THE WEST GERMAN ECONOMY continued to expand between July 1955 and June 1956. After June, production declined slightly. The gross national product rose 11 per cent in 1955, to 60 per cent above 1950. Industrial production, up 16 per cent, doubled that of 1950. The index (1936 = 100) was 221 by June 1956. But West Berlin only regained the 1936 level. Employment in the Federal Republic was more than 800,000 above the previous year. In part, this was due to the influx of almost 300,000 refugees from East Germany during 1955–56. Unemployment, at 479,000, or 2.5 per cent of the labor force of 18.4 million, was the lowest since the end of World War II. West Berlin unemployment fell, but was still 11.3 per cent.

Output per man was up 17 per cent in 1955, while wages rose only 12 per cent. The July 1956 cost of living index (1950 = 100) at 113, was 2.3 per cent above July 1955. National consumption rose 12 per cent during 1955–56, but old age pensioners, war invalids and widows, and the lowest categories of unskilled workers, were barely touched by the “economic miracle,” and continued to exist near the subsistence level.

Steel production, exceeding that of either France or Britain, reached a postwar high of 21,700,000 tons in the twelve months under review. Some of the Ruhr steel and coal combines, split up by the Allies to destroy “dangerous concentrations of economic power,” recombined in new forms. Some concerns were larger than they had been in the Thirties.

Exports rose 15 per cent, to $6,695,000,000, and imports 22 per cent to $6,226,000,000. In July 1956, the Bank Deutscher Länder held $3,571,000,000 in gold and foreign exchange. West Germany’s cumulative credit balance in the European Payments Union of more than $2,000,000,000 was up almost $600,000,000 during 1955–56.

To curb inflation, Minister of Economics Ludwig Erhard tried to slow down investments and encourage imports by reducing certain tariffs and raising the bank rate in three stages from 3 per cent to 5.5 per cent. The last increase, in May 1956, was strongly opposed by the Federation of German Industry. Chancellor Konrad Adenauer publicly supported the federation’s criticism of his economics and finance ministers.

Political Developments

Prospects for German national unity decreased during 1955–56, as Soviet hostility to any union of West and East Germany on a free basis became clearer.
At the Geneva “summit” conference in July 1955, the Soviet leaders said that a European collective security treaty, based on the status quo of German partition, should be concluded first, and that a rapprochement between the “two Germanies” in such a framework would create the best conditions for later reunion. During their visit to East Berlin after the conference, the Soviet leaders proclaimed that there could be no “mechanical reunion,” i.e., union through free elections, at the expense of the “social and economic achievements of the East German workers.”

This view was reiterated during Adenauer’s visit to Moscow in September 1955. All that the chancellor achieved, in return for re-establishing diplomatic relations, was the release of the remaining German prisoners of war in the Soviet Union.

This deal was unanimously approved by the Bundestag on September 23, 1955. When Soviet Ambassador Valerian A. Zorin arrived in Bonn on December 21, his only proposal on the problem of unity was direct negotiation between the East and West German governments. This suggestion was rejected by both the government and the opposition.

The Western powers, on the other hand, continued to call for German unity on the basis of free elections, and for freedom for the new government to choose its alliances. But Germans became increasingly afraid that the West might accept Russian disarmament proposals—put forward at the meeting of the subcommittee of the Disarmament Commission in London in March 1956—based on the continued division of Germany. German official statements consistently stressed the connection between German unity and a general relaxation of tension. During his visit to the United States in June 1956, Adenauer again urged continuing vigilance against the Soviet Union. Shortly afterwards, in an interview with an American news agency, he categorically rejected bilateral negotiations with the Russians.

The chancellor’s uncompromising attitude was criticized not only by the opposition but even by some of his supporters, and somewhat vague demands for “a new approach,” “greater flexibility,” and direct negotiations with Moscow gained ground.

Related to the unity issue was the question of Germany’s Eastern frontiers. A statement by Foreign Minister Heinrich von Brentano, made during a visit to London in May 1956, was interpreted to mean that Germany might one day have to choose between unity and the territories east of the Oder-Neisse line. This formulation was violently attacked by the refugee organizations.

**SAAR PLEBISCITE**

On October 23, 1955, the inhabitants of the Saar rejected the European Statute for the Saar previously agreed on by the French and West German governments (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 366).

The campaign preceding the plebiscite was characterized by great bitterness. The pro-German parties were organized in the Heimatbund (“Homeland League”), which for the first time since 1945 received full political freedom. They denounced the parties favoring a European statute, and particularly the prime minister of the Saar, Johann Hoffmann, and his supporters, as “slaves of France” and “traitors to Germany.” The Democratic Party of the Saar, led
by the ex-Nazi lawyer Heinrich Schneider, was especially violent. The methods of the pro-German parties led to warnings not only from the West European Control Commission supervising the plebiscite, but also from Chancellor Adenauer, who almost alone among German politicians declared himself in favor of a European statute.

After the plebiscite a caretaker government was appointed to prepare elections for a new Landtag. These were held on December 18, 1955. The three pro-German parties polled just under 70 per cent of the votes, slightly more than the antistatute votes in the October plebiscite. Schneider's Saar Democrats, with 24.2 per cent of the total vote, were the second strongest party.

The new Landtag elected Schneider as its president, and the Heimatbund formed a government. Shortly afterwards, Saarlanders who had publicly supported the European statute, as well as some Frenchmen and Jews, were reported to have received threatening letters telling them to leave the country. Schneider's paper, Deutsche Saar, demanded the removal of some followers of Hoffmann from the civil service.

In June 1956, Chancellor Adenauer and French Prime Minister Guy Mollet agreed on a timetable and conditions for the return of the Saar to Germany. On January 1, 1957, the Saar was to become politically part of Germany, while economic union was to be completed by 1960. The French were to have the right to extract a certain amount of coal from the disputed Warndt coal mines, situated at the French frontier. In addition, the Germans agreed to the canalization of the Moselle river wanted by the French to reduce the freight costs of their Lorraine steel industry.

REARMAMENT

On March 6, 1956, the Bundestag, with the support of the Social Democratic party (SPD), amended the constitution to authorize the government to raise armed forces. Over SPD opposition, it also passed the Soldiers Law itself. Parliament showed itself determined to keep the new army under control. The defense committee of the Bundestag was designated as the permanent organ for this purpose. The constitutional rights of the soldiers were safeguarded—on the Swedish model—by a soldiers' counsel appointed by parliament and directly accessible to every soldier. Supreme command was to be exercised by the minister of defense, except in time of war, when it would pass to the chancellor.

Federal Defense Minister Theodor Blank said he hoped to have 96,000 men under arms by the end of 1956. But by July only 32,000 men fit for service had volunteered, including 10,000 members of the Frontier Guard.

To raise the 500,000 men Adenauer claimed the treaties required, he introduced a conscription bill on May 4, 1956. It passed on July 7, over the votes of the SPD and the Refugee Party (BHE), while the Free Democratic Party (FDP) abstained. The FDP speaker objected, among other things, to conscription before all “war-condemned German soldiers” had been released and the former members of the Waffen-SS rehabilitated. In September 1956, the ministry of defense announced that former SS officers up to the rank of lieutenant-colonel would be accepted as volunteers at posts not below their former rank.

Opposition to conscription remained widespread. Moreover, as the former
Blank Office set up in 1951 to work out plans for the new armed forces became a full-fledged ministry of defense (in July 1956), relations between Blank and parliament deteriorated. Blank, a Christian trade unionist, had originally selected his advisers from anti-Nazis who were anxious to instill a new spirit into the future army. But as the ministry expanded, more officers of the traditional type joined its staff, and the reformers lost influence. Thus, Count Baudissin who, as the head of the department of internal structure, had been responsible for the conception of the “citizen in uniform,” was generally believed to have kept his post only because of unanimous backing from the defense committee of the Bundestag.

In a speech he made to naval cadets on January 16, 1956, in Blank’s presence, Captain Adolf Zenker, acting head of the naval department, praised the honorable traditions of the navy under Doenitz and Raeder. He said they had been sentenced as war criminals only for “political reasons.” Zenker was strongly attacked by all parties except the German Party, and was replaced.

Blank clashed several times with the personnel committee screening senior officers. In one instance, the committee refused to approve two colonels already working in the defense ministry. Up to the end of May 1956, the committee had rejected 18 out of 245 senior officers, and had restricted the scope of employment of 6 others.

All parties opposed a government proposal to prohibit spreading—or attempting to spread—“false and distorted allegations” about the armed forces.

DOMESTIC POLITICS

A regrouping of political forces started in the summer of 1955, when the BHE left the government over disagreements on social policy. The two BHE ministers, Theodor Oberlaender and Waldemar Kraft, who refused to give up their posts, were expelled from the party along with some Bundestag deputies who supported them. In October 1955, amid strong appeals to nationalist sentiments, the BHE congress confirmed the break, and eighteen of the twenty-seven BHE deputies went into opposition. This deprived Adenauer of his two-thirds majority in the Bundestag.

At the beginning of 1956 the FDP went into opposition. Even earlier, its chairman, Thomas Dehler, had attacked the chancellor for not pursuing a more “active” reunification policy. The immediate cause of the break, however, was a new electoral law proposed by Adenauer which would have practically abolished proportional representation. The FDP violently opposed the law, which would have greatly reduced its strength in the next Bundestag. At the same time, its North-Rhine-Westphalian branch started to discuss with the SDP the overthrow of the existing state coalition government of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the FDP, and the small Catholic Center Party. Adenauer, fearing loss of control in the most important state, withdrew the electoral law. But by then the FDP rebels had decided to end CDU “one-party rule” by strengthening the opposition in the states. On February 20, 1956, they joined with the SDP to overthrow the North-Rhine-Westphalian cabinet. This deprived Adenauer of his two-thirds majority in the upper house of parliament, the Bundesrat, which represented the state governments.

In the lower house, the Bundestag, the government was left with only 290 out of 487 seats, after having lost the 33 FDP deputies led by Dehler. Twelve
FDP deputies, including the four cabinet ministers, remained loyal to Adenauer, and formed the Free People's Party (FVP).

In North-Rhine-Westphalia, the FDP formed a coalition government with the Social Democrats, who thus emerged from political isolation in that key state, though at the price of an alliance with what was often described as the Hitler Youth Leader Circle of the FDP.

Actually, only two leaders of the Duesseldorf FDP held important positions in the Hitler youth: the Landtag Deputy Lange, and the press officer of the party Siegfried Zoglmann. Zoglmann currently published two extremely nationalist weeklies *Deutsche Zukunft* and *Fortschritt*. The others were too young to have reached prominence in the Third Reich. But their postwar activities and associations made them suspect even in their own party. And the FDP organizer in North-Rhine-Westphalia, Wolfgang Doering, was regarded as closely associated with Ernst Achenbach—also a Landtag deputy of the FDP. Achenbach in his turn was a friend and attorney of Werner Naumann, Josef Goebbels’ former state secretary, who had been arrested in 1953 by the British for trying to infiltrate German parties with former Nazis (see *American Jewish Year Book*, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 240 and ff.).

But the split in the FDP was not a clear-cut one between extremists and moderates. There were also ardent nationalists in the pro-Adenauer FVP, such as August Martin Euler, a member of its executive committee; in addition, some genuine liberals still existed in both groups.

**Neo-Nazism**

Sixty extreme right-wing groups existed in West Germany in the spring of 1956, according to the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution; the trade unions put the figure nearer to one hundred. But, as an organized force and in terms of votes, these groups were insignificant. Except in Lower Saxony, their total vote was less than one per cent in state diet elections, though in the municipal elections in Bavaria they were considerably stronger in some individual communities.

The only such group represented in a state parliament was the Deutsche Reichspartei (DRP), which won six seats with 3.8 per cent of the votes in the Lower Saxony elections of April 1955. In the Bremen elections in October 1955, the DRP formed an electoral bloc with the BHE. The combined poll was slightly below the 3 per cent the DRP alone had received in the Federal elections of 1953. In September 1956, the DRP claimed 12,500 members, mostly in Lower Saxony.

The DRP’s national chairman was a former high Nazi official, SS Lieutenant General Wilhelm Meinberg. In October 1955 the former Hitler youth leader Herbert Freiberger replaced the former deputy gauleiter of Oldenburg, Georg Joel, as DRP chairman in Lower Saxony. Freiberger, who started his postwar career in the FDP and was for a time one of the editors of a neutralist paper, switched the Party’s main line of attack from the Social Democrats to the government, and particularly to Adenauer’s foreign policy. The Party congress in January 1956 called for direct negotiations with the East German government to achieve German unity. Werner Naumann (see
above), who held no official position but was believed to have great influence in the party, was a guest at the congress. The DRP regarded Admiral Karl Doenitz, whom Hitler appointed as his successor and who was due to be released from Spandau prison in October 1956, as the "legal head of the German Reich." The jargon of the party's organ, Reichsruf, and the speeches of its leaders were reminiscent of Nazi propaganda. At the Party congress in the beginning of September 1956, it began to moderate its tone to impress possible allies in the 1957 Bundestag elections with the Party's respectability.

A concentration of neo-Nazi and neutralist groups was unsuccessfully attempted by Otto Strasser, the former leader of the Black Front, who returned to Germany from Canada in March 1955. Attempts were made by other groups, such as the Deutsche Gemeinschaft ("German Community") of August Haußleiter, and the Deutsche Block led by Karl Meissner. The associations calling themselves Victims of Denazification continued to demand rehabilitation and compensation for their members.

Some thirty groups united in a Ring of National Youth Groups under a former Hitler Youth leader, Richard Etzel. Their paper was called Junger Beobachter. Their activities centered in Bavaria, where they were fostered by a group of Nazi writers organized in the Deutsches Kulturwerk Europäischen Geistes ("German Cultural Activity in a European Spirit").

Nazi Literature

More than a dozen publishers specialized in books by unregenerate Nazis or neo-Nazis glorifying the Hitler regime. The best known were the Plesse-Verlag in Goettingen, run by former SS leader Waldemar Schuetz; Leonhard Schlüeter's Goettinger Verlagsanstalt; the Druffel-Verlag in Bavaria, under former deputy Reich Press Chief Helmuth Suendermann; and the Kurt Vowinckel-Verlag in Heidelberg.

Nazi books were also imported. Adolf Hitler—sein Kampf um die Minusseele was published in Argentina under the pseudonym of W. v. Asenbach and distributed in Germany by Friedrich Lenz, himself a Nazi writer. A book by the American anti-Semite Eustace Mullins, Federal Reserve Conspiracy, was published in German translation by the Widar-Verlag. The publisher, Guido Roeder, also circulated an anti-Semitic pamphlet containing Jewish caricatures drawn by Hans Schwaighofer, who had played Judas in the Oberammergau Passion Play.

According to the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, there were in the spring of 1956 twenty-seven extreme nationalist and neo-Nazi periodicals, and about forty newsletters and brochures with Nazi tendencies. Those most openly professing Nazi ideas were the Coburg monthly Nation Europa, the organ of the Fascist International, and the fortnightly Die Anklage ("The Accusation"), which called itself the "organ of the outlawed postwar victims." Die Anklage campaigned against the "slanderous atrocity story" that the Germans had murdered six million Jews. A few issues were confiscated, and the editor and publisher fined for slandering Adenauer and members of his cabinet, but Die Anklage continued to appear.
NATIONALISM

Nationalism in its traditional forms had a broader appeal than pure Nazi ideology. Its chief exponents were found in some of the war veterans' leagues. These, however, attracted only a small part of the veterans.

The central body of these leagues was the Association of German Soldiers (Verband deutscher Soldaten—VDS). Its organ, Deutsche Soldatenzeitung, campaigned for release of the “war-condemned” [i.e., not “war criminals”]; the rehabilitation of the German soldier; and the upholding of the soldierly traditions in the new Bundeswehr. On its fifth anniversary, the paper received the congratulations of about twenty-five former generals, headed by the convicted war criminals, Field Marshals Erich von Manstein and Albert Kesselring.

The individual leagues organized “search meetings” for the purpose of tracing missing comrades. At times, these meetings turned into nationalistic demonstrations. The speeches of the parachutist generals Hermann Bernhard Ramcke and Kurt Student on various occasions showed an especially aggressive tone.

About 20,000 out of the close to 400,000 surviving members of the Waffen-SS elite guard were organized in the HIAG (Hilfsgemeinschaft auf Gegenseitigkeit—Association for Mutual Help). Two monthlies, Wikingruf (“Viking Call”) and Der Freiwillige (“The Volunteer”), which was the official organ of the HIAG, devoted their pages to defending the Waffen-SS against the “slander” that it was a criminal organization, and to campaigning for equal opportunities in the new army and pensions for their members. In some states trade union pressure caused the HIAG’s “search meetings” to be banned, e.g., in Hesse in April 1956.

One of the most extreme nationalistic associations was the Stahlhelm. Field Marshal Albert Kesselring was demonstratively elected its leader in 1952, even before he was released from the British prison for war criminals. In a debate in the Bundestag in September 1955, the Social Democrats asked whether “Kesselring’s private army” could still be regarded as constitutional, in view of a Stahlhelm rally in Goslar in June 1955, at which a number of participants had appeared in steel helmets, jack boots, and uniform belts. Minister of the Interior Gerhard Schroeder replied that the reported infringement at the rally of the law of assembly forbidding, inter alia, the wearing of uniforms did not justify special measures. The Stahlhelm was defended by the parliamentary leader of the German Party, Ernst Christoph Buehler, who had been a speaker at the rally.

The Stahlhelm and other nationalist organizations also founded youth groups to teach the younger generation the “traditional soldierly virtues.”

DENAZIFICATION

Denazification ended in West Germany on December 31, 1955. But verdicts of denazification tribunals could be altered in favor of defendants by the ordinary courts on the basis of new evidence.

In West Berlin, the city parliament unanimously voted to prolong denazification for prominent Nazis beyond the end of 1955, because it was found that almost 300 of the leaders had never been subjected to denazification pro-
procedure, and many of them possessed large fortunes in Berlin. Secret bank accounts and real estate worth many millions of marks belonging to Hermann Goering, Josef Goebbels, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Robert Ley, and other dead or living leaders of the Third Reich were discovered. The Berlin denazification tribunals could still keep these fortunes out of the hands of these people or their surviving relatives by imposing a fine on the property. Thus, the property of Ernst Kaltenbrunner, the last chief of the Reich Security Office, was fined DM 300,000 ($71,500).

Nazis in Office

A law implementing Article 131 of the basic law of the Federal Republic obliged public authorities to fill at least 20 per cent of the vacant posts with officials who had lost their positions in 1945, either as a result of expulsion from the Eastern territories, or because they were Nazis or professional soldiers. West Berlin, which filled less than the required 20 per cent of vacant posts with such persons, was fined DM 600,000 ($143,000) for the six months from October 31, 1955 to March 31, 1956.

The law also applied to universities, and prevented Heidelberg from appointing the lecturers it wanted.

On the basis of this law, most Nazi officials had been reinstated. Even high Nazi functionaries again held public office. Occasionally, some striking instances aroused public criticism. Thus, attention was drawn to the case of Otto Braeutigam, head of the eastern department of the Bonn Foreign Office, when documents published in the Poliakov-Wulf book on the Third Reich and the Jews (see below) showed that Braeutigam had been involved in the extermination of Jews in Eastern Europe. After the SPD raised the matter in parliament, an investigation was started, and Braeutigam was temporarily suspended from office.

Hans Globke, secretary of state in the Federal Chancellery, was strongly attacked for his authorship of an official commentary on the Nazi Nuremberg race laws. His friends claimed he had used his influence under the Nazis to protect Jews and Catholics, and Adenauer refused to drop him. Globke's influence even increased. Adenauer put him in charge of General Reinhard Gehlen's secret service organization after its transfer from American to German control early in 1956.

Minister of Refugee Affairs Theodor Oberlaender, himself a member of the National Socialist Party from 1933 on and a former SS major, surrounded himself with several prominent Nazis, including high SA (Storm Troop) and Hitler youth leaders.

The Federal ministry of defense sent the former General Hermann Foertsch, author of a book on the "Duties of an Officer Loyal to Hitler" (Pfichtenlehre für den hitlertreuen Offizier), to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) headquarters to cooperate in the compilation of a book on NATO. Juergen Hahn-Butry, author of anti-Semitic books in support of the Nazi war effort, was appointed editor of the government-sponsored army paper Bundeswehr-Korrespondenz.

Prominent Nazis also found their way into office in the states. Lower Saxony's Education Minister Richard Tantzen (the successor of Leonhard Schlueter, who had been forced out of office by public protests) appointed a
former senior functionary of the Nazi writers' chamber as head of the art department of the ministry. Two leading Nazis were appointed to senior posts in July 1955, while two state secretaries who were Nazi victims were dismissed.

Leading Nazis were also back in municipal government. Hans Reschke, a former member of the Gestapo Security Service (SD), was elected mayor of Mannheim. The SDP challenged the election on the ground that Reschke's SD membership had been kept secret, but the Wuerttemberg Administrative Court ruled in his favor.

Friedrich Berber, a former collaborator of Joachim von Ribbentrop and editor of the Nazi monthly on foreign policy Monatshefte für Auswärtige Politik, was named professor of international law at Munich University.

In industry, most of those who had held important positions under Hitler again had influential posts. Alfred Krupp expanded into new fields. Friedrich Flick, also a convicted war criminal, increased his holdings with the money received from the forced sale of his coal mines. Otto Ambros, the former manager of the IG Farben plant Monowitz, which was based on the exploitation of slave labor from Auschwitz, held several directorships, while the former director of Monowitz, Walter Duerfeld, again headed a chemical plant. Wilhelm Zangen, former head of the Reichsgruppe Industrie, was director general of the restored Mannesmann Steel Combine, as he had been under Hitler.

PENSIONS AND COMPENSATIONS FOR NAZIS

The law implementing Article 131 of the basic law was also the basis for payment of pensions to former officials and officers, including high-ranking Nazi leaders and Gestapo officials—though they might be convicted war criminals.

In the fiscal year 1955 more than $270,000,000 were spent for this category. A further increase in pensions, involving an additional government expenditure of $43,000,000 a year, was envisaged in a draft amendment to the law.

Prominent Nazis who received payments in 1955–56 included: Walter Schroeder, Nazi police president of Lübeck and SS general of Riga during the war; Admiral Erich Raeder, released from Spandau prison for major war criminals in September 1955; and Field Marshals Erich von Manstein and Albert Kesselring, convicted war criminals.

Some officials also received lump sums for accumulated arrears, such as the former Nazi mayors of Bielefeld and Hanau. Often, towns refused to pay but were compelled to by the courts. But sometimes courts rejected or reduced claims on the ground that the officials concerned owed appointment or promotion solely to Nazi Party connections.

Public indignation caused some cases to be investigated. In the case of Rudolf Diels, founder of the Gestapo, the Bundestag demanded that his pension be stopped after he wrote a pamphlet attacking the principles of democratic government. But the interior minister of Lower Saxony, after a lengthy investigation, decided there was no legal cause for stopping the payments. The Bundestag also demanded cessation of payments to Ernst Lautz, the prosecutor who had demanded the death penalty for the leaders of the anti-
Nazi revolt of July 20, 1944, but the Schleswig-Holstein government only agreed to cut the pension by a third.

The law providing compensation for “late homecomers” from Russian captivity was also applied to war criminals released from Allied prisons. Thus, Hertha Oberheuser, a doctor who had conducted medical experiments on female concentration camp inmates, received all the benefits of a “late homecomer” after her release from the American prison for war criminals in Landsberg, and was readmitted as a medical practitioner in Schleswig-Holstein. Martin Hellinger, SS doctor who had specialized in extracting gold teeth from concentration camp inmates before they were executed, received compensation on his release from the British prison for war criminals in Werl. Otto Helmuth, former gauleiter of Mainfranken, sentenced to death for shooting American prisoners, but later reprieved, received compensation from the town of Kassel. Adolph Heinrich Beckerle, former Nazi police president, was granted compensation by the Frankfurt Administrative Court after his return from Russian captivity in October 1955. Angry press comments pointed out that Beckerle had been responsible for the SA terror in Frankfurt in 1933, and for the outrages committed during the November 1938 pogroms, and that he had pressed the Bulgarian government to liquidate the Jews when he was ambassador in Sofia during the war.

But Rudolf Jordan, former gauleiter of Magdeburg-Anhalt, who returned with Beckerle from the Soviet Union, was refused compensation by the Munich Administrative Court. The court ruled that it was not in the spirit of the law to treat “Hitler’s paladins who helped him to prepare the war” in the same way as ordinary war prisoners.

Some prominent Nazis also claimed and received compensation for property confiscated immediately after the war to relieve distress among refugees and bombed-out people. A wave of such claims started after the Federal court, in 1954, ordered Nuremberg to pay a former Nazi the full value of the clothing which had been requisitioned from him. Immediately afterwards, another leading Nazi successfully claimed compensation from the town of Lübeck.

Opposition to Renazification

The increasing activity of former Nazis called forth a strong reaction by a large part of German public opinion. On various occasions the Bundestag expressed almost unanimous disapproval of pro-Nazi or extreme right-wing tendencies. In February 1956 its president, Eugen Gerstenmaier (CDU), called for measures against the “arrogant behavior of the accomplices of Nazi crimes,” and in particular against their impudent financial claims. This initiative was widely welcomed, but produced no legislation before the summer recess.

In April 1956 the Bavarian diet voted to strengthen legislation on unconstitutional activity to put a stop to the “growing nationalist, national-bolshevist, and bolshevist propaganda.”

In West Berlin, members of all parties represented in the city parliament formed a Militant League Against Nazism on January 30, 1956, the anniversary of Adolf Hitler’s seizure of power.

In June 1956 the central organization of German youth attacked the in-
filtration of Nazis into high posts and the formation of youth groups "with an outworn ideology," and demanded stronger measures against the glorification of Nazism.

The trade unions denounced Nazi and nationalist activity, and repeatedly demonstrated against them. At the Stahlhelm meeting in Goslar, trade unionists clashed with the police protecting the meeting. Some of the trade union branches issued special publications on the "enemies of democracy" on the left and right.

Newspapers and radio stations, especially Radio Munich, played a prominent part in exposing Nazi activities and infiltration.

A group of writers and publishers known as the "Gruenwald circle" met at the invitation of the author Hans Werner Richter to discuss ways to stop the flow of Nazi literature. They criticized the reluctance of the courts to take action against the spreading of Nazi propaganda. As a test case, they sued the owner of the Druffel-Verlag on April 14, 1956, for spreading Nazi propaganda.

The German branch of the PEN Club also demanded stronger measures against Nazi literature in May 1956.

At the Frankfurt Book Fair in September 1955 some publishers threw the exhibit of the Plesse-Verlag, including the posthumous work of Alfred Rosenberg, out of the hall forcibly.

**War Criminals and Trials for Nazi Crimes**

By July 1956, all but 124 German war criminals convicted by Allied courts had been released.

Five major war criminals remained in Spandau prison under four-power control: Rudolf Hess, Walter Funk, Baldur von Schirach, and Albert Speer. Admiral Karl Doenitz was due for release in October 1956. Admiral Erich Raeder was freed in September 1955 because of his age and illness.

Twenty-nine war criminals were still held by the Americans in Landsberg, and twelve by the British in Werl. The French held thirty-seven, and the Dutch thirty-two. The remainder were imprisoned in Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway, and Italy.

Only the worst war criminals were still held. But large sections of German opinion, calling for their release, pretended that they were only prisoners of war unjustly held by the victors, or were soldiers who had only done their duty.

Many Nazi criminals tried by German courts were acquitted. Thus, the court accepted a defense claim that the former commander of a police unit, F. Schwarze, accused of having shot Jews in Poland, was on leave while his unit was concerned with "resettlement of Jews," and that on another occasion he had "merely accompanied some Jews to the station." Herbert Raschick, former head of the Gestapo in Bochum, and two of his assistants, accused of shooting nineteen prisoners shortly before the end of the war, were acquitted on the ground that it could not be proved that the defendants had realized the criminal nature of their action. The former head of the Danzig Gestapo, Guenther Venediger, who shot two British officers recaptured after escape, was freed because he had "acted under compulsion." The chief of the concentration camp of Zwickau, Wilhelm Muesch, who had shot
prisoners recaptured after escape, was sentenced to four and one-half years imprisonment but released because of ill health. The court took into account that “in difficult times he was placed at a difficult post.”

Two members of the Wehrmacht who had murdered the entire Jewish population of a village near Smolensk were sentenced to two and three years respectively. The chief of a Gestapo unit in Düsseldorf, Wilhelm Schaefer, received a sentence of four years for torturing prisoners. The “hangman of Flossenbuerger,” Adolf Niess, received four years, and the camp doctor, Hermann Fischer, and the SS man, Christian Wenck, three years each, for killing prisoners by injections. The commandant of Stutthoff concentration camp, Paul Werner Hoppe, who had murdered several hundred Jews, was sentenced to five years and three months. A medical orderly who had been an accomplice received three years. Hoppe's “exemplary behavior as an officer at the front” was taken into account by the court. Adolf Fehrenbach, camp elder at Sollstedt concentration camp, was given seven years for beating fellow prisoners to death. An SS man who shot a British army doctor captured during the parachute attack on Arnhem received ten years. A life sentence for the murder of Jews was given to the inspector of the Jewish labor camp of Hluboszek in Galicia.

The German courts also dealt with some perpetrators of summary executions during the last days of the war. Walter Huppenkothen and Otto Thorbeck, prosecutor and judge of the summary court which sentenced Admiral Wilhelm Canaris and his resistance group to death, were sentenced to seven and four years hard labor, respectively, after having been acquitted in a previous trial.

Widespread indignation was aroused by the acquittal of the former Waffen SS Lieutenant General Max Simon, who had four civilians executed for trying to prevent last-minute resistance to the Americans. The court held that the executions for “cowardice” had been justified.

Several notorious war criminals were among the prisoners repatriated from the Soviet Union between October 1955 and January 1956. They included Professor Karl Clauberg, who had conducted sterilization experiments on female prisoners at Auschwitz. It was only after the Central Council of Jews in Germany (Zentralrat) brought suit against him that the public prosecutor in Kiel started an investigation, and Clauberg was arrested on December 22, 1955.

Some of the prisoners returning from the Soviet Union had not been amnestied by the Russians, but were to be brought to justice in Germany. Those repatriated to West Germany were, however, freed and compensated like ordinary prisoners of war. The only difference was that their names were not revealed. But journalists discovered that some of them had belonged to the personnel of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. They included Heinz Baumkoetter, who had conducted experiments on human beings, and Gustav Sorge and Wilhelm Schubert, who had been notorious for the killing and torturing of prisoners. After a campaign in some newspapers, Sorge and Schubert were arrested in February 1956. But part of the press and public felt that those who had remained so long in Russian captivity had atoned for their crimes.
Attitude to the Third Reich

Public opinion polls taken by the Institute für Demoskopie over the years 1947–55 (published in 1956) showed that a sizable minority of the population still had a favorable opinion of Hitler. Seven per cent of those questioned in January 1955 thought that “Hitler had done more for Germany than any other great man.” In July 1952, 10 per cent considered him the greatest statesman of the century, while 22 per cent were of the opinion that Hitler was an excellent leader, though he had made some mistakes. In October 1951, 21 per cent blamed other countries than Germany for the outbreak of the Second World War; another 5 per cent attributed the war to “international capitalism.” In June 1951, 40 per cent expressed themselves in favor of the July 20, 1944, conspiracy against Hitler, 30 per cent opposed it, 19 per cent expressed no opinion, and 11 per cent did not remember the event.

Several organizations devoted themselves to publicizing the facts about the Nazi era. The Munich Institute for Contemporary History, financed by the Federal and state governments, issued a quarterly Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte. In June 1956 the institute organized a conference of German and foreign historians, at which various aspects of Nazism, resistance, and collaboration were discussed.

The Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst, under the Federal ministry of the interior, tried to reach a wider public. Its weekly Das Parlament published supplements on topics such as the November pogrom of 1938, the Reichstag fire, resistance to Nazism, and concentration camps.

Several books dealing with the persecution of the Jews were published during 1955–56, some of them with the help of public funds. Among them were Das Dritte Reich und die Juden, by Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf; Theresienstadt, by H. G. Adler; Er ist wie Du by Eleonore Sterling, and the German translations of Gerald Reitlinger’s Final Solution, Hannah Arendt’s The Origins of Totalitarianism, and Eva Reichmann’s Hostages of Civilization. Books by non-Jewish authors on these subjects included: Wenn nur der Sperber nicht kommt, a novel by Maria Mathi about the fate of Jewish families in Hadamar where the Nazis committed euthanasia on mental patients, and Deutsche und jüdische Tragik, by Michael Mueller-Claudius.

Influential individuals, including Federal President Theodor Heuss, also tried to prevent the public from forgetting what happened in the Third Reich. At a meeting held in Cologne in July 1956, the Bundestag deputies Franz Boehm (CDU) and Carlo Schmid (SDP) strongly appealed to their listeners never to forget the crimes committed by the Nazis against the Jews. But most people in West Germany preferred not to think of it. Most teachers, disliking “controversial subjects,” left their pupils in ignorance about the crimes of the Hitler regime and the resistance against it. In a school in Tegernsee where a teacher offended this taboo and wrote a play about children under the Nazi regime in April 1956, the headmaster forbade the performance, because it might hurt the feelings of some parents. School libraries rarely included books dealing objectively with the Nazi period, while books by Nazi authors were not weeded out, and—in Bavaria—were even included in a list of books recommended by the ministry of culture for school libraries.
Restitution

Restitution of identifiable property was almost completed. By the beginning of 1956, 370,000 claims had been settled; 40,000 cases were still pending.

A law to settle the claims of victims of Nazism against the former German Reich, the State of Prussia, and the Nazi Party, passed its first reading in the Bundesrat in July 1956. It covered the restitution of confiscated Jewish property, such as precious metals, works of art and furniture, real estate and securities. Up to $375,000,000 was to be provided for this purpose.

In January 1956 the supreme restitution court provided for by the Bonn treaties was set up. Its three divisions were in the same cities as the Allied restitution tribunals, which formerly functioned independently in each occupation zone. Each division consisted of an equal number of German and Allied judges under a neutral president. The first division started work in March 1956 at Rastatt in the former French zone.

Indemnification

On June 6, 1956, the Bundestag passed a new indemnification law, substantially improving the Federal Indemnification Law of 1953. The Bundesrat, which in November 1955 had rejected the most important improvements of the bill, approved it unanimously on June 15, 1956. The new law came into force with retroactive effect on April 15, 1956. It extended eligibility for indemnification to former residents of the present Soviet zone of Germany and of territories east of the Oder-Neisse line. Compensation was also provided for loss of life and liberty and damage to health of persons persecuted by foreign governments induced to such action by the German Reich (e.g., Czechoslovakia and Italy). Indemnification was also provided for the inmates of the Shanghai ghetto. A new clause, providing indemnification for "restriction of liberty," applied to persons who had to wear the yellow star of David or were living underground. The law also increased some of the pensions and capital sums payable to Nazi victims, and made most claims inheritable. Cases rejected under the old law could be reopened. The date for the filing of claims was extended to October 1, 1957.

The new law was welcomed by Jews from Germany and by the Conference of Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG), though the CJMCAG expressed regrets that suggested improvements had not been included. The law still lacked adequate provision for non-German victims of Nazi persecution. Eight West European countries which had been occupied by Hitler, including Great Britain (with respect to the Channel Islands), protested on June 28, 1956, that the law did not implement the obligation embodied in the Bonn agreement of 1953.

Even worse was the situation of refugees from East Europe who were imprisoned by the Nazis before they fled from Communism. The few rights given non-German victims by the law were often narrowly interpreted by the German courts. Many claims of non-German inmates of concentration camps were rejected on the grounds that they had been imprisoned not because of their nationality—which would entitle them to compensation—but for "opposing the occupying power"—which did not. In a case brought by a gypsy,
the highest Federal court even held that the forced settlement of gypsies in Poland in 1940 was a security measure, and had not constituted an act of persecution until the gypsies were actually sent to concentration camps under the Auschwitz decree of 1943.

**Progress of Indemnification**

Of the 1,268,910 claims received by the ten indemnification offices of the West German states, 852,812 were still pending on March 31, 1956. Of the 362,326 claims decided, 186,995 were settled in favor of the applicants. About \$390,000,000—an average of \$2,000 per claim—had been paid by that date. Owing to the slowness of the procedure, the Federal government and the states actually spent \$45,000,000 less than they budgeted for this purpose. Only in West Berlin did the claims granted exceed the available funds.

Just under \$110,000,000 was in the Federal budget for indemnification for the year commencing April 1, 1956. Total payments between 1949 and the end of 1962, when all cases were to be settled, were estimated at \$3,000,000-000. Together with the \$700,000,000 allocated for reparation deliveries to Israel, the total was estimated by chairman Otto Heinrich Greve of the Bundestag’s indemnification committee as about 3 per cent of the total Federal government expenditure for the period.

The German press and radio frequently contrasted the slow indemnification procedure and the great number of rejected claims with the great generosity shown to former Nazis. The attitude of the indemnification offices and the courts was repeatedly criticized in the Bundestag. The day the new law was passed the chairman of the indemnification committee expressed his "horror and dismay" at a number of decisions which he said were designed to turn the idea of indemnification into its very opposite. The committee demanded that only judges who had grasped the spirit of the law should serve on the courts concerned with indemnification. The courts were also attacked for having demanded proof which the victims could not possibly supply.

Similar criticism was voiced in the state parliaments. The Social Democratic leader in the Württemberg-Baden diet repeatedly accused the state minister of justice, Wolfgang Haussmann, of approaching indemnification from a legalistic instead of a humane and ethical aspect. He particularly criticized the authorities’ practice—also reported in other states—of appealing to the courts in cases where the decisions favored the applicant. A study of state indemnification offices by Kurt R. Grossmann early in 1956 was quoted extensively in German papers. Grossmann named among the objective difficulties the complicated procedures, which varied from state to state, and the fact that work in an indemnification office did not attract efficient employees wanting a career. But in Berlin, under the influence of energetic Senator Joachim Lipschitz, the record of the indemnification office was better than anywhere else. In fact, in November 1955 Federal Finance Minister Fritz Schaeffer objected that a draft amendment to the Berlin indemnification law actually went beyond the Federal law.

**Pensions for Civil Servants**

In December 1955 the Bundestag passed an amended version of the 1951 Law for Redressing National Socialist Injustices With Regard to Public Serv-
ants. Under the new law, officials who had prepared for a civil service career but had received no appointment because of Nazi persecution became eligible for pensions. So did university lecturers who had not yet been appointed to a chair, and former employees of certain public utilities. The law also included provisions for former rabbis and employees of Jewish communities.

**IG Farben Case**

At the beginning of July 1956, the liquidators of the IG Farben Dye Trust offered $7,000,000 as a settlement of claims of former slave workers employed by IG Farben. In June 1953 the firm, whose synthetic rubber plant in Monowitz had been based on the labor of the inmates of the adjoining Auschwitz concentration camp, appealed against a Frankfurt court decision awarding damages to the former slave worker Norbert Wollheim (see *American Jewish Year Book*, 1955 [Vol. 56], p. 253). The appeals court postponed its decision, suggesting a settlement out of court.

Under the proposed settlement, the money would be paid to a special trust fund under the auspices of the CJMCAG, for distribution among the surviving slave laborers. As of September 1956, 2,500 had submitted claims. The liquidators, though legally entitled to make a binding offer, asked for the approval of the shareholders, some of whom were opposed to the settlement.

**Private Initiative**

The South German radio station in Stuttgart televised an account of the misery of Jewish refugees now living in Paris under the title *Forgotten Men* during Brotherhood Week in March 1956. The program received much publicity. Many Germans sent contributions to a fund set up by Radio Stuttgart to further a scheme, initiated previously by the Bundestag deputies Carlo Schmid and Franz Boehm, for the establishment of a Jewish old age home in Paris. The Bundestag and a number of state and municipal governments also voted donations. At the time of writing (September 1956), $450,000 had been collected.

**Relations With Israel**

There were still no diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic and Israel. The Israel Purchasing Mission in Cologne, handling deliveries by German firms to Israel under the agreement of September 10, 1952 (see *American Jewish Year Book*, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 540), enjoyed quasi-diplomatic privileges.

By the beginning of September 1956, goods to the value of $275,000,000 had been delivered under the agreement. These included $72,000,000 worth of oil from Great Britain paid for by Germany out of her credit balance in the European Payments Union.

The purchases under the agreement represented 20 to 25 per cent of Israel's total annual imports. The share of capital goods for industrial developments steadily increased, to 55 per cent of the total. It included several ships built in German shipyards.

Travel between Israel and West Germany increased. Israelis who visited
Germany included Martin Buber, who lectured at the Berlin Free University and in West Germany.

In the summer of 1956, a group of Israeli students visited West Berlin and the Federal Republic. They took part in an international students’ meeting, which among other topics discussed the relations between Germans and Jews. German papers reporting on the meeting emphasized the lack of resentment and the objectivity shown by the Israeli students.

The German Holy Land Association celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary in October 1955 in the presence of a representative of the Israel mission. It was announced on this occasion that German pilgrims would again be allowed to visit the Christian holy places in Israel.

The Federal government subsidized a documentary film made in Israel showing its development and the contribution made towards it by German equipment.

LOTTE LOWENTHAL

Jewish Population

Reliable statistics as to the total number of Jews in West Germany did not exist. The last government census, on September 13, 1950, had showed 17,116 registered Jews in the Federal Republic and another 4,858 in West Berlin. Since April 1, 1955, the Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland—ZWS, the central welfare agency of the Jews in Germany, had been collecting the membership statistics of the Jewish Gemeinden (“communities”) in West Germany and West Berlin. But as membership was purely voluntary, these figures covered only those who had chosen to join the Gemeinden.

The Gemeinden figures showed 15,684 registered members on April 1, 1955; 15,857 on July 1, 1955; 15,920 on October 1, 1955; and 16,892 on January 1, 1956. This increase was mainly due to the inclusion as community members, since January 1, 1956, of the residents of the Föhrenwald Displaced Persons camp, which was in the process of dissolution. There were 16,905 in the camp on April 1, 1956, and 16,951 on July 1, 1956. The average age of the Jewish population, on June 30, 1956, was forty-four years.

In West Germany and West Berlin there were 4,704 Jews over sixty, including 1,744 who were seventy and over. Only 2,229 were under twenty. Of some eighty communities in West Germany, only four had more than 1,000 members, as of June 30, 1956. The West Berlin community had 4,625 members, Munich 1,919, Frankfurt 1,464, and Hamburg 1,015.

Little information on occupational distribution was available. A high percentage, 10 to 15 per cent or higher, were living on old age pensions, public assistance, etc. In contrast to pre-Hitler days, there were only a few professional people. About 140 Jews were in the higher civil service, about 150 were lawyers, perhaps 50 were physicians and surgeons, and another 50 worked for the press, radio, and television; around 2,000 Jews were in business. Of the 16,951 members of Jewish communities, 9,018 were male and 7,933 female. The majority of the Jews in Germany were either stateless or citizens of another country.
Migration

Emigration and immigration were no longer of major significance. During the period under review, the United Hebrew Immigrant and Sheltering Aid Society (HIAS) Service assisted about 800 persons to emigrate. The emigrants were mainly younger people who did not see too bright a future in Germany. The majority went to the Americas. The returnees were as a rule older, and came from various countries where they had not been able to adjust economically or socially, hoping to spend their last years in comparative quiet and comfort in their native land. Emigration aid was given by the United HIAS Service office in Munich, as well as by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). Returnees were aided by German authorities, and by Jewish communal and welfare agencies.

Intergroup Relations

Though there was little active anti-Semitism, many objective observers felt that a kind of invisible curtain still existed between the few and isolated Jewish inhabitants of postwar Germany and their gentile neighbors. It was understandable that most Jews kept to themselves, and that non-Jews, for a variety of reasons, found it at least equally hard to break through the walls of this self-imposed isolation. There were numerous efforts, largely official or semi-official, to break down these barriers. The majority of such efforts were initiated by non-Jews. The only noteworthy exception were the twenty local societies for Christian-Jewish cooperation, in which Jews, Catholics, and Protestants participated more or less equally. The national headquarters of these societies was located in Frankfurt and directed by Leopold Goldschmidt.

Round table conferences on Jewish problems, with Jewish participants, were sponsored by the Lutheran Church's evangelical academies in Hofgeismar, Schäftlarn, Düsseldorf, and Iserlohn. Some of these conferences considered such special problems as textbooks, the role of women, and youth work.

Communal Organization and Communal Affairs

The Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland, the central council of Jews in Germany, was formed in the summer of 1950 as an over-all body to represent the Jews of Germany. It was a purely voluntary body, formed by the official organizations of the Jewish communities, without legislative or executive powers. Originally, the Zentralrat concentrated on questions of restitution, indemnification, and related problems, on which its secretary general, H. G. van Dam, was an acknowledged authority. On September 1, 1955, the Zentralrat established a department for culture and education (Kulturdezernat) under the direction of Hans Lamm. The Zentralrat's annual meeting in Düsseldorf, held in November 1955, was attended by some two hundred delegates from all parts of Germany. Resolutions were passed on pending legisla-
tive measures, democratic re-education, and the defense of Israel. Special emphasis was given to the intensification of the community's cultural work.

New communities were formed during 1955-56 in Baden-Baden and Bayreuth, and Jewish cemeteries were consecrated in Berlin and Hechingen, in the state of Württemberg. Elections of officers took place in various communities. In Berlin, president Heinz Galinski retained control over strong opposition. In Hamburg the old community leadership was replaced by younger forces. In Munich elections were frustrated by the long-drawn-out conflict between the community leadership and the small but vigorous forces supporting the ousted rabbi, Ahron Ohrenstein, against whom criminal proceedings had been pending off and on since 1951 (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 387). In general, there was a satisfactory relationship between the relatively small group of former German Jews and the more recent arrivals with an East European background.

Joint fund raising for communal activities was still in the planning stage. The financial situation of most communities was in a state of flux, since few communities had yet obtained the restitution compensation due to them as a result of agreements with the Jewish successor organizations or of state action. Most communities derived little income from membership dues and/or taxes—many of their members being destitute—and the state authorities did not always contribute to their budgets.

Jewish Education

A very small full-time school in Bad-Nauheim with only sixteen pupils was the only Jewish school in Germany. However, religious education was provided in most Jewish communities. Many instructors taught in more than one community. Bavaria employed a teacher who regularly visited six different communities. The number of Jewish teachers rose from twenty-one in September 1955 to thirty-three in June 1956. Many of the new teachers were provided by the Jewish Agency. The number of students was 862 in June 1956. There were 1,014 children of school age in 1956, about 25 per cent more than in 1955. There were no general professional standards for the teachers or for the content and methods of instruction. An initial lack of textbooks was somewhat relieved by teaching material received from the United States, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. But there was still no Jewish history book in the German language. Plans were under consideration to prepare one with the support of the CJMCAG and the JDC, and in cooperation with other Jewish organizations in Central and West Europe. The language of instruction in religious classes was German. In addition to the traditional religious subjects, Hebrew was taught both as the tongue of the Bible and prayer book and as of that of the State of Israel. The Zentralrat's cultural department provided textbooks and other aids to the teachers. It held two week-end conferences in Frankfurt to discuss methods and goals, one in December 1955, the other in April 1956. They were well attended by teachers from all parts of Germany. Periodical conferences were planned.

Teachers were paid by the communities with the aid of subsidies of over DM 100,000 (about $25,000) in 1956, supplied by the Zentralrat out of funds
received from the CJMCAG. For 1956, the Zentralrat received DM 177,000 ($42,000) from the CJMCAG.

Youth seminars were held jointly by the cultural department of the Zentralrat and the youth department of the ZWS. Nation-wide gatherings for youth leaders were held in December 1955 in Reichelsheim in Hesse, and in April 1956 at Gut Rottland in the Rhineland. Similar meetings on a smaller scale were held at Berlin, Münster, Gauting near Munich, and in other localities. The instructors at the youth seminars and teachers' conferences came both from Germany and from abroad.

Efforts were made to extend adult education at all age levels. Lectures on Jewish subjects were conducted by both Jews and non-Jews in large communities regularly and in the smaller ones sporadically. Frankfurt was planning to open a cultural center before the end of 1956. The Berlin Jewish community was completing plans for erecting such a center, with the aid of the city government, on the site of a synagogue burnt by the Nazis in November 1938. This center was to be completed in 1957 or 1958. Meanwhile, the Berlin Jewish community held major cultural events on a monthly basis. A B'nai B'rith lodge resumed its activity in Berlin, and plans for another one were under way in Frankfurt.

Religious Life

The postwar Jewish communities in Germany retained the basically religious character which had been traditional there. However, the strong influence of the new members with East European background gave many communities a more national character than they had previously possessed, expressing itself in such ways as celebration of the anniversary of the proclamation of the State of Israel in synagogues.

Almost all synagogues in Germany had been destroyed between 1933 and 1945. The larger communities built new ones, while the smaller communities established prayer rooms. During 1955–56 new synagogues opened in Recklinghausen, Detmold, Offenbach, and Aachen. Preparations for new and larger structures were completed in Dortmund and Düsseldorf. There were rabbis in Cologne, Frankfurt, Dortmund, Hamburg, Karlsruhe, Munich, and Stuttgart. Berlin's very active Jewish community—again the largest in Germany—was still without a spiritual head, and efforts continued (mainly in Israel and the United States) to find suitable rabbis for this isolated but very important Gemeinde.

The Jewish communities of Germany were too small to make a division along religious lines feasible. Most communities had only one house of worship, where services were mostly traditional. Two types of services were conducted only in Berlin and Munich. Kosher restaurants existed in Frankfurt and Munich.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The Palestine Foundation Fund (Keren Hayesod) and the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemeth) were the only fund-raising bodies that conducted organized campaigns within Germany. The former raised over DM 350,000
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($80,000). The Keren Hayesod held its first conference in Germany in twenty years at Düsseldorf in November 1955. Headquarters were established in Frankfurt. The Zionist Organization of Germany was also re-established, and held its first nation-wide gathering at Cologne on March 6 and 7, 1956. For the elections to the twenty-fourth Zionist congress, 6,996 shekalim were sold in 128 different cities and towns of Germany. The delegates from Germany to the Zionist Congress at Jerusalem were Karl Marx of Düsseldorf, and Heinz Galinski and Carl Busch of Berlin.

Social Services

The ZWS administered almost all social service activities. The JDC, which had maintained a sizable staff in Germany after World War II, when up to 100,000 Jews lived in DP camps, had at the time of writing only a single office, located in Frankfurt. Its sole direct responsibility was to wind up the affairs of the last DP camp in Germany, at Föhrenwald. The ZWS attempted to provide every phase of social service, though institutional care was more highly developed than case and group work. Direct cash relief was granted to more than 1,500 beneficiaries, and fifteen homes for the aged were maintained in twelve cities (Berlin and Munich had two each, one of those in Berlin also serving as a hospital). These homes cared for 531 persons on June 30, 1956. Kindergartens, also substantially supported by the ZWS, existed in nine cities and were attended by 210 children on June 30, 1956, 58 pupils more than in 1955. A newly created youth department under Harry Mødr gave special guidance both to individuals and to youth groups.

The Jewish Hospital of Berlin had a capacity of 315 beds, but only a small part was occupied by Jews. In June 1956 the hospital administration was transferred to the city government. The name Jewish Hospital was retained, as well as a number of Jewish prerogatives in the institution. During the 1955 summer vacation, most Jewish communities, again supported by the ZWS, sent their children to vacation homes. In the summer of 1956 the Henrietta Szold Vacation Home was to open its doors for seventy to eighty children. This modern home in the southern part of the Black Forest—near the German city of Freiburg and the Swiss city of Basel—was acquired with the aid of a substantial JDC grant, to be used both for summer vacations for children and for general health and recreation for all age groups.

The ZWS and the JDC established five loan associations (Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Düsseldorf) which, in the eighteen months ending June 30, 1956, granted 571 loans totaling DM 1,450,000 (about $350,000). In numerous cases, the loans contributed substantially to the establishment of self-supporting enterprises.

Föhrenwald housed "hard core" cases, who for reasons of health or personal adjustment had found it hard to leave. Jewish organizations and German government agencies were in agreement that the camp had been maintained altogether too long, and that determined efforts should be made to relocate and reintegrate its residents in cities inside or outside Germany. Housing and other facilities were provided by German government authorities. From September 1, 1955, to June 30, 1956, the camp's population was reduced from 1,024 to 521, and its closing was anticipated in the not-too-
distant future. A large number of the residents of Föhrenwald resettled outside of Germany (about 400 in 1955), mainly in the United States and Canada with the aid of the United HIAS Service. Of the 3,400 persons who had left Föhrenwald since 1951, some 2,600 had been aided by HIAS in emigrating.

About 25 per cent of Föhrenwald residents—exactly 165 persons—emigrated during 1955-56, while about 75 per cent were integrated in the German economy. Of the slightly more than 400 persons still in the camp, more than 170 were to settle in Munich, 140 in Frankfurt, 58 in Düsseldorf, and less than 10 each in various other cities.

Cultural Activities

The hundredth anniversary of the death of Heinrich Heine was celebrated on February 17, 1956. President Heuss referred to Heine in his radio speech on the eve of the New Year and was present at the official celebration of the city of Düsseldorf, where the author was born in 1797. The Heine Year was observed in many ways by Federal and state authorities, by the cities, and by civic associations. The Federal government issued a special stamp commemorating the day of Heine's death.

The Loeb Lectures of the Goethe University at Frankfurt, made possible through a generous grant from private American sources, opened in February with a speech by the venerable former Berlin rabbi, Leo Baeck, before a large and distinguished audience in the largest hall of the university. Among those who welcomed him was Professor Max Horkheimer of New York, who for many years after World War II had been rector of the university, and who had taken an active part in making the series of Loeb Lectures a reality. Among speakers who followed Baeck were Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich of Basel, Hermann Levin Goldschmidt of Zürich, Professor David Daube of Oxford, Professor Walter Kaufmann of Princeton University, Rabbi Alexander Adler of Manchester, and H. G. Adler of London. During the academic year 1956-57 Professor Gershen G. Scholem of Jerusalem, and Eric Voegelin of Louisiana State University, were to be among the lecturers.

Lectures on Jewish subjects were also delivered by Ernst Ehrlich and Hermann Goldschmidt at the Free University of Berlin. Adolf Lesnitzer of New York City accepted an invitation to fill the chair of German Jewish history at the same institution. The evangelical organization of clergymen, scholars, and students, Dienst an Israel, held its eighth study conference at Lübeck. Among the speakers were three rabbis and four Jewish laymen. The week-long conference, held from February 27 to March 2, 1956, was devoted to a discussion of all aspects of tolerance. The 1957 conference was to take place at Saarbrücken.

Particularly noteworthy was the role West German radio stations and the press played not only in combating anti-Semitism but also in spreading factual information on Jewish thought and history, past and present. The Hamburg network had a weekly Jewish hour as a permanent feature, and other stations devoted substantial time to Jewish ideas and personalities. Student organizations and publications devoted a considerable portion of their interest to a sympathetic study of Jewish problems. Speakers on Jewish subjects
were invited to address nation-wide conferences and study seminars, and the student press wrote frequently on German Jewish or Israel problems.

In the spring of 1956, Leo Baeck spoke at Münster University on Moses Mendelssohn, Moses Hess, Walter Rathenau, and Franz Rosenzweig. Martin Buber addressed huge audiences in Berlin, Göttingen, München, Darmstadt, and other places. Sholom Ben Chorin of Jerusalem spoke in Munich, Hamburg, and Erlangen. Heinz Friedenthal of Tel Aviv lectured on Israeli music before various adult education institutions and over the German radio. Max Brod lectured and read from his recent book on Cicero in Frankfurt, Munich, Düsseldorf, and Berlin, and a number of his old books were reissued in Germany. Concerts by the Jewish violinists Yehudi Menuhin and David Oistrakh drew large audiences. The hundredth anniversary of the birthday of Sigmund Freud was observed by press and radio on May 6, 1956, and a special series of lectures was held at the University of Frankfurt; German and foreign scholars participated.

A number of exhibits of the work of Jewish artists were held in various cities: e.g., Paul Elsas in Stuttgart, the late Rudolf Levy in Wiesbaden, the late Yankel Adler in Duisberg and other cities in North-Rhine Westphalia. The return of the composer Paul Abraham from the United States was publicized widely. A number of books on Jewish subjects were published in Germany in 1955–56. Kurt Ziesel's *Daniel in der Löwengrube* was much discussed, because the author, who gave a moving description of Jewish life under Nazi oppression, had successfully published under the Nazis. *Lived in Paradise*, memoirs by the late Berlin journalist Hermann Sinsheimer, painted a pleasant picture of times past; while the collection of documents on the Third Reich and the Jews compiled by Poliakov and Wulf, pictured a more tragic period. The latter book and the German translation of Gerald Reitlinger's *Final Solution* reached a very wide public. A number of new editions of the works of Heinrich Heine appeared.

**Personalia**

The minute number of Jews contributed significantly to the cultural and social life of Germany. Among those on whom President Theodor Heuss bestowed the Federal Cross of Merit were: Erich Gompertz, manufacturer in Hannover; Mrs. Erna Sölzer of West Berlin, a non-Jew who had aided Jews heroically during the days of Nazi persecution; Gustav Baum, Düsseldorf industrialist; Adolf Hamburger, Nuremberg merchant, who helped rebuild the local Jewish community; the actor Ernst Deutsch of Berlin; Norbert Prager, chairman of the Lower Saxonia Association of Jewish Communities; Leo Alsbacher, Ludwigshafen community leader; and Yehudi Menuhin, world famous violinist. The Grand Cross of Merit was awarded to Professor Georg Misch of Göttingen University, who had emigrated to England in 1933, and returned to his chair of philosophy in 1946. Arthur Hellmer was made honorary member of the Berlin city theater; Michael Oppenheim, retired governmental official and historian, was given an honorary L.L.D. by the University of Mainz; the freedom of the city (honorary citizenship) was awarded to Mrs. Sara Nussbaum by the city of Kassel, to which she returned in 1946 at the age of seventy-seven; and when Leopold Goldschmidt of Frankfurt, gen-
eral manager of the national association of the societies for Christian-Jewish collaboration, became sixty years of age, President Theodor Heuss sent him a personal message of congratulations. When Harry Goldstein, then president of the Hamburg Jewish community celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday on July 20, 1955, the city of Hamburg, where he had lived since 1919, awarded him a medal "for faithful public service."

Death came to some prominent Jews in Germany. These included: Moshe Keren, fifty-four (formerly Erich Krämer of the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung*), Israel diplomat and since 1953 editor of the Tel Aviv *Haaretz* (July 1955); Dr. Chaim Brandt, prominent physician (July 1955); Kurt Messow, sixty-seven, leading Berlin jurist, author, and active in community affairs (January 1956); Benno Ostertag, Stuttgart lawyer, sixty-four, who had assisted greatly in the drafting of restitution legislation after World War II and headed the Wurttemberg Jewish community for years (April 1956); Fritz Sachs, seventy-five, who had done much to rebuild the Berlin Jewish community; Professor Alfred Sachs of Nuremberg (June 1956); Ernst Goldfreund, postwar president of the Leipzig Jewish community (January 1956); and Herbert S. Schoenfeld, director for Germany of the CJMCA (June 1956).

EAST GERMANY

The Soviet Union granted East Germany nominal sovereignty on October 6, 1955, "De-Stalinization" had only a limited effect in East Germany. The Soviet Union continued to block German unity by insisting that it be left to intra-German negotiation. Active measures for economic integration with the Soviet bloc continued.

Economic Development

East Germany's second five-year plan, which began in 1956, was to be even more closely coordinated with those of the other countries of Eastern Europe than its predecessor. The New Course of the immediate post-Stalin period was openly denounced by Walther Ulbricht, secretary general of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), when in June 1955 he declared that the expansion of heavy industry was the basic aim of East German economic policy.

It was officially claimed that industrial production increased 90 per cent during the first five-year-plan, while the national product rose 60 per cent. The actual increases were probably approximately half the amount claimed. By the end of 1955, the state controlled 85 per cent of industry. Approximately one-fifth of the agricultural area was incorporated in collective farms of the Soviet type. Food rationing continued during 1955–56; its abolition was promised for 1957. Consumer goods were still in short supply and of inferior quality. Reductions in some retail prices during 1955–56 raised living standards slightly, but they were still below pre-war levels. Average industrial wages were approximately four-fifths of those in West Germany.
**Political Developments**

The third SED party congress, held on March 24-30, 1956, was the first policy meeting after the Soviet-East German Treaty and the twentieth Soviet Party Congress at which Nikita Khrushchev had denounced Stalin (see p. 305). Although criticism of past errors played a large part at the meeting, most of Stalin's former protégés, including Ulbricht, maintained their positions. The obnoxious ministries of justice and state security, though much criticized, were not fundamentally changed. Ernst Wollweber, who had become minister of state security in November 1955 in a general government reshuffle, reaffirmed the need to make people fear the state security services.

Herbert Gruenstein, the son-in-law of Anna Pauker, who had been appointed deputy commander and inspector of the People's Police in 1951, was appointed deputy minister of the interior in January 1955, and also given the Hans Beimler medal, created recently for veterans of the Spanish civil war.

Some rehabilitations of former purge victims took place in the spring and summer of 1956. These victims included Franz Dahlem, an ardent opponent of Ulbricht, who had been attacked in connection with the Slánský trial (see *American Jewish Year Book*, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 288-94), and expelled from the Politburo in May 1953. Dahlem was made head of a department dealing with university matters, and in the summer of 1956 received the Hans Beimler medal.

Also rehabilitated were Anton Ackermann, former secretary of state for foreign affairs, and Hans Jendretzki, the former SED party chief of East Berlin. Paul Merker, a former member of the Politburo, who had been expelled in 1950 on charges including "pro-Zionism" (though he was not a Jew) was partially rehabilitated. The Central Committee of the SED declared that it had been wrong to send him to prison (he was released in the spring of 1956), and that the charges against him had been "chiefly of a political character."

The United Front, neglected in recent years, was pursued with new energy. Unsuccessful attempts were made to win the Social Democrats (SDP) of West Germany for a joint program of action.

The exodus of refugees, particularly skilled workers, caused the regime some concern. (Some 700,000 men under twenty-five had left East Germany since 1950.)

In the summer of 1956 the East German government, taking the Braeutigam case in Bonn (see p. 280) as a peg, ran a campaign against "anti-Semitism in West Germany." It began on June 15, 1956, with a press conference at which Max Seydewitz, SED member of the East German People's Chamber, accused the Bonn government of encouraging anti-Semitism. Articles followed in the East German press, and pamphlets were published in several languages.

In contrast, *Die Nation*, organ of the East German National Democratic Party, a Communist-dominated front organization designed to attract former Nazis, in May 1956 denounced Bonn's discrimination against National Socialist Party members and officers of the Hitler Wehrmacht. The article also called on former Nazis and officers in East Germany to renew contact with
their comrades in West Germany, and explain to them the aggressive nature of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's policy. Several organizations and publications in the Federal Republic were financed by East Germany for the same purpose.

In May and June 1956 there were several admissions of student unrest. In Leipzig and Dresden, students protested against interzonal travel restrictions; others reportedly engaged in hostile agitation indicating "bourgeois ways of thinking."

**German Unity**

A Soviet-East German treaty restoring the political sovereignty of East Germany was announced on September 16, 1955, and ratified on October 6, 1955. It provided that Soviet troops would remain in the country, but that East Germany would have independence in negotiating reunification with West Germany. On November 1, 1955, the SED declared that free elections were unacceptable under present circumstances. It demanded the establishment of a European security system and consultations on equal terms between the two German governments.

On November 29, Major General P. A. Dibrova, Russian commandant of Berlin, informed the Western allies that East Berlin was no longer "an occupied sector of the city," since the German Democratic Republic was a sovereign state recognized by the Soviet government. He would in the future only act "as an intermediary" with states that did not recognize the East German government. Dibrova's statement was rejected by the Western allies and the city government of West Berlin, who maintained that it contradicted the Four Power agreements.

Frontier control between East and West Germany passed from Soviet into East German hands on December 1, 1955. On January 18, 1956, the East German Chamber passed a defense law establishing a National People's Army. This army had in fact been in existence for some years, in the form of armed divisions formerly described as "barrack-based police." In contrast to West Germany, the new East German army used uniforms very similar to those of Hitler's Wehrmacht.

At a meeting of the Warsaw Treaty powers on January 28, 1956, the East German army was incorporated in the unified military command under Soviet Marshal Ivan Koniev.

An East German Council for Atomic Research was set up in December 1955 under the Nobel Prize winner Professor Gustav Hertz. The Soviet Union gave East Germany an atomic reactor.

**Relations with Arab Countries**

East Germany was active in wooing politically uncommitted and economically underdeveloped countries. New trade agreements were signed, or existing ones expanded, with Egypt, Lebanon, Sudan, and Syria. East Germany undertook to supply engineering products and machinery in return for raw materials and agricultural products. In some instances, she also supplied technical advice and technicians.
Cultural relations also expanded, and a number of “friendship” visits took place. The most recent was the visit of the Crown Prince of Yemen to East Berlin in June 1956.

Indemnification

At the press conference previously mentioned (see p. 297), Max Seydewitz stated that Jews living in the German Democratic Republic received pensions at the age of fifty-five for women and sixty for men, like all other victims of Nazi persecution. They also were entitled to certain privileges, such as priority allocation of housing accommodation.

Victims of Nazism living outside East Germany received no compensation.

Lotte Lowenthal

AUSTRIA

The first general election in Austria after the end of foreign military occupation took place on May 13, 1956. The main issue between the two parties in the coalition government was whether the former German properties in Lower Austria, especially the oil industry, should be nationalized, as the Socialists wanted, or developed with the participation of private enterprise, as the People’s Party (Catholic) wished. These so-called “German external assets,” previously administered by the Russians, were restored to Austria by the State Treaty for the Reestablishment of an Independent and Democratic Austria (see American Jewish Year Book, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 401).

The election demonstrated the need to continue the coalition government of the Socialist and People’s parties which had ruled Austria since the end of the war. The People’s Party, and to a lesser degree the Socialists, increased their popular votes and their seats in the Nationalrat (parliament) at the expense of the Communists and the Nazi-tinged Freedom Party, the former League of Independents. The new government, installed on June 29, 1956, included almost the same Socialist and People’s party ministers as before the election.

After Austria gained its independence in May 1955, fears were expressed that it might become neutral not only militarily but also ideologically. The Socialists accused Federal Chancellor Julius Raab of trying too hard to please the Russians. But Austria, though strictly adhering to military neutrality, confirmed its ideological loyalty to the democratic world. A Soviet loan offered to Lower Austria was refused. The government decided to join the Council of Europe, which was concerned with European unity, and included the Benelux and Scandinavian countries, England, France, the (West) German Federal Republic, Italy, Greece, Iceland, and Turkey. Oskar Helmer, the Socialist minister of the interior, ordered the Communist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions to move its headquarters from Austria. Although two other Communist agencies—the World Peace Council and the
The Federation of Resistance Fighters—still remained in Vienna, the government had no intention of tolerating any Communist activities which might endanger Austria's relations with the West.

The first year of Austrian independence was a prosperous one. There was a shortage of labor, particularly of skilled workers. In order to control the emigration of such workers the Austrian government asked all foreign voluntary agencies in Austria dealing with emigration to register with the authorities; other foreign agencies could register if they wished to obtain legal status.

On December 14, 1955, Austria, together with fifteen other countries, was admitted to the United Nations. On February 21, 1956, the Austrian government decided to establish diplomatic relations with the State of Israel.

**Refugees**

In February 1956 the Austrian government, at a meeting of the Council of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), appealed for international assistance in helping refugees from Eastern Europe. Austria pledged herself to increase her contribution to ICEM, and to make other sacrifices in order to speed the resettlement of refugees. Their number increased after the evacuation of Russian troops, and after the government in Budapest began to dismantle barbed wire fences and land mines along the Hungarian-Austrian border. In 1955, 3,000 refugees found asylum in Austria; the total number of non-German refugees there was estimated at 35,000 (Christian Science Monitor, May 16, 1956). George Warren, the United States delegate in the Council of ICEM, promised American support. The United States subsequently (June 1956) announced that it was ready to contribute $194,000 "to be used as a special effort on behalf of non-German-speaking refugees in Austria," and $250,000 "to ICEM for a special resettlement program on behalf of foreign-speaking refugees in Austria."

The easing of emigration restrictions by the East European countries brought 150-175 Jewish migrants a month to Vienna en route to various countries, in most cases to Israel but also to Australia and Canada. Some of the Israel-bound migrants remained in Austria.

**Jewish Population**

The number of Jews in Austria remained about 11,000, including Jews not affiliated with the Gemeinden, or Jewish communities. The available data on the membership of the Gemeinden and on Jewish camp residents revealed a slight drop in the course of the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gemeinden</th>
<th>June, 1955</th>
<th>June, 1956</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>9,181</td>
<td>9,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salzburg, Linz, Graz, Innsbruck</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camps (Asten, Glasenbach, Rothschild)</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,417</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,220</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following tables indicate changes in Gemeinde membership from January 1, 1952, to June 30, 1956. They are based on Die Tätigkeit der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien in den Jahren 1952 bis 1954, and the monthly statistical statements of the Vienna office of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC).

**TABLE 2**

**AUSTRIA, MEMBERSHIP INCREASE IN GEMEINDEN (JANUARY 1952 THROUGH JUNE 1956)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Immigration from Austria*</th>
<th>Births</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956 (Jan. 1-June 30)</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,935</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,206</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Persons converted to Judaism and previously unaffiliated Jews who joined the Gemeinde.

**TABLE 3**

**AUSTRIA, MEMBERSHIP DECREASE IN GEMEINDEN (JANUARY 1952 THROUGH JUNE 1956)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Emigration</th>
<th>Resignations</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>1,039</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>1,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956 (Jan. 1-June 30)</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,654</strong></td>
<td><strong>637</strong></td>
<td><strong>845</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,136</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of the distorted age structure of Austrian Jewry, there were four times as many deaths as births, and the only reason why the Gemeinde membership did not decline substantially was the repatriation of Austrian Jews and the influx of refugees from Eastern Europe.

**Community Organization**

Some 90 per cent of the Jewish population of Austria was concentrated in Vienna. The Bundesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden Oesterreichs ("Federation of Jewish Communities in Austria") was the representative body for all Jews in the country. The president and executive director of the Vienna Kultusgemeinde were ex officio president and executive director of the Bundesverband. The Bundesverband convened a general assembly on June 17, 1956, which discussed indemnification, coordination of welfare activities, and anti-Semitism.

In the November 27, 1955, election of the Vienna Kultusgemeinde board of directors (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 405), 67.3 per cent of those eligible to vote took part, and 5,405 votes were recognized as valid. The Socialist Liste der Werktätigen Juden received 50.3 per cent of the votes, entitling it to thirteen seats, a gain of one seat over January 1952 elections. The Zionists (Nationale Judische Wahlgemeinschaft) had five seats (compared to six in 1952); the Communists, (Jüdische Demokratische Liste Einigkeit) three seats (compared to five); the two Orthodox parties received a total of three seats. Their majority allowed the Socialists to form a homo-
geneous Socialist presidium under Emil Maurer, who was reelected president. Three Orthodox members of the board of directors resigned shortly after the election (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 406).

In the Linz community a new board of directors, with Franz Fuchs-Robetin as chairman, was elected on March 18, 1956. There was an amalgamation of Austrian Jews and Jews of East European descent, and representatives of the latter became members of the new board of directors. The Linz Jewish Central Committee, which had played an important role in the life of displaced Jews during the postwar years, was disbanded, and its archives were sent to Yad Vashem in Israel.

Social Service

The Vienna Kultusgemeinde received about one-fourth of its budget from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) and the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). During 1955–56, the Kultusgemeinde provided supplementary assistance to more than 650 persons monthly, some 600 of whom were Austrian and 50 non-Austrian Jews, and about half of whom were aged persons. The Kultusgemeinde also maintained a home for the aged and a hospital and dispensary. All three were located in the same building, and cared for about 240 persons a month. The Kultusgemeinde arranged for summer vacations for 265 children, and provided teachers for 300 pupils in religious classes held weekly in the elementary schools. The city paid the salaries of the teachers. The communities in the provinces conducted similar activities, although on a much smaller scale, and also benefited from the support of the CJMCAG and the JDC.

The direct activities of the JDC included cash relief to 600 refugees a month; stipends to academic students (twenty-two in September 1955 and seventeen in April 1956); the support of a kitchen in Vienna serving meals to 180-190 persons a month since 1946 (the kitchen was made kosher in 1955); a medical program for over 190 persons; and an educational program. The latter was concentrated mainly in Vienna, and comprised a Hebrew school including a kindergarten and four classes of a grammar school (eighty-four pupils), three Talmud Torahs (over fifty students), and a Beth Jacob school for about twenty girls.

The JDC and the CJMCAG also sponsored a credit cooperative (Jüdische Spar-und Kreditgenossenschaft). From its inception, under JDC auspices in 1949, through June 30, 1956, the cooperative granted 711 loans amounting to $381,022; of this sum artisans received 27 per cent, merchants 52 per cent, small manufacturers 6 per cent, professionals 8 per cent, and others 7 per cent.

Indemnification

In the spirit of the agreement reached in July 1955 between the Committee for Jewish Claims on Austria and the Austrian government (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 410), the Austrian parliament passed a law in January 1956 providing for the establishment of a fund of 550,000,000 schillings ($22,000,000) for payments to Austrian victims of
Nazism residing abroad (Fond zur Hilfeleistung an Politisch Verfolgte die ihren Wohnsitz und Staendigen Aufenthalt im Ausland haben, Bundesgesetz von 18 Januar 1956, B. G. Bl., No. 25). Persons eligible for payments from the fund were those who had suffered persecution by the Nazis, who had been Austrian citizens on March 13, 1938, or had been domiciled in Austria without interruption for ten years prior to that date, and were now domiciled outside of Austria. The deadline for filing of claims was set for June 10, 1957. The board of the fund included the following four Jewish members: Charles Kapralik of London, Hermann Kraemer of Tel Aviv, Norbert Liebermann and Emil Maurer of Vienna, and four Jewish alternates: Felix Bacher and Gustav Jellinek of New York, and Wilhelm Krell and Fred Ziegellaub of Vienna. Franz Sobek was appointed chairman of the board and George Weis was named executive director. As of September 15, 1956, the board had received 6,608 applications, and 604 cases had been processed.

There were no noteworthy developments in the question of the indemnification of Jewish victims of Nazism living in Austria and claims connected with heirless property (see American Jewish Year Book, 1954 [Vol. 55], p. 256-58). In June 1956 the assembly of the Bundesverband appealed to the government to carry out the clauses of the Austrian state treaty pertaining to restitution.

Intergroup Relations

Militant anti-Semitism did not exist as an organized political force in Austria during 1955-56. There were, however, small Nazi or Nazi-tinged groups; one of them, the Nationale Jungendkorps, was dissolved by the authorities in September 1956. On the whole, these groups did not represent any real danger, as shown by the losses of the Freedom Party in the elections of 1956, when it obtained only five seats, compared with fourteen in 1953.

Nevertheless, there was a tendency for the authorities to forget the crimes of the Nazi period. It took a long time before the government decided, in May 1956, to arrest a number of former police officials who had participated in the extermination of Jews in Poland during the war, and who had been released by the Russians in November 1955, in accordance with the state treaty. Two of them, Leopold Mitas and Josef Poell, who had been convicted of mass murder of Polish Jews in the Boryslaw district in Poland in 1941, were convicted in Vienna in July 1955. But the former Gestapo official Johann Sanitzer remained free, although he had been sentenced to a life term by an Austrian court in 1949; since his crimes had been committed in Russia, or on Russian-held territory, he had been extradited to the Russians and was repatriated after the conclusion of the state treaty. One of the first meetings of the cabinet formed after the May 1956 elections decided to return to former Nazi properties confiscated from them as punishment when they were convicted by postliberation courts. Parliament passed a law to this effect in July 1956. The feelings of the Jewish community found expression in a paper, read at the meeting of the general assembly of the Bundesverband referred to above, in which it was stated that the Jews in Austria felt isolated, cold-shouldered, and ignored by the general population.

Boris Sapiro