Central Europe

WEST GERMANY

Foreign Policy and Reunification

The deadlock over reunification remained complete. Moscow repeated in numerous notes and through its East German satellites that the East and West German governments should get together and form a confederation, with which a peace treaty might later be concluded. Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan visited Bonn in April 1958 to sign a trade agreement, but had nothing new to offer. The Bonn government, for its part, insisted on free elections for an all-German government and rejected anything implying recognition of the East German regime. Chancellor Konrad Adenauer also severed relations with Yugoslavia in October 1957 when the latter recognized the "German Democratic Republic."

For the time being, the question of reunification was overshadowed by the controversy over atomic arms for the West German army and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces stationed on German soil. George Kennan's suggestion of a disengagement of the great powers from Germany, in his BBC lectures in the autumn of 1957, and Polish Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki's proposal for an atom-free zone in Europe were welcomed by a large part of public opinion as a basis for further discussion. But Chancellor Adenauer rejected the Rapacki plan unconditionally in January 1958. In March 1958 the Bundestag, after a tumultuous debate, empowered the government to equip the Bundeswehr with tactical atomic weapons.

Domestic Political Affairs

After his victory in the Bundestag elections of September 1957 (see American Jewish Year Book, 1957 [Vol. 58], p. 288), Chancellor Adenauer made some minor changes in his cabinet, so that it consisted of fourteen members of his Christian Democratic Union (CDU-CSU) and two of the small right-wing German Party (DP).

In Bavaria the socialist-led coalition was replaced in September 1957 by a government composed of the CSU (the Bavarian branch of the Christian Democrats) and the other non-socialist parties. In Hamburg, on the other hand, the CDU was ousted from the city government by the Social Democrats (SPD), who won an absolute majority in the elections of November 10, 1957, in the city state. In Lower Saxony the DP and CDU refused to continue the coalition with the Free Democrats (FDP) and the Refugee party.
"All-German Bloc": BHE-GB) and on November 12 took the SPD into the government instead, because FDP and GB-BHE had decided to accept the six deputies of the neo-Nazi German Reich Party (DRP)—among them the former deputy Gauleiter of Oldenburg Georg Joel and the former SS leader and present owner of a neo-Nazi publishing firm Waldemar Schuetz—as members of their combined parliamentary group.

In the diet elections in the largest Land, North Rhine-Westphalia, in July 1958, the CDU captured an absolute majority with 50.5 per cent of the total vote and formed a one-party government, replacing a coalition of the SPD and the FDP. This victory also strengthened the CDU's position in the Bundesrat, the representative organ of the Länder, giving it 31 out of the 41 seats.

The controversy about atomic armament dominated the election campaign in North Rhine-Westphalia and indeed most of German political life during the year. It was conducted with extreme bitterness. The SPD, supported by the FDP and many prominent non-party people, launched a campaign against "atomic death." After the Bundestag vote in favor of atomic arms the Social Democrats announced that they would hold referenda on this question in the Länder they controlled. The Federal government declared these referenda unconstitutional, and was even supported in a decision to this effect by the Federal Constitutional Court on July 30, 1958.

**Economic Affairs**

West Germany's economy was scarcely affected by the American recession. Its level was slightly above that of the preceding year.

Industrial production stood at 234 (1936 = 100) in June 1958, five points above the year before. Unemployment dropped by 52,000 to 401,000 or 2 per cent of the employed population.

Exports were slightly above those of the preceding 12 months—$2,900 million against $2,700 million. Owing to an improvement in the terms of trade the foreign trade surplus rose from $276 million to $293 million. The gold and currency reserves of the Federal Bank gained $950 million and stood at the record figure of $5,775 million in June 1958.

Her favorable trade position enabled West Germany to invest capital abroad, particularly in underdeveloped countries, both directly and through loans to the World Bank. By a May 1958 trade pact with Egypt, the German state agreed to guarantee export credit to Egypt up to $94 million, thus enabling German industry to deliver goods on long-term credit.

Of the $9.3 billion federal budget for the fiscal year 1957-58, over a quarter was earmarked for defense. Taxes were reduced, with a loss in revenue of $200 million for the Federal Republic and the Länder.

**Neo-Nazism**

As in the 1957 Bundestag elections (see American Jewish Year Book, 1957 [Vol. 58], p. 288), neo-Nazi groups attracted few voters in the diet elections in North Rhine-Westphalia in July 1958, the DRP polling only 0.6 per cent of
the total vote. In the Hamburg elections in November 1957, its share fell from 0.8 to 0.4 per cent.

Many persons with pro-Nazi sympathies preferred to give their vote to less extreme parties which also appealed to nationalist resentments and which had a chance of reaching the 5 per cent required for parliamentary representation. Some support of this type went to the FDP in North Rhine-Westphalia. In other states, particularly in Bavaria and Schleswig-Holstein, the Refugee party, which had lost most of its original supporters, became a haven for unrepentant Nazis.

In spite of its electoral defeat, the DRP refused to join a “united national camp.” The only groups to agree on a common platform were Otto Strasser’s Deutsch-Soziale Union and Karl Feitenhansl’s Vaterländische Union. August Haussleiter’s Deutsche Gemeinschaft also remained aloof. Its party organ claimed an attendance of 1,400 at its party congress in May 1958, symbolically called at Nuremberg.

Youth leaders in Bavaria noted an increased activity of right-wing extremists among young people. Several extremist youth groups combined. The total membership in the Federal Republic was estimated at about 20,000. Branches of a League of National Students with close links to the DRP were formed at several universities.

Federal Interior Minister Gerhard Schroeder told International News Service in January 1958 that fears of a Nazi revival were groundless, extremist groups lacking the support of young people. He regarded the publicity given to right-wing groups abroad as out of proportion to their significance.

**Nazi Rehabilitation**

More important than the small neo-Nazi groups were the associations of old Nazis, the Denazifizierungsgeschädigten (victims of denazification) who campaigned for rehabilitation and compensation for the injustices they claimed to have suffered. In spite of the almost undisguised Nazi jargon used in their paper Der Ring and in their speeches, they found advocates both in the Bundestag—where their main spokesman was the FDP deputy Otto Dowidat—and in some Land governments. A conference of the association in Munich was attended by members of the Bavarian government and of all non-socialist parties. At a meeting of its Saar branch a government representative promised to support its demands.

The denazification laws were expressly revoked in several Länder, with the result that prominent Nazis could again be elected to public office. The CSU even proposed to run a former guard of Mauthausen concentration camp and a Gestapo official as candidates in the Bavarian diet elections.

The Allied law banning the Nazi party was revoked by the Bundestag in the course of annulling the occupation legislation. The government argued that the basic law sufficed to ban undemocratic organizations, though the SPD pointed out that such a ban required a lengthy procedure.

Berlin was the only state where denazification tribunals still functioned. Their proceedings led to the confiscation of the Berlin property of Nazi leaders who had died or were living in West Germany.
Berlin was also alone in refusing to comply with "Law 131," requiring public administrations to fill 20 per cent of their posts with officials who lost their positions in 1945, either as refugees or as Nazis. The Berlin Senate decided in July 1958 to pay the fine stipulated for the nonfulfillment of the quota of "131ers" rather than to employ officials it considered unsuitable.

In West Germany, the employment of former prominent Nazis in official positions occasionally led to protests by the trade unions or part of the press, but usually without success. Herbert Dittmann was appointed under-secretary in the Foreign Ministry in February 1958 although a Bundestag committee in 1952 had declared him unsuitable for the foreign service, after he had falsely told the committee that he did not know about the extermination measures against the Jews while serving in the Nazi foreign office. Charges that the mayor of Westerland, the former SS-General Heinz Reinefarth, had committed war crimes in Poland were ignored when he was appointed in 1951 and were only investigated in the summer of 1958 after a press campaign. Even before the investigation was concluded, he became a BHE candidate for the Landtag of Schleswig-Holstein and was elected on September 28, 1958.

Allegations that 374 West German judges and prosecutors had been responsible for death sentences against opponents of Hitler were published in 1957 in the Soviet Zone. Bonn did not reply to these charges. Similar accusations against some judges were also made in West Germany. Four senior serving judges were implicated when Field Marshal Ferdinand Schoerner was tried for unlawful executions. Publication of statements by Senior State Attorney Harry von Rosen von Hoewel, who had advocated "special treatment for Poles and Jews" during the Third Reich, led to his removal from office—with a pension.

**Pensions for Nazis**

Under Law 131, 124,000 officials and soldiers of the Third Reich and 155,000 of their dependents were receiving pensions. For this purpose the 1957-58 budget provided $325 million, which was later increased by another $70 million.

The pensioners ranged from nonpolitical civil servants to former state secretaries—of whom there were 15, getting up to $645 a month—75 generals and admirals, including Doenitz and Raeder, and other prominent Nazis such as the "controller of Jewish culture" in Goebbels' ministry, Hans Hinkel. Even the widow of Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the Gestapo and the Reich Security Office, was granted a pension by court order in August 1958. The prosecutor of the Nazi "Peoples Court," Ernst Lautz, responsible for hundreds of death sentences, had drawn $30,000 up to the beginning of 1958. Under public pressure his pension was reduced from the original $320 to $160 a month in April 1958.

**Nazi Literature**

Memoirs of prominent Nazis and other pro-Nazi books were rarely sold in bookshops. But through the medium of "specialized" book clubs they
reached what the Social Democratic paper Vorwaerts called "alarmingly high circulation figures," varying between 24,000 and 70,000.

Attempts to invoke the law against their publishers and authors met with little success. A test case which the Grünwaldkreis—a group of authors and publishers fighting anti-democratic tendencies—brought against the Druffel-Verlag, run by Hitler's former deputy press chief Helmut Sündermann, was rejected by two Munich courts (the second decision was given in October 1957). On May 6, 1958, it was reported in the Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden that the trade union publication Feinde der Demokratie ("Enemies of Democracy") was found guilty of libel because it had described a similar publishing house—the Leopold-Stoecker-Verlag—as an "enemy of democracy."

The editor of the Coburg neo-Nazi monthly Nation Europa was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in December 1957, but the sentence was suspended and the paper continued to appear. The author and distributor of Nazi books, Friedrich Lenz, who had also imported Nazi literature from Argentina, received a prison sentence of two years in September 1957.

Attitude to the Third Reich

While German democratic leaders, radio, and the press overwhelmingly condemned the crimes of the Third Reich, café-table conversations and opinion polls indicated a considerable survival of Nazi attitudes.

Forty-two per cent of a representative sample, when interviewed in June 1956 by the Institut für Demoskopie, said that but for the war Hitler would have been one of the greatest statesmen. Seven per cent named Hitler when asked which great German had done most for Germany.

Young people knew very little about the Nazi period, since the majority of school teachers preferred to avoid "controversial" questions. History textbooks dealt with the subject only inadequately. A statement in the manuscript of a history book that "several million" Jews had lost their lives during the Third Reich was queried by the Bavarian Ministry of Culture and replaced by the term "very many" Jews.

On the other hand, books containing factual information about the Nazi period, such as the compilation Der Nationalsozialismus: Dokumente 1933-45 (Frankfurt, 1957) edited by Professor Walter Hofer, a Swiss, of West Berlin university, achieved a high circulation. The government-financed Institute of Contemporary History in Munich specialized in spreading such knowledge. The official Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst published details on the "final solution of the Jewish question" in February 1958 and on the Warsaw Ghetto rising in March 1958. The Association for Christian-Jewish Collaboration organized an annual Brotherhood Week in March, with the persecution of the Jews as a major topic of discussion. The week was introduced by a radio program on Anne Frank, around whom a veritable cult had developed, particularly among young people.

The radio stations and many newspapers used anniversaries of such events as the Nazis' rise to power, the anti-Jewish boycott of April 1, 1933, and the November pogroms of 1938 to recall the Nazi crimes. The horrors of the
concentration camps, mentioned in recent trials, were also reported and commented upon by the press at great length.

A few public figures made a point of keeping awake the memory of the Nazi past. When Federal President Theodor Heuss visited Italy in November 1957, he insisted on laying a wreath at the graves of Italian hostages shot by the Germans. While in New York during his state visit to the United States in June 1958, he paid a visit to the Leo Baeck Institute. The Social Democratic vice president of the Bundestag, Carlo Schmid, recalled the German crimes in Poland when he spoke as a guest at Warsaw university in March 1958. For this he was attacked in Germany not only by the extreme right-wing and refugee organizations, but also by Federal Minister for Refugee Affairs Theodor Oberlander, himself a former Nazi.

Anti-Semitism

Public-opinion polls on anti-Semitism—which were normally not published—put the number of “genuine” anti-Semites at ten per cent of the population, according to a report in September 1957 by C. C. Schweitzer of the Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst. About a third expressed anti-Jewish feelings in response to certain projective questions.

Latent anti-Semitism came into the open in December 1957 after Federal Minister of Justice Fritz Schäffer charged abuses of the compensation law (see section on Indemnification). Editors of newspapers, particularly of the Jewish weekly, the Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden, were flooded with anti-Semitic letters. So was Federal Finance Minister Franz Etzel, who expressed his horror at their tone.

Attention was focused on the persistence of anti-Semitism by the case of the Offenburg schoolteacher Ludwig Zind, who in conversation with a half-Jew boasted that he had killed hundreds of Jews and regretted that more had not been killed. The authorities in Wuerttemberg-Baden allowed Zind to go on teaching and suspended him only after the matter was taken up by the magazine Der Spiegel, followed by many other papers and members of the Wuerttemberg-Baden diet. In April 1958 Zind was sentenced to imprisonment for a year. The audience at the trial showed its sympathy with him, while the press strongly condemned not only Zind but also the authorities for their reluctance to take action against him. (When he was to be arrested in November 1958, after his appeal had been rejected, it was found he had fled to Egypt.)

One month later in Hanover, another teacher, Edgar Fernau, was sentenced to four months in prison for similar remarks; the sentence was suspended. Other sentences for anti-Semitic abuse varied between fines of $25 to $100 and imprisonment—usually suspended—for two weeks to four months. Desecrations of Jewish cemeteries, reported in the press, were usually attributed by the police to “playing children.”

Leopold Goldschmidt, secretary general of the Society for Christians and Jews, reported a “considerable increase” in anti-Semitism for the year ending June 1958. He stated that anti-Semitism expressed itself not alone in the case
of Zind, but had become apparent in other courts, in rallies, in the taverns, in conversations, on posters and leaflets, in telephone calls, and in anonymous slanderous letters.

Ruling on a question of principle the Federal Court laid it down in June 1958 that to call somebody a Jew constituted an actionable insult irrespective of whether the statement was true, if it was made with "insulting intent." The court thereby overruled the decision of a lower court, which had sentenced the author of a neo-Nazi leaflet, who had called the chairman of the SPD, Erich Ollenhauer, a Jew, only for slander on the grounds that the allegation was untrue.

War Crimes and Nazi Trials

The Western Allies closed their prisons for war criminals in Germany (the U. S. prison in May 1958; the French prison in November 1957, and the British prison in June 1957) and amnestied the few remaining inmates. The only war criminals still detained were Rudolf Hess, Baldur von Schirach, and Albert Speer, held under Four-Power control in Berlin-Spandau, and about 30 war criminals imprisoned in various West European countries.

The German authorities granted released war criminals the same assistance and privileges as the "late returnee" prisoners of war. A few cases shocked public opinion, particularly those of doctors who had used human beings as guinea pigs.

Thus the concentration camp doctor Herta Oberheuser was allowed to practice in Schleswig-Holstein, though the authorities and the Doctors' Chamber knew about her crimes. Her license was withdrawn in August 1958 only after her case had received publicity abroad. Similarly, the former Buchenwald camp doctor Hans Eisele received $950 "compensation" and a loan of $5,850 as a "late returnee" and was admitted, in preference to other doctors, to the social-insurance panel in a suburb of Munich. When, in the course of the trial of a Buchenwald guard, his crimes became publicly known, indignation was so great that the Munich public prosecutor, who had known about Eisele's past all along, finally ordered his arrest in June 1958. By then Eisele had escaped to Egypt.

Sentences for Nazi crimes, pronounced by German courts under the ordinary criminal law, varied a great deal. The notorious "butcher of Buchenwald," Martin Sommer, received a life sentence in July 1958; so did the commander of an Austrian concentration camp, Georg Mott. The commander of a camp in Poland, Paul Thomanek, was sentenced to fifteen years' hard labor for the murder of Poles and Jews; so were Hans Joachim Boehme, chief of the "Einsatz-Kommando Tilsit," which had killed over five thousand Jews and alleged Communists in Lithuania, and the police chief of Tilsit, Werner Herrmann. Eight co-defendants received sentences of three to ten years.

A Jewish Gestapo informer, Stella Kübler, was sentenced to ten years by a West Berlin court on June 30, 1957; but she was set free as she had already served ten years in an East German prison.

In other courts, however, Gestapo and SS men who had killed and tortured Jews and anti-Nazis often got away with 18 months to two years of imprison-
ment, which was usually regarded as served by detention before trial or in Allied internment camps. "Twelve days per murder," was the comment of the Hamburg weekly Die Zeit (February 2, 1958) on a trial for the massacre of 208 slave workers, among them women and children, in which the main defendant was sentenced on February 12, 1958, to five years, another accused—who had taken part in the killing voluntarily—to 18 months, and three others were acquitted altogether.

Many killers were acquitted on the grounds that they had acted under duress or "had not realized the criminal nature of their actions." Some acquittals led to public protests, such as that of SS-General Max Simon and members of his notorious court martial, who during the last days of the war executed German citizens for trying to prevent a hopeless last-ditch defense. The Nuremberg court, to whom the case had been referred back by the appellate court after previous acquittals, acquitted them again in April 1958. It followed the opinion of former Field Marshal Kesselring, the convicted war criminal whom it had called as an expert, that the executed men "had endangered the striking power of the Wehrmacht."

**Indemnification**

According to the Federal government's Official Bulletin of August 6, 1958, more than 2,250,000 claims had been filed by "far more than a million" applicants when the time limit for compensation claims expired on April 1, 1958. By that date 750,000 claims, or 32 per cent of the total, had been dealt with.

To complete the compensation payments by April 1, 1963, as scheduled, was described as a "mammoth task." Total costs were estimated as between $3,300 million and $5,800 million.

Up to April 1, 1958, $1,100 million had been paid as compensation, of which $670 million had been transferred abroad. Another $600 million was set aside in the current budgets of the Federal Republic and the Länder, who shared the costs equally, making a total of $1,700 million. This, said the bulletin, "was a fifth of the total federal budget for 1958–59."

This comparison of the total compensation payments of the Federal Republic and the Länder over a number of years with the budget of the Federal Republic for one year only was attacked on August 24, 1958, by the Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden as "highly misleading" and designed to give the average German reader the impression that one-fifth of the federal budget was spent on compensation. In fact, compensation costs averaged 1.4 per cent of the expenditure of the Federal Republic and the Länder during the years 1949 to 1957 and amounted to just over 4 per cent in the current budget year.

Of the 270,000 claims dealt with between July 1, 1956, when the Federal Compensation Law came into force, and the end of 1957, some 22 per cent were rejected. The percentage of rejections varied greatly in the different Länder.

The slow progress of compensation was criticized by a delegation of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCA), which visited the Federal Republic in October 1957. They found the approach in many offices too bureaucratic and fiscal-minded. Above all, they blamed the
lack of qualified staff for the slow procedure, which was made even slower by the tendency of many offices to refer a large number of cases to the courts. They feared that the slow procedure would threaten the completion of the program by the target date of March 31, 1963.

Exaggerated estimates of the high costs of compensation spread by "well-informed quarters" and repeated authoritatively by Minister of Justice Fritz Schäffer in December 1957 further served to slow down the procedure and to increase the number of rejections.

Schäffer asserted that the implementation of the Compensation Law—for which he as the former minister of finance had been responsible—would endanger the German currency. Since, according to Schäffer, claims did not need to be proved, but merely had to be credible, $6,400 million to $6,900 million would be needed to pay for all these claims—many of which, he hinted, were unjustified—instead of the originally estimated $1,900 to $2,150 million. He demanded that annual compensation payments be limited to $2,150 in each individual case and to a total of $595 million for the Federal Republic and the Länder.

Though Chancellor Adenauer gave assurances that no change in the compensation law was intended, and Finance Minister Franz Etzel declared that while estimates of total costs were premature, they would probably be closer to $4,300 million, Schäffer's figures received wide publicity. They were also used by the finance ministers of some Länder to explain their budget deficits. Abuses mentioned by Schäffer were generalized and served as an excuse for a general attack on compensation.

The leading critic of compensation in the Bundestag, CDU deputy Jakob Diel, was accused by the Social Democrats of having said: "If fewer Jews had survived, we would have to pay less for compensation." Diel denied the charge—about which a lawsuit is pending—and in turn accused the Social Democratic chairman of the compensation committee, Otto Heinrich Greve, of having used his position to gain advantages for his private clients in compensation cases. Greve resigned pending an investigation.

A government proposal to increase the pensions of victims of the Nazis to bring them in line with the 20 per-cent rise granted to civil servants and "131ers" was finally adopted by the Bundesrat in December 1958 after prolonged discussion.

Restitution, the return of identifiable property, proceeded much more smoothly than compensation. Of the 292,000 claims filed by individuals, 87 per cent had been adjudicated by April 1, 1958. Compensation for non-recoverable property confiscated by the Reich, the Nazi party, and similar bodies was to be paid up to a total amount of $335 million under the Federal Restitution Law of July 19, 1957.

Relations With Israel

The Federal Republic did not yet have diplomatic relations with Israel because until recently the Israelis were reluctant and afterwards the West Germans feared that the Arabs would retaliate by recognizing the East German regime. However, unofficial relations were friendly.
 Deliveries under the Hague Reparations Agreement of 1952 proceeded smoothly. They had reached $430 million by March 1958, more than half of the total stipulated by the agreement.

Following reports that the Israel government intended to buy military equipment in West Germany in December 1957, the Federal government declared that it did not intend to endanger its relations with the Arab states by selling arms to Israel, nor would it allow arms to be exported privately.

In April 1958, a German delegation consisting of members of the Bundestag and Mayor Max Brauer of Hamburg went to Israel at the invitation of the Israel government for the celebration of the state’s tenth anniversary. Many German papers devoted long commentaries to the anniversary. A celebration held at the West Berlin university was disturbed by Arab students, who also distributed anti-Israel leaflets at other universities.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF WEST GERMANY

There were still no figures on the number of Jews in Germany except the membership statistics of the Jewish religious congregations (“communities”). There was general agreement that many Jews, particularly those returning from abroad, failed to take out formal membership, but estimates of their number varied greatly. The number registered in the Jewish congregations rose from 17,855 on June 30, 1957, to 20,645 on June 30, 1958. This increase came almost solely from immigration, mostly of Jews who had been forced to leave Germany after 1933, and not from natural population increase. During the period under review there were only 68 births, as against 432 deaths. But during the same period, 2,707 Jews immigrated while only 500 emigrated. The unofficial estimate of the total Jewish population was 30,000.

Intergroup Relations

Brotherhood Week was celebrated in all major German cities and by the 19 West German radio stations. The Deutscher Koordinierungsrat der Gesellschaften für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit (German Coordinating Council of Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation), established in 1949 under American auspices, was patterned on the United States National Council of Christians and Jews. Federal President Theodor Heuss, “protector” of the council, was also active in its work, as were many government officials, educators, and molders of public opinion. While the council and its local societies were not a mass movement, they exerted a continuous influence. There were 22 local societies active at the time of writing, the most recent having been founded in Cologne on March 19, 1958.

On March 12 to 14, 1958, the Koordinierungsrat and its local affiliate sponsored a conference in Munich on the problems of the German past that large parts of the public had preferred to ignore: anti-Semitism, nationalism, and totalitarianism. President Heuss sent a thought-provoking message to the more than 500 delegates (educators, writers, commentators, youth leaders, and stu-
Among the well-known public figures who spoke or led discussions were Bundestag Deputy Franz Boehm, Austrian Minister of Education Heinrich Drimmel, Munich Education Director Anton Fingerle, and the journalist Hermann Proebst. The secretary-general of the council, Leopold Goldschmidt of Frankfurt, and its Munich secretary, Hermann Brandlmäier, were given much credit for the success of the conference.

The Evangelical Dienst an Israel (Service to Israel) staged its ninth annual conference at Würzburg on March 3 to 7, 1958. The numerous Evangelische Akademien, which devoted every weekend to free discussions of public issues by men and women of all creeds and backgrounds, often scheduled gatherings on Jewish and intergroup questions where Jewish personalities were invited as speakers and guests. Likewise, the Drei Ringe (Three Rings), a group of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish high-school and college youth, arranged conferences and published a periodical. In Hamburg an Anne Frank youth group was organized and in April 1958 thousands of youths from that city and neighboring towns for the second time staged a pilgrimage to the site of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where Anne Frank had spent her last days. Seventy students of the high school at Buehl, Baden, spontaneously volunteered to clean up an old Jewish cemetery nearby. In March 1958 the Youth Council (Bundesjugendring) adopted a strong resolution warning against all manifestations of renewed anti-Semitism.

Erich Lüth, press director of Hamburg, made his third trip to Israel in 1957 and reported on his impressions in the press and over the radio. The Catholic writer, Gertrud Luckner, who had helped many victims of racial persecution during the Nazi regime, undertook another trip to Israel in the spring of 1958. Another friend of Israel and the Jewish people, the Lutheran clergyman Hermann Maas of Heidelberg, was widely honored by Jews and Christians alike on his 80th birthday, August 5, 1957. Thirty-two teachers from Hamburg visited Israel in December 1957 and reported sympathetically on their return, as did a smaller group of Düsseldorf teachers about the same time. German visitors to Israel increased in numbers and helped to further German understanding of the young state. Thomas Harlan, the 28-year-old son of Veit Harlan, the producer of the notorious Nazi film “Jud Süß,” wrote a play on the Warsaw ghetto uprising as an act of atonement. Hannoch Nissen (formerly Hans Nuessen), once a member of the Hitler youth, who emigrated to Israel after the war, became Jewish there, and served in the Israeli defense forces, was completing his professional training at Hamburg.

But there was another side to intergroup relations. The much-publicized trial of the Offenburg teacher Ludwig Zind, who was sentenced to one year in jail in April 1958 (see p. 189), focused public attention on the persistence of anti-Semitism. Some observers regarded such cases as isolated instances, representing only a small lunatic fringe. Others cited surveys which showed that some parts of the German public were still infected by anti-Jewish prejudices (see p. 189).

In April 1958 the Jewish community of Berlin established a fund for needy non-Jews who had aided Jews during their time of crisis. In November 1958 the city of Berlin honored 19 of these people with certificates and in addition made either single allocations of DM 500 (about $120) to DM 2,000 (about...
$475), or gave life annuities in monthly payments of DM 100 (about $25) to DM 200 (about $50), depending on the needs of the recipients.

Religious and Communal Affairs

Jewish life was carried on in an organized form in some 70 communities, of which only 5 (Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Cologne) had more than 1,000 registered members. There was still a shortage of spiritual leaders. The number of rabbis decreased to five with the retirement of Paul Holzer of Dortmund. Rabbis officiated only in Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Munich, and Cologne. In Berlin, the largest community, which had more than 6,000 members and was steadily growing, the lack of a rabbi was especially serious. Indeed, since Berlin had sizable congregations of both Orthodox and Liberal tendencies, and since five or six synagogues were currently in use, it needed at least two rabbis. But the community, in spite of long and persistent efforts, had not yet succeeded in obtaining even one on a permanent basis. Like many other communities, it had to use retired or foreign rabbis to conduct services on the High Holy Days.

In Berlin the former Frankfurt rabbi, Georg Salzberger of London, officiated on the High Holy Days in 1957. On February 17, 1958, the tenth anniversary of Heinz Galinski's participation in the leadership of the Berlin Jewish community was celebrated.

The situation in regard to Jewish teachers, though not quite so bad, was far from satisfactory. Jewish religious instruction was given in about 40 localities by some 35 teachers. They represented a variety of backgrounds and outlooks and the training and experience of some could not satisfy modern standards. If the Jewish Agency had not provided some Israeli teachers, the situation would have been even more difficult.

New synagogues and community houses continued to be planned and built. The most impressive of these projects neared its realization when, on November 10, 1957, the cornerstone was laid for the Berlin Jewish Community House, on the site of the huge Fasanenstrasse synagogue, burnt by the Nazis on November 9, 1938. The new building was to include assembly halls, club rooms, a library, and other educational facilities. More than 3,000 persons attended the ceremonies and heard addresses by Ernst Lemmer, a member of the Federal cabinet, Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt, Heinz Galinski, president of the Berlin Jewish community, Charles Jordan, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) director for Europe, and Hendrik George van Dam, secretary-general of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Rabbi Lothar Rothschild of St. Gallen, Switzerland, officiated. As a result of a contest among leading architects, two young Germans, Dieter Knoblauch and Heinz Heise, were chosen to plan and construct the new building. They were also picked to build the new synagogue at Essen. New synagogues and community houses were dedicated at Gelsenkirchen on June 29, 1958, and Minden on June 15, 1958, and a cornerstone was laid at Bonn, the capital of the Federal Republic, on April 9, 1958.

Resolutions of the Central Council (Zentralrat) and the Central Welfare Agency (Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle) called for joint planning of new welfare or
communal projects that might require central subsidies, in preparation for the
time when external assistance from restitution, indemnification, and Con-
ference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) funds would
no longer be forthcoming.

In the Munich Jewish community, where confused conditions had long
prevailed, a court order made the banker Eduard Jonas temporary president
of the congregation when the elections of 1957 were contested (see AMERICAN
JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 [Vol. 57], p. 387; 1957 [Vol. 58], p. 291; 1958 [Vol. 59],
p. 298), but a later court order in July 1957 held that state authorities were
not permitted to take action in religious affairs. The Vorstand (board) named
in those elections and headed by Max Bachmann then took office. But most
Jewish authorities regarded the "election" and the community leadership
under Bachmann as illegal and called for new and democratic elections.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The Federal Republic's relations with the State of Israel were carried on
through the Mission of Israel, established as a result of the Hague and
Luxembourg agreements of 1952 (see AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1953 [Vol.
54], pp. 436-7, 477-82; 1954 [Vol. 55], pp. 354-5). It functioned primarily as
a trade mission, since diplomatic relations between the two countries had not
yet been established. Yet as the actual relations between the two countries
were friendly, the mission also performed a variety of additional functions of
a consular, educational, and informative nature. The mission was headed by
Ambassador Felix Shinnar.

West German Jews continued to maintain close relations with Israel. Keren
ha-Yesod, Keren Kayyemet le-Yisrael, Youth Aliyah, and other campaigns
raised sizable sums, probably totaling over a million DMs (about $250,000).

The Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland (Central Council of Jews in Ger-
many) staged an impressive public celebration of Israel's tenth anniversary
on May 16, 1958. It took place in the Landtag (parliament) of North Rhine-
Westphalia at Düsseldorf, and was attended by ministers of state, public
officials, and representatives of many Jewish communities. The main speakers
were Count Christoph von Imhoff, an editor of the Düsseldorf Rheinische
Post, and Hendrik George van Dam. Both had made trips to Israel early in 1958.

The Friends of the Hebrew University established a German branch by
setting up local chapters at Berlin, Hamburg, Düsseldorf, and Munich. It
held a national conference in Frankfurt on March 30, 1958.

Nahum Goldmann, president of the CJMCAG, the World Zionist Organi-
tation, and the Jewish Agency, visited Germany frequently and conferred with
Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, other officials, and Jewish communal leaders.

In December 1957, Giora Josephthal, secretary-general of the Mapai party,
paid a visit to Bonn. David Reifen, judge of the Tel Aviv juvenile court,
lectured before professional circles in North Rhine-Westphalia. In the spring
of 1958, Alexander Ezer visited general and Jewish libraries in Germany on
behalf of the World Club for Hebrew Libraries.

A Zionist conference, held at Frankfurt on October 6, 1958, was addressed
Social Services

Most forms of social services were rendered by the Central Welfare Office of Jews in Germany (Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland—ZWSt), with headquarters in Frankfurt, and its local offices. It enjoyed the cooperation of the JDC, whose main German office was also in Frankfurt, and the United HIAS Service office in Munich. The ZWSt arranged vacations for more than 600 children during the summer of 1957 at its own Henrietta Szold Home in Wembach, the newly acquired home of the Cologne Jewish community at Sobernheim, and a rented home at Lichtenau in Austria.

Club houses for Jewish youth were opened in Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, and Düsseldorf. In Hamburg a new and modern Home for the Jewish Aged began to function. The Berlin community increased its facilities for elderly and single people by a second Wohnheim with accommodations for 40 persons. The first, for 35 persons, had opened in February 1957.

Jewish loan associations continued to operate in Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Frankfurt, and Düsseldorf. Over a period of three years, they had made 1,250 loans for a total of almost four million DMs (slightly less than $1,000,000).

Cultural Activities

The educational and cultural activities of the Jewish communities were stimulated and coordinated by the cultural department of the Central Council of Jews in Germany (Hans Lamm, director). Many Jewish lecturers, musicians, and artists from various countries came to Germany. The author Max Brod and the actors Simon Finkel and Josepha Schocken came from Tel Aviv. Hermann Levin Goldschmidt of Zurich and Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich of Basel lectured at the Free University of Berlin. Expositions were staged by the sculptress Kaete Ephraim-Marcus of Ramat Gan and Eugene Spiro of New York City in Düsseldorf, by Jakob Steinhardt in Berlin and Düsseldorf, and by A. D. Arielli of Paris and Margarete Brauer of Kassel in Berlin. A Yiddish theater group from Israel under Max Morrison performed in Munich, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Berlin, Frankfurt, and Hanover.

In 1957 and 1958 Professor Martin Buber of Jerusalem lectured in Frankfurt and Cologne and was honored by municipal authorities and the Jewish communities. On February 9, 1958, the Central Council of Jews in Germany and the Frankfurt Jewish community held an impressive celebration at Frankfurt University's assembly hall in honor of his 80th birthday. President Heuss sent a letter. The major addresses were delivered by Robert Weltsch, director of the Leo Baeck Institute of London and for decades editor of the Berlin newspaper Juedische Rundschau, and by the famous German author, Albrecht Goes. The addresses were published by the Zentralrat together with articles reprinted from the general press.

On November 2, 1957, the first anniversary of Leo Baeck's death, the Cen-
tral Council of Jews in Germany and the Central Welfare Agency made the first award of the Leo Baeck Prize to be given annually to individuals whose work tends to keep the humanitarian spirit of the late Rabbi Baeck alive. It went to Hermann Levin Goldschmidt, a well-known author and leader in Jewish adult education of Zurich, Switzerland, and the non-Jewish writer Peter Adler, whose radio and TV plays often dealt with Jewish subjects and who had done a great deal to aid German Jewish refugees in Paris.

Jewish members of British occupation forces held a week-long religious and educational seminar at the Henrietta Szold Home in the Black Forest in the fall of 1957.

In October 1957 the Jewish State Theater of Warsaw gave performances in the Soviet sector of Berlin.

Frankfurt University held a memorial session for Professor Hugo Sinzheimer, who had once headed the Academy of Labor there, on February 8, 1958.

In Munich a Jewish cultural society was founded to bring Jewish cultural achievements to the attention of a wide public. It sponsored lectures and an exposition at the City Museum. The Ner Tamid Verlag of Munich published a 400-page volume, Von Juden in München ("About Jews in Munich"), edited by Hans Lamm. More than 100 authors contributed to the book, which was well received.

**Personalia**

On November 2, 1957, the first anniversary of the death of Rabbi Leo Baeck, the Federal postal authorities issued a special postage stamp with his picture. Albert Ballin, the founder of the Hamburg-America Line, was also honored by a commemorative stamp on the 100th anniversary of his birthday, August 15, 1957. The Berlin postal authorities issued special stamps with the pictures of the chemist Fritz Haber (1868-1934) and the famous theater director Max Reinhardt (1873-1943).

The novelist Lion Feuchtwanger,* a resident of California, was honored by his birthplace, Munich, with its poet's medal.

The publisher Gottfried Bermann-Fischer (S. Fischer Verlag) of Frankfurt received the Frankfurt Goethe plaque on his 60th birthday in September 1957.

The Federal Republic of Germany awarded the Cross of Merit to the Düsseldorf lawyer Franz Engel, Rabbi Paul Holzer of Dortmund and London, the Hanover industrialist Erich Gompertz, President Adolf Sieradz of the Düsseldorf Jewish community, President Max Hirschfeld of the Bielefeld Jewish community, President Siegfried Leopold of the Bonn Jewish community, President Emil Samuel of the Minden community, and Moritz Siegel, administrative secretary of the Frankfurt Jewish community.

In the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1958 [Vol. 59], p. 301, the spelling of Herbert S. Schoenberg was incorrect and should have been cited as Herbert S. Schoenfeldt.—ED.

* Deceased December 21, 1958.
THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW (July 1, 1957, to June 30, 1958) saw a reversion to the “Stalinist” line pursued by the Communist Party Secretary Walter Ulbricht before the rising of June 17, 1953. At a Central Committee meeting in October 1957, he announced far-reaching plans for speeding up the “transition to socialism,” which were put into effect in the course of the year.

The remaining private sectors in industry, crafts, and trade were to be liquidated, at least half of the agricultural land was to be collectivized by 1960, and working norms were to be increased. Economic planning was technically decentralized but at the same time put under stricter party control, in accordance with the example set by the Soviet Union.

Three days before the Central Committee meeting all banknotes were withdrawn. Amounts up to 72 were exchanged at par, but larger amounts were credited only if the owners could prove that they did not represent “speculative gains.”

In May 1958, rationing was abolished except for milk and potatoes. The new prices were between the former controlled prices for rationed food and the high “free prices” of the state trading organization. Workers were compensated for the rise in the cost of living by increased wages and allowances; other groups, particularly craftsmen and traders, were worse off than before.

Purges

There was resistance against the drive for “sovietization” within the party leadership. But Ulbricht’s opponents, notably his second in command Karl Schirdevan, party ideologue Fred Oelssner, and former Minister of State Security Ernst Wollweber, as well as many of their alleged sympathizers, were expelled early in 1958. Penalties for political offenses were increased.

The campaign against “revisionism” was particularly violent in the cultural field. Artists and writers were attacked for favoring Western liberal ideas. University teachers came under fire for failing to convert the universities into “institutions of cultural education.” Foremost among those attacked for their nonconformism was the former Leipzig professor of philosophy, Ernst Bloch.

Escapes

The new wave of oppression led to a growing exodus from the so-called German Democratic Republic at the end of the period under review. While in the first half of 1958 the average monthly figures of refugees had dropped to 15,000 from a monthly average of 24,000 in the second half of 1957, the figures rose again to 19,000 in July and 21,000 in August. A growing number of intellectuals joined the exodus, such as Alfred Kantorowicz, a well-known literary figure in German Communism for many years and more recently professor of literature at the East Berlin university, and Josef Haemel, rector
of Jena university, who fled a few days before the 400th anniversary celebration of his university.

**Nazis in Official Positions**

In reply to repeated East German allegations about the role played by former Nazis in the Federal Republic (see *Western Germany: Nazi Rehabilitation*), the West Berlin Investigation Committee of Free Lawyers published a list of 79 former Nazis in high positions in the service of Pankow, 29 of them members of the People's Chamber.

Lotte Lowenthal

**Austria**

During the period under review (July 1, 1957, to June 30, 1958) Austria continued to honor her neutrality without foregoing her sympathies for the democratic countries.

The government rebuffed the attempts of Czech Prime Minister Viliam Siroky to secure Austria's support of the Polish Rapacki plan for an atom-free zone in Central Europe, and Czechoslovakia's protest against atomic rearmament of the German Federal Republic. On the other hand, Vienna protested against flights over Austrian territory by United States planes transporting troops and equipment from Germany to the Middle East.

These flights, in July 1958, occurred most inopportune for Austria, at a time when Federal Chancellor Julius Raab and Vice Chancellor Bruno Pittermann were about to leave for Moscow for important negotiations. Their trip was successful. The Soviet Union agreed to cut by 50 per cent the remaining 7 million tons of oil deliveries by Austria required by the state treaty of 1955, and acceded to other Austrian economic requests.

The Russian concessions reinforced Austria's continuing prosperity, which was not affected by the United States recession.

**Refugees**

Of the 18,200 refugees from Hungary still in Austria on May 1, 1958, some 7,600 were in camps. Between October 1956 and April 1958, 180,288 persons fleeing from Hungary arrived in Austria. Of these, 154,309 were resettled and 7,722 repatriated.

During 1957 there were 14,316 refugees from Yugoslavia. Besides the newer refugees, from Hungary and Yugoslavia, in October 1957, there were still 83,000 "old" refugees, including 20,000 in camps.

**Jewish Community**

Gemeinde membership decreased slightly during the period under review, while the number of Jewish refugees, especially those who escaped from Hungary after October 1956, dropped markedly.
TABLE 1
JEWISH POPULATION, 1957-58

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>As of June 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemeinden</td>
<td>9,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graz, Innsbruck, Linz, Salzburg</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camps—“old” refugees</td>
<td>2,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees from Hungary in and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside of camps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,416</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* There were probably an additional 1,200–1,300 Jewish refugees from Hungary not registered with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC).

The membership of the Vienna Gemeinde increased somewhat as a result of repatriation and immigration.

TABLE 2
CHANGES IN VIENNA GEMEINDE MEMBERSHIP, 1957-58

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1958 (Jan. 1–May 31)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Births</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons converted to Judaism</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL INCREASE</strong></td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emigration</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resignations</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL DECREASE</strong></td>
<td>681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET INCREASE</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 3
AGE STRUCTURE OF THE VIENNA GEMEINDE MEMBERSHIP, DECEMBER 31, 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 6</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 14</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 18</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 40</td>
<td>1,587</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 60</td>
<td>3,341</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 60</td>
<td>3,318</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>*<em>9,245</em></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,846</td>
<td>4,399</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* On June 1, 1958, Vienna had a population of 1,642,823, 44.2 per cent male and 55.8 per cent female.
From January 1, 1951, through May 31, 1958, some 5,500 new members joined the Vienna Gemeinde—by immigration, repatriation, natural increase, etc.—and about 5,400 left—by emigration, resignation, deaths. Despite this substantial turnover, the Gemeinde leadership succeeded in consolidating the community. An agreement was reached with the Orthodox minority, represented by the central Kehal Israel. Since the Socialist majority of the Vienna Gemeinde also was able to normalize its relationship with the Zionists, cooperation was secured among the Socialist, Zionist, and Orthodox groups. Jointly, they held 21 of the 24 seats in the Gemeinde council elected on November 27, 1955.

In February 1958, the Gemeinde resumed publication of its periodical Die Gemeinde, which had been started in September 1948 and discontinued in December 1949.

Several changes in the Gemeinde's bylaws were approved early in 1958. The term of future Gemeinde councils was increased from three years to four; participation in council elections was restricted to members whose Kultussteuer (Gemeinde tax) was paid up; Austrian members were made eligible to vote if they were domiciled in Vienna for six months before the date of the election, and non-Austrian members if they had lived in the city continuously for at least four years.

The activities of the Vienna Gemeinde, supported by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG) and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), included welfare assistance to about 500 persons a month, mainly the aged, unemployable, and unemployed; maintenance of a home for the aged (150 residents) and a hospital (50 patients); supervision of cemeteries in Vienna and the provinces, and vacation colonies for children and the aged. In December 1957 a 26-apartment house was opened. It was named for Desider Friedmann, president of the Gemeinde from 1933 to 1938, who perished in Auschwitz in 1944. A reading and recreation room for the aged was established in one of the Gemeinde buildings. A kosher canteen, financed by the JDC, served over 200 persons a month.

During the school year 1957-58, 400 children in Vienna attended religious classes supervised by the Gemeinde. In addition, five Jewish schools (including three in Vienna) with kindergarten classes conducted by various organizations and supported by the JDC, had an enrollment of 450 pupils. In April 1958 a group of communal leaders set up a committee to re-establish the Jewish primary school which had existed in Vienna before 1938.

In 1957 the Jewish Credit Cooperative, supported by the JDC, granted 112 loans amounting to 2,152,700 Austrian shillings (about $86,000). In 1957 the cooperative paid its first dividend, amounting to 5 per cent.

Jewish Refugees

On June 1, 1957, the JDC had 2,175 new Hungarian refugees under its care; a year later it was assisting only 1,186. During this period three camps—Bad Kreuzen, near Linz, and the Hotel Continental and a center in the Malzgasse, both in Vienna—were closed.
In May 1958, there were 400 refugees from Hungary in the all-Jewish camp of Korneuburg, near Vienna, which the Austrian authorities had taken over from the Red Cross in October 1957; another 300 lived in a mixed camp, Asten, near Salzburg; 180 lived in various other installations, and 306 lived outside camps. Camp Asten also accommodated 60 “old” refugees who, together with 32 more in the Rothschild Hospital in Vienna and 372 not in camps, were left over from the Displaced Persons (DP) era.

These 1,650 persons constituted the welfare caseload of JDC on June 1, 1958. Besides other assistance, JDC served the religious needs of its clients. Thus, in Camp Asten, where there were a good number of Orthodox Jews, a synagogue was built and a mikvah repaired.

Toward the end of the period reviewed here, Austria again served as a station for Jews in transit from East European countries to Israel. During the first nine months of 1958, approximately 2,700 Jews from Rumania arrived in Vienna en route to Israel. Emigration from Poland to Israel by way of Vienna fell off sharply during the winter of 1957–58 but increased in the summer of 1958.

**Indemnification**

In June 1958 the parliament passed several laws, published in the Bundesgesetzblatt of July 4 and 7, 1958. The most important for Jews, the War and Persecution Damages Law, provided indemnification only for loss by individuals of household goods, tools, machines, and other possessions indispensable for the exercise of a free profession or for the conduct of an industrial or agricultural business. Payments from the Assistance Fund set up in 1956 (see American Jewish Year Book, 1957 [Vol. 58], pp. 302–3) were as a rule deducted from payments prescribed by the War and Persecution Damages Law. Moreover, claimants whose income exceeded 72,000 Austrian schillings (a little over $2,769) a year were not entitled to any indemnification. Compensation for loss of tools, equipment, etc., required for a profession or trade might not exceed 25,000 Austrian shillings (about $1,000).

It was not clear whether the War and Persecution Damages Law was Austria’s last word on indemnification. Influential circles in Vienna apparently conceded its shortcomings and were preparing a new amendment to the Opferfürsorgegesetz (Relief of Victims Law) to undo the worst injustices in the treatment of victims of Nazism.

The Jewish community did not conceal its disappointment with the June 1958 legislation. In November 1957 the Federation of Jewish Communities had submitted to the government Jewish indemnification proposals patterned on German indemnification legislation. The federation sought continuously to persuade governmental and political leaders to adopt its indemnification program. At the time of writing those efforts had not met with success.

The registration center for heirless property established in 1957 (see American Jewish Year Book, 1958 [Vol. 59], p. 306) was unable to accomplish anything, since the long overdue fourth Rückstellungsgesetz (restitution law) had not yet been promulgated.
As of March 31, 1958, the Assistance Fund had processed 23,407 applications of the 30,435 filed. As of December 1, 1957, it had paid out 107,000,000 Austrian schillings ($4,115,385). Of the beneficiaries, 40.2 per cent lived in the United States, 19.2 per cent in Israel, 18.2 per cent in Great Britain, and the rest in other countries. To enable the Assistance Fund to hasten payments to claimants, Senator Jacob K. Javits (R., N.Y.) introduced an amendment to the Mutual Security Bill passed by the United States Congress on August 24, 1958, to make available to the Austrian government, with the approval of the International Cooperation Administration, an amount up to 100,000,000 Austrian schillings from counterpart funds for use by the Assistance Fund.

Acceding to the request of the Vienna Gemeinde, the city council of Vienna decided to accept applications for pensions from its former employees whether or not they had submitted their claims within the prescribed deadline.

**Intergroup Relations**

The Jewish community watched with uneasiness the increased activities of Nazi-inspired groups, and worried about instances of official leniency toward enemies of democracy. On several occasions former Nazis who disregarded the ban on wearing of German decorations of the Hitler era went unpunished (April, August, September 1958). Numerous public meetings of former SS men took place throughout the country, some attended by local elected officials (October 1957, April, May, August, September 1958). In October 1957, in the Linz Landestheater, an anti-Semitic demonstration was staged against the play *The Diary of Anne Frank*. A ban on shehitah was imposed in Upper Austria in 1958 on the basis of a 1953 law against cruelty to animals. The efforts of the Linz Jewish community to obtain a declaration from the Verfassungsgerichtshof (constitutional tribunal) that this law was at variance with the Federal constitution had at the time of writing been unsuccessful. Early in 1958 the Austrian president pardoned a war criminal, Josef Poell, who had been sentenced to 20 years for murder of Jews in Boryslaw, Poland. Shortly afterward, proceedings against a group of persons accused of war crimes in Polish Strij, Stanislaw, and Kolomea were dropped.

But there were also developments of a more encouraging nature. For instance, Mayor Koref and Deputy Mayor Wolk of Linz, supported by the Catholic-Socialist majority of the city council, strongly condemned the demonstration against *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Most importantly, the neo-Nazi groups did not represent a major political force or play a significant part in the shaping of national policy. The Jewish communities maintained close contact with the authorities, and the security of the Jewish population was not threatened by those who had learned nothing from the past. Nevertheless, neo-Nazi activity did represent a potential danger to Austrian democracy.

**Relations with Israel**

Samuel Ben-Tsur, Israel ambassador in Austria since March 1956, was succeeded in October 1958 by Ezekiel Sahar. Ernst Luegmaier succeeded Kurt Enderl as Austrian ambassador in Israel in June 1958.
Personalia

President Emil Maurer of the Vienna Gemeinde was awarded the Austrian Great Order of Merit in November 1957. Otto Wolken was elected vice president of the Vienna Gemeinde, succeeding Arnold Weiner, who died on January 23, 1958. Elections to the Council of Jewish Communities took place in Linz (November 1957, president, Wilhelm Schwager), Graz (December 1957, president, Fritz Strassmann), and Salzburg (January 1958, president, Hermann Einziger). The president of the Innsbruck Gemeinde, Rudolf Bruell, died on October 10, 1957, and Abraham Singer, the director of the religious department of the Vienna Gemeinde, died on June 10, 1958.

Boris Sapir