Expelled for the second time in 1972, he was working at the end of 1974 as a street cleaner in Prague. Fuchs was succeeded by Bedřich Bass and Ota Heitlinger by Rudolf Iltis, editor of *Věstník*, of the German-language communal quarterly, *Informationsbulletin*, and of the community's annual almanac. Arno Steiner, vice-chairman of the Prague Jewish community, was appointed its acting chairman, and František Kafka took over the chairmanship in January 1975.

### *Political Prisoners*

Hubert Stein and his wife Milada Kubiašová, Jewish victims of the Slánský trials (AJYB, 1954 [Vol. 55], pp. 288–92) who had been sentenced in 1971 to 12 and 10 years imprisonment, respectively, on charges of “espionage,” were still in prison at the end of 1974. Stein had been recalled from Ankara, where he was trade counsellor in the Czechoslovak embassy, to appear in the Slánský show trials. A long prison sentence imposed on him in 1953 was commuted by the 1962 amnesty. In 1971, two Slovak Jews, Stefan Grosz and Jan Weiss, were among six men sentenced in Košice from four and one-half to nine and one-half years in prison on charges of having “terrorized a woman for her positive attitude toward the Soviet Union.”

### *Publications*

*Věstník* continued publication as a monthly, but was put on a strict subscription basis since 1972. It reaches the West with a delay of up to two months. The German-language *Informationsbulletin* (mimeographed) is chiefly devoted to publicizing government support of the Jewish community for the benefit of the German-language Jewish press in the West. In its cursory surveys of the Czech press, antisemitic and anti-Israel attacks have been ignored. *Judaica Bohemiae*, a biannual of the State Jewish Museum now edited by a non-Jew, is devoted to the early history of the Jews in the Czech lands.

The following books on Jewish subjects were published in Czechoslovakia since 1971: Jan Heřman and Milada Vilimková, *History of the Prague Synagogues*; Ota Pavel, *Death of the Beautiful Roebucks*; Norbert Frýd, *The Bottle Mail or the End of the Last Century*; Václav Kaplický, *In the Name of the Law*; Josef Suchý, *The Light of Elijah*; Ivan Olbracht, *Biblical Stories* (illustrated by Gustav Doré); Jan Heřman, *Memories of the Prague Ghetto*; Pavel Grym, *The Night the Golem Rose*; Andrej Romanak, *Fortess Terezín*; Vojtěch Sailer, *We Were Three Doctors* (memoirs of a group of physicians at Terezín); Dr. Richard Feder, *Life and Bequest*; Zikmund Winter, *Pictures* (new edition); František Gottlieb, *Window to Window*; Norbert Frýd, *Three Little Women*; R. Bednářik, *Cemeteries in Slovakia*; Jan Tibenský, *Slovak History in Word and Pictures*. A novel by Alexej Pludek, *Vabank*, with strong antisemitic and anti-Israel passages, was published at the end of 1974.

Authors of Jewish origin blacklisted for publication in Czechoslovakia since 1971 include Ludvik Aškenázy, Eduard Goldstücker, Ladislav Grossmann, A. J. Liehm, Ivan Klima, Elmar Klos (coproducer of the Oscar-winning *Shop on Main Street*), Karel Šiktanc, Jan Štern, Oldřich Šuler, and Lucien Wachs. Jewish authors who left Czechoslovakia during 1971–1974, or were expelled, include Gabriel Laub, Ota Pavel, and Friedrich Uttitz (now editor of the weekly *Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung* in Düsseldorf).

### *Personalia*

Leo Haas, last of the group of Jewish painters at the Terezin concentration camp to survive, was awarded the Order of Labor on his 70th birthday in Prague in 1971. Ladislav Löwy of Liberec, a member of the Jewish synagogue choir, was awarded the title of Physician Emeritus in 1972. Karl Frank Koch, 82, was awarded the Yad Vashem medal of the Righteous Among the Nations in 1972 for his help to Jews in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia.

Hanuš Bonn, the Jewish poet and author, died in Prague in 1971. Dr. Otto Saxl, vice-chairman of the Brno Jewish community and head of the Research Institute for Pediatrics, died during a visit to England in Manchester in 1972. Jiří Grossmann, director of the Semafor Theater of Prague and a well-known song-writer, died in Prague in 1972. Karel Bacilek, former head of the Czechoslovak security police responsible for the Prague show trials of the 1950s, died in retirement in Prague in 1974, at the age of 77. The author František Gottlieb died in Prague at the end of 1974, at the age of 71.

KARL BAUM

## Yugoslavia

**I**N FEBRUARY 1974 Yugoslavia adopted a new constitution, the fourth since World War II, which was designed to promote the realization of a socialist society. This was to be accomplished through a system of self-management based on the active participation of worker-delegates in economic planning, distribution of income, investment, and in other decision-making. The constitution provided for a parliament with two elected chambers, one to be composed of 30 directly elected deputies from each of Yugoslavia's six constituent republics, and 20 from each of the two autonomous provinces. The other chamber was to be chosen indirectly, by the elected regional assemblies.

At the tenth congress of the Yugoslav Communist party, held in Belgrade in May 1974, 82-year-old Josif Tito was elected head of the party (League of Communists) for life. In his address to the congress, he reiterated the "nonalignment" policies pursued by Belgrade since it broke with Stalin some 25 years ago, stressing that it would continue its policy of friendly relations with all nations, regardless of their political systems. Accordingly, it negotiated, and in 1974 reached, an agreement with West Germany according to which Yugoslavia was to receive credits totaling DM 750 million linked to war reparations. While delegates from Moscow were now welcomed not only as observers but as participants in the congress, Belgrade leaders made it quite clear that this did not mean a drift toward the Kremlin. Tito did emphasize, however, that "imperialist circles" were intensifying their cold-war tactics against Yugoslavia; and the Communist press pointed out that, despite differences, there was a strong bond of common objectives between Yugoslavs and the Soviets.

At the same time, Tito was installed as Yugoslavia's president for life. His election signified recognition of his leading position in the nation. It also met the need for having at the head of the state a man of indisputable standing, who could impose unity on the various national groups which, of late, were becoming restless and seeking solutions to political problems within their ethnic frameworks.

In fact, there had been debate for some time about the relationship between the autonomous republics and the central government. The question arose after the 1971 unrest in Croatia, during which many arrests were made in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, to quash what Belgrade leaders regarded as a secessionist movement of the traditionally independent-minded Croats. It was not unexpected that Croatia became the focus of national tension, in view of the long history of animosity between Serbs and Croats. It should also be remembered that, during the Second World War, Croatia with its extremist fascist leadership was especially favored by the Nazis. Croatian demands now centered on more economic autonomy and political freedoms.

During 1973 the old conflict between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria over the Macedonians (living in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece) assumed serious proportions. Bulgaria claimed priority to their national allegiance, and Yugoslavia accused the Bulgarians of abandoning the spirit of socialist solidarity. Apparently, the situation was eased by the Soviet Union, which sent Prime Minister Aleksei Kosygin to Skopje, capital city of the contested region, to calm the volatile local population.

While the 23-member collective presidency under Tito (AJYB, 1971 [Vol. 72], p. 423) continued the established line of "its own Yugoslav way to socialism," party leaders recently appeared to be steering the country away from the relatively liberal attitudes of the past, and toward doctrinal conformity and a more rigid application of state control. Not only were such Western influences as television and movies frowned upon by the authorities, but the press was repeatedly attacked for what the party deemed to be its unhealthy aping of the ways of the West. The government imposed stricter censorship on publications and initiated a noisy campaign against all "enemies of socialism." Many scholars—even Marxist writers and teachers—among them the notable Belgrade professors Mihajlov, Markovic, and Lubomir Tadic became targets of official displeasure. Mihajlo Mihajlov, a well-known writer of Russian descent who had been persecuted for his writings in the past, was again arrested in 1974 and sentenced to prison for publishing his unorthodox socialist views in the English and Russian emigré press. In 1973 the authorities had denied his request to go to the United States where he was to have participated in a California symposium on "Problems of Forbidden and Discouraged Knowledge."

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Jewish population of Yugoslavia stood at about 6,000. Some 1,500 Jews lived in Belgrade, 1,200 in Zagreb, 1,100 in Sarajevo, 250 in Subotica, 300 in Novi Sad, 200 in Osijek, 120 in Split, and 100 in Skopje.

### *Communal and Religious Life*

Jews in Yugoslavia enjoyed all rights and privileges granted to other citizens, and their interests as a minority were protected by law. Communal activities were organized around the Federation of Jewish Communities, which greeted with much pride the new state constitution guaranteeing freedom to all nationalities (*Jevrejski Pregled*, January-February 1974). Lavoslav Kadelburg, the foremost Jewish leader, for many years served as president of the Federation; its secretary was Lucy Petrovic. With the approval of the government, the Federation maintained close ties with the world Jewish organizations, including the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture and the American Joint Distribution Committee. It was also affiliated with the European Council of Jewish Organizations and the World Jewish Congress.

Partly because of ideological considerations and partly because of the deteriora-

tion of religious life after World War II, the Federation was essentially a secular organization that dealt only peripherally with religious matters. A lack of trained rabbis made the maintenance of religious activities difficult. Children received no formal religious training, nor were *bar-mitzvot* celebrated. Sabbath and holiday services were held in some of the larger cities; but these were mostly conducted by learned laymen and in some cases by cantors. In the Zagreb Jewish home for the aged, religious services were provided for Jewish residents. A Jewish calendar for 1974–1975 was issued by Rabbi Cadik Danon. Social activities received support from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

### *Cultural Activities*

The Federation tried to stem the decline of the community by sponsoring a broad range of cultural activities. It coordinated youth clubs in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Sarajevo, and maintained kindergarten facilities in Belgrade and Zagreb. Educational work was also carried on in Subotica, Novi Sad, Split, and elsewhere. Special winter seminars of five or six days' duration were offered, attracting some 30 participants. Jewish educational programs were provided in summer camps, which were also attended by groups of children from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania. An important aspect of the educational program was that it continued to draw young lay leaders from the local communities.

The Federation maintained a Central Judaica Library with research facilities for interested scholars. Much time and energy were devoted to the Jewish publishing program. *Jevrejski Pregled* ("Jewish Review"), *Kadima*, a magazine for youth, and *Jevrejski Almanah* ("Jewish Almanac") continued publication. The Jewish Historical Institute was engaged in a research project covering many social aspects of community life. In 1973 the Institute issued the 350-page second volume of *Zbornik* ("Anthology"), edited by Professor Andrija Gams, Dr. Lavoslav Kadelburg, and others (AJYB, 1971 [Vol. 70], p. 425), dealing with the situation of the Jews in Yugoslavia during the Nazi period. Among its valuable material is a list of Jewish medical personnel murdered by the Nazis. The Jewish Museum continued its activities. In Belgrade and Zagreb, Jewish choirs presented programs of Jewish music. Some of the Federation's cultural endeavors were subsidized by the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture.

### *Relations with Israel*

Although Yugoslavia broke relations with Israel after the six-day war of 1967, authorities did not interfere with the Jewish community's support of the state. Yugoslavia continued its political friendship with the Third World and the Arab nations. However, Marshal Tito was reported to have expressed interest in efforts to promote a solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict, in a meeting with Dr. Nahum Goldmann who visited Belgrade in September 1974.