

Western Europe

GREAT BRITAIN

BY THE END of the period under review (July 1, 1953, through June 30, 1954) Sir Winston Churchill's Conservative government had been in office for almost three years. The three main domestic promises of the government had all been fulfilled by the end of June 1954—a sharp rise in housing construction, the abolition of the last remnants of food rationing, and the stabilization of the pound sterling. The British economy (except for the coal industry) was prosperous, and Britain's international position was significantly reinforced, despite disagreement with the United States on Far Eastern policy.

Foreign Policy Issues

Two foreign policy questions were of special interest to Jews: the problem of Suez, and German rearmament. British evacuation of the Suez Canal area had been the subject of intermittent negotiation between successive British and Egyptian governments since 1946. This negotiation was successfully concluded in Cairo, on July 27, 1954, and a memorandum of agreement was signed under which the 80,000 British troops constituting the garrison were to depart within twenty months. This force was to be replaced by approximately 4,000 civilian technicians from Britain, who would maintain the base in association with Egyptians under the terms of a new Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of seven years duration. Approximately forty right-wing Conservative members of Parliament condemned the agreement as a policy of "scuttle" that would leave this vital artery an undefended vacuum. They also contended that the negotiating Egyptian leaders were not a representative government and, in the event of their downfall, the agreement would not be honored by their successors. Finally, they expressed the fear (and in this opinion they were supported by the Labor Party) that the agreement contained no provision for the security of Israel, a state that must now suffer a grave military disadvantage by the transfer of the base to Egyptian hands. However, the agreement was approved with the support of the Labor Party and most of the Conservatives.

The rearmament of the German Federal Republic (Western Germany), and its integration within the European Defense Community, was officially endorsed by both the Conservative and Labor Parties during the year under review. Opinion throughout Great Britain, however, viewed the prospect with reluctance. The powerful right-wing Beaverbrook press conducted a

campaign against this policy, while Aneurin Bevan succeeded in getting the support of almost half the Labor Party for his campaign to reverse the party's position in favor of German rearmament. Within the Trades Union Congress seven unions, with a block strength of 2,170,000 votes, made known their support of official Labor policy, and fourteen unions, with a block strength of 1,922,000 votes, opposed it. Fifty-eight constituency Labor groups entered resolutions against German rearmament, with only one in support, for the Labor Party annual conference due to be held in September 1954. This indicated the bewilderment and indecision within the Labor Party on this issue.

ATTITUDE OF JEWISH GROUPS

A combined subcommittee of the foreign affairs and defense committees of the Board of Deputies of British Jews discussed the Jewish attitude to German rearmament, and reported on the subject to the Board of Deputies on November 15, 1953. "While feeling deep apprehension of the effects of German rearmament as a menace to democratic progress and world peace, it was a material fact in the situation that such rearmament was the accepted policy of the British and United States governments. It had also to be borne in mind that the Soviet Union have in effect rearmed Eastern Germany. In these circumstances it was felt that the community would not be served by launching a campaign [against rearmament] at present." This recommendation was accepted by a majority of deputies.

Jewish Population

There were no appreciable changes in the Jewish population of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, through either inter-city or overseas migration. It was believed to number approximately 450,000, or 1.13 per cent of the total population. The economic situation continued good.

Discrimination and Anti-Semitism

As the result of a change in its ownership in February 1953, the weekly magazine *Truth*, previously the most influential vehicle of anti-Semitism in Great Britain, had by July 1953 completely changed its orientation. Although *Truth* had never enjoyed a wide circulation, its reputation as a financial organ was high, and it was generally obtainable in public libraries, clubs, and regimental messes. Until its purchase by the Staples Publishing Company, its assistant editor had been A. K. Chesterton, who had been Sir Oswald Mosley's right-hand man until they quarreled in 1939. Chesterton continued to ventilate his anti-Jewish opinions in the columns of *Truth*, although the magazine gave generous space to correspondents challenging its views, among them official Jewish spokesmen. The new proprietors announced at the time of the change of management that the magazine would no longer encourage an anti-racial attitude; and, in fact, ever since that

time *Truth* had maintained a high standard of fairness. A. K. Chesterton was now organizing a League of Empire Loyalists, with anti-Russian, anti-American, anti-Semitic coloration. The league accused the government of betraying the white members of the Commonwealth by its policy towards the colored races. Chesterton also purveyed these views in a privately-circulated sheet called *Candour*.

Some other notorious anti-Semites still survived, but their activities, while calling for vigilance, did not justify alarm. Mosley himself divided his time between Ireland and Paris. In addressing a public meeting in London's East End, he attacked the British Military Government in Germany for imprisoning his "very distinguished friend, Dr. [Werner] Naumann" (see p. 357). Mosley made no specific reference to Jews, but spoke of "alien powers" dominating Parliament and the City of London.

A statement on Israel-Jordan border incidents made on June 18, 1953, by General John Bagot Glubb, commandant of the Arab Legion, was the subject of a question in the House of Commons on July 13, 1953. Woodrow Wyatt (Labor) protested that the statement had not been confined to details of border incidents, but that Glubb had delivered himself of "an anti-Semitic tirade of an exceptionally offensive and unpleasant nature." Replying for the government, Minister of State Selwyn Lloyd disclosed that the Israel Ambassador had made representations to the British government on the subject; Lloyd insisted that General Glubb was responsible to the Jordan government whose servant he was. Glubb, Lloyd said, was not obliged to consult the British government, and the latter was not called upon to comment on his views.

Natinform (National Information Bureau), a body of Nazi sympathizers in Suffolk and Lancashire that had distributed anti-Semitic literature during 1952-53, was quiescent during 1953-54.

Community Organization

Steps towards improving the machinery for the presentation of a coordinated Anglo-Jewish viewpoint in the field of foreign affairs were taken during the year. The three major bodies concerned—the Board of Deputies, the Anglo-Jewish Association (AJA), and the World Jewish Congress (British Section)—all held this to be highly desirable. A proposal for such coordination was prepared by the Board of Deputies and debated at the board's meeting of March 14, 1954. In July 1954 it was still under discussion. Although little of the negotiations involved had come into the open, spokesmen of the Anglo-Jewish Association and the World Jewish Congress expressly welcomed the Board's moves during June 1954 and five communal institutions—the Board itself, the AJA, the British sections of the World Jewish Congress, the Agudas Israel, and the World Union of Progressive Judaism—had consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Among the board's proposals was that each of the other organizations should have its representatives attend meetings of the Board of Deputies foreign affairs committee.

The second Conference of Commonwealth Communities, convened by the Board of Deputies, took place in London, June 20-25, 1954. Both participants and observers felt that, while the exchange of views on subjects of religious and communal organization, ritual slaughter, defense, and international affairs had been of value, a great opportunity to isolate and cure imperfections in communal structure had not been sufficiently exploited.

The triennial conference of the International Council of Jewish Women took place from May 24-27, 1954. The conference passed resolutions urging its affiliate organizations "to give their support to the continuing social, economic, and cultural upbuilding of Israel"; "to foster and promote the study of Judaism . . . and to cooperate with other groups, governmental and voluntary, to maintain and strengthen Jewish life"; "to encourage members to participate fully in all phases of communal, national, and international activities that will improve human relationships"; "to urge governments to support and to implement the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights"; and "to work for the ratification and support of the Genocide Convention."

Religious Activities

Female members of all the constituent synagogues of the United Synagogue were finally granted the franchise (limited to the right to vote, but not to stand for office) at a combined meeting of the council of the United Synagogue and delegates from its provincial synagogues held in London on April 30, 1954. The proposal had been the subject of controversy for many years (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1951 [Vol. 52], p. 272), but the principle had been accepted by the United Synagogue only in 1951. Only a minute number of women chose to exercise their hard-won privilege at the elections of synagogue officers which took place in 1954.

The United Synagogue, incorporated by act of Parliament in 1870, was responsible for the religious needs of at least 30,000 families within the London area. It decided on February 21, 1954, to re-examine the method of ministerial appointments, as differences had recently arisen between its ministerial appointments committee, which made recommendations to constituent synagogues, and certain synagogues which did not invariably find its recommendations acceptable.

With the relaxation by the government of building restrictions, the construction of several new synagogues had been planned by July 1954. Two of these were to serve families in west and northwest London, an area where the Jewish population had been rapidly increasing at the expense of east and northeast London. The Federation of Synagogues, which was largely based upon the East End, and was smaller in scope and more strictly Orthodox than the United Synagogue, announced plans on November 30, 1953, for the amalgamation of small and half-empty synagogues in that locality.

RITUAL SLAUGHTER

The slaughter of animals according to the Jewish ritual had been authorized in Britain since the Resettlement of 1656. No law forbidding *shechita* had ever been passed, despite attempts over the years to secure its abolition. There were no serious attacks upon *shechita* during the period under review. On the contrary, during the debate in Parliament on the Slaughter of Animals (Amendment) Bill, introduced on January 29, 1954, specific assurances on *shechita* were given; R. R. Stokes (Labor) stated that he had himself witnessed the kosher killing of animals, and paid tribute to "the Jews for the very thorough way they carry out their ritual slaughter."

After almost fifteen years of rationing, the free sale of meat was finally allowed in Britain on July 4, 1954. This meant that the organization of kosher food supplies was now once more in the hands of the community itself, through the regional Shechita boards and the ecclesiastical authorities. The changeover proved no simple task for these institutions, especially as the Jewish public, having long suffered from a dearth of kosher meat without possibility of redress, were now more critical of steps taken to insure adequate supplies of meat.

Jewish Education

A new chapter for Jewish education opened as a result of the agreement concluded on May 11, 1954, between the London Board of Jewish Religious Education on the one hand, and the Jewish Secondary Schools Movement and the Jews Day Schools Trust, on the other. The agreement ended a three-year controversy (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1953 [Vol. 54], p. 236-37), which arose when the latter two bodies lodged objections which prevented a scheme for urgently required school construction from receiving the approval of the ministry of education. Considerable funds held by the London Board of Jewish Religious Education had lain idle because they represented the assets of schools which had become defunct as a result of World War II, and could only be used if the ministry were satisfied there was no objection. Under the terms of the new agreement, all viewpoints were to be represented in a governing body to utilize these funds for the building of new schools, both primary and secondary, and the improvement of existing schools. It was largely the mediation of Edmund and Anthony de Rothschild, whose family had been associated with free Jewish education in past generations, that brought about the agreement.

According to statistics published by Jacob Braude in the [London] *Jewish Chronicle* of February 26, 1954, 4,400 children were at that time enrolled in Jewish day schools in London, Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham. (This figure did not include the small number attending private boarding schools.) Braude estimated that the 2,700 students attending the London schools represented a 20 per cent increase over the 1952 figure. Of the twenty-three schools he named, ten were state-aided, and education in them was free.

Jews College, the principal institution in the British Commonwealth for training rabbis, had an enrollment of forty-eight students during 1953-54, beside eight research students preparing for higher degrees.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The British government on the whole continued its policy of conciliating its Arab allies without taking definite sides in the Arab-Israel conflict. On October 16, 1953, the Foreign Office condemned the Israel action at Kibya (*see* p. 277) in exceptionally strong terms: "This attack constituted the gravest violation so far of the terms of the Armistice Agreement and will only endanger peace in the area. Her Majesty's Ambassador in Tel Aviv has been instructed to express to the Israel government the horror of Her Majesty's Government at this apparently calculated attack." On October 26, 1953, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden indicated in the House of Commons that the government thought of the Kibya affair in the context of Arab-Israel tension as a whole, and not as an isolated incident. This was the British policy in subsequent United Nations discussions.

The Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland consisted during 1954 of 292 Zionist societies, of which 142 were affiliated groups of women, 29 were Labor Poale Zion branches, 33 belonged to Hechalutz, and 19 to Zionist youth. Also affiliated were 119 synagogues and 17 fraternal orders. All these groups represented a total membership of approximately 30,000. A decreasing number of British Jews were emigrating to Israel. At a conference of British settlers in Haifa on June 25, 1954, Giora Josephthal, Jewish Agency treasurer, reported that 508 British Jews had emigrated to Israel in 1950; 300 in 1951; 230 in 1952; 140 in 1953; and only 35 during the first half of 1954.

A brief controversy arose within the Zionist Federation when a group led by Fredman Ashe Lincoln and affiliated with the General Zionist Party in Israel attempted unsuccessfully to gain power within the Zionist Federation. Ashe Lincoln's bid for power, which was supported by the four General Zionist members of Israel's cabinet, was on the grounds that the old Zionist Federation leaders were committed to the left wing in Israel. At the Zionist Federation annual conference on April 4, 1954, Ashe Lincoln was defeated in his attempt to secure election as chairman.

FUND RAISING

The annual Joint Palestine Appeal was inaugurated in February 1954 by Golda Myerson, Israel's Minister of Labor. As in previous years, Sir Simon Marks was president and J. Edward Sieff chairman. It was generally anticipated that the Appeal would produce a sum equal to that of 1953, when £1,206,000 (\$3,376,800) was raised from 29,507 contributors. Except for £35,000 (\$98,000) retained in Britain for educational grants, all funds raised were remitted to Israel. Campaign expenses were 5 per cent. Other Israel institutions (Children and Youth Aliyah, the Hebrew University in Jeru-

salem, the Magen David Adom, Anti-Tuberculosis League, Jerusalem Baby Home, and United Jewish Relief Appeal) conducted separate campaigns, with the Haifa Technion as a newcomer to the fund-raising scene. In September 1954, the British government refused permission for an Israel Bond Drive in Britain, on the grounds that Great Britain's current policy was to restrict recourse to the London capital markets to Commonwealth countries.

Cultural Activities

Jewish culture, when expressed, played a significant and appreciated role within the wider cultural development of Great Britain during the period under review. On the British Broadcasting Corporation's Third Program there was a constant recurrence of Jewish themes treated to suit the requirements of an exacting audience. These included Cecil Roth's *The King and the Cabbalist*, described as a piece of historical detective work, a series of talks on Jewish mysticism by Rabbi Alexander Altmann, and for the first time in Britain a broadcast of Rocca's opera *Il Dibbuc*, based on S. Anski's Yiddish play. Various aspects of Israel, as well as Biblical subjects, were discussed.

Jewish Book Week (January 9-16, 1954), a television examination of Judaism (May 10, 1954) as part of the *Men Seeking God* programs, an important collection of essays on *The Bible Described by Christian Scholars*, issued in June 1954 under the aegis of the *London Times*, and a Bible exhibition at the British Museum during August 1953, were all among the cultural events worthy of record.

Books with Jewish associations published during the year included: *The Man Who Never Was*, by Ewen Montagu; *A Kid for Two Farthings*, by Wolf Mankowitz (whose one-act play *The Bespoke Overcoat*, also attracted favorable notice); *More for Timothy*, by Victor Gollancz; *To the Quayside*, by Louis Golding; *To Next Year in Jerusalem*, by David Marcus; *The Final Solution*, by Gerald Reitlinger; *The Music of the Jews*, by Aron Marko Rothmuller; *End of an Exile*, by James Parkes; *Einstein*, by Antonina Vallentin; *A Passage in the Night*, by Sholem Asch; *The Life and Times of General Two-Gun Cohen*, by Charles Drage; and *The Nazarene Gospel Restored*, by Joshua Podro and Robert Graves.

Personalia

Sholem Asch settled in London during the year. Jacob Epstein, sculptor, and Prof. Francis Simon, scientist, received knighthoods, Dr. Hans Krebs was awarded the Nobel prize for medicine, and Leslie Hore-Belisha was made a baron. Lord Reading became minister of state in the Foreign Office, and Victor Mishcon chairman of the London County Council.

The death of Prof. Selig Brodetsky (May 18, 1954) deprived the community of its foremost Zionist personality, long a member of the Jewish Agency

executive and a former president of the Board of Deputies. Other losses were Frank Samuel (February 25, 1954), president of the United Synagogue (succeeded in this office by Ewen Montagu); Paul Emden (August 17, 1953), noted historian; Rabbi Israel Mattuck (April 4, 1954), a leader of the Liberal Jewish movement in England; Saemy Japhet (February 2, 1954), prominent London banker and philanthropist; and Col. Thomas Sebag-Montefiore (June 11, 1954), aviation pioneer, distinguished soldier, and leader of the British Sephardic community.

BARNET LITVINOFF

FRANCE

IN JUNE 1954, military defeat in Indo-China, sharply brought home by the fall of Dienbienphu, toppled from office the year-old government of Joseph Laniel. He was succeeded by the Radical Socialist deputy Pierre Mendès-France. Laniel's government had been a "do-nothing" government. Mendès-France made a "contract" with parliament that he would bring France an honorable peace in Indo-China within four weeks, or resign; he promised to tackle the other major problems facing the country in quick succession.

When the new premier took office, France's prestige was at its lowest since the end of the war. Irritated allies were insisting on a clear answer as to whether or not France would join the European Defense Community. The French position in Morocco and Tunisia had deteriorated seriously; there was open skirmishing between French troops and the *fellaghas* of Tunisia. At home, France's economy had achieved a precarious stability during the year, but was making little progress. Protectionist policies and cartels kept the prices of French products too high for world markets; the wages of French workmen were too low to permit a flourishing internal market.

A peace treaty for Indo-China was signed at Geneva on July 20, 1954, within hours of the deadline Mendès-France had set. There was no rejoicing in France; the defeat was bitter. But to the man in the street it represented a political victory for Mendès-France, and it meant the end of a war into which France had been pouring men and money uselessly for eight years. Within a fortnight Mendès-France made a dramatic flight to Tunisia and promised that country full internal autonomy, bettering relations significantly. At home, the Chamber of Deputies granted him broader economic powers than any other premier had received since World War II, on his promise to use them sparingly.

This vigorous approach, contrasted with the dilatory tactics of his predecessors, evoked a wave of enthusiasm in the country, particularly among younger Frenchmen. Observers compared the impact of the Mendès-France government with that of Franklin D. Roosevelt's first hundred days in 1933.

Considerable acrimony arose, however, over Mendès-France's handling of France's bitterest political problem, the European Defense Community

(EDC). On the one hand was the great French fear of the West German rearmament that EDC entailed. On the other, EDC's supporters argued that it was the only way to control German rearmament. Although he insisted that the French parliament must make a decision, Mendès-France himself and his cabinet abstained from doing so, causing strong criticism and charges that the premier was opposed to a real Western alliance. On August 30, by a vote of 319 to 264, the French Assembly killed EDC by adopting a motion to table discussion on it indefinitely.

At the London Conference early in October 1954, however, Mendès-France committed his government to a new pact drawn up by France and eight other Western powers as a substitute for EDC. This pact called for less surrender of French national sovereignty than EDC, was based on greater British participation in the maintenance of a Western army, and permitted the rearmament of twelve West German divisions under certain controls.

France chose a new president during the year under review, the unknown René Coty, a senator from Le Havre, replacing Socialist veteran Vincent Auriol, for a seven-year term. Many Jews besides Mendès-France played an important role in French politics. Jules Moch represented France at the United Nations' Disarmament Commission; Daniel Mayer was chairman of the foreign affairs committee of the French parliament. Both fought the European Defense Community so vigorously, essentially because of the issue of German rearmament, that they were expelled by the Socialist Party for violation of party discipline. For the same reason, the Mouvement Républicain Populaire took action against Senator Leo Hamon. One of the most effective supporters of EDC in parliament was the Radical Socialist deputy and former French premier, René Mayer. Henri Ulver was minister of industry and commerce in the Mendès-France cabinet. Professor René Cassin, president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, was one of the nation's leading judicial figures.

Mendès-France and Anti-Semitism

Mendès-France had never been active in Jewish community life in France; neither had he made any secret of his Jewishness. He was the third Jew to occupy the French premiership since the war, the others being Léon Blum and René Mayer. The general feeling among Jews was one of pride when Mendès-France took office, but some did not relish the idea of a co-religionist becoming premier at a time when the government had to make crucial decisions. The epithet "dirty Jew" was muttered in the halls of the French parliament on the day of Mendès-France's investiture—by Jacques Duclos, a French Communist leader, infuriated by Mendès-France's declaration that he would not accept office if he did not attain a majority without the ninety-six votes of the Communists.

When Mendès-France failed by thirteen votes to achieve the premiership in 1953, leading French papers reported that anti-Semitism had played a role—but a very minor one—in his defeat. Again, when he sought the office in 1954, "a certain anti-Semitism was not absent" in the lobbying against

him, according to the leading French afternoon paper, *Le Monde*. After his investiture, several papers commented on a nuanced anti-Semitism directed not so much against Mendès-France himself, in the face of his overwhelming early popularity, as against Jews known to be close advisers of his, like Jean Jacques Servan-Schreiber, a youthful editor of the weekly paper *L'Express*, and Georges Boris, a journalist-economist who had also served under Léon Blum.

There was nothing nuanced, however, about the attacks on Mendès-France by the two major anti-Semitic weeklies in France, *Aspects de la France* and *Rivarol*. *Aspects de la France* regarded Mendès-France's accession to power as a tragedy for France equal to that of Waterloo. *Rivarol* accused him of deliberately dismembering what remained of French power in the world, on behalf of Moscow.

Aside from these two papers, only the publications of a scattering of little splinter groups showed anti-Semitic tendencies. The French sections of the neo-Nazi international (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 193-94) had no impact worth mentioning. The Jewish community was increasingly disturbed, however, because it felt that Jewish candidates for advanced medical degrees were being discriminated against; and two doctors on the examining jury resigned in protest in May 1954 against what they felt to be systematic rejection of Jews.

War Crimes and German Rearmament

Ten years after the end of World War II there were still frequent and current reminders for Jews in France of the horrors imposed by Nazi Germany. Prominently featured in French papers for long periods of the year under review (July 1, 1953, through June 30, 1954) was the trial of SS General Karl Oberg, known as the Butcher of Paris, and his adjutant, SS Colonel Helmuth Knochen. In the spring of 1954 the case against these two German war criminals ended in a mistrial on a technicality. After a second trial they were sentenced to death by a military tribunal in October 1954, and appealed. An entire chapter of the 241-page indictment against Oberg and his adjutant dealt with their persecution of Jews and their role in the deportation of 120,000 French Jews to the death camps.

Jewish organizations were aroused, too, by the release on April 17, 1954, of Otto Abetz, who as German governor of Paris had expedited Jewish deportations. On June 30, 1954, the notorious anti-Semite Maurice Bardèche went to prison, after the failure of his appeals against a one-year sentence passed on him by a French court of appeals in February 1952 for "apology for murder" in his book *Nuremberg, ou La terre promise*, in which he had sought to justify German annihilation of Jews. But a fortnight after he went to prison Bardèche was free again, thanks to a presidential amnesty on Bastille Day, July 14, 1954; Bardèche continued his monthly neo-Nazi publication, *Défense de L'Occident*.

The Jewish community in France was overwhelmingly against any rearmament of Germany. Packed commemorative services for Jewish victims of

Nazism—at the Great Synagogue La Victoire, at the Père Lachaise cemetery, and at the Velodrome d'Hiver, on the anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising (April 12, 1943)—were but a few of the occasions on which Jewry in France voiced its opposition during the year under review. At the same time, the Jewish community was chary of Communist attempts to capitalize on this sentiment for political purposes. In January 1954 an effort to establish a Jewish Action Committee Against German Rearmament was rejected because, according to the daily French-language Jewish press service *Informations*, "the only organizations which are represented on it—it must be noted—are Communist or fellow-traveler groups." In April 1954, the Jewish Communist organization, L'Union des Juifs pour la Résistance et l'Entra'aide, urged the Fédération Sioniste de France to join in a "common Jewish front" against German rearmament, and was rebuffed.

Jewish Population

The Jewish population in France—usually estimated at 300,000 to 350,000—was almost completely stable during the year under review. Emigration hit a low point; in 1953–54 the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) had moved 1,408 persons from France to other lands, primarily the United States. Much of this movement had been under now-expired United States displaced persons (DP) legislation; the rate of future movement would be dependent, to a considerable extent, on the application of the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, but it was still too early to tell what the new rate of migration to the United States might be under this law. The JDC Migration Service and HIAS, merged together under the name United HIAS during the year under review, established their European headquarters in Paris in July 1954.

Only about eighty persons migrated to Israel during the year. In 1952–53 there had been several hundred "returnees" from Israel to France; this movement came to an end during 1953–54, thirty-four of the "returnees" choosing to return to Israel once again when the Jewish Agency offered them transportation back. There was no immigration into France to speak of; Eastern Europe, the traditional source of "freshening" of the French Jewish population, was completely closed off.

There was one exception to this lack of movement: the continued entry into France of Jews from North Africa, numbering perhaps 2,000 during the year. Nobody had any firm idea how large this immigration was. A report of French Jewry's central fund-raising agency for welfare purposes, the Fonds Social Juif Unifié, commented that North African Jews were lost sight of because they were indistinguishable on the surface from the mass of Arabs coming into France. Furthermore, continued the report, "there exists no real center of attraction in the Jewish community in France around which these immigrants can regroup and integrate themselves, to lead what should be a Jewish life." Altogether, various guesses had it, some 10,000–15,000 North African Jews had entered France during the last decade, many of

them gravitating to the squalid slums of the Marais section of Paris' 4th Arrondissement, once noted for its aristocratic palaces, and to Montmartre.

There was something of a greater awakening, during the year under review, on the part of French Judaism to the plight of these Orthodox, usually pitifully poor, and unskilled immigrants. An expanded program of the Comité de Bienfaisance Israélite de Paris, attached to the Consistoire, assisted more than 2,500 North African Jews. In January 1954 the first community of Jews from North Africa in the Montmartre section was formed. This was a direct result of the growing influence of the Merkaz of Montmartre, a kindergarten Talmud Torah established in 1953 by the Conseil Représentatif du Judaïsme Traditionaliste de France to counteract Catholic proselytizing among North African Jewry through the distribution of food and clothing. In the fall of 1954, a primitive but functioning social and sport center was being established in St. Fons, an industrial suburb of Lyon, where a colony of some 2,000 North African Jews did the heavy work in the town's chemical plants.

Otherwise, there was no sign of change in the magnitude or location of France's Jewish population. About 180,000 Jews lived in Paris and its suburbs; some 50,000 to 60,000 could be found in the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, and an equal number were spread through another thirty cities and towns where there were more or less organized Jewish communities; finally, some 20,000 to 30,000 lived in small towns and villages where there was no organized Jewish life of any kind.

No figures were available, but the impression gained that assimilation was making its greatest inroads among the Eastern European element of the community, though one might have expected this group's more orthodox, Yiddish-speaking background to have been more resistant to assimilative tendencies than the defenses of native French Jews. Apparently driving for what they considered greater security, however, many immigrants—and particularly their children—felt they had to be more French than the French, and assimilated rapidly and completely. The loss of native French Jews, while continuing, was more by attrition: they gradually drifted away because they found no modern, positive pole of attraction in Jewish life. Roughly speaking, the Eastern European group (who had come into France on a large scale since 1910 and particularly after World War II) and the native French Jews were about equal in number.

Communal Organization and Activity

The year under review was a quiet but important one for Jewish life in France. There were no great issues to evoke Jewish consciousness and intense community activity, as the Finaly case had the year before (*see* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 183-87). But for a variety of reasons the Jewish community was ready to tend its own garden with a greater intensity than at any time since the end of the war. To an increasing extent Jewish institutions were seeking to forge—or were already testing—new means of strengthening Jewish community life, albeit on a small scale. They were

trying, with some success, new techniques of attracting members, and particularly young members. There was growing hope that, with the proper use of funds from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCA), the gradual decline of Jewish life in France because of assimilation and intermarriage could be checked. Except for the Communists, virtually every element in the heterogeneous Jewish community in France was represented in a sixteen-man Cultural Commission, which drew up and unanimously adopted a long-range blueprint for community improvement for submission to the CJMCA.

FUND RAISING

Central community planning around the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU) was now an accepted and operating feature of the French Jewish scene. Judged by the funds it collected, it is true, the impact of the FSJU was hardly greater than the year before. In September 1954 collections were only about 7,000,000 francs (\$20,000) ahead of September 1953, when a total of 157,000,000 francs (\$445,000) had been gathered for the year. The experience of the FSJU from 1952 onward, indeed, seemed to indicate that this figure would be a ceiling, give or take a few million francs, for Jewish fund raising for local needs in France. This meant that the community would have to look to outside sources—primarily the JDC—for about half the money it needed to maintain its welfare, education, and cultural services. During the year the FSJU gained 1,500 new donors—and lost an equal number of old ones. Yet, in many less tangible ways FSJU was having an ever greater impact on Jewish life in France. During the five years of its existence it had provided the first common meeting ground for all elements of the community, French-born Jews and Yiddish-speaking immigrants, Sephardim and Ashkenazim. Continuous contact had shown the thirty-five member organizations of the FSJU that it was possible to work together despite all differences of ideology. There had grown up around the FSJU a small but experienced staff of social workers. Prominent personalities, who previously had had little contact with Jewish life, were being drawn into the FSJU orbit. Visits to the provinces of France by well-known laymen like Guy de Rothschild, president of the FSJU, and by professional fund raisers and social workers, were creating a greater consciousness there both of Jewish needs and what could be done about them.

PROVINCIAL GROWTH

The gradual reawakening of the virtually moribund Jewish life in the provinces was one of the more encouraging developments of the year under review. The work of two rabbis was very important in this regard. Although the Consistoire Central de France, the officially recognized organ of French Jewry, and its Union des Associations Culturelles Israélite de France, theoretically united some fifty Jewish communities in metropolitan France and Algeria, their presence in the provinces in the past had often been more nominal than real. A series of pastoral visits by one of the co-Grand Rabbis

of France, Henri Schilli, to cities such as Toulouse, Troyes, Caen, and Nice, and to areas where there were no organized Jewish communities, gave more meaning to the existence of the Consistoire Central. As a result, there was improvement in Jewish religious education, three communities were furnished with spiritual heads, and the Consistoire was able to draw up a detailed plan for reactivating Jewish religious life in the most neglected regions.

Also active in the provinces was the youth chaplain appointed by the Consistoire the year before, Rabbi Jean Kling. A Jewish Youth Week was organized in Lyon May 9-16, 1954, in which all the separate Jewish youth movements in the city cooperated. A few weeks later it was the turn of Marseille. In September, the first two-day regional Jewish youth meeting in France was held in Lyon. Young men and women came from the smaller communities of Grenoble, Saint-Étienne, Roanne, and Clermont-Ferrand. One of the objectives of this meeting was to give the youth a wider circle of Jewish acquaintances of their own age than could be met in their own home towns, in the hope of preventing mixed marriages between Jews and non-Jews.

COMMUNAL SERVICE

There was also some lift in morale as community projects undertaken in previous years began to show concrete results. The first Jewish students' home in France, to house some ninety-six Jewish youth attending the University of Paris, was completed during the year under review, and a large-scale inauguration ceremony was planned for November 1954. This home, the achievement of the Comité de Bienfaisance Israélite de Paris, cost the French Jewish community about \$180,000. On a much smaller scale, but quite significant, was the fact that from the Centre-Educatif in Paris, headed by Isaac Pougatch, a first class consisting of six young women and one man being trained as educators and community workers went out to do a year's in-service training in childrens' homes. Twelve new students enrolled for the Centre's second class, strengthening the impression that it would be possible to form a cadre of Jewish professional workers to meet the needs of the community, if training were provided and the jobs were made attractive enough. The Kehillah and the Fédération des Sociétés Juives de France joined forces to found three new kindergartens in Paris. The Conseil Traditionaliste founded one in Versailles, and established a Jewish day camp for children who could not get away from Paris for a vacation.

CONFERENCE ON JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS

This variety of community efforts gained impetus during 1954 from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG). In 1953, the CJMCAG's first year, little was known about it or how it would function; the CJMCAG itself was still busy determining its modes of action. A few of the more alert organizations managed to get assistance from the CJMCAG, but no unified community plan of action was presented to it.

Important grants given to French institutions for 1954 were: \$64,500 to the Cercle Amicale et Foyer Ouvrière Juif, for the maintenance of institutions sheltering several hundred war orphans; \$18,500 to OSE France, for the medical care of Jewish victims of Nazism not covered by government social insurance; \$14,000 to the Ecole Aquiba, the Jewish day school in Strasbourg, for a new building, on condition that this sum would be matched by the local community. The Aix-Les-Bains and Lubavitcher *yeshivot* participated in the \$50,000 given for eleven European *yeshivot*; the Centre de Documentation Juive in Paris got funds to publish five volumes dealing with Jewish life under the German occupation; and the Société des Études Juives was given money for two issues of a magazine. Thus, in 1954 the CJMCAG was giving the French Jewish community funds equivalent to one-fourth of what French Jewry raised in its campaign; the community benefited even more substantially through funds coming from the CJMCAG than through the JDC.

In community planning for 1955 and the following years the assumption that there would be substantial CJMCAG funds played a key role. The CJMCAG seemed to have acted as a catalytic agent drawing forth every possible project for community improvement: in the field of culture and education 86 organizations submitted more than 3,000 separate requests totaling well over 2,000,000,000 francs, or \$6,000,000. It was a sign of the maturity of the French Jewish community, and the strength of the trend to joint planning, that there was unanimous agreement on presentation of a single plan asking for 105,000,000 francs (\$300,000), plus a request for a special appropriation to build a Jewish lycée in Paris to incorporate the three existing day schools eventually to cost 80,000,000 francs (\$230,000). There was, however, no single community channel for welfare and rehabilitation requests. Projects totaling 700,000,000 francs (\$2,000,000) were presented, but it was doubtful that many of them would be approved.

A special CJMCAG grant of \$300,000 was made in 1954 for the construction of a Tomb of the Unknown Jewish Martyr, not far from the Paris Hotel de Ville. The driving force behind this project was Isaac Schneersohn, energetic head of the Centre de Documentation Juive. There was much local objection to the construction of such a monument, however, on the grounds that the funds could be better used for more vital community needs.

Despite the signs of progress described above, the fundamental position of the Jewish community was still quite bad. Even the small gains stood out, indeed, because of the background against which they occurred. Many leading figures in French Jewish life were pessimistic, or at least doubtful, as to whether there was any future for Judaism in the country. Some figures tell part of the story: there was only one rabbi for every 7,000 Jews in France; the total number of donors to the FSJU was only 7,000; the Consistoire Central had only about 3,000 members. Altogether, President Guy de Rothschild estimated at the FSJU's fifth annual conference in March 1954, perhaps 25,000 Jews gave any sign of being touched by some form of Jewish community life. And, as ever, the pressure of the surrounding environment,

tolerant, democratic, imbued with a strong and attractive culture, made for assimilation.

Another important communal phenomenon that became apparent during the year under review was that the Eastern European element was losing some of its cohesiveness. Since the end of the war, the Eastern European group had been split in two ideologically. On the one side were the Jewish Communists; on the other were Jews of a Zionist, Socialist, or simply *landsmannschaft* orientation, in such organizations as the Fédération des Sociétés Juives de France and the Jewish Socialist Bund. Despite the fact that in 1953 a *kehillah* had been formed, with the intention of uniting all the non-Communist Eastern European groups, this *kehillah* had never been able to achieve its aims and was hamstrung by lack of financial means with which to carry on any effective large-scale program. In addition, during the year under review, Eastern European Jewry in France lost its two most important leaders. Marc Jarblum, former head of the Fédération des Sociétés Juives and the acknowledged head of Zionism in France for decades, went to live in Israel. Israel Jefroykin, a venerable and respected figure and founder and president of the Kehillah, died at the age of seventy on April 12, 1954. Thus the two organizations through which Eastern European Jewry found its greatest expression were in effect leaderless. Aggravating the situation was the continued squabbling between the Fédération and the Kehillah, even though they both drew their membership largely from the same sources.

Community Welfare Aid

According to FSJU statistics, the Jewish community gave assistance to some 6,000 families during 1953-54. More than 1,000 children were being cared for in 18 institutions, and 480 aged persons in 8 homes. Canteens served 100,000 meals during the year; various health organizations registered 70,000 visits. Thanks to community help, 4,500 children were able to go to camp during the summer months. There was little change in the welfare load over the year, but some increase in minimum standards of aids. The last available annual figures showed a slight increase in aid from 147,000,000 francs (\$42,000) in 1952 to 155,000,000 francs (\$45,000) in 1953.

Religious Affairs

The Jewish communities of Algeria, part of the Union des Associations Cultuelles Israélites de France, were visited for more than a month by co-Grand Rabbi Jacob Kaplan of France in the spring of 1954. The grand rabbi then visited the United States, where he was feted by Jewish organizations for his successful intervention in the case of the Finaly children. On the occasion of the Assizes of French Jewry, in June 1954, he was named an officer of the Legion of Honor.

The Montevideo synagogue of Paris, home of French traditional Judaism, celebrated its hundredth anniversary late in 1953. The year also saw considerable building of new synagogues, particularly in Alsace-Lorraine, which

had its own autonomous Union des Associations Culturelles. In September 1954 the cornerstone was laid for the new Strasbourg temple, a modern synagogue building replacing one which had been damaged beyond repair during the war. A few months earlier, a synagogue was completed for the city of Thionville in Lorraine.

There was a tendency during the year under review to move Jewish affairs into larger and more spacious quarters. Thus, one of Paris' leading cinemas was filled for a Purim party and services for more than 2,000 children. The giving of Jewish education prizes, usually a rather restricted affair, was moved into a major hall. The Union Libérale, the single Reform synagogue in France, found its building too small to accommodate its High Holy Day worshippers, and held services in the concert hall of the Salle Gaveau.

The Consistoire of Paris elected Baron Alain de Rothschild as president in December 1953, in place of Georges Wormser.

Jewish Education

There was a rise of perhaps 20 per cent in the number of children receiving some form of Jewish education during 1953-54. The total in Paris, about 3,000, was still low compared with the potential of perhaps 50,000 children; but as an indication that community efforts were having effect, it was encouraging. During 1953-54 enrollment in the Lucien Hirsch day school went up from 126 to 180; in the Yabne school from 90 to 120.

Zionism and Israel

Concerned about the growing apathy to Zionism in France, Zionist chiefs substantially reorganized the Fédération Sioniste in January 1954. A major reproach leveled against the Zionist organization was that it had failed to attract any substantial number of French Jews. In an effort to remedy this situation, the Fédération—which had been organized as a collection of Zionist political parties—was re-formed as a so-called Territorial Union, although it retained its old name. In this union, 60 per cent of the voting strength was left to the political parties and 40 per cent was reserved for non-political Zionist groups, like the French branch of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), and for different regional Zionist units which were to be established. Into these regional units, it was hoped, could be drawn individuals who had been loath to get involved in Zionist political conflicts, but who would want to support general Zionist aims. Marc Jarblum was named head of this reorganized Fédération Sioniste, but this presidency was more honorary than real, since he left for Israel. The working head was the secretary general, André Blumel. His election aroused considerable opposition among many old-time Zionists, who felt that Blumel was too closely associated with various Communist groups with whom the Zionists had been battling vigorously. Zionist leadership—represented at the January 1954 conference in Paris by the Speaker of the Israel Knesset, Joseph Sprinzak, and by Jewish Agency chairman Nahum Goldmann—hoped, however, that Blumel

might succeed in attracting French Jewry where the old-line Zionists had failed. The reorganization did not appear to have had much effect, but it was still too early to draw any final conclusions. During 1953-54, one of the most successful of Zionist activities was the sending of some three hundred children for vacations in Israel.

Israel's influence on the Jewish community was felt through the active and well-liked ambassador, Jacob Tsur. In August Israeli Consul-General Abraham Guilboa, who had served in Paris since the founding of the Jewish state, returned to Israel and was replaced by Yosef Lotan. In August the Israel Chief of Staff, Moshe Dayan, paid a six-day official visit to France as guest of the French military authorities. Culturally, a high light of the season was the visit to Paris of the Habimah Theatre in July 1954. It was favorably received by the French critics. In March 1954, in a solemn ceremony, the ashes of Baron and Baroness Edmond de Rothschild were transported to Zichron Yaacov in Israel, one of the settlements which the Baron had helped found.

Publications and Cultural Activity

There was little change in Jewish community publications during the year. To those previously described (*see* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 198-99) should be added the monthly house organs of the traditionalist Jews, *Trait d'Union*, and of L'Union Libérale, *Le Rayon*. Two new publications appeared, *Renaissance*, a monthly put out by the Jewish community of Marseille, and a highly philosophical magazine, *Targoum*, the product of students of the Gilbert Bloch school at Orsay. An old friend also reappeared on the Yiddish-language scene, the monthly magazine *Kiyoum*, which had ceased publication during 1952-53.

There were no outstanding Jewish books brought out during the year under review, but various aspects of Jewish life were the subject matter of three books brought out for general circulation which won wide acclaim. One was the *Statue de Sel*, by Albert Nemmi, describing the inner conflicts of a young Jewish lad in Tunisia who could find no place for himself in either the medieval Jewish civilization that surrounded him, in the French environment, or as a Tunisian nationalist. Second was *Le Livre de Ma Mere*, by Albert Cohen, the tragedy of an immigrant woman from Corfu who was unable to adjust to modern Western life. A third was *La Baie Perdu*, by Manès Sperber, a story whose background was life in the Eastern European Jewish *shtetl* (small town).

There were two important Jewish museum exhibits, one at the Musée d'Art Juif in Paris, tracing a Jewish man's life through the ritual objects with which he would come in contact from the day of birth to the day of his death; and an unusual exhibit of Jewish antiques from all parts of Europe at the Alsatian Museum of Strasbourg.

The Youth Artistic Center and Kinor Chorale, founded in 1953 by young Jewish musicians at the Paris Conservatory, had a most successful season, appearing at several Jewish functions and organizing a number of independ-

ent concerts. There were also a number of Jewish discussion and lecture clubs.

Necrology

The well-known French dramatist, Henri Bernstein, died in December 1953. An appreciation of his life by the famous Catholic writer, François Mauriac, was greatly resented by members of the dramatist's family; and there was public dispute about his personality for some weeks.

ABRAHAM KARLIKOW

BELGIUM

THE CHIEF EVENT of the period under review (July 1, 1953, through June 30, 1954) in Belgium was the general election held in April 1954. This led to the fall of the all-Catholic government and its replacement by a Socialist-Liberal coalition, with Achille van Acker as premier and Paul-Henri Spaak at the ministry of foreign affairs.

The technical reason for the election was the need to amend the constitution to legalize the European Defense Community (EDC) Treaty and similar treaties with supranational clauses. The Catholic, or Social Christian Party, however, was so anxious to avoid losing its small absolute majority that the election was deferred by various means till the parliament, elected in 1950 under the stress of the disturbances about King Leopold, had virtually run the full four years of its maximum legal life.

Though the Catholics remained the largest party in both chambers, they were outnumbered by the combined Socialists and Liberals. Their defeat in the election was made the more decisive by the fact that the Socialists raised the issue of reduction of military service to eighteen months. The appeal of this slogan was particularly strong because the pay of the Belgian conscript was only 20 cents a day and the prolonged keeping of sons off the labor market worked an economic hardship for many families. The new government kept its promise to reduce the length of military service.

The EDC Treaty was ratified in March 1954, an agreement among the political parties having provided for ratification, irrespective of its constitutionality, provided the resolution to amend the constitution was passed immediately afterwards. The new parliament, though nominally a constituent assembly, had not yet passed the required amendments.

Economically, Belgium was feeling the effect of its postwar concentration on consumer's goods rather than on investment and industrial modernization. Belgian industry was feeling the full weight of competition in the export markets on which it depended, and a great many of the orders it received had been obtained only by sharp cuts in the profit margin. Belgium had, however, been able to capitalize its past trading surpluses, and its currency thus retained its strength and could stand up as well as any in Europe to the strains of convertibility.

Meantime, a new realism pervaded the recurrent discussions about the completion of the Benelux Union, and solid progress had been made toward that end. During the year under review, the three countries concerned (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) were able to permit almost complete freedom of capital movement among the member countries. They were attempting to work out a procedure for the joint negotiation of trade agreements; and though there was still an area of industry in which the Belgians could not meet the lower-cost Dutch competition, the Benelux Union seemed very much closer to full reality than it had a year before.

Jewish Population

The total Jewish population, previously rather loosely estimated at about 30,000, had been re-estimated at about 40,000. More than half lived in Brussels; some 15,000 Jews lived in Antwerp, where the Jews were largely engaged in the diamond trade. The remaining 4,000 Jews were distributed through the other Belgian cities, notably Charleroi, Liège, Ostend, and Ghent; across the border, in the small Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the number of Jews was about 1,500.

Apparently, the Jewish population of Belgium conformed fairly closely to the national demographic pattern, except that the size of families, notably in Antwerp, was below the normal for this Catholic city, whereas, in all the Flemish region, it was usual for the Belgians to have large families.

CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION

All authorities agreed that there had been an increase in the number of Jews adopting Belgian citizenship by naturalization or otherwise. These were largely the children of Jews driven westward during the pre-war Hitler period of the 1930's. The religious or racial status of the candidates was not stated in the naturalization lists presented to the Chamber once a year for the annual Naturalization Act. It was clear, however, that this increase was still in its early stages, since the option right could be exercised at the age of eighteen and the year under review would have produced only persons born in 1935 or earlier. Many children born abroad had to wait for their eighteenth birthday before acquiring their own Belgian citizenship. Naturalization, for those not born on Belgian soil, was a question of residence. The number who had completed the statutory ten years was now large, since it reflected population movements in the latter part of World War II. The residential requirement for foreign-born Jews was the same as for all foreigners. It was estimated that about 15,000 Jews now had Belgian nationality. Comparatively few Jews were entering Belgium with citizenship in view.

Emigration and Immigration

In August 1954 it was decided that the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), which had offices in Brussels and Antwerp, would

take over the emigration services of the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and thus handle all Jewish migration work in Belgium, except for that which involved emigrants to Israel, who continued to pass through the Israel office. The merger would remove from the organization Aide aux Israélites Victimes de la Guerre (AIVG) the JDC services which the AIVG formerly operated. The new arrangement was generally welcomed, since the big population movements of the postwar period were showing signs of slackening off, and there were obvious advantages in having the whole of the problem in the hands of a single body.

During the period under review there was a decline in emigration. It was estimated, though without any firm statistical basis, that the number of emigrants did not exceed 500, including both those assisted and those unassisted. At the time of the HIAS-JDC merger, it was stated that HIAS still had a waiting list of about 2,000 cases, and JDC one of about 1,200 cases. During 1953 JDC serviced 121 families (333 persons), HIAS 122 families (263 persons); during the first six months of 1954, JDC serviced 49 families (107 persons) and HIAS 43 families (77 persons).

Civic and Political Status

There was no official discrimination against Jews, either on religious or on racial grounds. This policy of nondiscrimination was part and parcel of Belgium's constitution and political mentality. Moreover, the Jewish religious communities had the benefit of arrangements by which, though Belgium was predominantly Roman Catholic, all organized religious communities drew financial assistance from Belgium public funds.

There was no organized anti-Semitism, though isolated and individual cases of overt discrimination did occasionally occur. In Antwerp, in particular, the concentration of a large part of the Jewish community in a small and central residential area produced occasional instances of the display of anti-Semitic feelings. An instance of this occurred in 1953 when a girl working in an Antwerp shop was dismissed a few days after she was hired when it was discovered that she was Jewish, the proprietor of the shop making no secret of the reason for his action. This, however, was an isolated case, and in general the Belgians accepted members of all creeds and races who were willing to conform to their laws and their way of life.

To some extent the aftermath of the Nazi persecutions had brought Jewish interests into conflict, not with Belgian authority, but with the evangelizing spirit of many Christians. In particular, some children whose parents had been victims of the Nazis had been cared for in non-Jewish homes where they have received the elements of Christian education. Though a large body of opinion preferred to return such children to Jewish surroundings and beliefs, the more moderate element had nothing but praise for the way in which the cases coming before the Belgian courts were being settled. In every case the happiness of the child was the main consideration motivating the decision; attempts to prevent the implementation of the verdicts—as, for example, the removal of children from the jurisdiction of the

court, or hiding them—were severely dealt with. Christian evangelism appeared to have played a major part in these cases. Of some fifty cases already settled, a large number were traced to a single school teacher, who had conceived it her mission to save souls and had placed a large number of children in homes where a similar ultra-Catholic spirit predominated.

An interesting situation arose during the period under review when two Dutch Jewish girls—Betty Milhado and Anneke Beekman—were smuggled into Belgium by their Catholic guardians in order to thwart Dutch court orders restoring them to Jewish custody. In both cases, Belgian police action was ordered and taken with a view to locating the child and instituting legal proceedings to return her to Holland. In the Milhado case, the action was successful in March 1954; in the Beekman case the police had not yet at the time of writing (August 1954) succeeded in tracing the girl. The main press reaction in the Beekman case was focused on the fact that the Dutch court appeared to have assigned Anneke to institutional care, which was thought less desirable than personal care, particularly in view of the great effort and risk undertaken by her guardian in keeping her. Though the ultra-Catholic papers regretted the possibility of a potential member being removed from the Catholic Church, no comment had disparaged the Jewish element in the case.

Jewish Education

The scattered character of the Brussels Jewish community remained an organizational problem. During the year under review it had been possible to find a larger number of qualified teachers of Hebrew and of Jewish subjects to work not only in the one Jewish school but also as visiting teachers in the many nondenominational state schools where Jewish children were enrolled. In Brussels the ORT courses in technical and trade subjects had to be dropped for lack of enrollment, but similar courses were being successfully continued in Antwerp and there were plans to enlarge them. The Tachkemoni secondary school in Antwerp was expected to have a full six-year course by September 1954. The work of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), the Maccabi, and the Union des Jeunes Gens Juifs continued on the same lines as in 1952-53. The secondary Talmud school at Kapellen, north of Antwerp, continued to train students to continue higher religious studies at a university level, mainly in Amsterdam and Paris.

Zionism

On various occasions the point had been raised that the Belgian Federation of Zionists was meagerly represented in the Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique. The practical result was that when a Jewish view was asked for—as in cases of disputed custody of children—it was given by the religious (and predominantly Belgian) body rather than by the political. Various dif-

faculties inside the Federation led to the annual meeting on November 8, 1953, being adjourned to December 20. The Mapai group, in particular, which had about 650 members of the 7,500 shekel-paying Zionists, criticized the Federation and its biggest group, the General Zionists, on the basis that the financial aims of Zionism were being given undue priority over the cultural and political objectives, and that there was an apparent "unwillingness to accept newcomers."

The adjourned annual meeting, however, produced twenty-one resolutions, one of which called for a *kehilla*, or fund-raising body. Another resolution called for the formation of a political study group designed to improve the internal relations inside the Belgian Federation, as well as relations with Israel. The study group was formed, and closer relations with the Consistoire Central were already apparent. The other resolutions provided for increased activities in various fields, notably educational, religious, and social welfare.

Further courses in Hebrew were given in the winter of 1953-54, and a fresh series was due to start in the autumn of 1954. There was strong interest in these courses. Two holiday courses, one at Ostend and one at Kapellenbosch, were attended by 21 students and 18 students, respectively.

Social Services

The AIVG was attempting to tackle the problem created by the scattered character of the Jewish population in Brussels. A center was to be established during the winter of 1954-55; it was hoped this center would aid the work of the AIVG fund-raising department, which had so far managed to reach only about 500 of the 20,000 Jewish inhabitants of the Brussels district.

Financial difficulties had led to various adaptations in the AIVG social service organization. In place of the former medical service, the agency was sending patients to private doctors with whom it had service contracts. There was now one permanent home for children and another home which took four groups of thirty children each for a seaside holiday of three or four weeks during the summer season.

The number of people receiving permanent care in the Brussels region was about 1,200 and in Antwerp about 900. These numbers included those helped by organizations other than the AIVG.

Religious Life

The shortage of rabbis and officiants had been to some extent relieved by the appointment of Jonas Zweig as rabbi in Antwerp.

Cooperation between the Consistoire Central and the Belgian civil and religious authorities continued and contributed to the successful settlement of the cases of the care of Jewish children. Grand Rabbi Solomon Ullmann, though well past the age limit, continued by special annual act of the

Belgian Parliament to serve as Jewish Almoner General for the Belgian armed forces.

Culture and Personalia

A cultural feature of the year was the unveiling by King Baudouin of the national memorial at the Nazi concentration camp at Breendonk. A Jew, the well-known sculptor Yudel Jankelevici, designed and executed the memorial. His work at Breendonk won him unstinted praise in all sections of the Belgian press.

An event of some importance in the cultural field was the establishment in Antwerp of a Jewish Club.

In September 1953 Maurice Stern became president of the Jewish National Fund succeeding Marc Bergier, who left for Israel.

In April 1954 the AIVG lost its president, Alfred Goldschmidt, at the age of sixty-two. In June its manager, Guy Mansbach, died at the age of forty-five. Mansbach was succeeded by his wife, who was to take over her duties in September 1954.

GAVIN GORDON

THE NETHERLANDS

THE PERIOD under review (July 1, 1953, through June 30, 1954) was one of political stability and continued satisfactory economic progress in The Netherlands.

General Background

In the quadrennial elections for the provincial states (councils) on April 21, Labor (Partij van de Arbeid) rose from 156 to 180 seats. The Catholic People's Party (KVP), with 186 seats and 31.5 per cent of the vote, remained the largest party. The Communists dropped to 5.3 per cent of the total.

A *mandament* issued jointly by the five Roman Catholic bishops in The Netherlands, on May 30, 1954, forbade Dutch Catholics to be members of the Netherlands Federation of Labor, listen regularly to the Dutch Labor Broadcasting Station (VARA), or be members of a number of other Socialist as well as of all Communist organizations. Membership in the Labor Party itself was not explicitly forbidden, but was called "undesirable" for Catholics.

This *mandament*—a reversal of the policy of the first postwar years—caused widespread repercussions. Its publication alienated certain sections of the Dutch population from the Catholics. The Labor Party pointed out that it might endanger the present political cooperation between it and the Catholic People's Party.

The damage caused by the 1952 floods was largely repaired. Productivity

was higher than ever before, as was the level of employment. Unemployment was limited to a few fields; one of these was the diamond industry, in which many Jews used to find a livelihood.

Because of its serious overpopulation, Holland allowed no immigration of any kind. The emigration of 50,000 persons a year remained an official government goal. Official bureaus assisted prospective emigrants, and their passage overseas was paid by the government.

War Criminals

On March 17, 1954, the minister of justice, L. A. Donker (Labor), informed the Senate that, of some 150,000 persons who after the liberation had been arrested for Nazi activities, and of whom about 100,000 had been sentenced, only some 600 were still in prison. Of these, all but the 159 who had been sentenced for life would be free in four years' time. Of these 159, 69 had originally been sentenced to death, but their sentences had since been commuted. The minister opposed additional clemency to the 159 who were serving life terms, as all of them had committed very serious crimes, which had resulted in the death of tens, hundreds, or even thousands of persons.

BREDA PRISON ESCAPEES

Of the seven Dutch war criminals who escaped over the German frontier from Breda prison in January 1952 (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 211-12), six still remained in Western Germany, and one was still at large. The West German Government continued to place legal difficulties in the way of their extradition.

For aiding the seven to escape, four Dutch ex-Nazis were sentenced by the 's Hertogenbosch Higher District Court to the maximum sentence of six months in prison on April 21, 1954. In October 1953, the Breda Lower District Court had given them a lower sentence on the ground that the men had already been harmed in their livelihood, as the press had published their names. The prosecution had appealed.

NESB

The former Dutch SS officer Paul van Tienen and the lawyer J. A. Wolhuis, another Dutch ex-Nazi, who in June 1953 had announced the establishment of a new political party, the Nationaal Europees Socialistische Beweging (NESB), and in August 1953 had published a weekly *Alarm*, were prosecuted in October 1953 on a charge of "belonging to a group which is a continuation of the pre-war and wartime Nazi party NSB." The latter, as well as all successor organizations, had been outlawed by a decree of the Netherlands Government in London on September 17, 1944.

The Amsterdam Lower District Court sentenced van Tienen and Wolhuis

to two months in prison, minus the nearly two months they had spent in detention. They appealed, and on February 4, 1954, the Higher District Court decided that the NESB was not a continuation of the NSB. Though its program showed certain similarities with the outlawed party, it differed in important aspects. For instance, the NESB was not autonomous, but formed part of an organization with headquarters in Sweden and branches in several Western European countries. The public prosecutor appealed. Meanwhile, the NESB again started selling *Alarm* and organized a few poorly attended meetings. On May 18, 1954, the Supreme Court ordered that the acquittal by the Amsterdam Higher District Court be quashed and the two men retried by The Hague Higher District Court. This retrial was due to take place in October 1954.

The minister of justice stated in the second chamber of the Netherlands parliament that, should the prosecution of the two NESB leaders fail, he would submit a new draft bill to outlaw parties like the NESB.

In general however, there was very little neo-Nazi activity in The Netherlands during the period under review.

Jewish Population

The number of Jews in The Netherlands was about 25,000, over half of them living in Amsterdam, 2,000 at The Hague, 900 in Rotterdam, and less than 450 in all other places.

No Jews from abroad settled in The Netherlands, except one rabbi. Very few persons who had settled in Israel returned to The Netherlands.

Most of the refugees from Central and Eastern Europe who had settled in Holland before the war had by the time of writing (July 1954) received Dutch citizenship.

Emigration continued, but at a much lower rate than in the first years after World War II. The American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), which on January 1, 1953, had 1,119 persons (434 families) registered for emigration, saw this figure more than halved at the end of 1953. A total of 260 persons left for overseas with the help of the JDC during the year, over half of them to the United States and Canada. Full Jewish emigration figures were unavailable, as many Jews did not apply to Jewish organizations. Those emigrating did so mostly because of unemployment in their particular trades or other personal problems.

Anti-Semitic Activity

Few cases of active anti-Semitism were reported. However, a few Catholic papers, especially in the south, from time to time showed an attitude of hardly disguised anti-Semitism, both in connection with the war orphans case (see below) and on other occasions, e.g., *De Gaset van Limburg* (Maastricht); *De Gelderlander* (Nijmegen).

Jewish War Orphans

Of the 1,731 Jewish war orphans, 500 had reached their majority by the end of 1953, 335 had emigrated since the end of World War II (a large proportion to Israel), 431 were under Jewish guardianship, 400 were still under Christian guardianship, and the fate of 59 was still being disputed. A few of those under Christian guardianship were being educated in Jewish surroundings, and vice versa.

Beekman and Milhado Affair

The case of the two Jewish war orphans, Anneke (Anna Henriette) Beekman and Betty (Rebecca) Milhado, both born in 1940, who had been missing since 1948 and 1949, respectively, continued to occupy public attention in The Netherlands (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 206-08).

On July 13, 1953, the acting Archbishop of Utrecht, Mgr. B. J. Alfrink, told the executives of the Ashkenazic and Portuguese congregations that the Misses van Moorst, the Roman Catholic former foster mothers of Anneke Beekman, "had been informed by the church authorities that they need not derive from their Catholic conviction the duty to keep the girl back." Simultaneously, Mgr. Alfrink appealed to the chief rabbi to curb incorrect press reports alleging that Anneke Beekman was being kept in a convent against her will. "Apart from the ladies who brought her up and those looking after the girl now, nobody seems to know where she is, including ourselves."

The influential *Nederlands Juristen Blad* on January 9, 1954, urged editorially that the child be produced and the Episcopate lend its cooperation. On September 25, 1953, thirty clergymen and members of the Dutch Mennonite Society had sent a similar appeal to the Episcopate.

On March 12, 1954, a few days before the matter was to be raised in the Dutch senate, the two girls were found in two Belgian convents, after ten weeks of active investigation by the Dutch police. Betty was immediately returned to Holland. Anneke had been removed a few minutes before the police entered the room, and was missing ever since.

It was established later that the girls had been brought in June 1948 to the Belgian convent of Valmeer, accompanied by the van Moorst sisters. Betty, who had been kidnapped in May 1948, had first spent some weeks in a Dutch convent, near the residence of the van Moorst sisters. Anneke had returned to Hilversum after a few months, but had been taken back to Valmeer on February 24, 1949, the day before the Supreme Court finally awarded guardianship over her to the Le'ezrath Hayered, The Netherlands Jewish Board of Guardians. When in September 1953 the Valmeer convent was closed down, the two girls were taken to two different convents, at St. Truiden and at Banneux.

CATHOLIC ATTITUDE

On March 14, 1954, the Centrale Commissie of the Ashkenazic congregation cabled Mgr. Alfrink and the Belgian Cardinal Van Roey to exercise

their authority for the earliest possible return of Anneke Beekman. Neither Mgr. Alfrink or Cardinal Van Roey gave a direct reply. On March 24 The Netherlands Episcopate stated that the appeal by the Ashkenazic congregation, which had also been released to the press, "was clearly mainly intended to foster anti-Catholic prejudice"; it also reiterated that it was not the task of the ecclesiastical authorities to exhort Roman Catholics to obey decisions of a civil court. The Catholic press stressed that the girls had been baptized in the Catholic faith and, though this baptism had been authorized by persons who were not the children's legal guardians, the girls could now only be brought up as Catholics. They also condemned Jewish "ingratitude," hinting that if a new disaster befell the Jews, Catholics might not save their children again. They emphasized the contrast between "Christian love" and "Jewish legal formalism," and alleged that in 1949 Anneke was to have been transferred to a Jewish "Communist" family.

However, the nondenominational press generally condemned the standpoint of the Episcopate. A very large number of letters to the editor, both *pro* and *contra*, appeared in practically every paper.

On April 3, 1954, the *Nederlands Juristen Blad* suggested that the Jewish community should voluntarily abandon guardianship over Anneke, for the sake of her harmonious development and the peaceful coexistence of the various denominations. Le'ezrath Hayeled replied that it was not prepared to do so, but that it was ready, after the girl had been produced, to have her observed by a neutral psychiatrist. If the psychiatrist thought it preferable, Le'ezrath Hayeled was willing to have Anneke placed at first in a non-Jewish environment, as a transitory measure.

On March 22, Mrs. G. M. Langedijk-van Moorst, who in 1948 had had legal custody over Anneke for a few months, was arrested after her return from a sudden visit to the neighborhood of Banneux. The arrests of three more relatives followed. The latter were soon released, but remained under charges. The Catholic press charged that the women had been treated brutally.

The chief district attorney of Amsterdam, F. Hollander, who had been largely responsible for tracing the children and who was of Jewish origin, became a target for attack. Hollander was eventually transferred to a provincial district court by the minister of justice, who added that he was one of the most capable members of the magistrature. The transfer was not to take effect until October 1, 1954, but an assistant district attorney immediately took over in the Beekman case.

WHITE PAPER

On May 7, 1954, a long-promised white paper was published jointly by the Ashkenazic and Portuguese congregations. The pamphlet, over a hundred pages long, reproduced many documents on the court proceedings and decisions, as well as press comments going up to the early part of April 1954. It was distributed to the Dutch press, members of parliament, child welfare organizations, etc. The Catholic press generally called the white

paper "nonobjective," "sensational," and "harmful," and claimed that it had again frustrated the main goal—a happy future for a war orphan.

GOVERNMENTAL DECISION

On June 11, 1954 The Netherlands (governmental) Guardianship Council decided that Betty Milhado—whose legal custody had not yet been finally settled when she was abducted in May 1948—should be educated with a Roman Catholic family. The Guardianship Council took this decision against the advice of a neutral psychiatrist for which it had itself asked. After observing the girl, the psychiatrist had advised that she be educated in neutral surroundings. As of July 1954, no decision had been made regarding Betty Milhado's ultimate guardianship. A joint deputation of the Ashkenazic and Portuguese congregations protested to the minister of justice against this decision.

On July 27, 1954, Mrs. Langedijk-van Moorst was sentenced to one year in prison for complicity in the abduction of Betty Milhado. Of this term, six months would be remitted on condition of good behavior for three years, and four months deducted for the period she had already spent in prison. Among the extenuating circumstances, the court mentioned that "it had not been proved that those to whom the accused had entrusted herself for spiritual guidance had ever pointed out to her the seriousness of her crime."

The sentence satisfied Jewish public opinion. Mrs. Langedijk, who did not appeal, faced another indictment for the abduction of Anneke Beekman.

Community Organization and Activity

The agreement originally concluded between the Ashkenazic and Portuguese congregations in The Netherlands in 1810 was renewed for another century on December 26, 1953. In this covenant, the two congregations recognized each other's existence and defined who should be a member of either congregation. Under the new covenant, not only Ashkenazic wives of Portuguese husbands, but also Ashkenazic husbands of Portuguese wives, and Ashkenazic orphans brought up by Portuguese families, were permitted to join the Portuguese congregation, which had dwindled to some 800 members.

On February 14, 1954, a liaison committee of six members was set up, three from each congregation, for the coordination of activities, particularly in regard to external affairs. As a result, the Beekman-Milhado White Paper (*see above*) was issued by the two congregations jointly.

On October 25, 1953, the quadrennial elections for the thirty-member Amsterdam Ashkenazic Community Council took place; this was the only community council in The Netherlands whose members were still elected by general vote. The community council appointed more than half the members of the Centrale Commissie and of the Permanent Commission, the national policy-making bodies.

Of some 6,000 eligibles, 1,887 voted. Of the thirty seats, the (Orthodox) Mizrahi, combined with the Association of East European Jews, received

twelve, the Zionists nine, and Binyan (a conglomerate of Agudah and other non-Zionists) ten, a balance of power only slightly different from that of the previous council.

There was little contact between Netherlands and world Jewry. Two representatives of the Ashkenazic congregation, I. de Vries, the chairman of The Netherlands Zionist Federation, and H. Beem, of The Netherlands Permanent Commission, attended the World Jewish Congress Third Plenary Assembly in Geneva in August 1953.

For the year 1954, Netherlands Jewry received \$15,000 from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

Religious Activity

B. Benedikt of Tel Aviv was installed as rabbi of Amsterdam for a four-year period in September 1953, replacing J. Oppenheimer, who had left for overseas in July. In February, E. Berlinger, of Sweden and Finland and formerly of the Saar, was appointed as a rabbi for the whole of Holland by the Centrale Commissie—the first time in the history of Dutch Jewry that a rabbinical appointment was made, not by one of the eleven rabbinical *ressorts* (provincial districts) for its own territory only, but by the Centrale Commissie. Rabbi Berlinger, who took up his position in July 1954, was to give special attention to the small Jewish communities in the Netherlands countryside.

Rabbi F. Ruelf, who had come to The Netherlands from Israel to serve as the rabbi of the Liberal Congregation in January 1953, returned to Israel in April 1954. For the first time in its twenty-year history, the Liberal Congregation, which consisted of some 400 members, mainly of German origin, then chose a Dutch-born Jew, Jacob Soetendorp, to serve as a lay preacher.

The "Great" and the "New" Synagogues of Amsterdam, inaugurated in 1671 and 1752 respectively, were sold, along with a number of adjoining former Jewish communal buildings, to the Amsterdam municipality in the spring of 1954. In January 1954 the Amsterdam Ashkenazic congregation also sold to the municipality the "Uilenburg" synagogue, dating from 1766 and on the list of government-protected historical monuments for its architectural value. The municipality was expected to turn the synagogues into historical museums.

The first large synagogue built in Holland since the end of World War II was dedicated in Rotterdam on June 20, 1954. The new modern premises contained, in addition to the synagogue, communal offices, a Jewish school, and a hall for meetings and festivities, and was the first Jewish communal center of its kind in The Netherlands. It was built with a subsidy from the ministry of reconstruction.

In other places, such as Bussum and Roermond, small synagogues which had been destroyed during World War II were rebuilt and reopened during December 1953.

Jewish Education and Youth Activity

Nearly 1,000 children were receiving some form of Jewish education in The Netherlands, some 200 of them at the elementary day school Rosh Pinah at Amsterdam. The (Ashkenazic) Central Education Committee employed four full-time and eight part-time itinerant teachers for communities without Jewish teachers of their own. In Amsterdam, fewer than half of all Jewish children received any Jewish education.

The four Jewish youth movements—Habonim, Bne Akivah, Tsofim and Hashalsheleth (Orthodox Agudah)—had some 600 members altogether. Most of them suffered from a shortage of leaders, especially for the boys.

Social Services

At the fifth anniversary of Joods Maatschappelijk Werk (JMW), the coordinating body for Jewish social welfare work, in the spring of 1954, it was reported that the number of affiliated organizations had risen from twenty-nine in 1948 to sixty-one in 1954. But several organizations—some with considerable funds but little activity—remained outside the JMW.

CEFINA, the central financing coordinating campaign for Jewish social work, had an income of about \$100,000 in 1953-54.

In December 1953, a second home for the aged was opened in Amsterdam, in addition to the Joodse Invalide. Called Beth Menuchah, it occupied the building of the pre-war Beth Shalom, and with the aid of the JMW served ninety persons, mostly non-invalid paying guests. On June 15, 1954, a new Jewish old age home for fifty-three persons was opened at The Hague. The old one had accommodated only fifteen.

During the year under review, a sum of F500,000 (\$131,500) from four closed Dutch-Jewish orphanages was transferred to Israel. The bulk was used to rebuild Hayotsrim, a religious Youth Aliyah institution for seventy-five difficult children, near Haderah, under the supervision of a Jewish director from The Netherlands. The institution, renamed Kfar Juliana after the Queen of The Netherlands, was dedicated on April 28, 1954.

New buildings at Kfar Eliyahu, a Poale Agudath Israel children's village near Rehovoth, which were constructed with part of the funds, were dedicated in December 1953.

Funds of a former Jewish hospital at Haarlem were transferred to Israel, where a Netherlands home for parents was to be built with them in Haifa.

Zionist Activity

The Netherlands Zionist Federation (NZB) continued to be a tightly organized structure, whose activities were practically confined to the executive. No new generation of Zionists was arising, as most young Zionists with a real interest in Israel had already settled there.

Among the resolutions carried at the fifty-first annual conference of the

NZB in December 1954 was one opposing the proposal by the executive of the World Zionist Organization to admit non-Zionists to the Zionist organization. In 1953 ninety-five persons from Holland settled in Israel (of whom thirty-three were members of the NZB), compared with 140 in 1952, 294 in 1951, 279 in 1950, and 569 in 1949. Fewer than twenty people were now receiving *hachsharah* training to prepare them to emigrate to Israel, and most were receiving a nonagricultural training. One of the three *hachsharah* centers that remained of the fourteen set up after World War II closed in November 1953.

FUND-RAISING FOR ISRAEL

In 1953-54 the United Israel Campaign (CIA) netted some 500,000 florins (\$131,500); the same amount was expected to result from the 1954-55 campaign. Keren Kayemeth-Jewish National Fund had a revenue of about 120,000 florins (\$31,000) in 1953-54, 20,000 florins more than in 1952-53. The Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO) also showed good results, raising 25,000 florins (\$6,578) and sending an equivalent amount in clothing to Israel. An Israel Bond Drive was launched in The Netherlands on April 15, 1954. An office of the American Financial and Development Corporation for Israel was set up in Amsterdam; the target was to sell \$1,000,000 worth of Israel bonds in The Netherlands.

Cultural Developments

An exhibition of Jewish religious objects organized by the Jewish community of Deventer in the spring of 1954 drew visitors from all over The Netherlands, both Jews and non-Jews.

Abel Herzberg, a lawyer and author, and past chairman of The Netherlands Zionist Federation, received the Amsterdam drama prize for his drama *Herodes* in January 1954.

Malcolm D. Rivkin, a young American Jewish graduate of Harvard University, visited The Netherlands during the period September 1953 through June 1954 on a Fullbright scholarship to do research on Jews and Judaism in postwar Amsterdam. In June 1954 Rivkin finished a ninety-page report, a summary of which was subsequently published in the Dutch Jewish weekly.

Personalia

On June 25, Prof. Eduard Meijers, the most renowned Dutch lawyer of the last two generations, died at the age of seventy-four. Professor Meijers had taught civil law at Leyden for over forty years. In 1947 he had been entrusted by the minister of justice with the task of drafting single-handed a new civil code, to replace that of 1837. At Professor Meijers's death, large sections of the new draft code had been completed. He had never been actively associated with Jewish affairs, but had after World War II given

valuable support in the struggle for Jewish restitution and in the controversy regarding Jewish war orphans.

The author Sam Goudsmit died on January 23, 1954, some days before his seventieth birthday. A writer with pronounced pro-Communist views, some of his novels had had a Jewish theme.

HENRIETTE BOAS

SWITZERLAND

DURING THE PERIOD July 1, 1953 through June 30, 1954, Switzerland continued to pursue the even tenor of its ways. Neutral for centuries, and spared the ravages of war since the days of Napoleon, Switzerland continued to maintain a successful neutrality in the current struggle between the Eastern and Western blocs. Since the Swiss army existed only to guard the country's borders, there was never even any discussion of Swiss entrance into the European Defense Community (EDC). Switzerland continued to serve as host to numerous international conferences and congresses.

The internal political situation remained quiet. In various elections the three major parties, of which the Social Democratic Party was the strongest, held their ground. Jews belonged to all the non-confessional parties; there was no Jewish party as such. The Communists played only an insignificant role, and were unrepresented in most of the cantonal parliaments. The only Jew who had hitherto played a leading role in the Communist Party, Ernst Rosenbusch, resigned his posts on July 13, 1953.

The favorable course of economic developments since the end of World War II continued. Comprehensive plans were in readiness for creating employment in case of a depression. It was impossible to predict just how great an effect the new tariff increases on watch imports into the United States, imposed on July 27, 1954, would have on the Swiss watch industry, in which a number of Jewish firms and workers were engaged, but Switzerland was expected certainly to suffer some damage as a result.

Jewish Population

Of a total Swiss population of 4,500,000, some 20,000 were Jews. Thus Jews formed less than one-half of one per cent of the population. But in some of the large cities, the proportion exceeded one per cent. Two-thirds of the Jews in the country were Swiss citizens; the others were foreign or stateless. The older age groups predominated.

During the period 1941-50, an estimated 4,000 Jews married. Since there were only about 1,400 marriages in which both parties were Jewish, it is obvious that many of the marriages in which Jews were involved were with non-Jews. Marriages with Catholics and Protestants were about equally numerous. As in most European countries, the demographic prospects for the Jewish population were not favorable. During the ten years

before the last census (1951), 2,270 Jewish children were born, while 3,260 Jews died. Thus in contrast to the surplus of births which existed among the non-Jewish population, there was an annual deficit of about 100.

The table below, prepared by cantonal statistician Hans Guth, describes the occupational distribution of the Jewish population, which is not covered in the official report of the census.

TABLE 1
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE JEWISH POPULATION, 1941

| <i>Occupation</i> | <i>Men</i> | <i>Women</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Self-employed</i> | 2,457 | 572 | 2,969 |
| Industry and handwork | 506 | 116 | 622 |
| Food, drink, and confectionery | 34 | 3 | 37 |
| Clothing | 269 | 93 | 362 |
| Textiles | 30 | 4 | 34 |
| Watches, clocks, and jewelry | 71 | 2 | 73 |
| Trade, banking, and insurance | 1,602 | 223 | 1,825 |
| Hotels | 13 | 75 | 88 |
| Liberal professions | 325 | 98 | 423 |
| Law | 71 | 1 | 72 |
| Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, etc. | 138 | 41 | 179 |
| Music, Theater, etc. | 32 | 24 | 56 |
| Other self-employed | 11 | — | 11 |
| <i>Employed by Others</i> | 3,700 | 1,603 | 5,303 |
| Agriculture | 84 | 2 | 86 |
| Industry | 943 | 249 | 1,192 |
| Clothing | 209 | 189 | 398 |
| Metal and machine work | 85 | 5 | 90 |
| Watchmaking and jewelry | 38 | 15 | 53 |
| Building trades | 454 | — | 454 |
| Mercantile and public employment | 1,994 | 862 | 2,856 |
| Hotel trades | 54 | 34 | 88 |
| Liberal Professions | 562 | 254 | 816 |
| Medicine and health services | 153 | 154 | 307 |
| Education | 60 | 21 | 81 |
| Music, Theater, etc. | 159 | 62 | 221 |
| Domestic Employment | 9 | 184 | 193 |
| Others | 54 | 18 | 72 |
| TOTAL | 6,157 | 2,115 | 8,272 |

Community Organization

During 1953-54 the major communities continued to increase their membership, while those in smaller centers lost members. In all, there were somewhat more than 4,000 heads of families and single persons belonging to communities. Only a small number of the Jews in Switzerland did not belong to any community, a fact which was the more noteworthy in view of the fact that membership was purely voluntary and involved considerable

expense. The communities were organized as voluntary bodies under the civil code governing associations, and financed by the self-imposed taxation of their members. The largest communities were those of Zurich (1,305 members), Basel (811), and Geneva (303). Some of the smaller communities had as few as three or four members.

The central organization of the communities, the Schweizerischer Israelitische Gemeindebund (SIG), celebrated its fiftieth birthday in May 1954. The meeting of the delegates was preceded by an impressive gathering of Swiss Jewry. In connection with the jubilee a commemorative volume was published, presenting for the first time comprehensive information on Swiss Jewry. Since the SIG was recognized both by the authorities and by Jewish institutions as the official representative of Swiss Jewry, the contents of the commemorative volume furnished an authoritative documentation covering the fields of religious and political rights, social and philanthropic work, education and culture, and defense against anti-Semitism.

Religious Life

Since kosher slaughtering had been prohibited in Switzerland since 1893, it was necessary, when a new agricultural law was introduced on January 1, 1954, to take steps to assure that the importation of kosher meat would continue to be possible in the future. It was possible to effect a significant reduction in price, so that the consumption of kosher meat had increased in recent months.

There were Orthodox communities in Basel, Lucerne, and Zurich. Bespeaking the origin of Swiss Jewry, the rites in the synagogues were characterized by South German, Alsatian, and East European usages. The number of Sephardic Jews was negligible.

The two *yeshivot* continued their work on about the same scale. One of them, formerly in Lugano, was able to purchase its own building in Lucerne, and transferred to its new home on June 13, 1954. The other *yeshiva*, established in Montreux in 1927, maintained its program. The Juedische Schulverein (The Jewish School Society) of Zurich, whose members were drawn from Orthodox circles, established a supplementary primary school for the lower grades. It followed the state school program in the secular subjects, and in addition gave its twenty-six pupils an intensive Jewish education. This was the first Jewish school in Switzerland; its establishment on April 27, 1954, aroused opposition in the press of Liberal Jewry.

Since Jewish books were no longer being published in Germany, prayer books with German translations, school books, and other publications to meet Jewish needs had to be printed in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. At the end of August 1954 there appeared the first volume of a four-volume translation of the Bible by N. H. Tur-Sinai (Harry Torczyner), printed together with the original Hebrew text, and an edition of the Pentateuch with the weekly readings as used for divine services.

Cultural Activities

In connection with its jubilee, in the summer of 1953, the SIG established prizes in the arts. These prizes, of 2,000 francs (\$457) each, were awarded on May 26, 1954, to Margarete Susman in literature, Alice Guggenheim in painting and sculpture, and Alexander Schaichet in music. Schaichet had previously received an award from the city of Zurich. Twenty nominations in all were made for the SIG prizes in the arts; every member of a Jewish community was entitled to submit nominations.

A number of Jewish writers, artists, and musicians produced new works during 1953-54. Kurt Guggenheim's cycle of novels, *Alles in Allem*, was a great success. Ralph Lieberman's opera, *Penthiselea*, had its first performance in connection with the 1954 Salzburg Festival. Fritz Hochwaelder, who had come to Switzerland as a refugee from Austria in 1938, published a play, *Donadieu*.

Social Services

The most important Jewish welfare activity in Switzerland was that of assisting refugees and war victims. At the end of World War II there were about 25,000 Jewish refugees in Switzerland needing assistance, while the settled Jewish population of the country was only 19,000. Since the end of World War II in 1945, 22,350 persons had been enabled to emigrate, 8,085 of them to new countries, 14,265 to their old European homes, mainly through the aid of the Verband Schweizerischer Jüdischer Flüchtlingshilfen (VSJF), a department of the SIG. Some 650 indigent refugees were being supported financially, while about 1,000 others required other forms of help. During the period January 1, 1953, through December 31, 1953, sixty-five former refugees, mostly younger ones, had been able to emigrate, chiefly to the United States, Israel, Canada, and South America. The new American law (August 8, 1953) permitting the immigration of 200,000 persons outside the quotas did not apply to Switzerland, which was not a member nation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Since 1933 the VSJF had spent a total of 67,725,000 Swiss francs (\$15,498,000) for assistance to refugees. Of this sum, 36,000,000 (\$8,238,000) had been supplied by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), 11,000,000 (\$2,517,000) by the Federal government and the cantons, and 12,000,000 (\$2,746,000) by the Jewish population of Switzerland. The VSJF's income for the year 1953, 1,830,000 Swiss francs (\$418,700), almost met its expenditures of 1,834,000 (\$418,800). Its largest expenditures were for the support of old, sick, and crippled persons. In the spring of 1954 the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany promised the SIG a contribution for the regular expenses of the VSJF, in addition to the funds allotted to subsistence loans and to the home for aged refugees, Les Berges du Léman-Maon, at Vevey. This home, which accommodated 130 persons, had been established in 1949 with the help of the government.

Etania, the sanatorium for consumptives at Davos and the society Pro Leysin (bone tuberculosis) had for years met the need for providing tubercular Jews with the possibility of treatment in the classic country of tuberculosis therapy. As in most tuberculosis sanatoriums, the available beds in Davos were not fully used. This was the result of the obstacles preventing persons from coming from Eastern Europe, the existing clearing restrictions, and the fact that modern methods of tuberculosis therapy were not dependent on specific climatic conditions.

The Swiss Jewish Old People's Home in Lengnau, with sixty-two inmates, celebrated its fiftieth birthday in 1953. An attractive commemorative booklet was published on this occasion. The Jewish home La Charmille at Riehen-Basel, to which a nursing care division had been added, accommodated ninety-seven persons. In Zurich the society Jüdisches Schwesternheim celebrated its fortieth anniversary, while the Israelitische Frauenverein of the same city, which maintained the children's recreational and health home Wartheim at Heiden (Canton Appenzell) for some ten to twenty children, was seventy-five years old, and published a journal for the occasion.

Under the auspices of the Association of Jewish Students in Switzerland, a scholarship was set up on June 13, 1954, to continue and expand the work begun with the help of the JDC in the postwar years. About twenty refugee students were being supported by the association, and some two hundred had been able to complete their studies with the aid of scholarships. On December 4, 1953, the Saly Mayer Memorial Fund, established with the assistance of the JDC, had in accordance with its statutes given 6,150 Swiss francs (\$1,407) to the student association.

ORT and OSE had their own offices in Switzerland. OSE continued to operate its preventorium at Morgins in the canton of Valais. During the year 1953 ORT trained 23 teachers for its 245 trade schools throughout the world at its central educational institute at Anières in the canton of Geneva.

HEIRLESS PROPERTY

Negotiations with the Federal Council continued, with a view to ascertaining and obtaining possession of heirless Jewish property located in Switzerland. The principal difficulty lay in the strict obligation of secrecy observed by banks in Switzerland, and which the bankers' association cited as a reason for not divulging information about heirless Jewish property. The SIG, which represented Jewish interests in these negotiations, had submitted a memorandum in July 1954 to the Federal Council recommending a solution that would accord with the banks' obligation of secrecy.

Anti-Semitism and Discrimination

There was no sign of any increase in anti-Semitism in Switzerland during the period under review. The propaganda of the insignificant neo-Fascist groups, like the Volkspartei der Schweiz, met with no public response. The SIG dealt with individual anti-Semitic incidents in an appropriate manner.

The SIG's press service Juna kept up its contact with the newspapers and the Christlich-Juedischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft in der Schweiz; the latter organization was linked with interfaith groups in other countries.

In the spring of 1954 the ex-Nazi German film director Veit Harlan planned to carry out a spectacular demonstration, whose high point was to be the public burning of the negative of his film *Jud Suess*. This plan failed of realization because of the adverse reaction of the public, which also rejected Harlan's new films and prevented their exhibition in Switzerland.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The Zionist movement had always been popular in Switzerland, which was one of the first to recognize the new State of Israel (on January 29, 1949). In March 1954 Fritz Hegg was named Swiss minister to Israel, while S. Tolkowsky remained Israel minister at Berne. There was an Israel consulate-general in Zurich, while at Geneva Menahem Kahani served as Israel's permanent delegate to the European headquarters of the United Nations.

The Swiss Zionist Federation consisted of ten sections, with about 1,000 members. In the coordinating committee established on May 3, 1953, the Labor Zionist Mapai, General Zionists, and Orthodox Mizrachi were represented by three members each; there were in addition one representative from the Jewish National Fund and one from the Palestine Foundation Fund. The Revisionists had no strength in Switzerland.

FUND RAISING

The Aktion Israel campaign of 1953 raised a total of just under 1,000,000 Swiss francs (\$228,000). The major part of this went to the Jewish Agency, the rest being allotted in agreed percentages to a religious children's home, the Mizrachi, the Agudat Israel, and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The Swiss section of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO) carried on its own fund-raising drive and raised about 200,000 francs (\$45,700). The practice of conducting fund-raising campaigns for Israel and Zionist purposes in the first half of the year, and for local Swiss and other causes in the remaining six months, continued. Proposals for a United Jewish Appeal had so far failed of adoption because the individual organizations believed that they could get better results through their own campaigns. The Friends of the Swiss children's village Kiriath Yearim, which in conjunction with Youth Aliyah was caring for seventy children whose education involved special problems, was able, without a drive, to raise almost 100,000 Swiss francs (\$22,800) in cash and goods. Israel bonds were being sold through a private committee, which began its work in the summer of 1954.

Numerous artists, scholars, and leading personalities again came from Israel to Switzerland to lecture or attend congresses, so that the existing intellectual and religious contact between the two countries was preserved and intensified. In the summer of 1953 twenty young people were also able

to spend their vacations in Israel; in the summer of 1954, thirty-one. Seven Swiss journalists, including editors of important dailies, visited Israel as guests of the state and the airline Swissair. The result of this visit was a noticeable increase in press coverage of news from Israel, and a generally favorable attitude to that country.

A memorial meeting on the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Theodor Herzl (July 4, 1954) took place in the Basel Casino, the historic site of the first Zionist congress. In almost all the major cities, the Zionist organizations held well-attended meetings in connection with Israel Independence Day.

PERIODICALS

Hans Klee of Zurich, formerly of Geneva, became the new editor of the *Israelitische Wochenblatt fuer die Schweiz*. This was the oldest Jewish publication in Switzerland, having been in existence for fifty-four years. The *Jüdische Rundschau Maccabi*, founded in 1941, appeared weekly. The monthly *Das Neue Israel*, organ of the Swiss Zionist Federation, had increased its picture service.

Personalia

Judge Max Gurny of Zurich, chairman of the central committee of the SIG, was chosen as president of the First Civil Court and vice president of the Superior Court of the Canton of Zurich.

Those who died during the year included Josef Bollag of Berne, who had been active in the Jewish community of that city and in numerous welfare organizations (September 10, 1953); Paul Bulka of Lausanne, who had been especially important in the Aktion Israel campaigns (July 12, 1953); Marcus Cohn, for many years a member of the administration of the SIG and the executive of the Jewish community of Basel, and in recent years active in work with the Israel ministry of justice (November 16, 1953); and Simon Erlanger, former vice president of the SIG, president of the Jewish community of Lucerne, and independent member of the Lucerne City Council (December 24, 1953).

LEO LITTMANN

ITALY

DURING THE PERIOD under review (July 1, 1953, through June 30, 1954) Italy was governed by what in effect were caretaker governments. Until December 1953, Giuseppe Pella headed a government which tended more and more to the right. Finally, the center and left wings of his own party, the Christian Democrats, could no longer accept the swing to the right, and the government fell. After an unsuccessful attempt by Amintore Fanfani in January 1954 to form a new government, Mario Scelba, a close associate of

Alcide De Gasperi, succeeded in forming a coalition with the three small moderate parties in February 1954. The most important of these, Giuseppe Saragat's moderate Socialists, had failed to support Fanfani.

In the meantime, certain significant political changes occurred. The Communists and Nenni Socialists seemed to have lost some support in the industrial north, but to have gained in total strength by improving their position in the south. At the convention of the Christian Democratic party in June 1954, De Gasperi gave up the secretaryship and was succeeded by Fanfani, who was expected eventually to succeed Scelba as premier. The Monarchist party had split, with one faction, led by Mayor Achille Lauro of Naples, allying itself more closely with the Christian Democrats. There appeared to be a trend towards the dissolution of the smaller parties and a concentration of strength in the Christian Democrats on the one hand, and the bloc of Nenni Socialists and Communists on the other.

Labor unrest continued throughout the year. On September 24, 1953, over 5,000,000 Italian workers participated in a token twenty-four hour strike for higher wages. There were many other similar demonstrations involving smaller numbers of workers. This unrest seemed likely to continue and become more serious unless there was a significant increase in real wages. An important part of the lire counterpart of the \$325,000,000 grant from the United States Foreign Operations Administration was spent on development of the depressed southern areas. However, this represented little more than a beginning. A recent report¹ showed that 20 per cent of all Italian families earned \$30 per month. Sixty-five per cent earned between \$30 and \$90, and only 15 per cent had incomes of \$180 or more. Even worse off than the lowest income group of the employed were the unemployed, who were estimated at between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000. Only slightly better off were the underemployed, whose number was unknown or at least unpublished, but it was presumed to be considerably higher than that of the unemployed. How the unemployed managed to live was a great mystery since there was no unemployment insurance system and public relief was virtually limited to soup-kitchens in the major urban centers.

Housing was also a serious problem. An estimated 12 per cent of all families were living in shacks or caves while overcrowding in city dwellings was constantly growing more severe. At the same time, it was reported that over 2,000,000 rooms were vacant because the rent was too high for the potential tenants. Practically all new housing built since World War II (and there had been considerable building activity) had been in the luxury class, far out of reach of the average family. Adding to these considerations a health service which functioned very poorly, it became clear why labor unrest was expected to be a permanent feature of the Italian scene.

Jewish Population

The total Jewish population of Italy was between 30,000 and 33,000; of this number 12,000 lived in Rome, 6,000 in Milan, 3,000 in Turin, 1,500

¹ *Economist*, London, October 3, 1953.

each in Florence and Trieste, while Genoa, Venice and Leghorn had Jewish populations of about 1,000 each. The balance was scattered throughout the remaining fourteen organized Jewish communities. As can be seen from these figures, the population was predominantly urban.

Not included in the above were Jewish refugees who had come to Italy during and after World War II. About 1,500 to 2,000 refugees from Central and Eastern European countries remained. There were also several hundred Jews, former residents of Egypt, Iraq, and other Moslem countries, most of whom lived in Milan and engaged in the import-export trade.

With the exception of Rome, the death rate significantly exceeded the birth rate. For Milan during the five-year period 1949-53, there were 379 Jewish deaths, while in the same period only 212 Jewish children were born. The excess of deaths over births was even greater for communities like Trieste and Genoa, where the proportion of old people was higher. While the net increase for Rome was high enough to make the figures balance for all of Italy, the losses through intermarriage, which in some communities had become very common, were expected to result in a continuing decrease in the Jewish population. Even where the non-Jewish partners in the marriage were converted to Judaism, experience had shown that in most cases the family eventually seceded from the community. Losses through conversion were not great, although Catholic organizations, sometimes led by converted Jews, actively attempted to induce Jews to embrace Catholicism. This activity was largely concentrated in the ghetto area where, occasionally, needy Jews were given some material help. During the summer these missionary organizations operated a day-camp program for children, and during the school year they conducted an after-school care program.

TABLE 1
BIRTH RATE, JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ROME,
1945-53

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Births Per 1,000 Jewish Inhabitants</i> |
|-------------|--|
| 1945..... | 11.66 |
| 1946..... | 14.56 |
| 1947..... | 18.75 |
| 1948..... | 21.18 |
| 1949..... | 17.78 |
| 1950..... | 17.50 |
| 1951..... | 13.10 |
| 1952..... | 10.15 |
| 1953..... | 16.38 |

Community Organization

Under the Law of 1930, which was still in effect, membership in the Jewish community was compulsory, unless the individual formally renounced Judaism. As a member of the community, the individual was obliged to pay taxes to support it. Most communal leaders were agreed that this power was extremely important in keeping the communities strong and assuring them of their minimum financial requirements.

Jewish Education

All of the larger communities maintained full-time separate Jewish schools, and the majority of the Jewish children attended these schools. With the exception of Rome, where the municipality gave some help, Jewish schools were entirely supported by Jewish communal funds. Milan, Turin, and Rome provided eight years of schooling, while Genoa, Venice, Florence, Leghorn, and Trieste had only schools covering the first five grades. In 1952 Milan had established a school for higher Jewish studies, aimed mainly at providing an opportunity for adult education and enabling university students to take some courses in Jewish subjects.

Rome, with the largest number of children, had only recently established its sixth, seventh, and eighth grades,² and these were still small. In fact, facilities existed for only a small number of children to go beyond the fifth grade. The low educational level was indicated by a recent study of the Jews of the ghetto area, which showed that of persons fifteen years of age and over, only 20 per cent had gone beyond the fifth grade, while 40 per cent had not gone beyond the third grade, and 15 per cent were illiterate. Many parents did not regard it as necessary for a child to go beyond the fifth grade, feeling that as soon as he was physically able, which was deemed to be at the age of ten or eleven years, he should begin earning some money to add to the family income. Inadequate facilities in Jewish schools tended to encourage this attitude, for parents were reluctant to send their children to state schools, where Catholic influence was strong.

Plans were under way to provide more adequate facilities in a new school building. The proposed building would cost 100,000,000 lire (\$160,000), which represented a major fund-raising undertaking for the community. However, this would permit the community to offer adequate facilities for eight years of education to Jewish children in the ghetto.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Because of the abnormal occupational distribution of the Jews of Rome (discussed more fully below) the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT) had established a program for teaching skills to the Jewish youth. Up to the close of the 1953-54 academic year, the ORT school had graduated several hundred students. The program was soundly conceived and ably led, but it would be some time before any major effects were felt. The problem was a difficult one, inasmuch as wages for craftsmen were so low that many trainees preferred to seek their fortune at street-peddling. Hence, many parents were reluctant to see their children attend the ORT school after the age of twelve.

ORT began its work in Italy in 1945, but until 1950 concerned itself almost exclusively with refugees. The school in Rome which was ORT's current major activity was established in 1950.

² In 1951, 1952, and 1953, respectively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Italian Jewish community was faced with a serious shortage of rabbis. All the larger communities had competent rabbis, but several of the rabbis were well along in years, making it difficult for them to play an active role in Jewish communal life. The rabbinical seminary conducted by the *Unione delle Comunità Israelitiche* (Union of Italian Jewish Communities) was training twelve students, but it was expected that most of them would leave the school before completing their studies. The cost of this training was relatively high for this small community. Even so, the level of training was not high. Some consideration had been given to the plan of sending rabbinical students to Israel for training, but this presented many serious obstacles.

During the period under review the Jewish community of Venice, with the aid of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), restored five ancient synagogues of the Venice ghetto. These five synagogues, all more than three hundred years old, had been built during the ghetto period in Venice, and contained a treasure of Jewish religious and cultural items.

Social Services

Outside of Rome, the problem of poverty among Italian Jews was not a serious one. The larger communities maintained homes for the aged and had welfare departments which gave help to the needy. In no case could the help given to needy persons be described as adequate, though some communities did better than others. Proportionately, the community of Trieste showed the greatest awareness of the need to help, with Milan second. Rome, however, had a serious problem of persons whose income was too low, whose health was poor, and whose housing was inadequate. Of the 12,000 members of the Roman Jewish community, approximately 5,000 lived in and around the area which until 1870 had been the ghetto. A recent study of this population³ showed that about 60 per cent of this group had a monthly per capita income of less than 10,000 lire (\$16). Another 25 per cent had an income of between 10,000 and 15,000 lire per month (\$16-\$24), and only 15 per cent received more than 15,000 lire. Housing conditions were extremely poor. The 85 per cent who fell into the two lower income groups suffered from serious overcrowding, an average of 3.7 persons occupying each room in the lowest income group, and 2.9 in the middle group. Even the upper income group suffered from lack of adequate space, with 1.6 persons per room. All of the buildings in this ghetto area were old. They were built close together, with very narrow streets. Consequently, ventilation was poor and most of the rooms never got any sunshine. The outlook for amelioration of these conditions in the foreseeable future was dismal, since moving meant going from a rent-controlled dwelling to one that was not controlled, which meant pay-

³ Made by the JDC in March and April 1954.

ing a rent ten, twenty, or even more times the controlled rents. With the exception of public housing, all new building was rentable at whatever the traffic would bear, which was far too high for this group. The amount of public housing was insignificant.

Half of those in the sample studied were found to be in need of treatment. The doctors who conducted the examination reported a great number of long-neglected illnesses, a serious lack of long-term treatment facilities, and an almost complete ignorance of basic hygiene.

The Roman Jewish housing condition appeared to be somewhat worse than in Italy as a whole, but the income and health condition of the Roman Jews probably were slightly better. Because of the abnormal occupation distribution resulting from the extreme restrictions imposed until their relatively recent emancipation from the ghetto, the Jews probably suffered less from unemployment. The Jewish community's figures⁴ showed that of the gainfully employed members of the community, 47 per cent were merchants and 8 per cent were in the professions. Twenty-two per cent were peddlers, some with a fixed stand, others with only a briefcase, some with a license, but many without. Every day some of the unlicensed were caught; they might spend a few days in custody or might be released immediately, but almost invariably their stock was confiscated. Employees and pensioners comprised 17 per cent of the total, while only 1 per cent were engaged in skilled labor. The remaining 5 per cent were distributed in a great variety of occupations.

The welfare department of the community had very inadequate means. During 1953, the total distributed in relief grants amounted to about 2,000,000 lire (\$3,200), hardly enough to meet any but the most dire emergencies. Because of the high number of self-employed persons, many were not entitled to the inadequate benefits of the health insurance system. OSE had attempted to provide some relief for this problem. OSE operated clinics in the major cities, but its main activities were in Rome, where it operated two clinics, one for adults and another for children. Needy persons certified by the welfare department of the Jewish community were given medical services and medicaments free of charge. Persons with a small income were required to pay a nominal fee.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany gave the JDC a grant of 100,000,000 lire (\$160,000) to be spent on behalf of Italian Jews during 1954. These funds, approved in March 1954, were expected to contribute immeasurably to the relief of great need.

REFUGEES

Despite the thousands of refugees from Central and Eastern Europe who had gone through Italy since World War II en route to Israel, the United States, and other overseas countries, fewer than 2,000 remained in the country. Because of its economic position, Italy had not proved attractive as a country of settlement for these people. Most of the remaining refugees were elderly persons who either found it impossible to get visas to other countries

⁴ As of March 1954.

or feared the difficulties of establishing themselves in a new land. A very high proportion of them (600) were dependent on the JDC for their daily bread. Only about 50 were still living in a refugee camp, so that the chapter of Jews in refugee camps in Italy could be said to be closed. During the period under review, the JDC and HIAS aided the emigration of 150 refugees, most of them to the United States.

At the time of writing (August 1954), the prospects for any significant emigration of refugees during the coming months were not good. As yet, no visas had been given under the United States Refugee Relief Act (August 1953), although it was one year old. Canadian emigration was practically restricted to members of the immediate family of a Canadian resident or persons with certain special skills, and emigration to South American countries was barely a trickle.

Relations With Israel

The leaders of Italian Jewry felt a very close identification with Israel and were very active in its support.

The same could not be said of Italian Jewish youth. There were, of course, Zionists among the membership of the Federazione Giovanile Ebraica Italiana (Federation of Italian Jewish Youth), but Zionism was by no means the dominant ideology. There was one small *hachsharah* agricultural training farm, but the number in training and the number likely to emigrate were negligible. Despite the poor conditions under which many Italian Jews lived, there was virtually no interest in emigrating to Israel.

Contributions to the Keren Kayemeth had gone down somewhat in 1953 and 1954 from their peak of 100,000,000 lire (\$160,000) in 1948 and 1949.

During the year under review, the first formal trade agreement was concluded between Italy and Israel in March 1954. Under this agreement, Israel was to buy from Italy \$10,000,000 worth of goods annually. The major items were textiles, rice, non-ferrous metals, chemicals, raw materials for plastics, machinery, and gasoline. Italy was to buy \$3,000,000 worth of Israel bananas, industrial diamonds, potash and phosphates. This would represent the first opportunity for Israeli exporters to come into the Italian market, and might establish a basis for expanded trade in the future.

Since May 1948 Italy and Israel had been involved in negotiations on claims by Israeli citizens against the Italian government for indemnification for trucks seized by the Italian government in Trieste in 1943. On the other hand, Italian nationals who had deposits in Palestinian banks at the time of the establishment of Israel had been claiming indemnification from Israel for the losses they sustained in being forced to accept Israel pounds for their higher valued Palestinian pound credits. An agreement was concluded⁵ under which the Israel government accepted the responsibility for settling these claims of Israeli nationals and the Italian government accepted responsibility for the claims of Italians with respect to Palestinian pounds.

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⁵June 1954.