
Western Europe

GREAT BRITAIN

IN THE PERIOD from July 1, 1955, through June 30, 1956, the Anglo-Jewish community celebrated the three-hundredth anniversary of the resettlement of the Jews in England under Oliver Cromwell, following Menasseh ben Israel's petition of 1656.

Tercentenary Celebration

Celebrations of this event began with Tercentenary Sabbath on January 7, 1956, when a message of good wishes to the community was received from the Queen. Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie preached at the Great Synagogue—the “Cathedral Synagogue” of Anglo-Jewry, now, unhappily, to cease to exist. An exhibition of Anglo-Jewish art and history was opened by Viscount Samuel at the Victoria and Albert Museum on January 5, 1956.

On May 28, 1956, a banquet at Guildhall, London, was attended by representatives of the crown (the Duke of Edinburgh), the state (the prime minister and leaders of the opposition parties), and the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Free churches. Viscount Samuel presided. It was the first time that a Jewish gathering had ever been addressed by both a member of the royal family and a prime minister. Also unique was the garden party given in honor of the tercentenary by the Council of Christians and Jews, with the Archbishop of Canterbury as host, on June 12, 1956.

On March 22, 1956, a tercentenary service of dedication and thanksgiving was held at Bevis Marks, the London Sephardic synagogue erected only forty-five years after the resettlement. It was attended by the principal representatives of Jewry throughout Britain—Ashkenazic and Sephardic, Orthodox, Liberal, and Reform. The only previous joint service of this type was held at the Great Synagogue in 1937, on the occasion of the coronation of the late King George VI. Complete harmony was not, however, attained, since the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations was not officially represented, and some members of the London Beth Din were also absent.

International Relationships

The question of Egypt's refusal, in defiance of the United Nations, to allow free passage through the Suez Canal to ships bound for Israel, was repeatedly raised in Parliament during the year, generally by members of the Labor opposition, although Conservative members also lodged protests. How-

ever, this problem had become mainly of academic interest since Egypt's seizure of the Suez Canal, on July 26, 1956.

During the visit of Nikolai A. Bulganin and Nikita S. Khrushchev to Britain in April 1956 it was hoped a representative Anglo-Jewish delegation might be received by the Russian leaders to discuss the situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union. A proposal to this effect by the Board of Deputies of British Jews was turned down, as were similar approaches by the European Executive of the Agudas Israel and the World Jewish Congress (British Section). In April 1956 a memorandum on the situation of Russian Jewry was sent by the Board of Deputies to the Soviet leaders.

The various Anglo-Jewish organizations subsequently claimed that lack of unity had led to the loss of an opportunity for British Jewry to intervene on behalf of their co-religionists in Russia, and each sought to justify its own position.

The Board of Deputies was still considering the possibility of a visit to the Soviet Union by an Anglo-Jewish delegation, and at a meeting on June 17, 1956, its president, Barnett Janner, expressed the hope that other organizations would join with the board in making the delegation as representative as possible. It appeared likely, however, that other representative bodies would also send their own delegations.

Although Bulganin and Khrushchev did not meet any Jewish delegation during their stay in Britain, they were not left wholly unacquainted with the views of the Jewish community. Following a request by the Jewish Labor Committee of the United States, the Socialist leader, Hugh Gaitskell, raised the issue at a private dinner given the Soviet delegation by the Labor Party Executive at the House of Commons on April 23, 1956. Asking about Social Democratic leaders imprisoned in Eastern Europe, he added: "The Labor Party is also concerned about the position of the Jewish minority in Russia." This apparently innocent remark led to an uproar, believed by some observers to have been due to a mistranslation. Khrushchev seemed to be under the impression that there had been a charge of anti-Semitism in Russia—an accusation that he hotly denied. Indeed, the atmosphere became so acrimonious that there was no opportunity to pursue the matter further.

SHECHITA

It seemed improbable that the Crouch bill, removing the exemption of Jewish and Moslem communities from having to stun beasts before slaughtering them for food, would be reintroduced in the near future (*see* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 309). The opponents of Shechita (ritual slaughter) in Britain had been relatively inactive. Nevertheless, the question of *kashruth* was giving cause for some anxiety, largely because the relatively high price of kosher meat was making it increasingly difficult for Jewish families in the lower-income level to observe the dietary laws.

A committee of inquiry set up by the Board of Deputies in October 1955 to consider this matter reported to the board in June 1956 that the average difference between the retail prices of kosher and nonkosher meat was 1s.6d. (\$.21) per pound, of which sixpence (\$.07) was attributable to the higher prices paid by the kosher butcher to the wholesaler. The committee recom-

mended that the prices paid by the public should be reduced by at least six-pence per pound, and that unless the butchers voluntarily took steps in this direction, consideration be given to a scheme whereby consumers would be given some voice in the fixing of prices of kosher meat, e.g., by the setting up of a consultative committee on prices or a price regulation committee. The Licensed Retail Kosher Meat Traders' Association, while rejecting the price reductions proposed by the committee, nevertheless declared itself willing to serve on a consultative committee to deal with questions relating to the kosher meat trade.

A further complication in regard to the administration of Shechita in Britain lay in the fact that the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations supplied certain kosher butcher shops in London, and it was charged that this violated an agreement arrived at in 1933 between the United Synagogue and other interested bodies.

The Board of Deputies, at its meeting on April 15, 1956, considered a report of its law and parliamentary committee on "the possibility of the legalization of the word 'kosher' and the protection of that word for the benefit of the Jewish community." The committee thought that there was little likelihood of such legislation being introduced; but a possibility was the registration of a distinctive trademark described as "kosher" under the authority of the rabbinical authorities. However, agreement would have to be reached between the various sections of the community before this step could be taken. The matter was left for the consideration of the rabbinical authorities; at the time of writing (August 1956) no decision had been arrived at.

Community Organization

Hopes that had been entertained for a greater degree of cooperation between Anglo-Jewish organizations were not fulfilled. There seemed little likelihood of the restoration of the Joint Foreign Committee of the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association which went out of existence in July 1943; independent representations were being made to the British government by a number of organizations purporting to speak for Anglo-Jewry—such as the Board of Deputies, the Anglo-Jewish Association, the Agudas Israel, and the British Section of the World Jewish Congress. This was notable in connection with the Jewish case relative to the British supply of arms to the Arab States and their refusal to Israel, as well as to the plight of Jewry in North Africa and other trouble-spots. The Board of Deputies rejected a formal proposal made by Nahum Goldmann in February 1956 to enter into a world-functioning Jewish organization, on the ground that participation might affect the board's independence.

Nor were communal organizations without their internal dissensions. Abraham Cohen, its former president, issued a warning on October 16, 1955, that it would be disastrous if the Board of Deputies broke up into parties.

Strong protests were voiced by the Board of Deputies as well as by other organizations and individuals, against allegedly unsatisfactory methods of allocating German restitution funds so far as British claims were concerned. There was particular concern at the failure of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany (CJMCAG) to recommend relief allocations

to Britain, and its decision to recommend what was described as a comparatively small sum to British organizations for cultural activities. British relief applications had totaled \$722,400. Cultural claims by British groups had amounted to \$836,500, of which \$123,284 was recommended by the British advisory committee. But only about \$100,000 was allocated by the CJMCAG for cultural activities in Britain, of which \$56,000 was for schools.

Anti-Semitism and Discrimination

During 1955-56 active anti-Semitism in Britain was almost moribund. Sir Oswald Mosley's Union Movement was inactive so far as Jews were concerned; his major subject of agitation was the danger of colored immigration from the West Indies and the consequent perils of miscegenation; Mosley also had a brief and inconclusive flirtation with the French Poujadist movement. His candidates in the London County Council elections were without exception at the bottom of the polls. One or two organizations among the "lunatic fringe" continued to attack the Jews, but their influence was negligible. The defense committee of the Board of Deputies, however, remained active, on the principle that even though anti-Semitism appeared dead, social disturbances or a trade recession might bring it to dangerous life.

Allegations of anti-Semitism in professions and in schools were difficult to substantiate or to refute. At the annual dinner of the London Jewish Hospital Medical Society on March 22, 1956, Dr. Max Sorsby, the society's president, declared that there were in the medical profession restrictions against Jews amounting to a *numerus clausus*. It was not uncommon, he added, for a Jewish student to apply to all the London medical schools and not be accepted.

Religious Activities

The rift between Orthodoxy on the one hand and Reform and Liberal Judaism on the other apparently widened during the period under review; as previously noted, some Orthodox representatives refused to attend the Tercentenary Service at Bevis Marks Synagogue because Liberals and Reformers had been invited to participate. However, in view of the importance of the occasion, the chief rabbi agreed to attend the Bevis Marks service. The matter was raised at the Conference of Anglo-Jewish Preachers held in London in May 1955, when Rabbi Wolf Gottlieb (chairman of the Glasgow Beth Din) declared that there was "no room for spiritual coexistence between us and them [the Reform movement]." Referring to the service at Bevis Marks, Chief Rabbi Brodie said that he did not normally approve of services where all sections participated, and that, bearing in mind the need to emphasize the Orthodox position, it was important not to "blur distinctions." He also deplored "pandering" to Jews who, whatever might be their services to the general community, had made no contribution *as* Jews and could be classified as such only because of their Jewish descent.

There were no reliable statistics, but it appeared that numerically the Reformers were gaining in strength and that Anglo-Jewry was less traditionally observant than it had been even a few years previous.

A loan of £200,000 (\$560,000) for building projects was approved by the United Synagogue; plans were published in October 1955 for the new building of the St. John's Wood Synagogue, London; and the Marble Arch and District Hebrew Congregation was established in February 1956.

Jewish Education

The problem of financing Jewish education in London became even more acute during 1955-56. At a communal conference on the subject convened by Chief Rabbi Brodie on October 4, 1955, it was stated that the London Board of Jewish Religious Education was faced with a current deficit of £15,000 (\$42,000), and that this would rise in subsequent years to £25,000 (\$70,000). The main source of revenue was a 25 per cent education tax levied on all members of the United Synagogue. The London Board had an enrollment of 15,000 pupils.

Some controversy arose between the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland and the Orthodox religious leaders on the subject of Zionist participation in Jewish schools and the fear that the education in them might be to some extent "nationalized" or secularized. The chief rabbi had, as far back as 1953, declared that "not a single penny of Jewish Agency funds should be spent on Jewish education," and advised Zionist groups who might consider offering financial assistance to Jewish day schools to refrain from doing so. However, in January 1956 the Zionist Federation established its first Jewish primary day school at Edgware, London, with the London Board of Jewish Religious Education as a party to the agreement; and at the annual conference of the federation (April 16, 1956) the retiring chairman, Isaac Solomon Fox, said that the federation had now "adopted" the Jewish day school movement, and hoped by so doing to create "a revolution in the upbringing of our children." At the Anglo-Jewish Preachers' Conference (May 3, 1956), Rabbi Brodie said that he had received pledges from the federation that nothing would be done at its schools which would offend the scruples of Orthodox Jews, and should there be any difficulty the matter would be referred to him for his final decision. But the chief rabbi made it clear that he had given his approval to only one of these schools (that at Edgware); and he warned ministers that they should not accept "tempting offers" or rely on any statement that Zionist schools had his approval.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Jews' College, the principal stronghold of Orthodox Jewish education in Britain, celebrated its centenary on November 16, 1955, when Alan A. Mocatta laid the foundation stone of its new building to be erected in Montagu Square, London. The dedication ceremony was performed by Chief Rabbi Brodie, president of the college. The new building was to be completed within two-and-a-half years at a cost of £150,000 (\$420,000); and another £30,000 (\$84,000) would be needed for its equipment as a teaching and residential college. In connection with its centenary celebrations the college published *Jews' College 1855-1955* by the late Albert M. Hyamson.

At its annual meeting in London on May 13, 1956, the Association of Synagogues in Great Britain, the principal Reform organization, decided to ap-

point a director of religious studies as a preliminary to the establishment of a theological college at Oxford or Cambridge for the purpose of training ministers and teachers.

At Hillel House, London, the Selig Brodetsky Library was opened; and a new Jewish section of the Manchester Central Library was established to commemorate the lord mayoralty of Alderman Abraham Moss.

Zionism and Fund Raising

The Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland and other Zionist organizations were active throughout 1955-56. Like other Jewish bodies, they made representations to the British government on Middle Eastern affairs affecting the interests of Israel, particularly the supply of arms to the Arab states.

The annual Joint Palestine Appeal was launched on February 18, 1956, the target figure being £2,500,000 (\$7,000,000). This was £500,000 (\$1,400,000) more than the previous year. Some £650,000 (\$1,820,000) was raised at the opening dinner. The institutions aided by the appeal included the Keren Hayesod (Palestine Foundation Fund), the Keren Kayemet (Jewish National Fund), the Mizrahi, and the Histadrut.

An Anglo-Jewish Development Corporation was launched in June 1956 to develop Kiryat Gan in the Lachish area. Anglo-Jewish volunteers went to Israel border settlements as part of the Shacham scheme, under which Jewish youth between the ages of eighteen and twenty-seven from the Diaspora went to Israel for a period of one year to assist hard-pressed collective settlements on the frontiers. A menorah, the work of Benno Elkan, was presented to the Knesset in Jerusalem in April 1956 as a gift from the British Parliament. An appeal to the government to reconsider the possibility of a bilateral defense treaty with Israel was contained in a resolution passed by the Board of Deputies on November 13, 1955.

PARLIAMENT

Questions and debates in Parliament on subjects of Jewish interest were confined largely to Egypt's restrictions on the passage of Israel-bound ships through the Suez Canal, and the supply of arms to the Arab states to the disadvantage of Israel.

The speech of Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden, at the Lord Mayor's banquet at Guildhall, London, on November 9, 1955, caused considerable dismay. Declaring that the British government would be willing to help to produce a "compromise solution" between Israel and her Arab neighbors, Eden offered a formal guarantee to both sides, provided an "acceptable arrangement" could be made about their common boundaries. This was generally interpreted to mean territorial concessions by Israel, and was described as being "Munich all over again."

While refusing to withdraw or qualify his Guildhall speech, Sir Anthony did, however, in the course of a subsequent debate (December 12, 1955) reaffirm the Tripartite Declaration pledging assistance to Israel if it were attacked or to an Arab country if it were attacked by Israel.

As the result of a by-election another Jew, Sir Keith Joseph, was returned to Parliament as a Conservative. There were now nineteen Jewish members of parliament, two of them Conservative and seventeen Labor.

Cultural Activities

The Ben Uri Art Gallery, which in addition to painting and sculpture also encouraged drama and other cultural activities, in June 1956 celebrated its fortieth anniversary. The centenary of the birth of Sigmund Freud was widely commemorated, and a tablet was unveiled outside his former home in London. The newly established Isaac Wolfson Foundation at Manchester sponsored a new quarterly, the *Journal of Semitic Studies*, whose first issue appeared in April 1956.

A Jewish Book Week exhibition, in connection with the tercentenary, was opened at Woburn House, London, on March 21, 1956.

Social Service

The past year saw a notable growth in the number of Friendship Clubs for older people. At the time of writing (August 1956) there were fifty-four of these clubs in London and the provinces with a total membership of about 6,000. Many of the clubs were assisted by the welfare committee of the United Synagogue. In addition to social and cultural activities, there was a central holiday scheme which offered members the opportunity to have holidays at reduced prices. Over 800 members took advantage of this opportunity.

Personalia

Viscount Samuel celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday on November 6, 1955, when he was honored by Jews and non-Jews alike. At a dinner organized two days later by the British Friends of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, it was announced that about £65,000 (\$182,000) had already been subscribed in London and Manchester towards a testimonial fund of £100,000 (\$280,000) to enable the university to build a library, housing books on philosophy and science, to be named after Lord Samuel.

Rabbi Meyer Steinberg, minister of the Brixton Synagogue, London, was appointed a *dayan* of the London Beth Din on March 12, 1956. Sir Basil Henriques retired, on October 31, 1955, from the East London Juvenile Court after thirty-two years as a member and eighteen years as chairman.

In the New Year Honor List (January 2, 1956) Arthur David Waley was made a Companion of Honor for his services to the study of Chinese literature; while knighthoods were conferred on Professor Hersch Lauterpacht, judge of the International Court of Justice; Colonel Frederick C. Stern, treasurer of the Linnaean Society; and Professor Solly Zuckerman, deputy chairman of the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy. In the Queen's Birthday Honors List (May 31, 1956) a baronage was conferred on Sir Henry Cohen, professor of medicine at Liverpool University, for services to medicine, while a knighthood went to Brigadier Edmund H. L. Beddington; Rabbi Jacob Dang-

low was made a C.M.G. (Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George) for services to the community in Australia.

Among prominent members of the Anglo-Jewish community who died during 1955-56 were: Professor Samson Wright, John Astor professor of physiology of the University of London and a vice president of the British Friends of the Hebrew University (March 11, 1956); Sigmund Gestetner, president of the Jewish National Fund of Great Britain and Ireland (April 19, 1956); Abraham Abrahams, chairman of the Zionist Revisionist Organization of Great Britain and Ireland (July 22, 1955); Noah Barou, chairman of the European Executive of the World Jewish Congress (Sept. 5, 1955); Maurice Simon, translator of the Talmud and the Zohar (November 21, 1955); Rabbi Isaiah Raffalovich, a pioneer Zionist and former minister in Liverpool (June 1956); Percy Newman, prominent Birmingham industrialist who in 1953 had presented £55,000 (\$154,000) to the Jewish National Fund Charitable Trust for establishing a village for settling Yemenite families near Jerusalem (July 6, 1955); Dr. Arthur Felix, bacteriologist and authority on typhus (January 17, 1956); Mark Labovitch, industrialist and president of the Leeds Jewish Representative Council (February 1956); and Hyman Morris, lord mayor of Leeds in 1941-42 (December 1955).

CHARLES SOLOMON

FRANCE

FRANCE UNDERWENT a turbulent and difficult year domestically and in its dealings with North Africa during the period under review (November 1955 through October 1956). Rising dissatisfaction with the Edgar Faure government and the sharp parliamentary attacks of Pierre Mendès-France led to Faure's downfall in November 1955, after ten months in office, and brought new elections on January 2, 1956. A new party, Union et Fraternité Française, headed by Pierre Poujade, won more than two and a half million votes, 12 per cent of the total, and elected 53 deputies. Twelve parties shared the 544 seats in metropolitan France. The Communists won 145, with a fourth of the popular vote. The election confirmed the fragmentation of the Rassemblement du Peuple Français, founded by General Charles de Gaulle in 1950. A new government was formed by a coalition of Socialists headed by Guy Mollet, with ninety-four seats, and Radical-Socialists headed by Mendès-France, with thirty-four seats, with the parliamentary support of the bulk of the centrist parties. Mollet became premier, and Mendès-France vice premier. In succeeding months, Mendès-France (*see* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1955, [Vol. 56], p. 317-18; 1956, [Vol. 57], p. 318-19) saw his influence in the government diminish. He finally withdrew over Mollet's Algerian policy in the summer of 1956.

The election campaign produced anonymous anti-Semitic tracts in some parts of the country. In Paris, anti-Semitic stickers were plastered by night on the election posters of various Jewish candidates. There was no evidence, however, that this had any significant effect on the vote. Jews elected to par-

liament included Mendès-France; Daniel Mayer, who became chairman of the assembly's foreign affairs committee; and Jules Moch, a former minister of the interior. Among the many Jews who held posts of importance in France during the year were Professor René Cassin, vice president of the Conseil d'État; Senators Leo Hamon and Michel Debré, who continued in office; jurists Lyon-Caen and Léon Meiss; Julien Cain, head of the French library system; and Max Hysmans, head of the nationalized aviation company, Air France. Jews were prominent in journalism, in the law and medical professions, and in academic circles.

North African Situation

France relinquished its protectorate over Morocco in an accord signed in Paris on March 2, 1956. The limitations on Tunisian sovereignty included in the French-Tunisian accord of September 1955 were gradually dropped, and that country, too, became fully independent of France. The French government was determined, however, to hold Algeria, which it insisted was an integral part of France. Premier Guy Mollet refused to deal with Algerian nationalists, who had begun guerrilla fighting against French rule in November 1954. He followed Algerian Resident Minister Robert Lacoste's recommendation that Algeria be pacified first, with free elections and reforms afterward. In a show of determination the French government resorted to the draft in order to bolster regular army forces in Algeria. The sultan of Morocco, Sidi Mohammed Ben Youssef, and Premier Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia repeatedly expressed their sympathy with Algerian nationalists. They warned France that their own moderate regimes, friendly to the French, would be threatened by extremist sentiment unless the Algerian conflict could be resolved quickly. A meeting of the sultan, Premier Bourguiba, and Algerian nationalist leaders was due to take place in Tunis in October 1956. The French, angered at the sultan's hospitality to Algerian leaders, on October 22, 1956, pirated a Moroccan plane containing five Algerian nationalist chiefs, and imprisoned them; French relations with North African countries reached a new low.

The French accused Egyptian Premier Abdel Gamal Nasser of aiding the Algerian nationalists with arms and money. Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal in July 1955 was the last straw for French opinion. France's troubles with Egypt brought her close to Israel, and the French furnished Israel with arms, including jet planes that she could not get elsewhere. When, in October 1956, Israeli troops entered Egypt's Sinai peninsula, France and Great Britain invaded the Suez Canal zone.

Economic Situation

The Algerian war strained the French economy. A strong tendency toward inflation was temporarily checked in the fall of 1956 by a bond issue and the borrowing of \$250,000,000 from the International Monetary Fund. French production made notable gains during 1955-56, but the balance of trade remained highly unfavorable. There was full employment and even a labor shortage, pushing the low French wage scale up slightly. Economists calcu-

lated that the French worker's real take-home wage was a trifle higher than before World War II, but added that concepts of decent minimum living standards had altered meanwhile. The government passed legislation making three-week vacations for workers mandatory, and increasing social security benefits for the aged, but it failed to tackle the wretched housing situation, a major source of French discontent, or to deal with fundamental French economic difficulties.

Anti-Semitic Agitation

French economic maladjustment was largely responsible for the Poujade movement, whose leadership showed anti-democratic and anti-Semitic tendencies (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956, [Vol. 57], p. 320). The gradual introduction of mass production and chain stores threatened the livelihood of many small shopkeepers, businessmen, and artisans. There were numerous economically depressed regions, particularly in southwest France. The tax system was cumbersome, and often capricious and unjust. Capitalizing on such grievances, Poujade attracted over half a million people into his Union de Défense des Commerçants et Artisans de France (UDCA), which became a political movement in November 1955.

Poujadist anti-Semitism was due in part to former Vichy collaborationists who became Poujade's allies. In part, it reflected a certain French "village xenophobia," marked by suspicion of all things "different" or foreign. At the first Poujade postelection rally, one speaker declared: "Our government is at the service of foreign powers, or of more or less stateless economic powers." "Our press is in homeless and foreign hands," asserted another. Following the meeting J. J. Kaufmann, a Jewish merchant from Strasbourg who had been one of the founders of the movement, resigned, charging that there was "an atmosphere of hatred that foreshadowed pogroms."

Poujade denied that he or his movement was anti-Semitic, but he made such statements as: "I find it dishonorable for us to allow people who have been in France for scarcely a generation to take up the reins, and boast about seeking to lead us." Or, "The real racists are the Jews, who for generations have refused to marry Christians." According to the statutes of the UDCA, "Only Frenchmen whose families have been of French nationality for three generations can be part of the administrative council" of the organization. A similar principle, Poujade asserted at a Foreign Press Association luncheon in Paris in January 1956, should apply to French government posts. The Poujadist leaders claimed that they were not attacking Jews, but "too-new Frenchmen who permit themselves to criticize in a country that is not theirs." But their attacks were concentrated most viciously on Jewish parliamentarians, whether they were Frenchmen of recent date or sixth-generation Frenchmen like Mendès-France, a particular Poujadist target. In April 1956, Francis Caillet, administrative secretary of the Poujadist group in parliament, resigned from the movement because, he said, "of disagreement over the anti-Semitic position of the group and because of certain political considerations." In May 1956, the Poujadist weekly *Fraternité Française* featured a picture story on the theme that Jewish smugglers were feeding arms to the rebels in Algeria. A few weeks later it repeated all the

canards of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and linked Jews with Communism.

Poujadism denounced French parliamentary institutions, demanding the establishment of a corporative society with a system of "parallel unions . . . built upon well-defined social layers with readily defined interest." To parallel his UDCA, Poujade sought with little success to organize unions of peasants, workers, and the liberal professions. As time went on, Poujade's adherents began to feel deceived, since taxes continued to mount, despite the presence of Poujadists in parliament. Some deputies left the movement. There were calls for an accounting of the huge sums of money raised by Poujade. Disgruntled UDCA members organized a dissident group. But in October 1956, Poujadism was still strong. As could be expected, French Jewish organizations came out vigorously against Poujadism. "We are opposed to Poujadism not just because it is anti-Semitic, but because it is anti-democratic," declared the president of the Consistoire Central des Israélites de France et d'Algérie, Guy de Rothschild. "As so often in French history, our interests and those of the French community coincide."

Throughout 1955-56, Mendès-France continued to be the favorite whipping boy of the anti-Semitic press, which held him responsible for French losses in North Africa. These publications also sought to minimize the number of Jewish dead resulting from Nazism and the war. They featured a purported anti-Semitic statement of Benjamin Franklin (actually a product of Nazi propaganda mills), when his 250th anniversary was celebrated in France in February 1956. But, on the whole, *Rivarol* was somewhat less anti-Semitic in tone during 1955-56 than in previous years, due to a certain grudging admiration for Israel. Indeed, this weekly even went so far as to support the sending of French arms to Israel. For so doing, *Aspects de la France* reproached *Rivarol*.

A number of new anti-Semitic publications appeared during 1955-56. Léon Dupont, a former Poujade lieutenant who had split with him, issued a crude bimonthly paper *Chevrotine*. François Daudet published the magazine *Les Libertés Françaises*. France's most notorious anti-Semite, Maurice Bardèche, continued to publish his magazine *Défense de l'Occident*. There were, in addition, a variety of lesser sheets. A Paris daily *Le Temps de Paris* began publication in February 1956, with a large number of former Vichy collaborationists on its staff. It collapsed in June, however, without having established any clear editorial position.

Ten years after the war, the rehabilitation of former Vichy collaborationists rarely excited comment. Nor did public protest have much effect in even the more outrageous cases. In November 1955, Horace de Carbuccia, former editor-owner of one of the most notorious papers to serve the Nazis, *Gringoire*, came back from exile in Switzerland, and stood trial for his pro-Nazi activities. The prosecutor of the French military court was castigated by the French press for failing to present readily available evidence—but de Carbuccia was acquitted. French student groups violently protested the reinstatement at the Sorbonne of philosophy professor Jean Guitton, whose works had been published under the imprimatur of Josef Goebbels' propaganda staff, but Guitton remained. Roger-Ferdinand, who had written anti-Semitic ma-

terial during the war years, became head of the French Conservatoire, despite protests by Jewish groups.

The Conseil Représentatif des Juifs de France (CRIF), grouping leading Jewish organizations under the presidency of Vidal Modiano, was active in denouncing anti-Semitism, as was the Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisemitisme (LICA), which celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in the fall of 1956. The pro-Communist Mouvement Contre le Racisme, et Pour la Paix (MRAP) organized its annual mass rally in June 1956. The Fédération des Sociétés Juives de France, representing two-score *landsman-schaften*, refused to join the rally, because MRAP had not taken a positive stand on religious and cultural freedom for Jews in the Soviet Union. Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne, devoted to promoting greater understanding between Christians and Jews, marked its tenth anniversary in May 1956. Particularly vigilant with regard to the Poujade movement was the Centre d'Études des Problèmes Actuels, composed of Jews and non-Jews.

Jewish Population

The troubles in North Africa brought increasing numbers of Jews from that area to metropolitan France. French community leaders, lacking any definitive statistics, continued to estimate the Jewish population in France at about 300,000. Over half were in Paris and its suburbs; about 40,000, in Alsace and Lorraine (which had a separate Jewish community organization from the rest of France); some 12,000, in the Lyon area; and 9,000, around Marseille. Most North African newcomers apparently made their way to Paris, while the more prosperous immigrants settled in the Midi. No one knew the precise extent of the North African immigration, but it numbered at least several thousand during 1955-56. North African Jews made up almost one-fourth of the relief load of the Jewish welfare agencies in Paris. French organizations, such as the Comité de Bienfaisance Israélite de Paris, ran special fund-raising projects on behalf of the immigrants. The Conseil Représentatif Judaïsme Traditionaliste de France, under the presidency of Edmond Weil, instituted special religious courses for North Africans living in the housing projects founded by the Catholic champion of the homeless, Abbé Pierre. Housing remained the most vexing problem for the newcomers; some first, not-too-hopeful steps were taken by Jewish community groups to find lodgings for them.

Due to the arrival of the highly Orthodox North African Jews, Jewish community schools reported an overflow of students, and sought ways to expand their facilities. The Consistoire de Paris saw its synagogues more crowded than in previous years, and opened prayer houses especially for North African Jews at Belleville, in the Marais district, and in Montmartre, leading Jewish population centers. Jewish community institutions, previously hard-pressed for staff with both French and Jewish training, now had an adequate supply of persons to choose from.

Migration from France was not very important during 1955-56. The United Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) Service helped 775 persons leave for destinations other than Israel from July 1955 to July 1956, a 50 per cent increase over 1954-55 made possible by the United States Refugee Re-

lief Act. Marseille was an important transfer point for North African Jews on their way to Israel. At one point, in September 1956, there were over 7,000 persons in the Jewish Agency camp there designed for only about 2,000, and the overflow had to be accommodated in lodging houses and tent towns. Only a handful of Jews from France itself left for Israel, however.

Community Organization and Activity

The French Jewish community made solid progress during 1955-56, a period which saw definite improvement in Jewish community structure, as important new institutions arose in Paris and the provinces. The community developed an integrated three-year plan for the use of funds available from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG). The Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU), the central fund-raising and planning organization for local needs, sought to organize cultural and educational cooperation with neighboring European communities.

The provisional YMHA-type of youth center which opened its doors in Paris in September 1955, the first of its kind in France, soon attracted 800 paid members and drew into activity many persons who had never been associated with Jewish communal life. Property was purchased for a permanent center, and work was to begin on it in the spring of 1957.¹ Communal centers were completed in the towns of Belfort, Roanne, and Lens, and were under construction in Grenoble and Lyon. In the fall of 1956, the Strasbourg community was to take possession of a new government-built structure replacing the synagogue destroyed by the Germans, with facilities for a full-time Jewish school and kindergarten, community offices, a library, and youth activities. Following the success of the Limoges pilot project for the revitalization of small Jewish communities (*see* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956, [Vol 57], p. 326), community workers were sent to the cities of Lille and Le Havre, Bastia in Corsica, and Champigny. The three Consistoire Central youth chaplains established groups in the south of France, at Beziers, Montpellier, Nimes, Avignon, and Perpignan; and around Clermont-Ferrand and Vichy in the center of France. For some towns, it was the first attempt since the end of the war to organize Jewish activity.

In February 1956, the FSJU called a conference of Jewish groups from neighboring and French-language countries for the end of June 1956. Later, however, the FSJU cancelled this conference, agreeing to work within the framework of a wider European cultural conference sponsored by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in Paris in October 1956. A special session at the JDC conference, particularly directed at French-speaking countries, was organized by the FSJU. It dealt with personnel training, publication of books of Jewish interest, school curricula, and allied subjects. While there was general agreement on the need for intercommunal cooperation, the actual form that this should take was not clearly indicated at the conference.

During 1955-56, the FSJU cultural action commission mapped out a three-year improvement program, to cover both cultural and general needs, costing more than \$3,250,000. Whether this could be achieved, it was clear, would

¹ The building was to be purchased with the aid of the Ford Foundation of the United States. The CJMCAG-JDC was to equip the building at a cost of \$67,500.

depend greatly on the CJMCAG and the JDC, since the French Jewish community was in no position to undertake such a burden by itself.

FUND RAISING

The community still depended on outside assistance for more than three-fourths of its funds. Auren Kahn, JDC's director for France, estimated in October 1956 that the total JDC-FSJU expenditure for 1956 would be 575,000,000 francs (\$1,640,000), of which 85,000,000 francs, or not quite 15 per cent, would go for one-time grants and investment, and the balance for the regular welfare and cultural activities of the thirty-five organizations receiving their funds from FSJU. An additional 53,000,000 francs (\$150,000) for cultural work came to French Jewish institutions directly from the CJMCAG cultural budget.

The FSJU expected to raise only about 180,000,000 francs, or just over \$500,000 in 1956, with associated fund-raising drives in Strasbourg, Lyon, Marseille, and Nice, and by the individual Jews in institutions bringing in another 95,000,000 francs, or \$275,000. The FSJU drive showed a tendency to level off at about 160,000,000 francs during 1954-55, and strenuous community effort was needed in 1956 to improve this showing.

A number of requests for assistance were made to the CJMCAG by French Jewish institutions acting independently of FSJU and its cultural action commission. Requests to the CJMCAG for relief and rehabilitation purposes from all sources in 1956 totaled well over \$3,500,000, plus another \$280,000 for cultural purposes. But the bulk of money for France from the CJMCAG passed through the JDC-FSJU.

Education and Youth Activity

Increased educational activity was shown, also, in five new two-hour-a-week courses for children in Paris; and the appointment of four traveling teachers to visit some thirty communities in the Bas-Rhin district, and two other teachers to circulate in the Moselle region. A building site was found for a large full-time secondary school in Paris to replace the existing Maimonides and Yabne schools, and the CJMCAG allocated \$100,000 toward acquiring it. In all France, some 750 Jewish children attended four full-time schools. Nearly 3,500 children received some form of part-time Jewish education.

Vocational training was carried on by the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT) in schools at Montreuil, Lyon, Marseille, and Strasbourg for a monthly average of 1,750 students, of whom about 20 per cent were adults. There was a special ORT pre-apprenticeship course for North African children.

The number of Jewish summer camps, run by a variety of organizations, had been growing steadily in the past three years. Thirty of them served more than 4,000 children throughout France in 1956. Originally these camps were meant for orphans and children whose parents did not have the means to give them a vacation. Gradually, however, attendance had come to include children from all social elements, including many not otherwise touched by community institutions.

Under the stimulus of the French cultural action commission which advised the CJMCAG on cultural allocations in France, several children's books and educational games were issued during 1955-56, and the preparation of a number of textbooks was well advanced. Community worker Roland Musnick was sent to the United States on a National Council of Jewish Women scholarship, and brought back a variety of audio-visual educational aids and film material to be adapted to European use and distributed through the Centre Educatif at Paris, headed by Isaac Pougatch.

The number of persons receiving training in the rabbinate, as teachers, and as community center and youth group workers reached a new postwar high of almost 100 by the 1956 fall term.

Social Service

Though French Jewish leadership was primarily interested in cultural and educational programs, by far the greatest expenditure went for welfare work. The thirteen children's homes, with a total population of about 850, received more than half their funds from the FSJU, and the rest from public sources and parents' fees. Three welfare agencies cared for about 2,800 persons monthly, almost 40 per cent of whom were over sixty. Two canteens served about 6,000 meals per month. Eleven old age homes had a population of about 900. These were supported by the government, but private funds were required for major improvements; six of the homes were thus helped by the Jewish community through the year. The Caisse Israélite de Démarrage Économique, a free loan service, granted about 100 loans a month totaling some \$55,000.

Zionist Activity and Relations with Israel

The French Fédération Sioniste, under the presidency of André Blumel, worked more effectively during 1955-56 than it had during 1954-55. A special campaign on behalf of migration from North Africa, started in November 1955 with a goal of 40,000,000 francs, was oversubscribed, raising 55,000,000 francs (\$157,000). Including the proceeds of this special campaign, the Zionist fund-raising drive L'Aide Israel in 1955-56 netted over 200,000,000 francs (\$570,000), almost double that of 1954-55. The Zionists of eastern France (who had maintained a separate body) merged with the Fédération. A number of internal disputes which had previously plagued the Zionists were resolved during the year.

France-Israel, an organization devoted to improving relations between the two countries and including Jews and non-Jews, helped to inform the French public about Israel.

A series of cultural accords between France and Israel during 1955-56 provided for book exchange, extension of Jewish studies in French universities, co-production of films, exchange of scholarship students, and exchange of theatrical troupes. Two *Ulpanim* were started to give Hebrew training to North African teachers desiring to work in Israel and to educators working in France.

Religious Activity

The Consistoire Central helped to provide for the religious needs of the North African Jews and worked closely with the FSJU and its cultural action commission, particularly in rebuilding religious life in the provinces. The Consistoire changed its statutes to permit the election of three vice presidents instead of two, thus making room for an Algerian vice president, E. Tenuoudji of Constantine.

Cultural Activity

A popular Golden Chain book series under community sponsorship was particularly directed at the older Jewish population. In 1956, three volumes appeared: *A Brief History of the Jews of France*; *The Doctrine of Judaism*; and *A Brief History of Anti-Semitism*. Six additional Golden Chain volumes were in preparation, as was a much-needed, one-volume Jewish reference encyclopedia in the French language. André Chouraqui, with the aid of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, issued the first three volumes of his series dealing with Jewish literary subjects. Two books of the World Jewish Congress popular series came out in French.

ABRAHAM KARLIKOW

BELGIUM

BELGIUM WAS a peaceful and prosperous country during the year under review (July 1, 1955 through November 30, 1956). Industrial production mounted to a new postwar high. There was full employment, with only some minor soft spots to trouble the Belgian economy. January 1956 brought with it the reduction of the Belgian work week from forty-eight to forty-five hours. The government kept in check a slight tendency toward inflation, and the Belgian franc was one of Europe's hardest currencies. Monthly Belgian exports were over \$250,000,000; and though Belgium had a balance-of-trade deficit, this was more than made up for by benefits from invisible exports. Continued progress was made toward economic union with the Netherlands and Luxemburg. The last major obstacle to Benelux integration—differences in wage scales paid in Belgium and Holland—was disappearing as Dutch workers' salaries rose to within about 30 per cent of Belgian standards during 1955-56. At the end of 1956, Belgium was already preoccupied with preparations for its 1958 World's Fair.

Politically, too, the country was serene under the leadership of the Socialist-Liberal coalition of Achille van Acker. The intense struggle between clerical and anticlerical forces over the size of government subsidies to be given to denominational schools, which had provoked much excitement early in 1955, had died down somewhat. The government took care, too, that no external forces should be permitted to disturb Belgium's political tranquility. The success of demagogue Pierre Poujade in the French elections of January 1956 inspired the formation of a Belgian Independence Association, which invited

Poujade to come and speak before it—but on February 25, the minister of justice Albert Lilar barred Poujade's entry to Belgium. At the end of May 1956, Belgian political circles sharply criticized United States Assistant Secretary of State George Allen after he made a trip to the Belgian Congo; the United States, it was charged, was seeking long-term gains in the region by backing the natives against Belgium. The country continued to be a staunch advocate of Western European Union and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Belgium's Foreign Minister Paul-Henri Spaak succeeding Britain's Lord Ismay as secretary-general of NATO in December 1956. A group of Belgian leaders, headed by Premier Achille van Acker, visited the Soviet Union at the end of October 1956 at the invitation of the Soviet Union in the hopes of furthering East-West understanding, but the delegation's visit was overshadowed by developments in Poland, Hungary, and the Middle East.

Relations between Belgium and Israel were good throughout 1955–56. There was some public furor in December 1955, when 180 British World War II Valentine tanks were discovered to have been reconditioned at the port of Antwerp and sent on to Egypt. The Belgian government explained, however, that it could not prevent such trans-shipment without endangering Antwerp's status as a free port. Trade between Belgium and Israel flourished, even though there was no formal agreement, and Israel managed to purchase certain material in Belgium that she found it difficult to get elsewhere. Press and public opinion showed sympathy for Israel's difficulties with her Arab neighbors, and understanding of the Israel move into the Sinai peninsula in October 1956. In November 1956, the government gave favorable consideration to applications from Jews in the Belgian Congo seeking visas for relatives being expelled from Egypt. At the request of the Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique, Foreign Minister Spaak ordered Belgian consuls in Egypt to deliver visas to Jews there asking to go to Belgium.

Jewish Population

Economically, Jews in Belgium shared in the well-being of the country as a whole. There were an estimated 23,000 Jews in Brussels, playing an important role in the manufacture of handbags, gloves, sportswear, and plastics, as well as in the fur and textile trades, and as shopkeepers. Antwerp had some 9,000 Jews. Most of the working population was connected with the diamond industry, but Jews were also influential in Antwerp's export and import business. Liège had 300 Jewish families, with about 1,200 persons; Charleroi, 123 families, with 500 persons; and Ghent was growing as a Jewish center, having some 100 families as of October 1956. There were small Jewish communities in Arlon and Ostend, with about a dozen families each, and a handful of Jews in Tournai, Namur, and other localities throughout Belgium. In the summer months, the Jewish population of Ostend and its neighboring communities on the North Sea shore multiplied many times over, the town being a favorite resort for Jews seeking kosher facilities and a Jewish atmosphere. Vacationers came not only from Belgium itself but from Great Britain, France, and other Western European lands, as well.

Further evidence of Jewish integration in Belgium was the virtual absence of Jewish emigration. The United HIAS reported aiding 271 persons leaving

for countries other than Israel during the period from July 1, 1955 through June 30, 1956. Only a score of persons went to Israel during the same period. (Altogether, from the founding of Israel through April 1956, 1,270 Jews had moved from Belgium to Israel, according to Jewish Agency figures.) It was estimated that returnees from Israel to Belgium numbered over 50.

Civic and Political Status

The situation of Belgium's estimated 35,000 Jews reflected the nation's peace and prosperity. Little difficulty was placed in the way of foreign Jews who wished to obtain Belgian citizenship; this had not been the case during the less prosperous postwar years. It was also easier to obtain Belgian work permits, and to acquire permission to exercise a profession. The sharp increase in the number of Jews acquiring citizenship, already noted during 1954-55, continued during 1955-56. Jewish community leaders in Brussels and Antwerp estimated, in October 1956, that more than 50 per cent of the Jews in Belgium were citizens, as contrasted with only 10 per cent in 1951. It was expected that at least 30 per cent more of the Jewish population would fulfill the conditions for citizenship in the coming four or five years: ten years' residence, payment of a sizeable fee, and the hurdling of various administrative and parliamentary formalities. Poorer Jews in Brussels, who were unable to pay the citizenship fee, were receiving financial assistance for that purpose from the leading Jewish welfare organization in the city, Aide aux Israélites Victimes de la Guerre (AIVG), thanks to a \$3,000 grant received from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG). In previous years there had occasionally been reports of Belgian administrators questioning whether participation in Zionist activities was compatible with Belgian citizenship. This kind of question no longer came up; there seemed to be increased recognition that support of Zionism in no way implied any double loyalty. An increasing number of Jews in Belgium were seeking court permission to change their names. As far as could be determined, however, this was motivated primarily by the desire to eliminate orthographic difficulties, rather than to avoid identification with Judaism. There was, however, a certain reluctance by Belgian courts to accede to such requests.

Intergroup Relations

Overt anti-Semitism, never very strong in Belgium, reached a new postwar low during 1956, in the opinion of Jewish community leaders. The Antwerp B'nai B'rith, under president Philippe Vecht, intervened informally and usually successfully in half a dozen cases where persons with apartments or lodgings to rent indicated in their notices that they would not accept Jews.

WAR ORPHAN CASES

The Belgian courts continued to deal with the cases of two Jewish war orphans, Anneke Beekman and Henry Elias (*see* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 332), which attracted some attention. Dutch Anneke Beekman was known to have been smuggled into Belgium in 1954 by her

erstwhile Catholic guardian, Mrs. Langendijk van Moorst, in an attempt to avoid turning the girl over to Jewish custody, as the Dutch courts had ordered. Thorough investigation by the Belgian police during 1955 and the first half of 1956—including the raiding of various convents where Anneke was believed to be hidden—proved fruitless; finally, the belief grew that Anneke had been spirited out of Belgium. The Dutch government asked for the extradition of Mrs. van Moorst's sister from Belgium, to face trial in Holland. In September 1956, the Belgian courts handed down a *non-lieu* judgment, on the grounds that the time limit for extradition had expired. Mrs. van Moorst was then expelled from Belgium by the authorities.

Henry Elias had been turned over by Belgian courts in the fall of 1955 to the custody of a Jewish uncle in Algiers, over the protests of a Catholic school teacher in Antwerp, Fernande Henrard. Miss Henrard had hidden the boy during the war years, and sought to do so again, unsuccessfully, in order to vitiate the court ruling. Miss Henrard, who appealed the custody decision, was also seeking court support for having the Alias lad stay with her during certain specified vacation periods. Decision had not yet been handed down as of this writing (December 1956).

Community Organization and Activity

The increasing stability of Belgium's Jewish population encouraged various efforts to create greater cohesion among Brussels Jewry, the great majority of whom were not reached by any form of local Jewish communal activity. These efforts, though by no means uniformly successful, were nevertheless beginning to make their effects felt during 1955-56. There was a tendency, too, to strengthen communication between the greatly disparate Antwerp and Brussels Jewish communities.

In Brussels (reported one request made to the CJMCAG in 1955) "there is practically no contact between the different elements of the Jewish population . . . between native Jews and the later arrivals, between Jews coming from East, West, and Central Europe, between Orthodox and non-Orthodox, between Zionists and non-Zionists. . . . This constitutes a major reason for the gradual dissociation from Judaism." In June 1956, in an effort to counteract this fragmentation, the Communauté Israélite of Brussels under the presidency of Paul Philippon invited forty-three other Jewish groups in the city to join with it in forming a Consultative Committee. The purpose of this committee was to make a master study of the needs of Brussels Jewry, and to act as an advisory group to the CJMCAG on applications sent to it from Brussels.

Unspectacular but steady in growth was La Centrale, a central fund-raising agency established in July 1952, to help meet the needs of six Brussels agencies: the AIVG; the local old-age home; the canteen-feeding program of the École Israélite; the Union des Étudiants Juifs; the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT) school; and the vacation colony Les Amis des Enfants. In 1953, 774 donors gave 1,340,000 Belgian francs (\$26,800); in 1954, 997 contributors gave 1,500,000 francs (\$30,000); in 1956 there were 1,148 donors giving 1,825,000 francs (\$36,500), and the drive was expected to yield close to \$40,000, despite a suspension in November and December 1956

to permit a special fund-raising campaign on behalf of Israel. During 1956, furthermore, La Centrale ran a separate, successful campaign to resettle thirty-three families living under miserable slum conditions.

Such sums were nowhere nearly enough, however, to cover local welfare needs. The AIVG alone, serving about 1,000 persons regularly during 1955, had a budget of over \$330,000, and 80 per cent of its funds came from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). Relief grants, recognized as insufficient, were raised about 20 per cent during 1956 with the aid of a CJMCAG grant. A happy note, reported the AIVG, was that, of the organization's 11 homes with 600 children in operation after the end of World War II, only one remained, housing 35 children; all the other children had been successfully resettled or had adjusted to an independent life. As an innovation, in the summer of 1956, AIVG sent eighty Jewish aged persons to the seaside and country on vacations at installations provided by Solidarité Juive. Providing legal assistance to Brussels Jews was another major AIVG service. (Practically none of the persons benefited by these services were Belgian citizens.)

The situation of Antwerp Jewry was strikingly different from that of Brussels. Almost all Antwerp Jewish families belonged to either the Machsikei Hadas, headed by Itzhak Freylich, or the Shomrei Hadas, under the presidency of Herman Schamisso, which had a combined membership of about 1,400. There was, in addition, a Sephardic community with fewer than 200 members, and a variety of Chassidic and other groups. Something of Antwerp's intense Orthodoxy—unmatched elsewhere in Europe—could be seen from the fact that there were five major synagogues, plus at least another half dozen prayer rooms. Nor could any other European city boast five kosher restaurants.

In the field of welfare work, the Antwerp community, through its Centrale, aided some 300 families regularly, maintained a kosher canteen, gave medical help—often contacting the Dutch Jewish community, which had superior hospital facilities—and sent over 120 children on summer vacations. Community contributions covered about 70 per cent of the Centrale's 5,000,000 Belgian franc (\$100,000) budget. A major Antwerp achievement was the completion of a new five-story home for the aged, with fifty-five beds, due to be opened in December 1956. The Centrale managed to raise 2,200,000 francs (\$44,000) for this building, with \$115,000 coming from the CJMCAG. The CJMCAG also contributed \$60,000 toward the rebuilding of a Machsikei Hadas *mikvah* and swimming pool, which had been destroyed during World War II and on which work was progressing in 1956.

The heart of the Antwerp Jewish community was still located near the city's Central Station, on Pelikaanstraat, but there was a growing tendency for Jews to move away into other parts of the city. There was no sign, however, that this was affecting the cohesiveness of Antwerp Jewry.

Antwerp and Brussels Jewry still led almost completely separate community lives. There were, however, during 1956, increasing signs of joint activity, particularly among the younger elements. The B'nai B'rith—which was quite dynamic, and which planned twenty meetings and events for 1956–57—established special youth sections; and the Brussels and Antwerp groups

often held joint affairs. The same was true of the Cercle Culturel Juif, where there was a growing tendency for collaboration between Antwerp and Brussels in arranging lecture and musical programs. Most important, however, was the creation in February 1956 of a new Fédération de la Jeunesse Juive de Belgique, under the leadership of O. Unger. This body sought to coordinate the activities of all organizations working with Belgian Jewish youth. A youth study day organized by the federation in October was an outstanding success, with Emile Jacqmotte, counselor of the minister of public education, as a featured speaker.

Jewish Education

The only major change in Jewish education in Belgium during 1955-56 was that the government agreed to appoint an educational inspector to concern himself particularly with the Jewish schools. There was, too, improvement in the physical facilities of the Yesode Hatorah Beth Jacob and Tachkemoni day schools in Antwerp, and the École Israélite in Brussels. Enrollment at the Antwerp day schools mounted about 10 per cent, to well over 1,100; the number of children reached by Jewish education in Brussels remained constant at about 300.

Religious Activity

In October 1956, Max Gottschalk was elected president of the Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique, the recognized Jewish religious body of the country, replacing General E. E. Wiener. Government recognition was being sought for a Portuguese Jewish community in Brussels. Such recognition was needed, inasmuch as it was the Belgian government that paid the salaries of rabbis and other religious functionaries, who were considered state officials. Though a first effort to get approval was rejected by the Belgian parliament's budget committee in July 1956, Consistoire leadership felt certain that the request would be approved when renewed.

Invigoration of the Belgian rabbinical corps was felt to be essential, because of the advanced age of Salomon Ullmann, the grand rabbi of Belgium, and the need for two Jewish military chaplains to serve in West Germany, where the majority of Belgian troops were located. In February 1956, Marc Kahlenberg became rabbi of Brussels' leading synagogue, situated on rue Royale.

Zionist and Pro-Israel Activity

Belgian Jewry was most active in support of Israel during 1955-56. While no figures were available, it was understood that funds raised for Israel in 1956 would be more than double those raised in 1955. In November 1956, the Comité Unifié Juif d'Aide à Israel decided to launch a special fund-raising drive, and almost all other Jewish organizations in the country suspended their own campaigns. The first issue of Israel Bonds in Belgium (\$500,000) was sold out, and the government gave permission for a second issue, of which about \$300,000 had been sold by December 1956.

Early in 1956 elections took place in the Fédération Sioniste, preparatory to the Zionist Congress in Jerusalem. Seven thousand shekels were sold, and 4,000 votes cast; the result was the defeat of the once-dominant General Zionists, who yielded first place to the Revisionists. Joseph Brandès of Mapai replaced M. Anisfeld as Secretary-General; but General Zionist Sam Horowitz remained federation president. The Zionist-oriented Menorah group, founded early in 1955 by Professor Chaim Perelman, demonstrated considerable vitality. It organized bi-weekly seminars on Jewish history and the Talmud that drew audiences of fifty or more, published a bulletin, and engaged in a variety of other activities.

The leading Jewish publication in Belgium was the federation's *Tribune Sioniste*. The Centrales of both Brussels and Antwerp issued magazines every two months dealing with their work and matters of general Jewish interest; and the Communauté Israélite of Brussels published a monthly bulletin, *Kehilitanu*.

ABRAHAM KARLIKOW

THE NETHERLANDS

FROM JULY 1, 1955, to June 30, 1956, The Netherlands enjoyed full employment—indeed, overemployment—as well as its traditional political stability. Industry, agriculture, the professions, and the service trades all suffered an acute shortage of labor. Many branches of the economy had to postpone expansion plans indefinitely for lack of manpower. Living costs were stable, with few inflationary pressures.

The housing shortage continued to be a major domestic problem. The number of dwellings completed declined in 1955 to 60,819 from the 1954 postwar peak of 68,487. The decline was largely due to poor weather during the first quarter of 1955.

Relations with Indonesia

The Netherlands-Indonesian conference, which opened December 10, 1955, ended in dismal failure on February 13, 1956, in Geneva, when the governments disagreed on an arrangement for the settlement of legal disputes which might arise. On the very day the conference broke up the Indonesian cabinet decided to abrogate the Dutch-Indonesian Union (which had remained largely a dead letter) unilaterally. The Netherlands Foreign Ministry castigated Indonesia's decision as "unprecedented in international relations in peacetime and a bad example to the world."

JUNGSCHLÄGER AFFAIR

There was further bad blood between the former colony and its one-time rulers over the trial in Jakarta of Leon N. H. Jungschläger, former head of the Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service. Jungschläger was arrested by Indonesian authorities on January 30, 1954, and charged with terrorist, anti-

government activities. He was brought to trial on February 17, 1955. The Dutch government—and most Dutch newspapers—called the charges trumped up, and the case was closely followed. The prosecutor asked that Jungschläger be condemned to death, but just before sentence could be pronounced Jungschläger died in the hospital to which he had been transferred.

Domestic Affairs

In June 1956, a hushed-up story of Queen Juliana's relations with a sixty-one-year-old faith healer named Margaretha Hofmans was finally published, first in the West German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, and subsequently throughout the world. At Prince Bernhard's instigation, the Queen had consulted Miss Hofmans, hoping something could be done to improve the eyesight of the fourth princess, Marijke. With the passage of time, Miss Hofmans had gained considerable influence over the Queen, and Prince Bernhard finally had the faith healer thrown out of the Palace, where she was living with the royal family. Their dispute over Miss Hofmans exacerbated already strained relations between the Queen and her husband. Shocked by publications abroad, Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard were induced to appoint three elder statesmen to investigate the whole situation and offer advice. Dutch Premier Willem Drees meanwhile insisted that the Queen's private relationships had produced no constitutional difficulties, and that the Queen had never gone beyond the role (and powers) assigned to her by the Dutch constitution.

Parliamentary elections on June 14, 1956, brought gains for the Labor Party, confirming it as the country's largest. It garnered 32.69 per cent of the vote, compared with 29 per cent in 1952. The Catholic People's Party won 31.69 per cent, compared with 28.7 per cent for it and 2.7 per cent for a subsequently amalgamated group in 1952. The Communist poll fell from 6.2 per cent in 1952 to 4.75 per cent.

SCHOKKING AFFAIR

One of the most controversial affairs of the postwar period centered about François M. A. Schokking, burgomaster of The Hague. On February 2, 1956, the *Haagsch Dagblad*, an independent Socialist newspaper, charged that Burgomaster Schokking had, in 1942, caused the arrest of a Jewish family subsequently killed by the Germans. In 1942 Schokking was burgomaster of the town of Hazerswoude. Hiding in the town were Jakob Pino, his wife and daughter. Schokking had indeed caused their arrest; he explained later that he feared Pino was an *agent provocateur*. A violent press polemic resulted from the *Haagsch Dagblad* disclosures. While some favored awaiting the results of a government investigation, others called for Schokking's resignation.

The *ad interim* minister of justice, Louis J. M. Beel, appointed an investigatory committee which found no reason to dismiss Schokking. But the controversy raged undiminished. Schokking filed a plaint against the *Haagsch Dagblad* with the disciplinary council of the Federatie van Nederlandse Journalisten (Federation of Netherlands Journalists), which decided in favor of the newspaper, though criticizing the *Haagsch Dagblad* for linking Schokking's wartime record with his achievements as burgomaster of The Hague.

A sister of the late Jakob Pino and Pino's mother-in-law failed to get the Dutch courts to accept a suit against Schokking. In Parliament an attempt to have the government reconsider the Schokking affair was voted down on July 6, 1956.

Jewish Population

There were still no reliable figures on Jewish population, partly because of the continuing reluctance of many to be considered Jewish. Compilation of an approximate demographic study was continuing. The tentative figures, based on religious identification, showed about 24,000 Jews in The Netherlands, with 14,000 in Amsterdam. In all there were about 4,000 couples with both husband and wife Jewish, and about 3,100 couples in which either husband or wife, but not both, were Jewish. Though women outnumbered men, more boys than girls were being born.

During the period from October 1954 to mid-September 1955, 101 additional prospective emigrants to Israel registered with the Jewish Agency for Palestine, in Amsterdam. In all, 67 persons emigrated from The Netherlands to Israel at their own cost, and the migration of 11 others was financed by advances from the Agency.

In the period July 1, 1955, to June 30, 1956, 178 emigrants were sponsored by United HIAS Service. Of the total, 143 emigrated to the United States, 23 to Australia, and 11 to Canada.

On June 30, 1956, United HIAS Service discontinued its activities in The Netherlands. Its functions were taken over by Joods Maatschappelijk Werk.

Discrimination and Anti-Semitism

There were virtually no overt examples of anti-Semitism during the period under review.

In November 1955 the Verbund van Nederlandse Werkgevers (Union of Netherlands Employers) was widely criticized for its reaction to a circular sent to Dutch firms by an Arab organization in Damascus seeking to determine links of Dutch employers to Jews and Israel. In a first advisory memorandum to its members, the union said individual employers would have to determine for themselves the extent to which business with Israel compared in importance to business with the Arab countries. A second memorandum attempted to pacify opposition roused by this advice—which many criticized for not being a firm stand against Arab anti-Semitism. It suggested that union members not answer the Arab circular without consulting the union, and declared that when consulted the union would advise members not to reply at all.

Community Organization and Communal Affairs

The Centrale Commissie of the Nederlands-Israelietisch Kerkgenootschap, the Netherlands Jewish religious community, decided on July 5, 1955—by a vote of 10 to 8—to publish its own community newspaper.

A continuing controversy engaged Orthodox and Liberal Jews in Amster-

dam, concerning the admission to the latter community of children of mixed marriages. The Liberal Joodse Gemeente welcomed children of mixed marriages who applied of their own free will, or whose parents wanted them to be members of the community, and who felt at home in the Liberal group.

On July 14, 1955, Premier Willem Drees officiated at the postwar reopening of the Jewish Historical Museum, in Amsterdam's Waaggebouw. The first Jewish exposition had opened there in 1926, and the exposition had become a more or less permanent museum after 1930.

On January 10, 1956, the Jewish Shopkeepers Association in Amsterdam asked the government, in reconsideration of the Sunday-closing law, to allow full compensation to Sabbath-observing Jewish shopkeepers, who suffered financially from having to remain closed on Sunday, as well as Saturday.

With changes imminent in West Germany's 1953 regulations for damage payments to victims of the Nazi regime, a commission was organized by numerous organizations of Dutch Jews to secure a maximum of benefits for Dutch victims of the Nazis. But the commission members were pessimistic about the chances of securing favorable changes.

BECKMAN AFFAIR

On September 22, 1955, the trial of six defendants in the case of Jewish war orphan Anneke Beekman opened in Amsterdam. The Beekman affair had been a continuing source of controversy between Catholic authorities on the one hand and the Jewish community, Protestant leaders, and the government on the other (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1955, [vol. 56], p. 330, 335, 336, 337; 1956, [vol. 57], p. 332, 339).

The principal defendant in the Amsterdam proceedings was Geertruida Langendijk, who had cared for Anneke during the war, and was charged with complicity in keeping her from Dutch authorities despite an official custody decision. On October 24, 1955, Mrs. Langendijk was sentenced to eight months' imprisonment. When detectives came to arrest her, she had disappeared. Her sister, Elisabeth van Moorst, who had not appeared for the trial, was sentenced to twelve months' jail, but was also in hiding. Anneke, meanwhile, was thought to be hidden in Belgium under an assumed name.

The court sentences were appealed, and the Amsterdam Appeals Court reduced Mrs. Langendijk's sentence to three months and her sister's to six. The court declared their offense "most serious," but found lower sentences justified because of the bond which had developed between the sisters and Anneke, and because of "their religious convictions concerning the welfare of the child." On August 19, 1956, Mrs. Langendijk was discovered in the Belgian village Nonceveux, near Liège. She was arrested by Belgian gendarmes, and jailed in Liège, to await action on a Dutch extradition request.

Jewish Education

Amsterdam's Jewish High School (founded in 1928 and the principal Jewish educational institution in the country), announced plans for a considerable broadening of its curriculum, beginning with the 1956-1957 academic year. The curriculum had been confined to the so-called "B" or science section. There had been so many requests for studies in the "A" (liberal arts)

section that this was being added, and pupils were already being admitted to it.

Amsterdam's municipal government announced on June 20, 1956, that it was giving the Jewish elementary school title to the building in which classes were held. Municipal authorities were also providing 600,000 guilders (\$158,000) for repairs, furniture, and other furnishings.

There was a controversy within the Jewish community over the admission to the Jewish High School of children of mixed marriages. The director of Joodsch Bijzonder Onderwijs (Jewish Special Education), which administered the school, declared that the institution had not expected requests for admission from the children of mixed marriages. Once the school realized such requests were coming in, it began asking applicants whether the mother, as well as father, was Jewish.

Religious Life

In The Hague, a proposal made by the Portuguese Jewish community at the end of November 1955 to purchase the old, unused Portuguese synagogue on the Prinsessegracht, was under consideration by the city government.

On September 27, 1955, Aron Schuster was named chief rabbi of Amsterdam. He was to continue as rector of the Seminary, which was giving courses on the Bible but training no rabbis. A native of Amsterdam, Rabbi Schuster had been imprisoned by the Germans in May 1943 and transferred to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in January 1944. Of the eleven rabbis from The Netherlands incarcerated at Bergen-Belsen, he was the sole survivor.

On November 29, 1955, Benjamin Benedikt was installed as rabbi of The Hague's Jewish (Orthodox) community, the Nederlands Israelietische Gemeente 'S-Gravenhage.

The Liberal Joodse Gemeente in Amsterdam named Jacob Soetendorp its rabbi on October 5, 1955. On November 26 he was installed in office, the first native Netherlander to hold the post.

A meeting of representatives of nine local Orthodox synagogue councils on December 18, 1955, named Eliezer Berlinger chief rabbi for a widely scattered collection of localities with organized Jewish communities—all except Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam. By a vote of 16 to 10 it was decided that Utrecht, rather than Arnheim, would be the rabbi's headquarters. Rabbi Berlinger was installed in office February 5, 1956.

On February 21, 1956, Nederlands Israelietische Hoofdsynagoge Amsterdam (Amsterdam's Israelite Religious Community) named Josef Apfel, a rabbi at Leeds, England, to serve the congregation as rabbi. Rabbi Apfel subsequently (April 1956) withdrew his acceptance of the post. The *Nieuw Israëlietisch Weekblad* editorialized that the task of attracting rabbis to The Netherlands would be simpler if their duties under Chief Rabbi Schuster were more clearly defined.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The *Joodse Wachter*, organ of the Nederlandse Zionistenbond (NZB), announced in its issue of July 27, 1955, that the editorial staff had resigned.

The editors gave as their reason the time and energy-consuming difficulties entailed in giving detailed explanations of their editorial decisions to an Appeal or Honor Commission. This involved procedure left the editors insufficient time in which to do their regular work, they maintained.

The NZB executive board called an emergency general assembly for September 11, 1955, in Utrecht. In view of the opposition to its policies, the executive board had decided to resign and let the general assembly choose new officers, as well as new editors for the *Joodse Wachter*.

On August 19, 1955, the executive board published a memorandum detailing its motives in presenting a collective resignation. It declared that the influence of Zionists on Jewish life in The Netherlands had been continuously on the decline since the Liberation. This was in part due to the Zionists themselves, the executive board continued. It noted that a resolution had been adopted at the last general assembly held December 25-26, 1954, authorizing the issue of Zionist directives to Zionists who were officers in other Jewish groups. The strongest opposition to the measure had been voiced by Zionists in the Amsterdam Synagogue Council. The retiring executive board therefore requested the election of a new council, to be granted more authority, or a clear mandate for its own (non-Zionist) views.

By a vote of 51 to 10 on September 11, 1955, the general assembly adopted a resolution declaring its opinion "that a commission should be instituted to deliberate regularly and . . . to take decisions in all affairs of Zionist interest . . . ; the commission to consist of five members of the Executive Board and three members of the NZB." A motion of confidence in the editors of the *Joodse Wachter* was voted, 38 to 11, and the staff agreed to withdraw their resignation.

On December 25 and 26, 1955, the NZB held its fifty-third (regular) general assembly. An important feature of the gathering was the absence of Mizrahi representation, in protest against the decision to subject Zionists to NZB discipline. On March 4, 1956, the Nederlandse Mizrachie general assembly in Amsterdam approved the action of its council in staying away from the Zionist general assembly.

The NZB had 2,581 members on November 1, 1955, compared with 2,688 about a year before. One-third of the total membership lived in Amsterdam.

The Collectieve Israël Actie collected 585,000 guilders (\$154,000) in the period October 1, 1954 to September 30, 1955.

The Joods Nationaal Fonds (Bureau Nederland) transferred 263,440 guilders (\$69,300) to Israel during the year from October 1, 1954 to September 30, 1955.

Seven members of the Dutch Parliament visited Israel as guests of the government there, and returned to express enthusiasm for the young nation's achievements. Dutch Minister of Finance Johan van de Kieft spent two weeks in Israel as the guest of officials there.

Interkerkelijk Contact Israël (Interchurch Contact Israel), representing the leading Protestant sects, urgently appealed to the Netherlands government in April 1956 to influence the western powers to fulfill their guarantees for the cease-fire agreements.

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra played in the 1955 (summer) Holland Festival. A squad of twenty Israeli soldiers walked along in Nijmegen's annual *Vierdaagse* ("Four Days")—a mass walk by almost 10,000 civilian and military sports enthusiasts. All the soldiers completed the prescribed 120 miles. Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum held an exposition (September 15–October 9, 1955) of works by Israel painter Joseph Zaritzky.

Social Services

The Centrale Financierings Actie voor Sociall Werk in Nederland, (CEFINA), the central fund-raising agency for Jewish welfare needs, netted 389,459 guilders (\$103,260) in its 1955 campaign.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG), making its second annual appropriation at the beginning of 1956, allocated 440,164 guilders (\$115,800) to the Netherlands.

At the end of 1955 the Berg-Stichting, which cared for problem children, had fifty-three boarders. Of these, twenty-eight were orphans. Ten had mothers living, but no fathers. The foundation's principal difficulty was securing trained personnel in a period of overemployment. Other Jewish homes reported similar personnel difficulties.

The Stichting Joods Maatschappelijk Werk (JMW), the central Jewish welfare organization, reported that on December 31, 1955, there were twenty-eight religious and thirty-seven private Jewish organizations affiliated with it.

The Vereniging Joodse Invalide, which opened a home for ninety aged persons in Amsterdam in 1952, was allocated 100,000 guilders (\$26,300) for expansion from the funds of the CJMCAG. The home began an expansion to bring its total of accommodations up to 105.

There was a growing waiting list for admission to homes for the aged.

Arnheim's Beth Miklath Lezikno planned to build a home for the aged to replace the one destroyed in 1944. The JMW planned to organize a society of the aged, to provide leisure-time diversion for those in homes for the aged.

The JMW received from the CJMCAG 30,000 guilders (\$7,896) to establish a rest home for convalescents who could not easily be cared for in hospitals, at home, or in an institution for the aged.

Plans were being made to care for several aged Jewish refugees from China. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs offered 12,000 guilders (\$3,160) annually to finance the scheme.

Le Ezrath Ha-Yeled received 20,000 guilders (\$5,260) from the CJMCAG, which it planned to use in paying social workers to visit Jewish orphans living in non-Jewish homes.

The commission for individual help and social section of the JMW reported that during 1955 it had considered 1,434 cases in 69 communities. Social workers had made 1,160 house calls in Amsterdam, and 466 elsewhere. The JMW provided 5,289 days of family care and help, thanks largely to national and municipal subsidies. The ministry of welfare paid about 60 per cent of the salaries of top officials of the JMW, the rest being covered by the CEFINA-JMW campaign.

Cultural Activities

The first publication of a series of Jewish monographs, a joint publication of the NZB and the Nederlands-Israëlietisch Kerkgenootschap, came off the press in 1955. It was a children's book called *Van Adam tot Ezra* ("From Adam to Ezra").

Abel J. Herzberg's *Kroniek der Jodenvervolging* ("Chronicle of the Persecution of the Jews"), written as a contribution to the collection *Onderdrukking en Verzet* ("Oppression and Resistance") was published as a separate book in 1956.

Jacob Soetendorp, rabbi of Amsterdam's Liberal Joodse Gemeente, published a book entitled *Schepping en Ondergang in het Oude Oosten* ("Creation and Decline in the Old East").

Jewish actor-singer Nathan Szpiro made the first Yiddish record for the Philips Phonograph Industry.

Personalia

Actor Jo Sternheim died in Amsterdam on February 17, 1956. Journalist Philip Pinkhof died on March 1, 1956. Alfred Polak, a prominent Zionist, died on March 28, 1956.

ISRAEL SHENKER

ITALY

AT THE BEGINNING of the year under review (July 1, 1955 to June 30, 1956) Mario Scelba resigned as prime minister, and was replaced by Antonio Segni (on July 5, 1955). Though both men were members of the Christian Democratic Party, Segni was considered closer to its left wing. Despite the change of personnel, the government coalition of the Christian Democrats with the Social Democratic and Liberal parties remained unchanged.

Throughout the year there was discussion regarding "an opening to the left," by which was meant the inclusion in the government of the Socialist Party of Pietro Nenni. Nenni's position was strengthened by the municipal elections of May 1956, in which his party gained at the expense of the Communists; the Communists received about 10 per cent fewer votes than in the last national election. Most observers considered the Khrushchev denunciation of Stalin (*see* p. 305) to have been the main cause of the Communist Party decline.

Italy's gross national product during 1955 increased by 9 per cent, which, according to the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, was a rise second in Western and Central Europe only to that of the German Federal Republic. Part of this increase was due to the beginning of returns from the work of the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno, a state corporation set up in 1950 with a capital of Lire 1,280,000,000,000 (over \$2,000,000,000) to develop the depressed southern area.

There was little doubt that the Jews, who were predominantly in commerce and the professions, benefited by the improved economic conditions. The constantly rising number of tourists visiting Rome furnished an important source of revenue for the 700 licensed Jewish peddlers.

Anti-Semitism

There was very little evidence of anti-Semitism during 1955-56, but one incident occurred which suggested that where Jews played a significant role in economic activity, even Italians could be anti-Semitic.

In the latter part of 1955, the Italian parliament adopted a new tax law. Among other things the law, which aimed at reducing opportunities for tax evasion, required stockbrokers to submit a monthly report to the government listing all persons who had purchased stocks during the month and the amount of money involved. The Associazione Nazionale degli Agenti di Cambio ("Association of Stockbrokers") headed by Gaetano Tedeschi, a Jew, protested bitterly against the required report, claiming that it would ruin the Italian stock market by driving investors out.

When negotiations with the government proved unavailing, the stockbrokers declared a thirty-minute protest strike for April 17, 1956. Meanwhile, on April 15, the Tedeschi brokerage firm included in a bulletin which it sent to its clients a statement indicating that the firm considered it unlikely that the law would be modified. During the strike period a number of brokers accused Tedeschi and another Jewish member of the negotiating committee of sabotaging the committee's efforts in order to earn large profits for their clients, whom they had advised to bet on a drop in stock prices. As tempers rose the accusation broadened to include all the Jewish brokers, who were estimated to number more than one-third of the total. The incident ended when a certain Carlo F6a, a broker of Jewish origin, slapped a non-Jewish colleague whom he accused of passing insulting remarks that included some reference to his being Jewish. No further incidents were reported, but subsequently Tedeschi resigned from the presidency.

In a comedy program over the Radio Audizioni Italiane (RAI) on April 9, 1956, the Italian government-owned radio network, a joke was told which placed the Jew in the position of being more concerned about the amount of inheritance he might receive from a late relative than about the loss of the relative. A humorous weekly *Super-Calendario*, with a relatively small circulation, in its issue of February 1956, also printed a joke which emphasized Jewish parsimony. In this instance they went all the way back to Czarist Russia for the setting.

The Unione della Comunit  Israelitiche Italiane, recognized by the law as the official voice of Italian Jewry, protested in both instances and received apologies and assurances against recurrences.

Community Organization

Under a law enacted in 1930 Jews were required to belong to a Jewish community unless they formally renounced Judaism. Membership carried with it the obligation to pay taxes to the community for the support of its reli-

gious and cultural activities. Taxes were paid on the basis of income, and the rate was established by the council of each community. Only taxpayers had the right to vote in the elections of the community councils.

The community council had the right to fix the amount of taxes to be paid by members, and could ask the government to collect the tax. Generally, however, this power was used only in extreme cases of flagrant refusal to pay the tax.

Although the law had been expected to result in the establishment of the amount of the tax as more or less automatic—a certain percentage of reported income—the procedure in fact proved much more complicated. Most communities felt that it was necessary to make adjustments to provide for inevitable differences among families in their ability to meet communal obligations. Evidence of large expenses, such as those due to illness, or to the necessity to help elderly parents, entitled members to consideration for a reduction. On the other hand, ownership of a luxurious home or automobile was considered sufficient ground for increasing the levy. To deal with protests against the amount of tax assessed, each community appointed a special committee and provided for an arbitration procedure.

Of the three largest communities (Rome, Milan, and Turin), the last was least dependent on tax revenue, having significant income from property. Only one out of every four members of the Turin community paid taxes, as against one out of three in both Rome and Milan. The average taxpayer in Rome paid about 50 per cent more than his counterpart in Turin, while in Milan he paid three and a half times the Turin average.

Improvement and expansion of educational and social service programs in various communities resulted in a need for increased income. In Rome increased welfare grants to the needy, a new community center, and a new school building, required an increase of at least 25 per cent over 1955. The community leaders realized that despite their power to compel payment of higher taxes, they had to convince the contributors of the value of the new programs. To this end the community newspaper devoted much space to the welfare and educational programs, and letters were sent to all taxpayers explaining the need for more funds.

CONGRESS OF COMMUNITIES

In May 1956 the twenty-three Jewish communities met for the first time since 1951 to elect a council of the Unione. The new fifteen-member council consisted of five representatives from Rome, three from Milan, three from Turin, two from Genoa, and one each from Trieste and Venice. A rabbinical council of three was also elected, consisting of Rabbis Ermano Friedenthal of Milan, Alfredo Toaff of Leghorn, and Paolo Nissim of Trieste.

The newly elected council met subsequently and elected Judge Sergio Piperno of the Court of Appeals of Turin as president of the Unione. Renzo Levi, a Rome businessman, was elected vice president.

As a basis for discussion of the problems of Italian Jewry, the congress heard a paper delivered by Giuseppe Ottolenghi, president of the Milan Jewish community. Ottolenghi pointed to the fact that the registered members of Jewish communities numbered less than 30,000, and that they were scattered in twenty-three communities. Of these communities only two had

more than 5,000 members (Rome and Milan), six had over 1,000 (Turin, Florence, Trieste, Venice, Leghorn, and Genoa), and the other fifteen had fewer than 1,000. Ottolenghi stressed the danger of assimilation under these conditions and urged that steps be taken to combat it. He placed particular emphasis on the need to improve the quality of personnel in Jewish organizations and schools, and emphasized that this and other desirable goals could only be achieved by significant increases in communal income.

Elio Toaff, chief rabbi of Rome, reviewed the cultural problems of Italian Jewry and noted that while he shared Signor Ottolenghi's view that the danger of assimilation was great, the expansion and improvement of Jewish schools since the war had done much to slow it down. The Jewish schools were giving Italian Jews a positive basis for affiliation with the Jewish community. He stressed the importance of teaching Hebrew as a means of keeping Jewish youth aware of their identity as Jews.

Jewish Education

The eight larger Jewish communities operated full-time Jewish schools. They considered this essential, since in the words of Chief Rabbi Toaff, "in the public schools, children receive a thorough Catholic indoctrination." The Milan community had a full program going through *liceo*, the equivalent of an American high school, with 422 children enrolled. Rome and Turin each provided eight years of schooling; the enrollments were 635 and 132 respectively. Elementary education only was provided for 63 children in Leghorn, 52 in Trieste, 49 in Florence, 29 in Venice, and 19 in Genoa.

In an effort to strengthen the Jewish schools, the Unione sponsored conferences on Jewish education in September 1955 and in February 1956. Most of the discussion centered around means of making up the deficiency in teaching materials. Particular emphasis was put on the lack of adequate textbooks for the teaching of Jewish history. The meetings also worked out plans for improving the quality of teaching in Jewish schools. With the help of a grant of Lire 4,500,000 (\$7,200) from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG), courses in Hebrew language and literature were established in Milan and Rome in November 1955, and twenty-eight teachers attended.

In April 1956 the Rome community began work on a new school building on the same site as the old Scuola Polacco, which had proved completely inadequate for modern school needs. The plans called for an expenditure of over Lire 100,000,000 (\$160,000), of which Lire 50,000,000 (\$80,000) was a two-year grant from the CJMCAG, and the balance was to be raised locally.

With the help of grants from the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the CJMCAG, the Milan community was able to make needed improvements in its school building. In March 1956 an auditorium with a seating capacity of 800 was dedicated in memory of Saly Mayer, the late president of the Milan community. At the same time the school was able to open a fully equipped science laboratory and two new classrooms, which were needed to relieve overcrowding. The cost of these improvements was approximately Lire 25,000,000 (\$40,000), of which Lire 11,000,000 (\$17,600) had been given by the JDC and the CJMCAG.

STUDENT AID

The Unione had long been concerned about the difficulty many Jewish families were having in paying fees and purchasing books for children in *scuole medie* and *licéi*. During 1955-56 they expanded the student aid program to include average grants of Lire 28,000 (about \$45) to thirty-eight such students.

As in past years, grants were made to needy university students with better than average scholarship. A total of Lire 2,300,000 (\$3,700) was distributed among forty students. The funds for student aid were provided almost entirely by grants from CJMCAG and JDC.

RABBINICAL COLLEGE

The Rabbinical College, which in 1952 had moved from Rome to Turin, returned to Rome during the fall of 1955. The college was directed by Rabbi Alfredo Toaff of Leghorn, and had a faculty of six, one of whom had been brought over from Israel in October 1955. Fourteen students attended the school during the academic year 1955-56. Three other students, who were in the final stages of training, remained in Turin to complete their education with Rabbi Dario Disegni. At the end of the year, these students passed an examination given by the Rabbinical Council of the Unione and were awarded the title of *maskil*.

Social Services

When the Organization for Rehabilitation and Training (ORT) had virtually completed its task of training refugees in 1952, it turned its attention to the employment problems of Italian Jewish youth. Habit and tradition had led most of them into peddling, and for some this produced an adequate livelihood. For many others, however, earnings were not sufficient to support their families in health and decency. Because of high unemployment in Italy (about 10 per cent of the total labor force), unsuccessful peddlers lacking skills could not solve their problem by becoming workers. During 1955-56, ORT had seventy-seven Jewish young men enrolled in full-time courses for television technicians, automobile mechanics, and electricians. Ninety-one boys and girls were enrolled in evening courses in electrical installations, carpentry, radio technology, leatherwork, and dressmaking.

In Rome, ORT's prevocational school for boys and girls aged eleven to fourteen years was attended by ninety-two Jewish children. In addition, ORT supervised the training of twelve *chalutzim* for work on collective farms in Israel, and gave manual training in all Jewish elementary schools. ORT received substantial funds from the Italian government and some help from local Jewish communities. The JDC contributed \$75,000 for ORT's program in Italy.

With funds provided by the CJMCAG and JDC, the Unione was able during 1955 to distribute Lire 28,000,000 (\$45,000) to twenty communities for help to needy persons. The communities raised Lire 19,000,000 (\$30,000), so that a total of Lire 47,000,000 (\$75,000) was distributed to 948 needy families.

Six hundred and twenty-three children in Jewish schools were given free lunches. The CJMCAG and JDC contributed Lire 3,000,000 (\$5,000) and the JDC gave food supplies received from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) valued at Lire 3,500,000 (\$5,800).

JDC also distributed 240,000 pounds of USDA food supplies to needy persons through the welfare departments of the Jewish communities. The food went to seven Jewish aged homes, the orphanages of Rome and Turin, the Jewish hospital and the maternity clinic of Rome, and the summer camps.

The *Organizzazione Sanitaria Ebraica* (OSE) provided medical services to needy persons through clinics in Rome and Milan and through contracts with private physicians in five other communities. Over 3,000 persons benefited from these services. OSE also operated four camps for Jewish children, and served 810 children during the summer of 1955. In June 1956 OSE dedicated a new building for its day camp at Ostia near Rome. Of the total cost of over Lire 14,000,000 (\$23,000), the CJMCAG and JDC gave Lire 5,000,000 (\$8,000) and the balance was raised locally.

In December 1955 the Jewish community of Rome opened the first Jewish community center in Italy. With Lire 8,000,000 (\$13,000) given by the JDC in 1953 and 1954, and Lire 12,000,000 (\$19,000) raised locally, the unfinished storage rooms in the basement of the temple were completed to provide a small theatre seating one hundred persons, a gymnasium, a game room, a large social room, three small club rooms, and offices. During 1955-56 the CJMCAG and the JDC gave the community Lire 3,000,000 (\$5,000) for the purchase of equipment. The director of the center was Miss Giuseppina di Capua, who had been sent to the United States in February 1955 for a nine-month orientation course under the guidance of the National Jewish Welfare Board. During its first six months of operation the center was well-attended, and it was considered by the community to have met a great need.

REFUGEES

Of an estimated 35,000 Jews from Central and Eastern Europe who had sought refuge in Italy since the war, only 1,500 to 2,000 remained. During 1955-56, 696 of these required financial help from the JDC. In the course of the year, 112 assisted refugees emigrated with the help of the United HIAS Service. Seventy of these persons received visas for the United States under the Refugee Relief Act (RRA). By June 1956 the RRA had ceased to function in Italy, because the number of visas allocated for refugees in Italy had been exhausted and the United States Congress had failed to authorize the transfer of excess visas provided for by other sections of the act. Approximately fifty JDC assistees—including thirty persons who had finally recovered from tuberculosis—had met all of the qualifications, but visas were not available for them.

There was a small but continuous problem of Israelis coming to Italy in search of emigration opportunities to other countries. During 1955-56 seventy-three persons in forty-one family units sought help from the JDC or from the welfare department of the Jewish community. Most of these persons were ultimately helped to return to Israel.

Relations with Israel

The active leadership of the Italian Jewish community felt a very close identification with Israel. Funds were raised on behalf of Keren Hayesod (Palestine Foundation Fund) and Keren Kayemeth (Jewish National Fund); during 1955-56, the two together collected a total of almost Lire 100,000,000 (\$160,000).

The Federazione Sionistica Italiana had a relatively small membership but was very active. Italian Jewish women were organized in the Associazione delle Donne Ebreo d'Italia (ADEI), affiliated with the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO).

There was one agricultural *hachsharah*. In June 1956 it graduated eleven young men, who went to Israel.

In February 1956 the governments of Italy and Israel raised their respective representatives from ministers to ambassadors. Trade between Israel and Italy was not great. Israel purchases in Italy totaled \$6,000,000, while Italian purchases from Israel amounted to \$1,000,000, of which the major item was potash imported by the Montecatini Company, Italy's largest chemical firm. The Syrian embassy attempted in March 1956 to get the Montecatini Company to cancel the order, threatening economic reprisals, but Montecatini refused to yield. In the view of informed observers, however, Arab pressure was a major factor in keeping Israel-Italian commercial relations at a low level.

Despite continued Arab pressure, the government again accepted some Israelis for training in Italian naval and air schools.

Cultural Activity

The Unione published ten issues of its monthly magazine, *La Rassegna d'Israel*, edited by Dante Lattes. Beginning with Rosh Hashonah 1955, Professor Lattes wrote a weekly twelve-to-sixteen-page pamphlet *Nuovo Commento alla Toràh*, which was mailed free of charge to 4,000 Jewish families. The chief rabbi of Leghorn, Alfredo Toaff, edited the writings of Rabbi Elia Benamozegh, the famous rabbi and scholar of Leghorn, who served that community during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In December 1955 the Unione published Rabbi Toaff's work under the title of *Scritti Scelti di Benamozegh*. In November 1955 the Unione also published a revised edition of *Boker*, a Hebrew primer by Leo Levi, which was in use in all Jewish schools in Italy.

Community bulletins were published monthly in Milan and Rome and irregularly in Genoa and Florence. A national weekly newspaper, *Israel*, was published and edited by Carlo Alberto Viterbo. While not an official organ, it cooperated very closely with the Unione and received financial assistance from it.

HAROLD TROBE