

Review  
of  
the  
Year

OTHER COUNTRIES

## *National Affairs*

CANADA'S CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS completed a new phase in 1992. Still hoping to get Quebec to endorse the 1982 constitution, which had been enacted without that key province's concurrence, the government held a national referendum in October on a package of constitutional amendments known as the Charlottetown accord. The major elements of the package included recognition of Quebec as a "distinct society"; an enhanced role for the provinces through reform of the Senate to make it an elected body with equal representation from each province; a change in the method of appointing Supreme Court justices and a transfer of some powers from the federal to the provincial governments; and granting of self-government to aboriginal peoples.

Proponents of the package contended that, after the failure of the Meech Lake accord in 1990 and Quebec's ensuing movement toward sovereignty, it was Canada's last best chance to satisfy Quebec's interests and thereby avert the threat of separation. As a result, the vote took on almost apocalyptic implications. Despite the calls to vote Yes in order to save Canada, most Canadians (about 54 percent) voted No, many in the belief that the accord weakened the power of the federal government. Six of the provinces, including Quebec and Alberta, voted No. The strongest support for the deal was found in parts of Atlantic Canada, which feared being cut off should Quebec separate. After the referendum's failure, there was widespread support for the idea of shelving the constitutional question, which had exhausted politicians and citizens alike for a decade. But Quebec's opposition Parti Québécois remained committed to the French-speaking province's independence and planned to hold a referendum on that question within a year of its next election victory, which it hoped would occur in 1994.

From the perspective of the Jewish community, Canadian unity was highly valued. With nearly 30 percent of the country's Jews living in Quebec, the prospect of Quebec independence, with its anticipated deleterious effect on the well-being of the community, remained anathema to the bulk of the Jews. Hence it was not surprising that the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), which speaks for the community on political and governmental issues, came out strongly for the Yes position. President Irving Abella described Charlottetown as "probably the most important

constitutional question in Canadian history since 1867. We owe it to ourselves as Canadians, not just as Jews, to vote to keep Canada together." Although some Jews were ambivalent about the accord—because of fears that the "distinct society" concessions to Quebec and other provisions would weaken the protection of individual rights in the country—ultimately it appeared that most Jews did vote Yes, accepting the view that support for the federalist side demanded such an action.

On other matters, a new political group, the Reform party, encountered some criticism from Michael Lublin, a disgruntled member, who claimed that racism and anti-Semitism were widespread at many levels. Tom Flanagan, the party's director of research, responded that in fact the party had been vigorous in expelling members of the racist Heritage Front who had joined, as well as a member who had defaced a Toronto synagogue. He claimed that Lublin's accusations were motivated by personal bitterness. Earlier, party leader Preston Manning had made it clear that he personally rejected anti-Semitism and racism and that his party did not adhere to such views.

### *Israel and the Middle East*

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney named Norman Spector as ambassador to Israel in January, the first Jew to hold the post. Spector, who speaks Hebrew, had been Mulroney's chief of staff. Reactions to the appointment from official Arab spokespersons were quite pointed. James Kafieh, president of the Canadian Arab Federation, charged that Spector, who had no diplomatic experience, was chosen simply because of "his record as a loyal supporter of Israel." He also wondered whether Spector would "be serving Canadian or Israeli interests" and concluded that "his primary interest will be in serving the interests of the international Zionist movement. . . ." Jewish organizations welcomed the appointment. In February the prime minister responded to the critics, stating that the assignment would "eliminate the doubt in anyone's mind as to where we should stand on certain issues. Norman Spector is remarkably well-qualified to serve as Canada's ambassador to Israel." He used the opportunity of a diplomatic reception to reiterate his commitment to a strong relationship with Israel.

Spector, in an interview with the *Canadian Jewish News*, stated that he had no doubt that the Department of External Affairs had systematically excluded Jews from top diplomatic assignments in Israel. He said that Mulroney had been delighted to break the existing practice. Spector's assertion about diplomatic personnel practices was supported by a letter to the *Toronto Star* from foreign-service officer Aharon Mayne, who claimed that superiors had discouraged him from any involvement with Middle East affairs. B'nai Brith's director of governmental relations, Ian Kagedan, who had talked with several foreign-service officers with similar complaints, argued that what is "most troubling is that within the culture of External Affairs is the thought that Jews can't be fully Canadian."

Canada was actively involved in the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations throughout

the year. Michael Bell, the outgoing ambassador to Israel, became an adviser to the Canadian delegation to the peace talks. He was optimistic early in the year, expressing the view that both sides were making a real effort to succeed. As part of the multilateral negotiations, Canada was asked to chair the working group on refugees. Bell, in a February interview, indicated that Canada was trusted by the Israelis and the Arabs "as a country that is fair-minded and solution-oriented."

The refugee talks held in Ottawa in May ran into trouble early. Israel declined to participate because Canada invited an "expanded Palestinian delegation," including representatives from outside the territories. Israel maintained that the multilaterals should operate according to the Madrid rules, which barred so-called diaspora Palestinians from the talks. However, both the United States and Canada contended that the multilaterals did not operate under the same rules. An underlying question was whether Palestinians have a right of return to Israel if they claim that they lived in that territory before 1948. As the Israeli embassy in Ottawa put it: "Inclusion of Palestinians from outside the Territories as partners to the peace process bestows legitimacy to their inevitable claim . . . for the 'right of return.'" The talks continued without Israel's presence, with Canada issuing a final communiqué expressing a broad consensus that negotiations on the refugees should not wait for progress in the bilateral negotiations. Both Syria and Lebanon were also absent as a protest against what they regarded as insufficient Israeli flexibility in the bilateral talks.

A number of specific refugee or asylum claims came up during the year. Wahid Kahlil Baroud, reportedly a former bodyguard for PLO head Yasir Arafat, applied for refugee status with his family, was allowed into Canada on bond, failed to appear at two immigration hearings, and was then arrested. He had reportedly been involved in terrorist actions in the past. Another Palestinian, Mahmood Abo Shandi, had been detained upon his arrival in 1991 with false papers, when he asked for political asylum, claiming to be in danger from the Mossad in Norway because of his previous PLO activities. The government opposed his claim on the grounds that he was "likely to engage in acts of espionage or subversion. . . ." Following a hearing on his claim in January, Shandi, who had been a Fatah colonel, was ordered deported by a federal court judge, who found, based on evidence presented by the government, that he had been more active in the PLO than he acknowledged. He was deported in February.

Another Palestinian terrorist, Mohammad Issa Mohammad, was more successful, clearing one of the two hurdles on the way toward refugee status. Even though he had taken part in a 1968 attack on a Greek plane in Athens in which an Israeli man died, a two-member immigration panel held in November that there was a credible basis for his claim. Jewish organizations urged the Immigration and Refugee Board to reject his application at the next stage.

Israel and Canada explored the possibilities of concluding a free-trade agreement, similar to the Israeli-U.S. pact of 1985, when Industry and Trade Minister Moshe Nissim visited Ottawa in March. International Trade Minister Michael Wilson stated that Canada had too many other priorities at the time, though he did hold

out hope for improved trade relations. In that light, the Canada/Israel Technology Co-operation Forum, held in March, provided an opportunity for Israeli companies to meet with Canadian counterparts in order to stimulate business. Cooperation in the legal area was also moving apace through the Canada-Israel Legal Co-operation Program. Law professor Irwin Cotler, who organized it, hoped that the exchange of ideas between lawyers and jurists in the two countries would culminate in Israel's eventual adoption of a bill of rights modeled on the Canadian version. The first undertaking of the group was a conference in Israel in December, involving top legal minds, on the treatment of human rights in the two countries.

Canada's agreement in September to sell three armed frigates to Saudi Arabia prompted an outcry from the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC). Executive Director Rob Ritter accused the government of a double standard because it authorized sales to Arab countries but not to Israel. Israeli ambassador Itzhak Shelef also opposed the sale, on the ground that the Saudis were still in a state of war with Israel.

The head of the Security Intelligence Review Committee told a parliamentary committee in May that the Mossad had operated illegally in Canada in 1990, specifically, that agents conducted activities without Canadian permission. The admission substantiated a charge by controversial author Victor Ostrovsky, who published an exposé of the Mossad, that two agents had come to his home to persuade him not to publish the book. Israeli officials were reportedly rebuked for the actions.

### *Anti-Semitism*

There was a major new development in the case of Ernst Zundel, who was appealing his 1988 conviction for "spreading false news" through his Holocaust-denial publications. The Supreme Court of Canada declared in a 4-3 decision that the law under which he had been convicted was unconstitutional, that it violated protections of freedom of expression in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Jewish community spokespersons expressed outrage at the judgment. They had been backing the various legal actions against Zundel for nine years and had seen him convicted twice, only to see both convictions ultimately overturned on appeal. David Satok of the Canadian Jewish Congress Ontario Region declared that "Congress will no longer allow the likes of Ernst Zundel or anyone like him to spread hatred against our community," after laying a new complaint against Zundel under another section of the criminal code.

James Keegstra was convicted for a second time under the antihate provisions of the code in July, for promoting hatred against Jews as a high-school social-studies teacher. He was fined \$3,000, but an appeal was planned. His case, too, had been in the courts for nearly a decade. Meanwhile, a New Brunswick court upheld an administrative decision to dismiss Malcolm Ross from his teaching job because of his anti-Semitic writings. He appealed to the provincial court of appeal, which heard the arguments in September and then reserved judgment.

British revisionist historical writer David Irving attempted another cross-country speaking tour in November. The ensuing uproar focused a great deal of attention on his Holocaust-denial efforts. The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Toronto tried to have him barred from the country on the grounds that a German law under which he had been convicted was equivalent to Canada's antihate law. The government agreed and notified Irving, who was by then in the United States, that he would not be admitted, thus jeopardizing planned speeches in at least seven locations. Irving managed to sneak into Canada and to speak in Victoria and Toronto before being taken into custody and deported to Britain. In a separate matter, Irving sued federal multiculturalism minister Gerry Weiner for defamation in connection with an earlier visit.

Anti-Semitic incidents continued to occur, although B'nai Brith Canada's annual accounting showed a decline in the total number of instances of harassment or vandalism, after annual increases since 1987. On a countrywide basis there were 150 incidents of harassment and 46 of vandalism, for a total of 196, compared with 251 in 1991. But this was still the third highest number in the 11 years that the survey had been conducted. The bulk of the incidents (97) occurred in Toronto, while Montreal and Ottawa had 25 each. A decline in the western provinces was attributed to tougher law enforcement.

Desecrations of cemeteries and synagogues distressed Jews in Montreal, where eight tombstones were defaced in February, and in Winnipeg, where a major synagogue was vandalized by neighborhood teenagers in April. Three Toronto area synagogues were defaced in June, and a Jewish community building in Ottawa was vandalized in July. A neo-Nazi rally planned for the end of July, in the town of Ste. Anne de Sorel, Quebec, attracted only about 70 participants. Vigorous action by the local authorities helped to discourage attendance.

A vacant house owned by a Kitchener, Ontario, Jewish woman who publicly opposed the speaking activities of David Irving burned down in November as the result of arson. In Ottawa, in December, many Jews and Jewish organizations received anti-Semitic material in the mail. Anti-Semitic stickers were also affixed to Jewish-owned businesses in the city.

A Jewish employee of the New York subsidiary of ScotiaMcLeod Inc., a large Canadian brokerage firm, alleged that anti-Semitic attitudes and practices were tolerated in the company. He contended that he and other employees had been targets of ethnic slurs on more than one occasion. After Simon Israel, the employee, was dismissed from his job, Jewish organizations in Canada intervened with the parent company. Eventually, two employees who had been accused of making anti-Semitic remarks were demoted. Several Jewish community officials claimed that such action came only after adverse media publicity, and that the company was only interested in damage control, rather than in rooting out discriminatory attitudes.

A doctoral dissertation at Université Laval in Quebec created controversy when its acceptance was inordinately delayed and some members of the committee ad-

vocated its rejection. The author, Esther Delisle, wrote on "Anti-Semitism and Extreme Right-Wing Nationalism in Quebec from 1929-39," arguing that anti-Semitism was central in the intellectual life of Quebec during that period, especially due to the influence of the late Lionel Groulx, a priest and historian who had a great influence on the development of Quebec nationalism. She also documented the frequency of anti-Semitic expressions in the Montreal newspaper *Le Devoir* during the 1930s, stating that "it was like *Der Sturmer*." The thesis was eventually accepted and then published as a book. Many Quebec intellectuals were outraged by her charges against Groulx, making her the object of considerable opprobrium.

### *Nazi War Criminals*

Jacob Luitjens, a former professor in British Columbia who had collaborated with the Nazis in his native Holland during World War II, was stripped of his Canadian citizenship and deported to the Netherlands to stand trial, culminating a four-year legal struggle. After the Federal Court rejected his appeal in April, he was finally deported in November, in response to an extradition request from the Netherlands. Subsequently, he was jailed in Amsterdam while he appealed a 1948 conviction in absentia and a life sentence. The appeal was denied by a Dutch court at the end of the year. Nazi rocket scientist Arthur Rudolph, who tried to visit Canada, was also deported.

Imre Finta, who was acquitted in 1991 of charges under Canada's war-crimes legislation, faced an attempt by the Crown to appeal the verdict. Although the Ontario Court of Appeal refused to grant a new trial, on the grounds that any judicial error did not affect the outcome, the Supreme Court of Canada agreed in December to hear the appeal. Charges against Michael Pawlawski, accused of participating in the killing of 500 Jews and Poles in Belorussia in 1942, were dropped by the Crown following adverse rulings by the judge that made it impossible to present a case. Subsequently, Pawlawski was awarded costs by the court. In a new case, Radislav Grujicic, originally from Yugoslavia, was charged with ten counts of murder and other crimes for his activities as a police officer between 1941 and 1944.

In an analysis of the government's handling of war criminals during the five years since the passage of the law, B'nai Brith's David Matas was highly critical of the lack of action by the prosecutors and unsatisfactory progress in dealing with actual and potential cases. "There is no area of the law where action is more lethargic," he charged.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

### *Demography*

First results from the 1991 census contained some surprises, most notably a reasonable growth in the Jewish population, a smaller than anticipated decline in Montreal, and large numbers of people who indicated some Jewish ethnic background but did not classify themselves as Jews by religion.

The census asks two questions that enable one to identify Jews: a religion question, which is usually straightforward, and an ethnicity question, which has changed from one census to the next and is a source of some ambiguity. In 1991, respondents were permitted to list a single response to the ethnicity question about the group to which their ancestors belonged or to give multiple responses. The number of people giving Jewish as a single response was 245,840, while those listing Jewish as one of two or more responses numbered 123,725. The total of 369,565 represents the high end of the estimate of the Jewish population because it undoubtedly includes among those giving multiple responses some people whose Jewish identity is extremely marginal. The religion question showed 318,070 Jews, which is certainly the lower end of the range. An accurate number is somewhere in between, including some of those who did not list their religion as Jewish but did give a Jewish ethnic identification.

In a recent analysis of the 1991 census data, Prof. Jim Torczyner and associates at McGill University cross-tabulated the ethnicity and religion measures to produce a combined Jewish variable that encompasses those who identify themselves as Jewish on both questions, those who are ethnically Jewish but give no other religion, and those who give their religion as Jewish. Thus, secular Jews with no religious affiliation are included, but Jews who have adopted another religion are excluded. On that basis, the total number of Jews in 1991 was 356,315, an increase of 44,215, or 14.2 percent, since 1981, using consistent methodology. (Jews represent about 1.3 percent of the Canadian population.) It should be noted that 49,460 people who list a Jewish ethnic origin identify with a religion other than Judaism. Of the 356,315 Jews, 281,680 give both religious and ethnic identities, 36,390 list Jewish religion but another ethnicity, and 38,245 list Jewish ethnicity but no religion.

The greatest percentage growth in the Jewish population between 1981 and 1991 occurred in Toronto (26.4), Ottawa (26.6), and Vancouver (31.0). People moving from Montreal and various smaller communities, plus immigrants, produced the large increase among the Jews of Ontario, with Hamilton and London experiencing double-digit percentage increases. Montreal, on the other hand, declined by 2.1 percent, but that was a lower drop than had been anticipated. The Montreal Jewish population fell from 103,425 in 1981 to 101,210 in 1991. As a result, Toronto is now home to nearly 46 percent of Canada's Jews, and Montreal's share is down to about 28 percent (in contrast to the 1970s, when the proportions of Jews in the two cities were about equal).

Eleven cities (defined as Census Metropolitan Areas, CMAs) have Jewish populations of 1,500 or more. The following table is based on the analysis of Torczyner and his colleagues.

The Jews of Canada continue to be an aging population: 17.3 percent are over 65 and 17.5 percent between 35 and 44, compared to 10.8 percent and 16.2 percent in the general population. At the same time, 21.0 percent of Jews are younger than 15, the same proportion as in the general population, and the proportions of 45–64-year-olds are similar, 19.1 percent among Jews and 19.9 percent in the population at large.

The Jews continue to have higher education levels than the rest of the population: 52.1 percent of Jews aged 25–44 hold university degrees, compared to 16.5 percent of the total population. In general, of people over 15 years of age, Jews are two and a half times as likely to have a bachelor's degree or some college and four times as likely to have an advanced degree as the general population. In terms of occupation, they are three times as likely to be professionals and twice as likely to be managers and administrators.

Some 18,270 people listed Israel as their birthplace, including 16,770 who are permanent residents and 1,500 who are in Canada on some kind of temporary permit. This statistic of course understates the Israeli population in Canada, because it omits those who were born outside of Israel, made *aliyah*, lived in Israel, and subsequently emigrated to Canada.

Some 6,595 people listed Yiddish as their home language while another 1,425 listed Yiddish and another language. Interestingly, 6,955 listed Hebrew as their home language and 1,790 listed Hebrew and another language. This is probably the first time that the number of Hebrew speakers outnumbered the Yiddish speakers

Census Metropolitan Areas	Jewish Population	Percent Change from 1981
Toronto	162,605	+26.4
Montreal	101,210	– 2.1
Vancouver	19,375	+31.0
Winnipeg	15,050	– 6.2
Ottawa	11,555	+26.6
Calgary	7,155	+18.0
Edmonton	5,430	+16.4
Hamilton	5,145	+10.6
London	2,670	+14.6
Windsor	1,785	–16.0
Halifax	1,755	+20.6

in Canada by any measure. However, 25,375 people listed Yiddish as their mother tongue (down from 32,760 in 1981), while 11,895 listed Hebrew. All told, there were 53,420 people in Canada who said they could speak Yiddish and 52,455 who could speak Hebrew. The most Yiddish speakers (23,485) were in Montreal, while Toronto had the most Hebrew speakers (26,345). In Winnipeg, which once boasted a vibrant Yiddish-speaking community, only 3,330 reported that they could speak Yiddish.

### *Communal Affairs*

One of the dominant themes during the year was the financial crisis faced by the community. As the economy generally sputtered in recession, the fallout in the community was serious. The problem was exacerbated by the restructuring necessitated by the free-trade pact with the United States. The crowning blow was the collapse of the Reichmann financial and real-estate empire in Toronto, though the Reichmann disaster was only the most visible sign of a process that affected the community deeply. Given the dependence of local federation fund-raising campaigns on the big givers, the economic downturn caused serious pressures on community agencies, in terms of both demand for services and resources available. Agencies noted an upsurge in requests for financial assistance, vocational counseling to find alternative employment, and help in dealing with the psychological and family problems related to job loss and deteriorating personal financial situations. Such difficulties even reached into the middle and upper-middle classes.

The recession's effects were felt in organizational budgets, which often had to be cut back just as demands for services and financial assistance were reaching record high levels. Schools, for example, found that families were less able to pay their tuition fees, while community funds to offset these shortfalls were less likely to be available. Organizations serving senior citizens were equally hard hit, and health-care agencies found it necessary to reduce spending at a time when their services were in demand. In Montreal, the budget of Federation CJA for local needs was reduced by about \$400,000 to just over \$12 million between 1991 and 1992. Some agencies saw their allocations drop by as much as 12 percent.

In Toronto, when the federation was compelled by its auditors to write off \$6.8 million in unpaid pledges to the United Jewish Appeal from earlier years, it became necessary to reduce the annual allocation to Israel as the alternative to crippling local agencies. Israel, through the United Israel Appeal, had expected to receive about \$16 million; instead its allocation was slashed to \$9 million. That compared with \$11.5 million in 1991 and \$17 million in 1990. Part of the problem was the diversion of funds to Operation Exodus, which had an impact on the regular campaign, but part was also due to the recession.

The financial bind of institutions that had depended on Reichmann largesse prior to the bankruptcy of Olympia and York Developments Ltd., the family real-estate company with worldwide holdings, complicated the situation immensely. Previ-

ously the Reichmanns reportedly donated millions of dollars annually to an array of community institutions, primarily but not exclusively Orthodox. Schools such as the Yeshiva and Mesivta Yesodei HaTorah, the Bais Yaacov School, and the Kolel Avreichim found themselves several million dollars in debt due to the abrupt cessation of subsidies from the Reichmann family interests. As the Reichmann funding dried up, institutions turned to the federation for support, precisely when the federation itself was experiencing serious difficulties. At the same time, the families utilizing the institutions were ill-equipped to undertake substantially higher financial burdens. A further problem in Toronto was the reduction by the United Way of allocations to its affiliated agencies, including Jewish ones.

Canadian Jewish Congress held its triennial plenary assembly in Toronto in May. In an interview before the plenary, outgoing president Les Scheininger raised questions about some of the trends in the community, in particular the focus on organizations for their own sake; he called on fellow activists to ensure that the purpose of service to the community was foremost in the mission of the various bodies. He also expressed fear that the financial crisis would lead to less emphasis on education, which he viewed as the primary tool to combat assimilation and intermarriage. At the plenary itself, the new president, Irving Abella, stressed the challenge of Jewish continuity and promised to focus programming on youth, especially on the nation's university campuses.

The plenary passed a number of resolutions on the Middle East, anti-Semitism, human rights, and community relations. The most controversial and divisive resolution was one that was defeated 72–28. Backed by Canadian Friends of Peace Now, it called for Israel to cease “further settlement in the territories during peace negotiations.” Debate on the resolution from both sides was intense.

Sociologist Steven M. Cohen and pollster Martin Goldfarb presented findings from recent surveys concerning Jewish life in Canada. Goldfarb pointed to the importance of visiting Israel as a factor in maintaining an individual's Jewish identity and commitment at home. In general he found that Jewish ritual practice in Canada was quite high throughout the different age cohorts. Cohen, reinforcing the point, asserted that Canadian Jews were more deeply committed to Jewish values and institutions than American Jews.

The Montreal community continued to be concerned about its future. The revived threat of Quebec independence during the constitutional turmoil of the early 1990s highlighted the heavy toll that political uncertainty can take on the vitality of community life. The knowledge that young people had moved out of the community in significant numbers during the past 20 years was a source of consternation, not only because decline in any part of the community is troubling, but also because of the likely effect on the community's future of a shortage of young people and a gap in that age cohort.

Between 1990 and 1992, various groups under federation auspices began investigating the problem and developing strategies to combat it. What emerged was a project known as ProMontreal. One of the key objectives of the new group was to

identify job opportunities for young people, especially with Jewish employers, who were most likely to be responsive to initiatives from the community. Other objectives included the promotion of positive aspects of living in Montreal, especially from a Jewish perspective, and the stimulation of an appreciation for the French language and Quebec culture. Overall, backers of the ProMontreal initiative hoped that they could stem the tide of outmigration among the young and perhaps even attract some of the Jewish students from elsewhere who attend university in Montreal to settle in the city. Even after the defeat of the October constitutional referendum, which generally had been supported by the city's Jews, there was a more positive feeling in the community than there had been for a few years. Certainly the deliberate community efforts were one factor in the change of mood.

The attempt to revive spirits in the Montreal community was accompanied by a greater appreciation of the role of the Sephardim in community life. The predominantly French-speaking group, a rapidly growing segment of the community, had become more assertive in general and seemed more aware of its strategic situation as a link between the Jews and the majority French Québécois society. Senior community leader Charles Bronfman addressed the annual meeting of the Communauté Sépharade du Québec (CSQ) in February, calling on French-speaking Jews to seek an enhanced role in the federation and communitywide fund-raising. "You have a major responsibility in helping to ensure the continuity of a vibrant and vital Jewish community in Montreal," he told them. Joseph Gabay, the new president of the CSQ, lamented the underrepresentation of Sephardim in key community bodies and committed himself to trying to remedy the situation.

Both of the major federations changed their names during the year. Toronto Jewish Congress became the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto (JFGT) in order both to make clear that it has no connection with the Canadian Jewish Congress and to stress the expansion of Jewish life beyond the city's traditional boundaries. In Montreal, Allied Jewish Community Services changed to Federation CJA, a name that could be used in either English or French and that emphasized the connection between the fund-raising of the Combined Jewish Appeal and the spending of the federation. In Toronto, the JFGT and CJC's Ontario Region agreed on a new division of responsibilities, shifting control over cultural activities, including Yiddish programming, archives, and Holocaust-related events, from CJC to the federation. The Council of Jewish Federations, based in New York, made its Canadian office in Toronto more autonomous by setting up a separate Canadian division known as CJF Canada. Backers of change believed that the new structure would be helpful in dealing with issues that are unique to Canada or are different from similar issues in the United States.

In an abrupt move, CJC Ontario Region dismissed Edmond Lipsitz as its executive director in June, for reasons that were not fully explained publicly. Some officers complained that they had been left out of the process that led to the decision. The matter was taken up by the council in July, but the termination remained in effect.

The Canadian Zionist Federation (CZF) canceled its planned election of delegates

to the World Zionist Congress. In a February decision, the CZF simply allocated the seats by agreement among the constituent groups, thus saving the \$250,000 cost of holding the election. The action was permitted under World Zionist Organization rules because a consensus existed. The allocation of delegates was as follows: United Torah Coalition—5, Kadima—4, Mercaz-Canada—3, Labor-Zionist Movement—3, Herut-Likud—2, Zionist Organization of Canada—2, Friends of Pioneering Israel—1, Confederation of United Zionists—1. The total of 21 delegates represented an increase of two over Canada's allocation to the 1988 Congress.

In other communal affairs, new Jewish community centers were dedicated in Hamilton, Ontario, and in Kelowna, British Columbia, the latter serving the growing community in the Okanagan region. The Canadian Association for Ethiopian Jews disbanded after 12 years, satisfied that its efforts had succeeded in helping to resettle the community in Israel.

### *Education*

Ontario's Jewish community continued to press for provincial government aid to the day schools, but without success. A key underlying consideration was the fact that Roman Catholic schools in Ontario did receive state support. Early in the year, a group of parents, aided by CJC, initiated a lawsuit to try to compel government funding, on the grounds that existing policy violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, specifically, equality and freedom-of-religion guarantees. In the case, heard in the Ontario Court of Justice in May, lawyer John Laskin argued that compulsory school attendance, coupled with a commitment to freedom of religion, obligated the government to fund the schools. The decision of the court, handed down in August, went against the Jewish parents, who decided to appeal. Justice William Anderson accepted the assertion that rights had been denied, but found the limitations on rights to be "acceptable" within the meaning of the constitution. Meanwhile, in Montreal, the Association of Jewish Day Schools (AJDS) was exploring the possibility of associate status with either the Protestant or Catholic school board, in order to gain access to increased funding. Financial pressures prompted the move for the schools, which received partial funding under the Private Education Act. Quebec government approval would be required for any new arrangement.

Several new educational facilities opened during the year. In Montreal, the Hebrew Academy erected its own building on land purchased from Federation CJA after renting for many years, while United Talmud Torahs expanded and remodeled its Herzliah High School's Snowdon campus. The first Jewish day school in Richmond, British Columbia, opened in the fall.

Five ultra-Orthodox schools in Toronto faced severe financial problems due to the ending of Reichmann funding. Yeshiva Bnei Zion of Bobov threatened to close because of an inability to meet its obligations. These schools had not been funded by the Board of Jewish Education because they failed to meet the necessary criteria. Some 2,000 children attended the five schools in question.

## *Community Relations*

In the aftermath of the failure of the Meech Lake accord in 1990, some Jewish leaders began to work together with other ethnic groups in order to promote national unity and enhance understanding of the complexity of the Quebec problem among Canadians in the rest of the country. The lead for this initiative came from CJC people in Montreal, who forged a coalition that also included the Hellenic Canadian Congress and the National Congress of Italian Canadians. After traveling across the country for over a year, the coalition was ready to swing into action to enlist ethnic support for an agreement to renew the Canadian federation. The message was straightforward: keep Canada united but recognize Quebec's uniqueness. In February, the coalition submitted a comprehensive brief to a federal committee exploring the parameters of a renewed Canada. It also was instrumental in building ethnic support for the October referendum. Despite the failure of the Charlottetown accord, the exercise proved useful in that it produced an unprecedented degree of cooperation between the three ethnic communities on matters of common interest.

A Mordecai Richler publication again precipitated a community-relations crisis for Montreal's Jews. This time it was the appearance of his book *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec!* in which he enlarged on the themes that he had identified the previous year in his controversial *New Yorker* article. Even though the main thrust of the book was criticism of Quebec's language laws, Richler's assertions about anti-Semitic influences in the province remained the major focus of debate. His writings provoked intense discussion as to whether Quebec had really changed from the 1930s and 1940s, when anti-Semitism was prevalent. Critics contended that Quebec society had indeed changed, while Richler still observed incidents that made him uncomfortable.

There were other discussions about the place of Jews in Quebec as well. In May, Université du Québec political scientist Julien Bauer and CJC community-relations professional Jack Jedwab had a sharp exchange at a public meeting in Montreal. Bauer contended that Jews remained marginalized in Quebec politics, that anti-Semitism was common among the elite, and that Jews suffered disabilities in some respects. Jedwab countered that French Québécois genuinely wanted to achieve rapprochement with Jews more than ever before. In a panel discussion held in Toronto, also in May, McGill professor Harold Waller argued that Quebec nationalism did not threaten Jews as Jews, even though most, including French-speaking Jews, were strongly opposed to the idea of Quebec independence. Jedwab went even further, suggesting that Montreal was the best place on the continent to "maintain a Jewish identity." Both speakers agreed that, although the declining Jewish population should be lamented, it did not necessarily mean that the community had no future. At a meeting in January, a Parti Québécois vice-president tried to convince Jewish community leaders that independence was inevitable and that Jews should support it and become part of the movement. The 150 leaders present gave him a

cool reception, reflecting continuing hostility toward the idea.

A number of issues involving the media arose during the year. The Montreal newspaper *La Presse* apologized for a front-page cartoon linking Richler and Hitler that appeared in October. In November, Montreal broadcaster Claude Jasmin described Hassidic Jews as racist during a broadcast. Earlier in the year, he had referred to Jews as "racists . . . especially practicing Jews." Both CJC and B'nai Brith were sharply critical of the incidents.

In other developments, Ontario finally decided to allow Sunday shopping, thereby concluding a lengthy battle that involved Sabbath observers, among others. Manitoba decided to abolish prayer in the schools. In Toronto, in April, an observant lawyer's request to adjourn a court proceeding late on Friday afternoon was denied. Bert Raphael, president of the Jewish Civil Rights Educational Foundation of Canada, declared that "this shows that anti-Semitism is alive and well in Toronto in 1992." The Quebec government's failure to provide kosher food to Jewish prison inmates provoked some internal conflict between Lubavitch representatives and federation officials over how to deal with the problem.

The Quebec government and Federation CJA in Montreal cooperated in efforts to bring about 400 Jews from the former Soviet Union to settle in Quebec. Russian Jew Dmitri Berman was finally able to leave the Canadian embassy in Moscow after many months of trying to avoid what he regarded as an unfair prosecution. He then was able to go to Israel.

## *Religion*

The Conservative movement faced serious disaffection within the Toronto rabbinate. Canadian Jewry in general is somewhat more traditional in patterns of religious observance and synagogue practices than American Jewry, and the Toronto members of the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly (RA) had strong reservations about the direction of the movement, especially in terms of egalitarianism. At a meeting of the Ontario Region of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism in Richmond Hill in June, rabbis Erwin Schild and Benjamin Friedberg criticized recent developments within their movement. Rabbi Schild expressed the view that "we seem to have lost our sense of direction and are steering by the winds of change rather than tradition." Rabbi Friedberg added that "instead of teaching Halakhah, we're trying to change it. We're watering things down." A threat by several rabbis to withdraw from the RA, at a meeting of the 18 RA members in Ontario held later in June, would have replicated an earlier split by the Conservative cantors of the Toronto area. According to Rabbi Wayne Allen, the regional chairman, among the issues that motivated the rabbis were ideology, decision-making processes, and the general direction of the movement. Rabbi Lawrence Troster said that the immediate stimulus for withdrawal was the adoption earlier in the year by the movement's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of resolutions dealing with gender equality, homosexuality, and human sexuality.

An August visit to the discontented rabbis by Rabbi Joel Meyers, executive vice-president of the RA, quieted things briefly, although Rabbi Allen reported continued unhappiness among many of his members. There were reports that several rabbis would join the rabbinic fellowship of the Union for Traditional Judaism (UTJ). Then Rabbi Allen resigned as regional chairman at the end of August, stating that "the gap is irreparable. There's no going back." In an effort to keep the dissident Toronto rabbis within the fold, Chancellor Ismar Schorsch of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America visited Toronto in December. He warned his colleagues not to join the UTJ, which he described as "marginal." He added, "We need the Yiddishkeit of Toronto."

Despite frantic efforts to raise necessary funds, the Conservative Shaareh Haim Synagogue, in the Toronto suburb of Richmond Hill, was forced to close in June. A Reform congregation, Rodeph Shalom, that had served the Montreal suburb of Dollard des Ormeaux for 26 years, decided to close after its membership had dwindled to only 38. It sold its building to a new Sephardic congregation and donated its ritual articles to the Reform movement, after holding its last service in July. Meanwhile, approximately 300 gays formed a new synagogue in Toronto, Congregation Keshet Shalom. In total there were approximately 65 Orthodox, 10 Conservative, and 10 Reform synagogues in Toronto. The new Vancouver Traditional Congregation decided to affiliate with the UTJ and to restrict the role of women in the service. The leadership of the new synagogue tried to establish a middle ground between contemporary Orthodox and Conservative practice, exemplified by distinct sections for separate and mixed seating.

Five medical doctors in the Toronto-Hamilton area became the first Reform Jews to be certified as *mohelim* (ritual circumcisers) by the Berit Milah Board of Reform Judaism. Quebec's newly revised Civil Code removed from religious congregations the responsibility to register births and deaths for official state purposes.

## Culture

The 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain was commemorated in Montreal by the yearlong series of events known as Sepharad '92, which was jointly sponsored by Federation CJA and the Communauté Sépharade du Québec (CSQ) in an effort to enhance the appreciation of Sephardic Jewish culture. The events included an exhibition of the works of the painter Raphael Abecassis entitled "*De l'Exil à aujourd'hui*" (From the Exile to Today), a special Mimouna celebration at the end of Passover, lectures, a film series, puppet workshops, and a photographic exhibit about the Jews of Morocco. An exhibit produced by the Spanish Foreign Ministry was shown in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, and several U.S. cities.

The Stars of the Ester Kaminska Theater from Warsaw made their first Canadian appearance, presenting *The Joys of Yiddish* in Toronto in June. The same month, Yiddish theater director Dora Wasserman and French-Canadian playwright Michel

Tremblay collaborated on a production of a Yiddish translation of Tremblay's *Les Belles Soeurs* (The Beautiful Sisters) in Montreal. A new film by Simcha Jacobovici, *The Sephardim—A Passion for Life*, traces the Sephardic odyssey since the expulsion of 1492. The National Film Board's documentary *Des lumières dans la grande noirceur* (A Vision in the Darkness) tells the story of Lea Roback, a political activist, trade unionist, and feminist looking back on her accomplishments at the age of 89.

Srul Irving Glick's symphonic poem "The Reawakening" had its premiere by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, under guest conductor Victor Feldbrill, in January. Another new Glick composition, "Artist's Life: A Portrait in Six Poems," is based on the work of the late Yiddish poet Rochel Korn. Its premiere was in Montreal in November. The Hazzan Mendelson Music Foundation of Montreal sponsored an International Jewish Song Competition in November. Some 170 songs were entered, with the top 15 being performed at the competition. Five songs, written by artists from England, Canada, the United States, Australia, and Israel, won prizes.

Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, established a chair in Jewish studies. The first professor to hold the chair is Reena Zeidman, a specialist in rabbinics. Prof. Emil Fackenheim returned to Toronto from his home in Jerusalem to speak at a symposium on the occasion of his 75th birthday in March. He stressed the importance of the Holocaust and the Six Day War as formative events in his intellectual development.

Montreal's Saidye Bronfman Center, dedicated to the arts, celebrated its 25th anniversary in February with a gala evening of ballet and musical presentations. "Tur Malka" (Royal Mountain, in Aramaic), an exhibition commemorating 200 years of Jewish life in Montreal, opened in May at the Jewish Public Library. In a lecture on the Jewish experience in Canada, in April, in Montreal, Prof. Irving Abella of York University described what he considered to be the golden age of Canadian Jewry, the 1840s, when Jews were in the vanguard of the fight for human rights. Turning to the present, he observed that "Canadian Jews are the envy of every Jewish community in the world. . . ."

## *Publications*

Gerald Tulchinsky's *Taking Root: The Origins of the Canadian Jewish Community* traces the development of the community from 1760 to 1920, trying to distinguish the Canadian experience from the American. The fact that Canada was more likely than the United States to foster separate ethnic identities helped maintain a more intense Jewish life and a strong commitment to Zionism.

Ruth Wisse confronts controversial contemporary issues in *If I Am Not for Myself: The Liberal Betrayal of the Jews*, in which she argues that Israel's well-being is endangered by the guilt of Jewish liberals in both Israel and the Diaspora, at a time when Arab hostility still constitutes a danger and anti-Semitism has taken on new forms.

*The Stones That Speak*, by David Rome and Jacques Langlais, chronicles two

centuries of the "common history" of Jews and French Québécois and asserts that, despite historical and contemporary tensions, Quebec has been a hospitable place for Jews to live. In contrast, Mordecai Richler's *Oh Canada! Oh Quebec! Requiem for a Divided Country* accentuates the negative aspects of Quebec nationalism, especially the language laws of the last 15 years.

The theme of anti-Semitism in Quebec is documented in much greater detail in *Le traître et le Juif: Lionel Groulx, Le Devoir et le délire du nationalisme d'extrême-droite dans la province de Québec, 1929–1939* (The Traitor and the Jew: Lionel Groulx, *Le Devoir*, and the Development of Extreme Right-Wing Nationalism in the Province of Quebec, 1929–1939) by Esther Delisle. She focuses on the influential daily newspaper *Le Devoir*, citing over 1,000 anti-Semitic articles, many on the front page and many written by Groulx, the father of modern Quebec nationalism. Alan Davies edited *Antisemitism in Canada: History and Interpretation*.

Other nonfiction works published during the year included *The Jews in a Polish Private Town: The Case of Opatow in the Eighteenth Century* by Gershon Hundert, which won the J.I. Segal Award from the Jewish Public Library in Montreal; *Que sais-je? Les partis religieux en Israel* by Julien Bauer; *Itinéraires sépharades 1492–1992* by Yossi Levy and Yolande Cohen; *Unholy Alliances* by Warren Kinsella, which demonstrates how Libya funds right-wing and anti-Semitic groups in Canada; *The Un-Canadians* by Len Scher, the story of the harassment of leftists by government agencies during the McCarthy period; *Religion and Culture in Jewish Family Law* by John Syrtash; *Canadian Families in Transition* by Ben and Rachel Schlesinger; *Fackenheim: German Philosophy and Jewish Thought*, a festschrift in honor of the philosopher's 75th birthday, edited by Louis Greenspan and Graeme Nicholson; and *Phoenix from the Ashes* by Saul Levine.

Among new works of fiction were *Ship of the Hunted* by Yehuda Elberg; *The Number Game* by Abraham Boyarsky; and a work based on the life of a Jewish pioneer, *Aaron Hart: Sieur de Becancour/La Vie Mouvementée du Premier Juif Etabli au Québec au XVIIIe Siècle* by Michel Solomon. New works of poetry included Ray Shankman's *For Love of the Wind*, Shel Krakofsky's *The Reversible Coat*, and Henry Pollack's *The He and the She of It*. Solly Levy published a book of songs, plays, and poetry entitled *Those Were the Days*. The book was written in Haquetia, a language spoken by Spanish Jews before the expulsion.

New reference books included David Mendel Harduf's *English-Yiddish, Yiddish-English Dictionary*, volume 4. The feminist quarterly *Fireweed* devoted its volume 35 to the topic of Jewish women. It was the first collection of feminist Jewish writings published in Canada.

Marianne Langner Zeitlin won the City of Toronto Book Award for her novel *Next of Kin*. Rabbi Gedalia Felder won the Penina Rubinoff Memorial Prize in Biblical and Rabbinic Scholarship posthumously for *Yesodai Yeshurun: A Collection of Comments and Notes on Maseches Avos*.

## Personalia

Judge Rosalie Silberman Abella was appointed to the Ontario Court of Appeal, that province's highest court. Other judicial appointments included Joel Guberman to the Quebec court and Sheila Ray to the Ontario criminal court. Ray is the first Sephardi Jew to serve as a judge in Ontario. Jacqueline Holzman was elected mayor of Ottawa, the first Jewish woman to hold that position. Ruth Wisse left McGill University to inaugurate a new chair in Yiddish studies at Harvard University, and Cheryl Jaffee became curator of the Jacob M. Lowy Collection of Hebraica and Judaica at the National Library. Bernard Dolansky was elected president of the Canadian Dental Association. Dror Zeigerman was appointed consul general of Israel in Toronto, succeeding Benjamin Abileah.

Irwin Cotler was appointed to the Order of Canada; the Order of Ontario was conferred on Rose Wolfe and Harry Rasky and the Order of British Columbia on Joseph Segal. Dorothy Reitman received the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case for her work to achieve equality for women. Bert Raphael was awarded the Law Society Medal by the Ontario bar association. King Hassan II of Morocco conferred the Al Istihqaq Al-Watan Medal, one of his country's highest honors, on Simon Keslassy. Dr. Ken Rosenthal won the Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research Industry Research Award.

Within the community, Irving Abella and Charles Zaionz were elected president and chairman of the national executive of the Canadian Jewish Congress. Other new CJC leaders include Gerda Frieberg as chairwoman of the Ontario Region and Manuel Shacter as her counterpart in Quebec. Rabbi Allan Nadler was appointed research director of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York, and Rabbi Howard Joseph became president of the Canadian Christian-Jewish Consultation. Gabe Nachman was elected president of B'nai Brith Canada, and Gerald Halbert became president of UIA Canada. Manuel Prutschi added the job of executive director of the Ontario Region of CJC to his community-relations job there. George Wasserstein became chairman of the National Budgeting Conference.

Among leading Jews who died in 1992 were the following: Florence Hutner, former executive director of the United Jewish Welfare Fund and the first woman to head a major Jewish organization in Canada, in January, aged 84; Dr. Martin Fischer, psychiatrist, in January, aged 78; Samuel Lewin, a longtime official of CJC, in February, aged 80; Barbara Frum, one of Canada's leading broadcast journalists, in March, aged 54; Jack Cowan, a founder of *Canadian Jewish Outlook* and former president of the United Jewish People's Order, in March, aged 91; Harry Orlinsky, eminent Bible scholar, in April, aged 84; Henry Blatt, founding president of B'nai Brith Canada, in April, aged 81; Dave Stitz, community leader, in April, aged 66; Cecil Linder, acclaimed actor, in April, aged 71; Hy Fogelman, community professional, in May, aged 66; Joseph Diamond, noted educator and founder of the Jewish Teachers Seminary, in May, aged 87; Sam Malmed, a one-man *bikur holim* society, in May, aged 95; Max Frieberg, a leader of Herut-Likud Canada, in June, aged 70;

Louis Soupcoff, community activist, in June, aged 78; David Weiss, social worker, in July, aged 77; Rabbi Mordechai Weinberg, dean of Yeshiva Gedolah Mercas Hatorah, in July, aged 63; Sam Berger, owner of a professional sports team and former president of the Canadian Football League, in August, aged 92; Jaan Saber, engineering professor, in August, aged 46; Faye Tanenbaum, philanthropist, in September, aged 89; Jack Burke, pioneer educator, in October, aged 77; Joseph Tanenbaum, businessman and noted philanthropist, in November, aged 87; Jacob Rabinovitch, Yiddish journalist, in November, aged 83; Morris Lax, president of the Shiloh Institutions for Israel, in December, aged 71; and Rabbi Eli Bohnen, former president of the Rabbinical Assembly, in December, aged 83.

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