On June 28, 1966 the heads of Argentina's armed forces overthrew the government of President Arturo Umberto Illia in a bloodless revolution—the fifth coup since 1930. The following day they swore in General Juan Carlos Onganía, chief of staff during the early months of Illía's government, as the new president. The government's first act was to do away with the constitutional representative system, which had been in force since 1853, and to give the president the power to issue decrees, adjourn Congress, dismiss from office all members of the Supreme Court, and ban all political parties. The Estatutos de la Revolución Argentina (Articles of the Argentine Revolution) became the law of the land. In his first press conference in August, Onganía said that one of the revolution's major aims was to promote public participation in the country's political life. He listed as some of Argentina's major problems Communism, underdevelopment, demographic distortion, statism, and excessive bureaucracy. The government, Onganía continued, would combat these problems by impeding the activities of Communists and all other extremists, streamlining state industries, and instituting a system of "selective immigration" of persons from countries of "similar races and beliefs." He reaffirmed his government's support of free enterprise and private property as the basis of Argentina's economic system.

An immediate problem for the new government was to make peace with the labor leaders, who were followers of former dictator Juan Perón and decidedly anti-military. In an attempt to prevent the recurrence of the often politically motivated crippling strikes that had plagued the ousted Illía regime, Onganía reportedly promised the unions that labor's rights would be respected as long as the workers did not meddle in politics. In September the government ordered the unions to submit to compulsory arbitration. The climax in government-labor disputes was reached with the international boycott of Argentine ships, precipitated by government intervention in a strike by local longshoremen. When the Confederación General del Trabajo (General Labor Confederation) called a general strike in December, it embarked on what seemed to be a collision course with the government.

One month after the revolution the government took over the national
universities in an effort to stop Communist agitation and all other political activities in these institutions. President Onganía ordered all university presidents and deans of faculties to recognize the authority of the education ministry within 48 hours, or to resign their posts. This order destroyed the tripartite system of university government administered jointly by faculty, students, and alumni. Henceforth, relations between the universities and the government were to be maintained through the education ministry; political activity by student organizations was prohibited. Only three of the state universities accepted government control, and many of the deans and presidents resigned their posts in protest. One of the first to resign was Fernandez Long, president of the University of Buenos Aires which had an enrolment of 75,000 students. In the course of anti-government demonstrations, 140 professors and students of the faculty of exact sciences were beaten and detained by the police (among them a visiting professor from the United States). In all, over 1,000 professors, among them leading men in the faculties of sciences, architecture, economics, and humanities, resigned.

As a result, when the universities reopened, many students were unable to continue their studies; others had to be satisfied with a much inferior education. A study conducted by the Torcuato Di Tella Institute, a private foundation for social science studies, found that “three months after the event, the intervention in the national universities and the consequent loss of autonomy has already resulted in the emigration of 108 professors at the University of Buenos Aires alone, most of whom were full-time (professors) and of a standing that will make their replacement difficult in the near or more distant future. This figure will go even higher if there is no fundamental change in the university situation.”

The continuing instability of Argentina’s economy was another major problem. The devaluation of the peso and the government’s announcements of large increases in various public services caused grave concern throughout the country. The average rise in the cost of living in 1966 was 32.4 per cent. The cost of sanitary services increased by 30 per cent, fuel by 30 per cent, and railway fares by 80 per cent. The price of all other public utilities as well as of food products was steadily rising.

Many of the government’s actions and their underlying purposes remained unclear. In July Onganía banned all political parties and expropriated their funds and property. Yet, the federal police did not interfere with several quasi-political meetings. Captain Enrique Green, former secretary of the Buenos Aires police and Onganía’s brother-in-law, who for many years had been suspected of antisemitic activity, began a morals clean-up campaign in the capitol. In a dispute with the mayor, Green was later fired without protest from the president. Unofficial surveys indicated that public opinion originally favoring the new regime seemed to be far less enthusiastic about it as 1966 came to a close. The absence of decisive planning in the economic, labor, and political spheres left it open to many attacks. Lieutenant General Pascual Pistarini, the nominal leader of the coup that placed Onganía in power,
asked to be retired from his post as commander-in-chief of the army after a disagreement with the president. A wave of speculation about the underlying causes for Pistarini's replacement followed his sudden departure in December. On December 29 all cabinet ministers and their staffs as well as the state governors resigned in order to give Onganía the opportunity to reorganize his government. He accepted the resignations of Interior Minister Enrique Martinez Paz, Finance Minister Jorge Néstor Salimei and of six state governors.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

The Jews of Argentina were extremely sensitive to the critical events in 1966. In July the government set up strict controls over the more than 1,000 credit cooperatives in Argentina which had always played an important role in the country's economy. The move caused panic and a run on reserves by depositors and, since 30 per cent of the cooperatives were Jewish, it was mistakenly interpreted by the world press, and especially by the New York Times, as an anti-Jewish act. Shortly thereafter, at a joint meeting, AMIA (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina) and DAIA (Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas, the coordinating agency of all sectors of the Jewish community and its official representative in relations with the government) (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 287) issued a statement describing the problem of the cooperatives as national in scope, and not limited to Jews. They called upon the Jewish community to continue their full support of the cooperatives which had made an important effort in maintaining and furthering Jewish institutions, especially schools and welfare agencies.

**Communal Activities**

The estimated number of Jews remained unchanged in 1966. Of the total of 450,000, 75 per cent lived in Buenos Aires (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 285). During the first six months of the year, 1,015 deaths were registered with the Buenos Aires kehilla.

AMIA, the central organization of the capital's Jewish community, had a membership of 36,000 families. It organized a membership campaign and raised dues to cover a larger part (heretofore only 10 per cent) of its expanded activities. Eighty-five schools and 21 different institutions received monthly financial aid from the AMIA. About $163,000 were allocated in 1966 for social welfare alone. AMIA also subsidized about 100 persons who emigrated to Israel.

The AMIA-sponsored Casa del Estudiante Judío Moshe Sharett (Jewish Student House) inaugurated in Buenos Aires in May, provided dormitory facilities for students coming from the interior to study at the University of Buenos Aires. By the end of the year, 51 of the 100 available places were filled. The Escuela de Instructores y Tecnicos en Trabajo Institucional (School for Institutional Leadership) organized by AMIA and the Sociedad
Hebráica Argentina (culture and sports center), had an enrolment of 65 students. It offered a two-year training course for leaders and administrators of all types of Jewish institutions—social, cultural, recreational, religious, and economic. The school also conducted seminars throughout the country in conjunction with various institutions. It sent ten of its first graduates to Israel for study at the Makhon Lemadrikhei Hutz La-aratz (Institute for Youth Leaders from Abroad).

There was a distinct decline in interest in communal affairs, as indicated by the May elections for officers of AMIA. Only 12,646 votes were cast, as compared with 16,284 in the 1960 elections. Votes were cast for eight different lists: Agudat Israel, Liberal Zionists, Herut, Mapam, Mizrachi and Hapoel Hamizrachi, Central Europeans, Bund, and Mapai-Ahdut Ha'avodah. The largest number of votes went to Mapai-Ahdut Ha-'avodah after an electoral campaign including newspaper advertisements, billboards, TV and radio announcements, with a total expenditure of approximately 25 million pesos. The new officers were headed by Tobias Kamenszain.

In February the community celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first Jewish Congress in Argentina whose purpose it was to unite the different segments of Jewry and to form a structured community.

The Wa'ad Ha-kehillot, the national organization of Jewish communities, had 145 affiliates throughout the country. Eighty per cent, or 113, of the so-called communities outside Buenos Aires had less than 100 members; 15 had between 100 and 300; 10, between 300 and 800, and 7 (including Buenos Aires), more than 800. Only some 30 of these were organized on a community level; the rest were individual schools, burial societies, or Jewish centers. The unorganized communities presented a serious problem to Jewish leaders because the absence of Jewish educational facilities and of Jewish commitment among the youth led to a growing tendency toward assimilation and intermarriage.

Commitment of Youth

The findings of a study conducted by DAIA demonstrated a disquieting lack of Jewish identification on the part of the vast majority of Argentine youth. There were approximately 90,000 young people between the ages of 10 and 25 in Argentina. Sixty-two per cent (about 56,000) of these were not affiliated with any Jewish institutions. Of the remaining 34,000, some 26,000 belonged to groups with no specific Jewish content (such as Jewish sports clubs); 8,000 were members of organizations having specific Jewish content. The unaffiliated youths either identified with political movements, or believed in cultural assimilation which led to complete separation from Jewish life. Of the approximately 17,000 Jewish university students (3.4 per cent of the total Jewish population as compared with .36 per cent university attendance for the general population), only 1,400, or 8 per cent, were active in Jewish institutions.
Cultural Activities

The Sociedad Hebraica Argentina, which played a major role in furthering Jewish and Argentine culture, celebrated its 40th anniversary in April. The World Jewish Congress (WJC) sponsored a symposium on "Yiddish and Jewish Life" in June. It organized the first Colloquium of Jewish Intellectuals of South America in November, at which guests from several Latin American countries discussed "Jewish Consciousness." WJC also published The History of Yiddish and Sholem Aleichem, the first two in a pamphlet series on Jewish personalities and events. A Bibliography of Jewish Themes in Spanish, another WJC publication, made available the first such listing to institutions and the general public.

The Confederación pro Cultura Judía (Culture Congress) laid the cornerstone for its new building in May. It published a Yiddish translation of Simon Dubnow's History of the Jewish People, in an effort to promote the Yiddish language as part of Jewish culture.

The Latin American office of the American Jewish Committee held a conference on Jewish identity and identification in Cordoba in August. Many prominent speakers participated. It also sent two travel exhibits of Haggadah illuminations and ceremonial art to various institutions in Buenos Aires and in the interior, and provided educational film-strips and slides to different groups. The AJC's new pamphlet series on basic Jewish themes included A Compilation of the Bible, an abridged History of Jewish Literature, and The Talmud. It also published the first issue of Comunidades Judías de Latinoamérica (year book of Latin American Jewry) with historic, demographic, cultural, religious, and statistical data pertaining to 19 Latin American countries. Comentario, the 13-year-old bi-monthly issued by the Instituto Judio Argentina de Cultura e Información, published its 50th issue. It also presented in June its first annual award to Argentina journalists who excelled in the field of human rights, an honor shared by Luis Mario Lozzia and Tomas Eloy Martinez. In September the Instituto established, as a tribute to Jewish agricultural pioneering in Argentina, the Gregorio Werthein award for Argentine professionals who distinguished themselves in farm-production research. The Instituto also published a booklet, Neonazism in Europe and America, and the fourth edition of Morris Kertzer's What is a Jew?


At the 20th AMIA-sponsored annual book fair in September, over 16,000 books in Yiddish, Hebrew, and Spanish were sold. There were 6,280 buyers, some 900 less than the preceding year. AMIA also sponsored a weekly television program and extensive lectures on Jewish affairs.
Education

The Central Organization for Hebrew Education (Wa'ad Ha-hinnukh) reported 15,500 students in all Jewish schools in Buenos Aires. Of these, 5,300 were enrolled in kindergartens, 8,800 in primary grades, and 1,400 in secondary schools. Eighty per cent of the students in primary schools, had also attended Jewish kindergartens. There were eight Jewish day schools with an enrolment of 2,400 students. The Natan Gesang school, one of the largest day schools, opened its new building for 400 pupils attending grades from kindergarten through high school.

In the interior of the country, 4,600 students attended 48 schools; 70 per cent of the student body was concentrated in 11 schools. The first secondary day school in northeast Argentina opened in Tucuman. Eighteen communities in the interior offered no Jewish education whatsoever. In general, the number of day-school students throughout Argentina was increasing.

The Moises Ville Teacher’s Seminary, which trained many of the teachers for the interior of the country, had 120 resident and 85 local students. The Seminario Docente para Escuelas Israelitas (Midrashah) of the AMIA, whose graduates usually taught in Buenos Aires and neighboring schools, had 350 students (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 289).

The function of the Wa’ad was to supervise the curriculum and textbooks of all affiliated schools throughout the country, and to serve as employment center for all licensed teachers. It subsidized all affiliated schools with funds allocated by AMIA. However, the Wa’ad's work was impaired by the lack of trained professionals on its own staff and by limited funds. While the general orientation of most schools was secularist and Zionist, they lacked unification because they were usually organized to correspond to local Israeli political parties. Another aggravating factor was the continued lack of cooperation between the Sephardi and Ashkenazi members of the community.

In the annual report to the Wa’ad, its president Hayyim Raichemberg stressed the need for restructuring the school system. He proposed that small Buenos Aires schools within a given district be combined, since only half of the city’s 24 primary schools had the required minimum number of students for the proper functioning of the schools’ morning sessions; the rest had far below the minimum. Other serious problems were the low teachers’ salaries and the lack of uniform textbooks.

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The main identification of the Jewish community, apart from the small but growing religious sector, was with Zionism and Zionist ideals. CUS (Centro Universitario Sionista) president Jorge Pustilnik stated in an article in the Buenos Aires Semana Israelita that 30 per cent of the Jewish students attending universities showed no interest in the Jewish community. The failure of the home to stress Judaism, the inability of the poorly organized Jewish institutions to keep pace with the times, and the incompetence of the
Jewish schools to impart ideals, all contributed to this general disinterest. Raichemberg maintained that Jewish identification could be developed among the university youth only through Zionism—"the most important contemporary means of expression and the nucleus of Judaism." Most sectors of the Jewish community held this view. As a result, there was great emphasis on strengthening communal ties with Israel, as well as relations between the governments of Argentina and Israel.

WIZO (Woman's International Zionist Organization), with 40,000 members in 370 centers throughout Argentina, completed 40 years of activities. Its work of cultural and social programs and social welfare work for Israel was hampered by a big financial scandal involving the leadership. The Makhon Le-Tarbut Israel, sponsored by the Israeli embassy, remained the center for Hebrew language studies and Israeli culture. The Federación de Clubes de Padres de Escuelas Hebreas Horim sponsored a three-week study tour of Israel for parents of Jewish students. The Friends of the Hebrew University and the Friends of the Weizmann Institute organized cultural and educational programs.

The General Zionists in Argentina sent seven delegates to the party's national convention in Israel in January. Tobias Kamenszain, president of the AMIA, participated in the World Jewish Congress convention in Brussels (July-August). He also represented the Argentine Jewish community in the inauguration ceremony for the Keneset building in Jerusalem.

On the long list of Israeli dignitaries who visited Argentina in 1966 were Moshe Goldstein, the assistant mayor of Tel-Aviv; Minister of Agriculture Hayyim Gvati; Hayyim Yehiel, the official representative for diaspora relations, and Minister of Finance Phinehas Sappir, who came to bolster trade relations between Argentina and Israel.

Since the creation of the State of Israel, 15,000 Argentine Jews have gone on aliyah. Before 1961, 2 per cent of the emigrants had returned to Argentina; since then the percentage has risen to 20.

The Argentine government maintained cordial relations with Israel. In January the Keneset invited ten members of the Argentine senate and house of deputies to visit Israel. They met with government officials and made special tours to various cities, industrial plants, agricultural projects and universities. The official announcement of the establishment of the Casa Argentina en Israel (Argentine House in Israel) in May, created much general public interest. Plans for the Casa Argentina, a project sponsored by Argentine Jews and Christians, included a center to house Christian pilgrims in Nazareth, a study center in Jerusalem, and a central house, a library, and a museum in Tel-Aviv.

In general, the Onganía government made strong efforts to reassure Argentine Jewry and critics abroad that it would continue to further friendly relations with Israel. This was the keynote of an interview of the noted Israeli journalist Moshe Ron with President Onganía in September. Onganía told Ron that he favored technical interchange and good relations between
Argentina and Israel, and made it a point to stress that “there has never been anti-Semitism in Argentina; there have only been isolated incidents.” Onganía also said that he hoped President Zalman Shazar, who had canceled a scheduled visit in July because of political events, would visit Argentina shortly. Other government officials expressed similar feelings. Argentine Foreign Minister Nicanor Costa Méndez, who met with Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban in New York in October, expressed his country’s support of Israel and again extended the invitation to Shazar. He also took the occasion to deny all rumors regarding anti-Jewish discrimination in Argentina. In October a committee on Argentine-Israeli government exchange programs was set up in Argentina. During the same month a public primary school in Buenos Aires was named Estado de Israel in a ceremony attended by government officials; messages were received from Onganía, Minister of the Interior Enrique Martinez Paz, and Monsignor Ernesto Segura, secretary to Cardinal Antonio Caggiano, Primate of Argentina.

Religion

The growth of diverse religious tendencies and movements was greeted by some Jews as a revitalization of religious life in Argentina. For others, it was a disturbing factor. Among the latter was David Kahane, former colonel in the Israeli air force and, since April, chief rabbi of AMIA, who gave his impressions after a visit to various communities in the interior. “In addition to the forces that disintegrated Jewish life,” he said, “the harmful influence of the groups identified with Conservative trends was felt. This entailed a danger, especially for the youth, since the snide tactics and actions of the Conservatives contributed to the weakening of the foundations of Jewish existence.”

Until the formation of liberal congregations in 1963, religious life was centered in the Orthodox rabbinate of the AMIA and the synagogues which were organized on a landsmanshaft basis. The German synagogues belonged to the CENTRA movement, and the other synagogues were separated according to their members’ country of origin. With few exceptions, there was little attempt to adapt the ritual and customs to the Argentine environment. Thus, sermons were delivered in German, Hungarian, Arabic, Yiddish, etc., and no Spanish was used in the service. There was complete separation of the Sephardim and Ashkenazim.

Buenos Aires had over 50 synagogues and some 14 rabbis. Most of the Jews, however, were not affiliated with any synagogue and, in 1966, the estimated attendance of the city’s 350,000 Jews at High Holy Day services dropped below the 10 per cent figure in 1965. The rabbis of AMIA attempted to register all marriages and to control divorces in the Ashkenazic community. They refused to perform conversions under any circumstances, and did not recognize conversions performed by other rabbis. With the appointment in February of Rabbi Kahane as chief rabbi, the religious parties
of AMIA began an all-out effort to stop the growing influence of the liberal groups.

The first three graduates of AMIA’s Orthodox Escuela Superior Teológica Seminario Rabinico received their ordination in Israel in August and subsequently began their rabbinate in Rosario and in the religious department of AMIA. (No university training was required for ordination.) Rabbi Itzhak Rojlin became director of the Seminario in August.

Rabbi Mordechai Edery, vice rector of Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano, the first Conservative rabbinical school on the continent, was invited to address the Sephardi synagogue of Sharei Tefila in November. His lecture was cancelled after Sephardi Chief Rabbi Isaac Shehebar and Rabbi Kahane exerted pressure to prevent a “liberal” from having a public platform. During that month, however, Rabbi Edery became the spiritual leader of the Asociación Israelita Sefardí Templo Chalom in Buenos Aires, the first Sephardi community to affiliate with Conservative Judaism. In Cordoba, a new Conservative synagogue, Bet El, was founded with a mixed Sephardi and Ashkenazi membership.

One of the Conservative synagogues in Argentina, Bet El in Buenos Aires, celebrated its fourth anniversary; it had a membership of some 500 families. It appointed Rabbi Jeffrey A. Wohlberg, a recent graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS), as assistant to its spiritual leader, Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer. The Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 291) sent its second graduate to finish his studies at JTS. All students at the Seminario, among them young men from Peru, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina, conducted High Holy Day services in communities throughout Latin America. The school opened a high school department. The Latin American office of the World Council of Synagogues, under the direction of Rabbi Meyer, continued its work with affiliated synagogues and the general community; it continued to publish Maj’shavot (Mahashavot), a Spanish-language quarterly dedicated to Jewish thought.

The newest Reform synagogue in Argentina, Congregación Emanu-El, appointed Rabbi Rifat Sonsino, a recent graduate of Hebrew Union College, as its spiritual leader.

Campamento Ramah, a summer camp sponsored by the Bet El congregation, began its third season with an enrolment of 250 young people, some of whom came from Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay. Congregaciones Emanu-El (Reform), Lamroth Hakol (German), and Templo Libertad also sponsored summer camps. In Buenos Aires and surrounding areas, some 5,000 children attended Jewish institutional and privately-owned day camps.

Antisemitism and Church Relations

Reaction to the Ecumenical Council was strong among both Argentina’s Catholic clergy and lay leadership. Twenty-seven priests, representing 80 per
cent of the parishes in the province of Mendoza, resigned in protest against Archbishop Alfonso M. Buteler’s criticism of the progressive attitudes of the Council and against his efforts to block the influence of young liberal priests. Cardinal Caggiano supported Buteler and assured him of “complete solidarity.” Another defeat of the liberal clergy was the closing of Rolf Hochhuth’s The Deputy, after a few performances in Buenos Aires, in response to a protest by the cardinal. The internal struggle between the two church factions was also seen in their attitudes toward the Council’s statement concerning the Jews.

The Onganía government was emphatic in its denial of the existence of official antisemitism. It issued a particularly strong denial of reports of alleged antisemitic attitudes of the new government by the Argentine New York Times correspondent. On July 12 President Onganía received a delegation of the Jewish community, headed by Isaac Goldenberg, the president of DAIA. In the course of the conference, which was given wide coverage in the national press, the delegation expressed concern over the activities of extremist groups which “openly created artificial divisions within the Argentine family, while distorting the image of the nation.” As a result of this meeting, a presidential statement was issued to the press, calling for a continuation of the ethical and traditional religious values of Argentina that always fostered tolerance and respect for the individual. Onganía also said that, as a firmly committed Catholic and as president of the nation, he would spare no efforts to promote the general welfare of the people and to take energetic action against any extremism of the left or right, that could endanger the harmonious development of society. Argentine Jewry was pleased with the president’s statement.

One day before the Jewish delegation met with Onganía, Minister of the Interior Enrique Martinez Paz received Patricio Errecalte Pueyrredon, secretary general of the ultranationalist Tacuara movement (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 292), despite the fact that the new government had dissolved all political parties. Pueyrredon stated after the interview that Tacuara “supported the spirit and program of the new government.” The Buenos Aires daily Yidishe Tsaytung found it hard to understand Martinez Paz’s hurry to speak with a leader of this notorious, terrorist political group even before receiving representatives of such bodies as the Academy of Law and the Lawyers’ Representative Societies.

In the periodical Política Internacional, the journalist Jorge Julio Greco stated that President Onganía was not antisemitic, but that some officials in the new administration were: “Now, as before, there were some elements, mainly from the middle class, who were not sympathetic to the Jews. And it is from this class that the military men come. However, the active, aggressive antisemite could only be found in an infamous minority.”

The College of Lawyers strongly protested against the appointment of Fernando Mántaras as a judge in the province of Sante Fé, in November.
Mántaras had burned a floral wreath placed by the Jewish community on the statue of San Martin when Argentina recognized the State of Israel.

Throughout Argentina there were several sporadic antisemitic manifestations, such as swastika daubing in public places and the appearance of a group of extreme rightist activists in La Rioja.

Naomi F. Meyer
During 1966 President Humberto de Alencar Castelo Branco relentlessly pursued his aim to legalize, with the support of the military and a comfortable majority in congress, the far-reaching political, administrative, and economic changes which he had instituted by presidential decree.

There was, however, growing disagreement between Castelo Branco and the military leaders of the March 1964 revolt, who had overthrown the João Goulart regime as a threat to democratic institutions, to freedom of thought and expression. They disagreed with Castelo Branco's concept of "democracy in action," that was a mixture of formal respect for the constitution and law, and the authoritarian manner in which he applied them. The idea of national security, as elaborated by the Escola Superior da Guerra (Higher School for Warfare), called "Sorbonne," became dominant; all else was subordinated to it.

The first challenge to the president's authority came during the last days of 1965, when Minister of War Arturo da Costa e Silva announced that he was a "contender for the candidacy of president." (He had signed the first emergency decree in 1964, which had put Castelo Branco into office.) Under military and civil pressure, Castelo Branco, who was generally suspected of wanting to succeed himself, was now forced to take up the question of presidential succession. He declared in February that no civilian candidate would be acceptable, and thereby barred his strongest political opponent, Guanabara's former governor Carlos Lacerda (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 295), from running for the presidency.

At the same time, Castelo Branco established by presidential decree (Ato Institucional No. 3) what was later called the "timetable for elections" (Calendário eleitoral). The decree called for: 1) gubernatorial elections on September 3, by absolute majority vote of the legislative assemblies in 11 states, to be held in public session (gubernatorial elections in Guanabara and Minas Gerais in 1965 by popular vote had brought victory to candidates of the opposition); 2) presidential and vice-presidential elections, on October 3, by absolute majority vote of the national congress; 3) elections for congress (senate and chamber of deputies) and state legislative assemblies by secret ballot. This timetable was rigorously observed. Since Castelo Branco held the power to suspend political rights, control over the elections remained in his hands. He handpicked the candidates for governorship, overruling even wishes of the military and of his supporters in the Alliance for National Renovation (Aliança Renovadora Nacional—ARENA; AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 295).

The most impressive proof of presidential power was the sudden disappearance of São Paulo's Governor Adhemar de Barros from the political
scene. He had been a key figure in the 1964 uprising, but, in March 1966, he began voicing severe criticism of the regime's economic policy which caused wide discontent in São Paulo industrial and commercial circles. In June he was suddenly ousted from the governorship, his political rights were suspended and he left for Europe to avoid imprisonment. Two months later his strongest supporter and a possible military candidate for the presidency, General Amaury Kruel was relieved of his post as commander of the second army, with headquarters in São Paulo.

The uncontested election on October 3 of Costa e Silva as president, and ARENA leader Pedro Aleixo as vice-president, was followed by a crucial challenge to Castelo Branco's power. He suspended the political rights of six members of the chamber of deputies, which had just elected his successor, but ran into strong resistance from its president and ARENA leader Adauto Lucio Cardoso, who called the presidential act a violation of the prerogatives of the chamber of deputies. He was supported by congress president Senator Auro Moura de Andrade. Public opinion was widely roused. Castelo Branco then adjourned congress and stationed soldiers there to enforce his decree. When the congress reconvened after the general election of November 15, the presidency of the chamber of deputies declared the mandates of the six suspended members void, against the vote of Adauto Cardoso, who resigned in protest from the presidency of the chamber.

The elections brought the expected victory for the ARENA which gained the majority in Congress and in most of the state assemblies.

At the end of the year President Castelo Branco by special decree forced upon the congress a new constitution which would strengthen the president's executive power and weaken congress. He set the end of January 1967 as time limit for its adoption.

The progressive Archbishop D. Helder Camara of Olinda and Recife asked the clergy in a pastoral letter to help support attempts to institute far-reaching social changes for the improvement of the situation of the workers, especially in rural areas. To this, the commanding officer of the fourth army at Recife gave a violent public reply in July. The personal intervention of Castelo Branco and of the Archbishop D. Agnello Rossi of São Paulo, as president of the Conference of Brazilian Bishops, quickly put an end to the incident.

The extension of the two-parties system (ARENA and MDB, created by presidential decree in November 1965 until 1968) deflated Carlos Lacerda's hopes of becoming the presidential candidate of a third party. He signed a "Manifesto to the Nation," asking for a return to civil government and democratic procedures, in September and, after the November elections, went to Lisbon to meet former President Juscelino Kubitschek, with whom he signed the "Pact of Lisbon" calling for reestablishment of a civilian government in Brazil.

The country's international monetary position improved. Heavy and strictly enforced taxation supplied the government with money for a num-
ber of public and other projects. Foreign credit was greatly improved, and there was a rise in exports and a growing demand for imports. At the end of the year the dollar reserve was about 600 million. The national budget still showed a deficit, but it was expected that, barring a change in fiscal policies, the budget would be balanced within a few years.

Loans were granted by international and private banking institutions, but the flow of money into the country was slow because of the time needed to get big industrial projects under way. The auto industry, for example reached its November 1962 production figure only in November 1966.

Although the value of the cruzeiro had remained stable (at 2.210 cruzeiros to the dollar) for more than 14 months, the promise given by Minister of Planning Roberto Oliveira Campos and Minister of Finance Otavio Gouvea de Bulhões to make 1966 the year of stabilization was not kept, and the new “hard cruzeiro” (cruzeiro forte) was not introduced.

The cost of living index rose by more than 40 per cent (about the same rate as in 1965). Wages increased by only 30 per cent; the minimum wage was maintained at 84.000 cruzeiros (about $40 a month) since March 1966, and consumption was shrinking. At the end of 1966 salaries for civil servants were raised 25 per cent.

Money in circulation in December 1966 totaled 2,661 billion cruzeiros, as compared with 2,275 billion at the end of 1965. Low buying power and the government’s fiscal policy, which syphoned large amounts of money from private enterprise and kept credit under strict control, greatly slowed down industrial development. The increase in the gross national product (GNP) could hardly keep pace with the rate of population growth (3.1–3.5 per cent).

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

The estimated number of Jews in Brazil was 130,000–140,000, of whom some 60,000 lived in São Paulo, 50,000 in Rio de Janeiro and 12,000 in Porto Alegre (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 342). Belo Horizonte (Minas Gerais) had about 3,000 Jews, Recife (Pernambuco) 1,600, Belém (Pará) 1,200, Paraná 1,300, and Salvador (Bahia) 1,000.

Immigration of Jews had come to a virtual standstill, with United HIAS Service reporting a total of 43 cases for the year. No figures were available for the negligible unassisted immigration.

According to the Zionist organization in Brazil, 213 Jews emigrated to Israel in 1966.

**Communal Activities**

The Confederação Israelita do Brasil (CIB—Jewish Confederation of Brazil; AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 296) strengthened its position as coordinating agency and spokesman for Brazilian Jewry. The federal government indirectly recognized the Confederation by inviting its president, Moysés
Kauffmann, to all official events on the occasion of President Shazar's visit (p. 429). In 1966 the Confederation's executive held three meetings: in March in São Paulo, in June and November, in Rio, at which national and international problems affecting Jews were discussed. Among the activities of the Confederation were a protest against the court verdict handed down in the Novak war crimes trial at Vienna to which it received an official reply from the Austrian embassy in Rio (December); a protest to the Russian embassy in Rio against equating Zionism with Nazism; expressions of appreciation to the Brazilian government for its condemnation of antisemitism at the UN and to the embassy of Uruguay for rejecting an anti-Israel resolution at a three continents conference in Havana, Cuba. Its representatives also met with Deputy Rainer Barzel of the Bonn parliament, on his visit to Rio de Janeiro.

The Federação Israelita do Estado de São Paulo (Jewish Federation of São Paulo; AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 296) opened new offices in December on the occasion of its 20th anniversary. Other communal celebrations included the 25th anniversary of the Associação Religiosa Israelita (ARI—Jewish Religious Association) at Rio de Janeiro, headed by Rabbi Henrique Lemle (July); the 30th anniversary of the Congregação Israelita Paulista (CIP) in São Paulo, headed by Rabbi Fritz Pinkuss (September), and the golden jubilee of the São Paulo welfare organization EZRA, one of the oldest Jewish institutions in Brazil (May).

As a constituent member of the World Jewish Congress, the Confederation sent delegates to the WJC general assembly at Brussels in August; and to meetings of the South American Council of the WJC in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. In July, it sent representatives to Geneva to attend meetings of the World Council of Jewish Education and of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture of which it became a member.

The second Pan American Maccabiah was organized at São Paulo in August with 600 participants from 15 countries. More than 20,000 spectators attended each of the two events at which the state government and the Church were officially represented.

A new burial place was consecrated in July at Rio in Vila Rosali. The São Paulo Cemetery Society bought a five million square foot plot as reserve, although 15,000 places are still available in the new cemetery in Butantan.

The Liga Feminina Israelita (Jewish Women's League) held a seminar on the volunteer community worker (August); in collaboration with the Instituto Brasileiro Judáico de Cultura a Divulgação, WIZO organized a three-day seminar for young couples on the role of the Jewish mother in a changing society.

Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, UN high commissioner for refugees, visited Brazil in September and met with leaders of Jewish welfare institutions. UN funds were to be made available for the care of former Jewish refugees.

American visitors to Brazil included Max Lerner to Rio and São Paulo (April); Republican Senator Jacob Javits (April) and Judel Mark of YIVO,
who spoke in Rio and São Paulo (July-August). Professor Konrad Bloch of Harvard, 1964 Nobel Prize-winner in medicine, who toured five South American countries, was the official guest of the Foreign Office in Brazil (July). He gave lectures at the universities of São Paulo and Rio, received an honorary doctorate of medicine from the Federal University of Brazil and was made an honorary citizen of Rio de Janeiro.

Communal Relations

The position of the Jews in Brazil, was not affected by political trends. In the November general elections six Jews, running on both ARENA and MDB tickets, were elected to the chamber of deputys: Julia Steinbruch (MDB), wife of Senator Aaron Steinbruch, and Ruben Medina (MDB) in Guanabara; Marcos Kertzmann (ARENA) and David Lerer (MDB) in São Paulo; Henrique Henkin (MDB) in Paraná, and Abraão Saba (ARENA) in Amazonas. This was the largest number of Jews elected in any single election. No reference to Jews was heard during the campaign or after the elections. Non-Jewish candidates sought Jewish votes; they visited synagogues in São Paulo and Rio on Rosh Ha-shanah and Yom Kippur.

The Brazilian press gave prominence to news of Jewish interest, both on the international scene (Middle East affairs, events in Germany, the situation of the Jews in Russia) and in local affairs. Comments on news such as the liberation of war criminals Baldur von Schirach and Albert Speer (p. 355) or the elections in Hesse and Bavaria (p. 351) referred to the horrible Nazi past. The writers were generally well informed, objective, and sympathetic to the Jews. Jewish religious and communal festivals were the topic of articles in many papers, which attempted to explain them to their readers by pointing out similarities between them and Christian holidays (Purim and Carnival, Hanukkah and Christmas, Rosh Ha-shanah and the New Year).

The activities of the Conselho de Fraternidade Cristão-Judáica (Council for Christian-Jewish Brotherhood) in São Paulo (and, to a lesser degree, in Rio de Janeiro) were reflected in a growing ecumenical spirit. In July a "Day of Prayer" at Rio was addressed by Christian and Jewish speakers and attended by Governor Negrão de Lima. The interfaith events culminated in São Paulo in October with a series of four evenings devoted to the following subjects: "The Bible and Human Society," "The Bible as Inspiration in Art," "The Bible as Fountain of Revelation and as Literature," and "The Presence of the Bible in the Contemporary Life of Man." The last event was a round-table discussion held at the CIP community center. Jewish speakers were Rabbis Fritz Pinkuss and Menachem Diesendruck, Carlos A. Levi, and Isaac Schifnagel; art critic Lisette Levi showed slides of scenes from the Bible. Cardinal Rossi of São Paulo, honorary president of the Council, formed 14 teams to prepare for the implementation of the Ecumenical Council decrees in his diocese; one study group was assigned to work on changes in liturgy and didactic texts.
In January, on the occasion of the anniversary of the founding of São Paulo, Rabbi Pinkuss was one of six religious leaders who addressed a special session of the city council.

The Jewish community gave generous aid to victims of three national disasters: torrential rainstorms in Rio de Janeiro-Guanabara, in which 200 lost their lives; widespread forest fires in Paraná, and a severe drought in the Northeastern Brazil.

Intergroup relations, especially in the smaller towns, were good; in Recife, for example, B'nai B'rith invited non-Jews to monthly dinner parties.

Mrs. Yedda N. R. Benzecry was named to sit on the Council of the Fundação Nacional do Bem-Estar do Menor (National Foundation for the Welfare of Minors) in Rio de Janeiro (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 299), with another Jew, Professor H. Rattner of São Paulo, as her alternate.

Jewish organizations which received tax-exempt status were the Lar dos Velhos (home for the aged) (January) and the Center for Religious Education which supports the Orthodox-oriented Bet Hinnukh school and Javne College in São Paulo (March).

In São Paulo, a school was named in honor of the late Brazilian Jewish minister Horácio Lafer.

Human Rights

The United Nations organized a seminar on apartheid in Brasília (Aug.-Sept.) to which the Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations sent an observer.

The Instituto Brasileiro de Direitos Humanos (IBRADIU—Institute of Human Rights; AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 299) was represented at the 22nd session of the UN Committee for Human Rights in April by its secretary general, Isaac Schifnagel.

The regional delegates of the nongovernmental organizations, among them the Instituto Brasileiro-Judaico de Cultura e Divulgação, marked Human Rights Day, December 10, at a social gathering in the São Paulo municipal theater. The entertainment included a performance by the A Hebraica choir. Brazilian Deputy Cunha Bueno who was also president of IBRADIU, stressed the importance of Human Rights Day in a speech in the congress.

Religious Activities

The number of rabbis remained unchanged. Rabbi M. M. Masliah of Rio de Janeiro, left for Mexico; at the same time, Rabbi Chaim Begun, a native Brazilian educated in the Lubavitcher yeshivah in New York, was appointed as spiritual leader in a São Paulo congregation.

Two students of the Buenos Aires Rabbinical Seminary came to São Paulo during the High Holy Days where they served with the Congregação Israelita Paulista as assistant rabbis. The A Hebráica club in São Paulo which is plan-
ning to construct its own synagogue held religious services on the High Holy Days, with Sidor Belarsky famous Yiddish singer, as hazzan.

The Keneset Israel synagogue in São Paulo celebrated its golden anniversary in November. In August, the Comunidade Israelita de Copacabana in Rio dedicated its new synagogue Bet-El. It was designed by Elias Kaufman and had stained glass windows painted by Emeric Marcier.

In Belo Horizonte three Jewish organizations joined to form the Comunidade Israelita Mineira (CORIM). The community had two synagogues, both Orthodox—Tefferet Israel and Bet Yakov.

Education

The central office of Jewish education which had moved from Rio de Janeiro to São Paulo (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 300), began work on several projects under the direction of its president, Marcos H. Firer. It was developing a general program of education, as well as educational material and plans for more advanced training of kindergarten and other teachers and assistant teachers in national seminaries, along with supplementary courses in Jewish culture. The agency also participated in the World Jewish Congress for Education held at Geneva in August; the Education Committee of the World Zionist Organization; the Education Committee of the Action Committee of the World Zionist Congress, and the Congress for Education in Uruguay.

Brazil had 33 Jewish schools which were supervised by the central office for education. Thirteen of the schools, including kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, a college and teachers training institute were in São Paulo; 13 similar schools, as well as a yeshivah, in Rio de Janeiro; one elementary school with 95 pupils in Salvador; one school with 26 pupils in Recife; one in Curitiba; one in Pôrto Alegre; two—the Theodor Herzl school with 100 pupils and the Israelita Brasileira with about 60 Jewish and 22 non-Jewish children in Belo Horizonte, and one school in Niterói (state of Rio de Janeiro).

Altogether 10,409 students attended these schools: 2,907 attended kindergarten and pre-primary schools (pré-primário); 4,611 were enrolled in grammar schools (primário); 2,383 attended college (ginásio), and a total of 508 went to secondary and teachers training schools. In addition to these officially listed schools there may be several more in the smaller cities, which are not listed with the central office, as for example a grammar school in Belém do Pará which has 45 pupils.

A yeshivah college with campus was opened at Petrópolis near Rio in February. By the end of 1966, students from six different towns or cities in Brazil were in attendance.

In an effort to raise the educational standards of Jewish schools, the Sholem Aleichem college (established in August as an extension of the Sholem Aleichem school) held a three-day symposium for teachers and experts in the field of education in September.
Fifteen candidates graduated from the Hebrew Teachers' Seminary which is under the supervision of the Conselho Educativo of the São Paulo Federation and officially connected with the Casa de Cultura e Língua Hebráica (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 304).

**Youth**

There were no changes in the organizational setup of youth movements (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 300). B'nai B'rith held its first youth seminar at the Associação Religiosa Israelita center in Rio de Janeiro in June. It was attended by university students from Belo Horizonte, Campinas, Curitiba, Manaus, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Santos, and São Paulo. The São Paulo Federation's Youth Council and central office for education held their first seminar for the training of youth leaders in November. Seventeen youth leaders, representing all groups, went to Israel on a Jewish Agency sponsored training tour in preparation for teaching careers in Brazil.

Grupo Universitario Hebraico (Organization of Jewish University Students) was given offices at the Casa de Cultura e Língua Hebráica.

**Cultural Activities**

Instituto Brasileiro-Judáico de Cultura a Divulgação (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 189), in cooperation with local agencies, arranged audio-visual educational programs in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Recife, and Salvador; organized a Jewish book exposition at São Paulo in December, which was hailed as a significant cultural event by the general press; published several booklets, including AJC—O que é—O que faz (“The American Jewish Committee: What It Is, and What It Does”) by John Slawson; Dez Comunidades Judáicas (“Ten Jewish Communities”) and Simpósio sôbre Educação Judáica (“Symposium on Jewish Education”), a report on a symposium at the Associação Religiosa Israelita center in Rio de Janeiro. Comentário the Portuguese quarterly of the Instituto, began its 7th year of publication.

Nobel prize-winner S. Y. Agnon was honored at a special meeting arranged by the Hebrew section of the University of São Paulo's department of Oriental studies. Ben Tzion Tomer, cultural attaché of the Israeli embassy, and the well-known Jewish author Jacó Guinsburg, addressed the audience. The Brazilian press praised the works of both Agnon and Nelly Sachs, who shared the prize with him.

In November the A Hebraica club opened its own art gallery as a permanent feature of its cultural program. The club's organ *A Hebraica* was developed by its editor José Knoplich from an information bulletin into a monthly magazine with a circulation of 7,000.

Two publishing houses for Jewish books in the Portuguese language were founded in 1966. In São Paulo Jacó Guinsburg established Editora Perspectiva which planned to publish a Judáica collection of 12 books covering, as
it claimed, "4,000 years on 4,000 pages." Four volumes have already appeared: 40 Contos de I. L. Peretz (a collection of stories); Nova e Velha Pátria ("The New and the Old Homeland"—stories by 31 authors); Conto Idish (a collection of stories in Yiddish by 31 authors), and Contos da Dispersão ("Folktales of Israel"). Editora Perspectiva also will publish Debates, a series of volumes containing Portuguese translations of philosophical and sociological works.

In Rio de Janeiro, a group connected with the leading publishing house Editora Delta founded Editora Tradição (February) which planned to publish Biblioteca de Cultura Judáica, a series of 10 books, as well as translations and adaptations of Nathan Ausubel’s The Book of Jewish Knowledge; Howard M. Schar’s The Course of Modern Jewish History; Solomon Grayzel’s A History of the Jews; Mortimer J. Cohen’s Pathways Through the Bible; Cecil Roth’s An Illustrated History of Jewish Art and The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia, and David Ben-Gurion’s The Jews in Their Land.


Among books on Jewish subjects by Brazilian authors were: Waldirio Bucarelli, O kibutz e as cooperativas integrais ("The Kibbutz and the Integral Cooperatives") published by Livraria Pioneira in April; Jacob Pinheiro Goldberg, A discriminação racial e a lei brasileira ("Racial Discrimination and Brazilian Law"), published by Editora Luanda in August, and Guilherme de Figueiredo, Deus sobre pedras ("God upon Stones"), impressions of a trip to Israel published by Editora José Álvaro, Rio; Geraldo Ferraz, Warchavchik e a introdução da nova arquitetura no Brasil: 1925-1940 ("Warchavchik and the Introduction of New Architecture in Brazil") published by Museu de Arte, São Paulo, in August. The publication of Osvaldo Orico’s Pio XII e o massacre dos Judeus ("Pius XII and the massacre of the Jews") was used by some newspapers as an occasion for the censure of writers—especially Rolf Hochhuth—who had condemned Pope Pius for his failure to speak out on behalf of the persecuted Jews. Two books by Rabbi Fritz Pinkuss of São Paulo also appeared in 1966: Quatro Milênios de Existência Judáica ("Four Thousand Years of Jewish Existence"), published by
the São Paulo University Revista Histórica and financed by the American Jewish Committee's community service, and *O Caminho de uma Geração* ("The Way of a Generation") a selection of his sermons and speeches, published by Congregação Israelita Paulista's Fritz Pinkus Foundation on the occasion of the congregation's 30th anniversary.

A Franz Kafka exhibit, organized under the supervision of Professor Eduard Goldstücker of Prague (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 438), was shown at the city library in São Paulo.

Among the São Paulo artists whose work was exhibited at the Salvador Bienal in November, were Mariselda Bumajny, Moyses Baumstein, Paulina Rabinovich, Alice Brill, and Anatol Wladyslaw. The Brazilian Foreign Office (Itamerati) in April bought a number of paintings by Yolanda Mohali, Franz Weismann, Abraham Palatnik, Rubens Gerchmann and Fayga Ostrower, shown at the eighth Bienal in São Paulo (AJYB, 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 302), for Brazilian embassies abroad. Works by Fayga Ostrower were shown at the Bienal in Bahia, at the Galeria Arco d'Aliveri in Rome, and at the Armos Anderson museum in Helsinki, as well as at the Brazilian-American Cultural Institute in Washington.

The Joseph Buloff theater group gave performances of several Yiddish comedies in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in September.

In May the 50th anniversary of the death of Sholem Aleichem was widely commemorated; the Instituto Cultural Israelita-Brasileiro in São Paulo observed the day at a gathering in the Teatro Israelita Brasileiro.

The press review of Brazilian Jewish pianist Yara Bernett's recitals in London were very favorable; the pianist Anna Stella Schic went on a European concert tour in February. Isaac Karabchewski, founder and conductor of the famous Renascença madrigal choir (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 351) became assistant to Eleazar de Carvalho, the conductor of the Brazilian symphony orchestra. Nathan Schwartzman, well-known violinist and professor at the University of Brasília, went on a European concert tour which was sponsored by the Brazilian Foreign Office.

**Zionism and Relations with Israel**

On the occasion of President and Mrs. Zalman Shazar’s nine-day state visit to Brazil in July, the entire country did their utmost to show their warm feelings for Israel. Shazar and his entourage first visited Brasília, where President Castelo Branco officially received him. With the congress in recess, a special parliamentary committee headed by Deputy Cunha Bueno met the president. In São Paulo, at a reception given by state and municipal authorities, Shazar was made an "honorary citizen of São Paulo." The leaders of the Jewish communities, who were officially invited to all state affairs, showed their deep affection for Israel’s president at the social gatherings which they organized in his honor. In Rio de Janeiro, the last stage of the visit, there were several more official receptions at which speakers voiced the desire on
the part of both Israel and Brazil for stronger cultural and economic relations. President Shazar received an honorary doctorate at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. The Brazilian daily and weekly press prominently featured all news about the visit. A postal stamp with a picture of Shazar was issued in his honor. A joint statement on future cooperation was made at the end of the visit.

Israel Ambassador Josef Nahmias left Brazil in October and was succeeded by Ambassador Shmuel Divon.

In honor of the Brazilian statesman, Oswaldo Aranha, who presided at the UN General Assembly in 1947 which decided on the establishment of a Jewish state, the Oswaldo Aranha cultural center was founded in the so-called Brazilian kibbutz Bror Chail in the northern Negev with funds contributed for that purpose by Israel Klabin and other members of his family.

In May Israel and Brazil signed a convention on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Aloysio Regis Bittencourt, Brazilian Ambassador to Israel, started a building campaign for a House of Brazil in Israel on a site donated by the Israel government.

In August the Brasil-Israel Chamber of Commerce in Tel Aviv published its first Portuguese and Hebrew language bulletin, edited by Salomon Tocker.

Ney Braga, former governor of Paraná and senator-elect, visited Israel in November. Fourteen graduates of the Brazilian Escola Superior da Guerra visited Israel in November as guests of the Israel army command.

Rabbi Israel Goldstein, President of the Keren Hayesod, and Netanel Lorch, Israeli ambassador to Peru, visited Brazil in April.

The 1962 Treaty of Recife (AJYB, 1964 [Vol. 65], p. 190) formed the basis for an intensive agricultural program in Brazil in which Israel actively cooperated. Israeli irrigation and soil conservation experts were often in Brazil and Brazilian agriculture students spent much time in Israel. Raanam Weitz, head of the Jewish Agency colonization department spent three weeks in June in Brazil, investigating methods of developing and colonizing Northeastern Brazil. His visit was sponsored by the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Brazilian government. Israel and the state of Rio Grande do Norte agreed on a $100,000 project to establish a joint wells and irrigation enterprise. Arrangements were also made for the special training of Latin American heads of production centers in Israel. In February ARTENE (Promotion of Artisans in the Northeast of Brazil) was invited to participate in the Tel Aviv International Fair, as were Brazilian firms. Israeli Minister of Agriculture Hayyim Gvati came to Brazil in May to discuss cooperation in the field with the Brazilian Minister of Agriculture, Ney Braga.

Among other Israelis who visited Brazil were: Kneset member Rabbi Salomon I. Gross of Agudat Israel (November); Moshe Ron, secretary-general of the Association of Journalists (August), and an impressive list of
scientists including Chaviv Etery, director of the Institute for Biological Research.

Professor Pedro Calmon, Atos de Silveira Ramos, Fritz Feigl and Israel Klabin were chosen by the Weizmann Institute of Israel to form a special commission for permanent exchange of scientists (August).

Several Hebrew University professors visited Brazil in 1966: Felix Bergmann of the pharmacology department, to attend the Congress of Pharmacology in São Paulo; Hilel Nathan of the medical faculty; Daniel Zohary of the botany department, to attend the International Symposium for Genetics in Piracicaba in São Paulo, and Aharon Shulov, zoology department, to participate in an international symposium on animal poisons at the Butantan snake farm in São Paulo.

Professor Warwick E. Kerr of the University of São Paulo medical school in Ribeirão Preto went to Israel in January. The psychologist Cintra Menezes represented Brazil at an Israel government sponsored seminar on the fight against illiteracy among women (August). The renowned Brazilian author Erico Veríssimo went on a 20-day tour of Israel to gather material for his forthcoming book, *April in Israel*.

The Israeli artist Rico Blass exhibited his paintings in Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo (April). The works of five Israeli artists were shown at WIZO-organized exhibits in São Paulo in November and in Rio de Janeiro in December. Brazilian artist Augusto Barbosa showed his paintings in Tel-Aviv in August, and an exhibit of the works of Danilo di Prete, Manabu Mabe, Yolanda Mohali, and Arcangelo Lanelli, organized by art critic Lisette Levi, called “Four Brazilian painters” was opened at the Tel-Aviv art museum in November.

In March Professor Alfredo de Mello gave a talk on Israeli music in Rio. Israel participated in the International Festival of Folksongs in Rio de Janeiro in October. João Bethencourt represented Brazil at the UNESCO-sponsored International Congress for Theater at Tel Aviv in June.

Alexander Schemer, director of the Casa de Cultura e Língua Hebraica in São Paulo (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 349; 1966 [Vol. 67], p. 304) returned to Israel in August. He was succeeded by Josef Lefkowitz of Israel. The Casa Hebrew-language courses had an enrolment of 400 persons. Its program also included lectures, conferences, and exhibits of all kinds. It offered instruction in Israeli folk dancing in preparation for public performances at official functions.

**Antisemitism**

In Curitiba, capital of Paraná, the Jewish cemetery was again desecrated (AJYB, 1964 [Vol. 65], p. 192). Federal authorities have been alerted to watch the situation in this state where new immigrants from many European countries are living in closed groups, perpetuating their old-world prejudices. Sporadic rumors that Josef Mengele and Martin Borman were seen and that
former Nazis had established training camps in Brazil remained unconfirmed. Occasional swastika daubings in Rio, São Paulo, and elsewhere were condemned by the authorities and in the press.

Attempts by the Arab League to foment antisemitism in Brazil by means of anti-Israel propaganda remained unsuccessful. In general, the press took little note of Arab declarations; nor did a visit in November of a trade delegation from five Arab countries make headlines. Talk of the possibility of extending the Arab boycott to Brazil evoked a strong statement from acting Foreign Secretary Pio Correa in October. He made it clear that his government would not tolerate polemics against any nation, and would take the strongest measures if the Arab League, which was permitted in Brazil only as a cultural and welfare agency, engaged in political activities.

The Confederação Israelita do Brasil strongly protested a single incident when a Brazilian firm, Companhia Italiana de Navegação Linea C, gave up its representation of the Israeli steamship line ZIM as a result of pressure by the Arab League boycott committee.

Although the sale of the Portuguese edition of Hitler's Mein Kampf, had been prohibited in Brazil, copies of it were still in circulation.

Personalia

In April, architects Jorge Wilheim and Rosa Kliass were chosen by São Paulo Mayor Faria Lima to plan the urbanization of the Tietê river valley. The São Paulo community leader Carlos Katzenstein was elected president of a nonsectarian health organization fighting tuberculosis among the poor population (October). David Kopenhagen, honorary president of the Latin American MACABI, was elected vice-president of the Macabi World Union in December. In December Dr. Pedro Bloch, oculist, playwright, and active in Rio de Janeiro's Jewish cultural life, was made honorary citizen of Guanabara. Colonel A. Chahon was promoted to the rank of general; General Waldemar Levi Cardoso became a marshall when he was transferred to the reserve. The governor of Paraná appointed Saul Raiz secretary of state for transportation and public works. In Bahia, the governor appointed Boris Tabacow secretary of the treasury, and Bernardo Spector secretary for welfare.

Gabriel Kibrit, leader of the São Paulo Sefardi community died in February at the age of 72. Marcos Constantino, an attorney and for many years a leader in Jewish communal organizations, died at Rio de Janeiro in October at the age of 56. Eduard Horwitz, who had been president of the now defunct Centro Hebraico Brasileiro died at Rio de Janeiro in October at the age of 71. Isaak Koifmann, one of the founders of the Sholem Aleichem college and library in Rio de Janeiro, died in November at the age of 73. Henry Szulc, journalist and former director of JDC in São Paulo, died in December at the age of 67.
When Gustavo Díaz Ordaz became president in 1964, he initiated government policies new in the history of Mexico. During his first two years in office, he firmly maintained the country's political and economic stability. Great emphasis was placed on agrarian reform, and land was distributed to the farmers who worked the fields. But while the standard of living in rural areas, where the majority of Mexicans lived, improved, it could not keep pace with that in the cities. The industrialization of the country was particularly effective.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Mexican Jewish community, which has been in existence for more than 50 years, numbered about 45,000, or 0.1 per cent of the general population. The figure was an estimate based on the membership in various communal institutions and organizations, as well as on the number of Jews known to be living in the various states of the Mexican Republic. No comprehensive records had ever been kept. Immigration of Jews since the end of World War II has been practically nonexistent because of stringent anti-immigration laws. The community was therefore composed mainly of second- and third-generation Jews, who are Mexican citizens with the same rights and duties granted to all Mexicans by the Constitution.

There were in Mexico several groups of "Jewish Indians" claiming to be descendants of marranos and of Spanish Jews who arrived in the country during the period of Spanish conquest (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 353). The best known communities of these "Jewish Indians"—their exact number was undetermined—were in Venta Prieta, in the state of Hidalgo, and in Cocula, in the state of Guerrero. There was also a group in Mexico City, with its own synagogue in a poor section of the city.

For many years the very existence of these "Jewish Indians" produced a passionate controversy over the true origin of Mexican Judaism. The diversity of opinions depended as much on the individual's religious as on his historical point of view. Except for their religious belief and their synagogues, these communities had no connections with Mexican Jewry. However, they have, on various occasions, displayed interest in coming close to and identifying with the larger Jewish community and its institutions.

Communal Activities

The Comité Central Israelita (Central Jewish Committee), the representative organ of the Mexican Jews, consisted of 21 delegates representing the
various Jewish communities on a proportional basis: 11 from the Kehila Ashkenazi Nidje Israel, the Ashkenazi community which was believed to comprise 60 per cent of all Mexican Jews; three from the Unión Sefaradi (Sephardi Union); three from the Alianza Monte Sinai, the organization of Jews from Damascus, Syria; two from Zedáká Umárpé, the community of Jews from Aleppo, Syria; one from Emuna, for Hungarian Jews, and one from the Hatikva Menorah, for German Jews. The Comité represented these communities as a national and social entity in all dealings with the government. It also spoke for Mexican Jewry in the World Jewish Congress and other international Jewish organizations. The committee's president was Gregorio Shapiro.

Kehila Ashkenazi, modeled after the East European kehillot, recently built a community center with offices and conference rooms, which was also the meeting place for many organizations. Simón Feldman has been its president for more than a decade. It supported a number of Orthodox synagogues, had two rabbis, a cemetery, and carefully supervised stores in which kosher meat was sold. It supported the religious Yavne school, had its own hevra kaddisha, and maintained Eshel, a home for senior citizens located in the city of Cuernavaca.

Only five years ago, a group of young people founded the Bet-El Congregation (Conservative), which soon became an important part of the life of the young generation of Mexican Jews. They built a temple and social facilities for more than 300 families.

Another Conservative congregation, the Bet Israel Community Center, consisted largely of English-speaking North American Jews temporarily living in Mexico.

The Consejo Mexicano de Mujeres Israelitas (Mexican Council of Jewish Women), was part of the Comité Central Israelita, but operated as an autonomous communal agency. It provided fellowships for university students, educational material for numerous schools and aid to crippled children. It maintained cordial relations with many non-Jewish women's groups in an effort to advance the important need for Mexican-Jewish rapprochement.

The Centro Deportivo Israelita (Jewish Sports Center), planned and built by the young generation of Mexican Jews, has grown rapidly in recent years. Its original function as a sports center has been superseded by its new role as an important social institution (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 355). It had a membership of over 20,000—the largest of any Jewish institution in Mexico—coming from all parts of the country and from all walks of life. Over 200 non-Jewish Mexicans applied for membership, and were accepted. The Centro resembled a small city, with an outdoor sports arena, gymnasiums, restaurants, swimming pool, functional entertainment rooms, an ample library, and art exhibits. It undertook cultural projects in Spanish as well as in Yiddish, and organized two theater groups performing in both languages.

The Mexican Jewish community also had several social service institutions
doing important work. Among these the Hilfsfarein, dedicated to the assistance of the indigent, was the first to be founded. The Froienfarein (Society of Jewish Women) aided needy Jewish women and their families. The Sociedad Mexicana OSE cooperated with the Centro Médico OSE (OSE Medical Center) in offering medical assistance to the poor. In addition, it maintained a vacation home for the special use of children from poor families.

In June 1966 the American Jewish Committee opened an office for Mexico and Central America. Among its first diverse activities was the issuance of two Spanish-language publications, *Para su Información* and *Cuaderno*, providing information on current Jewish affairs.

The Banco Mercantil de México, S.A. (The Mexican Mercantile Bank), a substantial and prestigious financial institution servicing primarily Mexico's Jews, has for many years also played an important role in national economic affairs.

**Education**

The Mexican Jewish community took particular pride in its educational system. In Mexico City alone, there were seven Jewish secular schools and two yeshivot. In addition to the Sunday school of the Bet Israel community center and the Talmud Torah of the Bet-El congregation, there were two secular schools in the interior, one in Guadalajara and one in Monterrey. Approximately 65 per cent of all Jewish children attended these institutions. The secular schools used the ministry of education curriculum, which was supplemented by Jewish studies including Hebrew and Yiddish. Graduates of the secular schools, however, had only scant knowledge of Jewish subjects because too little time was devoted to these studies, and their content was quite outdated. The teachers in these schools were graduates of the Seminario de Maestros de Yiddish y Hebreo (Seminary of Yiddish and Hebrew Teachers), conducted under the auspices of the Kehilá Ashkenazí. A number of others were sent from Israel for temporary teaching assignments at the schools.

**Culture and Publications**

One of the many worthwhile projects of the Kehilá Ashkenazí was the establishment of a Commission of Culture, under Tuvia Maizel, which for years has been organizing round-table conferences in Yiddish, with foreign Jewish intellectuals as participants. The commission also supported a Yiddish theater and a Month of Jewish Music. The latter took on national significance in 1966, when Brazil's Public Education Minister Agustín Yañez presided over its main concerts that took place in front of the Palace of Fine Arts.

Malkah Rabell's book, *The Modern Jewish Theatre*, in Spanish, was published by the Theatre of the University of Mexico. The Foundation of Economic Culture published the *Common Collective in Mexico* by Salomón
Eckstein, a graduate of the National University in Mexico and now head of the department of economics at Bar-Ilan University in Israel. Abel Eisenberg, an esteemed musician, was appointed director of the National Conservatory of Music symphony orchestra. A mural by the artist Fanny Rabell is at the National Museum of Anthropology.

The Jewish press in Mexico played a vital role in the education and orientation of the Jewish community. The publications were: Der Weg, a bi-weekly Yiddish and Spanish publication; Di Shtime, a Yiddish bi-weekly; Prensa Israelita, a Spanish weekly; Horizonte Israelita, Tribuna Israelita, and Revista Israelita de México, Spanish monthlies; Forois and Fraind, Yiddish monthlies; Kojavim, a Yiddish, Hebrew, and Spanish publication devoted to children, and Voz Sefaradi, a Spanish review. Several other publications of the various Zionist parties, youth groups, and schools, appeared sporadically.

Mexico had an Association of Jewish Writers and Journalists.

Antisemitism

In 1965 a number of Mexico City synagogues were daubed with swastikas and other antisemitic symbols, but the police failed to establish the identity of the perpetrators. At the end of 1966, 32 gravestones in the city's Jewish cemetery were desecrated in the same manner. Blatantly antisemitic books continued to be published and sold at a low price in large quantities to libraries and private individuals throughout Mexico, and to all other Latin American countries. As a result, Mexico has become the headquarters for the distribution of antisemitic propaganda throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

The Arab monthly Al Gurbal in Mexico City carried on a continuous anti-Jewish and anti-Israel campaign, as propaganda agent for the Arabs.

A pamphlet entitled, "Food for Thought for the Greatest Progress in Vatican Council II," appeared in 1965 and was widely distributed throughout the country. Its author was Joaquín Sáenz de Arriaga, doctor of philosophy and theology, of the archdiocese of Mexico, who had published other anti-Jewish books. The pamphlet advocated a 20th century Inquisition in Mexico. Typical antisemitic articles now and then appeared in the Mexican press, especially in provincial newspapers.

These various attacks on the Jews moved Mayor Alfonso Corona del Rosal of Mexico City to issue an official statement which said: "Mexico, under the leadership of President Díaz Ordaz and guided by a traditional international policy of respect for human rights and justice, will not permit the disruption of the climate of tolerance at home or the attack on the democratic principles which characterize the social life of the country."

Zionism and Relations with Israel

The largest Zionist organization in the country, the Zionist Federation of Mexico, consisted of Poale Zion, Sionistas Generales (General Zionists), Partido Liberal (Free Party), Herut, Mapam, and Mizrachi parties, as well as
of the WIZO and the Damas Pioneras (Pioneer Women). The various young grupos jalutzianos (pioneering groups), with central headquarters in the Young Zionist Federation, received financial and moral support from the Zionist Federation of Mexico. Keren Kayyemet and Keren Hayesod were also active within the Zionist movement. The unaffiliated Organización Sionista Sefaredí (Sephardi Zionist Organization), had its own youth group and a cultural committee called "Victor Mitraní."

The strong Zionist orientation of the Mexican Jews was reflected in the community's general attitude. However, the decrease of Zionist activity among young people in recent years has become a problem for the Zionist movement.

Relations between Mexico and Israel remained very cordial. The diplomatic services performed by Israeli Ambassador Shimshon Arad have been extended to the cultural, social, and artistic spheres. Among the eminent Mexicans who visited Israel as guests of the government were Minister of Public Education Agustín Yañez; Ruth Rivera, director of the department of architecture of the National Institute of Fine Arts; Martín Luis Guzmán, revolutionary writer and director of Tiempo magazine; Donato Miranda Fonseca, member of a special commission appointed by President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz; José Luis Martínez, prominent intellectual and director of the National Institute of Fine Arts, and Minister of Hydraulic Resources José Hernández Terán. A large number of Mexicans went to Israel to attend different courses and seminars. Many prominent Israelis have visited Mexico on various missions.

For many years Israel has been giving technical assistance to Mexico, in agriculture and the establishment of cooperatives. The Mexican-Israeli Cultural Institute, headed by Senator Andrés Serra Rojas has undertaken a number of cultural and artistic ventures. Progress has also been made in trade between Israel and Mexico through the efforts of the Mexican-Israeli Chamber of Commerce. For the first time, in June 1966, Mexico was represented at the Tel Aviv fair.

Personalia

The economist Benjamín Ratchkiman was named private secretary of the Minister of Industry and Commerce. Jacobo Zabludovsky, journalist and television commentator, was appointed professor of journalism at the School of Political and Social Sciences of the National University. Drs. Samuel Fastlicht, Fernando Katz, Horacio Jinich, and Rubén Lisker were named members of the National Academy of Medicine.

Dr. Marcos Moshinsky, prominent nuclear physicist, received the 1966 science award of the Elías Sourasky Fund, which gives annual prizes to Mexicans for their contributions to science, art, research, and other fields.

The Jewish community suffered the loss of Salomón Kahan, writer and musicologist; Yosef Winiecky, journalist, and novelist Meyer Corona.

Sergio Nudelstejer