

Latin America

MEXICO

DURING 1949-50 the government of President Miguel Alemán continued to veer right of center. Politically, the once powerful leftist Partido Popular led by Vicente Lombardo Toledano was on the decline. Economically, the government repeatedly announced its willingness to welcome private enterprise, foreign as well as domestic. The government's labor policy had altered considerably from what it had been during the radical Cárdenas regime from December, 1934, to November, 1940, and even during the liberal presidency of Manuel Avila Camacho, President Alemán's predecessor. The government representative on the Juntas Federales de Conciliación y Arbitraje was no longer completely on the side of labor in all conflicts between capital and labor.

Evidence of the growing rapprochement between the government of Mexico and the Catholic Church was seen in the election of the Archbishop of Mexico to membership in the Academia Mexicana de la Lengua, an honor unimaginable during the regimes of Calle, Cárdenas, or Avila Camacho. The Catholic Church had occasion also to express its gratitude for the return to ecclesiastic authorities of certain former church possessions appropriated during the revolutionary period.

On the other hand, the power of the ultra-nationalist and pro-fascist Unión Sinarquista was on the wane. The Sinarquist "march on the capital" was a complete fiasco. Only four thousand adherents turned out, instead of the forty thousand predicted. Notwithstanding the protest of several organizations the government granted permission for the Sinarquist gathering, on the grounds that the Mexican constitution guaranteed freedom of assembly where violence was not appealed to or implied. This was in line with the government's continued reiteration of devotion to democratic principles and abhorrence of racial and religious prejudice. The Jewish population of Mexico viewed the government of President Alemán as one of friendly benevolence.

Jewish Population

There were no exact statistical data available concerning the Jewish population of Mexico. Although the Comité Central had decided in 1949 to establish a statistical bureau, internal dissensions within the community prevented the realization of this project as well as that of a community *pinkas*, or record.

It was estimated that the total number of Jews in Mexico was between 20,000 and 25,000, out of a total population of 25,000,000, as revealed by the population census of June 6, 1950. The Mexican Jewish press urged the Jewish population to identify themselves in the questions dealing with national origin, language, and religion, in order to obtain some approximation of the Jewish population figures.

It was estimated that some 17,000 of the 20,000–25,000 Jews were concentrated in the capital, Mexico City. Of the remainder of the Jewish population the majority was distributed in the larger provincial cities of Guadalajara, capital of the state of Jalisco, and Monterrey, capital of the state of Nuevo León. Smaller numbers of Jews were established in such smaller cities and towns as Puebla, Pachuca, and Toluca. There was a marked trend among Jews in provincial communities to send their children to Mexico City and even to migrate thither themselves, in order to provide their children with Jewish surroundings.

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

The occupational distribution of the Jews of Mexico began to undergo slight but significant changes during 1949–50. The Jews continued to be heavily represented in light industry, principally in sweater and underwear manufacturing. They were far less represented in large and heavy industry. Jews continued to be an important factor in the commercial life of Mexico City and the larger provincial cities and towns. The Jewish Banco Mercantil de México enlarged its capital by a million pesos (\$115,000), and was recognized by governmental authorities as one of the soundest financial institutions in Mexico.

However, though the first-generation Mexican Jews were thriving economically, there were signs of the beginning of a process of pauperization among a small but not inconsiderable sector of the Jewish community. In addition, the question of the occupational distribution of the second-generation Mexican Jews was becoming urgent. For there were almost 80 Jewish physicians practicing in Mexico City, and some 200 Jewish students were pursuing their medical education. Since Mexican patients could not be counted on as a permanent source of income and Jewish immigration to Mexico was virtually excluded, there was considerable agitation in the Jewish press for Jewish youth voluntarily to eschew the liberal professions, particularly medicine. There were Jewish students in the schools of engineering and chemistry, both of which afforded promising careers in view of the industrialization of Mexico. But, although no statistical data was available, these students were far outnumbered by the Jewish medical students.

Civic and Political Status

The Mexican Jews received equal treatment under law with other elements of the Mexican population. There were no instances of governmental discrimination against Jewish residents. The overwhelming majority of the adult Mexican Jews were citizens, and almost all of their children were

Mexican citizens by birth. The process of the psychological as well as financial integration of Mexican Jewish immigrants was completed.

There were no instances of organized anti-Semitism and discrimination in Mexico, in the fields of housing, education, or employment, and only a slight amount of social anti-Semitism. The government gave convincing demonstration of its good will by employing Jewish physicians in government hospitals, as well as by naming several young Jewish intellectuals to chairs in academic institutions of higher learning.

The Comité Unido de Antidifamación, composed in equal parts of members of the Comité Central and B'nai B'rith, was carrying on an intensive activity of enlightenment among both Jews and non-Jews. Its monthly, *Tribuna Israelita*, was widely acclaimed for the high calibre of its material and editing. In addition, the Comité Unido published well-written books in Spanish on outstanding Jewish personalities.

Community Organization and Communal Affairs

The Mexican Jewish community was represented by two central bodies: the Comité Central Israelita de México and the Kehiláh Nidje Israel. The Comité was a democratically elected body representing the community in external affairs; the Kehiláh was the central institution for religious Mexican Jewry. The status of the Comité as the representative body of Mexican Jewry vis-a-vis the government of Mexico was confirmed by a statement made by the Minister of the Interior, Adolfo Ruiz Cortines.

It was reported that the Comité was expanding its activities during 1950 by the establishment of a Commission for External Affairs to represent the Jewish community before governmental bodies. All the various Jewish ethnic groups were represented in the Comité: Ashkenazic, Sephardic, German, Hungarian, Arabic, and others. However, in the elections to the Comité held in the Ashkenazic sector in December, 1949, only 1,428 votes were cast, although the census had shown that 5,700 individuals were eligible to cast ballots.

Nidje Israel was engaged in a field of activity much broader than merely the religious. [See *below* for specific activities.]

Jewish Education

During 1949-50 there were four Jewish Ashkenazic all-day schools in Mexico City attended by 75 per cent of the Jewish children of school age, in addition to two Sephardic schools of the Tarbut type, with a total enrollment of almost 200.

The largest of these schools was Colegio Israelita de México, which in December, 1949, had an enrollment of 925. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the student body by department and number of classes.

The personnel involved in instruction and administration amounted to nearly one hundred. Jewish subjects were taught in Yiddish, although Hebrew had an important place in the curriculum. There were no female students

since co-education was banned by law. General, non-Jewish subjects were taught in Spanish by non-Jewish teachers. Highly rated by the Mexican Secretariat of Education, the graduates of the Colegio Israelita were admitted to all Mexican universities. The Colegio was planning to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary with a series of special events during 1950. These included the publication of an anniversary volume, a Jewish Education Month, and a Round Table on Jewish Education.

TABLE I

ENROLLMENT IN COLEGIO ISRAELITA DE MÉXICO, DECEMBER, 1949

<i>Department</i>	<i>No. of Classes</i>	<i>No. of Students</i>
Kindergarten	5	152
Elementary	16	506
Secondary	7	193
Preparatoria (pre-university)	2	50
Teachers Seminary	3	24
TOTAL	<u>33</u>	<u>925</u>

Next in importance to the Colegio Israelita was the Yavne school, founded and maintained by the Kehiláh Nidje Israel along traditional lines. Lacking the Preparatoria and Teachers' Seminary of the Colegio Israelita, Yavne had an enrollment of approximately 450. Extracurricular activities included youth activity in a Bnai Akiba club, whose choir had achieved a local reputation, and the publication of a monthly periodical in Yiddish.

Tarbuth, a school with a Hebrew-Zionist ideology, had not been able to develop as fully as the Colegio Israelita and Yavne. Approximately 200 students were enrolled at Tarbuth.

As a consequence of an internal rift within the Colegio Israelita, a new Jewish school was founded in January, 1950. Nuevo Colegio Israelita had an enrollment of 150. Unlike the other Jewish schools, Nuevo Colegio Israelita did not receive an allocation from the Fareynikter Kampeyn, the Mexican version of a united Jewish appeal, and was forced to rely entirely upon tuition fees for its maintenance. Both Colegio Israelita and Nueva Colegio Israelita published monthlies in Yiddish entitled *Eltern Tribune*.

Another innovation on the Jewish educational scene in Mexico was the establishment by Keliláh Nidje Israel, in co-operation with Sociedad ORT de México, of special technical training courses for graduates of Jewish secondary schools. In June, 1950, forty young men were enrolled in courses in electricity. The scope of the curriculum was expected to be broadened.

Religious Life

The outstanding event in Jewish religious life during 1949-50 was an attempt which ended in frustration to establish a liberal congregation. Although the sponsors stressed that the new congregation would be Conservative rather than Reform, there was an overwhelming communal opposition to the idea which was expressed in the Yiddish press.

During 1949-50 there were five permanent congregations, all of which were self-supporting. In addition there was a part-day religious school called Yeshiva Etz Hayim.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

A new and important trend was evident in the Zionist movement in Mexico during 1949-50. This was the development of a Zionist cultural life, in addition to fund raising for Israel, as a significant aim of the Zionist movement. As a consequence of the adoption of this point of view by the groups represented in the Federación Sionista de México, all the Mexican Zionist groups had expanded or begun new publications and initiated lectures and round table discussions on the subject of the relations between world Zionism and Israel. Each of the Zionist parties, from the Orthodox Mizrachi to the ultranationalist Revisionist, published its own periodical in Yiddish, Spanish, or both languages. A number of pamphlets had been published, and books were planned dealing with Zionist subjects.

There was a considerable effort to attract the Mexican Jewish youth to Zionism. Every Zionist group within the Federación had its own youth branch and youth camps, and sponsored intensive lecture courses for youth.

The former Mexican Christian Committee for Palestine was dissolved, and a new Instituto de Relaciones Culturales entre México e Israel established. The president of the new Institute was Alfonso Francisco Ramirez, associate justice of the Supreme Court, the vice-president Dr. Adolfo Fastlicht, the representative of the Jewish Agency. (*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 31, 1949.)

Social Services

The most important achievement of 1949-50 in the field of social service was the inauguration of an old age home by Kehiláh Nidje Israel in December, 1949. The home had facilities for seventy individuals; its expansion was contemplated.

During 1949-50 Sociedad OSE Mexicana extended its activities for which a complete building was required. OSE continued to send a large number of children to the resort of Cuernavaca during the long winter vacations to improve their health. Unfortunately, the growing number of cases serviced in the OSE medical center attested to the gradual pauperization of a section of Mexican Jewry.

The growing poverty of part of the Jewish community was also demonstrated by the establishment by the Mothers' Association of the Colegio Israelita of a free lunch service for children of indigent parents, and by the increase in the number of applications for free tuition presented to the administration of the Jewish schools. It was necessary for the president of the local welfare aid society to appeal in the Yiddish press for larger contributions. An increasing number of applicants were in need of help to reorganize their businesses or had become bankrupt and needed financial relief.

Cultural Activities

There was a wealth of cultural activities in the Jewish community of Mexico during 1949-50. Most outstanding achievement of all was the publication of the sixth volume of the *Encyclopedia Judaica Castellana*—ten volumes were planned in all.

The Mexican branch of B'nai B'rith continued to serve as an impartial tribune for every shade of Jewish life and thought. During 1949-50 it presented the ex-Irgun Leader, Menachem Beigin, with an opportunity to express his point of view. Dr. I. N. Steinberg, leader of the Freeland League, was also granted a hearing.

The cultural activities of the Comité Central were varied. The Comité Central published several books in Yiddish through its cultural department. In addition, it patronized performances of the Yiddish theater, as well as concerts by Jewish artists. The cultural commission of the Comité Central was planning to found a library and a Jewish Historical Society.

The Kehiláh Nidje Israel was completing the construction of a monument to the six million Jews assassinated by the Nazis, to stand at the cemetery which it maintained.

The Mexican branch of the Jewish Socialist Bund supplemented its bi-weekly *Foroys* with a bi-weekly political periodical, *Di Tzayt*. The Bund was planning to publish a series of books in Yiddish through the Shlomo Mendelsohn Fund. The Kultur Center, a non-Zionist Yiddishist institution, had enlarged its library and instituted monthly performances of Yiddish-language films imported from the United States.

The Zvi Kessel Fund for Yiddish literature granted a series of awards: to Dr. Raphael Mahler for his book on the Karaites; to Abraham Eisen for his volume of short stories, *Menshen fun Ghetto* ("People of the Ghetto"); to David Hoffnung for his stories, *Der Veg fun Payn* ("The Road of Suffering"); and to M. Dluzhnovsky for his *Dos Rod fun Mazel* ("The Wheel of Fate").

Among the important Yiddish writers living in Mexico mention must be made of the well-known poets Jacob Glantz and Isaac Berliner.

Immigration

The immigration of Jews into Mexico was at a standstill, due to the virtual exclusion of Eastern-European immigrants. This policy of tacit discrimination was highly resented by the Mexican Jewish population, though there were no official indications that the limitation of immigrants was directed specifically against Jewish immigration. During 1949-50 two events took place which indicated the true nature of the restriction of Eastern-European immigration. One was an editorial comment on a governmental decision to bring a large number of Italian peasants to Mexico in order to colonize certain uncultivated areas. The writer spoke of this immigration as "highly desirable" in contrast with the "undesirable Jewish immigration." On another occasion, a high governmental official was quoted as declaring that "a

large-scale Jewish immigration would put weapons into the hands of the anti-Semites, of whom there is no scarcity. . . .”

Personalia

Outstanding among the Jewish personalities in Mexico during 1949–50 was Israel Ambassador Eliahu Elath, who was welcomed by the Jewish community with great enthusiasm. The Mexican government extended every courtesy to Ambassador Elath, but his visit unfortunately did not improve the possibility for the establishment of official relations between Mexico and Israel.

SOLOMON KAHAN

CUBA

DURING THE PERIOD under review (July, 1949 to July, 1950) political conditions in Cuba continued tranquil, in the wake of the popular insurrection of 1933 which had deposed dictator Gerard Machado y Morales and his government. The sugar crop, Cuba's chief source of livelihood, was sold on the field to the United States and continued to bring in an annual income of about \$500,000,000. Cuba was one of the countries which still maintained the gold standard and suffered from no dearth of American dollars. Its balance of trade with the United States was in Cuba's favor to the extent of \$50,000,000 annually.

These secure economic and political conditions were reflected in the prosperity of the small Jewish community that had been residing in Cuba since the early twenties.

Population

The Jewish population of Cuba was approximately 10,000 out of a total Cuban population of 5,000,000. The majority, some 7,500, resided in Havana. Of this number, 5,500 were Yiddish-speaking and hailed originally from Poland, Russia, Rumania, and Lithuania; approximately 2,000 were Sephardic Jews from Turkey and the Balkans.

In addition, there were some 1,650 Jews distributed in the five provinces of Cuba, 750 refugees, and 100 members of the American Jewish colony. A breakdown of the Jewish population in the Cuban provinces by ethnic group is presented in Table 1.

During the period from September, 1948, to September, 1949, the total number of deaths among the Cuban Jewish population was sixty-two, according to the registrations of the two Jewish cemeteries in Havana.

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

The majority of both the Eastern-European and the Sephardic Jewish groups in Cuba were engaged in commerce and industry. Seventy per cent of the Sephardic group were small businessmen and peddlers. The Eastern-

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF JEWISH POPULATION IN CUBAN PROVINCES
BY ETHNIC GROUP

<i>Province</i>	<i>Yiddish-Speaking</i>	<i>Sephardic</i>
Pinar del Rio	50	200
Matanzas	100	150
Santa Clara	100	200
Camagüey	150	250
Oriente	100	350
TOTAL	<u>500</u>	<u>1,150</u>
GRAND TOTAL		1,650

European Jews were in a somewhat better economic position. Among the occupations where Jews were represented in Cuba were building construction, and the clothing, shoe, and linen industries. There was no Jewish working class, the number of Jewish laborers being insignificant. In the provinces as well as in Havana, the Cuban Jews were engaged in commerce.

Civic and Political Status

An estimated 70 per cent of the Cuban Jewish population were citizens of Cuba. Cuban Jewry joined all of Cuba in celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the Cuban flag. The Centro Israelita of Cuba observed the event May 15, 1950, with an affair at which the author A. Z. Weinstein and the Cuban intellectual and historian Dr. Enrique Gay Galbo spoke, the poet Eliezer Arnowsky recited a poem composed for the occasion, and the students in the sixth grade of the Autonomous School at the Centro Israelita declaimed. The Modern Jewish School under the direction of Dr. Ida Glazer-Castiel dedicated the evening of May 25, 1950 to a similar patriotic celebration.

Communist elements were without influence in Jewish life, either in terms of numbers or ideological inroads.

Discrimination and Anti-Semitism

During the period under review (July, 1949 to July, 1950), there were no instances of official anti-Semitism in Cuba. The government was friendly to the Cuban Jewish population; Jews occupied few governmental positions because such positions were not attractive, and few young Jewish physicians were available to accept positions in the various government hospitals. For the same reasons Jews did not enter the armed forces, where service was voluntary.

Community Organization and Communal Affairs

The period under review witnessed several unsuccessful attempts to achieve a consolidation of Jewish communal life in Cuba.

On July 6, 1949, a conference of the philanthropic institutions failed to achieve unification. The effort initiated by the Kehilla Ahdut Israel on August 13, 1949, to enroll all the members of the Cuban Jewish community in the Kehilla failed, despite the various benefits offered by the Kehilla. Such efforts at communal organization had been made several times in the past and had proven unsuccessful.

It also proved impossible for the World Jewish Congress to achieve the organization of a central Jewish representative body in Cuba which would join and cooperate with the World Jewish Congress. Visits made for this purpose by Dr. I. Gottlieb in October, 1949, and Dr. Saul Sokal in April, 1950, were fruitless.

FUND RAISING FOR LOCAL NEEDS

On November 2, 1949, the American Joint Distribution Committee, having concluded its welfare activities in Cuba, in October 15, 1948 donated 25 per cent of its funds to the local Jewish Refugees Committee, the committee in charge of refugee aid. This step was announced by a committee for a campaign to meet local needs presided over by David H. Brandon, a member of the American Jewish colony in Cuba. The campaign succeeded in raising the sum of \$30,000.

INTERNAL DISPUTES

The inherent difficulty of centralizing the representation and organization of the Jewish community in Cuba was also indicated by several disputes among various organizations in the community during the period under review.

The elections held on December 4, 1949, within the Centro Israelita de Cuba was the scene of a struggle between two political blocs: one representing the newly organized Kehilla Ahdut Israel, the other representing the Autonomous School at the Centro Israelita. As a result of this conflict, two rolls of candidates were presented to the electorate. The issue at stake was the kind of Jewish education to be provided for the children of the four hundred members of the Centro Israelita. The Kehilla's orientation was to an Orthodox philosophy, that of the bloc of the Autonomous School to a secular one. The Autonomous School bloc emerged the victor at the polls.

But the internal dispute did not end at this point. In January, 1950, a group under the inspiration of Rabbi Meyer Rosenbaum, the spiritual leader of Kehilla Ahdut Israel, launched a campaign for a prospective school building in Havana. There was immediate opposition from the Zionists, on the one hand, who were at the very outset of their fund-raising campaign for Israel, and on the other from the Centro Israelita, which viewed the Kehilla's action as an attempt to assume the role of a representative body. The Centro Israelita, the Unión Sionista de Cuba, and the Yidisher Sochrim Farain (Jewish Chamber of Commerce) published a statement in the newspaper *Habaner Lebn* in February, 1950, to the effect that the building had been purchased by individuals and not by any institution. As a result of these and other discussions in the press and at public meetings, the committee headed

by Herman Heisler which was responsible for the purchase of the building decided that it should serve the interests of the Jewish community as a whole, and not that of any one organization. At the time of writing (June, 1950), there were still reverberations of this incident, despite the fact that the building had been purchased in January, 1950 (at a cost of \$140,000).

Jewish Education

There were four Jewish schools in Havana during the period under review. There were no Jewish educational institutions in the provinces.

The Jewish schools in Havana taught Yiddish, Hebrew, Spanish, and Jewish history, and their students were graduated into the free public secondary schools. A nominal tuition fee was charged by the Jewish schools.

The largest of these schools was the Autonomous School at the Centro Israelita, with an enrollment exceeding 400. The other Jewish schools were: the modern Jewish school which was under the direction of an individual, Dr. Ida Glazer-Castiel, and had an enrollment of 100; the Theodor Herzl School maintained by the Sephardic community, with an enrollment of 100; Tahkemoni, which was founded by Rabbi Meyer Rosenbaum of the Kehilla Ahdut Israel on October 20, 1949, after the local Communist sympathizers had been forced to close down their school in September, 1949, because of financial difficulties (Tahkemoni had an enrollment of 80); and a private summer academy maintained by David Perez to tutor students for high school entrance examinations, with a normal enrollment of 100.

Jewish students were faring well in the free public high schools and university. Thus, Ruben Gurfinkel received special mention as the best Cuban high school student of the year and a prize of \$3,000 to continue his studies.

In addition to these communal and private academic educational institutions, ORT continued to offer vocational training. On July 18, 1949, forty-eight students were graduated from the ORT school in Havana where they had taken vocational courses in watchmaking, leatherwork, and the garment trades.

Religious Life

There were only four synagogues in Cuba, and these were but poorly attended. About 30 per cent of the population observed the dietary laws. The few Orthodox slaughter houses and three kosher Jewish restaurants were under the supervision of the Kehilla Ahdut Israel.

In September, 1949, Rabbi Milton Weissberg arrived in Cuba to serve as rabbi of the American Jewish colony's Temple Beth Israel, also known as the United Hebrew Congregation. Rabbi Weissberg was also appointed the director of the local branch of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation. Rabbi Weissberg was officially initiated into his spiritual duties at a solemn ceremony held at the Temple on September 16, 1949.

An important event in the life of the Jewish religious community of Cuba was the delivery of an address by Robert Butler, Ambassador from the United

States, to the United Hebrew Congregation at a solemn service on March 24, 1950.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

Zionist and pro-Israel activities continued to occupy much of the energies of the Cuban Jewish community. Strenuous efforts were made to raise funds for Israeli institutions; Zionist visitors from Israel and the United States were enthusiastically received; local Zionist organizations celebrated various Zionist special occasions; and representative Zionist bodies in Cuba intervened with the Cuban government on behalf of Israel.

FUND RAISING FOR ISRAEL

On December 21, 1949, a national United Campaign for Israel was initiated at a large mass meeting in a Cuban hall. Israel Goldstein, a member of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, was the featured visitor of the occasion. Miguel Graiver, a representative of Argentinian Zionism, was in charge of the administration of the campaign which had as its aim the erection of 200 houses in Israel at a cost of \$400,000. However, only \$100,000 of this sum was achieved. The communal dissension which was responsible for the failure of the 1949 campaign [see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1950, p. 262], was to a certain extent also responsible for the decline in fund raising for Israel during the period under review. Among the discordant factors was the attempt by Jewish Communist elements to sabotage the campaign through innuendo and vilification.

In an effort to arouse enthusiasm for the United Campaign for Israel, Major Meir Laniado of the Israeli Army, first governor of Jaffa, visited Cuba in December, 1949, and was honored at a number of meetings by both the Eastern-European and Sephardic communities. Major Laniado was also received by General Ruperto Cabrera, chief of the Cuban military forces, and by Señor Segundo Curti, Minister of Defense, in the presence of other Zionist representatives.

RELATIONS WITH WORLD ZIONISM AND ISRAEL

A number of Zionist visitors from abroad came to Cuba during the period under review to encourage cultural and scientific interchange between Cuban Jewry and the Zionist movement.

On November 1, 1949, Pinhas Shteinwaks arrived in Cuba in connection with the organization of a Zionist Plenary Council which, it was hoped, would enable Cuban Zionist Jewry to send delegates to the Twenty-third World Zionist Congress.

On January 26, 1950, Abraham Hamlin, a labor leader from the United States, spoke on the subject of "The Role of the Histadrut in the State of Israel." On April 5, 1950, Israel Stolarsky, the director of the Histadrut for Latin America, spoke before the Liga pro Histadrut at a special Third Seder.

On March 21, 1950, Dr. Salomon Tocker, director of the Latin American Department of the Weizmann Institute, arrived in Cuba. Dr. Tocker delivered an address at the National University on April 12 on the theme "Scientific

Exchange between Israel and Latin America." Dr. Tocker succeeded in founding a committee to encourage scientific exchange between Cuba and Israel in which well-known Cuban professors participated.

In May, 1950, a Jewish committee in behalf of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the Weizmann Institute of Science, and the Hebrew Institute of Technology in Haifa was established. Adolph Kates was chosen honorary president and Fernando Martín Hirsel president.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND ISRAEL

Relations between the government of Cuba and the state of Israel were generally favorable. On May 25, 1950, Abraham Drapkin, the director of the Latin American division of the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs, arrived in Cuba on a special diplomatic mission. He was received by Dr. Ernesto Dihigo in the presence of the Israeli representative in Cuba and the editor of *Habaner Lebn*, Sender M. Kaplan.

In October, 1949, Señor Kaplan intervened in the name of the Unión Sionista de Cuba with the Cuban Postal Ministry regarding the poor postal connections between Cuba and Israel. As a result of his intervention, communications between these two countries were improved.

ZIONIST CONTROVERSY

A controversy developed within the Zionist movement in Cuba when Menachem Beigin, the leader of the Herut party in Israel and former head of the Irgun, visited Cuba on May 14, 1950. He was enthusiastically received by his supporters. However, the Zionist Plenary Council took no official role in his reception, and the Hashomer Hatzair distributed leaflets attacking Beigin for terroristic tactics.

SOCIAL SERVICES

With the closing of the JDC office in June, 1950, the Cuban Jewish community was left with three social service agencies: the Committee to Aid Tubercular and Mental Patients, the Jewish Women's Federation of Cuba, and the Jewish Refugee Committee. All these organizations were unfortunately in dire financial straits.

The Committee to Aid Tubercular and Mental Patients, founded in 1926, administered a clinic which provided medical assistance to indigent patients. The Committee was non-sectarian and rendered financial support to its clients. Approximately ninety patients took advantage of the Committee's free services monthly.

The Committee had a membership of nine hundred monthly contributors who provided the Committee with an income of from \$12,000 to \$14,000 annually. The remainder of its budget of \$25,000 was derived from special campaigns and individual donations.

The Jewish Women's Federation of Cuba was founded in 1924 in order to maintain a children's home. At the time of writing (July, 1950), the children were being maintained by their parents or in private homes, under Federation auspices.

The Jewish Women's Federation of Cuba and the Committee to Aid

Tubercular and Mental Patients were identical in budget and function. They differed only in the respect that the Women's Federation provided no medical assistance. Unfortunately the income of both these agencies was insufficient to cover the needs of the indigent and invalid individuals who required their services.

In addition to child care, the Jewish Women's Federation of Cuba maintained a lending bank that played a significant role in the Jewish community. During the course of years the bank had built up a capital of some \$25,000, so that it was able to lend approximately \$70,000 annually to applicants. The bank enabled many individuals to achieve financial security.

On October 15, 1948, when the JDC closed its office in Cuba, a Jewish refugee committee was formed by the Cuban Jewish community to take over the work of the JDC and aid elderly and indigent refugees. This committee received its funds from the general campaign of 1948 as well as 25 per cent of the funds accumulated during the JDC campaign.

In July, 1950, the Jewish Refugee Committee announced that it would be forced to suspend its activities in September, 1950, due to a lack of funds. At the time of writing (July, 1950), only some twenty elderly and invalid refugees who were unemployable required assistance. It was expected that they would be provided for by the Committee to Aid Tubercular and Mental Patients and the Jewish Women's Federation.

CELEBRATIONS

Important occasions in Zionist history were celebrated during the period under review. On April 22, 1950, a large celebration organized by the Zionist Plenary Council in honor of the second anniversary of Israel's independence, was attended by over two thousand persons.

The one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the important Zionist thinker Max Nordau was celebrated on August 12, 1949, by the Unión Sionista de Cuba at a meeting at which Dr. S. Dolnicky, a recently arrived intellectual immigrant, spoke. Nordau's anniversary was also celebrated by the Círculo de los Estudiantes Hebreos on September 13, 1949.

Cultural Activities

Information available concerning Jewish cultural life in Cuba is restricted to the activities within the Eastern-European community.

During June and July of 1949, Iser Goldberg visited Cuba in behalf of the Yiddish Encyclopedia. The local Jewish institutions gave him their cooperation.

On January 3, 1950, the Yiddish poet I. J. Schwartz arrived in Cuba and presented a series of lectures on literary themes.

On February 5, 1950, a guest performance by a Yiddish actors' group from the United States was presented. The actors Herman Yablokoff, Bella Meisel and Hannah Grossberg performed. And on February 12, 1950, Maurice Schwartz appeared with several members of his Yiddish Art Theater in a guest performance of Sholom Aleichem's comedy *Shver tzu zayn a Yid*.

ABRAHAM J. DUBELMAN

ARGENTINA

THE POLITICAL SITUATION in Argentina remained stable under the government of General Juan Perón during the period under review (July, 1949, to July, 1950). Argentina was in a good economic position. There was no unemployment, and the control of imports imposed in September, 1947, had provided the country's industries with rich opportunities. The Jews of Argentina, who were well represented in industry, were actively aiding the development of the Argentinian economy.

Population

According to a census conducted by Jedidio Efrón, at the end of 1946 the Argentine Jewish community numbered 321,546, and constituted 2.2 per cent of the total population of Argentina. During the period between 1946 and 1950 it was estimated that the natural increase of the Jewish population, together with the additions to the Jewish community through immigration, had raised the Jewish population of Argentina to between 350,000 and 360,000.

Civic and Political Status

The Jews of Argentina possessed equal civic and political status with the other citizens of the country. The Jewish community shared in the protection of the clause banning racial and religious discrimination which had been introduced into the revised constitution of Argentina on March 16, 1949. The Organización Israelita Argentina (OIA), a Jewish political organization publicly supported by President Perón, was instrumental in securing the introduction of this clause, through the direct request of its former president, Sujer Matrajt.

The month of July, 1950, marked two years since the establishment in Buenos Aires of the Instituto Judío Argentino de Cultura e Información (IJA). The purpose of the IJA was to acquaint the general Argentine public with Jewish life and problems, as a means of combatting anti-Semitism. Various media, including the newspaper and radio, were employed to publicize pro-Semitic articles and addresses by non-Jews. During the period from 1948 to 1950 twenty-two publications were sponsored by Servicio de Información y Cultura and Informativo Periodístico Argentino, the educational arms of the IJA. In addition to its service to the non-Jewish public, the IJA established a Yiddish department to help orient the Yiddish-speaking population of Argentina in matters of importance to the Jewish community.

Community Organization and Communal Affairs

On March 31, 1949, the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina-Chevra Kedisha of Buenos Aires had taken the important step of transforming itself

into the Comunidad Israelita de Buenos Aires-Kehila Ashkenazit (AMIA), under the presidency of Dr. Moisés Slimim. In assuming the name as well as the duties of a Kehilla, the Comunidad undertook to supply guidance to the 40,000 Jewish families affiliated with it. In order to implement this action, a commission was nominated at a general membership meeting and given the task of preparing a constitution to delimit the functions of a Jewish Kehilla which would be national and traditional in scope.

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMUNIDAD ISRAELITA

The Comunidad's activities extended into many areas of Jewish life in Argentina. The Comunidad contributed 40 per cent of the budget of the Jewish educational budget, a sum amounting to 2,000,000 pesos (approximately \$200,000) annually. The Comunidad's contributions to the united campaign for Israel and its construction of a pavilion in Givat Hasofer, Israel, in the name of the Hebrew poet, Saul Tchernichovsky, were noteworthy. In addition, the Comunidad was engaged in subventing local Jewish cultural activity, and social and relief activity. Thus it was fulfilling the role of a Kehilla such as existed in the former European communities.

SEPHARDIC COMMUNITY

The Sephardic Jewish population of Argentina, which numbered 52,046 in the 1946 census, was organized in separate communities, and possessed an institutional life of its own. However, the Sephardic communities were represented in the Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas (DAIA) and also co-operated to a certain extent in the united campaign for Israel. (The same was true for the smaller German-speaking and Central-European Jewish communities.) The Sephardic youth participated in the Argentine branch of the Maccabi Organization, where they constituted 10 to 12 per cent of the membership.

REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

There were two organizations in the Argentine Jewish community that undertook to represent the community in its relations with the government of Argentina: the Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas (DAIA), and OIA. These two groups differed in their orientation: OIA was a specifically political group which favored the government of General Juan Perón, while DAIA saw its function to be the preservation of the rights of the community as a whole by calling the attention of the proper authorities to every abridgement of constitutional rights and liberties. DAIA was non-political in character and represented the entire Jewish community, including the Sephardic group.

Under the presidency of Dr. Ricardo Dubrovsky, DAIA intervened with the municipal authorities of Buenos Aires on May 29, 1950, to prevent the sale of anti-Semitic literature in public kiosks and book stores.

OIA was conducting an extensive political activity in behalf of the Perón government, and enjoyed the confidence of the General and his influential wife, Madame Eva Perón. Of peculiar political significance for the Jewish community was the expression of friendship to the Jewish community of

Argentina voiced by General Perón on March 3, 1950. General and Madame Perón also expressed their sincere sympathy for Israel at the bon voyage arranged by OIA at the departure of the Argentine Minister to Israel, Dr. Pablo Manguel.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER JEWISH COMMUNITIES

A number of American and world Jewish organizations maintained offices in Buenos Aires, in order to aid the Jewish community in Argentina. Deserving of note were: the World Jewish Congress, represented by Dr. Jacob Hellman; the American Jewish Committee, represented by Maximo Yagupsky; and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), represented by Marc Turkow.

Jewish Education

Of the Jewish children of school age in Buenos Aires, barely 20 per cent were attending Jewish schools during the period under review (July, 1949, to July, 1950). In all, 8,493 children were in attendance at fifty-seven schools, including fifty-three elementary schools, twenty-eight kindergartens, and two mittelshulen. The kindergarten enrollment represented 30 per cent of the total school enrollment, or 2,167. However, there were only sixty students who had reached the sixth grade.

A classification of the Jewish elementary schools in Buenos Aires by size of enrollment is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

JEWISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN BUENOS AIRES, 1949-50

<i>Size of Enrollment</i>	<i>No. of Schools</i>
0-99	33
100-199	11
200-499	6
500 and over	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	53

The Organización Central de Escuelas Israelitas de la AMIA subsidized these schools to the amount of 920,000 pesos (\$92,000). It also subsidized a teachers' seminary to the amount of 290,000 pesos (\$29,000).

CENTRAL ORGANIZATION

There were two organizations in Argentina whose function was the supervision and administration of the Jewish educational system in that country: the Organización Central de Escuelas Israelitas de la AMIA, which supervised the Jewish schools in Buenos Aires, and the Cursos Religiosos Israelitas de la República Argentina, which supervised the religious schools in the Argentine provinces. The Cursos Religiosos subsidized and inspected the Hebrew and Yiddish educational system of the south, as well as a similar system in the province of Entrerios.

The school system administered by the Cursos Religiosos in the provinces of Argentina included sixty-three elementary schools and fifteen kinder-

gartens. These schools were attended by a total of 3,500 students, and were staffed by ninety instructors and administrative personnel. The largest of these schools had an enrollment of 200, and was under the supervision of the local community of Rosario. Under the leadership of Rabbi Jacob Fink the Cursos Religiosos also maintained the Makhon, a seminary which also provided its students with a liberal education. The Makhon had an enrollment of sixty students, and was unique in that it offered its student body a course in Jewish culture in Spanish, Yiddish, and Hebrew. The first graduation ceremonies of the Makhon were to be held in 1950. In addition to the Makhon, the Cursos Religiosos, whose administrator was Dr. Israel Yagupsky, organized an emergency summer course in order to train teachers for its educational system. The budget of the Cursos Religiosos amounted during 1950 to 500,000 pesos (\$50,000).

TEACHERS' SEMINARY

There was a serious shortage of teachers for the Jewish schools in Argentina. In an attempt to meet this shortage, the Comunidad conducted a teachers' seminary under the supervision of the journalist Joseph Mendelsohn; 440 students were in attendance during 1949-50. Of the seventy-nine graduates of the seminary, thirty-nine had emigrated to Israel, and only twenty-eight were instructors in the school system.

CONSTRUCTION

An outstanding phenomenon in Jewish education in Argentina was the renovation and construction of school buildings. Among the outstanding examples was the Yiddish and Hebrew school and community center in the neighborhood of Villa De Voto in Buenos Aires, which was renovated in order to house a kindergarten and serve as a center for the local Jewish cultural and social activities.

Construction included a large building in the center of Buenos Aires, to be known as Hekhal ha-Torah be-Argentina, which was to house all the religious educational institutions of the city maintained by the Orthodox Agudat Israel. The community was indebted to Isar Masel for the funds to cover the maintenance of the schools and building. The Sholem Aleichem secular Yiddish educational system had undertaken the construction of an "integral" mittelshul in the agricultural settlement of Julio Levin. The Sholem Aleichem had also begun the construction of a summer camp for Jewish children. The Tel Aviv school, founded in November, 1939, and whose principal was Simon Lichenstein, had undertaken to construct a series of schools along the Hebrew-Yiddish model, to supplement the four schools already functioning. The Argentine branch of ORT presided over by Moses Avenburg was in the process of completing a new building for its technical school, at the cost of 1,500,000 pesos (\$150,000). The building was to house a trade school for women, as well as one for men.

NEW PROJECTS AND TRENDS

A new field, and one hitherto untouched, was educational summer camps for Jewish children. During 1949-50 the Organización Central conducted a

summer camp near Buenos Aires for the second consecutive year, and with good results; more than six hundred children visited the camp during the season.

Religious Life

Although traditional Judaism had been conspicuously without influence in Argentine Jewish life, there was a growth of Orthodoxy during 1949-50 that centered around Mizrachi, Agudat Israel, and Orthodox youth groups. The Argentine rabbinate, composed of such figures as Rabbi Zev Klein, G. Shlesinger, Amram Blum, and Jacob Fink, began the organization of a committee on religious affairs. Plans called for the appointment of a chief rabbi from outside Argentina.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

During 1949-50 the Jewish community of Argentina began to set about making concrete the enthusiasm which the founding of the state of Israel in May, 1948, had generally awakened in it. To aid this work the Consejo Central Sionista, founded in 1948, served as representative body for all the Zionist organizations of Argentina in relation to the problems of the Zionist movement, specifically that of emigration. It was very necessary for such a central Zionist body to speak on important occasions in the name of the Zionist movement.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND ISRAEL

The arrival in Argentina on August 10, 1949, of Jacob Tsur as minister from Israel and the ceremony of the presentation of his credentials to President Perón were occasions of great satisfaction to the Jewish population of Argentina. In recognition of the importance of the Israel Embassy the Jewish community purchased a building at the cost of 1,500,000 pesos (\$150,000) which it donated to the government of Israel. The Embassy was dedicated on the occasion of the second anniversary of the state of Israel, in May, 1950.

A concrete expression of the friendly relations between Argentina and Israel was the conclusion of a commercial treaty involving the sum of \$10,000,000. In addition to this official display of sympathy with Israel, the government of Argentina expressed its humanitarian impulses: Madame Eva Perón was responsible for the shipment to Israel of a transport of food and clothing for the young immigrants to that country.

FUND RAISING FOR ISRAEL

The united campaign for Israel during 1949-50 was a conspicuous success under the leadership of Simón Mirelman. Aspersions were cast at the campaign by the "progressive" element in the Jewish community, who announced a "popular campaign" of its own, and went so far as to send a delegation to Israel in February, 1950, to study the needs of that country. However, the "progressives" were boycotted by the remainder of the Jewish community.

The united campaign for 1950-51 was introduced in Argentina by Joseph Sprinzak, chairman of the Israel Knesset (parliament). Represented in the campaign were: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), ORT-OSE, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Weizmann Institute of Science, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, and the World Jewish Congress. The Jewish Agency agreed to contribute 3.5 per cent of its receipts from the campaign to the Argentine Jewish educational organizations.

EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL

A great deal of emphasis had been laid by the Zionist movement since the founding of the state of Israel in May, 1948, on the emigration of Jewish youth from Argentina to Israel, to aid in the construction of Israel. Under the supervision of the Argentine office of the Jewish Agency, a number of hakhsharot (agricultural training farms) were in existence, at which approximately two hundred young people were preparing to migrate to Israel. Several hundred halutzim (pioneers) emigrated to Israel from Argentina during the period 1948-50. All but one of these hakhsharot were under the supervision of partisan Zionist groups—Asociación Poale Sión-Zeire Sión, representing Labor Zionists, Hanoar Hazoni (General Zionists), Organización Religiosa Sionista Mizrahi (Orthodox Zionists), etc. In addition to the hakhsharot, the Confederación Juvenil Sionista Argentina, the federation of Zionist youth groups, sent thirty young people to Israel to undergo a two-year training course in order to return to Argentina as youth leaders.

VISITS TO AND FROM ISRAEL

A number of Argentine Jews visited Israel during 1949-50; to accommodate the tourists the local Argentine Jewish traveler's aid organization had decided to build a visitors' shelter in Haifa. However, the devaluation of the Argentine peso was a serious obstacle in the way of a larger wave of Argentine tourists to Israel.

Among the important visitors from Israel to Argentina during 1949-50, mention must be made of: Joseph Sprinzak, chairman of Knesset, whose visit was described above; Yitzhak Gruenbaum, former Minister of the Interior in the first government of Israel; Samuel Juchobitzky, one of the first settlers in Palestine, and active in the Jewish National Fund; and Rabbi Zeev Gold, Mizrahi leader and member of the Jewish Agency. Other visitors included Shlomo Z. Shragai, Meir Grossman, and Leo Taubman.

Isaac Arcavy, a young Argentine Jewish intellectual, was appointed a representative of the Jewish Agency in Latin America. Dr. Abraham Mibashan, director of the political department of the Jewish Agency in Argentina, was responsible for the appointment of other native Jewish young people to positions of importance in the Argentine Zionist movement.

Social Services

The inflation of Argentine currency and the continued rise in the cost of living was making it difficult for Jewish social institutions in Argentina

to complete the plans they had adopted for expansion of services. This situation was aggravated during 1949-50 by the needs of Israel; the result was that such institutions as the Hospital Israelita supported by the Sociedad Israelita Ezrah in Buenos Aires had appealed to the united campaign for Israel to allot a specific sum for local services.

LOCAL SERVICES

The Hospital Israelita, founded in 1900, was under the presidency of Leon Kajani. Reputed to be one of the best hospitals in Buenos Aires, at the end of 1949 the Hospital Israelita added a wing for eye diseases named after Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the President of Israel. The hospital operated under an annual budget of 4,000,000 pesos (\$400,000); because of the inflation mentioned above, a number of the wards and wings were unable to operate.

The Maccabi Organization was in a similar situation, lacking the sum of 250,000 pesos (\$25,000) to complete a handsome center for its 5,000 youthful members. The building of the Yiddish and Hebrew school H. N. Bialik in Villa Crespo remained unfinished. The Colony established by OSE in 1948 for the care of sickly children did not function during 1949-50. The organization Hogar Israelita Argentino para Ancianos y Huérfanos, which had built a complete city for old folks and orphans outside of Buenos Aires, was finding difficulties in the way of undertaking new construction. Under the leadership of Moises Kleinman, Hogar Israelita had, however, decided to complete its projects, despite the financial situation.

AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

An important event in the life of the Jewish population of Argentina was the liquidation of the office of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in April, 1950. Because of the new circumstances created by the appearance of the state of Israel and the practical cessation of Jewish immigration into Argentina, the JDC office in Argentina was reduced: J. B. Lightman, the JDC representative in Argentina, was withdrawn, and Julius Lomnitz remained as the JDC representative in the united campaign. Mr. Lightman was appointed the director of community affairs in Europe for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

A unique phenomenon in Argentine Jewish life was the presence of a number of large banks whose operations rose during 1949-50, despite the shrinkage in credit and other controls imposed by the governmental Banco Central. During the course of 1949-50 the Jewish banks expanded their capital by the issuance of new series of stocks, and also established new branches.

The largest of these banks were Banco Israelita del Rio de la Plata, the Banco Mercantile, and the Banco Commercial (formerly Banco Industrial). Possessing a total of more than 30,000,000 pesos (\$3,000,000), they were all involved in construction projects. These banks had begun as charitable mutual aid organizations and retained their sensitivity to popular Jewish needs. In September, 1949, the Banco Israelita sent a delegation to Europe

and Israel in order to establish financial relations with banking institutions abroad, and to facilitate commercial exchange between Argentina and Israel.

There were similar banks on a smaller scale in most of the cities and towns in the provinces where there was a Jewish population. In addition, there were a score of credit co-operatives in Buenos Aires. The Jewish insurance companies Central del Plata in Rosario and Febar in Buenos Aires, operating in a new field (Central del Plata was founded in 1945 and Febar in 1946), were prospering.

Cultural Activities

Several local Jewish organizations and one branch of a world Jewish organization were engaged in cultural activity in Argentina. Prominent in this activity was the Comunidad, which sponsored adult education lectures in both Yiddish and Spanish that were attended by large audiences. Another local institution, Sociedad Hebraica, conducted courses in higher Jewish education and presented permanent art exhibits.

An event of importance in the cultural life of the Jewish community was the celebration on August 1, 1949, of the tenth anniversary of the founding of Instituto Científico Judío-IWO (YIVO). During the ten years of its existence, the library of YIVO had succeeded in collecting 17,000 copies of books in many languages.

The Argentine branch of the World Congress for Jewish Culture had set out to lay the foundations for a strong structure of a Yiddish-centered culture in Argentina. Among its achievements mention must be made of the appearance of the anthology *In Eynem*; the celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of the death of Elijah Bahur; the creation of a prize for literature donated by Avrom Leib and Pinkhos Hoffer; and the initiation of the publication of Simon Dubnow's classic *An Outline of Jewish History*. The World Congress for Jewish Culture was also responsible for bringing the partisan poet Schmerke Katcherginsky to Argentina, in order to develop Jewish cultural life. The World Congress was under the chairmanship of the author, Samuel Rollansky.

The Yiddisher Kultur Farband (IKUF), representing the "progressive" elements of the Jewish population, published a monthly and conducted the IKUF publishing house, as well as the Yiddish Folks theater (IFT) to house which a large building was under construction. During 1949-50 the journalist B. Z. Goldberg of the United States visited Argentina under the sponsorship of IKUF. However, IKUF remained isolated from the rest of the Jewish community, because of its political irresponsibility and hostility to the state of Israel.

LITERATURE

Argentina continued to play a prominent role in Yiddish literature during 1949-50, chiefly through the efforts of the publishing house Farlag fun Poylishe Yidentum. Under the direction of Marc Turkow and Abraham Middleburg of the Union Central de Judíos Polacos en la Argentina, a record number of a hundred thousand copies of the sixty-five works published by the

Farlag were reported to have been sold during the three years of the Farlag's existence. The Farlag had achieved international acclaim for its effort to erect a monument to creative Polish Jewry.

In the summer of 1950, the Union of Bessarabian Jews in Argentina began its literary activity under the guidance of Jacob Botashansky and I. L. Grussman.

PERIODICALS

A number of Jewish periodicals celebrated anniversaries during 1949-50. *Die Yiddishe Zeitung*, the oldest Jewish newspaper in Argentina, celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary in November, 1949. Under the editorship of Matias Stoliar, *Die Yiddishe Zeitung* was considered one of the best and most influential Yiddish newspapers in the world.

El Colonista Cooperador, the publication of the central committee of the Jewish colonial co-operative (Fraternidad Agraria), celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary under the editorship of Abraham Gabes in April, 1950, with an enlarged edition. *Argentinier Beymelekh* celebrated its tenth anniversary; *Der Shpigl*, published by I. L. Grussman, celebrated its twentieth anniversary in January, 1950; *Rosarier Leben*, edited by Nahum Wainer, and the only Jewish periodical in the Argentine provinces, celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in July, 1949. In July, 1949, *Davke*, a quarterly for literature and criticism, began publication under the editorship of S. Suskevich.

THEATER

During 1949-50 Maurice Schwartz and Joseph Buloff toured Argentina with their troupes. Schwartz produced I. L. Peretz's *Die Dray Matones* ("The Three Gifts") and Sholom Asch's *Der Tehilim Yid* ("The Psalm Jew"). Buloff appeared in several Yiddish classics and a Yiddish adaptation of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. Both troupes met with great success.

LECTURES AND EXHIBITIONS

Significant elements in the Argentine cultural picture were the visit of Dr. Jacob Shatzky, who delivered instructive lectures; and the exhibitions of the art of Arie Aroch, an Israeli painter, and of Rafael Mendelzweig, who depicted the tragic European events which he had witnessed.

Immigration

From January, 1949, to July, 1950, some 8,000 Jewish survivors of the Nazi catastrophe immigrated to Argentina from Europe. More than 6,000 of these immigrants entered Argentina illegally via the adjacent countries. However, they were pardoned by the government of Argentina on January 20, 1948, and granted legal residence in Argentina. The terminal date by which the immigrants could register for legal residence was deferred to July 31, 1950.

OIA was empowered by the government of Argentina to regulate Jewish immigration and guarantee the political views of the immigrants. OIA co-operated with Sociedad de Protección a los Inmigrantes Israelitas in this labor.

Personalia

Among the communal leaders who died during 1949-50 were the following:

Solomon Furst, one of the earliest Jewish settlers in Argentina and among the founders of important institutions.

Chaim Epstein, veteran Zionist and leader in the Jewish National Fund.

Federico Kotliar, who devoted many years to Hogar Israelita.

Dr. Wolff Nijenshon, a veteran Zionist and author of books in Spanish dealing with the history of Zionism.

Simje Banchik, one of the leaders in the agricultural movement, founder of the agrarian co-operative in Basavilbaso (Entrerios), and active in the Zionist movement.

Rabbi David Maliar, rabbi of Pasor Temple, one of the most important rabbis in the community.

Alberto Gerchunoff, co-editor of the newspaper *La Nacion*, a Spanish stylist whose *Gauchos Judios* was one of the classics of Argentine literature.

HONORS

Arturo M. Luziatti received a prize from the government of Argentina for a musical composition in honor of General José de San Martín, whose hundredth anniversary was celebrated with fervor throughout Latin America. Luziatti, who occupied a professorial chair at the National Conservatory, was a descendant of the famous Luziatti (Luzzatto) family of Italy.

SALOMON WASSERTZUG

CHILE

ONE OF THE essentially democratic countries in South America, Chile continued to function freely under the government of Gabriel González Videla and the Radical party.

The economic situation was seriously affected by the diminution of the export of copper, the principal source of Chile's income. This circumstance gravely affected the national economy and brought the trade unions into unusually energetic action on the national scene. Backed by united syndicalist support, they demanded higher wages and salaries, thus accelerating the process of inflation.

On the international scene, Chile's openly anti-Communist policy had led it to sever relations with Soviet Russia and its satellite countries in 1948, and to lend strong support to the Good Neighbor policy of the United States. President González Videla's visit to the United States in April, 1950, on the invitation of President Harry S. Truman reinforced the friendly relations between Chile and the United States.

None of these events was directly reflected in the life of the Jewish community of Chile.

Population

The Jewish population of Chile amounted to approximately 40,000 out of a total population of 5,704,000.

Of the 40,000 Jews, 35,000 resided in Santiago, which had a total population of 1,182,000; the remaining 5,000 were scattered among the cities of Valparaiso, Concepción, Temuco, Valdivia, and Puerto Montt. The majority of the Jewish population was engaged in industry, commerce, and the professions; very few were in agriculture or labor.

Under the sponsorship of the Federación Sionista de Chile and the Comité Representativo de la Colectividad, a census was to be prepared during the course of 1950 which would provide more precise data on the composition of the population.

Political and Civic Status

The civic and political condition of the Chilean Jews depended on whether or not they possessed citizenship.

Chilean Jews who were citizens by birth or by naturalization suffered no discrimination in the exercise of their political and civil rights. As Chilean citizens they enjoyed full and equal suffrage and public employment. Though Jews were not very active in politics, in the general parliamentary elections of 1949, Angel Faivovich, a naturalized Chilean and ex-President of the Círculo Israelita de Santiago, was elected senator for the province of Santiago; and Jacobo Schaulsohn was elected deputy for the department of Santiago—both as members of the Radical party. On previous occasions Jewish deputies had been elected by the Socialist and Communist parties.

There were numerous Chilean Jews in public administration, and several were presidential representatives in important bureaus. Thus, Abraham Drobny was Under-Secretary of the Bureau of Health; Luis Lamas Runstein, counsel for the Mortgage Credit Office; Gil Sinay Sestopal, Counsel for the Corporation of Production; and David Stichkin Branover, Counsel for the Bureau of Welfare.

There was no limitation whatsoever on the admission of Jewish citizens into colleges and universities, and there were several Jewish university professors. Many Jewish attorneys were practising in the courts, and there were some Jewish judges. Jewish physicians held positions in the public welfare organizations and Jewish engineers held state posts.

Jews who were not native born had, like all foreigners, the right to participate only in municipal elections. But they had the same opportunities as native Chileans to engage in commercial or industrial enterprises without discrimination. There had been efforts to restrict commerce to Chilean natives but they had been unsuccessful.

Discrimination and Anti-Semitism

During the period of World War II, a number of anti-Semitic incidents were stimulated by the powerful German colony living in Chile. But during 1949-50 such incidents were very infrequent and ascribable to nationalistic elements of minor political importance.

An openly anti-Semitic publication called *El Mundo Arabe* circulated in the Arab colony, which possessed great economic power in Chile and largely controlled the textile industry. In collaboration with several democratic institutions of students and intellectuals, a special department of the Comité Representativo of the Colectividad Israelita carried on defense activity against anti-Jewish manifestations.

Community Organization

The first Jews who came to Chile in the early years of the twentieth century came as individuals, but the second decade brought waves of immigrants from Argentina who were of Ashkenazic origin. With the end of World War I these immigrants brought over their relatives from Russia, Poland, Rumania, and Lithuania. This group came to constitute the first Chilean Jewish organizations, the Círculo Israelita, devoted to religious and social activities, and the Sociedades de Beneficencia júdia. Concurrently Sephardic Jews of Serbian origin settled in Temuco, in the south. Finally, the Nazi persecutions brought about an immigration that began in 1933 of Jews from Germany and other Central-European countries.

In July, 1950, there were four clearly defined Jewish groups: the Ashkenazic, consisting of about 15,000 Ashkenazic Jews whose principal institution was the Círculo Israelita; the Sephardic, consisting of about 3,000 Sephardim, organized in the Comunidad Israelita Sefaradi; the German, consisting of approximately 15,000 German-speaking Jews associated in the Sociedad Bnei Jisroel; and the Central European, consisting of some 2,000 Hungarian-speaking Jews associated in the Sociedad Masze and Hagibor.

REPRESENTATION

Relations among these several sectors of the Chilean Jewish community were marked by complete harmony and co-operation in all matters of common interest. They were represented by one central organization, the Comité Representativo de la Colectividad Israelita de Chile, founded in 1940, which consisted of an Assembly of Delegates to which officers were elected annually. The president of the Comité Representativo was Isidoro Dimant Kogan. The Comité was affiliated with the World Jewish Congress and sent delegates to its first Inter-American Conference held at Baltimore in 1941, and to the World Jewish Congress held at Atlantic City in 1944.

The Comité Representativo intervened with the government of Chile in matters of interest to the community as a whole. It also co-ordinated all organizational activities.

Jewish Education

All Chilean Jewish institutions as well as the Federación Sionista de Chile had founded and supported the Vaad Hajinuj, a central educational committee of which Eduardo Flatau had been president since its inception in 1944.

In Santiago, the Vaad Hajinuj maintained two "integral" schools which were officially recognized as co-operating in the national educational program. Pupils at these schools were given examinations validated by commissioners designated by the governmental Ministry of Education. The Colegio Bialik had an enrollment of 131 elementary school pupils, the Instituto Hebreo of 266 elementary school pupils and 122 in the secondary grades. The total enrollment in both schools was 519. The curriculum of these "integral" schools consisted of the public school curriculum with the addition of courses in Hebrew and Jewish history. Hebrew courses were also given in Valparaíso, Concepción, and Temuco, and evening courses were offered by various Jewish organizations. The ORT industrial training school which had been in operation since 1944 was maintained by the Asociación ORT Local. The enrollment in July, 1950, was 75.

Since 1948 a portion of the Campaña Unificada had been allocated to cover the expenses of Jewish education.

Religious Life

The religious activities of Chilean Jewry were principally maintained by the various religious organizations within the several communities. However, during 1949-50 one such organization, the Jevra Kedischa, was transformed into the Kehila Religiosa, consisting of Orthodox elements.

Nevertheless, the religious activities continued to be co-ordinated by the religious department of the Comité Representativo. The Comité had established an official chief rabbinate, occupied by Rabbi Nathan Blum, for the Ashkenazic, Sephardic, and Hungarian communities. The spiritual needs of the German-speaking group were served by Rabbis Egon Lowenstein and Manfredo Lubliner.

The Chilean Jewish community expected in July, 1950, to dedicate synagogues constructed by the Sociedad Israelita Sefaradi and the Sociedad Bnei Jisroel; the Círculo Israelita was expected to begin the construction of a synagogue of its own during 1950.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

Zionism largely dominated Jewish life in Chile. The organization directing Zionist activities was the Federación Sionista de Chile, which was established in 1919. In addition to specifically Zionist organizations and parties, the Federación contained every Jewish organization that recognized the Zionist aspirations as stated in the Basle program. This wide popular basis lent the Zionist movement considerable authority within the Jewish community.

Every variety of Zionist political party had come to be represented in

Chile since the immigration during the twenties: Clali (General Zionist); Mapai (Labor Zionist); Mapam (left-wing Zionist); Revisionist (ultra-nationalist); and Mizrahi (Orthodox Zionist). Youth movements ran the same gamut: Hanoar Hazioni, Dror, Hashomer Hatzair and Betar, and Bnai Akiba. The largest parties were the General Zionists and the Labor Zionists.

Since 1926 Zionist women had been organized in the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), which had branches in every Chilean city with a Jewish population. During 1949-50 a branch of the Pioneer Women organization was founded.

These various parties and organizations were affiliated with the Federación Sionista de Chile which held annual national conventions. Member organizations and parties were directly represented according to the size of their membership by delegates elected by the shekel-holders. Beginning with 1950-51, to be accredited, shekel-holders were to be required to have contributed to the Campaña Unificada.

At the thirtieth Chilean Zionist Congress, held on April 23-24, 1950, Gil Sinay Sestopal was elected president of the Federación.

The activities of the Federación were carried on by departments dealing with the Jewish National Fund, Palestine Foundation Fund, culture and propaganda, education, youth, press, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, migration training, organization, politico-economic problems, and migration.

ZIONIST YOUTH WORK

The Zionist youth movement was an active one. The principal organization engaged in Zionist youth work was the Hashomer Hatzair, which established its haksharah (agricultural training farm) in 1945, and had sent more than fifty halutzim (pioneers) to Israel during the period 1945-50.

In 1948 Dror established a haksharah which sent approximately fifteen halutzim to Israel; the Hanoar Hazioni, Betar and Bnai Akiba participated in haksharot in Argentina and Uruguay.

All these youth movements held summer camps subsidized by the Federación Sionista. Several of the youth movements had sent potential youth leaders to be trained in Israel.

FUND RAISING

In co-operation with the Comité Representativo, the Federación Sionista had been sponsoring the Campaña Unificada since 1948. The major portion of the funds raised, or 70 per cent, was assigned to Zionist needs; the remaining 30 per cent was distributed among the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the World Jewish Congress, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), ORT, and the local welfare institutions. The director of the Palestine Foundation Fund was the executive director of the Campaña Unificada.

PUBLIC OPINION

The Federación Sionista carried on an intensive political program on the Chilean scene. In 1944 it established the Comité Chileno por Palestina Hebrea, whose first president, Gabriel González Videla, was in 1949-50 the

president of the Republic of Chile. In 1945, González Videla was a delegate to the World Congress of the Christian Committees for Hebrew Palestine.

Chile voted against the internationalization of Jerusalem in the special committee of the United Nations which studied this problem, and abstained from the final vote in the General Assembly; but Chile made it clear that internationalization would be impractical. Despite Arab influence in Chile, Chilean public opinion remained indifferent to the problem of the Arab refugees.

Jacob Tsur, the Israeli Minister to Uruguay and Argentina (also accredited as minister to Chile), arrived in Chile on May 14, 1950, as the first representative from the state of Israel. His visit created a tremendous stir among the population, and he was a guest of the Senate of the Republic. The Legation remained in the charge of Samuel Goren, ex-president of the Federación Sionista and of the Comité Representativo, as counsel *ad honorem*.

Taking advantage of the presence of Mr. Tsur, the Instituto Chileno-Israelita de Cultura was created under the aegis of the Federación Sionista as a subsidiary of the Comisión de Cooperación Intelectual sponsored by the University of Chile. Professor Humberta Alvarez Suárez of the University of Chile was president of this organization, and its secretary-general was Professor Astolfo Tapia Moore, vice-president of the Chilean chamber of deputies. The Instituto Chileno-Israelita had a membership composed of non-Jewish intellectuals as well as members of the Jewish community.

Social Services

Social services were in the charge of the welfare institutions maintained by the several sectors in the Jewish community. In the Ashkenazic sector, the Círculo Israelita maintained a loan office; the care of the sick and the needy was under the charge of the Sociedad Bikur Joilim and the Women's Sociedad La Bienhechora. In the Sephardic sector there was a Sociedad de Damas la Ozer Dalin; and in the sector of the latest immigration, the Comité Israelita de Socorros (Cisroco) and the Women's La Caridad, which were subsidized by JDC, were active. La Caridad had established a home for the aged.

The funds for these institutions were obtained from the dues of their members, from contributions given at special affairs, and from funds donated by the Campaña Unificada [*see above*].

Cultural Activities

Cultural activities were organized at conferences held by the various institutions. There were two Jewish newspapers in Chile, one in Spanish, *el Mundo Judío*, sponsored by the Federación Sionista, and the other, *Dos Idische Wort* in Yiddish.

Emigration and Immigration

The wave of Jewish immigration to Chile subsided during 1949-50, potential immigrants having been absorbed by Israel. During 1949-50, 350 immi-

grants arrived, of whom 100 came independently and the rest were brought over by their relatives. These immigrants were serviced by the welfare organizations. Cisroco, which received a small allotment from the Campaña Unificada and was associated with JDC, was most active in immigrant aid.

A total of 194 persons emigrated to Israel, of whom 40 were halutzim. This emigration was ideological, not economic, in motivation.

GIL SINAY