Australia*

During the period under review (July 1960 to June 1961) the Liberal and Country coalition government, under Prime Minister Robert G. Menzies, adopted policies designed to check the boom of the previous year. The lifting of import controls, tight money, and reduced prices for primary products combined to slow business activity, and there was significant unemployment for the first time since World War II. Controversy developed over the immigration program.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Australia's population exceeded ten million, the exact figure awaiting the publication of the census of 1961. The Jewish population, previously estimated at 67,000, was increased by some 1,200 immigrants from Europe during the year and by an unknown natural increase. Most Jews lived in Melbourne, Victoria (32,000), and Sydney, New South Wales (30,000). There were also 1,750 in Brisbane, Queensland; 1,300 in Adelaide, South Australia; 3,000 in Perth, Western Australia; 100 in Canberra, Australian Capital Territory; 100 in Hobart and Launceston, Tasmania, and a few in other provincial centers.

As in previous years, Jewish immigrants came principally from Poland, Israel, Rumania, and Hungary. Some Jews began to arrive from South Africa, but since they were economically independent and required no visas, their number was not known.

Community Organization and Activity

For the basic structure of the Jewish community see AJYB, 1961 (Vol. 62), pp. 372–73.

CJMCAG provided a total of A£115,650† of which about A£98,150 went for social services and A£17,500 for education.

Relief for immigrants and other major social services were handled by welfare societies in each state, united in the Australian Federation of Jewish Welfare Societies. In Melbourne all social-welfare organizations were combined in the Victorian Social Services Council. Hostels run by the welfare
societies for persons awaiting permanent housing accommodated approximately 125 in Melbourne and 45 in Sydney. Separately administered homes for the aged housed 80 in Sydney and 100 in Melbourne. In Sydney a second successful Migrants Cooperative Housing Society was established.

In Sydney a sheltered workshop, which had operated for six years, employed about 60 aged men and women, providing them with social activities and a supplement to their income. A similar workshop in Melbourne entered upon its third year with 35 employees. In Melbourne, for the second year, Refuah supplied hospitalized Jews with frozen precooked meals for Passover and throughout the year.

**Education**

With the assistance of the Zionist Federation, Queensland maintained a part-time Hebrew school (160 pupils) and kindergarten. Perth maintained a kindergarten, and its day school entered its second year with 40 pupils. There were also Sunday schools attached to the Orthodox (120 pupils) and Liberal (65 pupils) congregations. Adelaide's one congregation had 118 pupils in Sunday classes and 45 in each of two other classes during the week.

The Melbourne community's Mount Scopus College increased its enrolment to over 1,200 pupils, a new wing being opened in September 1960 by Prime Minister Menzies. Six hundred additional students attended three other day schools, Moriah College, the Adass Israel day school, and the Lubavitcher yeshivah. There were nine kindergartens.

Part-time schools were sponsored by several institutions. The (Liberal) Temple Hebrew school sponsored once-a-week classes for 600 children. The (Orthodox) United Jewish Education Board provided a once-a-week program for about 280 pupils and six to ten periods weekly for another 400 pupils. In addition, it conducted correspondence courses for 50 children throughout Australia and the Pacific area. The enrolment in other part-time schools totaled about 1,200, including 100 students in the Bialik school and 500 in a Yiddish school.

One state high school offered Hebrew as part of its curriculum.

Sydney had one private Jewish day school, Moriah College, with about 250 pupils, and the King David school, under communal auspices, opened with 20 pupils. The (Orthodox) New South Wales Board of Jewish Education provided for teaching 1,800 pupils once a week and 80 pupils four times a week. Adass Israel had 60 pupils four times a week, and Temple Emanuel (Liberal) approximately 500 once a week. Hebrew classes were conducted by the Zionist Council of New South Wales.

In Melbourne and Sydney the Jewish Board of Education provided a weekly period of religious instruction to 6,000 children in classes at state schools under the “right of entry” system.

**Religion**

Suburban congregations in Melbourne and Sydney flourished. In Sydney the Orthodox congregations were united in a federation, and the Progressive
(Liberal) congregations throughout Australia were organized in the Australian branch of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. In Sydney the Central Synagogue opened a new synagogue and hall and communal center (the largest in Australia) in September 1960. Rabbi Shalom Coleman came from South Africa to the pulpit of the South Head congregation. (He was the second rabbi to come from South Africa). In Melbourne Rabbi John Levi became assistant rabbi of the Liberal Synagogue, the first Australian-born rabbi in the country.

Cultural Activity

The Zionist Federation sponsored a new bimonthly, *Contact*, reprinting selected articles from Jewish periodicals throughout the world. In September 1960, the Polish actress Eda Kaminska toured Australia with her Yiddish troupe. Israeli drama critic and writer Jacob Malkin and Henry Shoshkes of the (New York) *Day-Jewish Journal* lectured in various cities, and Israeli singer Shulammit Livnat toured for three months. In Melbourne the Jewish Men's choir was reorganized under the name of ha-Zamir.

Antisemitism

There were few incidents of the type which had occurred early in 1960, and the Eichmann trial brought no manifestations of antisemitism. The trial received extensive and sympathetic coverage throughout the press, although most newspapers strongly urged Israel not to exact the death penalty. The so-called Australian Nationalist Workers' party made the headlines with an invitation to the American Nazi George Lincoln Rockwell to visit Australia, but this group and its activities were totally insignificant. Eric Butler, leader of a Social Credit group in Melbourne, remained the leading Australian antisemite.

"Social" antisemitism appeared to be diminishing. In November 1960 Herbert Baer became the first Jew for many years to be admitted to the Melbourne Stock Exchange.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The 5,500 participants at Melbourne's celebration of Israel's Independence Day were addressed by General Hayyim Laskov, former chief of staff of the Israeli army, who led the 1961 United Israel Appeal. Another emissary was Colonel Dinah Werth, commander of the Israeli army's women. In October 1960 J. S. Ben-Meir, Israel's deputy minister of the interior, carried out a cultural mission.

Israel's minister in Australia, Moses Yuval, moved into the new Israeli embassy at Canberra in March 1961, and Hayyim Raphael became consul general in Sydney.

Australia and Israel modified their civil-aviation restrictions to permit charter flights.

To establish a wool-tops industry in Israel, Australian Jews invested approximately A£250,000. Trade between Israel and Australia increased.
Imports from Israel came to A£529,000, including diamonds, fertilizers, cotton, orlon, and other goods.

**Personalia**

Rabbi Lazarus Maurice Goldman, well known for his chaplaincy in the field, died in October 1960. Philanthropist Aaron Cohen died on August 26, 1960, and leading Zionists Max Brenner and Dr. Fred Benfey also passed away during the year.

*Arnold Bloch*