The apparent stability and progress which had characterized Iran since the downfall of Mohammed Mossadegh, came to an abrupt end during the period under review (July 1959 to June 1961). The elections of August 1960 were followed by widespread protests. In September Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlevi issued a decree canceling the elections because of flagrant irregularities and he appointed a caretaker government under Prime Minister Sharif Emami to carry out orderly and honest elections. The new elections, which took place early in 1961, were again followed by charges of fraud and by protest demonstrations. In May, after teachers demonstrating in front of the Majlis (parliament) for higher salaries had been fired upon, the shah again canceled the election, dissolved the parliament, and appointed Ali Amini as prime minister of still another caretaker government until new elections could be held. In August 1961 elections had not been held.

The two officially-sponsored political parties, the Melliyun and the Mar-dum, suffered tremendous defeats as a consequence of the cancellation of the two elections and appeared to have lost whatever influence they had had. An increasingly prominent role was played by the National Front, which was supported by most intellectuals, many followers of ex-Premier Mossadegh, and a number of splinter groups. Although they had suffered little repression in recent years, it was only in 1961 that they began organizing throughout the country.

Amini embarked on a drive against corruption, with the motto of “tell the people the truth” about bad economic conditions, corruption at high and low levels, and the need for an austerity program to combat the results of many years of careless management and irresponsible spending. He told the people that despite the natural wealth of the country, the corruption of the previous eight years had led Iran to the verge of bankruptcy.

When Premier Amini took over, foreign-currency reserves had almost disappeared. Exports were far below imports, which consisted largely of luxury goods. He imposed heavy duties on all imports, to the consternation of importers and retail merchants. Travel abroad, except for business or

* For meaning of abbreviations, see p. 497.
medical reasons, was restricted. A number of high-ranking government officials and army officers were arrested on charges of corruption.

The Plan Organization of Iran, set up to utilize income from the country's oil resources for economic and social development, submitted its third development plan. Under the first two plans a number of large-scale programs in dam and road building and industry were undertaken.

JEWSH COMMUNITY

Of Iran's population of about 20 million, approximately 80,000 were Jews, distributed among 37 towns and villages throughout the country. Some 45,000 lived in Teheran, 14,000 in Shiraz, 3,500 each in Isfahan and Abadan, and the rest in small villages. The history of the Jewish community of Iran extended back to the Jews who were freed from the Babylonians by Cyrus the Great 2,500 years ago.

During the last few years there was a movement of Jews from smaller communities to larger ones. Emigration to Israel, in no way restricted by the government, averaged between 100 and 150 monthly, somewhat less than the rate of natural increase of the Jewish population.

Civil and Political Status

Reza Shah, the father of the ruling shah and founder of the Pahlavi dynasty, gave the Jews political status equal to that of all other citizens of the country in 1925. Thereafter, they were allowed to buy and own property and to engage freely in business and trade. They were permitted, like other minorities, to elect a member of parliament. Although very few held government positions, some were prominent in professional and business circles.

In the small communities many of the ancient restrictions still persisted in practice, both for Jews and for other non-Moslem minority groups.

Few incidents of antisemitism were reported. Jewish artisans and clerks found little difficulty in being hired by Moslems, though they still preferred to work for Jewish employers.

Relations with Israel

Good though unofficial relations existed between Iran and Israel. Commercial ties linked the two countries, and Israeli agricultural experts, engineers, and other technicians were employed in Iran. Nasser's breaking off of relations with Iran in the summer of 1960 (see p. 418), following the shah's reiteration of the de facto recognition of Israel, strengthened the bonds between Iran and Israel.

Community Activity

Every Jewish community in Iran, no matter how small, had its local committee. In the smaller communities these committees were set up mainly for the purpose of fostering education. In Teheran the activities of the 12 existing committees covered a far wider area, including medicine, education, child care, vocational training, culture, and welfare.
The wealthier members of the communities usually took a leading role in their activities. A Central Jewish Committee was officially registered with the government, and its president was the incumbent Jewish representative in parliament. However, it was not in fact a real central organ of the Jewish community. Some committees contributed to the organized programs of the foreign Jewish organizations working in Iran—JDC, ORT, Otzar ha-Torah, and Alliance Israélite Universelle.

**Jewish Education**

Most Jewish children in Iran went to schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, Otzar ha-Torah, and ORT. With the aid of subsidies from JDC, these organizations provided elementary and secondary schooling and vocational training. Their schools were part of the Iranian school system, and their curriculum was basically the same as in government schools, with the addition of Hebrew and subjects of Jewish content. In the 1960-61 school year there were 13,200 Jewish children attending 37 of these schools and between 2,000 and 3,000 Jewish children attending non-Jewish schools. Most left school at an early age.

Hebrew education was under the auspices of Otzar ha-Torah, which employed Israeli supervisors and graduates from two small local yeshivot, having a capacity of 50 students.

Four communities had kindergartens, which cared for approximately 1,500 children. These were operated by the Ladies' Committee of Iran, with funds provided primarily by JDC. All Jewish schools had feeding programs, clothing distributions, and bath and health programs, also supported mainly by JDC.

**Health and Social Services**

JDC's medical program, combining an intensive school and family health service, continued to raise the health standards of the Jewish community. As a result of curative and preventive medical care, trachoma, ringworm, dysentery, and malnutrition were brought under control. The low rate of infant mortality among the people served by JDC health clinics was especially noteworthy. About 15 per cent of those receiving the health services of JDC were Moslems. The United States Department of Agriculture supplied surplus rice, flour, and powdered milk for JDC's various feeding programs.

JDC and Otzar ha-Torah ran a summer camp near Teheran for about 800 children and a day camp in Shiraz, which enabled about 1,200 children to spend two weeks in the countryside during the day.

In Teheran a small welfare office gave assistance to the needy, the handicapped, and the aged.

**Cultural Activities**

The Koresh Kabir cultural center, founded in 1953, contained a small library, a synagogue, meeting rooms, and outdoor recreation area. Although partially supported by JDC, the club had a difficult time financially.
A young men's committee held frequent fairs to raise money for assistance to university students, about 80 students receiving such aid. The Young Ladies' Club offered courses in typing, sewing, and knitting for poor young girls.

**Eichmann Trial**

The two English newspapers and the French newspaper gave extensive coverage to the Eichmann trial. The picture of the holocaust which emerged was news to many of the Jewish community as well as the general population.

There was little or no adverse editorial criticism. On the whole, the editorials stressed the right of Israel to try Eichmann.